

Dutch king and his subordinates, detail from the *Lisbon Screen*'s left half. Renato de Albuquerque Collection, Sintra.



Seascape with three Dutch VOC's Indiamen, detail from the *Lisbon Screen*'s right half. Museu do Oriente, Lisbon.

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The stern of the Dutch cargo ship, detail from the *Rothschild Screen*.

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DOI: 10.6541/TJAH.202603_(60).0003

Picturing Dutch Tropes on Lacquer Screens: Maritime Encounters, Inter-Artisanal Networks, and the Pro-Nomadic Turn in Seventeenth-Century Chinese Art***

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Abstract: In the last two decades of the seventeenth century, the production of a type of Coromandel lacquer screen featuring Dutch tropes flourished along China's southeastern coast. Art historiography has generally linked their portrayals of armed vessels, musketeers, and trade goods, as well as winding coastal landscapes, to the grandeur of the Japanese 'Southern Barbarian Screens' (*Nanban byōbu*). This paper challenges the prevailing view that considers these Dutch-themed screens to be copies of the Japanese types, arguing instead that their production relied on pictorial vocabularies shared among Ming-Qing professional painters, printmakers, and porcelain decorators. Portraying the Dutch as skilled seafarers with advanced shipbuilding and artillery technologies, or as formidable horseback hunters on a par with the Manchu warriors, evoked the Chinese perception of the Dutch East India Company's (VOC) supremacy in seventeenth-century East Asian waters. These depictions were inherently military rather than commercial in nature, as opposed to their Japanese counterparts. As this paper further reveals, the search for such masculine iconography emerged against the backdrop of the Manchu defeat of the Three Feudatories (1673–1681) and the annexation of Taiwan (1683), events that restored stability to the war-torn southern regions and precipitated a decisive 'pro-nomadic turn' in early Qing visual culture. More specifically, Dutch tropes and the desire for a 'calm sea' emerged as parallel responses to the empire's new maritime frontier. At the heart of the turn lay the evolving attitudes of Han Chinese officials toward nomadic cultures and martial virtue, as well as their aspirations within the newly consolidated empire.

Keywords: Coromandel screen, Dutch VOC, maritime history, Kangxi period, Taiwan

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* The work described in this paper was funded by a grant from the Research Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China [Project No. CityU 9043771]. The author is indebted to Pedro Coelho, Kee Il Choi Jr., Caroline van Eck, Joana Belard da Fonseca, Anna Jackson, James

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Introduction

In the second half of the seventeenth century, screens made of *kuancai* 款彩 ('carved polychrome,' also known as Coromandel lacquer in Western historiography) flourished along China's southeast coast as coveted domestic objects and among the most exported commodities after porcelain.[1] Alongside a spectrum of vernacular themes,[2] a number of screens incorporating Dutch tropes, armed vessels, musketeers, trade goods (infrequently), and coastal landscapes have been the subject of recent scholarly debate. They were often brought into discussions with a type of Japanese screen known as the 'Southern Barbarian Screens' (*Nanban byōbu* 南蠻屏風, flourished between the 1590s and around 1650) due to their visual and compositional similarities.[3] At first glance, the circulation of a variety of Japanese objects and screens within

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Cheng-Sheng Lin, Xialing Liu, and Jorge Welsh for their help in the preparation of the manuscript.

**Please note that the derogatory term 'barbarian,' which is used throughout the paper, refers to a historical concept that was employed by the Sino-centric perspective to label non-Han ethnic groups. The term does not carry any additional contemporaneous cultural or political implications.

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1. W. De Kesel and Greet Dhont, *Coromandel Lacquer Screens* (Ghent: Snoeck-Ducaju & Zoom, 2002), pp. 97–105.
2. The major scenes include the 'Han Palaces' and various types of palace scenes (also known as the 'Estate Celebration'), scholars' gatherings, birds and flowers, immortals, and landscape panoramas. See W. De Kesel and Greet Dhont, *Coromandel Lacquer Screens*, pp. 31–80; Ding Wenfu 丁文父, *Zhongguo gudai xiuqi jiaju: shi zhi shiba shiji zhengju de yanjiu* 中國古代髹漆家具：十至十八世紀證據的研究 (Lacquered Chinese Furniture: Research Based on Examples from the 10–18th Centuries) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe 文物出版社 [Cultural Relics Press], 2012), pp. 270–273.
3. The term 'Southern Barbarian Screen' refers to an extensive corpus of folding screens produced primarily by Kanō school masters in the greater Kyoto region between the 1590s and 1650. These screens carried auspicious symbolism, reflecting Japan's encounter with Portuguese and Southeast Asian traders, known as *nanban* (literally, 'southern barbarians'), who arrived via Kyushu and the southern islands and brought continental goods. See Yukio Lippit, "Japan's Southern Barbarian Screens," in Jay Levenson, Diogo Curto, and Jack Turner, eds., *Encompassing the Globe: Portugal and the World in the 16th and 17th Centuries*, vol. 3 (Washington D.C.: Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, 2007), pp. 244, 247–251. Representative studies linking Dutch-themed Coromandel screens to Nanban screens are abundant. Notable examples include Kee Il Choi Jr., "Japan and Design in Early Chinese Export Art," *Magazine Antiques*, vol. 158 (2000), pp. 336–345; and "A Chinese Porcelain 'European-subject' Baluster Vase and Its Export Design Context," *Oriental Art*, vol. XLVIII, no. 1 (2002), pp. 17–22; W. De Kesel and Greet Dhont, *Coromandel Lacquer Screens*, pp. 81–84; Luísa

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Chinese households during this period of thriving East Asian maritime exchange lends support to this assumption.[4] This paper, however, challenges the prevailing view that these Dutch-themed screens copied their Japanese counterparts.

Against the backdrop of the Qing opening of maritime trade, the existing corpus of the Dutch-themed screens presents a compelling puzzle. In particular, the factors behind the rise of such novel iconography, including historical events, pictorial sources, social conditions, and agents, remain understudied, primarily due to the scarcity of examples and what we refer to as 'standard pieces' with clear references to dates and places of production. Close analysis of newly discovered examples reveals that their visual parallels instead derive from shared Ming-Qing pictorial vocabularies employed by professional painters, printmakers, porcelain decorators, and lacquer artisans across China's southeast coast.

Through examination of pictorial details and carving techniques, the paper firstly proposes a developmental sequence in which Dutch tropes were woven into a shared, cross-media visual program. A handful of dated 'standard pieces' of screens (either

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Vinhais and Jorge Welsh, eds., *Art of the Expansion and Beyond* (London: Jorge Welsh Books, 2009), pp. 94–102; Jorge Welsh, "Biombo / Screen," in Alexandra Curvelo et al., *Encomendas Namban: Os Portugueses no Japao da Idade Moderna / Namban Commissions: The Portuguese in Modern Age Japan* (Lisboa: Fundação Oriente, 2010), pp. 215–218; Joan Hornby, *Chinese Lacquerware in the National Museum of Denmark* (Copenhagen: The National Museum of Denmark, Narayana Press, 2012), pp. 204–205; Tamara H. Bentley, "Barbarian Tropes Framed Anew: Three Qing Dynasty Chinese Lacquer Screens of Europeans Hunting," in Tamara H. Bentley, ed., *Picturing Commerce in and from the East Asian Maritime Circuits, 1550–1800* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019), pp. 258–263; and most recently, Alexandra Curvelo, "Europeans Paying Tribute on a *Kuancai* Screen: Representing Otherness in Early Modern China," in Luísa Vinhais and Jorge Welsh, eds., *Unfolding Stories: The Dutch Tribute and West Lake Kuancai, so-called Coromandel, Lacquer Screen* (London: Jorge Welsh Research & Publishing, 2025), pp. 92–95.

4. In 1567, fourteen Japanese screens of various types were seized from the Senior Grand Secretary Yan Song's 嚴嵩 (1480–1567) household. See Wu Mei-feng 吳美鳳, "Zhongshi zenghua de Ming gongting luodian qizuo – Cong yijian yuanlin shinü tu qian luodian heiqi pingfeng tanqi 踵事增華的明宮廷螺鈿漆作—從一件園林仕女圖嵌螺鈿黑漆屏風談起 (Ming Imperial Mother-of-Pearl Lacquer: A Study of a Black Lacquer Screen with Garden Ladies)," *Zijincheng* 紫禁城 (Forbidden City), no. 3 (2015), p. 108. See further Yiwen Li, "Useless Tribute, Desirable Exotics: Japanese Folding Fans in China, 1000–1500," *Sungkyun Journal of East Asian Studies*, vol. 21, no. 1 (2021), pp. 27–49.

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supported by their inscriptions or archival presences) suggest that two production centers, likely active in the last two decades of the seventeenth century, view southern kilns in this endeavor. More significantly, the paper reveals a key distinction: while the 'Southern Barbarian Screens' placed far greater emphasis on themes of equal trade and continental commodities, these Chinese screens cast the Dutch seafarers in a distinctly martial role. Depictions of equestrian skill, firearms, fortifications, and 'barbaric' customs such as hunting and eating raw meat, among others, essentially conflated China's historical nomadic memory with new threats coming by sea. Whether portraying the Dutch parading, hunting, or presenting tributes, their visual presence transcended decorative trends, emerging alongside the Qing pacification of the south and the establishment of new maritime frontiers. Lastly, the paper contends that lacquer artisans, adapting to post-conquest realities, reconfigured these iconographies to equate the Dutch seafarers with Manchu warriors—a visual rhetoric that reinforced an early Qing pro-nomadic turn. These militarized representations served a dual purpose: they affirmed nomadic cultural values while simultaneously projecting an imperial order onto what Qing officials envisioned as the 'calm sea' of conquered waters.

I. Beyond the Nanban: Forging a Dutch Realm through Chinese Eyes

Our discussion begins with two screen halves in Portuguese collections that, we believe, offer the potential to trace the origin of this visual trend. They were previously separated, yet after being reunited in 2010 for an exhibition in Lisbon, the screen reveals a compelling panoramic landscape featuring European figures.[5] This screen **(**hereafter: *Lisbon Screen*, **Fig. 1)** is at the center of discussion for several reasons, but

5. While the screen's right half was sold by Ellsworth & Goldie, New York, to the Anna Moffo Sarnoff Estate in 2009 and is now in the Museu do Oriente in Lisbon, its left half remains in the Renato de Albuquerque Collection, Sintra. See Luísa Vinhais and Jorge Welsh, *Art of the Expansion and Beyond*, pp. 88–105; Jorge Welsh, "Biombo / Screen," pp. 215–218; Alexandra Curvelo, "Europeans Paying Tribute on a *Kuancai* Screen: Representing Otherness in Early Modern China," pp. 88–96.

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particularly due to its unique materiality and composite design, which, if not the earliest, is certainly one of the earliest lacquer prototypes. A close inspection reveals a striking fact: the screen's entire surface shows no visible traces of carving but was instead painted with color pigments infused with a lacquer-tung oil mixture, while maintaining the typical twelve-panel format and multi-layered bordering characteristic of the Coromandel screens. Though insufficient for a precise date, this finding accounts for the composition's remarkable singularity. As the following paragraph reveals, the *Lisbon Screen* potentially represents an early experimental attempt by the lacquer artisans and thus retains an 'archaic' quality before standardized templates were deployed for reworking and copying.

What message is conveyed in the grandeur of this view? Zooming into the central image reveals a thematic center through the figures' multidirectional movements and distinctive topography. Converging from all directions, the grotesque European figures march toward an isolated landmass, with one side surrounded by water. The sense of barbarism and distance is further accentuated by the oversized and oddly shaped tree canopies, rugged rocks, distant peaks, and billowing clouds. A European gentleman, slicing a deer leg on a table (on the waterfront opposite the bridge) and surrounded by servants bringing raw meat, adds a customary touch to the rustic lifestyle.[6]

Adding to this alien ambiance, a grand tent, a temporary structure historically linked to China's nomadic neighbors, forms a striking contrast to the refined cityscape appearing on the screen's upper-left corner.[7] Comparison with *The Veritable Records of the Manchus* **(***Manzhou shilu* 滿洲實錄; Manchu. *Manju-i yargiyan kooli*; **Fig. 2)** enables identification of the tent as a 'squared military tent' (Ma: *cacari*), positioned in

6. The meat-slicing scene also appears on the *Lisbon Screen*'s 'twin copy.' See Edward F. Strange, *Chinese Lacquer* (New York: Scribner, 1926), pp. 52–53, pl. XXXIV.

7. A 'twin screen,' likely produced within the closest circle of the *Lisbon Screen* but surviving as a non-continuous fragment, implies that the grand narrative included a maritime journey from a walled city to a rocky, tree-covered landmass that features a similar Mongolian-style *ger*. Edward F. Strange, *Chinese Lacquer*, pp. 52–53, pl. XXXIV, suggests that the walled city represents Macau, but this assertion seems groundless.

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front of a Mongolian *ger* and designated for military or ceremonial uses.[8] The structure shows a hip roof over a rectangular layout and relies on wooden poles and guy ropes, which distinguishes it notably from the conical ceiling and felt-covered walls of a Mongolian *ger*.[9] The sense of ephemerality, in contrast to the solid built environment of the Central Plains, was widely addressed in a multitude of Ming festive and battle scenes set against the Sino-nomadic confrontations.[10] Thus, the appearance of the tent here formed the most immediate and pervasive impression of the steppe nomads.

On the *Lisbon Screen*, an array of details further supports the grand tent as a power center in this realm. With a commanding presence, a European figure sits prominently on a stool at the center, engaging in conversation with his subordinates and servants **(Fig. 3; Plate 1)**. While his European subordinates have respectfully removed their hats, the central figure wears a fine cloak,[11] a symbol of his superior status, and a broad-brimmed hat decorated with an embroidered border and a red bow. What sets his attire

8. Jerry Norman, *A Comprehensive Manchu-English Dictionary* (Cambridge [Mass.] and London: Harvard University Press, 2013), p. 50; Lin Chi-lynn 林頎玲, "Qianlong de yidong gongdian: Qinggong zhi 'Menggubao' yanjiu 乾隆的移動宮殿—清宮製「蒙古包」研究 (Qianlong's Movable Palace: A Study on "Mongolian Yurts" Made in the Qianlong Court)," (Master's thesis, Guoli Taibei yishu daxue 國立臺北藝術大學 [Taipei National University of the Arts], 2016), pp. 16–19, 31–36. In Ming prints depicting historical tales, nomadic figures were often shown seated in a tent, such as Wanyan Chen Heshang 完顏陳和尚 (1192–1232), a Jurchen military officer who defeated the Mongol troops in 1229. See Wang Tingne 汪廷訥, *Renjing yangqiu* 人鏡陽秋 (Mirror for Conduct of Life from History) (printed 1600), *juan* 14, pp. 15–16.
9. For the *ger*'s wall structure, see Lin Chi-lynn, "Qianlong de yidong gongdian: Qinggong zhi 'Menggubao' yanjiu," pp. 13–16, 19–21, 40–41, 62.
10. Well-known examples include the scroll of the *Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute* (*Hujia shiba pai* 胡笳十八拍; hereafter: *Eighteen Songs*). This contrast can be seen in the scroll kept in the Nanjing Museum, stanza 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13 (*ger* and tent), stanza 17 (walled city). See Nanjing bowuyuan 南京博物院, ed., *Hujia shiba pai* 胡笳十八拍 (The Eighteen Songs of a Nomad Flute) (Shanghai: Renmin meishu chubanshe 人民美術出版社, 1961), pp. 3–10, 12–13, 17. See also the late-sixteenth-century painting commemorating the Ming official Wu Dui's 吳兌 (1525–1596) success in managing the Mongols, kept in the Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena. For Wu's contributions to the Ming's border defense, see Kang Ruifang 康瑞芳, "Wu Dui yu Ming Meng bianfang 吳兌與明蒙邊防 (Wu Dui and the Ming-Mongolian Border Defense)," (Master's thesis, Neimenggu daxue 內蒙古大學 [Inner Mongolian University], 2012), pp. 11–36.
11. For the use of cloak in the Netherlands during the seventeenth century, see Aileen Ribeiro, *Clothing Art: The Visual Culture of Fashion, 1600–1914* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), p. 126.

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apart from European fashion is the inclusion of a sizable, embroidered badge featuring a four-clawed dragon, commonly known as the python robe, worn either by members of the Chinese imperial family or officials or kings of foreign countries subject to China.[12]

Jorge Welsh identifies these European tropes as Dutch, given the consistency of their sartorial details and their hair color (some of which is red), all of which align with seventeenth-century sources.[13] A thorough examination of the visual sources confirms their stylistic conformity with the contemporary attire of Dutch merchants in East Asian waters. Besides the cravat (mistaken for a type of shoulder-covering scarf), the figures are portrayed in thigh- and knee-length coats with short, buttoned sleeves that form a pair of wings, paired with black felt hats, knee breeches, puttees, and heels typical of Dutch fashion at that time.[14] Porcelain figures dressed in long-sleeved coats with felt hats and scarves around their necks, produced in Jingdezhen 景德鎮 (Jiangxi province)[15] and Dehua 德化 (Fujian province)[16] around 1700, suggest a shared iconography among the southern kilns. More strikingly, the posture of the Dehua porcelain figure **(Fig. 4)**, sitting with one knee bent, presents a counterpart to those shown on the screen; this posture is most notably found in porcelain sculptures of deities, such as Guanyin 觀音 and Zhenwu 真武, produced in Dehua.[17]

12. Sophie Volpp, *The Substance of Fiction: Literary Objects in China, 1550–1775* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2022), pp. 29–31.
13. Luísa Vinhais and Jorge Welsh, *Art of the Expansion and Beyond*, pp. 93–94.
14. The family portrait of Pieter Knoll (d. 1671), a VOC merchant based in Batavia, shows him in similar attire made of black satin. See Aileen Ribeiro, *Clothing Art: The Visual Culture of Fashion, 1600–1914*, pp. 117–118, 125–128.
15. Kee Il Choi Jr., "A Chinese Porcelain 'European-subject' Baluster Vase and Its Export Design Context," pp. 21–22.
16. Patrick Joseph Donnelly, *Blanc de Chine: The Porcelain of Têhua in Fukien* (London: Faber & Faber, 1969), pl. 116A. A similar porcelain figurine in the Peabody Essex Museum suggests that this type of Dehua ware was mass-produced. See William R. Sargent, *Treasures of Chinese Export Ceramics: From the Peabody Essex Museum* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 212. A painting by a Fujianese painter showing a Dutchman in the same posture, dated 1738, is kept in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. See the discussions in Klaas Ruitenbeek, "Westerlingen in de achttiende-eeuwse Chinese kunst," *Aziatische Kunst*, vol. 20, no. 4 (1990), pp. 10–22.
17. I thank Caroline van Eck for sharing this observation with me, and James C. S. Lin for providing me with the example of a porcelain Zhenwu with a bent leg, kept in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, acc. no. C.149-2010.

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While various types of Asian textiles were known to have been incorporated into the attire of Dutch East India Company (VOC) officials,[18] the garments on the screen might have been the artisan's invention. More persuasively, the floral, striped, and checkered fabrics **(Fig. 5)** were taken from the diverse brocade patterns found in Ming-Qing paintings, prints, lacquerware, and porcelain.[19] These patterns not only implied the value of the brocades but also underscored the status of their wearers, as seen in the court figures featured in commercial paintings **(Fig. 6)**. Among these designs, the octagonal honeycomb pattern, which can also be found in the Dutch central figure's stool, seems to have derived from Song-style brocade. As Wan Chui-ki Maggie noted, the production of this pattern reached its peak during the 1670–1680s and was first applied to *famille verte* porcelain manufactured in Jingdezhen.[20]

Behind the central figure, a large roll of fabric is unfurled like a temporary screen, further revealing its roots. Its presence accentuates the indisputably high status of the figure, given that a screen's function is to demarcate a space and establish a place that belongs exclusively to its owner.[21] From the turn of the seventeenth century onward, woodblock prints and blue-and-white porcelain often depicted military or nomadic

18. Marsely L. Kehoe, "Dutch Batavia: Exposing the Hierarchy of the Dutch Colonial City," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art*, vol. 7, no. 1 (Winter 2015), pp. 1–2.
19. Wang Kaibiao 王凱飆 and Fei Bo 費博, "Diaoqi jingwen yanjiu 雕漆錦紋研究 (Study on the Brocade Pattern of the Carved Lacquerware)," *Zhongguo shengqi* 中國生漆 (Journal of Chinese Lacquer), vol. 43, no. 1 (March 2024), p. 12.
20. Wan Chui-ki Maggie 尹翠琪, "Songjin zhi xiang: Shiba shiji Guangdong falang yu waixiaoci de bafang jinwen 宋錦之象：十八世紀廣東琺瑯與外銷瓷的八方錦紋 (Image of Song-Style Brocade: Honeycomb Octagonal Pattern on Canton Enamels and Export Porcelain of the 18th Century)," *Guoli Taiwan daxue meishushi yanjiu jikan* 國立臺灣大學美術史研究集刊 (Taida Journal of Art History), no. 48 (2020), pp. 166–185.
21. Sun Ji 孫機, *Handi wuzhi wenhua ziliao tushuo* 漢代物質文化資料圖說 (Illustrated Explanations of the Material Culture of the Han Dynasty) (Beijing: wenwu chubanshe 文物出版社 [Cultural Relics Press], 1991), pp. 226–227; Yang Zhishui 揚之水, "Xingzhang yu guazhou 行障與掛軸 (The 'Buzhang' Hanging and Hanging Scroll)," *Zhongguo lishi wenwu* 中國歷史文物 (Journal of National Museum of China), no. 5 (2005), pp. 65–72. This type of hanging—sometimes also stretched between two spears—can be found in woodblock prints produced in Jian'an 建安 (Fujian) during the Mongol Yuan period (1271–1368). See Anonymous, *Sanguozhi pinghua* 三國誌平話 (The Plain Tale of the Three Kingdoms) (c. 1321–1313) [Tokyo: National Diet Library, 重002-0002], sq. 22, 42, 49, 65.

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figures, such as Kublai Khan (1215–1294) or the Tang rebel leader An Lushan 安祿山 (703–757, **Fig. 7)**, within similar curtained spaces in outdoor environments.[22] As an established rhetoric, the temporary and movable nature of stretched hangings implies An's Sogdian and Göktürk origins.

If a power center can be sustained, what do the other parts of the realm contribute to the *Lisbon Screen*'s central theme? Emerging from the remote city, a faction forms a procession **(Fig. 8)** heading toward the grand tent. Notably, the procession's organization loosely adheres to the imperial ceremonial regalia.[23] At its core are three chariots of varying types and ranks, accompanied by cavalrymen and guards carrying banners and flags.[24] At the far end of this festive parade, a trumpeter enhances the vibrant, bustling

22. This type of hanging appeared in nearly every printed Ming-Qing drama book involving battle scenes. In the collection of Julia and John Curtis, there are two porcelain pieces featuring the motif of striped tents: One is a shallow blue-and-white bowl (Lot 3525) dated to ca. 1643, depicting the meeting of Emperor Wen of Han (Han Wendi 漢文帝, 180–157 BC) with the military general Zhou Yafu 周亞夫 (?–143 BC) at a frontier garrison defending against a Xiongnu attack. The other is a shallow blue-and-white bowl (Lot 3566), dated between 1662 and 1670, which portrays a scene on a mountainside where Kublai Khan is seated in a curtained tent with the son and wife of a Khitan aristocrat who pledged allegiance to the Mongol empire; see Christie's, *An Era of Inspiration: 17th-Century Chinese Porcelains from the Collection of Julia and John Curtis* (New York: Christie's, Manson & Woods International Inc., 2015), p. 132. See further, Wang Tingne, *Renjing yangqiu*, *juan* 5, pp. 32–33; *juan* 4, pp. 9–10 (Xiongnu). In episode XXVIII of *Fengshen Yanyi* 封神演義, which depicts the capture of a Shang official, King Wen of Zhou (Zhou Wenwang 周文王, r. 1100–1050 BC) and his strategist Jiang Ziya 姜子牙 (fl. 12th–11th century BC) are portrayed seated majestically in front of a similar hanging. See Anonymous, *Fengshen yanyi* 封神演義 (Investiture of the Gods) [BNF Chinois 4054], *juan* 6, pp. 28v–39r.

