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## Fine Chinese Works of Art and Snuff Bottles

**Sale:** NY7278 | **Location:** New York

**Auction Dates:** Session 1: Mon, 22 Mar 99 2:00 PM

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### LOT 424

#### The Conquests of the Emperor Qianlong

60,000—80,000 USD

**Lot Sold.** Hammer Price with Buyer's Premium: 46,000 USD

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### DESCRIPTION

#### The Conquests of the Emperor Qianlong

GROUP OF ELEVEN ENGRAVINGS AFTER CASTIGLIONE, ET AL

1769-74

from a set of sixteen engravings commemorating the Emperor's military victories during the period from 1755 to 1760, depicting scenes of the various battles, surrenders of the enemy, and a banquet feast honoring the victors, each numbered, attributed to the artist and the engraver, and dated, the group comprising no. 1, (Receiving the Surrender of the Ili); no. 2, (Forcing the Encampment at Gādān-Ola); no. 4, (The Victory of Khorgos); no. 5, (The Battle of Khurungui); no. 8, (The Big Victory of Qurman); no. 10, (The Battle of Qos-Qulag); no. 11, (The Battle of Arcul); no. 13, (The Khan of Badakhshan Surrenders); no. 14, (Presenting the Prisoners taken during the Pacification of the Muslim tribes to the Emperor); no. 15, (The Emperor goes to the suburb in order to receive news of the officers and the soldiers who have succeeded against the Muslim tribes); and no. 16, (The Emperor gives a Victory Banquet for the Officers and Soldiers who distinguished themselves in battle); all in gilt frames each etching approximately 20 3/4 by 35 1/2in. (52.7 by 90.2cm.), with frame 29 1/4 by 44 1/2in. (74.3 by 113cm.)

The engravings are documented in a monograph by Mich 3/16le Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens, *Gravures des Conqu 7/16tes de l'Empereur de Chine K'ien-long au MusEe Guimet*, 1969. The titles given are translations of those given by M. Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens, which he based on translations from the Chinese by Paul Pelliot, 1921. Each etching and description is identified by its corresponding P.-t'Serstevens number. Numbers 3, 6, 7, 9, and 12 are not included in this group.

The Emperor Qianlong commissioned the original set of sixteen engravings of his conquests on July 13, 1765, for the central hall of the Palace of Beijing. The drawings were prepared in China by four Jesuits: Giuseppe Castiglione, the director of the project, Jean-Denis Attiret, Ignatius Sichelbarth (or Sickelpart), and Jean Damasc 3/16ne. By recommendation of Louis-Joseph Le Febvre, head of the French Jesuit mission to China, they were then sent to Paris, where the engravings were executed by eight artists under the direction of Charles-Nicolas Cochin of the AcadEmie Royale at the Court of Louis XVI. This commission was considered of utmost importance, as it potentially offered France a means of leaving a favorable impression with the Emperor and thus gaining advantages in view of commerce and missioning, directed against the Dutch, Portuguese, and English. Qianlong's commission was for an edition of one hundred copies only; however, to ensure the safe receipt of at least 100 copies in China, an edition of 200 copies was actually printed. To reduce the risk of loss at sea, they were distributed on two ships in lots of 100 impressions each, and returned to China in three shipments. The entire edition was received in China by 1775 for which the Compagnie FranAaise des Indes in Canton was paid the sum of 240000 livres. Only a very limited number of extra copies was printed for the French King, his ministers and some members of the court, and the greatest precaution was taken that no copies remained with the engravers or printers to ensure exclusivity to the Chinese Emperor. For the details of the execution, see Pirazzoli-t'Serstevens, pp. 9-12.



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#### 424 The Conquests of the Emperor Qianlong

GROUP OF ELEVEN ENGRAVINGS

AFTER CASTIGLIONE, ET AL

1769-74

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**SOTHEBY'S**

New York March 22 and 23, 1999