Making the Qianlong Emperor's Private Garden: Imperialization of the Lion Grove in Eighteenth-Century China

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the imperialization of the Lion Grove, a time-honored scenic site in Suzhou, during the reign of the Qianlong emperor (r. 1736-95) in the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). Qianlong visited the garden during five of his Southern Inspection Tours and initiated a rewriting of the garden's history in eighteenth-century China. In the first section, I will elaborate how, in addition to physical reconstruction, Qianlong transformed the Lion Grove from a private garden to an imperial landscape through naming, gifting, and replicating the site. This section binds together an array of literary and visual materials: Qianlong's imperial poems, calligraphy (displayed on a titleboard and a stele), and paintings regarding the Lion Grove, as well as a pictorial representation and architectural replications of the garden commanded by the emperor. In addition, Suzhou's local government and denizens were profoundly engaged in the process of imperializing the Lion Grove. Section 2 will elaborate the role played by the provincial authority through analyzing the Lion Grove images and texts in a record of Qianlong's southern tours and gazetteers of Suzhou Prefecture. Meanwhile, Suzhou's popular publications, primarily a Suzhou perspective print and a travel guide, and the booming tourism tremendously expedited the imperialization of the Lion Grove. My analysis will center on the ways these sources legitimized and broadcasted Qianlong's imperial authority over the landscape and registered the Lion Grove in his geographical, cultural, and political territories.

This thesis challenges the conventional categorization of Chinese gardens and yields an innovative perspective from which we can understand both the famed sites in

south China and Qing imperial landscape. More importantly, the imperialization of the Lion Grove epitomizes the strategies employed by a Manchu emperor to realize his cultural and political rulership over an empire with a vast territorial domain and multi-ethnic traditions. Through adroitly employing cultural forms mastered by Han Chinese for centuries, Qianlong claimed and reinforced his cultural and political leadership in China proper. Furthermore, through an investigation of a wide range of visual objects and the reproduction and circulation of emperor-centered texts and images among various surfacescapes, this paper generates a nuanced account of Qing visuality during the Qianlong reign.

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INTRODUCTION

What is a Qing imperial landscape? How could a Qing emperor claim the ownership of a private garden in south China through imperial poems, calligraphy, pictorial representations, and architectural replications? How did a Manchu ruler subtly orchestrate the varied cultural traditions valued by the Han Chinese as a means of legitimizing and broadcasting his rulership over an empire with a vast territorial domain and multiple ethno-cultural traditions? This thesis proposes answers to these questions through investigating the transformation of the Lion Grove 獅子林 (Shizi lin) from a private garden to an imperial landscape during the reign of the Qianlong emperor 乾隆 (1711-1799, r. 1736-1795) in eighteenth-century China.

Stephen Whiteman defines the term "imperial landscapes" in the Qing context as "all varieties of designed landscapes constructed by the court for imperial use."[1] They were the primary sites of court activities and were used by Qing emperors in a broad variety of ways due to their potential as stages for imperial performance and their use-value as real properties.[2] Drawing upon Whiteman's definition, I suggest that a Qing imperial landscape is not merely real estate erected by the court and owned by the emperor for imperial use. We can also understand those privately owned gardens, temples,

[1] Stephen H. Whiteman, "From Upper Camp to Mountain Estate: Recovering Historical Narratives in Qing Imperial Landscapes," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes* 33, no. 4 (2013): 272n1.

[2] Ibid., 250.

and palaces visited by the emperor on his imperial tours and retreats as imperial landscapes with a broader cultural and political concern.

Located in Suzhou, the longstanding cultural and economic centre of Jiangnan,[3] the Lion Grove was originally constituted by the Chan Buddhist monk Tianru 天如 (1286-1354) and his disciples in 1342 during the Yuan dynasty (1271-1368). The garden was a quite famed location that gathered local sophisticates during the Yuan-Ming period, when literary eulogies and pictorial representations of the site widely surfaced. By the end of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), the garden fell into a state of disrepair. In the early Qing, a local elite family in Suzhou acquired the garden as a private property and left it unattended.[4]

The Lion Grove's association with the Yuan painting master Ni Zan 倪瓚 (1306-1374) has added to its reputation. As a member of the renowned "Four Masters of the Yuan," Ni Zan's artistic achievement and lofty character have been celebrated by Han Chinese elites for centuries.[5] Popular imagination claiming that Ni Zan laid out the

[3] "Jiangnan" literally means "south of the (Yangtze) River" and refers to the geo-cultural region that straddles the boundary of Jiangsu and Zhejiang provinces. For the political, economic, and cultural significance of Jiangnan to the Qing empire, see Michael G. Chang, "The Emperor Qianlong's Tours of Southern China: Painting, Poetry, and the Politics of Spectacle," *The Asia-Pacific Journal* 12, no. 8 (February 23, 2015): par. 2, http://apjjf.org/2015/13/8/Michael-G.-Chang/4288.html.

[4] For the history of the Lion Grove prior to Qianlong's visits, see Chen Congzhou, ed., *Zhongguo yuanlin jianshang cidian* (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 2001), 37-38; Wei Jiazan, *Suzhou gudian yuanlin shi* (Shanghai: Shanghai sanlian shudian, 2005), 167-174; Nancy Berliner, "Gardens for Emperors and Scholars," in *The Emperor's Private Paradise: Treasures from the Forbidden City*, ed. Nancy Berliner (Salem, MA: Peabody Essex Museum; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 59.

[5] David Ake Sensabaugh, "The Lion Grove in Space and Time," in *Bridges to Heaven: Essays on East Asian Art in Honor of Professor Wen C. Fong*, vol. II, eds. Jerome

garden as his retreat and that the garden was designed in the style of his paintings prevailed at the end of the seventeenth century and the beginning of the eighteenth century.[6] Ni Zan was the pivotal figure that connected Qianlong to the garden, as Qianlong's knowledge of the garden stemmed from a Lion Grove scroll attributed to Ni Zan (Fig. 1). A fervid admirer of Ni Zan and his art, Qianlong acquired the scroll in 1744 and credited it as *shangdeng* 上等 (the supreme level) in his imperial art catalogue *Shiqu baoji* 石渠寶笈 (*Precious Book Box of the Stone Drain*).[7] Qianlong was not aware of the contemporary existence of the garden until his second Southern Inspection Tour to Jiangnan in 1757. He then immediately paid a visit, and the Lion Grove afterwards was stipulated a routine destination in his successive southern tours (in 1762, 1765, 1780, and 1784 respectively).[8] The emperor's touring initiated a rewriting of the garden's history, singlehandedly reviving the Lion Grove from its waning days during early Qing and putting the site back into the cultural territory of Qing China.

My thesis examines the Lion Grove during the Qianlong reign, arguing that forces from different echelons in society—the emperor and his court, the local government, and the local society—transformed the site from a private garden into an imperial landscape

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Silbergeld, Dora C.Y. Ching, Judith G. Smith, and Alfreda Murck (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 643.

[6] Ibid., 647.

[7] David Ake Sensabaugh, "Suitable for Sons and Grandsons: The Qing Emperors and the Imperial Collection of Calligraphy and Painting," in *The Last Emperor's Collection: Masterpieces of Painting and Calligraphy from the Liaoning Provincial Museum*, ed. J. May Lee Barrett (New York: China Institute Gallery, 2008), 24-25.

[8] Zhang Hongxing, *The Qianlong Emperor: Treasures from the Forbidden City* (Edinburgh: National Museums of Scotland, 2002), 95.

in eighteenth-century China. The primary visual sources to be discussed include: a titleboard and a stele in the garden with Qianlong's imperial calligraphy; the Lion Grove scroll attributed to Ni Zan and a one-to-one copy done by Qianlong during one of his tours; the *Shilin quanjing tu* 獅林全景圖 (*Complete View of the Lion Grove*) by a scholar-artist Qian Weicheng 錢維城 (1720-1772); a painting depicting Qianlong in one Lion Grove replication in north China; the Lion Grove illustrations in the *Nanxun shengdian* 南巡盛典 (*The Grand Record of Southern Tours*) and *Suzhou mingsheng tuyong* 蘇州名勝圖詠 (*Illustrated Odes to Suzhou's Famous Sites*); and a Suzhou perspective print titled *Gusu mingyuan Shizilin* 姑蘇名園獅子林 (*The Lion Grove, Reputable Garden in Old Suzhou*).

State of the Field

My thesis, aiming to address the physical, cultural, and political reconstruction of a Qing landscape, benefits greatly from a wide range of primary and secondary sources on Chinese literature, history, art and visual culture, and architecture. In particular, this study builds upon a diverse body of scholarship on the history of the Lion Grove, Qing imperial landscape, Qing art history and visual culture, and Qing history.

My study of the Lion Grove, a time-honored scenic site, draws from various sources that examine the history of the garden. Scholars have underlined the vital role Qianlong played in the revival of the garden in the eighteenth century through singling out the imperial activities related to the site.[9] However, their investigations have not

[9] For example, Berliner, "Gardens for Emperors and Scholars," 59; Ka Bo Tsang, ed., *Brilliant Strokes: Chinese Paintings from the Mactaggart Art Collection* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Museums, 2008), 25-27.

pursued in depth the cultural and political connotation of these imperial activities. In addition, given that the encounter between Qianlong and the garden occurred during his southern tours, several pieces of art historical research investigating Qianlong's tours have touched upon the Lion Grove. For instance, Wang Cheng-hua and Ma Ya-chen have both examined the transformation of the Lion Grove resulting form Qianlong's visits as a vital part of their discussions of how the southern tours have refashioned the representation of Suzhou's cityscapes.[10] Chen Pao-chen documents the construction of the Lion Grove replications in north China in her study of Kangxi 康熙 (1654-1722, r. 1662-1722) and Qianlong's practices of picturing and reproducing the famous scenic sites in Jiangnan.[11]

Aiming to understand the Lion Grove as the Qianlong emperor's private garden, my project is built upon the scholarship on Qing imperial landscapes. Qing imperial landscapes—a large number of designed landscapes consisting of flower-gardens, park-places, hunting parks, traveling palaces, and temples—were important stages for Manchu emperors' residence, governance, ritual, and leisure. In recent years, historians, art historians, architectural historians, and historical geographers have devoted scholarly attention to them. Among the numerous Qing imperial landscapes, art historians have dedicatedly surveyed the Bishu shanzhuang 避暑山莊 (Mountain Villa to Escape the

[10] Ma Ya-chen, "Zhongjie yu difang yu zhongyang zhijian: *Shengshi zisheng tu* de shuangchong xingge," *Guoli Taiwan daxue meishushi yanjiu jikan* 24 (March 2008): 259-322; Wang Cheng-hua, "Qianlong chao Suzhou chengshi tuxiang: zhengzhi quanli, wenhua xiaofei yu dijing suzao," *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* 50 (December 2005): 115-184.

[11] Chen Pao-chen, "Kangxi he Qianlong er di de Nanxun jiqi dui Jiangnan mingsheng he yuanlin de huizhi yu fangjian," *Gugong xueshu jikan* 32, no. 3 (Spring 2015): 1-62.

Heat) in Chengde, deciphering its significance in the construction of Qing imperial identity and authority. For example, Cary Liu maintains that the architectural design of the Bishu shanzhuang was an archival practice that not only defined an order for the empire but also claimed authority over the physical, religious, and ethnic territories of the empire.[12] Stephen Whiteman has published a series of research on the Bishu shanzhuang, with a concentration on the Kangxi emperor's *Bishu shanzhuang sanshiliu jing tu* 避暑山莊三十六景圖 (*Thirty-Six Views of the Mountain Villa to Escape the Heat*). His scholarship identifies Kangxi's founding role in constructing the imperial identity through landscape and its poetic and pictorial representations.[13] In addition, Jonathan Hay challenges the boundary between imperial and private gardens in his illuminating evaluation of early Qing visual and material culture. He proposes that, in addition to the stable centre, the Forbidden City, other examples of palatial architecture—such as the traveling palaces in which the Qing emperors resided—became the mobile centres of their imperial power.[14]

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[12] Cary Y. Liu, "Archive of Power: The Qing Dynasty Imperial Garden-Place at Rehe," *Guoli Taiwan daxue meishushi yanjiu jikan* no. 28 (2010): 43-82.

[13] Stephen Hart Whiteman, "Creating the Kangxi Landscape: Bishu Shanzhuang and the Mediation of Qing Imperial Identity" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2011); Whiteman, "From Upper Camp to Mountain Estate," 249-279; Stephen H. Whiteman, "Translating the Landscape: Genre, Style, and Pictorial Technology in the Thirty-Six Views of the Mountain Estate for Escaping the Heat," in *Thirty-Six Views: The Kangxi Emperor's Mountain Estate in Poetry and Prints*, trans. Richard E. Strassberg, intros. Richard E. Strassberg and Stephen H. Whiteman (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2016), 73-119.

[14] Jonathan Hay, "The Diachronics of Early Qing Visual and Material Culture," in *The Qing Formation in World-Historical Time*, ed. Lynn Struve (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004), 310-316.

My thesis binds together disparate visual objects related to the Lion Grove during Qianlong's reign and conducts an in-depth examination of the pictorial sources with a focus on how they projected Qianlong's imperial authority over the landscape. This project benefits profoundly from the scholarship of Qing art and visual culture. Art historians have recently opened new vistas through researching new sources and applying innovative approaches, departing from the convention of studying the paintings of the Orthodox School and Yangzhou's eccentrics and individualists. They have been challenging scholarly indifference to Qing art, especially Qing court art, which has suffered from a long-held misconception of it as "overly decorative, unskillful, derivative or otherwise unworthy of attention."[15] Meanwhile, heralded by the groundbreaking exhibition *The Elegant Brush: Chinese Painting Under the Qianlong Emperor, 1735–1795* in 1985, a large number of exhibitions presented worldwide have been catalysts for studies and publications on Qing art, especially art under Qianlong.[16]

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[15] Stephen H. Whiteman, "40 Views of the Summer Palace," review of "'40 View of the Yuanming yuan': Image and Ideology in a Qianlong Imperial Album of Poetry and Painting," by John R. Finlay (PhD diss., Yale University, 2012), http://dissertationreviews.org/archives/2290 (accessed July 26, 2016).

[16] Recently published exhibition catalogues include: Chan Hou Seng, ed., *Huaibao gujin: Qianlong huangdi wenhua shenghuo yishu* (Macau: The Macau Museum of Art, 2002); Fung Ming-chu, ed., *Qianlong huangdi de wenhua daye* (Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 2002); Zhang, *The Qianlong Emperor*; Chuimei Ho and Bennet Bronson, *Splendor of China's Forbidden City: The Glorious Reign of Emperor Qianlong* (London: Merrell Publishers Limited, 2004); Evelyn S. Rawski and Jessica Rawson, eds., *China: The Three Emperors, 1662-1795* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2005); Nancy Berliner, ed., *The Emperor's Private Paradise: Treasures from the Forbidden City* (Salem, MA: Peabody Essex Museum; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); Hong Kong Museum of Art, ed., *A Lofty Retreat from the Red Dust: The Secret Garden of Emperor Qianlong* (Hong Kong: Kangle ji wenhua shiwuchu), 2012; Fung Ming-chu, ed., *Shiquan Qianlong: Qing Gaozong de yishu pinwei* (Taipei: Guoli gugong bowuyuan, 2013). For a summary of the exhibitions of Qing collection abroad held between 1974-2004, see Susan Naquin, "The Forbidden City Goes Abroad: Qing History and the

Art historians have also delved into non-Chinese aspects of Qing art—court art in particular. The most remarkable output in this category is Patricia Berger's award-winning monograph *Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China*. In her seminal research, Berger takes an innovative look at Buddhist artworks produced and collected during the Qianlong reign and elucidates how the eighteen-century Qing court, in order to project and harmonize Qianlong's multi-faceted rule, incorporated various religious practices and pictorial styles from Chinese, Manchu, Tibetan, Mongolian, and even European traditions.[17]

In addition, in an attempt to incorporate the Qing within a global context, some art historians are devoted to exploring the exuberant cultural and artistic exchanges between the Qing empire and Europe, especially during the reign of Qianlong, through investigating imported innovative pictorial techniques, artistic mediums, and visual devices in contact zones, such as the Beijing court, Jiangnan cities (Yangzhou and Suzhou), and the port of Guangzhou. Cheng-hua Wang provides a comprehensive literature review of the scholarship in this subfield in her paper published in the "Whither Art History?" column in *The Art Bulletin*.[18] A recently released academic anthology, *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges between China and the West*, furnishes many case

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Foreign Exhibitions of the Palace Museum, 1974-2004," *T'oung Pao XC* 90, nos. 4-5 (2004): 341-397.

[17] Patricia Berger, *Empire of Emptiness: Buddhist Art and Political Authority in Qing China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003).

[18] Cheng-hua Wang, "Whither Art History? A Global Perspective on Eighteenth-Century Chinese Art and Visual Culture," *The Art Bulletin* 96, no. 4 (December 2014): 379-394.

studies exploring the Sino-European artistic encounters during the long eighteenth century (1680-1830).[19]

Meanwhile, art historians are expanding the visual sources they investigate, focusing on more than just Qing paintings. This innovative approach to Qing visual culture has produced book-length studies on images mounted on walls and ceilings, printed on paper and books, and carved into decorative objects in palace life.[20] These scholarly publications have also probed into the reproduction and circulation of texts and images, while developing a detailed account of Qing visual culture.

This study also builds upon the scholarship of Qing history. In the past two decades, the "New Qing History" has been the most noticeable and influential scholarly trend in Qing historical studies in North America. Presenting innovative stances for evaluating the historical legacy of the Qing empire, scholars have endeavored to amend Chinese historical scholarship's longstanding sinicization of the Qing dynasty. Instead of understanding the Qing empire as an extension of Han Chinese dynastic rule, the New Qing History focuses on the merging and maintenance of Manchu identity by the Qing emperors through the employment of Central Asian models of rule. The Manchu rulers

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[19] Petra ten-Doesschate Chu and Ning Ding, eds., *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges between China and the West* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2015).