23. Jing Xie, "Disembodied Historicity: Southern Song Imperial Street in Hangzhou," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, vol. 75, no. 2 (June 2016), pp. 186–190; Chen Fang 陳芳, "*Dajia lubu tushu* zhong 'wu' de shengehua ji xiangzhengxing xitong 《大駕鹵簿圖書》中「物」的神格化及象徵性系統 (The Deification and Symbolic System of "Things" in the Illustrations of Imperial Regalia of the Grand Carriage)," *Meishu daguan* 美術大觀 (Art Panorama), vol. 10 (2024), pp. 32–37.

24. It was common practice in Chinese rituals to use both a long banner strip (*pei* 旆) and a military flag (*yu* 旟) with horizontal stripes together as accompaniments to a vehicle, see Weng Lianxi 翁連溪 and Liu Yu 劉禹, eds., *Ouzhou Fengshi cang Zhongguo gudai banhua congkan* 歐洲馮氏藏中國古代版畫叢刊 (The Von der Burg Collection of Ancient Chinese Painting) (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe 文物出版社 [Cultural Relics Press], 2020), vol. 11, pp. 228, 233. These types of banners and flags were also known in the seventeenth-century Dutch sources, such as Olfert Dapper, *Gedenkwaerdig bedryf der Nederlandsche Oost-Indische maetschappye, op de kuste en in het keizerrijk van Taising of Sina […]* (Amsterdam: J. van Meurs, 1670), fig. 2 after 458 (Merken der Mandaryns), p. 459.

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atmosphere. What sets the scene apart from an imperial parade is the figures mounted on *qilins* and guardian lions **(Fig. 9)** at the forefront. While lion riders were often depicted as non-Chinese figures, such as bearded Central Asians, the Dehua porcelain copies of a Dutch lion rider **(Fig. 10)** with a veiled woman are particularly striking.[25] In the latter, the Dutchman is again depicted sitting with one leg bent, while the woman's leaning posture, suggesting emotional companionship, echoes the figure of the woman on the lacquer screen. These supernatural creatures are absent from the secular procession paintings, suggesting the screen's roots in contemporary schemata applied to religious contexts.

This paper argues that the portrayal of the Dutch procession recapitulated a long-established pathos formula for depicting power, in which boundaries between religious and secular authority became blurred.[26] Surviving examples are abundant, particularly the monumental mural at the Dai Temple (Daimiao 岱廟) in Tai'an 泰安, Shandong. It portrays the processions of the Emperor of the Eastern Peak **(**Dongyue dadi 東嶽大帝, **Fig. 11)**. Within the murals, *qilin* and lion riders are depicted as armed warriors and barbaric tribute bearers, carrying light-emitting vases, who precede the

25. A Jingdezhen-made porcelain figurine depicting a Dutchman playing with a lion has been discussed in Kee Il Choi Jr., "A Chinese Porcelain 'European-subject' Baluster Vase and Its Export Design Context," pp. 21–22.

26. Recent research suggests that processional scenes adhere to 'fixed, ready-made models,' reflecting a Confucian ideal of scholars' participation in state affairs. This tradition began in the Eastern Han period (25–220 CE), when tomb murals and stone carvings in central and northern China frequently depicted chariots, ceremonial rituals, animals, and musical performances. See Lian Chunhai 練春海, *Handai chema xingxiang yanjiu: yi yuli wei zhongxin* 漢代車馬形象研究——以御禮為中心 (A Study on the Depictions of Horses and Chariots during the Han Dynasty: Focusing on Charioteer Ritual) (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe 廣西師範大學出版社 [Guangxi Normal University Press], 2012), pp. 272–324; Doris Croissant, "Funktion und Wanddekor der Opferschreine von Wu Liang Tz'u: Typologische und ikonographische Untersuchungen," *Monumenta Serica*, vol. 23 (1964), pp. 149–151; Wu Min-min 吳旻旻, "Han huaxiangshi 'chema chuxing tu' zhi diguo xiangxiang 漢畫像石「車馬出行圖」之帝國想像 (The Imperial Imagination in Depictions of Journeys by Horse and Carriage in Han Dynasty Stone Reliefs)," *Hanxue yanjiu* 漢學研究 (Chinese Studies), vol. 28, no. 4 (December 2010), pp. 6–15; Kate A. Lingley, "Silk Road Dress in a Chinese Tomb: Xu Xianxiu and Sixth-Century Cosmopolitanism," *The Silk Road*, vol. 12 (2014), pp. 1–12; Wu Hung, *The Art of the Yellow Springs: Understanding Chinese Tomb* (London: Reaktion, 2010), pp. 102–106.

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Taoist deities and the mountain god sitting in his Jade Carriage. In each of the treasure vases carried by the elephants, one can see a red coral branch, gemstones of various colors, and a mystical beam of light – a typical rhetorical device for representing, if not tribute offerings, sacrificial offerings. Another example that often features deities atop mythical animals in a processional context can be found in the representations of the Three Ministers (*sanguan* 三官), who have been worshipped along the southeast coast since the Ming period, particularly in the Pearl River Delta and southern Fujian, particularly Zhangzhou 漳州.[27] The geographic proximity of the latter to the Dehua kilns well justifies the portrayal of the Dutch parade atop mythical beasts. This imagery constructs a dual portrayal of the Dutch as both supernatural and powerful, a shared Ming-Qing concept absent from the Japanese Nanban art.[28]

The seascape on the right side of the screen is anomalous **(Fig. 12; Plate 2)**. Although lacking accuracy in proportion, the vessels demonstrate features that align with our best knowledge of the VOC's ocean-going ships: One vessel, its sails furled, lies anchored in deep waters while small boats shuttle cargo and crew to the shore. In the far-

27. The cult of the Three Ministers holds great significance for Zhangzhou people and their migrants in Taiwan as patrons of hydraulic works. See Chen Chih-hao 陳志豪, "Qingdai Taiwan beibu de sanguan dadi xinyang yuanliu xiaokao: yi Xinzhu Xian Xinpu Zhen de Damaopu Sanyuangong weili 清代臺灣北部的三官大帝信仰源流小考——以新竹縣新埔鎮的大茅埔三元宮為例 (Research of Origin of Three Divine Officials Worship in Fengshan River Basin of North Taiwan: The Case of San-Yuan Temple in Damaopu, Xinpu Township, Hsinchu County During Qing Dynasty)," *Shida Taiwanshi xuebao* 師大臺灣史學報 (Bulletin of Taiwan Historical Research, NTNU), vol. 11 (December 2018), pp. 34–38; Wang Shiqing 王世慶, "Minjian xinyang zai butong zuji yimin de xiangcun zhi lishi 民間信仰在不同祖籍移民的鄉村之歷史 (A History of Folk Beliefs in Rural Communities of Immigrants from Different Ancestral Origins)," *Taiwan wenxian* 臺灣文獻 (Taiwan Historica), vol. 23, no. 3 (1972), pp. 12–13; David Faure, *Emperor and Ancestor: State and lineage in South China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), p. 199. Eighteenth-century reproductions suggest that scrolls of the Three Ministers by the Five Dynasties painter Lu Huang 陸晃 (ca. 929–936) were available in the Qing court. See Jean-Baptiste Clais, ed., *Une passion chinoise la collection de Monsieur Thiers* (Paris: RMN-Grand Palais, 2025), pp. 113–116. We also have a Southern Song (1127–1279) version that depicts two ministers traveling toward a center where the Heaven Official is represented as a seated figure, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, acc. no. 12.881.

28. An example of a folding fan featuring European hunting scenes and *qilin* beasts, dating to 1700–1730, can be seen in Craig Clunas, *Chinese Export Art and Design* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum, 1987), p. 96.

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off bay, two sailing vessels provide a visual counterpart to the walled cityscape opposite, suggesting this central landmass is accessible by water. With a raised aftercastle and a flat stern, the vessel at anchor resembles a three-masted, armed two-decker, falling within the category of a seventeenth-century Dutch *fluyt*.[29] The hull's raised bow and stern clearly distinguish it from the U-shaped cross-section of the Portuguese Carrack, which is characterized by its bulbous, oversized bow and high stern.[30] Beneath the forward-pointing mast, the artisans also meticulously detailed the beakhead, adorned with a lion figurehead featuring an oversized head, mane, and paws—a distinctive feature of seventeenth-century European cargo ships.[31] The beakhead's main rail includes three figures with exaggerated body movements, likely representing sculpted *putti* or Triton, both seen in European ship decoration.[32]

Further indicators for dating this vessel type include the round tops on the rigging, a characteristic trait of seventeenth-century design.[33] The artisans seemed to have studied Dutch vessels closely, as the view presents a nearly technical-level drawing.[34] Two crew members climbing toward the mainmast appear to be ensuring that the furled sails are tightly secured, perfectly capturing the moment when the vessel is at anchor. Unlike the caricature-like ship images found on other screens (see Chapter II), these renderings are enriched with astonishing accuracy, as if the artisans had seen a ship model firsthand or

29. Robert Parthesius, *Dutch Ships in Tropical Waters: The Development of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) Shipping Network in Asia 1595–1660* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), pp. 72–79.
30. For the visual representations of the Portuguese Carrack in Japan, see Kotaro Yamafune, "Portuguese Ships on Japanese Namban Screens" (Master's thesis, Texas A&M University, 2012), pp. 40–71.
31. The lion was the national emblem not only of Holland (appearing in red), but also England and Denmark, see Gordon de L. Marshall, *Ships' Figure Heads in Australia* (Kalamunda: Tangee Pty Ltd., 2003), p. 25.
32. John K. McCarthy, "Maritime Archaeology and 3D Digital Libraries: A Case Study of Dutch Merchant Ships (1595–1800)" (Ph.D. thesis, Flinders University, 2020), p. 375 (S10 'Hohenzollern,' built 1660).
33. John K. McCarthy, "Maritime Archaeology and 3D Digital Libraries: A Case Study of Dutch Merchant Ships (1595–1800)," pp. 120–121.
34. These include various types of masts, stays, small wooden disks for manipulating the rigging, and yards, particularly the presence of the mizzen (rearmost) mast rigged with a yard for the lateen sail.

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understood how the rigging functioned.[35] This precision can also be noted in the ship's aft section: while the stern design is obscured by the view, the square windows and a balcony flanked by two quarter figures (presumably Neptune and Venus) hint at the existence of a quarter gallery.[36]

Particularly intriguing is the bottle-like structure, likely representing the 'onion dome' of the quarter gallery. Above it, three cabinets with balusters indicate there was not only a gun deck but also an upper quarter deck.[37] At the stern, the presence of a spherical structure indicates that the ship was equipped with a lantern.[38] It is worth noting that a similar structure of a Dutch *fluyt* also appeared in Ferdinand Verbiest, S.J. (Nan Huairen 南懷仁, 1623–1688)'s world map; its accompanying text specifies the lantern's exact dimensions and glass-paneled construction.[39]

35. It was recorded that the Dutch embassy brought three models of Dutch ship to the Kangxi emperor in 1685–1687, see John E. Wills Jr., *Embassies and Illusions: Dutch and Portuguese Envoys to K'ang-hsi, 1666–1687* (Cambridge [Mass.]: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1984), pp. 155, 165, 253.
36. The combination of Neptune and Venus appeared often in the VOC printers' marks, see John Landwehr, *VOC: A Bibliography of Publications Relating to the Dutch East India Company 1602–1800* (Kyoto: Kikuo Shoten, 1991), pls. XXV–XXVI, XXXIII–XXXV, XXXVII–XXXVIII.
37. For an introduction to the Dutch stern design in the seventeenth century, see Andrew Peters, *Ship Decoration 1630–1780* (Barnsley: Seaforth Publishing, 2013), pp. 71–77.
38. Unlike its hexagonal shape, the *Lisbon Screen*'s spherical lantern appears unique, apparent no earlier than 1650. See Brian Lavery, *The Arming and Fitting of English Ships of War, 1600–1815* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1987), p. 255. Nick Ball and Simon Stephens, *Navy Board Ship Models* (Barnsley: Seaforth Publishing, 2018), pp. 75 (see the model "St Michael", 1669) and 76, indicates that the spherical lantern emerged around the mid-seventeenth century, but the introduction of the hexagonal form was dated to the beginning of the following century. For a hexagonal ship lantern, see the one kept in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, acc. no. NG-MC-1051.
39. Nan Huairen 南懷仁 (Ferdinand Verbiest S. J.), *Kunyu quantu* 坤輿全圖 (Universal Map of the World) (printed 1674) [BNF, Chinois 9231], scroll 4. The inscriptions read "舶後尾樓 / 夜點燈籠照視 / 燈籠周二丈四尺 / 高一丈二尺 / 皆玻璃板湊成 / At the stern of the ship, there was a rear deckhouse where lanterns were lit at night for illumination. The lanterns were 2 *zhang* and 4 *chi* (approx. 852 cm) in circumference and 12 *chi* (approx. 426 cm) in height, all made of glass panels." [translation by the author] Verbiest's text was largely relied on Ai Rulüe 艾儒略 (Giulio Aleni S. J.), *Zhifang waiji* 職方外紀 (A Record of [Countries] beyond the Imperial Geographer's Vision) (printed 1623, Taipei: Commercial Press, 1966).

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Not depicted on the Japanese 'Southern Barbarian Screens' is the small orchestra positioned atop the poop deck, which the Chinese mistook for a temporary pergola.[40] Among the trio of musicians, the presence of a trumpeter appears to echo a seventeenth-century Dutch tradition: VOC vessels often travelled with one or more trumpeters on board, responsible for communication among the fleet ships, the commander, and the crew.[41] A contemporary Dutch source confirms that the J-shaped trumpet was a type of Chinese copper or brass horn (*zhajiao* 札角).[42] Along with the flute and clapper, it was used for Ming-Qing imperial banquets and festival processions.[43] It is more than a mere coincidence that a Dehua porcelain figure in the British Museum likewise depicts a Dutch figure playing clappers **(Fig. 13)**. Taking these details into account, it seems

40. See the 1623 Jesuit description of the European ship's poop deck in Ai Rulüe, *Zhifang waiji*, p. 14: "尾建水閣，為納涼，以待貴者遊息 / At the end [of the ship's stern], a waterside pavilion was constructed for cooling off, in anticipation of the visits and rest of the esteemed guests." [translation by the author] On Chinese junks, this structure served as an officials' cabin (*guancang* 官艙) located on the middle upper deck, see Wang Guoping 王國平 and Liang Erping 梁二平, *Zhongguo gudai haizhan shi* 中國古代海戰史 (The History of Naval Battles in Ancient China) (Hong Kong: Sanlian shudian 三聯書店 [Joint Publishing], 2022), pp. 189–190.

41. Placing the orchestra on the poop deck would have aligned with the practice of assigning trumpeters a cabin near the captains, as they dined and socialized with the captain and other senior crew members. The ship trumpeters had various duties, including signaling during foggy conditions and low visibility and announcing arrivals and departures at ports, with over half of the outward-bound VOC ships having at least one trumpeter, see more in Ralph Henssen, "The Use of Trumpet on Board Ships of the Dutch East India Company," *International Trumpet Guild Journal* (January 2011), pp. 27–30. The trumpeter was recorded in Chinese sources, such as: Ai Rulüe, *Zhifang waiji*, p. 142: "吹掌號頭 / 指使夫役 / 探試淺水礁石 / 以定趨避 / The trumpeter gave signals to the laborers, directing them to probe the shallow waters and reefs to determine the course to take." [translation by the author] A similar musical group can further be observed in a Japanese votive painting showing a Dutch VOC *yacht* from around 1653. See Michiko Fukaya, "Depictions of Dutch Ships in Dutch and Japanese Paintings of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in Benjamin Schmidt and Thijs Westeijn, eds., *The Globalization of Netherlandish Art* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2025), pp. 143–145, 159–160.

42. Olfert Dapper, *Gedenkwaerdig bedryf der Nederlandsche Oost-Indische maetschappye, op de kuste en in het keizerrijk van Taising of Sina […]*, fig. 2 after p. 458 (Merken der Mandaryns), p. 459. A comparable, nineteenth-century J-shaped horn can be found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, acc. no. 89.4.2339.

43. Wan Yi 萬依, "Minggong yinyue yuanliu kao 明宮音樂源流考述 (On the Origin of the Ming Court Music)," *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 (Palace Museum Journal), vol. 1 (1995), pp. 117–118.

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plausible that the *Lisbon Screen*'s seagoing ships are akin to those of mid-seventeenth-century Dutch Indiamen, yet reinterpreted through a Chinese eye.[44] Meanwhile, the undeniable iconographic consistency between the figures depicted on the lacquer screen and those rendered in porcelain – including lion riders, female attendants, and clapper-playing musicians – suggests at least geographical proximity, if not temporal simultaneity, within an inter-artisanal exchange.

While the exact source remains unknown, these details propose a close encounter between the Dutch fleets and Chinese artisans. A painting of Fuzhou 福州 harbor, believed to document Vincent Paets' (1658–1702) visit, corroborates Chinese eyewitness accounts of a Dutch vessel.[45] It captures a detailed view of a *fluyt* named Montfoort **(Fig. 14)**, which was anchored in the Dinghai 定海 Bay from 1685 to 1687.[46] Although the vessel's image appears small, its accuracy reveals intricate details, such as the lion figurehead, a trumpeter and his fellow musicians, and the spherical lantern atop the stern.

Another lacquer screen of similar size and composition, previously owned by the Rothschild Collection **(**hereafter: *Rothschild Screen*, **Fig. 15)**, stands out as a testament to the artisans' eyewitness account of a real Dutch *yacht*, with only a few misinterpreted motifs. Highlighted in gold paint, consistent with the Dutch convention of emphasizing stern sculptures, the ship's stern **(Fig. 16a; Plate 3)** features a row of half-naked, horned

44. The vessels bear structural similarities to the N16 model (*Salamander*) and the *Prins Willim* (built 1651), despite the distinction that the latter two were single-decked vessels. See John K. McCarthy, "Maritime Archaeology and 3D Digital Libraries: A Case Study of Dutch Merchant Ships (1595–1800)," pp. 355–368 (S7 and S8).

45. Huang Zhongjie 黃忠傑, "Chengshi dijing yu huanyu maoyi: Amusitedan guoli bowuguan cang *Fuzhou chengtu* kaoshi 城市地景與寰宇貿易：阿姆斯特丹國立博物館藏《福州城圖》考識 (City Landscape and World Trade: Research on the View of City of Fuzhou in Rijksmuseum Amsterdam)," *Zhuangshi* 裝飾 (Art & Design), no. 5 (2019), pp. 84–87; Karina H. Corrigan, Jan van Campen, Femke Diercks, and Janet C. Blyberg, eds., *Asia in Amsterdam: The Culture of Luxury in the Golden Age* (Salem [Mass.]: Peabody Essex Museum, Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 2015), pp. 66–71.

46. Montfoort was a 540-ton *fluyt* sailed from Batavia to Fuzhou in July 1685 and returned in May 1687. See further Weichung Cheng, "Admiral Shi Lang's Secret Proposal to Return Taiwan to the VOC," in Tonio Andrade and Xing Hang, eds., *Sea Rovers, Silver, and Samurai: Maritime East Asia in Global History 1550–1700* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016), p. 303.

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figures resembling wooden sculptures of satyrs beneath a gallery with a Dutchman peeking out through a window and a large board flanked by a pair of satyrs serving as corner figures. More strikingly, in this view, the destructive power of the Dutch ship is made unmistakably visible through its eleven protruding cannon muzzles, highlighted with gold paint.

In seventeenth-century East Asian waters, Dutch commercial interests were invariably accompanied by warships and gunpowder. Given the numerous accounts of Sino-Dutch military conflicts, the inclusion of these vessels and their artillery appears well justified.[47] The VOC was known not only for their fortified trading posts in Penghu 澎湖 (the Pescadores Islands)[48] and later in southern Taiwan, but also for their coastal raids on the Chinese mainland, such as the 1622 raid of Fujian[49] and the 1665 assault on a Buddhist temple at Putuoshan 普陀山 (part of the Zhoushan 舟山 islands).[50] From

47. Two representative Ming records are cited in Huang Yi-long 黃一農, "Mingqing zhiji hongyi dapao zai dongnan yanhai de liubu jiqi yingxiang 明清之際紅夷大砲在東南沿海的流布及其影響 (The Spread of European Artillery along the Southeast Coast of China and its Influence during the Ming-Qing Transition)," *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院歷史語言研究所集刊 (Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology Academia Sinica), vol. 81, no. 4 (December 2010), p. 778: "[…] 其所乘舟高大如山 / 板厚三尺 / 不畏風濤 / 巨統長丈餘 / 一發可二三十里 / 當者輒碎 / 海上舟師逢之 / 皆辟易 / 莫敢與鬬; […] 皆置大銃外向 / 可以穿裂石城 / 震數十里 / 人船當之粉碎 / 是其流毒海上之長技有如此者 / [The ships] towered like mountains, with hulls three feet thick, undaunted by wind and waves. Their colossal cannons measured over ten feet long, capable of firing twenty to thirty li—anything struck would be shattered. Naval forces encountering them at sea would scatter in fear, none daring to engage; all [ships] were outfitted with heavy cannons facing outward, able to pierce through stone fortresses and shake the earth for dozens of li. Any person or vessel in their path would be pulverized—such was the devastating maritime prowess they wielded." [translation by the author]

48. At Magong 馬公 Harbor on the Penghu Islands, a location familiar to southern Fujian merchants and fishermen due to its role as a hub in the strait, the VOC built a four-bastion fort with forced Chinese labor. See James Wheeler Davidson, *The Island of Formosa, Past and Present. History, People, Resources, and Commercial Prospects. Tea, Camphor, Sugar, Gold, Coal, Sulphur, Economical Plants, and Other Productions* (London and New York: Macmillan & Co.; Yokohama: Kelly & Walsh, 1903), pp. 11–12.

49. In 1622, a Dutch fleet of more than a dozen ships sailed from the Penghu islands to raid the Fujian coastline, where they burned villages and destroyed Chinese junks. See Willem Ysbrantsz Bontekoe, C. B. Bodde-Hodgkinson and Pieter Geyl trans., *Memorable Description of the East Indian Voyage 1618–25* (New Delhi and Madras: Asian Educational Services, 1992), pp. 14–16.

50. Xing Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime East Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c. 1620–1720* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 154.

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the Chinese perspective, the Dutch were seen primarily as pirates rather than legitimate traders. During their prolonged struggle for maritime supremacy, their image became strongly associated with hilltop forts, armed cargo ships, cannons, and musketeers.[51] A Black Musketeer regiment, comprising many former slaves of the Dutch and Portuguese, was known to have played a decisive role in the 1661 capture of Casteel Zeelandia, the VOC's stronghold in present-day Anping 安平, southern Taiwan.[52] Through the depictions of multiple cannon muzzles and musketeers **(**shown alongside spears, wooden clubs, and swords, **Fig. 17a)**, the *Rothschild Screen* conveys a compelling impression of the VOC's maritime dominance in unequivocal terms. This leads us to argue that the portrayals of this 'barbaric' realm were inherently military rather than commercial in nature, as opposed to the Japanese screens' "harboring of expectations".[53] Instead, the two screens primarily evoke seventeenth-century Chinese perceptions of Dutch naval supremacy and advanced firearms in East Asian waters yet now subordinate to China, as suggested by the *Lisbon Screen*'s python robe and return gifts from the emperor.

