

Edited by Martina Siebert, Kai Jun Chen, and
Dorothy Ko

Making the Palace Machine Work

*Mobilizing People, Objects, and Nature in the
Qing Empire*

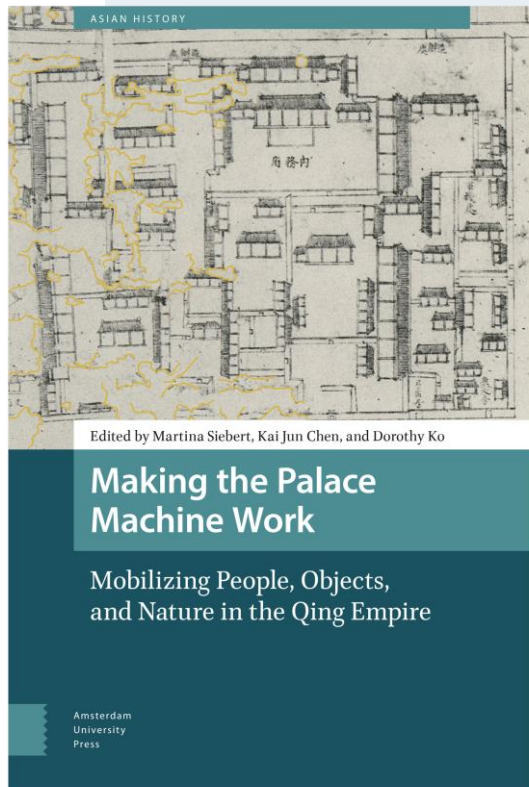
Making the Palace Machine Work: Mobilizing People, Objects, and Nature in the Qing Empire brings the studies of institutions, labour, and material cultures to bear on the history of science and technology by tracing the workings of the Imperial Household Department (*Neiwufu*) in the Qing court and empire. An enormous apparatus that employed 22,000 men and women at its heyday, the Department operated a "machine" with myriad moving parts. The first part of the book portrays the people who kept it running, from technical experts to menial servants, and scrutinises the paper trails they left behind. Part II uncovers the working principles of the machine by following the production chains of some of its most splendid products: gilded statues, jade, porcelain, and textiles. Part III examines the complex task of managing living organisms and natural environments, including lotus plants grown in imperial ponds in Beijing, fresh medicines sourced from disparate regions, and tribute elephants from Southeast Asia.

BIOGRAPHY

Martina Siebert works as subject librarian at the East Asia department of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin and as independent scholar.

Kai Jun Chen is Assistant Professor at Brown University. He specialises in the history of imperial institutions, handicraft technology, and material culture studies.

A native of Hong Kong, Dorothy Ko is Professor of History at Barnard College, Columbia University. She is a cultural historian of early modern China whose research and publication focus on gender, technology, and material culture.



Asian History
July 2021
334 pages, 22 b/w, 13 colour illustrations
Hardback
156 x 234 mm
€109.00 / £99.00 / \$136.00
Open Access

ISBN 9789463720359
e-ISBN 9789048553228
BISAC HIS008000 / HIS037060 / TEC056000
BIC HBJF / GM

KEYWORDS
China, Qing Court, Material culture, Science & technology, Imperial Household Department

To order this book visit www.aup.nl

Distribution Rest of World via Ingram Publisher Services UK (formerly NBNI Ltd.) | www.distribution.nbni.co.uk
Distribution North America via Baker & Taylor Publisher Services | www.btpubservices.com

Amsterdam University Press
Nieuwe Prinsengracht 89
1018 VR Amsterdam

T +31 (0)20 420 00 50
info@aup.nl
marketing@aup.nl

www.aup.nl
facebook.com/AUPAcademic
twitter.com/AmsterdamUPress

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Map of Imperial and Forbidden City

Map of Beijing and outskirts

Map of Qing China (1820)

Acknowledgments

Conventions for the Notation of Time, Weights, and Measures

Note on Translation

List of Figures, Tables, Charts, and Maps

Introduction

Part I. Operating the Machine: Personnel and Paper Trails

Vignette essay. Moving Pieces: On the Reuse of Interior Decoration Objects in Qing Palaces (Shuxian Zhang)

1. Working the Qing Palace Machine: The Servants' Perspective (Christine Moll-Murata)

2. Manager or Craftsman: Skillful Bannermen of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912) (Kai Jun Chen)

3. Kupiao and the Accounting System of the Imperial Household Workshops (Yijun Wang and Kyoungjin Bae)

Part II. Producing the Court: Materials and Artefacts

Vignette essay. The Story of An Image: Ding Guanpeng's 'Ultimate Bliss' and the Auspiciousness of Reproduction (Qiong Zhang)

4. Piecing Shards Together: The Uses and Manufacturing of Imperially Porcelain (Guangyao Wang)

5. Resplendent Innovations: Fire Gilding Techniques at the Qing Court (Hui-min Lai and Te-cheng Su)

6. Transporting Jade: Objects, Ecology and Local Bureaucracy in Qing Xinjiang (Yulian Wu)

Part III. Mobilizing Nature: Plants and Animals

Vignette essay. Decluttering: On the Classification of Objects at the Imperial Household Department (Elif Akçetin)

7. Growing and Organizing Lotus in Qing Imperial Spaces: Interlocking Cycles of Money and Nature (Martina Siebert)

8. The Medicine Supply System of the Qing Court (Xueling Guan)

9. When There Is Peace, There Are Elephants (Hui-chun Yu)

Coda

Bibliography

Index

To order this book visit www.aup.nl

Distribution Rest of World via Ingram Publisher Services UK (formerly NBNi Ltd.) | www.distribution.nbni.co.uk
Distribution North America via Baker & Taylor Publisher Services | www.btpubservices.com

Amsterdam University Press
Nieuwe Prinsengracht 89
1018 VR Amsterdam

T +31 (0)20 420 00 50
info@aup.nl
marketing@aup.nl

www.aup.nl
facebook.com/AUPAcademic
twitter.com/AmsterdamUPress