[20] See Kristina Kleutghen, *Imperial Illusions: Crossing Pictorial Boundaries in the Qing Palaces* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2015); Whiteman, "Creating the Kangxi Landscape"; John R. Finlay, "'40 Views of the Yuanming yuan': Image and Ideology in a Qianlong Imperial Album of Poetry and Painting" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2012); Whiteman, "Translating the Landscape," 73-119; Jonathan Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces: The Decorative Object in Early Modern China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2010).

regarded China, or China proper,[21] as only a part—though a very important one—of an empire with a vast territory extending into the Inner Asia, including areas like Tibet, Xinjiang, and Mongolia.[22]

Contribution to the Field

Stephen Whiteman has reminded us of the challenge of exploring artworks produced in the Qianlong reign. He writes:

> Unpacking a work of art in the Qianlong era is a challenging project, as individual works were enmeshed in a complex network of connections stretching across styles, cultures, artistic media, and time. Further, these works often stand as the most fully articulated visions of rulership left by the emperor, yet they are also some of the most highly rhetorical…. These works are not only carefully

[21] China proper is a term used to distinguish the core of the Qing empire from the outer regions. It was the territory of the Ming dynasty and was populated predominantly by Han Chinese. See Brian R. Dott, *Identity Reflections: Pilgrimages to Mount Tai in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2004), 305n3. For a map of China proper, see William T. Rowe, *China's Last Empire: The Great Qing* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 36. As Stephen Whiteman has written, "Referring to China proper helps remind us that 'China' is itself a conceptual construction, or rather several overlapping but not identical constructions, of which territory is one." See Whiteman, "Translating the Landscape," 76n6.

[22] For scholarly summaries and reviews of the "New Qing History," see Joanna Waley-Cohen, "The New Qing History," *Radical History Review* 88 (Winter 2004): 193-206; Evelyn S. Rawski, "Qing Historical Studies," in *A Scholarly Review of Chinese Studies in North America*, eds. Haihui Zhang, Zhaohui Xue, Shuyong Jiang, and Gary Lance Lugar (Ann Arbor: Associate for Asian Studies, 2013): 99-112, http://www.asian-studies.org/Portals/55/Publications/A_Scholarly_Review_ePDF.pdf (accessed September 9, 2016); Ruth W. Dunnell and James A. Millward, introduction to *New Qing Imperial History: The Making of Inner Asian Empire at Qing Chengde*, eds. James A. Millward, Ruth W. Dunnell, Mark C. Elliott, and Philippe Forêt (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 3-4; Joanna Waley-Cohen, *The Culture of War in China: Empire and the Military under the Qing Dynasty* (London: I.B Tauris, 2006), 5-13; Evelyn S. Rawski, "The Qing in Historiographical Dialogue," *Late Imperial China* 37, no. 1 (June 2016): 1-4; Paul Cohen, "Changes over Time in Qing History: The Importance of Context," *Late Imperial China* 37, no. 1 (June 2016): 10-13; R. Kent Guy, "Images of the Qing," *Late Imperial China* 37, no. 1 (June 2016): 14-16.

calibrated ideological expressions, but are also essential to understanding the state and the empire during this period.[23]

My thesis takes on a challenging project as described above, drawing from and aiming to add to the aforementioned body of scholarship in the following ways. First, by positioning the Lion Grove in the category of Qianlong's imperial landscape, this study challenges the conventional categorization of a Chinese garden, which rigidly understands private and imperial gardens as different types.[24] It therefore offers insights into viewing both Qing imperial landscapes and the numerous scenic sites in Jiangnan. Second, my thesis explores the methods the Manchu emperor Qianlong applied to legitimize his rulership over a Jiangnan garden by employing the artistic forms and following the cultural orders valued by Han Chinese. It adds a new dimension in understanding the cultural and political strategies deployed by Qianlong, the self-imaged universal king,[25] in maintaining his governance and authority over an empire with a vast territory and varied ethnic traditions. Third, based on the investigation of a wide rage of visual materials—paintings, a titleboard, a stele, and woodblock prints—as well as the reproduction and circulation of emperor-centered texts and images among various surfacescapes of mediums, this thesis finds itself a place within the scholarly enterprise of articulating a more nuanced account of not just Qing painting but Qing visuality.

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[23] Whiteman,"40 Views of the Summer Palace."

[24] Yanxin Cai, *Chinese Architecture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 110-111; Zhou Weiquan, *Zhongguo gudian yuanlin shi* (Beijing: Qinghua daxue chubanshe, 1990), 7.

[25] Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), ch. 5.

Theory

I will draw some key concepts from W. J. T. Mitchell's theorization of landscape as medium as my theoretical framework for this thesis. Mitchell proposes that landscape should be understood as "a process by which social and subjective identities are formed" and "an instrument of cultural power."[26] Before all the "secondary representations," such as painting, drawing, and engraving, landscape is itself "a physical and multisensory medium in which cultural meanings and values are encoded."[27] The purpose of my discussion of imperialization of the Lion Grove by Qianlong's tours, poetry, calligraphy, paintings, and garden replications is therefore twofold: to elaborate what specific cultural and political meanings were encoded onto the specific landscape; and to explore how the encoding process took effect in the historical context. Drawing upon Mitchell's theory of landscape as medium, I will argue that the Lion Grove, as a reconstructed landscape during Qianlong's reign, embodied, visualized, and publicized abstract, often politically charged dimensions of the emperor, such as his presence, identity, ownership, cultural leadership, political authority, and territorial expansion.

Though instrumental in examining the imperialization of the Lion Grove by the Qianlong emperor, Mitchell's theorization, still, has its limitation for this project. When Stephen Whiteman applies Mitchell's theory in his study of how Kangxi employed the Bishu shanzhuang as a means of forming his imperial identity, he suggests that Mitchell's emphasis on the landscape exclusively as a "symbol of value" overshadows the active

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[26] W. J. T. Mitchell, introduction to *Landscape and Power*, edited by W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 1-2.

[27] W. J. T. Mitchell, "Imperial Landscape," in *Landscape and Power*, ed. W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 14.

participation of the audience in shaping the landscape and its meaning.[28] The audience of the Lion Grove in the eighteenth century, primarily Suzhou's governmental officials and local denizens, in fact played a vital role in turning this site into a Qianlong landscape; many of Qianlong's cultural and political enterprises, as will be discussed in Section 1, would become purely invalid without the audiences of the landscape. In light of this weakness of Mitchell's theory, the second section of the thesis will argue that the cultural and political meanings encoded into the landscape—generally put, the Lion Grove as Qianlong's imperial garden—were profoundly enriched and reinforced by the active engagement of the local government and society.

Outline of the Thesis

The thesis consists of the following two sections. In Section 1, I will examine how Qianlong transformed the Lion Grove into an imperial landscape through physical and ideological reconstructions, imperial gifts, pictorial representations, and architectural replications. I will argue that the physical reconstruction of the garden turned it into a mobile centre of Qianlong's imperial power. Through the act of naming the site and the views in the garden in his imperial poems, Qianlong projected his knowledge and authority over the landscape. In addition, I propose that the imperial gifts Qianlong awarded to the Lion Grove—a titleboard and a stele with his calligraphy, along with his copy of the Lion Grove painting attributed to Ni Zan—broadcasted his imperial power and created an abiding presence of the emperor on the site. Moreover, I will explore how Qianlong owned the garden through a pictorial representation and architectural replications. I will explain that the Lion Grove scroll painted by Qian Weicheng was a

[28] Whiteman, "Creating the Kangxi Landscape," 37.

customized landscape portrait that represented its owner Qianlong, while the Lion Groves reproduced in north China belonged to a large project that the Manchu rulers undertook to enhance their rule by reproducing named sites across the empire. Finally, the portrait of Qianlong dressed in the Han-literati style in one reproduced Lion Grove further legitimized Qianlong's ownership of the garden with a cultural association dominated by Han Chinese.

Section 2 will center on the role played by Suzhou's provincial government and local society in imperializing the Lion Grove. First, I will address how Suzhou's provincial government, by means of the Lion Grove texts and images in the *Nanxun shengdian* and gazetteers of Suzhou Prefecture, glorified Qianlong's presence and significance while helping to shape the collective memory of the site as an imperial landscape. Furthermore, I will discuss how local society participated in the imperialization of the garden by analyzing two sets of commercial publications: a Suzhou perspective print titled *Gusu mingyuan Shizi lin* and the Lion Grove text and illustration in the travel guide *Suzhou mingsheng tuyong* published by a Suzhou native Guo Zhongheng 郭衷恆. Finally, considering the vogue of opening private gardens in eighteenth-century Suzhou, I propose that burgeoning tourism in Suzhou publicized the imperialized site and generated a new imperial performance when the visitors experienced the emperor-related objects in the garden.

SECTION 1: IMPERIALIZATION OF THE LION GROVE BY QIANLONG AND HIS COURT

Introduction

Following the model inaugurated by his grandfather, the Kangxi emperor, Qianlong embarked on six Southern Inspection Tours to Jiangnan respectively in 1751, 1757, 1762, 1765, 1780, and 1784.[29] As Michael Chang states in his monograph *A Court on Horseback*, the imperial touring of the Qianlong court was "a politically potent and multivalent symbolic practice capable of simultaneously generating meanings within a variety of different social formations."[30] The plethora of scenic sites in Jiangnan, the longstanding economic and cultural centre of China proper, were the major destinations of Qianlong's tours. For the Lion Grove, it was a turning point when Qianlong encountered the garden in 1757. Qianlong toured the site in his latter five southern tours and initiated a rewriting of the garden's history. In this section, I will elucidate the transformation of the Lion Grove by examining the garden's reconstruction, which was dominated by the emperor, imperial gifts awarded by the emperor, a pictorial representation, and architectural replications of the garden commanded by the emperor in the eighteenth century.

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[29] Regarding the dates, routines, and pictorial representations of the two Qing emperors' Southern Inspection Tours, see Maxwell K. Hearn, "Document and Portrait: The Southern Tour Paintings of Kangxi and Qianlong," in *Chinese Painting under the Qianlong Emperor: The Symposium Papers in Two Volumes*, eds. Ju-hsi Chou and Claudia Brown, *Phoebus* 6, no. 1 (1988): 91-131; Chen Pao-chen, "Qianlong huangdi dui Xiaosheng huangtaihou de xiaoxing he ta suo xianshi de yiyi," *Gugong xueshu jikan* 31, no. 3 (Spring 2014): 115-129; Chen, "Kangxi he Qianlong er di," 2-19.

[30] Michael G. Chang, *A Court on Horseback: Imperial Touring and the Construction of Qing Rule, 1680-1785* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007), 27.

Reconstruction of the Lion Grove Dominated by Qianlong

Qianlong's imperial tours straightforwardly resulted in the reconstruction of the Lion Grove. As the Qing scholar-official Liang Zhangju 梁章鉅 (1775-1849) observed, it was only after Qianlong's southern tour in 1762 that the garden was rebuilt from pervasive weeds and the garden walls were erected.[31] More specifically, Qianlong's visits led to the construction of several imperial landmarks in the garden.

Documenting Qianlong's first four tours, the *Nanxun shengdian* presents a woodblock rendering of the Lion Grove in the chapter entitled *Mingsheng* 名勝 (famous sites) (Fig. 2). This illustration labels three constructions in the garden associated with Qianlong's tours: Yubei ting 御碑亭 (Pavilion of imperial stele), Zuoluo 座落 (Imperial rest stop), and Yushi lou 御詩樓 (Tower of imperial poetry). These imperial landmarks were erected by the provincial government for practical functions during Qianlong's southern tours: Zuoluo provided the emperor with a well-situated lounge in which to repose during his sightseeing excursion, while Yushi lou and Yubei ting were built in order to monumentalize the emperor's on-site poetic or calligraphic writings in commemoration of his personal visits.[32] These momuments turned the Lion Grove into a stage for Qianlong's imperial performance that hosted his physical presence as well as calligraphic and poetic accretions. Functioning as "symbolic stamps of ownership [by the emperor]" and celebrated as "emblematic of imperial grace and glory,"[33] the imperial

[31] Liang Zhangju, *Liangji congtan xutan santan* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1981), 220.

[32] Yun-chiu Mei, "The Pictorial Mapping and Imperialization of Epigraphic Landscapes in Eighteenth-century China" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2008), 103.

[33] Ibid., 105.

landmarks also displayed the Lion Grove's status as a "mobile center" of Qianlong's imperial power. According to Jonathan Hay, early Qing emperors' revival of imperial tours is an obvious example of the "mobile center" for their imperial power. He writes:

> Among the most important aspects of early-Qing palace construction is the contribution that Qing rulers from the Kangxi emperor onward made to relativizing the importance of the stable center, as embodied in the Forbidden City (Zijincheng) in Beijing. Instead, imperial authority was reinvested in a *mobile* center, responsive to the emperor's movements and to contingent political needs. Power was no longer so rigidly tied to a hierarchical organization of space, but was free-flowing, crystallizing in specific places around the emperor's physical presence.[34]

The real centre of the empire therefore was not a place, but an individual. Implying the emperor's presence and signaling his imperial authority, the construction of the imperial landmarks transformed the garden into an imperial landscape, even when Qianlong was physically absent from the site.

The reconstruction of the garden dominated by Qianlong also included a non-physical dimension of the site: the naming of the landscape, which was seen as an important skill of a learned man[35] and had a political connotation of prescribing special patterns of order.[36] Qianlong's naming practice, primarily demonstrated in his imperial poems, touched upon two aspects: the name of the site and the scenic views in the garden. The owner of the garden, the Huang family, renamed the garden She yuan 涉園 (Garden

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[34] Hay, "The Diachronics of Early Qing Visual and Material Culture," 310.

[35] Dott, *Identity Reflections*, 216.

[36] This importance placed on naming can be trace to the Confucian idea of *zhengming* 正名 (rectification of names). See John Makeham, "The Confucian Role of Names in Traditional Chinese Gardens," *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes* 18, no. 3 (1998): 192.

for strolling) prior to Qianlong's first visit. Qianlong was aware of the renaming.[37] At the time, people also spoke of the garden as Wusong yuan 五松園 (Garden of five pine trees), since there were five large pine trees in the site.[38] However, Qianlong applied neither of the names; the Lion Grove was the only name he acknowledged in his poems.[39] For Qianlong, naming or addressing the garden the Lion Grove, though not innovative, had two functions: first, it projected Qianlong's knowledge of the site and asserted his authority over the place; second, it cannily undermined the ownership of the Huang family by avoiding the name decided upon by the owner of the garden.

In addition to the garden, Qianlong underlined his ownership though naming the scenic views (*jing* 景) in the Lion Grove. In his poems, Qianlong named eight views in the garden with poetic eulogies and later increased the views to sixteen.[40] Well

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[37] The annotation of one Qianlong poem reads: "[The Lion Grove] is now the She yuan, which is owned by the Huang family." See Qianlong, "You Shizi lin," in Li Mingwan and Feng Guifen, et al., eds., *Jiangsusheng Suzhou fuzhi*, vol. 1 (Taipei: Chengwen chubanshe youxian gongsi, 1973), 77.

[38] Qian Yong, *Lüyuan conghua* (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1979), 523.

[39] Qianlong's Lion Grove poems are documented in the "Xunxing"巡幸 (Imperial inspection tours) chapter of the gazetteer of Suzhou Prefecture published in 1882. See Li and Feng, *Jiangsusheng Suzhou fuzhi*, 77-12.

[40] The eight views are Shizi lin 獅子林 (Lion Grove), Hongqiao 虹橋 (Rainbow bridge), Jiashan 假山 (Artificial mountains), Najing tang 納景堂 (Hall of views), Qingbi ge 清閟閣 (Qingbi studio), Tengjia 藤架 (Pergola), Dengdao 磴道 (Rockery path), and Zhanfeng ting 占峯亭 (Pavilion on top of the hill). The eight new views are Qingshu zhai 清淑齋 (Study of clear gentleness), Xiaoxiang zhuang 小香幢 (Building of light fragrance), Tanzhen shuwu 探真書屋 (Study of exploring the truth), Yanjing lou 延景樓 (Terrace of extended view), Huafang 畫舫 (Painted boat), Yunlin shishi 雲林石室 (Stone chamber of Yunlin [Ni Zan]), Hengbi xuan 橫碧軒 (Tower of horizontal green), and Shuimen 水門 (Water gate). See the poems Qianlong inscribed on the Ni Zan scroll and on a copy he painted after the Ni Zan work. Chan, *Huaibao gujin*, pls. 29 and 30.

established during the Five Dynasties (907-960), the concept of *jing* is a vital element of Chinese garden as it "defines the interactive unity between scenic views and the spectator."[41] The tradition of naming the sites in Chinese gardens acquired unparalleled importance in the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127), when educated scholar-officials affixed their writings to the scenic highlights of their gardens.[42] Several historians of Chinese art have explored the significance of site naming in Chinese landscapes.[43] For instance, Stephen Whiteman proposes that: "The naming and commemoration of *jing* was a key part of the garden building process in China, a moment in which the owner invested something of himself in the landscape."[44] In addition, Robert Harrist maintains that: "The act of naming places in landscape is a special form of power through which peaks, boulders, or streams are wrested from the otherwise anonymous continuum of nature and given identities that have new meaning."[45] With the literary remarks he added to the garden—a self-expression conveyed through his imperial poems—Qianlong claimed his authority in knowing and describing the garden, which eventually projected his imperial

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[41] Hui Zou, "*Jing* (景): A Phenomenological Reflection on Chinese Landscape and *Qing* (情)," *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 35, no. 2 (June 2008): 353.

[42] Robert E. Harrist Jr., "Site Names and Their Meanings in the Gardens of Solitary Enjoyment," *The Journal of Garden History* 13, no. 4 (1993): 199.

[43] Craig Clunas points out that the naming in the garden is not exclusively a Chinese tradition; it is also an important element in its Western counterparts, as often seen in Renaissance Italy and eighteenth-century England. See Craig Clunas, *Fruitful Gardens: Garden Culture in Ming Dynasty China* (London: Reaktion Books, 1996), 144.

[44] Whiteman, "From Upper Camp to Mountain Estate," 261.