II. Formidable yet Defeated: Cross-Strait Imagination of the Red-Haired Barbarians

Essentially, the *Lisbon* and *Rothschild Screens* are connected through their shared pseudo-ethnographic interest in framing the Dutch realm. The Dutch seafarers were depicted in a positive light as militarily advanced tribesmen, skilled in hunting yet inhabiting a remote valley accessible only by water. To trace the origin of this trope,

51. Eyewitness accounts of the Dutch musketeers were abundant, particularly during the Dutch occupation of Taiwan. See William Campbell, *Formosa under the Dutch: Described from Contemporary Records* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co. Ltd., 1903), pp. 280–230, 482–489.
52. Tobias R. Avalos, "The Black Gunners of Formosa," *International Journal of Military History and Historiography*, vol. 45 (2025), pp. 1–30.
53. Joachim Rees and Nora Usanov-Geissler, "Harbouring Expectations: The Littoral as Contact Zone in the Visual Arts of Japan and the Netherlands around 1600," in Karin Gludovatz, Juliane Noth, and Joachim Rees, eds., *The Itineraries of Art: Topographies of Artistic Mobility in Europe and Asia* (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2015), pp. 203–233.

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a much-debated lacquer screen, now kept in the National Museum of Copenhagen **(**hereafter: *Copenhagen Screen*, **Fig. 18)**, will be placed under scrutiny. It demonstrates a thematic flexibility by reorganizing Dutch tropes into a transoceanic journey – quite similar to the 'Southern Barbarian Screens', such as Kanō Naizen's 狩野内膳 (1570–1616) 'departure scene', yet with a different logic of maritime travel.[54] Besides the shared composition of a coastal landscape involving 135 figures of Dutch and their dark-skinned Southeast Asian companions, key narrative structures linking it to the *Lisbon Screen* include the juxtaposition between a dominant architectural presence and a distant cityscape **(Fig. 19a-d)**.

The *Copenhagen Screen* is a prime example of the experimental approach employed by lacquer artisans. To visualize a cross-strait journey, a set of interrelated spatial signifiers from right to left was implemented to evoke directional movement. The sequence begins with a walled compound offering an unobstructed interior view—an 'upgrade' from the *Rothschild Screen*'s standalone 'palace hall', now featuring both Chinese-style and seemingly European bell towers. A small orchestra, comprising a trumpeter playing a J-shaped horn and two string players positioned atop the towers, marks the building compound as the domain's ceremonial center.[55]

Notably, the *Rothschild Screen*'s longitudinal 'palace hall' (atypical of Chinese palatial architecture) and towering finials suggest inspiration from a widely distributed print of the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus. In Verbiest's *Kunyu tushuo* 坤輿圖說 **(***An*

54. The screen has been discussed in Joan Hornby, "Koromandellack," in Berliner Festspiele GmbH, ed., *Europa und die Kaiser von China* (Frankfurt a. M.: Insel Verlag, 1985), pp. 103, 114–115, 248; and *Chinese Lacquerware in the National Museum of Denmark*, pp. 204–205; W. De Kesel and Greet Dhont, *Coromandel Lacquer Screens*, pp. 81–83; So Yü-ming 索予明 and Chang Chih-hui 張志蕙, "Qingchu haijing renwu tu *kuancai* heiqi pingfeng 清初海景人物圖款彩黑漆屏風 (Black Lacquer *Kuancai* Screen with Maritime Figure Scenes, Early Qing Dynasty)," *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 故宮文物月刊 (The National Palace Museum Monthly of Chinese Art), no. 239 (2003), pp. 26–30; Tamara H. Bentley, "Barbarian Tropes Framed Anew: Three Qing Dynasty Chinese Lacquer Screens of Europeans Hunting," pp. 247–273.

55. An indoor wedding scene, with kneeling figures presenting gifts, suggests the compound's dual administrative and communal functions. See Joan Hornby, *Chinese Lacquerware in the National Museum of Denmark*, p. 204.

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Illustrated Explanation of Geography, **Fig. 20)**, the temple site was included as one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world.[56] Often discussed alongside this temple is the "Western Painting of a Distant View" **(***Xiyang yuanhua* 西洋遠画, **Fig. 21)**, a printed leaf of unknown origin included in a Chinese optical treatise.[57] This fictitious landscape features an elongated structure reminiscent of the Artemis temple, framed by a pair of towering trees typical of the Dutch landscape.[58] Scholars have noted that this composition offered Chinese audiences an extraordinary view of distant lands, accessible only through optical devices, thereby serving as a marketing strategy.[59] Here, the recurring presence of the Artemis temple points to a broader cultural fascination with foreign realms that emerged almost concurrently. While optical devices offered a privileged glimpse of remote European landscapes, the lacquer screens expand this vision into a full panorama, synthesizing all available sources into a new visual regime.

As the *Copenhagen Screen* unfolds, it reveals a European-style fortress (though less authentic in details), smaller and less intricate than the central palace hall. Its defensive function is conveyed through its hilltop topography, multi-storied cylindrical keep, towering stature, and crenelated walls. The progression culminates in a cityscape **(Fig. 19b)** with golden, palatial rooftops emerging from clouds at the screen's upper-left corner, similar to those on the *Lisbon Screen*. This ascending spatial arrangement, from

56. Anna Grasskamp has demonstrated that this image was taken from one of the Blaeu maps printed in Amsterdam. The same temple was also known in Edo Japan through Utagawa Kuninaga's 歌川国長 (1788–1829) printed sheet as a Dutch dwelling, see Anna Grasskamp, "EurAsian Layers: Netherlandish Surfaces and Early Modern Chinese Artefacts," *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin*, vol. 63, no. 4 (2015), pp. 366–369. In Blaeu's map and contemporary engravings, the finials were replaced by figural designs.

57. Sun Chengsheng 孫承晟, "Mingqing zhiji xifang guangxue zhishi zai Zhongguo de chuanbo jiqi yingxiang: Sun Yunqiu *Jingshi* yanjiu 明清之際西方光學知識在中國的傳播及其影響—孫雲球《鏡史》研究 (The Diffusion and Impact of Western Optical Knowledge in Late Ming and Early Qing: A Study of Sun Yunqiu's Jingshi)," *Ziran kexue shi yanjiu* 自然科學史研究 (Studies in the History of Natural Sciences), vol. 26, no. 3 (2007), pp. 363–376.

58. Anna Grasskamp, "EurAsian Layers: Netherlandish Surfaces and Early Modern Chinese Artefacts," pp. 370–371.

59. Kaijun Chen, "Transcultural Lenses: Wrapping the Foreignness for Sale in the *History of Lenses*," in Anna Grasskamp and Monica Juneja, eds., *EurAsian Matters: China, Europe, and the Transcultural Object, 1600–1800* (Cham: Springer, 2018), pp. 83–86.

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rugged landscapes to grand palaces, guides the viewer along the parade route toward the distant horizon. The procession itself, led by a Dutch cavalryman wearing a hat with pheasant-feathers (a visual trope used to denote barbarism or rebellion), advances toward anchored vessels. In contrast to the *Lisbon Screen*'s portrayal of a barbaric yet formidable realm, here diverse tribute goods—precious metals, ivory, coral, *lingzhi* mushrooms, exotic birds, and captive animals such as monkeys, tigers, lions/mastiffs, camels, or oxen—reinforce the journey's purpose as a tribute mission. A white elephant carrying an orchestra on its back evokes historical tropes of South Asian tribute bearers.[60]

Artisans experimented exhaustively with available sources to piece together a mosaic of the Dutch realm that would appeal to Chinese viewers. Over successive reworkings, however, the Dutch tropes, costumes, and vessel details became less accurate. Beginning with the *Copenhagen Screen*, portrayals grew increasingly generalized: the plumed hats, frilled collars, tight pantaloons, and breeches appear far less authentic than those on the *Lisbon Screen* (to which artisans may have had firsthand access or eyewitness accounts of the Dutch and their vessels). For instance, the Indiamen morph into peculiar, almost barbaric designs **(Fig. 16d)**; both the sharp elephant tusks appearing as beakheads and stern decorations and the protruding cannons continue to highlight the vessels' formidable power. Only the Dutch trumpeter and shipboard orchestra remained unchanged. These observations suggest that the *Copenhagen Screen* was based on pictorial reworkings rather than eyewitness accounts or actual encounters.[61]

60. One of the early medieval examples picturing an elephant orchestra with the South Asians is painted on a lute plectrum guard, now kept in the Shōsōin in Nara, Japan. See Michael Sullivan, *Chinese Landscape Painting, vol. 2: The Sui and T'ang Dynasties* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1980), pp. 127–128.

61. A 'twin' version of the screen, owned by Jorge Welsh Works of Art (hereafter: *Welsh Screen*), attests to the use of templates. See Valentina Bruccoleri, "The Dutch Tribute and West Lake *Kuancai*, so-called Coromandel, Lacquer Screen," in Luísa Vinhais and Jorge Welsh, eds., *Unfolding Stories: The Dutch Tribute and West Lake Kuancai, so-called Coromandel, Lacquer Screen* (London: Jorge Welsh Research & Publishing, 2025), pp. 108–142.

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The portrayal of the Dutch as tribute-presenting barbarians was shaped by China's collective memory of their steppe neighbors, a perception rendered obsolete by the Manchu ascension to China proper. Key insights into these Sino-centric narratives can be traced back to the seventeenth-century Suzhou prints, where elephants and lions (or mastiffs) were depicted as tributes associated with portrayals of historical barbaric peoples.[62] A single-sheet print by Wang Junfu 王君甫 (n.d.) was the earliest known example (around 1663) that exemplifies this prejudicial view's early existence as New Year's imagery by placing China at the core of an imagined world order.[63] Among caricatured vassals, a grotesque, hairy Dutchman offers tribute with an animal on his shoulder animal and a white gibbon, both emerging from a clouded grotto. Such motifs circulated widely via Suzhou's print networks, including a refined version, *Zhuguo jingong* 諸國進貢 **(**All States Bringing Tributes, **Fig. 22)** by Lü Yuntai's 呂雲台 (n.d.) studio.[64] The view appears compelling as it reorganizes the tribute parade into a cohesive journey through rugged terrain, linking a central grotto to an upper-right compound labeled '*jingcheng* 京城' (capital city). Two pointy-hatted Dutchmen pushing a gibbon-laden carriage anchor the scene. Though historically inaccurate—the Dutch never brought gibbons to China—the banner inscription claiming that white gibbons "can

62. Luo Maodeng 羅懋登, ed., *Sanbao taijian xia xiyang ji tongsu yanyi* 三寶太監下西洋記通俗演義 (The Popular Exposition of the Record of Eunuch Sanbao's Voyage to the Western Ocean) (1597), *juan* 2, 18r-v.

63. Wang Cheng-hua 王正華, "Qingdai chuzhongqi zuowei chanye de Suzhou banhua yu qi shangye mianxiang 清代初中期作為產業的蘇州版畫與其商業面向 (Art as Commodity: The Commercial Aspects of Suzhou Single-Sheet Prints in the Early and Middle Qing Dynasty)," *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* 中央研究院近代史研究所集刊 (Bulletin of the Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica), vol. 92 (June 2016), p. 11; Anita Xiaoming Wang, "Exploring the Jesuit Role in Early Qing Suzhou Prints," in Anne Farrer and Kevin McLoughlin, eds., *Handbook of the Colour Print in China 1600–1800* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2022), p. 181.

64. Xialing Liu, "Decoding the Screen Frame: The Names and Pattern Sources of Chinese Antiques on the Dutch Tribute and West Lake *Kuancai*, so-called Coromandel, Lacquer Screen's Frame," in Luísa Vinhais and Jorge Welsh, eds., *Unfolding Stories: The Dutch Tribute and West Lake Kuancai, so-called Coromandel, Lacquer Screen* (London: Jorge Welsh Research & Publishing, 2025), pp. 44–45.

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tell past and future" seems to have been derived from anomalous tales.[65] The parade, featuring exotic animals such as elephants and camels, along with the juxtaposition of the grotto and capital city, suggests a shared conceptual framework among the printmakers and lacquer artisans. Through their collaboration, the printed images of periodic offerings were revitalized through the arrival of Dutch seafarers, transforming them into a public display of auspiciousness akin to New Year's pictures, now on a monumental scale.

Which distant land was intended to be represented here: Holland, or another location where the VOC had a stronghold? During the seventeenth century, China's southeast coast saw vibrant Sino-European exchanges, initiated by the VOC as the major trading power.[66] Due to Ming China's maritime trade bans, the VOC were initially unable to establish direct, regular contact with the mainland.[67] Trade primarily relied on its trading outposts in Batavia, the Moluccas, and Taiwan, aside from occasional private trade following Dutch embassies.[68] A significant mediator in this trade was a group of (mostly southern Fujianese) merchants who established a junk trade network, connecting Batavia with Bantam, Nagasaki, Taiwan, and their hometown in southern Fujian; they cooperated with domestic merchants to sell silk, porcelain, and, later, lacquer screens (predominantly Coromandel lacquer) to the Europeans.[69]

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65. The characters on the banner read: "賀蘭國進白猿能知過去未來之事 / The Dutch State submitted white gibbons that can tell the past and the future." [translation by the author] It eventually ties to the anomalous tale, *Tale of the White Ape* (*Baiyuan zhuan* 白猿傳). See Wu Hung, "The Earliest Pictorial Representations of Ape Tales: An Interdisciplinary Study of Early Chinese Narrative Art and Literature," *T'oung Pao*, vol. 73, no. 1/3 (1987), pp. 91–92, 97.
66. For a short introduction into the Dutch engagement with China trade, see Donald F. Lach and Edwin J. Van Kley, *Asia in the Making of Europe* (Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), vol. 3, pp. 60–61.
67. Leonard Blussé, "No Boats to China. The Dutch East India Company and the Changing Pattern of the China Sea Trade, 1635–1690," *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 30, no. 1 (1996), pp. 51–76.
68. Tamara H. Bentley, "Barbarian Tropes Framed Anew: Three Qing Dynasty Chinese Lacquer Screens of Europeans Hunting," pp. 250–253.
69. See a detailed study on the Fujian merchants in the inter-Asian maritime trade in James K. Chin, "The junk trade and Hokkien merchant networks in maritime Asia, 1570–1760," in Tamara H. Bentley, ed., *Picturing Commerce in and from the East Asian Maritime Circuits, 1550–1800* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019), pp. 93–102.

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Trade patterns shifted in 1661–1662 when Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功 (1624–1662) and his clan-based regime ousted the VOC from their trading outpost in Taiwan, thereby monopolizing intra-Asian maritime trade.[70] The Casteel Zeelandia (built 1624–1634), constructed on the sandbar of the bay west of Tainan City, and a brick fortress named Fort Provintia (built 1653–1654) on the city's mainland side, were repurposed by the Zheng regime as a residence and administrative center, respectively, after the Dutch departure.[71] The dual positioning of these two sites, as reflected in seventeenth-century cartographic representations, seems to have been mirrored in the *Copenhagen Screen* as part of the Chinese understanding of the Dutch presence: the hilltop fortress was seemingly envisioned as, if not the Dutch fort at Penghu, the multiple-walled Casteel Zeelandia, and the fortified building compound as Fort Provintia.[72] This association seems plausible, as the view of the rugged landscape matched the Qing authorities' understanding of the Dutch presence in Taiwan, a place described as "[…] of deep mountains and vast marshes."[73] In local gazetteers, Fort Provintia **(Fig. 23)** is described

70. Weichung Cheng, "Linking the Visible Cities: The Chinese Junks Sailing between Nagasaki and Batavia (1665–1719)," *Historical Inquiry*, vol. 61 (2018), pp. 289–340; Yung-ho Ts'ao, "Taiwan as an Entrepôt in East Asia in the Seventeenth Century," *Itinerario*, vol. 21, no. 3 (1997), pp. 99–103.

71. John E. Wills Jr, "The Seventeenth-Century Transformation: Taiwan Under the Dutch and the Cheng Regime," in Murray A. Rubinstein, ed., *Taiwan: A New History* (Armonk, London: M.E. Sharpe, 1999), pp. 89–95. In fact, Fort Provintia, seen as a symbol of Dutch dominance and oppression, was among the first targets during Zheng's offensive. See Huang Dianquan 黃典權, "Chikanlou kao 赤嵌樓考 (A Study on the Chikan Tower)," *Tainan wenhua* 臺南文化 (Tainan Culture), vol. 8, no. 4 (1968), pp. 20–21.

72. Hsia Li-ming, "Guojia tongzhi yu zhishi shengchan: Qingdai Taiwan ditu de huizhi yu quyu fazhan 國家統治與知識生產：清代臺灣地圖的繪製與區域發展 (State Governing and Knowledge: Producing Mapping and Regional Development in Ching Dynasty Taiwan)," Xingda lishi xuebao 興大歷史學報 (Chung-Hsing Journal of History), vol. 15 (2004), pp. 39–60.

73. Lu Dingmei 魯鼎梅 and Wang Bichang 王必昌, eds., *Chongxiu Taiwan xianzhi* 重修臺灣縣志 (Revised Gazetteer of Taiwan County) (1752), *juan* 1: "臺灣古荒服地 / 未入中國版圖 […] 地多深山大澤 / 聚落星散 / 無君長 […] 嘉靖末 / 倭寇擾閩 / 大將戚繼光敗之 / 倭遁居於此 […] 至萬曆末 / 紅毛番泊舟於此 / 因事耕鑿 / 設閩闈 / 稱臺灣焉 / In ancient times, Taiwan was a wild and undeveloped land, not yet incorporated into China's territory [...] It was a place of deep mountains and vast marshes, with scattered villages and no unified ruler [...] In the late Jiajing period of the Ming dynasty, Japanese pirates raided Fujian, but General Qi Jiguang [1528–1588] defeated them, forcing the pirates to flee and settle here [...] By the late Wanli period, ships of the red-haired barbarians (the Dutch) anchored here, began cultivating the land, established markets, and named the area Taiwan." [translation by the author]

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as a prominent structure on the land, situated to the east of the turbulent waters. Two watchtowers, positioned to the north and south, highlight their defensive purpose, much like the towering Casteel Zeelandia atop the mountain.[74]

To those artisans who had never been to Taiwan, the representation of Fort Provintia remained largely obscure: its images either relied on Verbiest's illustration or appeared as a group of nomadic *ger* **(Fig. 24)**, as seen on a 1699 screen. The latter was commissioned for a Qing senior officer who had served as military commander of Nan'ao 南澳, a region near Zhangzhou (Fujian) of strategic importance in controlling the waterways to Taiwan. Guo Weiqi's study reveals that this map-like screen held significant political meaning for Qing coastal officials.[75] The depiction of earlier Dutch (and later, Zheng regime-repurposed) structures was tied to serious concerns about the shifting maritime order following the Qing conquest of Taiwan. To represent Fort Provintia as *ger* would convey a sense of foreignness. This depiction reminds us that behind all the Dutch-themed screens discussed above lay their strategic stronghold in southern Taiwan.

Finally, a customary detail that lends support to this assumption is the oxcart **(Fig. 25)**. This type of vehicle was introduced by the VOC and frequently appears in

74. Lu Dingmei 魯鼎梅 and Wang Bichang 王必昌, eds., *Chongxiu Taiwan xianzhi*, 20: "背山面海 / 與安平鎮赤嵌城對峙 / 以糖水糯汁搗蜃灰壘磚為垣 / 堅埒於石 / 週方四十五丈三尺 / 無雉堞 / 南北兩偶 / 瞭亭挺出 / 僅容一人站立 / 灰飾精緻 / 樓高凡三丈六尺有奇 / 雕欄凌空 / 軒豁四達 / 其下磚砌如巖洞 / 曲折宏邃 / [The structure] was nestled against the mountains and faced the sea, standing opposite Chikancheng (Casteel Zeelandia) in Anping Town. The walls of the building were constructed using a mixture of sugar water, glutinous rice juice, and lime mortar, making them as sturdy as stone. The entire structure has a circumference of 45 *zhang* and 3 *chi* (equal to 144.96 meters), with no battlements. At both the northern and southern ends, there was a watchtower, each only large enough for one person to stand in, and they were exquisitely decorated. The tower stood over 3 *zhang* and 6 *chi* tall (equal to 10.52 meters), with carved railings that seem to float in the air, offering open views on all sides. The brickwork below the tower resembles a cave, winding and deep […]." [translation by the author]

75. Weiqi Guo, "Mapping the Unfinished City: The Military Commander's Birthday Celebration Screen," in Foong Ping and Chelsea Foxwell, eds., *The Multivalent Screen: Materiality and Representation in East Asian Visual Culture* (Chicago: Art Media Resources, The Center for the Art of East Asia, University of Chicago, 2019), pp. 209–239.

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contemporary cartographic representations.[76] A multitude of contemporary records—particularly those by Wu Zhenchen 吳桭臣 (1664–?), who served under the Prefect of Taiwan—confirm that the oxcart was the primary vehicle used to transport goods from shuttle boats after they had been loaded from ships anchored near Casteel Zeelandia.[77] The artisans seemed to be familiar with such local customs, if not precise in their pictorial details.[78] It is thus intriguing that the *Copenhagen Screen* captures a moment of bustling transportation at Dajingtou 大井頭 Wharf, located on the mainland side of Tainan during the Kangxi period (1662–1722).[79]

If this interpretation holds, why did Dutch tropes become incorporated into a tribute context? In the second half of the century, when the VOC ceased sending vessels on a regular basis, Dutch embassies dispatched from Batavia approached China via Fuzhou. Five years after Zheng's defeat, in 1666, the Dutch again journeyed to the Chinese mainland in search of new opportunities. This diplomatic mission, carrying a wide range of gifts, including four Bengal oxen, four Persian horses, and dogs of various

76. Alongside the oxen brought by Han Chinese migrants, the Dutch VOC was known to have been a major agent in importing oxen to Taiwan from Fujian, the Penghu Islands, and India. See John Robert Shepherd, *Statecraft and Political Economy on the Taiwan Frontier, 1600–1800* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), pp. 366–367; Chen Kuo-tung 陳國棟, "Taiwan lishi shang de niuche: Cong Kangxi Taiwan Yutu tanqi 臺灣歷史上的牛車—從《康熙臺灣輿圖》談起 (On the Oxcarts in the History of Taiwan with References to the Kangxi Taiwan Map)," *Taiwan Natural Science* 臺灣博物季刊 (Taiwan Natural Science), vol. 34, no. 1 (2015), pp. 24–26. The Dutch VOC also introduced oxen from Bengal during its 1667 mission to Beijing. See Lennert Gesterkamp, "Heavenly Horses from Holland: A Tribute Painting of 'Dutch Attendants, Oxen, and Horses' at the Kangxi Court of 1667 and a Failed Dutch Embassy," *Taida Journal of Art History*, no. 48 (2020), pp. 98–107.

77. Chen Kuo-tung, "Taiwan lishi shang de niuche: Cong Kangxi Taiwan Yutu tanqi," p. 30 (see also other records in pp. 27–29): "紅毛城即今安平城 / 渡船往來絡繹 / 皆在安平赤崁二城之間 / 沙堅水淺 / 雖小艇不能達岸 / 必藉牛車挽之 / 赤崁城在郡治海岸 / 與安平城對峙 / The Fort of the Red-haired Barbarians (Casteel Zeelandia), known today as Anping Fort, was a busy ferry hub, with all traffic moving between it and Chikan (Fort Provintia). The shallow, sandy waters prevented even small boats from landing; oxcarts were needed to pull them ashore. Chikan, located on the coast of the prefectural seat, stood directly opposite Anping Fort." [translation by the author]

78. The tripartite wheel (made of three pieces of wood joined side by side) was indeed the primary structure used for oxcarts in Taiwan during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. See Chen Kuo-tung, "Taiwan lishi shang de niuche: Cong Kangxi Taiwan Yutu tanqi," p. 26.

79. The wharf was progressively farther from the shoreline and located within the wall after the city's Inner Sea silted up in the eighteenth century.

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colors, departed from Fuzhou and traveled along the east coast.[80] In Olfert Dapper's (1636–1689) *Gedenkwaerdig bedryf* (*Memorable Affairs*, 1670), an illustration **(Fig. 26)** reimagines the Dutch embassy's arrival at the Zhongzhou 中洲 Island in Nantai 南台, an area on the outskirts of Fuzhou, also known as the 'Dutch Harbor.'

The meeting between the Dutch delegation and Qing officials took place along the island's shoreline. With trumpeters playing nearby, the VOC ambassador Pieter van Hoorn (1619–?), who headed the embassy, and his entourage initiated the meeting with mutual deep bows. Oxen, horses, and bundled tribute items were being unloaded from smaller junks, since Dutch ships could not navigate the shallow waters. Despite the lively atmosphere, the bureaucratic challenges of their mission—endless negotiations with local officials, repeated checks on the cargo, and long waits for imperial permission that delayed transporting the animals and gifts for several months—were absent from this joyful scene.[81] In this context, the title 'King of Holland' arose in discussions about who had sent the embassy to China. Qing officials misunderstood the Dutch delegation's status, mistakenly believing they were representatives of a state rather than a trading

80. The embassy and its gifts were documented in a 1667 painting commissioned by the Kangxi emperor. See Ching-ling Wang, "Chinoiserie in Reflection: European Objects and their impact on Chinese Art in the Late Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in Matthias Weiß, Eva-Maria Troelenberg, and Joachim Brand, eds., *Wechselblicke. Zwischen China und Europa 1669–1907* (Berlin: Michael Imhof, 2017), pp. 52–53. For an in-depth discussion of this painting, see Lennert Gesterkamp, "Heavenly Horses from Holland: A Tribute Painting of 'Dutch Attendants, Oxen, and Horses' at the Kangxi Court of 1667 and a Failed Dutch Embassy," pp. 93–139; Jing Sun, "Curiosity and Authority: Images of Europeans at the Qing Court during the Kangxi and Yongzheng Reigns," in Thijs Weststeijn, ed., *Foreign Devils and Philosophers: Cultural Encounters between the Chinese, the Dutch, and Other Europeans, 1590–1800* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2020), pp. 255–258; Lin Faqin 林發欽, "Qingdai Helan shituan gongpin yu xifang keji, wenhua chuanhua 清代荷蘭使團貢品與西方科技、文化傳華 (Dutch Tributes to the Qing Dynasty: The Transmission of Western Culture and Technology to China)," *Aomen ligong xuebao* 澳門理工學報 (Revista da Universidade Politécnica de Macau [Humanities and Social Sciences]), no. 4 (2015), pp. 76–77.

81. John E. Wills Jr., *Embassies and Illusions: Dutch and Portuguese Envoys to K'ang-hsi, 1666–1687*, pp. 47–64.

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company.[82] Aside from these sporadic Dutch presences, as previously mentioned, the VOC fleets of the fourth embassy were anchored in the Dinghai Bay for nearly a year.[83] This extended stay, coinciding with the suggested timeframe of the Dutch-themed screens, provided the artisans with an opportunity to observe these colossal vessels.[84]

One might wonder whether the screens' cityscapes represent Fuzhou. Nevertheless, the absence of recognizable architectural or urban landmarks suggests that the cityscape is instead a generalized representation of a distant Chinese city—or perhaps even a symbolic capital city, akin to those found in prints **(Fig. 22; cf. also Figs. 19a-d)**. More precisely, the strong juxtaposition between the cultured center and the 'barbaric periphery' was achieved through visual rhetoric prevalent in Ming-Qing paintings and prints, aligning with the concept of the Sino-Barbarian Dichotomy, where barbaric realms and peoples were always situated at the empire's edges. Mobilizing a variety of gifts, including non-indigenous animals, elephant tusks, textiles, natural products, and European artifacts or scientific instruments, through the prosperous cultural metropoles in the Jiangnan area may have reinforced the impression that the Dutch were bringing tributes to China. Having seen the gifts brought by Paets' mission in Suzhou, a local Qing official named Gao Yilin 高一麟 (1635–1709) emphasized that their arrival

82. John E. Wills Jr., *Embassies and Illusions: Dutch and Portuguese Envoys to K'ang-hsi, 1666–1687*, pp. 52, 69–70; Lin Jinshui 林金水 and Xie Bizhen 謝必震, eds., *Fujian duiwai wenhua jiaoliu shi* 福建對外文化交流史 (History of Fujian's Foreign Cultural Exchanges) (Fuzhou: Fujian jiaoyu chubanshe 福建教育出版社 [Fujian Education Press], 1997), pp. 128 (King of Batavia), 129 (King of Holland).

83. John E. Wills, *Embassies and Illusions: Dutch and Portuguese Envoys to K'ang-hsi, 1666–1687*, pp. 145–169.

84. Besides this, abundant records suggest that Dutch fleets consisting of dozens of various types of vessels approached Yuegang 月港 (Moon Harbor, Zhangzhou), Amoy (Xiamen 廈門), and Fuzhou in the seventeenth century. See Lin Jinshui and Xie Bizhen, *Fujian duiwai wenhua jiaoliu shi*, pp. 121–131. Detailed records of the Dutch ships that arrived in China are scattered in J. A. Van der Chijsm, *Dagh-register behouden int Casteel Batavia vant passerende daer ter plaetse als over geheel Nederlandts-India* (Batavia: G. Kloff, 1889), 1665–1667, 1685.

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was "clear proof of the emperor's grace."[85] It seems reasonable that the portrayals of the python-robe wearing 'King of Holland' on the *Lisbon Screen* reflect the Chinese perception of the Dutch that submitted tribute, capturing a shift from the derogatory, anachronistic term 'red-haired barbarians' (*hongmao fan* 紅毛番) to their recognition as a vassal state.[86] The Dutch were powerful yet conquered—this was the message conveyed by the set of 'Dutch tribute' screens following the Paets mission.

III. From Lacquer Workshops to Kilns: Making Dutch Tropes through Inter-Artisanal Networks

The tribute mission, however, was not the only theme involving Dutch tropes. Another group of lacquer screens employing shared European iconographies and coastal landscape compositions highlights hunting as its central motif. Representative of this group is a superb twelve-panel hunting screen **(Fig. 27)**, now in the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam (hereafter: *Amsterdam Screen*), which displays a view of numerous Dutch figures hunting on horseback against a rugged landscape. While the swirling clouds highlight the remoteness of this barbaric land, the view relies on a consistent pictorial formula that portrays the Dutch tropes as powerful equestrians living in a remote

85. Gao Yilin 高一麟, *Ju'an shizhi* 矩庵詩質 (Ju'an's Poetic Essence) [digitalized by China Text Project–China Academic Digital Associative Library], *juan* 7, 34r: "舟泊閶門值賀蘭國入貢 / 姑蘇城外水漫漫 / 萬里朝宗遇賀蘭 / 欵塞惟知天落近 / 獻琛豈畏海風寒 / 貂囊倒貯玻璃鏡 / 雀尾輕懸玳瑁冠 / 自是皇恩通絶域 / 蠻臣歲歲舞金鑾 / Moored at Chang Gate as the Dutch embassy came to pay tribute: Outside Gusu's (Suzhou) walls, the waters stretched vast and wide. I met the Dutch, a tribute-bearing convoy from afar. They knew only that the Celestial Court was near at hand, offering precious treasures, undaunted by the sea wind's biting cold. In sable pouches, glass mirrors were carefully stowed. Peacock feathers lightly adorned coronets made of tortoiseshell. This was clear proof of the emperor's grace, reaching distant lands and compelling barbarian ministers to dance yearly before the golden halls." [translation by the author]

86. Several derogatory terms for the Dutch appeared in Chinese sources during the first half of the seventeenth century. See Lennert Gesterkamp, "Red-Haired Barbarians: The *Dongxi Yangkao* (1617) and its Portrayals of the Dutch in China," in Thijs Weststeijn, ed., *Foreign Devils and Philosophers: Cultural Encounters between the Chinese, the Dutch, and Other Europeans, 1590–1800* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2020), pp. 57–81.

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landmass separated by water. This consistent pictorial structure is found in all surviving Dutch-subject screen variants, from the reduced eight-panel screens to the standard twelve-panel and extended sixteen-panel versions.[87] Adding to the martial grandeur of the Dutch hunters are elements imagined with the VOC's formidable presence: bladed weapons, muzzleloader muskets **(Fig. 17b)**, protruding cannons mounted on their vessels **(Fig. 16b)**, and (a partial view of) a fortified structure in the screen's upper-right corner.[88]

As first noted by Kee II Choi Jr., the Dutch tropes and the environmental setting are connected to two types of Kangxi-period porcelain: blue-and-white and *famille verte* porcelain vessels.[89] The latter, a technical innovation, was known to have been produced in Jingdezhen from the 1680s onward.[90] Sharing a common subject, the key elements of this semantic structure can be best demonstrated by a polychrome baluster vase **(Fig. 28a)**: One side of the vase depicts a walled compound with towering structures, while the opposite side features two galleons, extending the view into a compelling seascape. The walled compound includes a three-axial façade, a watchtower, and a striking bell gable, elements we recognize as distinctly European in style. If we follow our earlier identification, this structure likely represents, if not Fort Provintia specifically, then a European-style fort in general (though less precisely in details). Yet, both the tribute parade and the variety of trade goods are absent. It is remarkable that this unique 'land-

87. Some of the hunting screens are illustrated in: W. De Kesel and Greet Dhont, *Coromandel Lacquer Screens*, pp. 82–84; Nicole Brugier, *Les laques de Coromandel* (Lausanne: La Bibliothèque des Arts, 2015), pp. 132–137, 140–142; Klaas Ruitenbeek, "Westerlingen in de achttiende-eeuwse Chinese kunst," pp. 10–22.

88. Comparisons among this group of screens suggest that the fort might have been modeled after defensive structures appearing in Chinese woodblock prints, such as a barbican, given its protruding structure and gate-like function. A European hunt screen from the Dalva Brothers collection, auctioned by Christie's New York 2020, Lot 152, shows that the cargo ship is not an essential part of this pictorial structure.

89. Kee Il Choi Jr., "Japan and Design in Early Chinese Export Art," pp. 336–345.

90. Christiaan J. A. Jörg, *Famille Verte Chinese Porcelain in Green Enamels* (Groningen: Groninger Museum, 2011), pp. 1–3.

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sea formula' was further adapted into a continuous frieze on a European-style food box **(Fig. 28b)**, incorporating leisure scenes such as boating and resting on the shore.[91]

On one hand, the presence of the three-axial facade with its side watchtower suggests the circulation of shared 'democratic features' in the strict Warburgian sense among porcelain decorators and lacquer carvers.[92] The nearly continuous, less rigid spatial formula and the loosely organized grouping of figures indicate a high degree of flexibility and adaptability in synthesizing these shared 'modules' across different surfaces.[93] On the other hand, this significant discovery points to a distinct, kiln-based circulation of sources and pictorial formulas.[94] A large *femille verte* baluster jar with one side picturing a European seated in a carriage with a female companion further confirms that the type of nomadic tent **(Fig. 28c)** was known in Jingdezhen kilns. Given their geographical proximity and the established collaboration among porcelain decorators and lacquer artisans, it is plausible to suggest that the group of hunting screens was produced concurrently with the emergence of new features on porcelain. Through successive, cross-regional copying, however, the accuracy of the Dutch tropes and their ships deteriorated. For instance, the crown of the Dutch plumed hat appears almost cylindrical, while the sterns of the ships **(Figs. 16b and c)**, crowded with figures, display either an overflow of figures in the quarter galleries or rows of figures with crossed arms on the great board. These inaccuracies disclose that, just like the porcelain decorators, the lacquer artisans also relied on pictorial reworkings.

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91. Craig Clunas dates this food box to 1700–1720. See Craig Clunas, *Chinese Export Art and Design*, pp. 18–20. See also Kee Il Choi Jr., "A Chinese Porcelain 'European-subject' Baluster Vase and Its Export Design Context," pp. 18–19.
92. The term was first used in Aby Warburg's (1866–1929) study on the Burgundian tapestries in 1907, see Aby Warburg and Kurt W. Forster, eds., *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity: Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999), p. 315.
93. This phenomenon aligns with Lothar Ledderose's conception of 'modules,' which were widely employed in Chinese export art to facilitate rapid, industry-scale production while maintaining creative diversity. See Lothar Ledderose, *Ten Thousand Things: Module and Mass Production in Chinese Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 1–2, 75–102.
94. The European sources are markedly different from the Jesuit and court sources of the Suzhou prints, see Jing Sun, "Curiosity and Authority: Images of Europeans at the Qing Court during the Kangxi and Yongzheng Reigns," pp. 4–5; Anita Xiaoming Wang, "Exploring the Jesuit Role in Early Qing Suzhou Prints," pp. 179–190.

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We have substantial evidence to establish the manufacturing site for this group of hunting screens. The *Amsterdam Screen* offers clues about its origins through its distinctive landscape style **(Fig. 29a left)**. This is evident in the finely carved textures and shading of the rocks, the subtle yet dynamic brushstrokes of the tree branch reminiscent of literati ink painting, and the unique coloring of the archaic blue-and-green style.[95] Significantly, this style can be linked to a pair of 'Estate Celebration' screens **(Fig. 29a middle)** from Leeuwarden's lacquer cabinet—originally constructed in 1696 and now reinstalled in the Rijksmuseum. Additionally, its overall composition, the technique of incising motifs on a thin plaster layer, and the border patterns of these screens point to a specific style originating from the greater Suzhou area after the 1680s.[96]

Through a close comparison, the landscape style of the Suzhou area-made screens can be characterized by their dynamic, angular rock forms that mimic a painterly or nearly calligraphic quality; the dense cross-hatched lines convey a sense of physicality and volume; and mosses are rarely integrated into the rock textures but instead appear as dense dots encircling the outer contours of the rocks. In contrast, the landscape style of the *Copenhagen Screen* set itself apart through its use of curved, yet less forceful contour lines **(Fig. 29b left)**; the rock textures remain minimally carved, in the sense that the physicality is, in large, achieved through coloring (e.g., using ochre to convey shading), not carving; and mosses appear as small circles embedded within the rock surfaces. This particular style is evident in a group of screens produced in the lavish 'Fujian style,' exemplified by the 'Estate Celebration' screen **(Fig. 29b middle)** in the Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Cologne. It features sets of rocks carved in a similar manner, characterized by angular forms, short and disconnected stroke lines, and an absence of

95. This carving style also appears in screens featuring other themes, such as the birthday celebration of the Queen Mother of the West or renowned regional landscapes. See Nicole Brugier, *Les laques de Coromandel*, pp. 122–129.

96. Chou Kung-shin 周功鑫, *Qing Kangxi qianqi kuancai 'Hangong chunxiao' qi pingfeng yu Zhongguo qi gongyi zhi xichuan* 清康熙前期款彩〈漢宮春曉〉漆屏風與中國漆工藝之西傳 (The Early Kangxi-period Polychrome Lacquer Screen 'Spring Morning in the Han Palace' and the Transmission of Chinese Lacquer Craftsmenship to the West) (Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan 國立故宮博物院 [National Palace Museum], 1995), pp. 56–65.

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densely carved textures. It shares almost identical dimensions and outer border patterns with others in the group.[97]

The Cologne piece is considered a 'standard piece' for this style because we know from its inscriptions that it was crafted around 1671/72 in the Zhangzhou region, where the production of this type of screen is known to have thrived.[98] In this region, a variety of kilns produced thick-bodied porcelain, known as 'Swatow wares,' for the Southeast Asian market and maintained vibrant exchanges with Jingdezhen since the sixteenth century.[99] Through stylistic analysis, we can tentatively identify two distinct, if not personal, carving styles that emerged in the greater Suzhou area and southern Fujian in the last two decades of the seventeenth century, paralleling the styles of lacquer screens entered European lacquer rooms from the 1680s onward.[100] It is demonstrable that kilns in Dehua and Jingdezhen played an integral role in this interconnected visual culture. While interpreting this iconography as part of a shared maritime heritage provides richer analytical insight than rigid chronological or stylistic classifications of the screens, evidence suggests this trend originated in southern Fujian. This is supported by the fact that maritime interactions, whether commercial or military, were largely confined to Fujian's southern coastal region. This finding is crucial, as it challenges our understanding of the radial diffusion of Coromandel screens from the greater Suzhou area, suggesting instead a vibrant reciprocal exchange among southeastern regions.[101]

97. Xialing Liu, "Decoding the Screen Frame: The Names and Pattern Sources of Chinese Antiques on the Dutch Tribute and West Lake *Kuancai*, so-called Coromandel, Lacquer Screen's Frame," pp. 76–82.

98. Given that three locations—Zhangping 漳平 (where the screen's recipient was based), Longyou 龍游 (where the composer of the dedicatory inscription lived), and Zhang 漳 (where the carver was based)—are mentioned on the screen, it is reasonable to suggest that it was manufactured in Zhangzhou County. See Masako Shōno-Sládek, *The Splendour of Urushi: The Lacquer Art Collection at the Museum of East Asian Art* (Köln: Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, 1994), pp. 100–102.

99. Anne Gerritsen, *The City of Blue and White: Chinese Porcelain and the Early Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), p. 202.

100. Jan van Campen, "'Reduced to a heap of monstruous shivers and splinters': Some Notes on Coromandel lacquer in Europe in the 17th and 18th Centuries," *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin*, vol. 57, no. 2 (2009), pp. 137–138.

101. Ding Wenfu, *Zhongguo gudai xiuqi jiaju: shi zhi shiba shiji zhengju de yanjiu*, pp. 288–289.

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The portrayals of Dutch tropes extended beyond just Suzhou and southern Fujian. A hunting screen **(Fig. 30)**, believed to have been produced in (and the only sample of this type surviving from) Guangdong, first heralded the dawn of this trend.[102] Housed in Ham House (hereafter: *Ham House Screen*), Richmond, the screen frames Dutch tropes of horseback hunters with the Sino-barbaric dichotomy's prejudicial lens.[103] A Xiongnu-style *ger* at the screen's center and an iconic footbridge in the lower right corner evoke compositional and conceptual parallels with lacquer screens and porcelain produced in Suzhou and Jingdezhen; in the latter, the abundance of multi-figural hunting and battle scenes was generally understood as a widespread aspiration for martial and military excellence. While the scene of a female figure cradling a baby beneath a nomadic tent, with geese-hunting warriors on the opposite side of the vase **(Fig. 31)**, on a Jingdezhen porcelain vase remains recognizable as deriving from the *Eighteen Songs* (stanza 9 'writing home'), the warriors appear distinctively Manchu.[104]

The *Ham House Screen* exhibits a similar carving style to that of a lacquer screen that entered the Danish court in 1688, making it possible to estimate the date of its

102. Tamara H. Bentley, "Barbarian Tropes Framed Anew: Three Qing Dynasty Chinese Lacquer Screens of Europeans Hunting," pp. 253–257.

103. While the view's ethnic details appear less authentic, making it challenging to identify the figures as Dutch, the red hair of some of the figures suggests they were aligned with the concept of red-haired barbarians that emerged in the late Ming period.

104. According to Liu Shang's 劉商 (727–805) poem, Wenji (original name Cai Yan 蔡琰) wrote a letter in her own blood but was thwarted in her attempt to have migrating geese carry it to her homeland, as the huntsmen frightened the geese away. See Christie's, *An Era of Inspiration: 17th-Century Chinese Porcelains from the Collection of Julia and John Curtis*, pp. 162–165; Robert A. Rorex and Wen Fong, *The Story of Lady Wen-Chi: A Fourteenth-Century Handscroll in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1974), pp. 44–47. As for the battle scenes on porcelain, see Li Yifan 李依凡, "Kangxi ci shang daomaren wenshi xingqi beijing jiqi jiazhi tanxi 康熙瓷上刀馬人紋飾興起背景及其價值探析 (The Background and Significance of the Rise of Battle Scenes on Kangxi-Period Porcelain)," *Wenwu jianding yu jianshang* 文物鑒定與鑒賞 (Identification and Appreciation to Cultural Relics), no. 14 (2021), pp. 42–45; Huang Fei 黃斐, "Gugong bowuyuan cang Kangxi ciqi renwuwen jiqi wenhua neihan tanxi 故宮博物院藏康熙瓷器人物紋及其文化內涵探析 (The Figure Patterns and Cultural Connotation of Porcelain from the Kangxi Reign in the Palace Museum Collection)," *Gugong xuekan* 故宮學刊 (Journal of Gugong Studies), no. 1 (2023), pp. 161–162.

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production.[105] This similarity is evident in the way rock formations **(Fig. 29c left and middle)** are represented. For instance, the rocks' contour lines appear relatively weak and lack the dynamic brushstrokes that might suggest a skilled painterly style. Unlike the screens from the greater Suzhou area (primarily, Huizhou 徽州 and Yangzhou 揚州), which used dense cross-hatching to create rock textures, or those from southern Fujian, which employed angular lines to convey physicality, the *Ham House Screen*'s carved strokes give the rocks a flat, decorative appearance rather than a sense of depth. While the use of malachite green, light indigo, and light gamboge adds some variety to the rock formations (though they do little to create substantial depth), malachite green appears to be the dominant and representative tone for the Guangdong-made lacquer screens such as those dated to the 1690s, now in New York and Guangzhou.[106]

It is noteworthy that the *Ham House Screen* incorporates visual elements distinct from those of other Dutch-themed screens. The motif of a crown-wearing king playing the lute **(Fig. 32)** and enjoying music and food with companions, is clearly derived from circulated commercial Ming paintings featuring the *Eighteen Songs* **(Fig. 33)**.[107] It is well-known that the tale of Wenji 文姬 (ca. 177–ca. 249 CE), one of the few Chinese women who ever ventured into the steppe, has constantly carried political undertones

105. Joan Hornby, *Chinese Lacquerware in the National Museum of Denmark*, pp. 200–203.

106. "Le pavillon à toiture verte" (the green-roofed pavilion), as termed by Nicole Brugier, remains the most iconic feature of the surviving 'Estate Celebration' screens produced in Guangdong. This same carving style can be observed on another 'Estate Celebration' screen produced around 1674 for a Guangdong official, now in a private collection in Vancouver; see Anna Jackson and Amin Jaffer, *Encounters: The Meeting of Asia and Europe 1500–1800* (London: V&A Publications, 2004), p. 201, 206–209. The 1689/90 screen from Foshan and the 1693 screen in the Atelier Brugier (now in the Guangdong Provincial Museum), Paris, support the continuation of this regional style to the end of the century, see Chou Kung-shin, *Qing Kangxi qianqi kuancai 'Hangong chunxiao' qi pingfeng yu Zhongguo qi gongyi zhi xichuan*, pp. 44, 242–245; Nicole Brugier, *Les laques de Coromandel*, pp. 23–25, 35–40, 44–49, 56–57, 113, 170. As for the 1689/90 screen, see Ruan Huaduan 阮華端, "Meiguo daduhui yishu bowuguan cang 'Qing Feng Langgong gongyuantu pingfeng' yanjiu 美國大都會藝術博物館藏「清馮朗公宮苑圖屏風」研究 (Research on the Screen of "Palace Scene" Made by Feng Langgong of the Qing Dynasty Collected in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the United States)," *Yishu yu minsu* 藝術與民俗 (Journal of Arts and Folklore), no. 2 (2019), pp. 27–37.