[45] Robert E. Harrist Jr., "Mountain as Material: Landscape Inscriptions in China," in *Cultural Histories of the Material World*, ed. Peter N. Miller (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2013), 156.

identity onto the landscape. Qianlong's repetitive poetic eulogies describing the same sixteen views revealed his enterprise to canonize and regulate the package of views. As a result, Qianlong ideologically reconstructed the garden by naming the most notable scenes in the landscape and suggesting a systematic experience of the site.

Imperial Gifts Awarded by Qianlong

As an essential aspect of his rulership, Qianlong deftly employed imperial gifting to manipulate and disseminate his power. Art historians have studied the significance of Qing emperors' gifting practice, arguing that it was an important vehicle for circulating their cultural and political authority. For example, Patricia Berger has stated that Qianlong understood things given to him as tributes or offerings and things he dispensed to others as presents and boons that "materialized aspects of his greater emanating virtue as emperor."[46] She also aptly puts that: "Whenever Qianlong gave gifts, he simultaneously received them as tribute due the imperial court, and these acts of exchange created webs of reciprocity that materially tied the Manchus' outer territories to the emperor-as-collector."[47] Moreover, Jonathan Hay elucidates the value of a Qing emperor's gifting for his rule when he explores the Kangxi emperor's calligraphic gifts. He writes:

> Gifting to individuals was an essential aspect of the practice of rulership and a daily feature of imperial life, in part because every attention paid by the emperor to an individual or group was by definition a gift (and was formally recorded as such)…. The most common material gifts were food, clothes, money, imperial

[46] Berger, *Empire of Emptiness*, 41.

[47] Ibid.

> publications, imperial commissioned decorative objects, and, of course, traces of the imperial brush.[48]

Hay continues to pinpoint the political purposes that institutional gifts from the emperor served: they were "a means of demonstrating the dynasty's evenhandedness in its attention to regions and to religions" and systematically invested China's social, political, and geographical space with the Qing-dynasty presence.[49] Qianlong honored the Lion Grove with a number of imperial gifts, which profoundly contributed to the imperialization of the garden.

Titleboard

Qianlong bestowed a titleboard with his calligraphy reading "zhenqu"真趣 (genuine enjoyment) on the garden in 1765 (Fig. 3).[50] The titleboard has been well preserved and is still hung in the present-day Lion Grove. It is a gilt plaque bearing the two horizontally rendered characters inscribed by Qianlong during his third trip to the garden. It obeys the tradition in which calligraphy is executed with large-size characters to project a more powerful image in order to make the imperial writing more legible on titleboards.[51] In addition to the size, the contrast of the colors of the characters and the

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[48] Jonathan Hay, "The Kangxi Emperor's Brush-Traces: Calligraphy, Writing, and the Art of Imperial Authority," in *Body and Face in Chinese Visual Culture*, eds. Wu Hung and Katherine R. Tsiang (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 326.

[49] Ibid., 327.

[50] Li and Feng, *Jiangsusheng Suzhou fuzhi*, 102.

[51] Cary Y. Liu, "Calligraphic Couplets as Manifestations of Deities and Markers of Buildings," in *The Embodied Image: Chinese Calligraphy from the John B. Elliott Collection*, eds. Robert E. Harrist Jr. and Wen C. Fong (Princeton: The Art Museum, Princeton University, 1999), 368.

background—gold versus indigo—effectively enhances the visibility and recognizability of the imperial text. Located at the top centre of the titleboard, four words rendered in the fashion of a seal—"Qianlong yubi"乾隆御筆 (imperially authored by Qianlong)—remind the viewers, especially those who are unfamiliar with Qianlong's calligraphy style, of the imperial credential of the text.[52] On both sides of the seal, two golden dragons are affixed, emblemizing the author's sovereign position as son of heaven. The placard thus precisely conveys Qianlong's imperial identity and authority in visual terms, while efficiently accommodating the monumental display of the imperial brush-traces.

The text on the titleboard, "genuine enjoyment," summarizes Qianlong's emotional assessment of touring the garden. It also projects Qianlong's ability to experience and understand the landscape, which is in essence an assertion of power. Like a guiding and persuasive caption attached to the real site, the imperial calligraphy on the nameboard also possesses the potential of mediating, revising, and eventually determining the visitors' experience in the very site through the emotional and sensory lens of the emperor's calligraphy. The titleboard is able to regulate the public perception of the landscape by broadcasting a sentimental discourse delivered by Qianlong. This persuasive function is meanwhile enhanced by the visual qualities—which blatantly showcase Qianlong's imperial authority—of the titleboard.

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[52] Qianshen Bai proposes that bearing imperial seals is a striking feature of Qing dynasty plaques with imperial calligraphy. See Qianshen Bai, "From Wu Dacheng to Mao Zedong: The Transformation of Chinese Calligraphy in the Twentieth Century," in *Chinese Art: Modern Expressions*, eds. Maxwell K. Hearn and Judith G. Smith (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), 266.

As a textual accretion inscribed on the architectural construction, the titleboard, like a label, had a substantial potential for naming the pavilion or terrace that hosted it.[53] I have analyzed the importance of site naming in imperialization of the garden. Unlike the scenic views named by Qianlong's poems, the name physically remained in the garden on the titleboard, delivering the imperial text to a broad audience. Robert Harrist observes that when names became part of the physical reality of a place, "they give tangible form to the historical, political, or religious discourse that human beings bring to the experience of looking at nature."[54] Thus, the "zhenqu" titleboard, when functioning as a name of an architectural construction, would also regulate the way people looked into the landscape by generating a sensory and literary discourse dominated by Qianlong.

Stele

Steles, a venerable medium of public proclamation, have been frequently used in China as symbolic monuments for various social, cultural, and religious functions. The term *bei* 碑 was coined in the Han dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE), when stone steles became widely used in China.[55] Erected for "commemoration and standardization,"[56] steles were

[53] I have not traced a solid source that pinpoints the location of the titleboard in the eighteenth century. Nowadays, the extant titleboard in the garden names its architectural host—the Zhenqu ting 真趣亭 (Pavilion of genuine enjoyment).

[54] Harrist, "Mountain as Material," 156.

[55] For the origin of the stele tradition in China, see Dorothy C. Wong, *Chinese Steles: Pre-Buddhist and Buddhist Use of a Symbolic Form* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), ch. 1 and ch. 2; Clarissa von Spee, "Visiting Steles: Variations of a Painting Theme," in *On Telling Images of China: Essays in Narrative Painting and Visual Culture*, eds. Shane McCausland and Yin Hwang (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2014), 213-215; Amy McNair, "Engraved Calligraphy in China: Recension and Reception," *The Art Bulletin* 77, no. 1 (March 1995): 106.

employed by commissioners to articulate their aspirations, project their ideals, and construct notions of identity in a public sphere.[57] Celebrating Qing military achievements and territorial expansions, commemorative steles sprang up all over the empire during the Qianlong reign.[58] A stone stele with Qianlong's imperial calligraphy was erected after his first trip to the garden in 1757 (Fig. 4).[59]

The text on the stele is engraved based on Qianlong's poetic inscription on the Lion Grove scroll attributed to Ni Zan (Fig. 5). The last two characters on the stele, "yubi" 御筆 (imperially authored), remind the readers with limited knowledge of Qianlong's calligraphy and poem that the emperor authored the text. Titled "You Shizi lin"遊獅子林 (Touring the Lion Grove), the poem records Qianlong's initial encounter with the Lion Grove during his second southern tour in 1757 (see the entire poem with a translation in Appendix 1).[60] The poem states the name of the garden, Shizi lin, disregarding that the owners of the site had renamed it She yuan. Qianlong's naming practice, as I have

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[56] According to Wu Hung, a stele established for an individual commemorated a man's meritorious conduct, and when erected by the government, it issued official, authoritative versions of Confucian classics or recorded events of extraordinary historical significance. See Wu Hung, *A Story of Ruins: Presence and Absence in Chinese Art and Visual Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 38.

[57] Wong, *Chinese Steles*, 9.

[58] Waley-Cohen, *The Culture of War in China*, 26-38; von Spee, "Visiting Steles," 228-230.

[59] Guo Zhongheng, ed., *Suzhou mingsheng tuyong*, in *Zhongguo yuanlin mingsheng zhi congkan*, vol. 28, eds. Zheng Xiaoxia and Zhang Zhi (Yangzhou: Guanling shushe, 2006), 529. The original stele was destroyed during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). The imperial stele in the present-day garden was reproduced based on a rubbing of the stele after the Cultural Revolution. See Xi Jin, *Shizi lin* (Suzhou: Guwuxuan chubanshe, 2014), 123.

[60] Qianlong, "You Shizilin," in Li and Feng, *Jiangsusheng Suzhou fuzhi*, 77.

specified, was a statement of his ownership over the landscape. Qianlong also traces the historical and cultural origin of the garden to Ni Zan. In this travel account, Qianlong elaborates the topographical highlights, including the artificial hills, the pine trees, the pond, and the pavilion, in the garden. The visual narrative in Qianlong's poem, a key aspect of Chinese travel writing,[61] could function as a textual guide for the visitors when they are physically located in the garden. The imperial writing on the stele clearly declares for a reader/traveler in the space what scenes to see and what features of the scenes to notice. Unlike the more abstract and sentimental text on the titleboard, the poem inscribed by Qianlong therefore would guide, in a more straightforward manner, the multisensory perception of the site and eventually shape the public experience and memory of touring the garden.

Furthermore, the imperial text on the stele redefined the Lion Grove as a "place," as it conveyed the garden's distinguished name, its special topographical features, and the specific historical, cultural, and literary associations of the site through the distilled vein determined by Qianlong's own knowledge and preference regarding the garden.[62] Distributed in the tradition of five-character poems, the imperial text on the stele epitomized the lyrical mode of expressive and aesthetic response to the landscape, which coincided with the poetic turn of monumental writings of the Qing emperors.[63] According

[61] James M. Hargett, "Chinese Travel Writing," in *The Routledge Companion to Travel Writing*, ed. Carl Thompson (London: Routledge, 2015), 113.

[62] For the reference a "place" bears in the Chinese context, see ibid.

[63] Mei, "The Pictorial Mapping and Imperialization of Epigraphic Landscapes," 53-57.

to Richard Strassberg, lyric travel writing,[64] the most literary means of representing a journey, styled an individual poetic vision and created "sublime, self-centered worlds" by inscribing the landscape with the perceptions of the self.[65] Through textualization of his first trip to the Lion Grove, Qianlong symbolically claimed his ownership of the landscape.

As a poetic eulogy inscribed into the physical space of the landscape, the stele refers to a tradition known as *tijing* 題景 (inscribing scenery) in China.[66] Richard Strassberg has noted that engraving texts at the original sites of their inspiration is unique to Chinese travel writing compared to its Western counterpart. He also suggests that the texts "altered the scene by shaping the perceptions of later travelers and guiding those who sought to follow in the footsteps of earlier talents."[67] Qianlong's imperial poem on the stele, in Robert Harrist's words, "asserts authority over a landscape, and over a viewer, by establishing a vantage point from which a formation must be seen in order to discern the resemblance."[68] Interestingly, Qianlong's rudimentary skill in composing poetry, often criticized for a paucity of merit in traditional poetic terms,[69] in this respect

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[64] Richard Strassberg defines the two modes of Chinese travel writing: historiographical and lyrical, see Richard E. Strassberg, "Introduction: The Rise of Chinese Travel Writing," in *Inscribed Landscapes: Travel Writing from Imperial China*, trans. Richard E. Strassberg (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 9-10.

[65] Ibid., 12.

[66] Robert E. Harrist Jr., *The Landscape of Words: Stone Inscriptions from Early and Medieval China* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 277.

[67] Strassberg, "The Rise of Chinese Travel Writing," 5-6.

[68] Harrist, "Mountain as Material," 157.

[69] See, for example, Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces*, 213.

would enable a broader audience to understand the text on the stele and get involved in the process where Qianlong led the public reception of the garden.

The imperial text remaining in the real landscape parallels Qianlong's practice of adding numerous inscriptions and seals onto the Lion Grove painting attributed to Ni Zan (Fig. 6), the pictured landscape. Like Qianlong's infamous behavior of invading the pictorial space of paintings with his calligraphy and seals, the imperial stele intruded into the real landscape, physically marking Qianlong's imperial authority on the garden. Similar to the steles located at the empire's borders that commemorated Qianlong's military achievements and territorial expansions, the stele in the Lion Grove declared the emperor's symbolic ownership over the garden, a then unfamiliar and marginal place in his domain. The imperial stele ensured Qianlong's imperial omnipresence and cult at a newfound site located at China's cultural centre in Jiangnan. Considering the imperishable nature of the medium, the perennial existence of the stele has a lasting influence in physically and ideologically reshaping the landscape.

Displaying the imperial calligraphy awarded to the Lion Grove, the titleboard and stele both represent the brush-traces of Qianlong. These two objects in the garden therefore generated the imperial presence at a location distant from the political centre of the empire during Qianlong's reign. The imperial practice of calligraphy, the art of political authority, was a long-established tradition in China that can be traced back to the Han dynasty in the first century CE.[70] As an enthusiastic follower of the Chinese cultural

[70] For the history of

\ imperial calligraphy, see Hay, "The Kangxi Emperor's Brush-Traces," 322-326.

traditions, Qianlong himself was an adept and industrious practitioner of calligraphy.[71] As Jonathan Hay has observed, building upon Kangxi's employment of imperial calligraphy to disseminate the Qing imperial presence throughout the empire, Qianlong inherited the practices of circulating imperial brush-traces, normally poems and other texts authored by him, through gifts, rubbings, printed editions, and stone inscriptions.[72]

Because brushwork has been understood as an extension of the writer's body and physical movement and an utterance of the calligrapher's emotion, personality, and self-cultivation, calligraphy is considered the most self-expressive art in a Chinese tradition.[73] Qianlong's imperial calligraphy hence presented his imperial visage, akin to an imperial portrait, irrespective of its content. As a consequence, the Lion Grove has become an imperial landscape, since the titleboard and stele in situ unceasingly display the imperial visage and provoke Qianlong's imperial authority in the garden.

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[71] For surveys of Qianlong's calligraphy, see Ho Chuan-hsin, "Qianlong de shufa jianshang," *Gugong xueshu jikan* 21, no. 1 (Fall 2003): 32-33; Fu Dongguang, "Qianlong yubi shufa mianmian guan," in *Huaibao gujin: Qianlong huangdi wenhua shenghuo yishu*, ed. Chan Hou Seng (Macau: The Macau Museum of Art, 2002), 356-359.

[72] Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces*, 211.

[73] For the politics of calligraphy as the most self-expressive art in China, see Wen C. Fong, "Some Cultural Prototypes," in *Possessing the Past: Treasures from the National Palace Museum, Taipei*, eds. Wen C. Fong and James C.Y. Watt (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1996), 107; Qianshen Bai, "Calligraphy," in *A Companion to Chinese Art*, eds. Martin J. Powers and Katherine R. Tsiang (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 312-313; Amy McNair, *The Upright Brush: Yan Zhenqing's Calligraphy and Song Literati Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1998), ch. 1; Lothar Ledderose, "Chinese Calligraphy: Its Aesthetic Dimension and Social Function," *Orientations* 17, no. 10 (October 1986): 35.

Painting

Qianlong's southern tours were a vital venue for his artistic acquisition, creation, and connoisseurship.[74] The Lion Grove scroll attributed to Ni Zan was one of the most notable paintings that Qianlong frequently viewed and inscribed during his southern tours.[75] As Chiu Shih-hua has surveyed, a number of the topographical paintings in Qianlong's collection, including this piece, served his unique viewing/traveling practice of *jijing yinzheng* 即景印證 (verifying the painted landscape based on the real site).[76] Obsessed with the scroll, Qianlong even painted four copies after this work and demanded that one of them be preserved in the garden in 1762.[77] So how could gifting a painting, one of the "instrumental functions"[78] of the medium, contribute to the imperialization of the garden?

Imitation is a crucial tool for Chinese artists to study painting technique while positioning them in an influential lineage by copying the canonical pieces of old masters.[79] The copy, under this circumstance, guarantees the cultural and artistic

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[74] Chiu Shih-hua, "Xingqie suixing: you Qianlong huangdi nanxun shi de shuhua jiancang tanqi," *Guogong xueshu jikan* 32, no. 4 (Summer 2015): 91-142.

[75] Ibid., 108.

[76] Ibid., 109.

[77] Chan, *Huaibao gujin*, 110.

[78] By "instrumental functions," Hay means the ways in which artworks have served as instruments of a social purpose that was not specific to the medium. See Jonathan Hay, "The Functions of Chinese Painting: Toward a Unified Field Theory," in *Anthropologies of Art*, ed. Mariëte Westermann (Williamstown, MA: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2005), 111-113.

[79] For the tradition of imitation in Chinese art, see Ginger Cheng-chi Hsü, "Imitation and Originality, Theory and Practice," in *A Companion to Chinese Art*, eds. Martin J. Powers

inheritance of Chinese painting since it "upholds and sustains a tradition that oscillates seamlessly between past and present."[80] Thanks to the plentiful court artists in his service and the abundant paintings in his collection, Qianlong became a devotee and practitioner of painting at a young age.[81] *Lingu* 臨古 (copying ancient works) was one basic method of Qianlong's painting practice.[82] Reading "Yi xun Qingbi"藝循清閟 (art in imitation of Qingbi (Ni Zan's studio)), the frontispiece of a copy Qianlong painted in 1772 (Fig. 7) demonstrates that, by copying, Qianlong firmly positioned himself in the same artistic and cultural lineage as Ni Zan, who was seamlessly cemented to the garden's history and reputation. Moreover, a poem that Qianlong composed manifested his intent in copying the painting and leaving it at the site: he attempted to preserve a eulogized and memorable tale (*liu jiahua* 留佳話).[83] Qianlong's motivation here attested to his belief that, as Patricia Berger has put it, "the image was a profound and mysterious thing that by its very physical nature could survive long past its creation and even outlast its creator to

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and Katherine R. Tsiang (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 293-311; Martin J. Powers, "Imitation and Reference in China's Pictorial Tradition," in *Reinventing the Past: Archaism and Antiquarianism in Chinese Art and Visual Culture*, ed. Wu Hung (Chicago: The Center for the Art of East Asia, University of Chicago; Art Media Resources, 2010), 103-126; Cary Y. Liu, "Seeing Double: Copies and Copying the Arts of China," *Orientations* 32, no. 3 (March 2001): 154.