107. The second stanza of this scroll, for instance, portrays the protagonist Wenji playing music for her Xiongnu husband in a similar posture.

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and biases against steppe nomads since the twelfth century.[108] This powerful yet positive image of the nomads is distinct from the anti-Manchu sentiment expressed in early Qing vernacular literature centered in the Jiangnan area, which often equated the Manchu conquest with the Jurchen invasion of the thirteenth century.[109]

The critical perspective of Wenji's tale was once the subject of a lacquer screen, previously owned by the Duke of Westminster **(**hereafter: *Westminster Screen*, **Fig. 34)**. It is primarily articulated through contrasts between the nomads' subsistence lifestyle and the cosmopolitan Ming culture. Given its early date (the inscriptions give a date of 1659),[110] the screen, which juxtaposes two territorial halves, holds significant political meaning in the time after the Ming-Qing transition: on the screen's right-hand half, an opulent procession led by an elephant and heavily armored cavalry symbolizes the

108. Wenji was one of the few Chinese women who ventured into the steppe through a forced marriage to a Xiongnu chieftain during the Eastern Han dynasty (25–220 CE). For a short introduction to the *Eighteen Songs* scrolls, see Lianming Wang, "When the Barbarians Came by Sea: Hunting and Alienism in Entangled Sino-Japanese Visual Cultures, 1550–1750," *World Art*, vol. 14, no. 3 (2024), pp. 315–347; Itakura Masaaki, "Representations of Politicalness and Regionality in Wen-chi's Return to China," *Acta Asiatica*, vol. 84 (2003), pp. 20–41.

109. For example, Ding Yaokang's 丁耀亢 (1599–1669) *Xu Jinpingmei* 續金瓶梅 (Sequel to the Plum in the Golden Vase, 1661) which narrates how the Song emperor is depicted as being compelled to eat raw meat and uncooked hunting trophies after his abduction to the north was a clear allusion to the Manchu conquest. See Yang Lin 楊琳, *Qingchu xiaoshuo yu shiren wenhua xintai* 清初小說與士人文化心態 (The Novels and the Cultural Mentalities of the Intellectuals in the Early Qing Dynasty) (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe 社會科學文獻出版社 [Social Sciences Academic Press], 2017), pp. 84–86, 161; Li Wai-yee 李惠儀, "Xingbie yu Qingchu lishi jiyi: cong Yangzhou nüzi tanqi 性別與清初歷史記憶——從揚州女子談起 (Gender and Early Qing Historical Memory: The Case of Yangzhou Women)," *Taiwan dongya wenming yanjiu xuekan* 臺灣東亞文明研究學刊 (Taiwan Journal of East Asian Studies), vol. 7, no. 2 (December 2010), pp. 298–300, 308–309.

110. The *Westminster Screen*, which features incised lines for rendering the rock textures and rolling hills in the far distance, known as the 'refined hook' (*qinggou* 清鉤), is stylistically close to the Yangzhou-made screen (dated 1672) kept in the Smithsonian Institution – National Museum of Asian Art in Washington, D.C. For more details about this technique, see Fu Juyou 傅舉有, "Zhongguo gudai qiqi de zhuihua Yishu he qiangjin yishu 中國古代漆器的錐畫藝術和鎗金藝術 (The Arts of Gouqing Images and Incising Gold in Ancient Chinese Lacquer-work)," *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 (Palace Museum Journal), no. 4 (2007), p. 91. Another screen dated to 1637 was also applied with the same 'refined hook' technique, see W. De Kesel and Greet Dhont, *Coromandel Lacquer Screens*, p. 58; Ding Wenfu, *Zhongguo gudai xiuqi jiaju: shi zhi shiba shiji zhengju de yanjiu*, pp. 294–295.

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military prowess of, if not the Ming, one of the Chinese empires.[111] Surrounded by music-playing servants, the protagonist rests beneath a square tent. Notably, the use of temporary structures, including a *ger* with a conical ceiling, draws from the widely circulated *Eighteen Songs* scroll (stanza 3), foreshadowing the protagonist's tragic fate in the steppe. On the left half of the screen, a powerful yet savage view of Manchu horse riders is evoked through the hunters' shaven heads, rough clothing, and anachronistic weapons (one hunter, seen in the upper middle section of the deep woods, is fighting a tiger with a broken trident). Accompanied by strains of refined music, Wenji, seated beneath a tent, serves as a poignant reminder of her journey to the desolate frontier, bridging the two contrasting worlds; a dualistic worldview that endured among Han Chinese well after the Manchu conquest.[112]

IV. Performing Salvage: Martial Prowess and the Pro-Nomadic Turn in Seventeenth-Century Art

If framing the Dutch as tribute bearers aligns with the Chinese perception of VOC missions and the Qing's taking of Taiwan, what explains the concurrent rise of their portrayal as mounted huntsmen? Moreover, since when the prejudicial attitude toward 'savage nomads'—a view applied to both the Manchus and the 'red-haired barbarians'—fade from their visual representations? An early hunting screen, previously owned by a private collection in the Rhineland **(**hereafter: *Rhineland Screen*, **Fig. 35)**, marks the moment when this significant turn occurred.[113]

Central to this fashionable iconography are Manchu horseback warriors, now imbued with an indisputably positive undercurrent. All the troops are depicted wearing

111. See my discussion of the screen's central image in Lianming Wang, "When the Barbarians Came by Sea: Hunting and Alienism in Entangled Sino-Japanese Visual Cultures, 1550–1750," pp. 332–334.
112. Compare the details of the *Eighteen Songs* scroll in Robert A. Rorex and Wen Fong, *The Story of Lady Wen-chi A Fourteenth-Century Handscroll in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, pp. 20–23.
113. A similar pair of lacquered panels encrusted with shells and stones, depicting hunting scenes and datable to the late seventeenth century, is kept in the Victoria and Albert Museum under acc. no. 598-1883.

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Manchu-style caps with tassels and owns with rounded collars; some warriors are shown with shaved heads and early Qing-style queues, while dragon and tiger flags highlight the masculinity of the activity. Essential ethnic details confirm the artisans' familiarity with Manchu customs, such as smoking a dry pipe,[114] falconry, the use of a *domo* vessel (a type of Mongol nomadic ewer),[115] and low, square dining tables.[116] While conveying a strong pro-nomadic sentiment, the *Rhineland Screen* reminds us that the Manchu horsemen were no different from China's other steppe neighbors, such as the Jurchens or Mongols.[117] This visual impression was effectively achieved through a sharp contrast between the panoramic display of Manchu martial grandeur and residual feminine presence: a woman in Han dress **(**most likely Wenji, **Fig. 36)** receiving butter tea from a *domo* vessel—symbolizing her acceptance of the nomadic lifestyle—feminizes the sole Han representation, standing in opposition to the formidable Manchu warriors.

The *Rhineland Screen*'s origin and date had remained uncertain. Nevertheless, beyond its slender frame, the screen's finely yet forcefully carved lines exhibit an exquisite painterly quality, reminiscent of a brocade-mounted painting and suggesting an early (pre-1680 or earlier) regional style associated with the greater Suzhou area,

114. L. Carrington Goodrich, "Early Prohibitions of Tobacco in China and Manchuria," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. 58, no. 4 (December 1938), pp. 648–657; Lucie Olivova, "Tobacco Smoking in Qing China," *Asia Major*, vol. 18, no. 1 (2005), pp. 227–229.

115. This type of container was introduced to the Manchus by the Mongols, who brought it from Central Asia in the early seventeenth century; see Huang Taiji 皇太極, ed., *Manzhou shilu* 滿洲實錄 (Veritable Records of the Manchus) (1779), *juan* 3, seq. 133; *juan* 7, seq. 64; Man Zeyang 滿澤陽, "Duomuhu kaolüe 多穆壺考略" (Master's thesis, Nanjing daxue 南京大學 [Nanjing University], 2015), pp. 19–40, 49–53. For an example of a seventeenth-century domo vessel, see Edward F. *Strange, Catalogue of Chinese Lacquer* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1925), p. 29, pl. XXXIV.

116. The presence of two square or low dining tables (*kangzhuo* 炕桌) shows the artisans' familiarity with the traditional furnishings of northern Chinese households.

117. To secure peace in the southern regions, Ming official Shi Kefa 史可法 (1601–1645), who led the defense of Yangzhou, even proposed emulating the 1120 treaty between the Song and the Jurchen-led Jin dynasty, which had divided China into northern and southern territories, see Hellmut Wilhelm, "Ein Briefwechsel zwischen Durgan and Schi Ko-Fa," *Sinica*, vol. 8, no. 5/6 (1933), pp. 239–245. In early Qing novels, Mongol tropes were also often allusive to the Manchus. See Jonathan Spencer, *The Death of Woman Wang* (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), p. 103.

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specifically Yangzhou.[118] The screen was not only crafted in close temporal and geographic proximity to the *Westminster Screen* but also shared pictorial details with the latter, including the feminine figures and temporal structures (beneath the *ger*, one can also see a figure with a shaved head holding a *domo* vessel). The only difference lies in the fact that the *Rhineland Screen*'s hunting scene drew inspiration from contemporary painting compositions and predated the rise of Dutch hunting themes.

It is crucial to note that the imagery of the Manchu hunt relied on a long-established pictorial tradition, distinct from the battle scenes derived from historical tales or opera illustrations, which predominantly featured Han Chinese tropes. Rather, hunting scenes were a popular subject in commercial paintings produced in Suzhou and its surrounding areas, commonly referred to as 'Suzhou fakes' (*Suzhou pian* 蘇州片) in nineteenth-century historiography.[119] At least 15 surviving paintings that feature or are related to the Wu Emperor of Han (Han Wudi 漢武帝, 141–87 BCE) hunting at Shanglin Park (Shanglin yuan 上林苑) proved the popularity of this theme.[120] Composed in a prolonged panoramic view, these scrolls invite viewers to marvel at the grandeur of the imperial hunt as narrated in the "Ode on the Shanglin Park" (*Shanglin fu* 上林賦).[121] Though they vary in size, composition, and pictorial details, the scrolls often bear 'big names,' such as the Southern Song court painter Zhao Boju 趙伯駒 (c. 1120–c. 1162) or Qiu Ying 仇

118. The similar carving techniques evident in the representations of water waves, willow trees, and stone bridges further affirm its closeness to the Yangzhou-made screen kept in the Smithsonian Institutions, National Museum of Asian Art in Washington, D.C., acc. no. F1906. 42 (Gift of Charles Lang Freer). The latter was commissioned in 1672 to celebrate the retirement of a Yangzhou official.

119. Ellen Johnston Laing, "'Suzhou Pian' and Other Dubious Paintings in the Received 'Oeuvre' of Qiu Ying," *Artibus Asiae*, vol. 59, no. 3/4 (2000), p. 267.

120. Hsu Ding-yun 許丁云, "Cong Qiu Ying dao 'Erzhao': Yi *Shanglin Tu* wei zhongxin tan Suzhou Pian zhong de 'Erzhao'wenti 從仇英到「二趙」：以《上林圖》為中心談蘇州片中的「二趙」問題 (From Qiu Ying to the "Two Zhao": A Study of the "Two Zhao" of "Suzhou Fakes" Based on Shanglin Park Paintings)" (Master's thesis, Guoli Taiwan shifan daxue 國立臺灣師範大學 [National Taiwan Normal University], 2022), pp. 21–24, 42–51.

121. Composed by Sima Xiangru's 司馬相如 (c. 179–117 BCE), the ode depicts the Wu emperor's hunting park's mythical splendor through extravagant descriptions of flora, fauna, and topography, blending Daoist cosmology with imperial propaganda.

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英 (who was known for his long scroll dedicated to this theme), or are even attributed to anonymous Yuan painters, all to maximize their market value.[122]

Despite the iconic, heavily colored blue-and-green landscape style—a hallmark of Suzhou workshop paintings—the core of its pathos formula includes sections depicting the 'imperial carriage procession', 'hunting inspection', and 'riverside hunting' **(Fig. 37)**. For Ming-Qing Chinese viewers, the scrolls' didactic purpose would have been clear: the grandeur of the palaces and pleasure parks in the opening section, the emperor's six-horse carriage, and the opulent ritual and ceremonial regalia associated with the hunt are contrasted with the emperor's regret over his obsession with hunting.[123] Nevertheless, the admonitory function alone does not convincingly account for the widespread popularity of these scrolls. It is compelling that most of the scrolls are dedicated to depicting the grandeur of the imperial regalia and the vastness of the park. As Hsu Ding-yun noted, when the literary source of this theme (which often appeared as an accompanying colophon) was detached from the scrolls, the paradisiacal imagery of the palaces, parks, and mountain peaks, rendered in the 'archaic' landscape style, conveys a sense of longevity associated with the Taoist view of paradise.[124] During the Ming-Qing period, these scrolls enjoyed popularity as elegant birthday gifts.[125]

A Japanese copy of similar composition demonstrates that its core remained consistent through successive copies and remakes. The retention of key episodes

122. Hsu Ding-yun, "Cong Qiu Ying dao 'Erzhao': Yi *Shanglin Tu* wei zhongxin tan Suzhou Pian zhong de 'Erzhao'wenti," pp. 81–114.

123. This moral lesson has been known for a long time but was included in *Dijian tushuo* 帝鑑圖說 (*Illustrated Arguments in the Mirror of Emperors*), a late sixteenth-century compendium of anecdotes about the failures of emperors in the past. The tale recounts how King Tai Kang 太康 (n.d.) lost his capital while hunting beyond the Luo River, serving as a cautionary example of the dangers of excessive indulgence in hunting.

124. The paradisiacal pursuits are evident in the extensive body of Suzhou workshop paintings depicting *The Peach Blossom Spring* (*Taohua yuan* 桃花源), many of which were produced under the names of Zhao Boju and Qiu Ying. See Ellen Johnston Laing, "'Suzhou Pian' and Other Dubious Paintings in the Received 'Oeuvre' of Qiu Ying," pp. 269–274; Hsu Ding-yun, "Cong Qiu Ying dao 'Erzhao': Yi *Shanglin Tu* wei zhongxin tan Suzhou Pian zhong de 'Erzhao'wenti," pp. 65–66, 80, 117.

125. Hsu Ding-yun, "Cong Qiu Ying dao 'Erzhao': Yi *Shanglin Tu* wei zhongxin tan Suzhou Pian zhong de 'Erzhao'wenti," pp. 11–12, 68–69.

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includes the 'emperor's departure' and the 'hunting inspection' (specifically, goose shooting). It is striking that the depiction of riverside hunting **(Fig. 38)**, with its iconic stone bridge and horseback hunters chasing muntjac deer and other small beasts, shows striking similarities with the *Rhineland Screen*. Additionally, the opulent procession departing from a city gate and the encircling hunt of a tiger and other animals suggest that variants of the *Shanglin Park* scrolls were accessible to porcelain decorators and lacquer carvers who produced the *Amsterdam Screen* and its variants. Given all these, we can trace a visual lineage in which Dutch tropes evolved from portrayals of Manchu hunters, which themselves were derived from the Suzhou workshop paintings.

This argument extends beyond mere speculation, as demonstrated by the scene of a thrilling encircling hunt that appears on both the *Rhineland and Amsterdam Screens* **(Figs. 39a-b)**. When the admonitory purpose of the hunting gave way to the pursuit of paradisiacal imagery, the desire for masculinity revitalized existing pictorial traditions to celebrate the martial prowess of the Manchu, a theme that resonated powerfully in the post-turmoil and trauma of the revolt of the Three Feudatories, an event that had devastating effects on civilian life and the economy in the southern provinces.[126] In this context, the existing body of hunting screens captured a shift in attitudes toward the Manchus. As demonstrated by the increased attention to nomadic equestrian and hunting skills, a celebration of masculinity and martial prowess became evident. This turn was rather abrupt if we take into account the 1677 letter in which Zheng Jing 鄭經 (1642–1681, Zheng Chenggong's eldest son) still insisted on a "strict delineation of 'Chinese' and 'barbarian'" to counter the Manchu-led Qing regime.[127] Considering the severe resistance the Manchu conquest faced in Yangzhou (site of the 1645 massacre) and other

126. In 1673, three Han Chinese warlords—Wu Sangui 吳三桂 (1612–1678), Geng Jingzhong 耿精忠 (1644–1682), and Shang Zhixin 尚之信 (1636–1680)—led a revolt that swept across half of China's territory through warfare. The successful suppression in 1681 marked the end of the military campaigns through which the Manchu-led regime effectively strengthened its control over southern China. For an introduction, see Kai-fu Tsao, "K'ang-Hsi and the San-fan 三藩 War," *Monumenta Serica*, vol. 31, no. 1 (1974), pp. 108–130.

127. Xing Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime East Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c. 1620–1720*, p. 212.

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southern regions, this new interest in nomadic hunting marked a significant attitudinal shift, best exemplified by a lacquer screen **(Fig. 40)** kept in the Musée de la Compagnie des Indes in Lorient (hereafter: *Lorient Screen*).[128]

Surrounding the Manchu cavalry, fierce and formidable hunters and warriors are shown bringing down tigers, foxes, and deer, and triumphantly displaying their hunting trophies.[129] A goose-hunting female figure in front of a *ger* reminds viewers of Wenji's tragic fate. It further indicates that these aspirations were not confined to Jingdezhen and the greater Suzhou area but extended to Fujian as well, where the violence of warfare and political upheaval caused both physical and psychological devastation.[130]

This shared, novel iconography was highly significant, emerging barely two decades after the massacres and brutal suppressions in the Jiangnan region. It stood in stark contrast to the persistent memories of violence and trauma in early Qing literature, as lamented by Ding Yaokang about Yangzhou: "In new pleasure houses, painted faces mimicked Chu's graceless pose, while Yangzhou's 'lean horses' (groomed concubines) were all brought to Yan (the north)."[131] As Wai-yee Li incisively observed, literary representations of the Yangzhou Massacre consistently operated through a dual framework that simultaneously glorified and vilified women, oscillating between reproach and sympathy toward them.[132] We may thus conclude that the deliberate inclusion of Han-attired women visually constructed an asymmetrical power relationship, framing them simultaneously as war trophies and conquered subjects. Drinking butter tea (as a gesture of adaptation) and accepting subordination to the Manchu-led regime may have represented the least detrimental option for the conquered.

128. For a general discussion on the Jiangnan resistance movement, see Frederic Wakeman, Jr., *The Great Enterprise: The Manchu Reconstruction of Imperial Order in Seventeenth-Century China* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1985), vol. 1, pp. 591–674.
129. Nicole Brugier, *Les laques de Coromandel*, pp. 130–131.
130. Lynn A. Struve, "Confucian PTSD: Reading Trauma in a Chinese Youngster's Memoir of 1653," *History and Memory*, vol. 16, no. 2 (2004), pp. 14–31.
131. Li Wai-yee, "Xingbie yu Qingchu lishi jiyi: cong Yangzhou nüzi tanqi," p. 331: "新市鴨牀仍步楚 / 舊臺馬瘦盡歸燕."
132. Li Wai-yee, "Xingbie yu Qingchu lishi jiyi: cong Yangzhou nüzi tanqi," p. 335.

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In fact, after more than half the empire fell under rebel control beginning in early 1676, the coastal region of southern Fujian, particularly Quanzhou 泉州, Zhangzhou, and Amoy, became the site of intense military confrontations between Qing forces and Zheng's followers.[133] These battles represented the final challenge for the empire before the Kangxi emperor successfully consolidated his maritime frontier. Adding to the *Lorient Screen*'s masculine imagery, an inscription (engraved in the screen's central lower frame) discloses the view's political connotation: *Dingce weimu youan sheji zhixun* 定冊帷幕有安社稷之勳, which translates literally as "deciding on strategies within the military tent with the honor of safeguarding the state."[134] This phrase often appeared on bamboo slip-shaped inksticks and printed images, reflecting literati scholars' political commitment to ensuring the country's stability and prosperity.[135] Xialing Liu has astutely observed that the inscriptions, taken from a widely distributed ink manual, match a group of Fujian-made screens, such as those kept in Cologne (inscriptions dated 1671/72) and Copenhagen (with slight variations in wording).[136] Given that most symbols, objects, and motifs on the frame conveyed power, wealth, and auspicious meanings, the screen's decorative frame, typical of the Fujian style, calibrated an integrated visual—one that appealed to scholar-officials aspiring to become powerful statesmen in service of the state.

Not only the frame but also the inscriptions help us determine the primary agent and audience for the lacquer screen. The aforementioned *Nan'ao Screen* bearing the same inscriptions is a prime example of how screens became a site of intermingled

133. For a detailed description of the Qing defeat of the Zheng regime, see Xing Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime East Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c. 1620–1720*, pp. 210–240.

134. For a different translation on the *Copenhagen Screen*, see Joan Hornby, *Chinese Lacquerware in the National Museum of Denmark*, p. 205; W. De Kesel and Greet Dhont, *Coromandel Lacquer Screens*, p. 83.

135. The inscriptions stemmed from *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書, *juan* 99, cited in Lin Huan 林歡, "Mo zhong zhu: Gugong cang Huimo zhong de zhu yixiang 墨中竹——故宮藏徽墨中的竹意象 (Bamboo in Ink: The Imagery of Bamboo as seen in the Anhui Inksticks kept in the Palace Museum)," *Zijincheng* 紫禁城 (Forbidden City), no. 6 (2013), p. 94.

136. Xialing Liu, "Decoding the Screen Frame: The Names and Pattern Sources of Chinese Antiques on the Dutch Tribute and West Lake *Kuancai*, so-called Coromandel, Lacquer Screen's Frame," pp. 47–74.

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concerns about personal aspiration and the new maritime frontier following the conquest of Taiwan.[137] The exaggerated scale of the unfinished Chinese fort and garrison in the screen's central image, the inclusion of a map-like representation of the waterways to southern Taiwan, and the engraved names, titles, and territories of the officers' civil service in the gratulatory text, all help to transform the screen into a public stage for personal aspirations and political manifestos.

The *Nan'ao Screen* was not unique at all. A birthday screen of this kind, dated 1690, exemplifies the best how a Han-Chinese scholar-official navigated the turbulent post-dynastic transition, achieving recognition through service to the new regime by adding a long list of signatures from county magistrates and a Manchu bannerman.[138] An extreme case from around 1689–1690, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (hereafter: *Metropolitan Museum Screen*), New York, adds an extensive list of 868 birthday well-wishers **(Fig. 41)**, ranging from officials of various ranks to gentry and merchants.[139] Parallel to the peak popularity of composing birthday essays, which served as a powerful medium for Ming loyalists to mourn their fallen dynasty, engraving these texts onto screens became a primary means of publicly declaring social and political alliances in the late seventeenth century.[140] The surviving screens containing birthday

137. Weiqi Guo, "Mapping the Unfinished City: The Military Commander's Birthday Celebration Screen," pp. 209–239.

138. Virginia Bower, *Decorative Arts, Part II: Far Eastern Ceramics and Paintings; Persian and Indian Rugs and Carpets* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1998), pp. 282–283.