[80] Nixi Cura, "On Pictures and Multiples," in *China's Imperial Modern: The Painter's Craft*, ed. Lisa Claypool (Edmonton: University of Alberta Museums, 2012), 74.

[81] On Qianlong as a painter, see Fu Shen, "Qianlong huangdi *Yubi panshan tu* yu Tangdai," *Guoli Taiwan daxue meishushi yanjiu jikan* 28 (2010): 83-90; Yang Danxia, "Qianlong huangdi de huihua," in *Huaibao gujin: Qianlong huangdi wenhua shenghuo yishu*, ed. Chan Hou Seng (Macau: The Macau Museum of Art, 2002), 360-361.

[82] Fu, "Qianlong huangdi *Yubi panshan tu* yu Tangdai," 86.

[83] Chiu, "Xingqie suixing," 113.

witness history, to forge a career and life of its own."[84] Copying the painting and gifting it to the site made Qianlong the central figure that not only resonated in the past and present, but also in the future of the scroll and the Lion Grove, the painting's garden origin.

On the other hand, the replica functioned as a material reminder of Qianlong's ownership of the original copy. Qianlong admitted that he could not remove the original Lion Grove scroll he possessed to the garden due to the reality that the painting had been preserved and catalogued by the imperial collection for a long time.[85] Besides collecting and cataloguing the work, Qianlong reinforced his ownership of the scroll attributed to Ni Zan by inscribing numerous colophons and stamping imperial seals on the image and remounting the scroll with a frontispiece and a long inscription panel. The imperial possession of ancient art, with a history that could be traced back to the early Han dynasty in the second century BCE, was an important strategy for imperial rulers to legitimize their rule and uphold a civilization's future.[86] Such cultural possession was even more politically charged for the Manchu emperors to claim their supreme rulership over their Han Chinese objects. Qing emperors employed artistic collection and connoisseurship to "broadcast their power" and "equate possessing art with both the idea

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[84] Berger, *Empire of Emptiness*, 127.

[85] Qianlong, "Mo Ni Zan *Shizi lin tu* bing tiyi ju," in Li and Feng, *Jiangsusheng Suzhou fuzhi*, 88.

[86] Wen C. Fong, "Chinese Art and Cross-Cultural Understanding," in *Possessing the Past: Treasures from the National Palace Museum, Taipei*, eds. Wen C. Fong and James C.Y. Watt (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1996), 35.

of being personally cultured and the notion of being the overlords of Chinese culture."[87] By owning the garden's most significant cultural legacy, Qianlong imaged himself as a cultivated ruler entitled to occupy the famed garden with a long-lived history.

Third, copying the scroll on site provided Qianlong with a privileged experience in viewing/touring both the real and pictured Lion Grove. Kristina Kleutghen has stated that, in the eighteenth century

> the unity of gardens and garden representations on the one hand, and the unity of mind and scene on the other, meant that looking at a pictured garden could be experienced as an early modern virtual reality tour through the real space.[88]

One of Qianlong's poems conveys that he is an experienced viewer-visitor in a pictured landscape when he declares that "I feel more serene when I travel in the painting [of Ni Zan] once again" (重來圖裏更怡心).[89] Chonglai 重來 (once again) reveals his deft skill in spiritually touring in a pictured garden. By reproducing the Lion Grove painting on site, Qianlong was able to break down the boundaries of the real and pictured gardens and savor the painting and garden in "body and mind, which creates a much more evocative and profound experience than if he were imaging himself within the painted garden of the

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[87] Jan Stuart, "Imperial Pastimes: Dilettantism as Statecraft in the 18th Century," in *Life in the Imperial Court of Qing Dynasty China*, eds. Chuimei Ho and Cheri A. Jones (Denver: Denver Museum of Natural History, 1998), 58-59. Patricia Ebrey provides a comprehensive summary of the scholarship on Qianlong's imperial art collections in her study of the Song emperor Huizong's 徽宗 (1082-1135, r, 1100-1125) collections, see Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *Accumulating Culture: The Collections of Emperor Huizong* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 12-14.

[88] Kleutghen, *Imperial Illusions*, 203.

[89] Qianlong, "Shizi lin die jiuzuo yun," in Li and Feng, *Jiangsusheng Suzhou fuzhi*, 95.

scroll."[90] More importantly, such viewing/traveling experience was highly privileged, as Qianlong was the only legitimate owner of the scroll.

A Pictorial Representation and Architectural Replications of the Lion Grove Commanded by Qianlong

Qian Weicheng's *Shilin quanjing tu*

Qianlong also made the garden an imperial landscape through a Lion Grove painting and two garden replicas created at his behest. Qianlong commanded his court artists to create a large number of paintings depicting the scenic sites of Jiangnan viewed by him during his southern tours,[91] including Qian Weicheng's *Shilin quanjing tu* (Fig. 8), which offered a panoramic view of the garden.

Qian Weicheng was one of the most important painters active at the court of Qianlong. Native to Wujin (the modern Changzhou), Jiangsu, Qian won his *jinshi* degree in 1745. He was awarded the first-place in the palace examination, an honor that guaranteed him a highly successful official career.[92] Qian was not affiliated with Qianlong's painting academy; he belonged to a group of scholar-artists who were "civil officials of varying importance who had a talent for painting and came into contact with

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[90] Kristina Kleutghen, "The Qianlong Emperor's Perspective: Illusionistic Painting in Eighteenth-Century China" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2010), 191.

[91] Chen, "Kangxi he Qianlong er di," 13-20.

[92] For Qian Weicheng's bibliography, see Tu Lien-chê, "Ch'ien Wei-chêng," in *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1912)*, vol. I, ed. Arthur W. Hummel (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1943), 158; Ju-hsi Chou and Claudia Brown, *The Elegant Brush: Chinese Painting under the Qianlong Emperor, 1735-1795* (Phoenix, AZ: Phoenix Art Museum, 1985), 78.

the emperor in this way."[93] Though they produced a large body of contemporary works, which were archived by Qianlong's imperial art collections, the *Shiqu baoji* and the *Bidian zhulin* 秘殿珠林 (*Secret Hall of the Grove of Beads*), their art has not attracted sufficient scholarly attention.[94] As one of Qianlong's most celebrated artists, Qian was often commissioned by the emperor to create a pictorial record of his poems.[95] Qian was also highly engaged in the visual representation of Qianlong's Southern Inspection Tours. According to Qian's extant works, he attended the emperor on at least two of his imperial tours—the second in 1757 and the fourth in 1765. Qian also composed various poems to record his visits to the sites during the southern tour and contributed to the pictorial documenting of the imperial tours with his topographical paintings.[96]

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[93] Yang Boda, "The Development of the Ch'ien-lung Painting Academy," in *Words and Images: Chinese Poetry, Calligraphy, and Painting*, eds. Alfreda Murck and Wen C. Fong (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 351.

[94] Claudia Brown, "Painting at the Qing Court: Scholar-Artists, 1736-1850," in *Tradition and Transformation: Studies in Chinese Art in Honor of Chu-tsing Li*, ed. Judith G. Smith (Lawrence, KS: Spencer Museum of Art, The University of Kansas; Seattle: The University of Washington Press, 2005), 306.

[95] Chou and Brown, *The Elegant Brush*, 78.

[96] For Qian's southern tours poems, see Qian Weicheng, *Qian Wenmin gong quanji*, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu*, vol. 1442, ed. Xuxiu Siku quanshu bianji weiyuanhui (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1995), 452-473. Extant examples of Qian's southern tour paintings include, for example, the scenery of Jinmen in Jiangsu, the traveling palace Gaomin si in Yangzhou, and a set of 32 album leaves depicting the named views of the West Lake in Hangzhou. See, respectively, An-yi Pan and Ellen Avril, *Nature Observed and Imagined: Five Hundred Years of Chinese Painting* (Ithaca, NY: Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, 2010), 21; Frances Wood, *Chinese Illustration* (London: The British Library, 1985), 45; Guojia tushuguan ed., *Xihu sanshier jing tu* (Shanghai: Shanghai shuhua chubanshe, 2010).

How did this Lion Grove scroll help to make the garden Qianlong's private landscape? Stephen Whiteman suggests that the purpose of a garden painting was twofold: first, artists sought to convey some sense of the appearance of the landscape by including its most prominent features and scenic environs; second, the garden painting was a form of "portraiture-by-metonymy," in which the garden came to signify its owner.[97] This pictorial representation of the Lion Grove imperialized the garden, as it not only enabled Qianlong to own the garden pictorially but also to travel in the pictured garden with his eye and mind. More importantly, Qian's Lion Grove scroll worked as a "garden portrait"[98] that expressed Qianlong's identity, which was conveyed in his imperial poems. His identity was not displayed through a depicted figure in the space. Instead, the painting was like an imperial portrait, where the pictorial appropriation of the site in Qianlong's depiction was extremely based on his private, multisensory reception when touring the garden.

Qian applied several pictorial appropriations in his painting to make it a garden portrait of Qianlong. The Lion Grove was situated at the northeastern section of the inner city and was surrounded by streets, gardens, and temples.[99] Qian sketches the outline of the city wall in the upper right part of the work. A handful of buildings are clustered beyond the wall, suggesting an urban space. The site's remote distance from the wall,

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[97] Whiteman, "Translating the Landscape," 90.

[98] In his study of how the Bishu shanzhuang demonstrated Kangxi's imperial identity, Stephen Whiteman terms "garden portrait" as "the identification of person with his garden, a site that reflected not only his wealth and property-owning status, but his position within elite social networks that took gardens as a principal stage for their activities." See Whiteman,"Creating the Kangxi Landscape," 189-190.

[99] Qian, *Lüyuan conghua*, 523

mainly indicated by the flowing clouds in between the two constructions, states that the garden is relocated to a suburban or valley place. In Qian's painting, the Lion Grove has been moved out from the inner city of Suzhou and relocated in a tranquil place away from the urban chaos. Qian's repositioning of the garden echoes, or derives from, Qianlong's traveling experience of the site: he assumed that the Lion Grove was located in a peaceful valley before his first visit, and later he felt the site like a mountain in the urban area.[100]

Qian has also practiced several compositional rearrangements in his depiction. One contemporary visitor expressed his reluctance to visit the garden by asserting that he loathed the narrowness of the interior space of the Lion Grove.[101] Another visitor described the chaotic and noisy environment in the garden when it was filled with tourists in the springtime.[102] However, in contrast to the visitors' purely negative narrative, the landscape depicted in Qian's scroll is a panorama covering a vast area along the long handscroll. The panoramic representation of the garden literally satisfies Qianlong's expectation of "expanding the view into a panorama" (補成全景) as the emperor believed that Ni Zan only depicted one specific corner of the garden in his scroll.[103] The artist has then inserted several visual devices and applied pictorial rearrangement to support the panorama in seeking to "convey the vastness and complexity of the natural

[100] Qinglong, "You Shizi lin," and "You Shizi lin deju," in Li and Feng, *Jiangsusheng Suzhou fuzhi*, 77, 87.

[101] Liang, *Liangji congtan xutan santan*, 220.

[102] Yuan Xuelan, "Wuxia mingyuan ji," in Yi Xueling, ed., *Suzhou yuanlin lidai wenchao* (Shanghai: Shanghai sanlian shudian, 2008), 208.

[103] See Qianlong's inscription.

world."[104] Starting from the right end of the scroll, several layers of cloud spread to the centre of the painting. The clouds flow into the inner space of the garden, implying a large area without presenting the details of the dense compositional design.[105] Apart from the clouds, Qian places the natural mountains in the middle of the garden despite the fact that the mountains in the Lion Grove were artificial ones made of piled Taihu rocks.[106] Qian's depiction of the mountains visualizes the emperor's stated feeling that the artificial mountains of the Lion Grove are real ones.[107]

Furthermore, the artist attempts to set up the boundary between the interior and exterior spaces of the Lion Grove in the scroll by the use of walls and fences. The fence and wall on the right bottom of the scroll, connected by some buildings, divide the garden from the grassy ground. This wall expands leftward on the bottom of the scroll until it is not pictured. It reappears from underneath the rocks and trees on the bottom left and meanders until the very end of the scroll. The upper section of the pond is isolated from the trees and clouds by the fence and the architecture. It is obvious that Qian is trying to horizontally expand the boundary as far as possible in response to the extended internal

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[104] Maxwell K. Hearn, "Pictorial Maps, Panoramic Landscapes, and Topographic Paintings: Three Modes of Depicting Space during the Early Qing Dynasty," in *Bridges to Heaven: Essays on East Asian Art in Honor of Professor Wen C. Fong*, vol. I, eds. Jerome Silbergeld, Dora C.Y. Ching, Judith G. Smith, and Alfreda Murck (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 111.

[105] According to Cheng-hua Wang, one of the functions of clouds in Chinese pictorial tradition is that they work "as the blank but not empty area in contrast to the dense compositional design." See Wang, "Whither Art History," 384.

[106] For introductions to Taihu garden rocks, see Clunas, *Fruitful Gardens*, 73-74; Robert L. Thorp and Richard Ellis Vinograd, *Chinese Art & Culture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2001), 282-283; Hay, *Sensuous Surfaces*, 94-95.

[107] Qianlong, "You Shizi lin," in Li and Feng, *Jiangsusheng Suzhou fuzhi*, 77.

space. In his poems, Qianlong expresses, more than once, that he could not sense any hubhub when he travels in the Lion Grove—it is a reclusive space that makes him feel like a hermit.[108] The pictured walls and fences in the scroll then visualize Qianlong's sense of boundary between the garden and the chaotic mundane world outside.

There are many manmade constructions—pavilions, terraces, and towers—in the mountainscape or on the ground of the middle and right sections of the scroll. As the focal points in the pictured natural environment, they are located at visually ornamented spots: some sit underneath a tree, some stand in front of a mountain rock, and some are framed by both rocks and trees. This compositional strategy reminds us of Qianlong's naming of the views in the garden, although these individual scenes defined by the architecture do not correspond to those described in Qianlong's poems one to one. As a result, the painting merges the two types of estate portraiture—the broad panoramic view of an imperial estate and delicate individual views to illustrate imperial poems—in this representation of the Lion Grove.[109] Qian's Lion Grove painting, therefore, signified its owner—the Qianlong emperor—by picturing a customized and idealized garden portrait based on Qianlong's reception of touring the garden.

The Lion Grove Replications in Qianlong's Imperial Gardens

The vogue of replicating Jiangnan landscapes in the Qing imperial palaces, such as the Bishu shanzhuang in Chengde and the Yuanming yuan 圓明園 (The Garden of

[108] Qianlong, "Ti Ni Zan Shizilin tu die jiuzuo yun" and "You Shizilin deju" in Li and Feng, *Jiangsusheng Suzhou fuzhi*, 87, 88.

[109] Anita Chung, *Drawing Boundaries: Architectural Images in Qing China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 84.

Perfect Brightness) in Beijing, started during the reign of the Kangxi emperor and reached its zenith during the Qianlong reign.[110] Qianlong commissioned two replications of the Lion Grove in the Changchun yuan 長春園 (Garden of Eternal Spring), a garden in the Yuanming yuan garden compound, from 1771 to 1772 and in the Bishu shanzhuang in 1774 under the name of Wenyuan Shizi lin 文園獅子林 (The Lion Grove in Wen Garden).[111]

At first glance, the Lion Grove replicas in Qianlong's imperial palaces evidenced his zealous preference for the site and desire to occupy the garden physically through reproductions when he was absent from Suzhou. In addition, the replications of the Lion Grove in the Bishu shanzhuang and the Yuanming yuan, along with other scenic sites in Jiangnan, belonged to a broader enterprise that expressed the Manchu emperors' universality of rulership, especially during the Qianlong reign, through building "a landscape incorporating non-Chinese as well as Chinese modalities."[112]

In response to the Qing empire's extensive territorial expansion from Manchuria through China, Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet,[113] Qianlong commanded the construction of plentiful landscapes, gardens, buildings, and temples—both Chinese and non-

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[110] Chen, "Kangxi he Qianlong er di de Nanxun, 1-62; Victoria M. Cha-Tsu Siu, *Gardens of a Chinese Emperor: Imperial Creations of the Qianlong Era, 1736-1796* (Bethlehem, PA: Lehigh University Press, 2013), 60-64.

[111] Hui Zou, *A Jesuit Garden in Beijing and Early Modern Chinese Culture* (West Lafayette, IN: Purdue University Press, 2011), 30-33.

[112] Philippe Forêt, *Mapping Chengde: The Qing Landscape Enterprise* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2000), 25.

[113] For the territorial expansion of Qing, see Evelyn S. Rawski, "Territories of the Qing," in *China: The Three Emperors, 1662-1795*, eds. Evelyn S. Rawski and Jessica Rawson (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 2005), 154-160; Rowe, *China's Last Empire*, 71-81.

Chinese—that were reproduced from famed sites from across the territory of the empire. Moreover, the layout of the replications abided by a distinct hierarchy, where the Qing ruler was at the symbolic centre while surrounded by the nation.[114] The architectural replications in the imperial gardens in Beijing and Chengde overtly expressed, in historical geographer Philippe Forêt's words, a "Manchu ambition to dominate the cultural, physical, and metaphysical geographies of Eastern and Central Asia."[115] Cary Liu proposes that the imitative design strategy helped reinforced the symbolism of the imperial palaces as "microcosms of the nation."[116] For the Manchu emperors, it was essentially an endeavor to authorize an order and occupation over the empire.[117] Reproducing the Jiangnan landscapes in the imperial palaces was a means of collecting and eventually occupying sites geographically remote from the centre of Qianlong's imperial authority. It was an enterprise akin to Qianlong's artistic collecting and cataloguing. The Lion Grove replications in north China therefore allowed Qianlong to legitimately claim his authority over the landscape physically and symbolically and register the Lion Grove in his geographical, cultural, and political territory.

Qianlong's reproduction of the Lion Grove reveals another layer of significance in imperializing the landscape when we take one of Qianlong's portraits into consideration. Qianlong's court artist(s) depicted a Lion Grove replication in the painting

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[114] Liu, "Archive of Power," 51-52.