139. Ruan Duanhua, "Meiguo daduhui yishu bowuguan cang 'Qing Feng Langgong gongyuantu pingfeng' yanjiu," pp. 27–37.

140. Chou Kung-shin, *Qing Kangxi qianqi kuancai 'Hangong chunxiao' qi pingfeng yu Zhongguo qi gongyi zhi xichuan*, p. 44; Dai Liang 代亮, "Qingchu yimin shouxu de xinbian jiqi yiyi 清初遺民壽序的新變及其意義 (The Meaning and Change of Birthday Essays by Ming Loyalists during the Early Qing)," *Suzhou daxue xuebao (zhexue shehui kexue ban)* 蘇州大學學報（哲學社會科學版） (Journal of Soochow University [Philosophy and Social Science Edition]), vol. 4 (2016), pp. 153–159; Ruan Duanhua, "Meiguo daduhui yishu bowuguan cang 'Qing Feng Langgong gongyuantu pingfeng' yanjiu," pp. 32–33. For example, in 1661, Adam Schall, S. J. (Tang Ruowang 湯若望, 1591–1666), a German Jesuit based in Beijing, published the birthday essays he received for his seventieth birthday to openly affirm his recognition from Chinese literati scholars, including his ties with those turncoat officials who had switched allegiances to the Manchus. See Ji Jianxun 紀建勳, "Jiaohui wenxian *Beiji zengyan heke* yanjiu 教會文獻《碑記贈言合刻》研究 (Research on Church Document *Anthology of Stele Inscriptions and Dedications*)" (Master's thesis, Shanghai shifan daxue 上海師範大學 [Shanghai Normal University], 2009), pp. 10–14, 22–24, 38–40.

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essays best attest that waterfront officials were the primary consumers of the carved (Coromandel) screens.[141]

The use of social gatherings to convey political messages was rooted in earlier traditions: for instance, in texts and paintings linked to the renowned 'Gathering at the Apricot Garden,' an event that fostered secret alliances among officers sharing common provincial origins.[142] As demonstrated by the *Metropolitan Museum Screen*, the more influential the participants involved, the greater the recognition one could achieve. To evoke this gathering visually, the screen's front displays an elaborate palace scene featuring dancers, musicians, children, and numerous gift-bearing guests arriving from afar—a composition that emulates the grandeur of Tang general Guo Ziyi's 郭子儀 (697–781) birthday celebration, whose military achievements and numerous offspring remained constant ideals for officials.[143] Since the 1670s, European (specifically Dutch) gift bearers also joined the elegant gatherings on lacquer screens.[144]

Unlike the *Rhineland Screen*—a small table work intended to be viewed on an elevated level, the double-sided birthday screen denotes an absolute ceremonial center. With the screen placed at the celebration's center, the host's subjectivity was elevated to great heights through both the textual presence of participants (not all of whom may have actually attended the event) and the analogy between the celebrant and a historical

141. Jan van Campen, "'Reduced to a heap of monstruous shivers and splinters: Some Notes on Coromandel lacquer in Europe in the 17th and 18th Centuries," pp. 138–139, gives the example of a lacquer screen, commissioned as a gift from the Governor-General of the Fujian province, that arrived in The Hague before 1687.

142. Yin Jinan 尹吉男, "Zhengzhi haishi yule: Xingyuan yaji he *Xingyuan jiaji tu* xinjie 政治還是娛樂：杏園雅集和《杏園雅集圖》新解 (Politics or Recreation: Apricot Garden Salon and Reinterpretation to the 'The Apricot Garden Salon' in Hand Scroll)," *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 故宮博物院院刊 (Palace Museum Journal), no. 1 (2016), pp. 6–39; Craig Clunas, *Chinese Painting and Its Audiences* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2017), pp. 52–58.

143. Yoonjung Seo, "Der Stellschirm 'Das Bankett des Guo Ziyi' im Museum für Völkerkunde Hamburg: Von der historischen Persönlichkeit zur Manifestation Reichen Segens," in Susanne Knödel and Bernd Schmelz, eds., *Uri Korea: kunsthistorische und ethnografische Beiträge zur Ausstellung* (Hamburg: Museum für Völkerkunde Hamburg, 2018), pp. 327–329.

144. Anna Jackson and Amin Jaffer, *Encounters: The Meeting of Asia and Europe 1500–1800*, pp. 208–211. The screen with Dutch tropes was auctioned by Sotheby's, London, November 2021, Lot 202.

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ideal, one that any official would aspire to embody. We have no evidence to suggest that any of the Dutch-themed screens were commissioned as birthday screens or engraved with birthday essays. The double-sided examples, however, such as the *Welsh Screen*, suggest that the combination of the Dutch tribute mission and compelling landscape (West Lake) transformed a space into a concrete place exclusively subject to its owner, who was both cultured and dominant. In a nutshell, the existing corpus of essay-bearing screens, the demonstrable fascination with nomadic masculinity, and the mass-produced Dutch-themed screens collectively point to a broad group of waterfront officials who admired martial prowess that would have brought stability in the empire's new frontier. "[…] by the grace of His majesty's virtue and power," as a Qing official believed, "the bandits (the Ming loyalists) had been pacified, and the seas were now calm."[145] Here, we must acknowledge that Kangxi's 1679 special imperial examination, which co-opted influential scholars into supporting Manchu rule, effectively softened the tension between the Chinese and Manchus.[146] Apart from a handful of Ming loyalists, most scholars gained opportunities to participate in state affairs. Behind this aspiration lay a deeper search for political stability, conditions that had been utterly shattered by the devastating forces of the Three Feudatories rebellion across southern China. The rebellion not only ravaged the region militarily but also inflicted profound social disintegration: displaced populations, collapsed local economies, and a breakdown of trust in governance.[147] During this period, nearly all handicraft production centers, including kilns, printing and lacquer workshops, came to a near standstill.

With all this in mind, when the linkage between the rise of Manchu prowess and the broader aspiration for peace and prosperity becomes evident, the presence of Dutch

145. Liu Fengyun 劉鳳雲, *Qingdai sanfan yanjiu* 清代三藩研究 (A Study on the Three Feudatories of Qing China) (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe 中國人民大學出版社 [China Renmin University Press], 1994), p. 360: "[…] 幸得皇上威德 / 削平寇盜 / 海不揚波."

146. Bai Limin, "Shaping the World of Scholars: The Soft Power of Emperor Kangxi (1661–1722)," *Journal of the European Association for Chinese Studies*, vol. 1 (2020), pp. 19–57; Liu Fengyun, *Qingdai sanfan yanjiu*, pp. 364–373.

147. Xing Hang, *Conflict and Commerce in Maritime East Asia: The Zheng Family and the Shaping of the Modern World, c. 1620–1720*, p. 221.

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tropes is equally justified. Parallel to their maritime presence in East Asian waters, the VOC was renowned for its military strength, particularly its advanced muzzle-loading artillery. Such firepower was a decisive factor in the maritime dominance of both the VOC and the Zheng family.[148] The Manchu ascendancy and its consolidation of the southern regions owed much to European military technology, including various cannons and artillery pieces produced by Verbiest (a Belgian Jesuit father, not a Dutchman).[149] Given the geopolitical significance of these coastal regions, viewing the Dutch as equal to the formidable Manchu horseback riders would have aligned with the enduring ambition to defend the empire's maritime frontiers. The Manchus and Dutch were once allies; in 1679, during the battle against Zheng's army, the Qing court sent an embassy to Batavia, hoping the VOC, who had helped drive the Zheng family from the mainland coast, would once again collaborate with them.[150] Following the Paets mission, portraying the formidable Dutch forces has logically fit into the larger picture of the Qing's successful annexation of Taiwan. To Chinese viewers, this representation underscored a paradox: though the Dutch had once been a formidable power, they now submitted to the Qing regime.

Conclusion

This paper presents the first comprehensive analysis of surviving Dutch-themed lacquer screens, arguing for a significant pro-nomadic turn in early Qing visual culture. Central to this interpretation are critical comparisons of the Coromandel screens' carving

148. The studies on the European artillery's role in seventeenth-century China are extensive. See particularly Huang Yi-long, "Mingqing zhiji hongyi dapao zai dongnan yanhai de liubu jiqi yingxiang," pp. 787–789, 795–815.

149. Nicola Di Cosmo, "European Technology and Manchu Power: Reflections on the 'Military Revolution' in Seventeenth-Century China," in Sølvi Sogner, ed., *Making Sense of Global History: The 19th International Congress of the Historical Sciences, Oslo 2000* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 2001), p. 119; Liguang Shu, "Ferdinand Verbiest and the Casting of Cannons in the Qing Dynasty," in John W. Witek, S. J., ed., *Ferdinand Verbiest (1623–1688): Jesuit Missionary, Scientist, Engineer and Diplomat* (Nettetal: Steyler Verlag, 1994), pp. 119–139.

150. Weichung Cheng, "Admiral Shi Lang's Secret Proposal to Return Taiwan to the VOC," pp. 290–311.

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styles and thematic particularities, which reveal two major production centers active concurrently in the last two decades of the seventeenth century: the greater Suzhou area and southern Fujian (likely Zhangzhou). As demonstrated, their production relied primarily on pictorial vocabularies shared among Ming-Qing professional painters, printmakers, and porcelain decorators, linking them to the kilns of post-1680 Jingdezhen and Dehua. Evidence suggests that it first emerged in southern Fujian – the frontier of the Qing's campaign against the Zheng regime—and later gained popularity through reciprocal exchanges between these regions and artisans with various specializations. Whether portraying the Dutch parading, hunting, or presenting tribute, these screens emerged in close temporal proximity and should be understood as part of a coherent pictorial program.

Templates and pictorial reworkings proved instrumental in this trans-regional and inter-artisanal visual exchange. Notably, while eyewitness accounts of Dutch vessels were limited to Fujian's coast, Dutch tropes in Suzhou and Jingdezhen (and even some of the later southern Fujian screens) degenerated into caricature-like renditions. Except for the *Lisbon and Rothschild Screens*, most of the portrayals of Dutch vessels and ethnic details remained generic and idiosyncratic. Meanwhile, Suzhou commercial paintings, such as the widely circulated *Shanglin Park* and *Eighteen Songs* scrolls, played a key role in framing these red-haired seafarers as equals to the horseback Manchu warriors. The female presence in the latter served to feminize the conquered Han Chinese, contrasting sharply with the tropes of Manchu warriors on lacquer screens.

Though compositional and thematic accents varied regionally, the Dutch-themed screens achieved a significant synergy between China's historical nomadic memories and contemporary maritime experiences, fusing them into a new iconographic regime. 'Barbaric' elements drawn from Sino-nomadic confrontations, temporary dwellings (tents and *ger*), horseback hunting, and raw meat consumption merged with Chinese eyewitness accounts and imaginations of Dutch maritime violence and dominance in East Asian waters. It is demonstrable that Casteel Zeelandia and Fort Provintia were central to this visual trend among the lacquer workshops in southern Fujian. Even when portrayed as savage horseback hunters, Dutch tropes were consistently highlighted

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through giant vessels with protruding cannons, muskets, and fortified structures, underscoring a militarized—rather than commercial—interpretation distinct from Japanese "Southern Barbarian Screens."

To the Chinese viewer, the Dutch were fearsome yet ultimately defeated, a perception reinforced by early Qing Dutch missions (particularly following the Paets mission in 1685–1687). Following the compositions of Suzhou New Year prints, the 'Dutch tribute' screens perpetuated a prejudiced Sino-barbarian dichotomy, projecting a distinct Sinocentric worldview onto their audience. This pursuit of masculine yet subordinate iconography reflected a significant shift in the political landscape: the Manchu suppression of the Three Feudatories and the annexation of Taiwan restored stability to war-torn southern China, catalyzing a pro-nomadic turn in Qing visual culture. Ironically, lacquer screens featuring Manchu hunting scenes emerged precisely in the southern regions that had been devastated by the Manchu conquest. Equating the Dutch with Manchu warriors thus followed a shift in the perception of the Manchus from being perceived as savage nomads to being regarded as formidable conquerors.

At its core lay the evolving attitudes of Han Chinese officials toward nomadic cultures and martial virtue, alongside their aspirations to serve the consolidated Manchu empire after Kangxi pacified the south and established of a new maritime frontier. The Dutch-themed screens were emotionally linked: Commissioned and consumed primarily by waterfront officials, these screens were not mere annotations of early Qing geopolitical transformations but an active medium to articulate their vision of a 'calm sea'—a symbolic order imposed through militarized alien representation. More importantly, these visual materials capture a pivotal moment when land-centered perspectives clashed with transoceanic histories, offering historians a fresh lens through which to examine how local agents—artisans, merchants, and officials—perceived both the shifting East Asian maritime order and the Qing empire's new frontier.

（責任編輯：陳卉秀）

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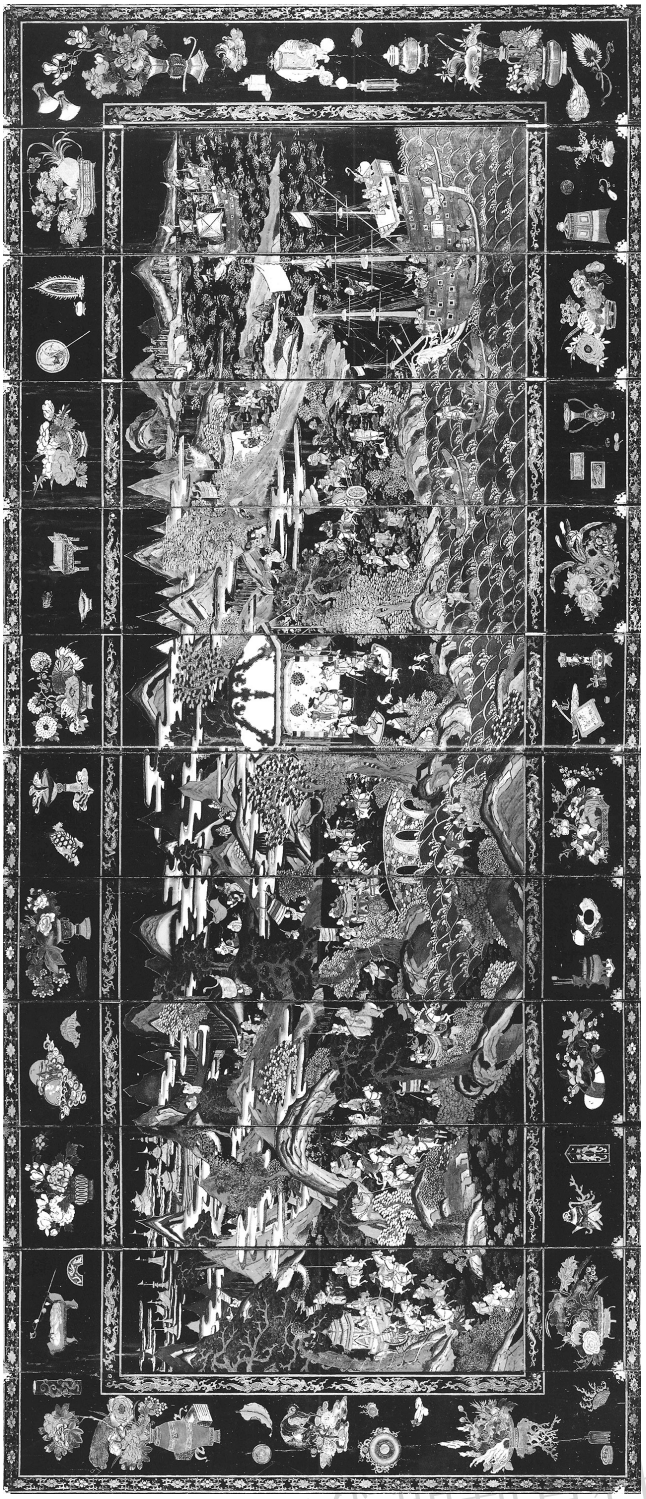


Fig. 1　Twelve-panel screen depicting an imagined Dutch realm, painted lacquer, produced in southern Fujian after 1683 (?), right half in the Museu do Oriente, Lisbon; left half in the Renato de Albuquerque Collection, Sintra.

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Fig. 2 Illustration depicting a Manchu warrior presenting the Jurchen leader Nikan Wailan's head (?–1587) to Nurhaci (r. 1616–1626).



Fig. 3 Dutch king and his subordinates, detail from the *Lisbon Screen*'s left half. Renato de Albuquerque Collection, Sintra.

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Fig. 4　Bent-legged seated Dutchman with a monkey, white-glaze porcelain, Dehua. Musée national des Arts asiatiques – Guimet, Paris.

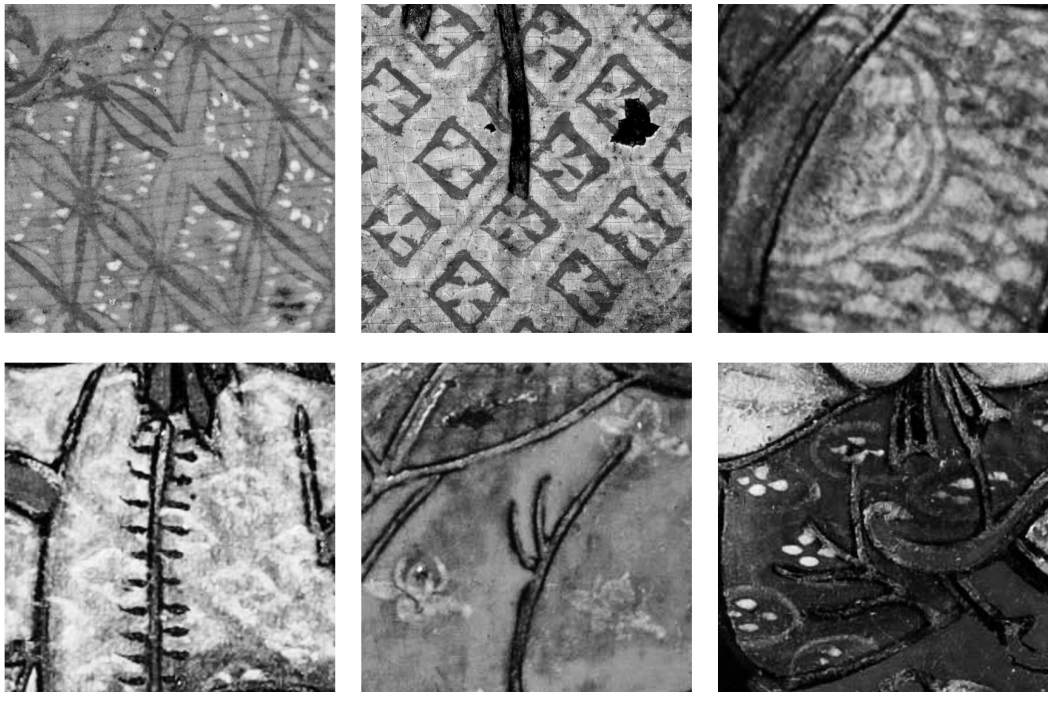


Fig. 5　Types of textile patterns on the Dutch garments. Upper row (from left to right): ball brocade pattern, honeycomb pattern, segmental wave pattern; lower row: variant of honeycomb pattern, lotus pattern, variant of honeycomb pattern (?).

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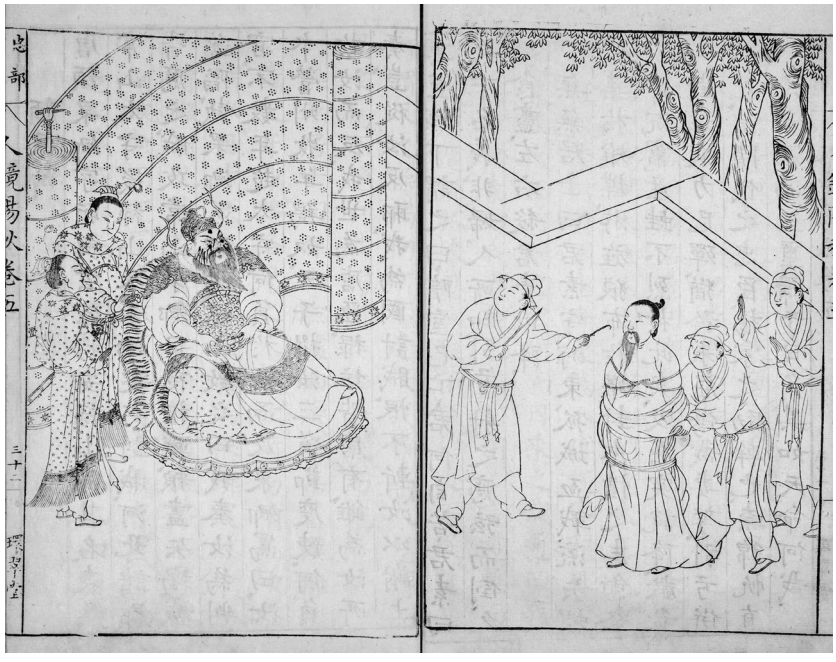


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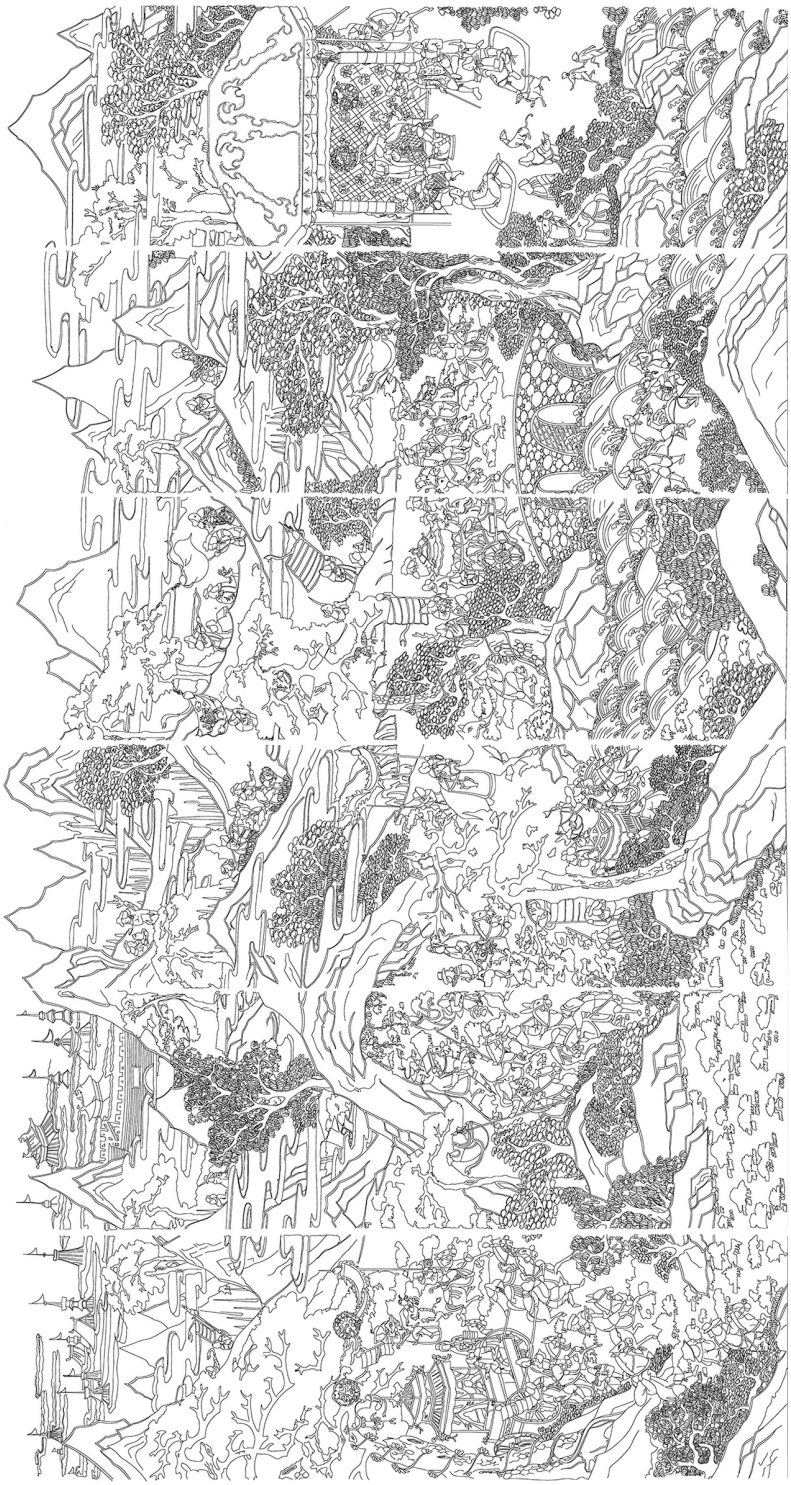


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Fig. 10 Dutch lion rider with attendants, white-glaze porcelain, Dehua, 1700 or before.

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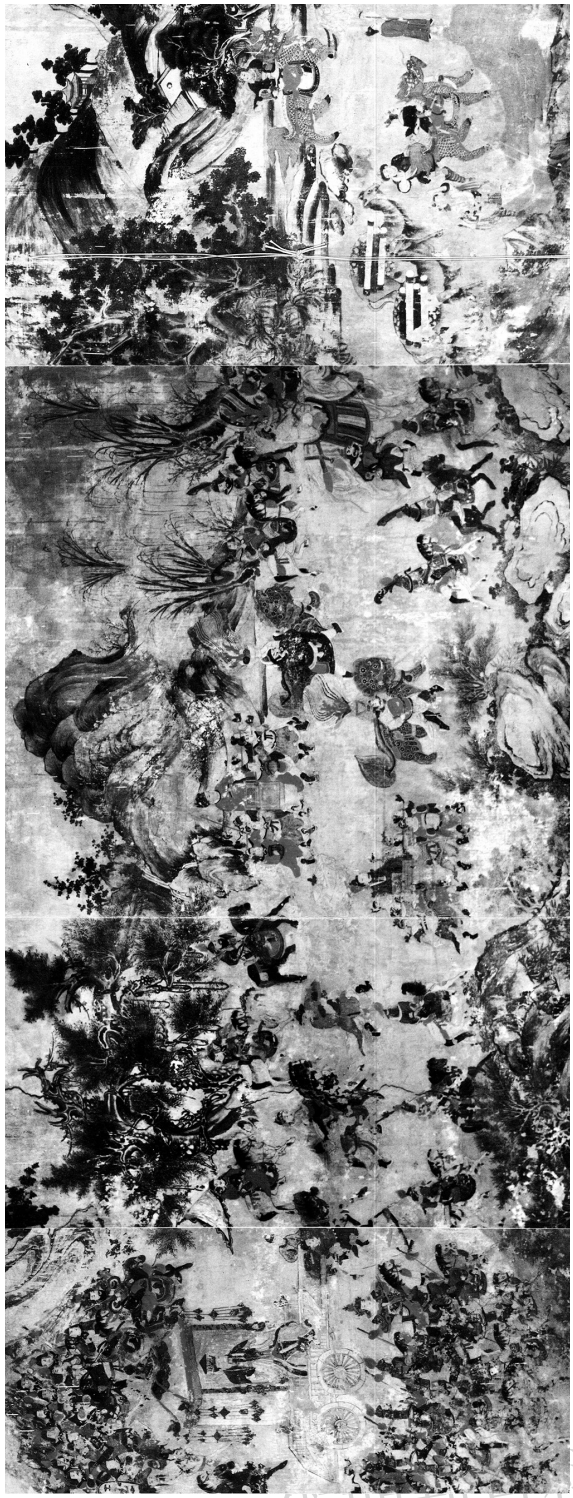


Fig. 11　Returning procession of the Emperor of Eastern Peak, detail from the Celestial Blessings Hall's mural, Dai Temple, Tai'an, Shandong.

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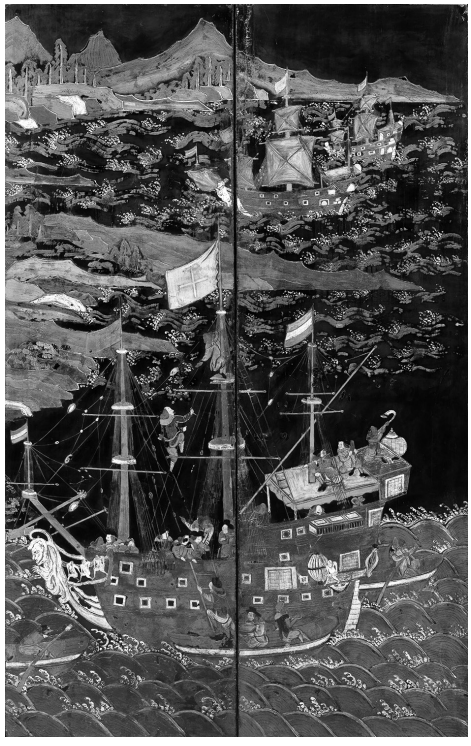


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Fig. 13 Two Dutchmen playing music, white-glaze porcelain, 1700 or earlier, Dehua. The British Museum, London.

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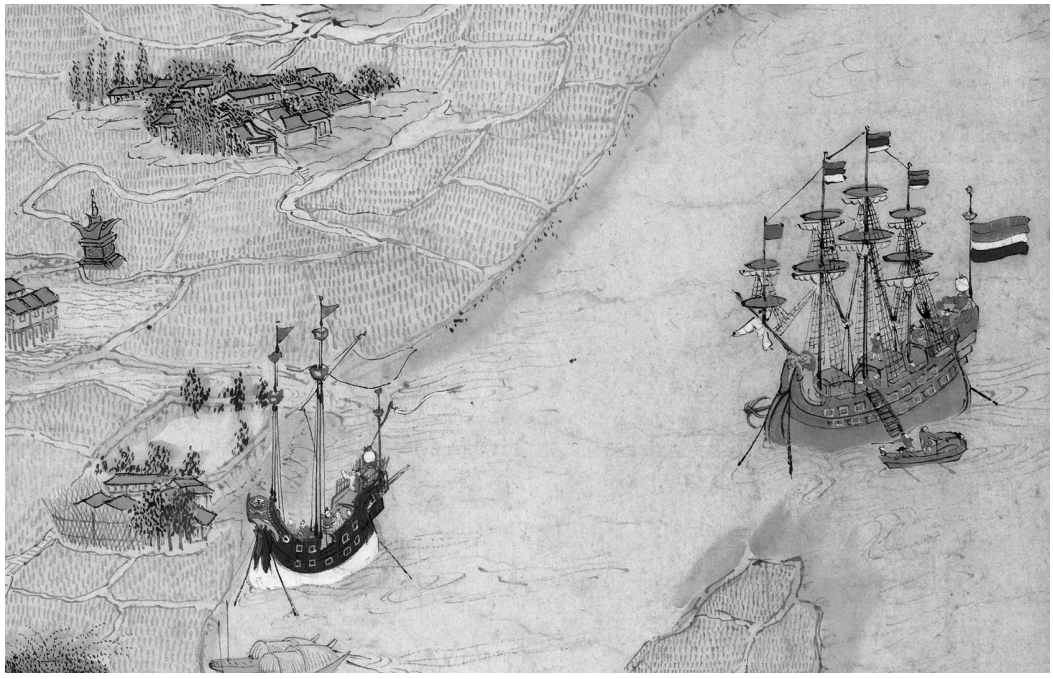


Fig. 14　Dutch *fluyt* 'Montfoort' at anchor in the Dinghai Bay, detail from: *View of Fuzhou*, after 1685. Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

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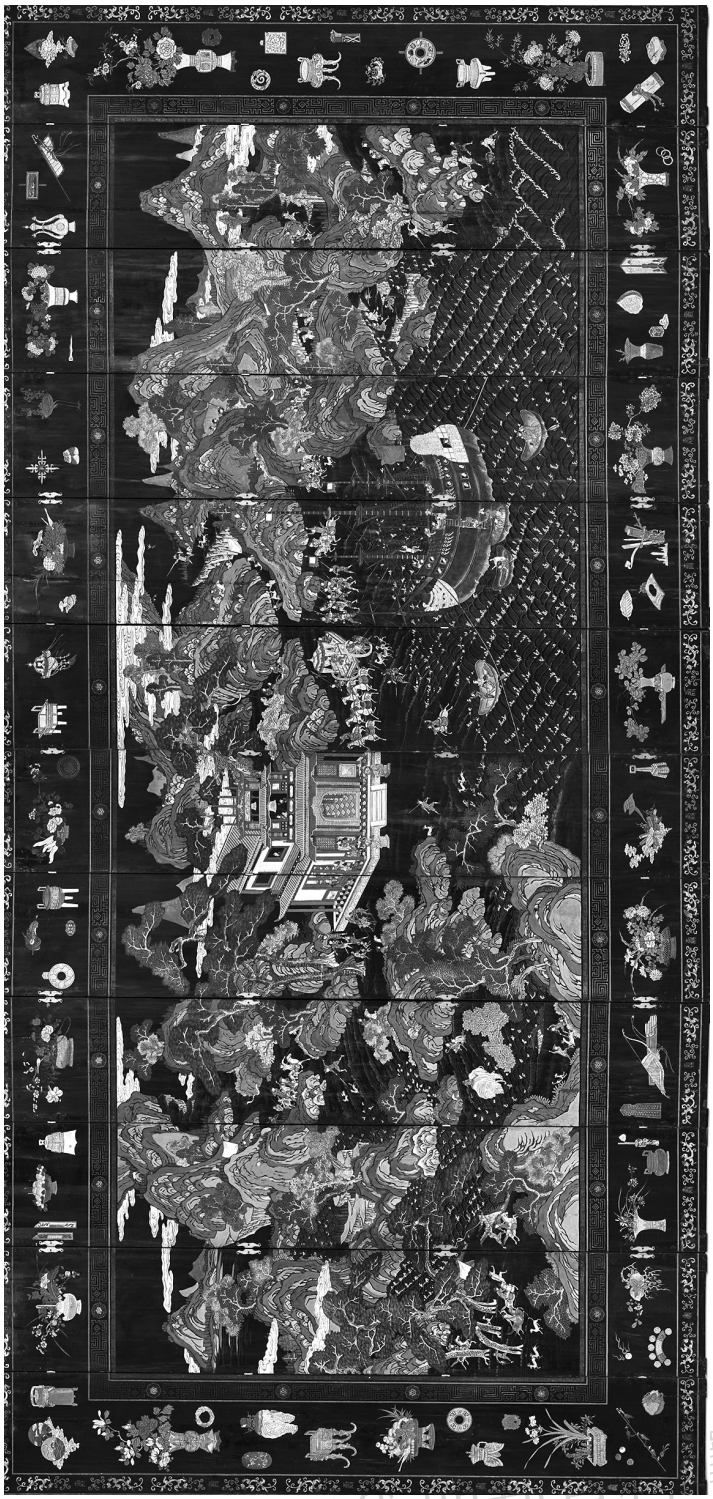


Fig. 15 Twelve-fold lacquer screen depicting a Dutch realm, produced in southern Fujian after 1683 (?). Previously in the Collection Rothschild.

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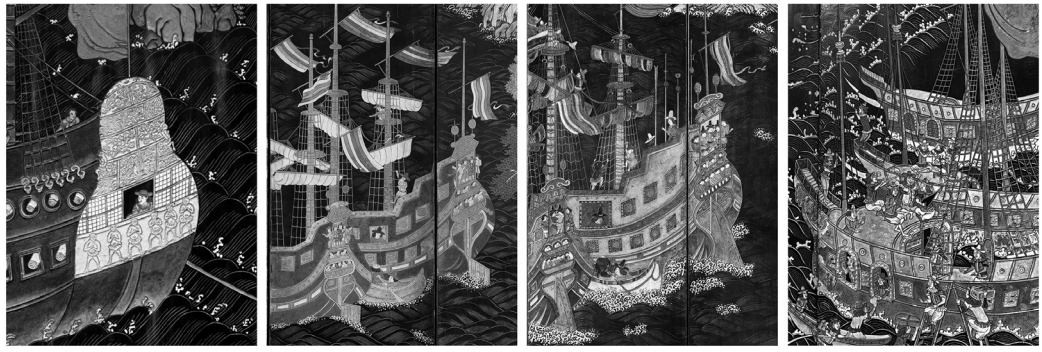


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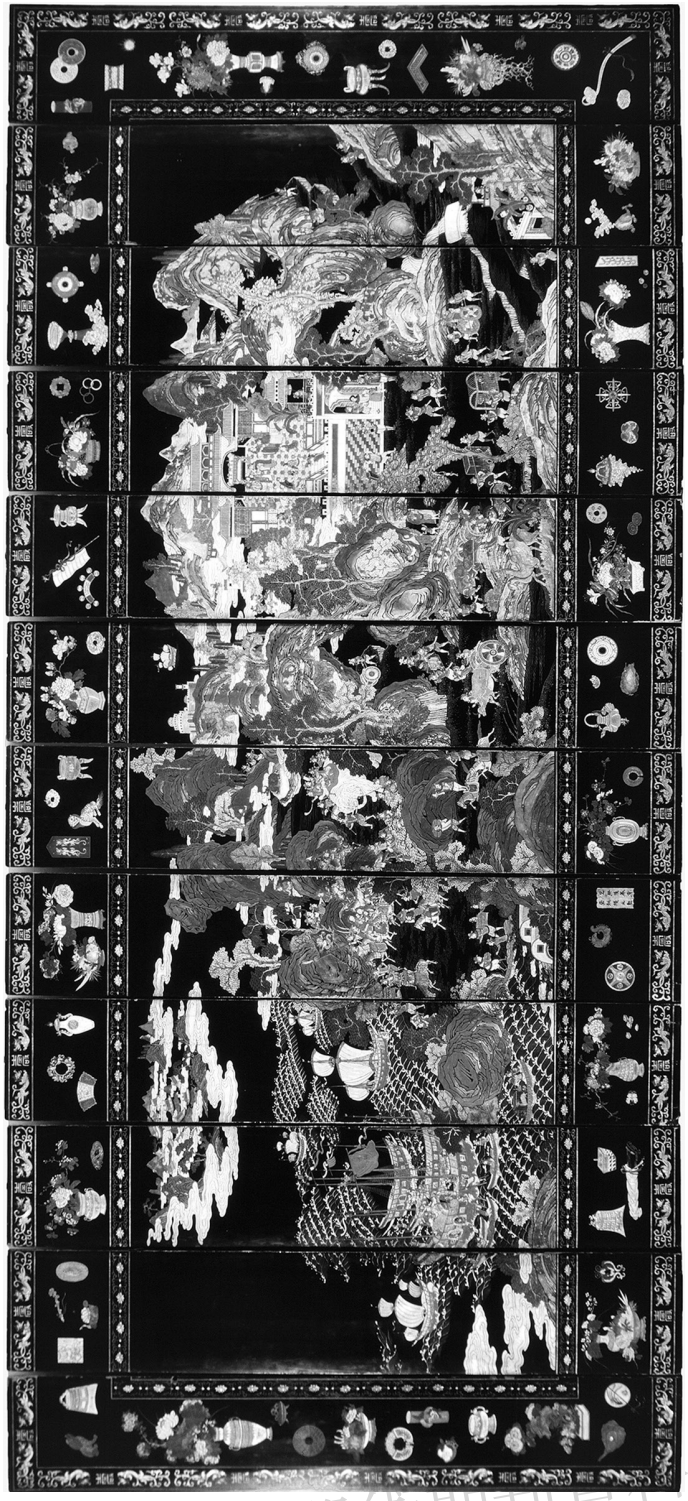


Fig. 18 Twelve-fold lacquer screen depicting Dutch offering tributes, produced in southern Fujian after 1683 (?). National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.

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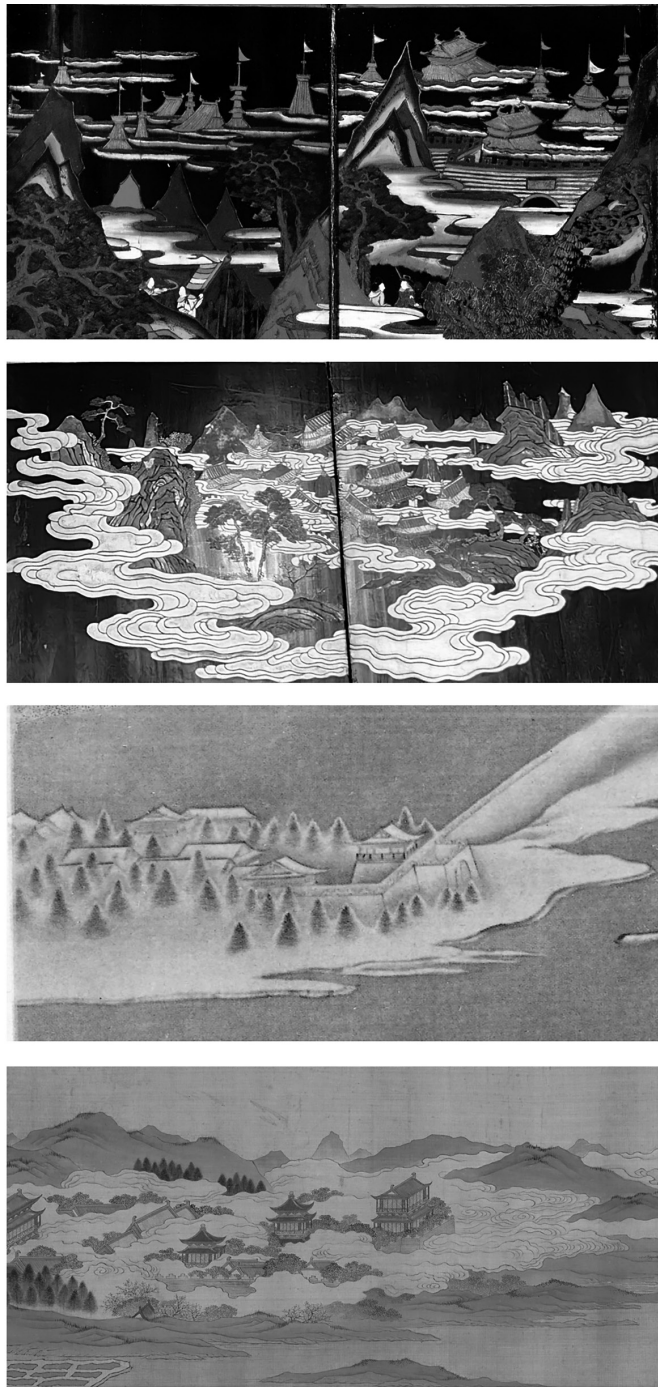


Fig. 19　Chinese cityscapes on the horizon in comparison: a. *Lisbon Screen*, b. *Copenhagen Screen, c. Eighteen Song scroll* (Nanjing copy), d. *Shanglin Park* scroll (Taipei; part of Figure 37).

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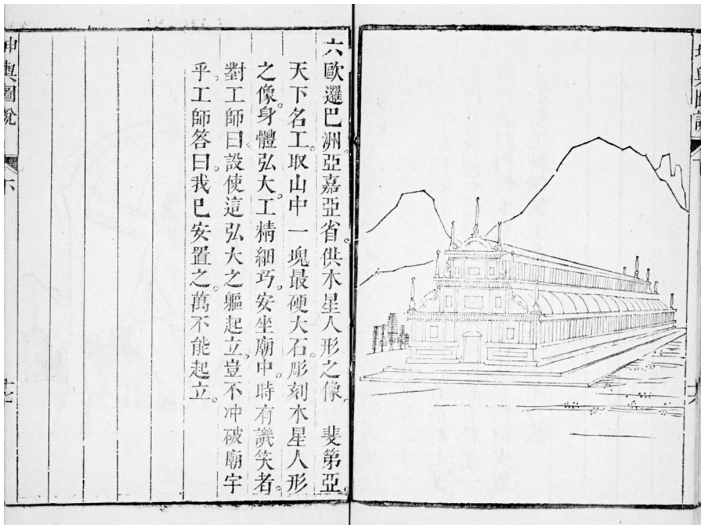

六歐邏巴洲亞嘉亞省。供木星人形之像。斐弟亞。天下名工。取山中一塊最硬大石。彫刻木星人形之像。身體弘大。工精細巧。安坐廟中。時有詆笑者。對工師曰。設使這弘大之軀起立。豈不冲破廟宇乎。工師答曰。我已安置之。萬不能起立。

Fig. 20 The Temple of Artemis, Ephesus, illustration from: Nan Huairen (Ferdinand Verbiest), *Kunyu tushuo* 坤輿圖說 (1674).



Fig. 21 Illustration 'Western Painting of a Distant View,' illustration from: Sun Yunqiu, *Jingshi* 鏡史 (1681).

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Fig. 22　Lü Yuntai, 'All States Bearing Tributes' (*Zhuguo jingong* 諸國進貢), Suzhou, second half of the 17th century. Umi-Mori Art Museum, Hiroshima.

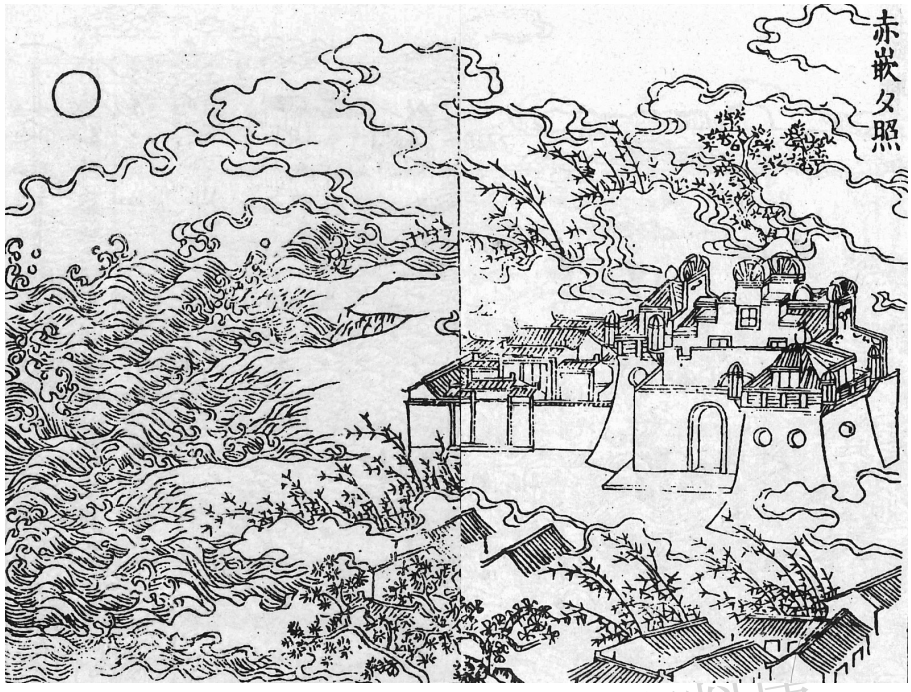


Fig. 23　Chikan (Fort Provintia) at Sunset.