[115] Forêt, *Mapping Chengde*, 23.

[116] Cary Y. Liu, "Architects and Builders of the Qing Dynasty Yuanming Yuan Imperial Garden-Palace," *The University of Hong Kong Museum Journal* 1 (September 2002): 43.

[117] Liu, "Archive of Power," 44.

titled *Qianlong di xuejing xingle tu* 乾隆帝雪景行樂圖 (*Qianlong Emperor Enjoying Himself in Snowy Weather*) (Fig. 9). As identified by Jia Jun, the architectural setting of the painting is the Lion Grove in the Changchun yuan in Beijing.[118] This painting belongs to the subgenre of *xingle tu* 行樂圖 (picture of enjoying pleasure) of Chinese portraiture, which depicts the subject enjoying himself through behaviors such as viewing a scene, reading a book, or drinking tea.[119] Early Qing emperors commissioned a large group of *xingle tu* images from their court artists.[120] On the imperial level, the *xingle tu* images are, in James Cahill's words, "images of power and possession."[121]

One notable feature of the painting is the emperor's attire: Qianlong sports a robe and a hat fashioned by the Han literati. Seated in the front of an open terrace, Qianlong is performing calligraphy while being attended by several servants, who are also dressed in the Han tradition. According to a canon set up by the founding father of the Qing empire, Huangtaiji 皇太極 (1592-1643), Manchu rulers were prohibited from wearing Han Chinese attire in order to preserve their ethnic identity.[122] Such dressing as a Han Chinese

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[118] Jia Jun, "Qianlong di *Xuejing xingle tu* yu Changchun yuan Shizi lin kao," *Zhuangshi* 239 (March 2013): 52-57.

[119] For an introduction to the *xingle tu* tradition, see Richard Vinograd, *Boundaries of the Self: Chinese Portraits, 1600-1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 9.

[120] Hui-Chi Lo offers an in-depth discussion of the genre *xingle tu* and the history of imperial *xingle tu* in the introduction of her dissertation. See Hui-Chi Lo, "Political Advancement and Religious Transcendence: The Yongzheng Emperor's (1678-1735) Deployment of Portraiture" (PhD diss., Stanford University, 2009), 5-22.

[121] James Cahill, *Pictures for Use and Pleasure: Vernacular Painting in High Qing China*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 44.

[122] Chen Pao-chen, "Yongzheng yu Qianlong er di Hanzhuang xingle tu de xushi yu yihan," *Gugong xueshu jikan* 27, no. 3 (Spring 2010): 51-53.

scholar was never realistic for Qianlong. Qianlong even confessed in his connotation to a poem that he inscribed on a *xingle tu* painted by Jin Tingbiao 金廷標 (?-1767) that wearing Han Chinese dress in his portraits was "no more than a play within painting—it is not that we admire the Han people's costume."[123] Depicting Qianlong as a scholar performing calligraphy, this portrait presents the Han Chinese aspect of his cultural and political self-identity as "a Confucian sage-emperor."[124] Accordingly, Qianlong further legitimized his ownership of the garden with an identical Han Chinese origin. It also mitigated the dislocation of removing Han Chinese cultural heritage from its original context in Jiangnan and implanted it into an alien environ in the Qing imperial palaces in the north.[125]

Another striking feature of the portrait is the season pictured: it is a winter day after snow when the pond in the garden is frozen and the servants are sweeping the snow in the courtyard. Since all of Qianlong's southern tours took place in lunar spring,[126] he was never able to witness the wintery scenery of the Lion Grove in Suzhou. Thus, this season depicted in the painting could function as a visual supplement for Qianlong to

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[123] Cahill, *Pictures for Use and Pleasure*, 47. For a reproduction of the painting by Jin Tingbiao, see Chan, *Huaibao gujin*, pl. 108.

[124] Wu Hung, "Emperor's Masquerade: 'Costume Portraits' of Yongzheng and Qianlong," *Orientations* 26, no. 7 (July and August, 1995): 38-39.

[125] This point of dislocation derives from Wu Hung's discussion of the Chinese elements in the painting *Spring's Peaceful Message*. See Wu Hung, *The Double Screen: Medium and Representation in Chinese Painting* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996), 229.

[126] For the schedules of Qianlong's southern tours and the reason why the southern tours only took place in spring, see Chen, "Kangxi he Qianlong er di," 6-9.

own and appreciate the overall sensory enjoyment of touring the garden to the greatest extent.

Conclusion

During the reign of Qianlong, the Lion Grove was reformed into an imperial landscape by a complex endeavor that involved the emperor's reconstructing, gifting, and replicating practices regarding the site. Visual objects played a vital role in the process. Through adroitly employing literary and artistic traditions mastered by Han Chinese for centuries, including poetry, calligraphy, painting, and stele inscription, Qianlong, as a Manchu ruler, achieved his agenda in claiming and maintaining the political and cultural leadership over a landscape in China proper.

SECTION 2: IMPERIALIZATION OF THE LION GROVE BY SUZHOU'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY

Introduction

Suzhou's local government and society played a significant role in imperializing the Lion Grove in eighteenth-century China. The provincial government's effort, apart from its coordination of Qianlong's trips to the garden, lay in the compilation and publication of a record of Qianlong's southern tours and gazetteers of Suzhou Prefecture. Meanwhile, Suzhou's popular publications, primarily a Suzhou perspective print and a travel guide, tremendously expedited the imperialization of the Lion Grove.

Archiving the Jiangnan Landscapes: The Lion Grove as a Famous Site in the *Nanxun shengdian*

The *Nanxun shengdian* was edited and compiled under the supervision of Gao Jin 高晉 (?-1779), the Governor-General of Jiangsu, Jiangxi, and Anhui Provinces (Liangjiang zongdu 兩江總督). Produced in 1771, the *Nanxun shengdian* documents Qianlong's first four southern tours with texts and illustrations. The chapter titled *Mingsheng* is composed of 160 woodblock prints depicting the travelling palaces and scenic sites at which Qianlong sojourned during his tours. The illustrations of the famous sites were probably designed and drawn by the renowned painter Shangguan Zhou 上官周 (b. 1665).[127] Qianlong declared that the compilation of the *Nanxun shengdian* was not

[127] It is still controversial to attribute the illustrations to Shangguan Zhou. For instance, drawing upon Guo Weiqu's study, Eugene Wang maintains that Shangguan is the designer and painter of the prints. Wang Cheng-hua opines that it was impossible for Shangguan to create the images when he was over 100 years old. Claudia Brown

his idea in the preface to the book.[128] During the production of the project, local officials were required to submit the images of sites in their domains for the *Mingsheng* chapter.[129] As a propagandist display of Qianlong's imperial tours, this volume thus manifested an enterprise initiated by the local authority to document and glorify the imperial tours.

Gao Jin's compilation of scenic sites visited by Qianlong during his southern tours constituted the provincial government's attempt to archive the Jiangnan landscapes for the emperor's inspection. Cary Liu proposes that an imperial archival project, achieved through "naming and categorizing relationships between people, places, and things," was a means to order and occupy empire.[130] The character *dian* (典) in the name of the compilation expresses a connotation of ruling and regulating.[131] This large-scale publication reminds us of the major imperial archival projects commissioned by Qianlong, such as the *Siku quanshu* 四庫全書 (*Comprehensive Library of the Four Treasures*) and the *Shiqu baoji*, which made the emperor excel as a monumentalist.[132]

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attributes the credit of the illustrations to Qian Weicheng, which I believe is groundless. Eugene Y. Wang, "The Rhetoric of Book Illustrations," in *Treasures of the Yenching: The Seventy-Fifth Anniversary Exhibit Catalogue of the Harvard-Yenching Library*, ed. Patrick Hanan (Cambridge, MA: Harvard-Yenching Library; Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2003), 200; Wang, "Qianlong chao Suzhou chengshi tuxiang," 139n80; Claudia Brown, *Great Qing: Painting in China, 1644-1911* (Seattle: University of Seattle Press, 2014), 78.

[128] Gao Jin, et al., *ngdian*, in *Zhongguo Qingdai gongting banhua*, vol. 31, ed. Qu Yanjun (Hefei: Anhui meishu chubanshe, 2002), 105.

[129] Ma, "Zhongjie yu difang yu zhongyang zhijian," 280-281n67.

[130] Liu, "Archive of Power," 44.

[131] Ibid.

[132] Harold L. Kahn, "A Matter of Taste: The Monumental and Exotic in the Qianlong Reign," in *The Elegant Brush: Chinese Painting Under the Qianlong Emperor, 1735-*

Through archiving famous sites in Jiangnan by cataloguing imperial poems, woodblock illustrations, and inscriptional texts, the *Nanxun shengdian* organized and censored named sites with cultural and historical significances for the emperor's inspection. This archival project initiated by the provincial government invokes a longstanding literary and poetic tradition: *mingsheng*, which are famous sites known for their natural beauty or historical significance. A wide spectrum of publications surveying sites within the imperial realm gave rise to the proliferation of *mingsheng* from the late Ming period.[133] The term was often applied in topographical paintings, gazetteers, and guidebooks as "a geographical subheading in religious, literary, and political discussions of the history of scenic sites and institutions."[134] Since at least the Eastern Jin dynasty (317-420), the famous sites of Suzhou have possessed a longstanding history written cooperatively by pilgrims, sightseers, literary and social club members, and holiday vacationers.[135] Ma Ya-chen has proposed that the term *mingsheng* was vested with an imperial connotation during Qianlong's southern tours. Local officials who coordinated

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1795, eds. Ju-hsi Chou and Claudia Brown (Phoenix, AZ: Phoenix Art Museum, 1985), 291-296.

[133] Si-yen Fei, *Negotiating Urban Space: Urbanization and Late Ming Nanjing* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009), 150.

[134] Elizabeth Kindall, "Visual Experience in Late-Ming Suzhou 'Honorific' and 'Famous Sites' Paintings," *Ars Orientalis* 36 (2009): 139.

[135] Elizabeth Kindall, *Geo-Narratives of a Filial Son: The Paintings and Travel Diaries of Huang Xiangjian (1609-1673)* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2016), 36.

the tours employed *mingsheng* to refer to the local sites that the emperor was about to visit.[136]

The *Nanxun shengdian* presents a woodblock-printed rendering of the Lion Grove in the *Mingsheng* chapter (Fig. 2). The illustration provides a panoramic view of the Lion Grove, depicting it as a walled garden with multiple natural and manmade objects in it. In addition to a pond located to the left part of the garden, architectural constructions are situated sporadically within the space. Unlike the exaggerated representation of the rocks as natural mountains in Qian Weicheng's Lion Grove scroll, the depiction of the Taihu rocks in the garden in this print is more realistic. The printmakers made an effort to represent the complex, sculpturally eroded, monumental limestones by delineating their winding outlines. Among a number of plants interspersed in the space, five tall pine trees grow from the picturesque rocks. Picturing pine trees evokes another name that the garden has been known for: Wusong yuan. Also, in contrast to Qian's painting, which employs a variety of pictorial devices to dramatically enlarge the interior space of the garden, the layout of the constructions in the print remains topographically accurate.[137]

The nametags of the constructions in the Lion Grove illustration remind us of the longstanding tradition of Chinese cartographic and topographical images that employs

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[136] Ma, "Zhongjie yu difang yu zhongyang zhijian," 284.

[137] I draw the definition of the term "topographical" from James Cahill, who claims that topographical representations depict the real, the individual, and the specific, so that we can still compare the topographical pictures against the real places. See James Cahill, "Huang Shan Paintings as Pilgrimage Pictures," in *Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China*, eds. Susan Naquin and Chün-fang Yü (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 253.

textual annotations to ensure correct identification of landmarks.[138] In addition, the labels function as textual hints that make the imperial-related constructions the focus of the illustration. Considering that Qianlong was engaged in the spectatorship of the print, the labels thus assisted the emperor to legitimately navigate and situate himself when he viewed the illustration. Since the imperial monuments do not feature any visual distinction from other constructions in the garden besides the labels, the labels hence helped Qianlong properly position himself in the pictorial space, which was actually a precondition of an imperial performance. Meanwhile, guided by the labels, other viewers of the illustration would be able to notice and focus on the implied existence of the emperor and consequentially get involved in the imperial performance. Focusing on the existence of the emperor, either physical or implied, is significant in the context of an imperial ritual. As Stephen Whiteman has argued, noticing the presence of the emperor during an imperial performance helps to "displace the viewer, compelling a voyeuristic perspective that necessarily placed himself at a physical and psychological remove from the object of the gaze and subordinated his own personality."[139] The illustration therefore generated a pictorial stage for a conceptual imperial performance on the surface of book pages.

Accompanying the Lion Grove print, a textual annotation of this *mingsheng* on the following two pages records the garden's history and its association with Qianlong:

> Situated at the northeastern corner of the city, the Lion Grove features plenty of grotesque rocks that resemble the shape of lions, after which the garden was

[138] Hearn, "Pictorial Maps, Panoramic Landscapes, and Topographic Paintings," 93-101, 103-111.

[139] Whiteman, "Translating the Landscape," 93

> named. In the second year of the Zhizheng era in the Yuan dynasty (1342), the disciples of the Chan Buddhist monk Tianru constructed a house to accommodate their mentor. There were hills, ponds, bridges, pavilions, pine trees, and bamboos in the garden. Dwellings for monks and guests were never inadequate. A powerful family later occupied the garden. The emperor bestowed a titleboard reading "Puti" (Bodhi) on the monastery. Ni Yuanzhen (Ni Zan) once created a painting to sketch it. The authentic piece (Ni Zan's Lion Grove painting) was acquired by the imperial storehouse [of the Qianlong emperor]. The sage (Qianlong) visited the garden with Ni Zan's painting as a reference and favored it ardently by composing a heavenly chapter. [The garden with its] groves and pavilions, is therefore able to compete in beauty with famed mountains of the South.[140]
> 獅子林在城東北隅，中多怪石，狀如狻猊，故名。元至正二年，天如禪師之門人結屋以居其師。有峰，有池，有橋，有亭，有松，有竹，僧寮賓館無不具備。敕賜寺額曰"菩提"。後為勢家所占。倪元鎮曾作圖貌之，真跡傳入內府。聖人按圖臨幸，寵以天章一曲，林亭遂與南國名山爭勝。

The text articulates the historical and cultural associations that the garden bore prior to Qianlong's visits. After specifying the Lion Grove's prosperity during the Yuan dynasty, the text explains the decline of the garden when in the possession of an esteemed family. It took place during the reign of Jiajing 嘉靖 emperor (1521-1567) in the Ming dynasty, when the garden was utterly demolished and abandoned.[141] According to the text, what enabled the Lion Grove to be a famous site was not its cultural and historical connection to Tianru or Ni Zan but Qianlong's interest and touring of the site. Moreover, the text points out that the Lion Grove scroll painted by Ni Zan entered Qianlong's imperial collection and serviced his imperial tours as a pictorial guide. As I have explored in Section 1, Qianlong used the scroll attributed to Ni Zan as an important means to perform and broadcast his imperial power. The inscriptional text of the Lion Grove illustration in the *Nanxun shengdian* also registers the emperor and his activities in the

[140] Gao Jin, et al., *Nanxun shengdian*, in *Zhongguo Qingdai gongting banhua,* vol. 32, ed. Qu Yanjun (Hefei: Anhui meishu chubanshe, 2002), 532.

[141] For the decline of the Lion Grove in the sixteenth century, see Chen, *Zhongguo yuanlin jianshang cidian*, 38; Wei, *Suzhou gudian yuanlin shi*, 174-174.

lineage of the historical and cultural heritage of the garden, forming a legitimate and complimentary account of the emperor's ownership of the landscape: he occupied the major material and artistic legacy of the garden and singlehandedly rescued the garden from its nadir. The text also indicates that Qianlong's personal interest, preference, and visits redefined the garden as a *mingsheng* that deserved a position in this chapter of the *Nanxun shengdian*. The concluding sentence of the narrative suggests that Qianlong was the pivotal figure that made the Lion Grove visible and magnificent in China's geographical and aesthetic territory.

The text attached to the illustration also references Qianlong's Lion Grove poems, which are complied in the "Tianzhang"天章 (Heavenly chapters) chapter in the volume. The text interprets Qianlong's verses as the emperor's gesture of favoring, or spoiling (*chong* 寵) the garden. As I have discussed in Section 1, Qianlong's Lion Grove poems documented his knowledge and reception of the site and eventually asserted his physical, cultural, and political ownership of the garden. Yun-chiu Mei has proposed that the *Nanxun shengdian* normalizes a large-scale imperialist invasion into the local leisure culture, which was, in essence, no less aggressive than those massive Qing military campaigns.[142] As for the Lion Grove, Qianlong's poetry was a literary and artistic instrument employed by the emperor to occupy a Jiangnan garden. Qianlong's ideological ownership of the site was essentially glorified by the *Nanxun shengdian* as the gesture of favoring the site.

The formatting of the text in the volume visually venerates the emperor and his behaviors (Fig. 10). The last two lines of the inscription are situated right underneath the

[142] Mei, "The Pictorial Mapping and Imperialization of Epigraphic Landscapes," 104.

upper frame of the rectangle enclosing the text, making the emperor-centered narrative the highest among all the vertical lines. Known as *taitou* 抬頭 (shift head), this is a typographical device applied in traditional, written Chinese to denote respect for the individual being mentioned.[143] Practice of the convention has visually signified and glorified the emperor on the surface of the book page.

By establishing a combination of illustration and inscription of the site, the *Nanxun shengdian* would importantly shape the collective memory of the Lion Grove in eighteenth-century China. As Stephen Whiteman aptly puts it: "Canonized sets of famous views had long served as vehicles for perpetuating the collective memory of cultural landscape."[144] Likewise, James Cahill argues that the creation of the clusters of visual and written information about a space reinforced the cultural structure of the physical terrain and were disseminated and accepted within a social group, which, in turn, structured the movement and experience of travelers to the place.[145] The illustration and text in the *Nanxun shengdian* defined the Lion Grove as an imperial landscape and would condition viewers' understanding of the site even after Qianlong's era.

Provincial society's enterprise to shape collective memory through archiving was inherited by the publications of Suzhou gazetteers. In his investigation of local gazetteers

[143] During the Qing dynasty, when the official text referred to the emperor or his words and behaviors, it had be located two characters above a normal line. This is called *shuangtai* 雙抬 (double shift). See Guo Sijie, "Tan gudai zhongyang jiquan de jiaqiang dui gongwen tishi de yingxiang," *Wenshi ziliao* 625 (2013): 143.

[144] Whiteman, "Translating the Landscape," 76

[145] Cahill, "Huang Shan Paintings as Pilgrimage Pictures," 280.

from twelfth- to eighteenth-century China, Joseph Dennis points out that the local gazetteers were "sites where the central state interacted with local elites" and "forums to shape public opinion and advocate policy."[146] The official status of the gazetteers pushed readers to understand gazetteers as "authoritative, orthodox monographs on locales, produced through the diligent efforts of non-native resident officials in cooperation with key representatives of local society."[147] According to Dennis, officials and literati were the main readers of local gazetteers, but their readership also included a wide range of readers who had various motivations and ways of reading. For instance, some read for pleasure about local scenic and historic sites and persons, while other readers were book collectors, travelers, and authors on various topics.[148]

Suzhou's local gazetteers inherited the methods applied by the *Nanxun shengdian* and further reinforced the regulated image of an imperial landscape to a larger audience. Suzhou Prefecture published a gazetteer during Qianlong's reign, before his first southern tour, in 1748. In this volume, the compiler did not highlight Lion Grove at all; it was even categorized in the section of temples and monasteries.[149] However, the visibility and significance of the garden had been considerably strengthened after Qianlong's era: two nineteenth-century Suzhou gazetteers, published respectively in 1824 and 1882,

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[146] Joseph Dennis, *Writing, Publishing, and Reading Local Gazetteers in Imperial China, 1100-1700* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2015), 3.

[147] Ibid., 127.

[148] Ibid., 251-252.

[149] Yaerhashan and Fu Chun, eds., *Suzhou fuzhi*, http://fzk.szlib.com/AncientBook/Book!getBookByBoodId.action?book.book_id=35# (accessed December 1, 2016).

documented Qianlong's visits, calligraphic gifts, and imperial poems in the opening chapters.[150] The 1824 *Daoguang Suzhou fuzhi* 道光蘇州府志 (*Gazetteer of Suzhou Prefecture during the Reign of the Daoguang Emperor*) even reproduced a variation of the Lion Grove illustration from the *Nanxun shengdian* (Fig. 11), along with a handful of famed scenic sites in Suzhou, including the Tiger Hill 虎丘 (Huqiu) and Stone Lake 石湖 (Shihu), which were also both tremendously reshaped by Qianlong's tours.[151] The Lion Grove's status as an imperial landscape was constantly celebrated and reinforced in Suzhou's provincial publications.

Commodifying Qianlong's Southern Tours: The Lion Grove in Popular Publications

Local society—basically publishers of popular products—also played a vital role in the imperialization of the Lion Grove in the eighteenth century. I will focus on two items available on market during the Qianlong era: a print entitled *Gusu mingyuan Shizilin* (Fig. 12) and the travel guide *Suzhou mingsheng tuyong* published by a Suzhou native.

[150] Song Rulin, Etengyi, and Shi Yunyu, eds., *Suzhou fuzhi*, http://fzk.szlib.com/AncientBook/Book!getBookByBoodId.action?book.book_id=23# (accessed July 16, 2016); Li and Feng, *Jiangsusheng Suzhou fuzhi*, 14-119.

[151] For discussions of how Qianlong's southern tours reshaped the Lion Grove and Tiger Hill, see Wang, "Qianlong chao Suzhou chengshi tuxiang," 132-153; Ma, "Zhongjie yu difang yu zhongyang zhijian," 268-287.

The Lion Grove in a Suzhou Perspective Print

Suzhou has been an important centre of China's printing business since the late Ming period.[152] The printmaking industry in Suzhou took an innovative shape in the Qing dynasty and nurtured a form of new products known as Suzhou perspective prints in the eighteenth century. They are single-sheet prints mainly produced between the 1730s and 1740s in local workshops. Often identified as *nianhua* 年畫 (New Year's prints), Suzhou perspective prints were purchased as domestic decorations for the lunar New Year and other holidays and celebrations. They are large—on average a metre high and 50 centimetres wide—monochrome prints to which colors are later applied manually. These prints commonly feature affluent cityscapes, popular scenic spots in Suzhou and other areas, imaginary sites with historical or cultural associations, auspicious imagery, and scenes from popular fictions and dramas.[153] Eighteen-century Suzhou perspective prints

[152] Thomas G. Ebrey, "Printing to Perfection: The Colour-Picture Album," in *The Printed Image in China: From the 8th to the 21st Centuries*, ed. Clarissa von Spee (London: The British Museum Press, 2010), 26.

[153] On eighteenth-century Suzhou perspective prints, see Kleutghen, *Imperial Illusions*, 195-197; Kristina Kleutghen, "From Science to Art: The Evolution of Linear Perspective in Eighteenth-Century Chinese Art," in *Qing Encounters: Artistic Exchanges between China and the West*, eds. Petra ten-Doesschate Chu and Ning Ding (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2015), 180; Hiromitsu Kobayashi, "Suzhou Prints and Western Perspective: The Painting Techniques of Jesuit Artists at the Qing Court, and Dissemination of the Contemporary Court Style of Painting to Mid-Eighteenth-Century Chinese Society through Woodblock Prints," in *The Jesuit II: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773*, eds. John W. O'Malley, S.J., Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Steven J. Harris, and T. Frank Kennedy, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 270-271; Hiromitsu Kobayashi, "Seeking Ideal Happiness: Urban Life and Culture Viewed through Eighteen-Century Suzhou Prints," in *The Printed Image in China: From the 8th to the 21st Centuries*, ed. Clarissa von Spee (London: The British Museum Press, 2010), 36-40; Cheng-hua Wang, "Prints in Sino-European Artistic Interactions of the Early Modern Period," in *Face to Face: The Transcendence of the Arts in China and Beyond*, ed. Rui Oliveira Lopes (Lisbon: Artistic Studies Research Center and the Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Lisbon, 2014), 436-443.

evidence Western pictorial influence, primarily linear perspective, chiaroscuro, and cross-hatching, on Chinese popular art and visual culture outside of the court art of Beijing and the export art of Canton during the Qing dynasty.[154] Some of the extant Suzhou prints overtly declare their Western source with inscriptions that state that the prints imitate "Taixi bifa"泰西筆法 or "Taixi biyi"泰西筆意 (Western brush methods). Some scholars have even termed this group of works *yangfeng Gusu ban* 洋風姑蘇版 (Western-style old Suzhou prints).[155] There is scholarly debate regarding the impact of European paintings and copperplate engravings on Suzhou print production. James Cahill suggests that these popular prints are successors of paintings applying European styles by Suzhou artists such as Zhang Hong 張宏 (1577-ca. 1652) during the late Ming and early Qing periods.[156] Hiromitsu Kobayashi identifies the stylistic influence of the Qing imperial court academy through artists and artisans who returned to their hometowns in Jiangnan, tracing the works' stylistic origin to the art of the Jesuit missionaries at the Qing court.[157] Wang Cheng-hua proposes the possibility that the style stemmed from the influx of

[154] For investigations of the influence of European artistic styles in Bejing and Canton, see Wang, "Whither Art History," 381-386, 390; Kristina Kleutghen, "Chinese Occidenterie: The Diversity of 'Western' Objects in Eighteenth-Century China," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 47, no. 2 (Winter 2014): 117-126.

[155] For instance, Zhang Ye, *Yangfeng Gusu ban yanjiu* (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2012).

[156] Cahill, *Pictures for Use and Pleasure*, 71.

[157] Kobayashi, "Suzhou Prints and Western Perspective," 281-282. For Qing painters that moved between the Beijing court and Jiangnan cities, see ibid., 35-42.

western optical devices and artefacts in Jiangnan.[158] All of these hypotheses, however, are tentative due to a lack of evidence.

As visual objects and popular products, Suzhou perspective prints were visible to numerous viewers during various procedures of production and circulation. Kristina Kleutghen maintains that the consumers of the Suzhou perspective prints were basically local middle-class merchants, who were proud of the city's commercial culture and could afford those considerably luxurious prints.[159] Applauding Kleutghen's argument, Ma Ya-chen considers that the prints were consumed by Suzhou's "mid-level merchants," who were more open-minded to unconventional pictorial styles and refused to be restrained by the domination of artistic taste from local literati elites.[160] However, Kleutghen's and Ma's characterization of the consumers of Suzhou perspective prints fails to account for the varied levels, in terms of both quality and price, of the prints on local market.[161] Hence, I believe that the Suzhou prints bore a wide spectrum of local spectators: all the designers, printmakers, vendors, buyers, and viewers were engaged in the spectatorship

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[158] Wang, "Qianlong chao Suzhou chengshi tuxiang," 155-156; Joseph McDermott, "Chinese Lenses and Chinese Art," *Kaikodo* 19 (Spring 2001): 9-29.

[159] Kleutghen, "From Science to Art," 183; Kleutghen, *Imperial Illusions*, 195.

[160] Ma Ya-chen, "Shangren shequn yu difang shehui de jiaorong: Cong Qingdai Suzhou banhua kan difang shangye wenhua," *Hanxue yanjiu* 28, no. 2 (2010): 100-101. Ma draws the term "mid-level merchants" from Richard Lufrano, who defines them as those who were "below the wealthy and politically powerful merchants but above the extremely vulnerable peddlers and stall owners." See Richard Lufrano, *Honorable Merchants: Commerce and Self-Cultivation in Late Imperial China* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), 3-4.

[161] The production and consumption of multileveled Suzhou prints, see Wang Cheng-hua, "Qingdai chuzhongqi zuowei chanye de Suzhou banhua yuqi shangye mianxiang," *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* 92 (June 2016): 9-38.

of the prints in the eighteenth century. There was even potentially a wider audience composed of travelers from other regions of the country, who acquired the prints as souvenirs to commemorate Suzhou's famous sites.[162]

Nowadays these prints are preserved mainly in Japanese and other foreign collections. One of the extant Suzhou prints depicts the scene of the Lion Grove, and through it local society contributed to the garden's imperialization. It is an excellent example by which we can understand how Suzhou's commercial culture turned the private garden into an imperial landscape. Entitled *Gusu mingyuan Shizi lin*, the print depicts the panorama of the garden from a bird's-eye perspective. The layout of the garden is rendered from the same perspective as the one in the illustration in the *Nanxun shengdian*. Similarly, the five tall pine trees and Taihu rocks are more realistically depicted in this print than in Qian Weicheng's painting. Like the illustration in *Nanxun shengdian*, the Suzhou print maintains a topographic accuracy, while man-made constructions and trees are more compactly distributed along the bank of the pond.

Like in the *Nanxun shengdian* print, labels identify the names of the pavilions, terraces, and bridges in the garden. They function as textual annotations that ensure the correct identification of the landmarks.[163] This Suzhou perspective print also marks the constructions related to the emperor. The pavilion alongside the Feihong qiao 飛虹橋 (Flying rainbow bridge) in the foreground is Yushu ting 御書聽 (Hall of imperial

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[162] Ma Ya-chen holds a similar view concerning the possibility of the consumers from other areas, See Ma, "Shangren shequn yu difang shehui de jiaorong," 115n90.

[163] Labeling the landmarks on landscape is in fact a conventional strategy practiced by some Chinese mapmakers and topographical landscape painters in order to enable the places' recognizability. See Hearn, "Pictorial Maps, Panoramic Landscapes, and Topographic Paintings," 104, 108.

calligraphy). In addition, in the building facing the pond in the garden, which is labeled Chaonan wujian lou 朝南五間樓 (Five buildings facing south), stands an imperial seat in the hallway. The two horizontally written characters "zuoluo" are framed, provoking thought of the titleboards with imperial brush-traces affixed to the garden's constructions.

Two of Qianlong's Lion Grove poems are inscribed at the top of the print. Titled "You Shizi lin" and "You Shizi lin deju"遊獅子林得句 (Verse acquired after the trip to the Lion Grove), they were composed during the emperor's first two visits to the garden in 1757 and 1762. The designer(s) of the print reminded the viewers of the imperial credential of the text by adding "yuti"御題 (imperially authored) before the poems. Moreover, "yujia chongxin"御駕重幸 (toured again by the emperor and his entourage) before the second poem underlines that the emperor's long-term preference for the garden.

Like many other Suzhou prints, this work employs a mixture of both Chinese and Western pictorial styles. Two open pavilions, Chaonan wujian lou and Songfeng ge 松風閣 (Pavilion of breeze through pine trees), display the traditional Chinese isometric perspective, as the floors of both constructions expand diagonally upward rather than receding horizontally into space. However, the rendering of Yushu ting showcases linear perspective derived from Western visual culture.[164] The diagonal lines on the ground of both sides of the construction direct the eye toward a single vanishing point. It is in fact the only trace of Western artistic influence in this image. Employing both Chinese and

[164] For the development of linear perspective in Qing China, see Chung, *Drawing Boundaries*, 61-64; John R. Finlay, "The Qianlong Emperor's Western Vistas: Linear Perspective and Trompe l'Oeil Illusion in the European Palaces of the Yuanming yuan," *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient* 94 (2007): 172-176; Kristina Kleutghen, "Peepboxes, Society, and Visuality in Early Modern China," *Art History* 38, no. 4 (September 2015), 772-775.

Western visual techniques, the print therefore creates a "modern image in which these multiple representational systems could comfortably coexist in an innovative work of affordable art" for local consumers.[165] In James Cahill's words, the Lion Grove print thus achieves "an adequate cluster of information" about the garden—its physical configuration presented in an image; its name; and some cultural resonances that it arouses, in the form of poetic or literary or legendary or historical references—on a single piece of paper.[166]

The designers of Suzhou prints, which were market-oriented products, eagerly embraced any available means of increasing the novelty and salability of their prints.[167] Reflecting the "local exoticism,"[168] Suzhou prints showcased innovative images relevant to the consumers' particular culture and celebrated Suzhou's local pride. The novelty, or the exoticism, in this Lion Grove print—the emperor-related text and labels and the linear perspective—fueled the imperialization of the Lion Grove. First, like the Lion Grove illustration in the *Nanxun shengdian*, the Lion Grove print visualizes the physical and cultural reconstruction of the garden in response to Qianlong's tours via highlighting the imperial landmarks, which transformed the garden to a mobile centre of Qianlong's imperial authority. In addition, it is notable that the Lion Grove print appropriates Qianlong's imperial poems in its inscription, which is unique among extant Suzhou prints. The Lion Grove print is evidence of the wide circulation of Qianlong's southern tour

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[165] Kleutghen, "From Science to Art," 183.

[166] Cahill, "Huang Shan Paintings as Pilgrimage Pictures," 280.

[167] Cahill, *Pictures for Use and Pleasure*, 71.

[168] Kobayashi, "Seeking Ideal Happiness," 45.

poems in the eighteenth century in the local society of Jiangnan.[169] Meanwhile, the inscription on the print exposed Qianlong's private narrative of an imperial ritual to a public audience. Located right after the title of the print, the inscription functions as a textual annotation for the title. Viewers are guided to figure out "why the Lion Grove is a famous garden in old Suzhou" by reading Qianlong's poems, which were composed with the intent of his personal thoughts, motivations, and perceptions. By displaying only Qianlong's Lion Grove poems, the printmakers yielded their authority in interpreting the historical and cultural associations of the garden to the emperor. Qianlong's Lion Grove poems inform the readers of its historical and cultural association with Ni Zan and his painting, a picture of the garden owned by the emperor himself. Qianlong's vicarious ownership of the garden, as the *Nanxun shengdian* text implies, was achieved by occupying the pivotal artistic heritage of the garden. Through creating "cinema-like word-pictures" [170] of the views in the garden and describing his multisensory and emotional experiences during his sojourns in the garden, Qianlong's text was guiding the readers to see and sense the place through following Qianlong's eyes and imitating his bodily experiences. The imperial poem on the Lion Grove print proclaims Qianlong's ownership of the garden in that he has the privilege to articulate his experience of both occupying and knowing the landscape. As the only interpretative text on the image, the poetic inscription would profoundly reshape the "social knowledge" and "collective

[169] On the circulation of Qianlong's southern tour compositions, see Chang, *A Court on Horseback*, 323-324.

[170] Hargett, "Chinese Travel Writing," 113.

understanding"[171] of the garden among the spectators of the print. To sum up, the appropriation of the imperial text informs the readers that Qianlong had turned the garden into a famous site by visiting it constantly and composing poems for it, as the title indicates, and moreover, he owned the privilege of interpreting it. The readers of the imperial text were passively engaged in the narrative dominated by the emperor and were eventually invoked into the imperial ritual performed by Qianlong.

Qianlong's poems in this print epitomize the frequent use of the inscriptions in the eighteenth-century Suzhou prints. As the calligraphic colophon is a common element in Chinese paintings, several scholars have suggested that a print with an inscription—a strategy to attract more consumers—could be treated as a painting substitute.[172] This Lion Grove print inscribed with Qianlong's poems, though not in his personal calligraphic style, could be viewed as a painting endorsed by the emperor. Qianlong's text, in this regard, functioned as a credential that aggrandizes the print over those without imperial poems in their colophons. It appealed to its target consumers by indicating that a purchaser could own an imperially sponsored work for less money than authentic paintings. Considering Qianlong's infamous practice of writing poems on both ancient and contemporary paintings as a declaration of his ownership, it might further suggest to consumers that this print is a reproduction of a painting in Qianlong's imperial collection.

Unlike in the *Nanxun shengdian* illustration, which merely references Qianlong's Lion Grove poems in its accompanying text, the incorporation of Qianlong's Lion Grove

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[171] Cahill, "Huang Shan Paintings as Pilgrimage Pictures," 280.