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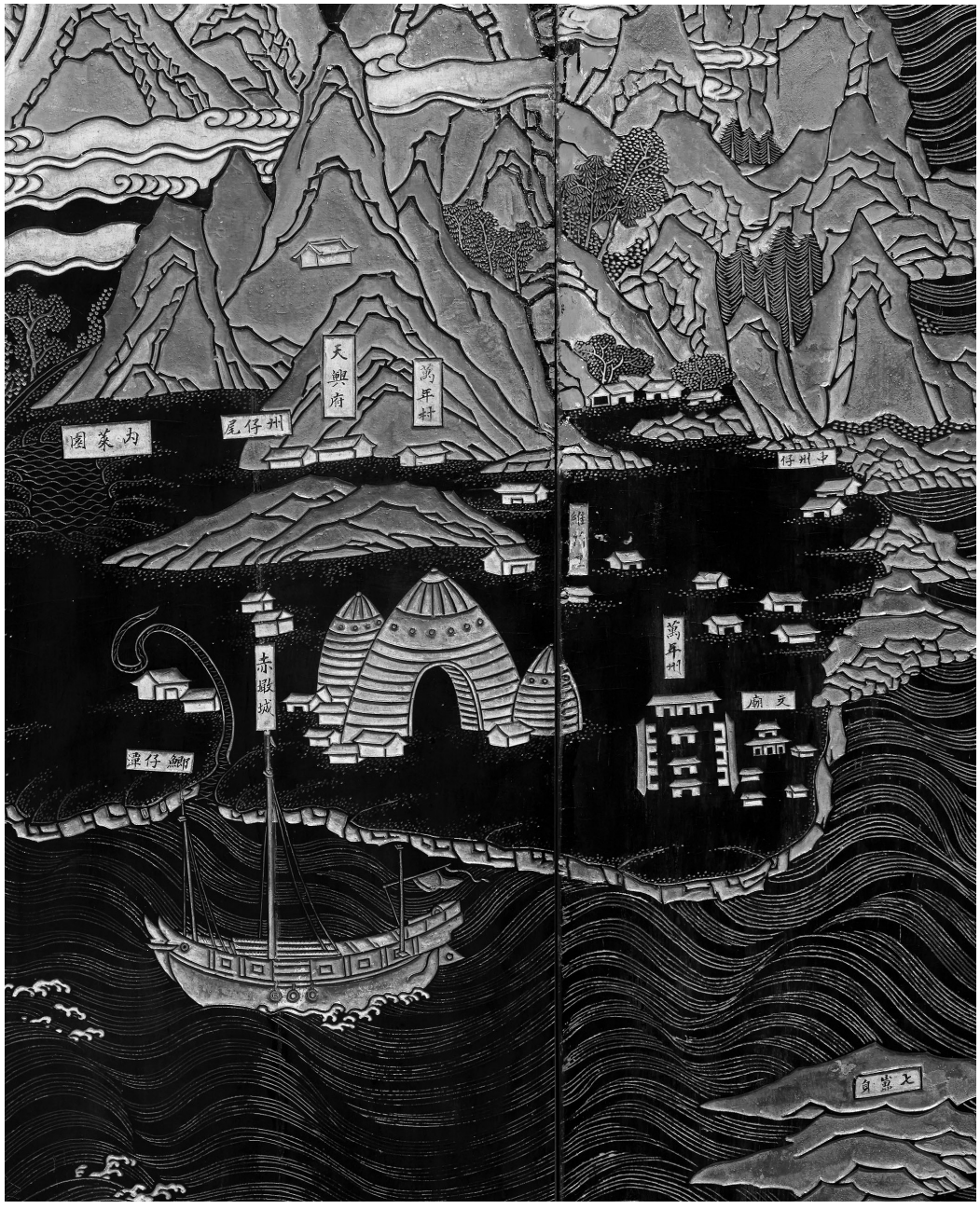


Fig. 24 Fort Provintia as gers. Detail from a twelve-fold Coromandel screen depicting the fort and military garrison in Tainan. The Shimao Maritime Silk Road Museum of Fujian, Quanzhou.

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Fig. 25　Oxcart as transportation vehicle. Detail from the twelve-fold lacquer screen depicting Dutch offering tributes. National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen.

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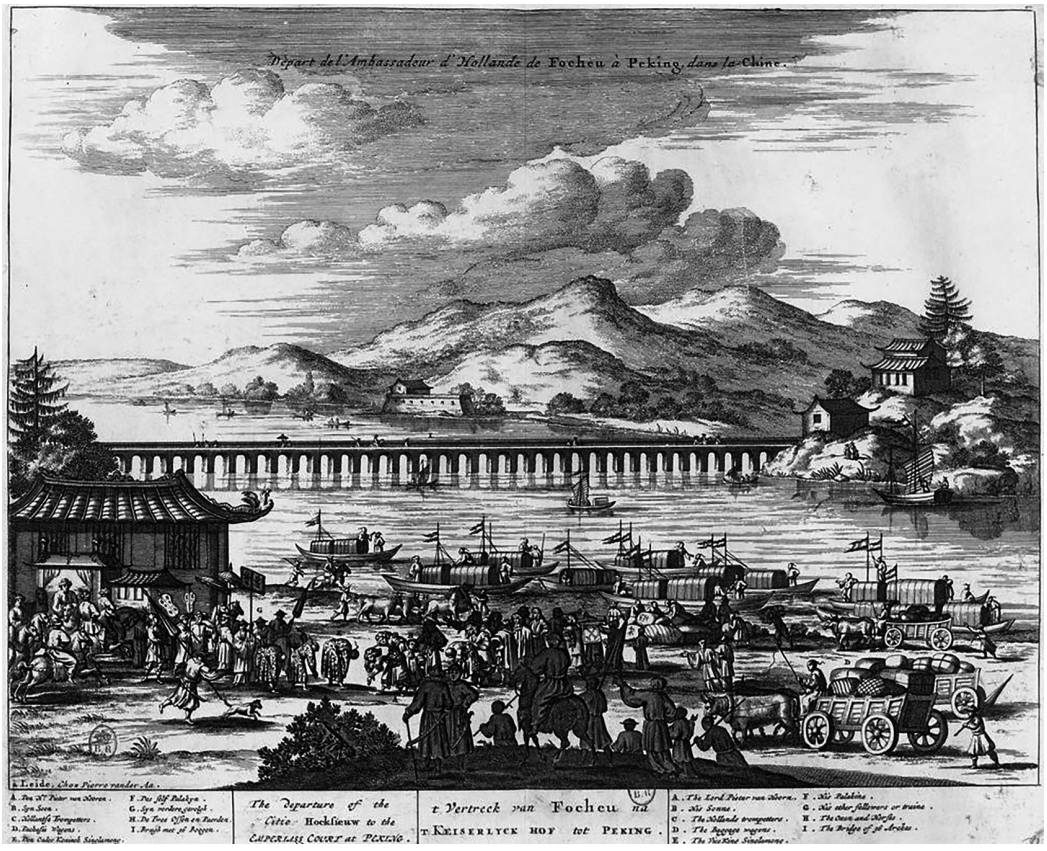


Fig. 26 Olfert Dapper, Dutch embassy's arrival at Nantai, Fuzhou.

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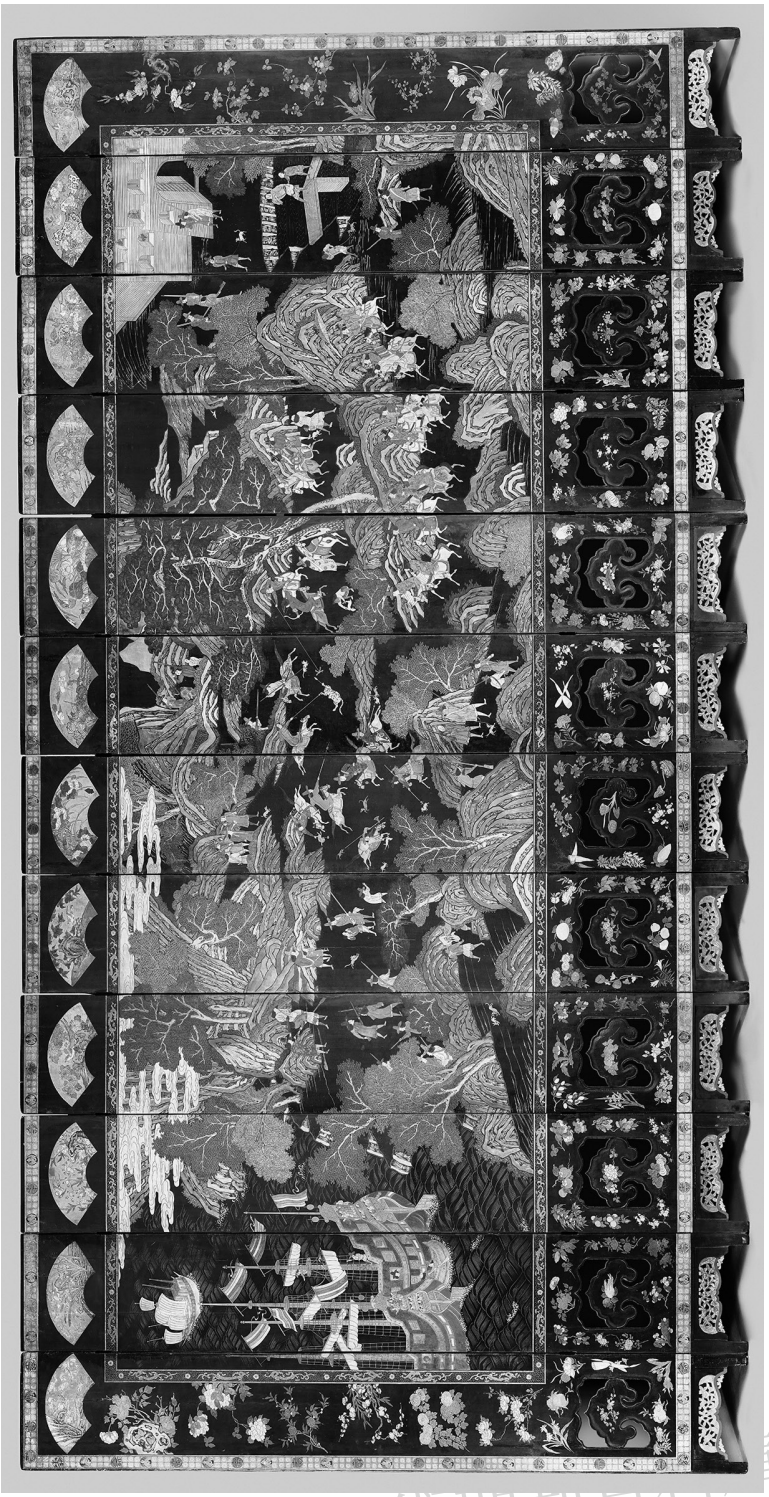


Fig. 27　Twelve-fold lacquer screen depicting Dutch hunting, Coromandel lacquer, greater Suzhou region, c. 1685–1700. Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

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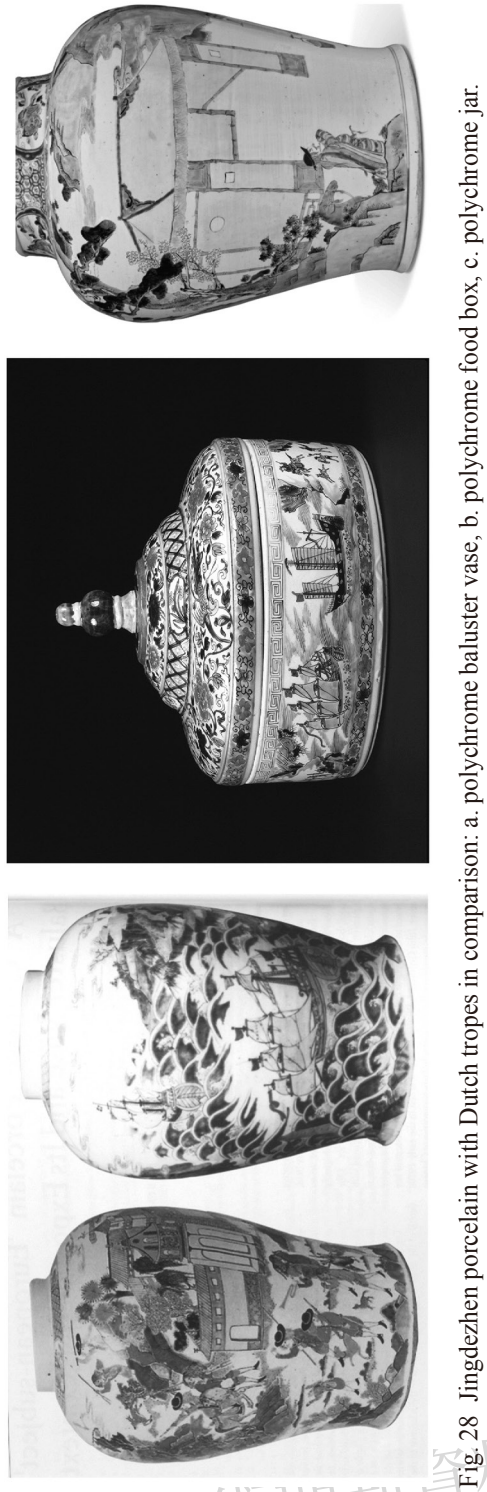


Fig. 28 Jingdezhen porcelain with Dutch tropes in comparison: a. polychrome baluster vase, b. polychrome food box, c. polychrome jar.

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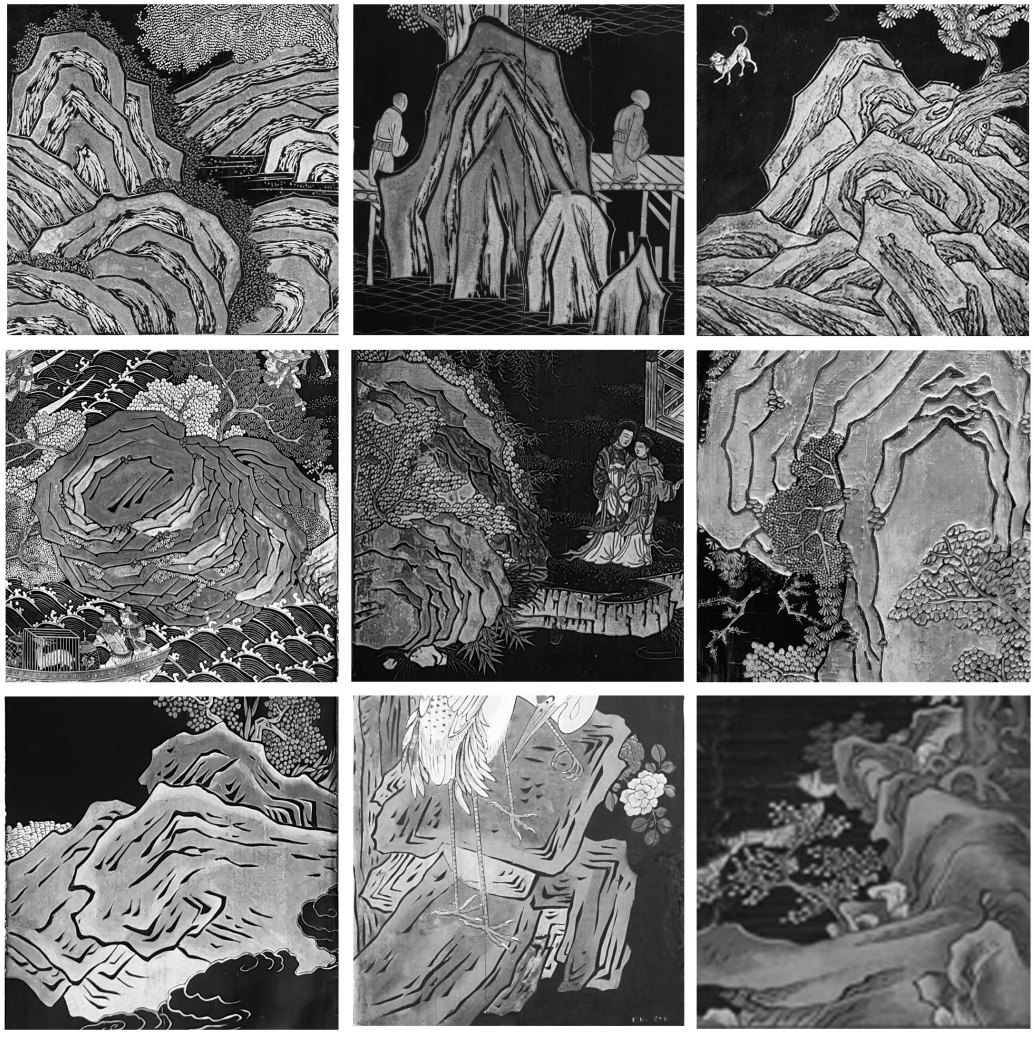


Fig. 29　Carving styles of the rocks in comparison (from top to bottom): a. *Amsterdam Screen*, Amsterdam lacquer room (since 1696 in Leeuwarden, now reinstalled), *MFA Boston Screen*; b. *Copenhagen Screen, Cologne Screen* (1671/1672), *Lorient Screen* (part of Figure 40); c. *Ham House Screen*, National Museum of Denmark (since 1688 in Denmark), *Metropolitan Museum Screen* (1689/90).

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Fig. 30 Right half of the twelve-fold screen depicting Dutch hunting, produced in Guangdong, in situ in Ham House, Richmond.

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Fig. 31　Blue-and-white vase depicting Manchu hunt, ca. 1680, Jingdezhen.

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Fig. 32 The Dutch king and his associates enjoying the music, detail from the Ham House Screen, Richmond. .

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Fig. 33　Stanza 2, detail from: Qiu Ying, attr., *Shibapai tu* 十八拍圖. National Palace Museum, Taipei.

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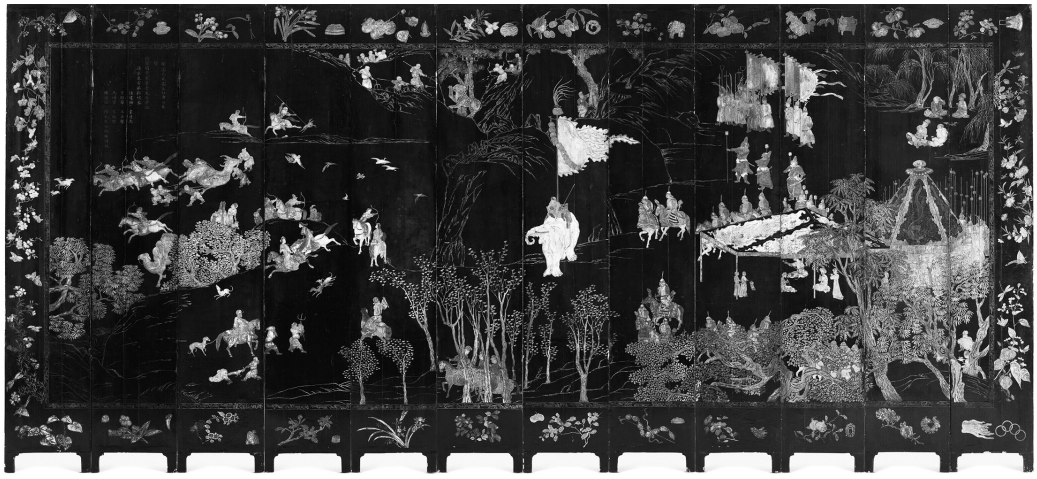


Fig. 34 Twelve-panel screen depicting Wenji Departs the Frontier, inscription dated 1659, formerly owned by the Duke of Westminster and the Ann & Gorden Getty Collection, now in the Wynn Resorts.



Fig. 35 Twelve-fold table screen depicting Manchu hunting, second half of the seventeenth century, formerly in a private collection in Rhineland, Germany, now in the Collection of Sun Wenjiang, Qingdao, China.

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Fig. 36　Han-attired woman with her attendant, detail from the *Rhineland Screen*.

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Fig. 37 Riverside hunting, detail from: Qiu Ying, attr., *Shanglin tu* 上林圖, Suzhou workshop painting. National Palace Museum, Taipei.



Fig. 38 Waterside hunting, detail from: Anonymous, *Jōrin-fu no Zu* 上林賦之図, 1808. Tokyo National Museum, Tokyo.

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Fig. 39　Scene of encircling hunt: a. *Rhineland Screen* (upper), b. *Amsterdam Screen* (lower)

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Fig. 40 Han-attired women shooting a goose (reminiscent of stanza 9 ‘writing home’ of the *Eighteen Songs* scroll), produced in southern Fujian, later seventeenth century. Musée de la Compagnie des Indes, Lorient.

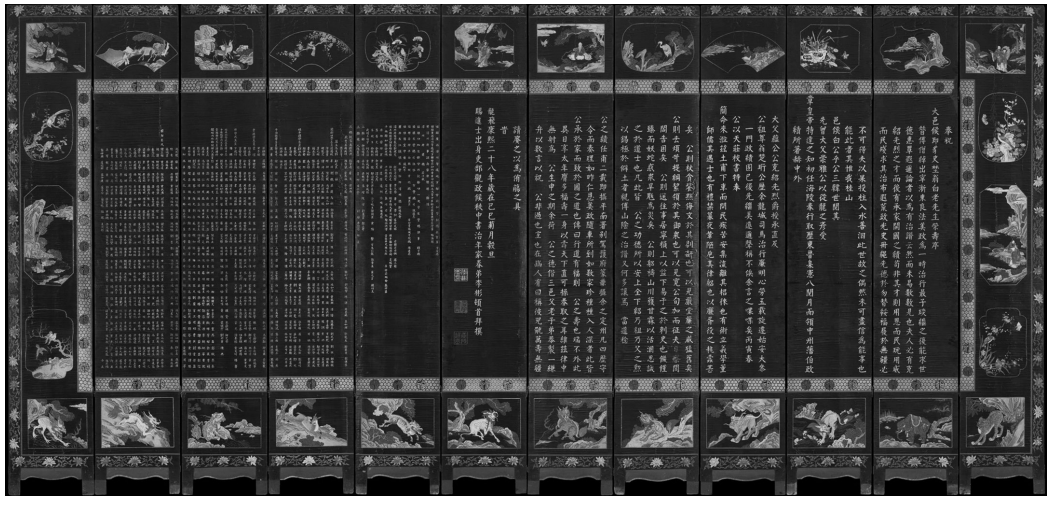


Fig. 41 The birthday essay engraved on a twelve-fold screen, produced by Feng Langgong 馮朗公 in Foshan 佛山 (Guangdong), 1689–1690, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

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漆屏風上的荷蘭人：海上相遇、匠作網絡與十七世紀中國藝術中的「狄夷轉向」

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在十七世紀的最後二十年間，一種描繪荷蘭人形象的科羅曼多漆屏在中國東南沿海一帶蓬勃發展。藝術史論述通常將此類屏風上描繪的武裝船隻、火槍手、貿易商品以及蜿蜒的海岸景觀，與日本「南蠻屏風」聯繫起來。本研究挑戰了將這些荷蘭人主題屏風視為日本屏風仿製品的主流觀點，主張其製作實依託於明清職業畫家、刻工與瓷器畫工之間共享的圖像語彙。將荷蘭人塑造為精通航海、擁有先進造船與火炮技術的民族，或是塑造為可與滿洲勇士匹敵的馬背獵人，反映了十七世紀東亞水域中中國人對荷蘭東印度公司霸權的認知。與日本的同類屏風相反，這些描繪在本質上側重軍事性，而非商業性。本研究進一步揭示，此種尚武圖像的推崇，是在清朝平定三藩之亂（1673–1681）與收復臺灣（1683）的背景下出現的。這些事件恢復了飽經戰亂的南方地區的穩定，並促成了清初視覺文化中一個決定性的「狄夷轉向」。更具體而言，荷蘭人主題與對「海波不揚」的渴求，是作為對帝國新海疆的平行回應而出現的。此一轉向的核心，在於漢人官員對遊牧文化及尚武精神的態度轉變，以及他們在新帝國中的抱負。

關鍵詞：科羅曼多屏風、荷蘭東印度公司、海洋史、康熙時期、臺灣

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