[172] Kleutghen, "From Science to Art," 180; Wang, "Qingdai chuzhongqi zuowei chanye de Suzhou banhua," 31.

poems visually invades the pictorial space of the Suzhou perspective print, just like the emperor's physical and ideological invasion into the garden. The situation of the imperial text highlights the sovereign power of the emperor in these prints. Positioned at the top of the illustration and extending from right to left, the emperor, appearing in a textual form, is able to view the landscape from a privileged, ubiquitous perspective.

During the heyday of the Suzhou perspective prints, local printmakers regularly employed Western visual instruments to generate more visually appealing products to attract target consumers. Kristina Kleutghen states that by constantly referencing the Western brush methods in their inscriptions, extant Suzhou prints indicate the foreign pictorial tradition's popularity, recognizability, and applicability to the diversity of print subjects.[173] Anita Chung, likewise, suggests a widespread awareness and appreciation of the novel artistic methods among intended consumers in local society.[174] Employed as a selling point and treated as an accomplishment by Suzhou's printmakers, linear perspective was recognizable and appreciated by consumers with cultivated eyes. By only applying linear perspective to the pavilion with the imperial calligraphy, this print directs the eye to the Yushu ting instead of those rendered in a conventional isometric manner. In addition to the textual labels, this print, with its combination of both Chinese and European perspectives, offers visual prominence to the pavilion with Qianlong's imperial brush-traces—the implied calligraphic presence of the emperor. The formal quality of the print helps to prioritize the emperor and his presence, suggesting that the emperor was the only individual who could savor the innovative visual technique and that it was his

[173] Kleutghen, "From Science to Art," 182; Kleutghen, "Chinese Occidenterie," 129.

[174] Chung, *Drawing Boundaries*, 73.

imperial power that made the pavilion unique. With the assistance of the labeled, "Yushu ting," the linear perspective makes the print more "indicative" as it "directs the viewer to the focus of the scene."[175]

The Suzhou print used several methods similar to ones in the Lion Grove illustration in the *Nanxun shengdian*. For example, they both highlighted the imperial presence in a pictorial space and prioritized Qianlong in the historical and cultural significance of the site. These shared methods had similar impact on the imperialization of the garden. Moreover, considering the exposure of the image during the procedure of design, production, consumption, and circulation, the Lion Grove print enhanced the visibility of the imperial power over the garden among a much broader audience. Suzhou natives metaphorically got involved in the imperial ritual and performance that Qianlong and other political authorities conducted in or onto the Lion Grove when they purchased or viewed this print.

The Lion Grove in the *Suzhou Mingsheng Tuyong*

In addition to the Suzhou perspective print, other commercial publications in eighteenth-century Suzhou employed Qianlong's southern tours as primary sources. This trend testifies to the local publishers' commodification of the imperial tours for profit and contributed significantly to the imperialization of the Lion Grove.[176] During the reign of Qianlong, Suzhou publishers produced guidebooks that catalogued the local scenic sites toured by the emperor during his sojourns. One exemplary case is the *Suzhou mingsheng*

[175] Whiteman, "Translating the Landscape," 81.

[176] On the commodification of Qianlong's southern tours, see Ma, "Zhongjie yu difang yu zhongyang zhijian," 282-283.

tuyong (hereafter *Tuyong*) edited by a Suzhou native Guo Zhongheng. Issued in 1759, the *Tuyong* introduces, with both texts and illustrations, the scenic spots Qianlong visited in his 1751 and 1757 tours. Guo's publication was highly welcomed and consumed by the market and was thus shortly reprinted with extended content under the title of *Jiangnan mingsheng tuyong* 江南名勝圖詠 (*Illustrated Odes to Jiangnan's Famous Sites*) in 1763 and 1765. The pocket-sized guidebook (around 15 by 9 centimeters) was basically produced for sale.[177] As Tobie Meyer-Fong suggests, this illustrated book assumed "a popular, or at least a local, audience for imperial compositions, while providing a guide to the sites as they had been imperially seen and inscribed."[178]

Tuyong introduces the Lion Grove along with twenty other famous Suzhou sites visited by Qianlong. It documents Qianlong's tours, calligraphic gift (a titleboard), an imperial stele, and a Lion Grove poem ("You Shizi lin"), along with an illustration of the garden.[179] The text of the titleboard gifted by Qianlong, "Jingzhi yuanzhao"鏡智圓照 (Orbicular illumination of mirror-like awareness), is printed horizontally in enlarged characters (Fig. 13). Such a layout is unique among textually archived titleboards bestowed by Qianlong during his tours and reproduced in publications by the local government and society. The visual resemblance makes the text a miniature of the original object. Guo also reminds the readers of the location of the emperor's calligraphic gift: it is reverently hung on the main hall of the garden. The text therefore helped the

[177] Ibid., 277n59, 282-283.

[178] Tobie Meyer-Fong, *Building Culture in Early Qing Yangzhou* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003), 186.

[179] Guo, *Suzhou mingsheng tuyong*, 528-535.

reader/visitor effortlessly spot the titleboard, the calligraphic display of Qianlong's imperial presence and authority, when they were physically situated in the garden. The *Tuyong* also records the poem Qianlong composed after his first tour to the garden. The annotations before and after the poem—"yuzhi"御製 (imperially styled) and "yubi"—persistently state the imperial credential of the verse.[180] By locating Qianlong's poetic inscription before the writings by previous and contemporary literati authors, the *Tuyong* prioritize the Manchu ruler's reception of the garden in a poetic form mastered by Han Chinese for centuries.

The illustration of the Lion Grove in the *Tuyong* (Fig. 14) pictures the garden in a bizarre manner: all the representative views of the Lion Grove, such as Feihong qiao and Shizi feng 獅子峰 (Hill of lions), are located outside the realm of the walled garden. The image designers' intent to highlight the landmarks made the views float above and encircle the boundary of the garden.

Owning to the fact that the *Tuyong* was published only two years after Qianlong's first tour of the Lion Grove, I would like to suggest that the book was produced before imperial authority profoundly intruded into the geographical and cultural territory of the garden. Even so, the *Tuyong* inaugurated a vogue in Suzhou popular publications for ones that utilized the spots and poems of Qianlong's tours for commercial profit. These publications, including the Lion Grove print, further pushed the garden to the position of an imperial landscape and broadcasted the turn to a wider audience. Also, by comparing the Lion Grove illustrations in the *Tuyong* and the Suzhou perspective print, it is obvious how the southern tours gradually but firmly reshaped and refashioned the pictorial

[180] Ibid., 531-532.

representations of Suzhou's cityscape. More significantly, as a travel guide, the *Tuyong* closely tied the readers to the site. It used imperial traces in the garden to attract readers to the garden, an imperialized landscape, and eventually made them engage in the imperial performance generated by the traces of the emperor in the site.

The Lion Grove print and the *Tuyong*, as popular products welcomed by the local market, exposed the imperial landscape to a wide group of spectators and reshaped their collective memory of the imperialized garden. The readers of the imperially authored text and viewers of the illustrations were passively engaged in the imperial ritual that had taken place in the physical, pictorial, and textual space generated by the Lion Grove. They therefore broke up the time and spatial limit of the original imperial performances, which normally took place in the lunar month of March, as indicated by the calendrical information on the Suzhou print, during Qianlong's inspection tours. The flourishing popular publications therefore opened up a new avenue of Qianlong's imperial power over the Lion Grove.

Publicizing the Imperial Landscape: The Lion Grove in Local Tourism

The publication of guidebooks like the *Tuyong* evidenced the burgeoning of travel in eighteenth-century Suzhou, which had been a long-term vogue among the city's residents. The term *lüyou* 旅遊 (tourism) appeared as early as the Southern and Northern dynasties (420-589) and has been widely used since the Tang dynasty (618-906). Travel in China had been prevalent from the late Ming period, and Jiangnan was one of the most significant destinations for domestic travelers.[181] The eighteenth century was the zenith of

[181] Wu Jen-shu, "Wan Ming de lüyou huodong yu xiaofei wenhua: yi Jiangnan wei taolun zhongxin," *Zhongyan yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* 41 (September 2003): 88-89.

Suzhou's local tourism. Visitors were intrigued by the prosperous streets and time-honored scenic sights. Booming tourism in Suzhou gave rise to numerous travel writings on scenic spots in the city, including the Lion Grove. [182] Consisting of first-hand descriptions of the landscape and autobiographical sentiments, the travel accounts record and describe the garden through the perspective of the educated elite.

Based on a close reading of the travel accounts of visitors that toured Suzhou's scenic spots, Wu Jen-shu has unveiled the gardens' transition from private properties to recreational public spaces in Qing China. The owners of the gardens, including the Lion Grove, opened their private properties to tourists in spring, which made touring gardens a vogue among Suzhou citizens.[183] An entrance fee, called the *kanhua qian* 看花錢 (flower-viewing fee), was levied by the gardeners.[184] Some writers even mentioned that the bustling environment felt like the Song painter Zhang Zeduan's 張擇端 (1085-1145) painting *Qingming shanghe tu* 清明上河圖 (*Along the River during the Qingming Festival*) when tourists clustered at famous sites such as the Lion Grove, Lanxue tang 蘭雪堂 (Hall of Snow on Orchid) and Zhuozheng yuan 拙政園 (Garden of Humble Administrator).[185]

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[182] The history of Chinese travel writing, see Richard E. Strassberg, "China," in *Literature of Travel and Exploration: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Jennifer Speake (London: Routledge, 2003), 244-248; Hargett, "Chinese Travel Writing," 112-124.

[183] Wu Jen-shu, "Jiangnan yuanlin yu chengshi shehui: Ming Qing Suzhou yuanlin de shehuishi fenxi," *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan jindaishi yanjiusuo jikan* 61 (September 2008): 38-43.

[184] Yuan Xuelan, "Wuxia mingyuan ji," in Yi, *Suzhou yuanlin lidai wenchao*, 286.

[185] Qian, *Lüyuan conghua*, 523.

When situated in the Lion Grove, an eighteenth-century traveler was inevitably engaged in the imperial ritual evoked by the imperial traces in the site. Wu also points out that the objects for display constituted a significant part of the garden's material culture. They were exhibits that showcased the status and identity of the owners.[186] For the Lion Grove, the most important exhibits were those associated with Qianlong: the titleboards with his imperial brushwork and the stele with his imperial poem. Sojourners were even able to view Qianlong's replica of the Lion Grove painting attributed to Ni Zan if the owners were willing to display it. The opening of the garden to the public, therefore, exposed those imperial objects to the public gaze, which later accelerated the circulation of those immobile objects.

The circulation of the imperial titleboards and stele was distinct from that of portable guidebooks or popular prints, as a spectator had to enter the physical environment in which they were located. It therefore generated the "experience of reading these texts in their original spatial contexts, in the places where those who composed and carved them expected them to be read."[187] When visitors noticed the objects related to Qianlong, the site's position as a mobile centre of the imperial power was activated and the visitors were eventually involved in the imperial performance dominated by Qianlong's calligraphic gifts. As Jonathan Hay suggests, "calligraphy also had the advantage of its physical immediacy, which could bring the recipient closer to the emperor as a living presence than almost any other gift."[188] The imperial calligraphy

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[186] Wu, "Jiangnan yuanlin yu chengshi shehui," 23-29.

[187] Harrist, *The Landscape of Words*, 19.

[188] Hay, "The Kangxi Emperor's Brush-Traces." 327.

displayed by the titleboard and stele also disrupted the ideally equal relationship between calligrapher and spectator.[189] The display of the imperial gifts in the garden visualized Qianlong's imperial presence and authority for a large audience. The textual, visual, and material nature of the objects worked effectively on a material scale and functioned cooperatively in the complex enterprise of imperializing the Lion Grove.

As a seasonal public garden in the eighteenth century, the Lion Grove engaged more visitors in the imperial ritual generated by the display of objects in the garden, and it eventually publicized the imperialized landscape. The "zhenqu" titleboard and imperial stele are even preserved in the present-day Lion Grove. The imperial traces are still celebrated, after hundreds of years, as the major cultural and historical heritage of the site—a famous garden now toured by numerous contemporary domestic and foreign visitors.

From *Mingsheng* to *Guji*: The Afterlife of the Lion Grove Poetry and Imagery

I have explained how local government preserved the imperial traces in the garden by reprinting Qianlong's Lion Grove poems and reproducing the *Nanxun shengdian* Lion Grove illustration in nineteenth-century Suzhou gazetteers. How then did the local society treat the Lion Grove poetry and imagery after the heyday of the garden during the reign of Qianlong? The *Shizi lin jisheng xuji* 獅子林紀勝續集 (*Sequel Collection of Recorded Sights of the Lion Grove*, hereafter *Xuji*), complied and published by a Suzhou native Xu Lifang 徐立方, suggests an answer. Like the nineteenth-century Suzhou gazetteers, the preface to the *Xuji* records the titleboards and couplets conferred

[189] Ibid., 323.

by two Qing emperors, Kangxi and Qianlong, during their southern tours. The *Xuji*, like the *Nanxun shengdian* and Suzhou gazetteers, also reprints Qianlong's Lion Grove poems.[190] In addition, this volume reproduces the Lion Grove illustration from the *Nanxun shengdian* (Fig. 15). The text accompanying the image reads: "The image is a reproduction of [the illustration in] the *Nanxun shengdian*. Though it is uncertain which edition we copied, the reproduction is merely an enterprise to preserve the *guji* 古蹟 (ancient sites)."[191]

According to Eugene Wang, a *ji* is a site that emphasizes "vestiges" and "traces." The overlay of writing is the key factor that defines a site. A *ji* is textualized by a body of writing by a succession of authors of the past in local gazetteers and literary anthologies.[192] The textualized Lion Grove in the *Xuji* is the most important element that links individual travel works and travelers over time. Referred to as *guji*, the Lion Grove poetry and imagery prevalent in Qianlong's reign was reprinted and reproduced to "infuse the present landscape with a storied past, thereby transporting visitors not only to 'nature' but also back to past worlds."[193]

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[190] Xu Lifang, ed, *Shizi lin jisheng xuji*, in *Zhongguo yuanlin mingsheng zhi congkan*, vol. 31, eds. Zheng Xiaoxia and Zhang Zhi (Yangzhou: Guangling shushe, 2006), 139-145.

[191] The Chinese text reads: 此圖從《南巡盛典》中摹出，不知臨誰氏本，謹以存古蹟云爾. See ibid., 154.

[192] Eugene Y. Wang, "Tope and Topos: the Leifeng Pagoda and the Discourse of the Demonic," in *Writing and Materiality in China*, eds. Judith T. Zeitlin and Lydia H. Liu with Ellen Widmer (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003), 488.

[193] Eugene Y. Wang, "Perceptions of Change, Changes in Perception—West Lake as Contested Site/Sight in the Wake of the 1911 Revolution," *Modern Chinese Literature and Culture* 12, no. 2 (Fall 2000): 97. For *guji* in Chinese landscape and landscape painting, see Wu Hung, "*Ji*: Traces in Chinese Landscape and Landscape Painting," *Cahiers d'Extrême-Asie* 17 (2008): 174-182.

Conclusion

Multiple enterprises by Suzhou's local government and society helped transform the Lion Grove into an imperial landscape in eighteenth-century Suzhou. Suzhou's local society and government shared several similar strategies in the process of imperializing the Lion Grove. These included documenting Qianlong's activities regarding the site, appropriating or referencing Qianlong's imperial poems, highlighting the imperial presence by textual and visual instruments, and placing and prioritizing Qianlong in the historical and cultural lineage of the garden. As a consequence, Suzhou's local society proclaimed Qianlong's cultural, historical, and political ownership of the garden and generated conceptual imperial performances on the pictorial and textual spaces of the materials. These enterprises by local government and society, though motivated by varied political and commercial agendas, all transformed the Lion Grove from a private garden to an imperial landscape in eighteenth-century China.

CONCLUSION

Imperialization of the Lion Grove during the Qianlong reign was a complicated, collaborative enterprise that engaged various efforts from different echelons of society. The eighteenth-century Lion Grove essentially challenges the conventional categorization of a Chinese garden. By suggesting a more fluid definition of imperial landscape and studying the Lion Grove as a venue where Qianlong performed and reinforced his imperial authority, this thesis yields an innovative perspective from which we can comprehend both Qing imperial landscapes and numerous scenic sites in south China. More importantly, the issue of how Qianlong imperialized the Lion Grove emblemizes the strategies employed by this Manchu ruler to maintain his cultural and political rulership over an empire with a vast territorial domain and multi-ethnic traditions. I believe that two aspects of Qianlong's strategies are most noteworthy: first, he legitimized and manipulated his ownership and leadership over a region through strategically employing the region's cultural prototypes,[194] and second, he ruled through replication of architecture and art.[195] For the first aspect, through adroitly employing cultural forms mastered by Han Chinese for centuries, including poetry, calligraphy,

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[194] Nixi Cura proposes that Qianlong's unremitting control over different constituencies can be seen to originate from his apparent surrender to his role within each group's cultural order. See Nixi Cura, "A 'Cultural Biography' of the *Admonitions* Scroll: The Qianlong Reign (1736-1795)," in *Gu Kaizhi and the Admonitions Scroll*, ed. Shane McCausland (London: The British Museum Press, 2003), 269.

[195] For a seminal discussion that explores how Kangxi and Qianlong ruled through replication in architecture and the arts, see Jason Steuber, "Qing Dynasty Emperors Kangxi and Qianlong: Rule through Replication in Architecture and the Arts," in *Original Intentions: Essays on Production, Reproduction, and Interpretation in the Arts of China*, eds. Nick Pearce and Jason Steuber (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2012), 138-211.

painting, and stele inscription, Qianlong achieved his agenda in claiming and maintaining the political and cultural leadership in China proper, which remained a bastion of Ming loyalism and anti-Manchu sentiment. For the second, by means of replication, the circulation of emperor-centered text, image, and architecture concerning the Lion Grove, along with their visual and ideological operations on a material scale, generated an insight into not just Qing painting, but of Qing visuality.[196]

Meanwhile, investigation of the Lion Grove texts and illustrations in the *Nanxun shengdian*, Suzhou gazetteers, the Suzhou perspective print, and the *Tuyong* fleshes out the way Qianlong's southern tours reshaped the geographical and cultural landscapes in Jiangnan and refashioned the pictorial representations of Suzhou's scenic sites. Both local officials and commercial publishers adapted Qianlong's tours as their primary sources while tirelessly venerating and glorifying the emperor with texts and images in their publications. More importantly, we are able to comprehend the unique roles of visual materials in the complex enterprise of producing Qianlong's imperial landscape.

In Jonathan Hay's thought-provoking article "The Diachronics of Early Qing Visual and Material Culture," he lists innovative strategies employed by early-Qing rulers to achieve their political and cultural leadership: the "mobile center" of power, the refashioning and renaming of symbolic sites, the physical inscription of Qing imperial presence in the cultural landscape, and the promotion of the emperor as a nationwide celebrity.[197] Most of these strategies were widely adapted, and efficiently operated in the

[196] For this point, I am indebted to Nixi Cura's brilliant observation. See Cura, "On Pictures and Multiples," 70.

[197] Hay, "The Diachronics of Early Qing Visual and Material Culture," 312.

case of the Lion Grove. Whereas Hay's discussion focused on the level of the central government, this study's examination of Suzhou's local society's contribution to the imperialization of the Lion Grove enables us to observe the adaptation of these innovative methods by local authority and popular culture of the early-Qing state, seeing how they maintained and enhanced imperial authority in a geographical and cultural landscape in Jiangnan. The study of the imperialization of the Lion Grove has showcased a new perspective for reconsidering early-Qing rulers' political and cultural encounter with provincial authority and local society in China proper.

Finally, based upon an investigation of a Qing emperor's multifaceted manipulation of landscape for cultural and political authority and leadership, this thesis could work as a basis and an inspiration for future scholarship that examines the rule of other emperors of imperial China, and even political leaders in modern and contemporary periods, through landscapes.

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APPENDIX 1

"You Shizi lin" by Qianlong

《遊獅子林》
早知獅子林，傳自倪高士。
疑其藏幽谷，而宛居鬧市。
肯構惜無人，久屬他氏矣。
手蹟藏石渠，不亡賴有此。
詎可失目前，大吏稱未飾。
未飾乃本然，益當尋屐齒。
假山似真山，仙凡異尺咫。
松掛千年藤，池貯五湖水。
小亭真一笠，矮屋肩可掎 。
緬五百年前，良朋此萃止。
澆花供佛鉢，瀹茗談元髓。
未擬泉石壽，泉石况半毀。
西望寒泉山，趙氏遺舊址。
亭台乃一新，高下煥朱紫。
何幸何不幸，誰為剖其旨？
似覺凡夫云，慙愧雲林子。

"Touring the Lion Grove"

I have known the Lion Grove for a long time. It is a heritage of the lofty elite Ni [Zan].
Though I suspected that it was located in a tranquil valley, it is in fact situated in the boisterous city.
It would have been reconstructed. Unfortunately, no one is willing to do so. It has been occupied by someone else for ages.
The original [Lion Grove] scroll [by Ni Zan] is catalogued in the *Shiqu baoji*, which helps avoid the loss [of the painting].
What I have seen is unexpected honestly. The official claims that the garden has never been embellished.
Though unembellished, it is the natural and original way it looks, which even assists me in searching for traces [left by previous visitors].
The artificial hills look just like real mountains. The distance between immortals and mortals are within steps.
There are thousand-year-old vines hanging on the pine trees. The pond hoards water from five lakes.
The tiny pavilion looks just like a straw hat, and the house is so short that it even touches your shoulders.
I cherish the moment five hundred years ago, when intimate friends gathered here.

They watered the flowers and enshrined the alms bowl of the Buddha. Also, they boiled tea while talking about the essence of the Yuan dynasty.
I have not been able to estimate the ages of the spring and rocks since they are partly destroyed.
When I look toward the west, I see Mount Hanquan, which is a site abandoned by someone named Zhao.
The pavilions and terraces there are recently constructed. They display both pleasant and unpleasant views from top to bottom.
Is it fortunate, or not? Who will decipher its significance?
This seems like what a vulgar person would say. [It would] embarrass Master Yunlin (Ni Zan).

APPENDIX 2: FIGURES

Fig. 1. Attributed to Ni Zan. *Shizi lin tu*. Handscroll, ink on paper. 100 x 30 cm. Datable before 1616. Palace Museum, Beijing. As reproduced in Zhang, cat. 45.

Fig. 2. Illustration of the Lion Grove in the *Nanxun shengdian*. Woodblock print. 1771. As reproduced in Gao, vol. 32, 530-531.

Fig. 3. “Zhenqu” titleboard in the Lion Grove. Photo: Author.


Fig. 4. Imperial stele in the Lion Grove. Photo: Author.

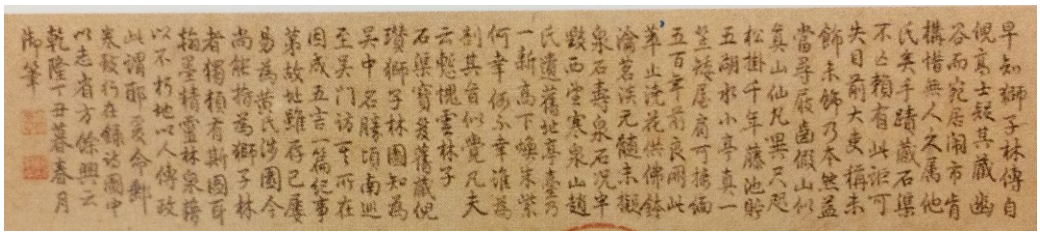


Fig. 5. Qianlong's poems inscribed on the Lion Grove scroll attributed to Ni Zan. As reproduced in Zhang, cat. 45.

Fig. 6. *Shizi lin tu* attributed to Ni Zan after Qianlong's remounting. As reproduced in Chan, pl. 30.

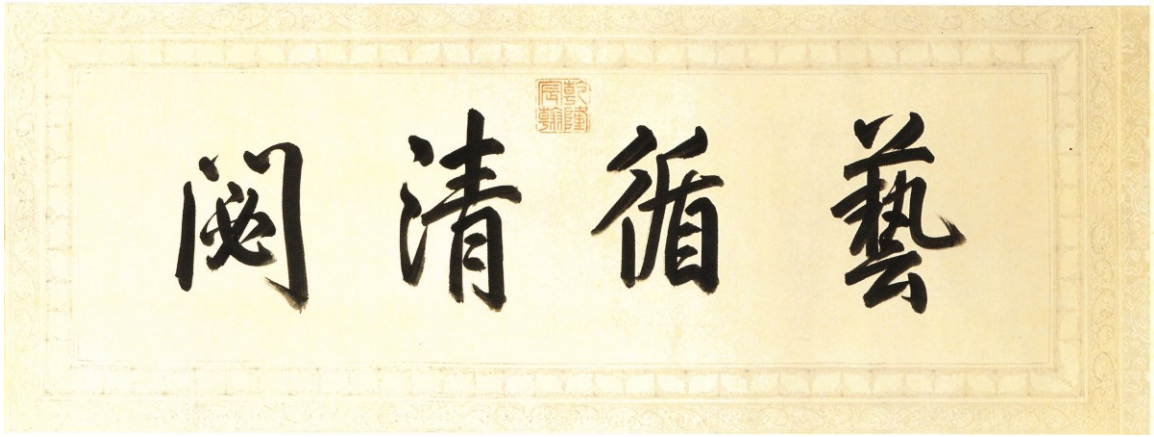
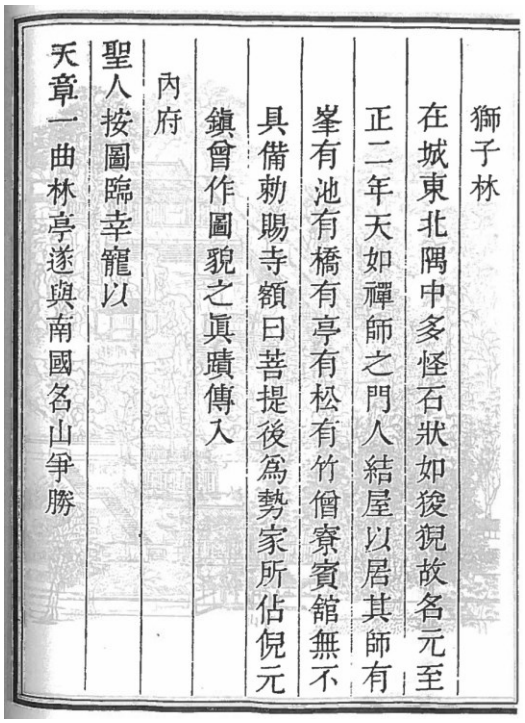


Fig. 7. Frontispiece of Qianlong's 1772 copy of the *Shizi lin tu* attributed to Ni Zan. As reproduced in Chan, pl. 29.

Fig. 8. Qian Weicheng. *Shilin quanjing tu*. Handscroll, ink and colors on paper. 38.2 x 187.3 cm. ca. 1757. The Mactaggart Art Collection, University of Alberta Museums, Edmonton. As reproduced in Tsang, cat. 7.

Fig. 9. Anonymous. *Qianlong di xuejing xingle tu*. Hanging scroll, ink and colors on silk, 468 x 378 cm. Undated. Palace Museum, Beijing. As reproduced in Nie, cat. 73.



獅子林

在城東北隅中多怪石狀如狻猊故名元至正二年天如禪師之門人結屋以居其師有峯有池有橋有亭有松有竹僧寮賓館無不具備勅賜寺額曰菩提後爲勢家所佔倪元鎮曾作圖貌之眞蹟傳入內府

聖人按圖臨幸寵以天章一曲林亭遂與南國名山爭勝

Fig. 10. The Lion Grove text in the *Nanxun shengdian*. 1771. As reproduced in Gao, vol. 32, 532.

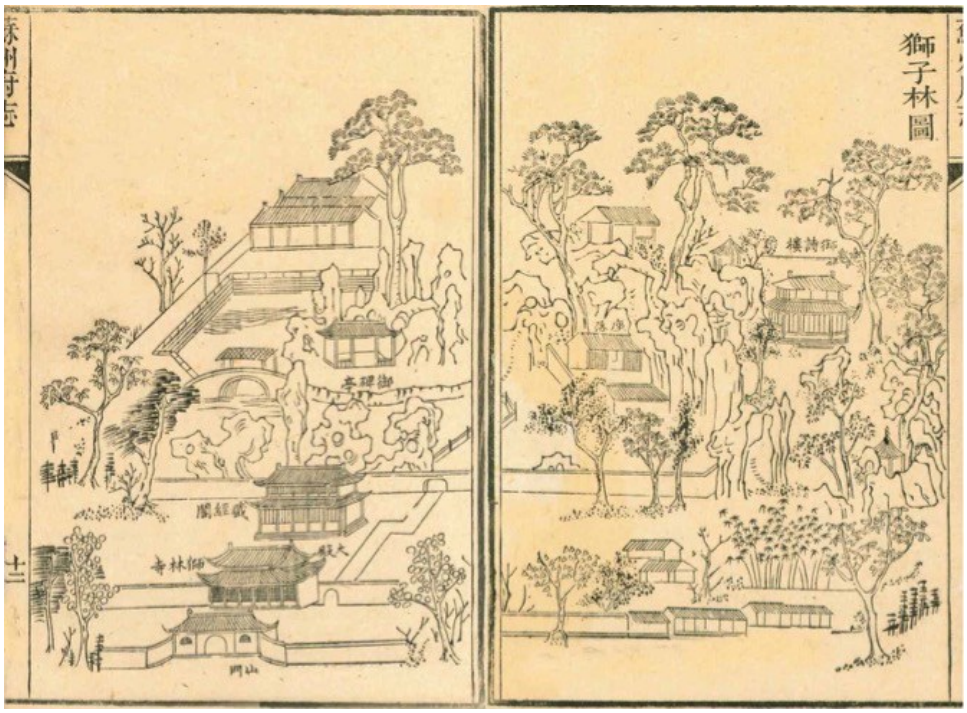


Fig. 11. Illustration of the Lion Grove in the *Daoguang Suzhou fuzhi*. 1824. Woodblock print. As reproduced in Song, Etengyi, and Shi, n.p.

Fig. 12. *Gusu mingyuan Shizi lin*. 18th Century. Woodblock print. 64.8 x 56.8 cm. National Diet Library, Tokyo. As reproduced in Aoki and Kobayashi, 378.

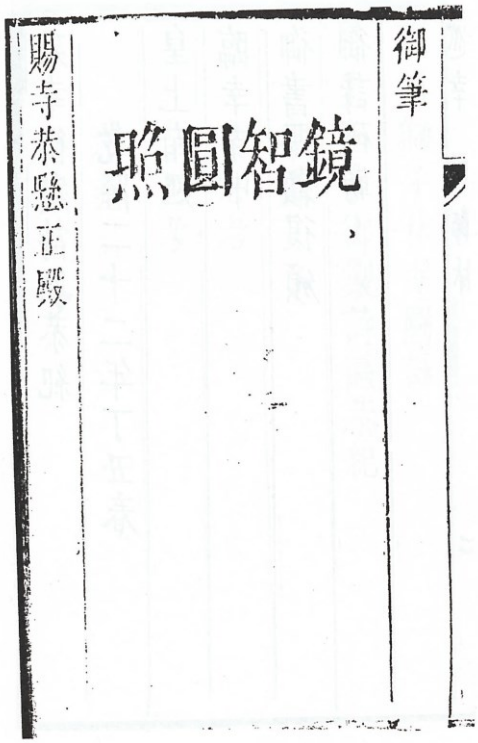


Fig. 13. Record of "Jingzhi yuanzhao" titleboard in the *Suzhou mingsheng tuyong*. 1759. Woodblock print. As reproduced in Guo, 530.

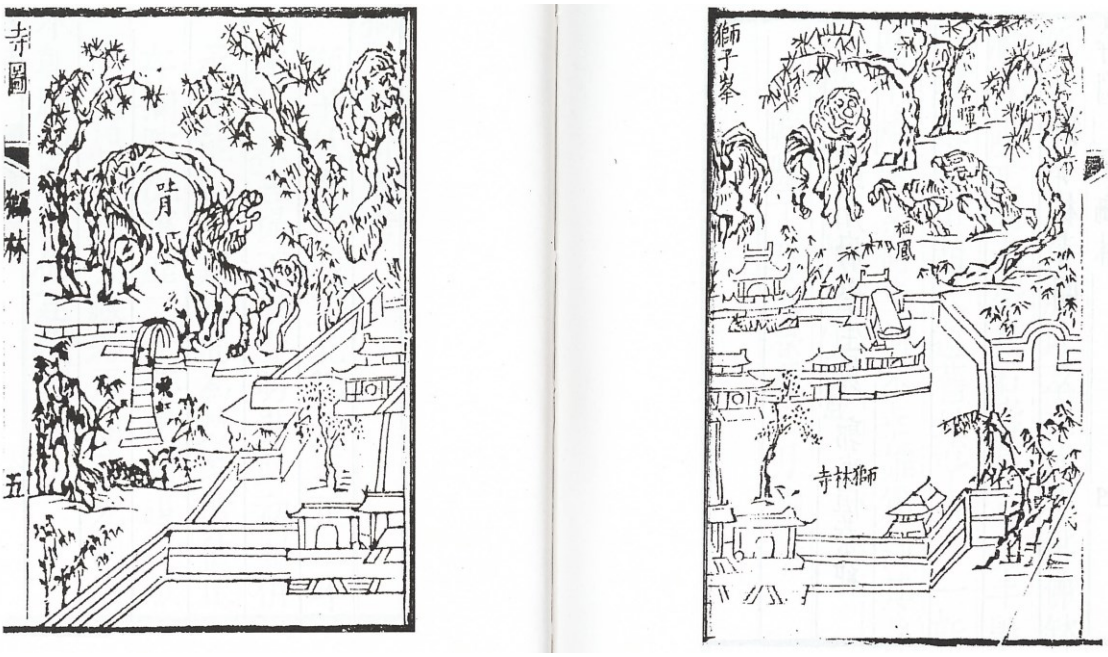


Fig. 14. The Lion Grove illustration in the *Suzhou mingsheng tuyong*. 1759. Woodblock print. As reproduced in Guo, 534-535.

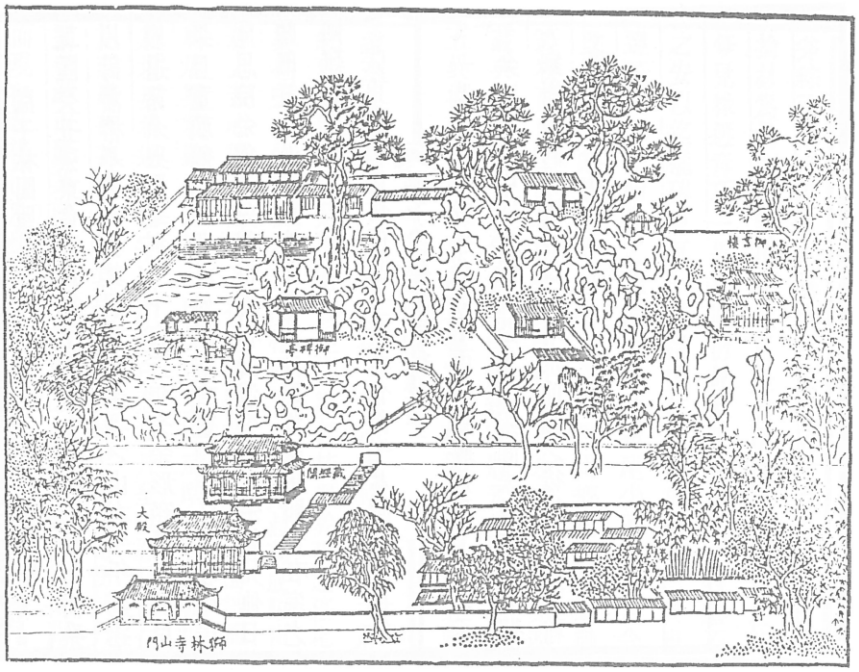


Fig. 15. Illustration of the Lion Grove in the *Shizi lin jisheng xuji*. 1857. Woodblock print. As reproduced in Xu, 152-153.