

This workshop explores the inner and outer workings of the Chinese imperial palace with a focus on the Qing dynasty (1644-1912). It approaches the palace and its organization as a “machine” with partly distinct, partly overlapping, interwoven and dependent functional parts that produced money, matter and identity for the court. Looking at the organization and workflow of technologies, the transmission and codification of knowledge, and the coordination of profane, administrative and representative activities, the workshop examines how this range of activities conjointly formed this complex organization and made it work: agendas were drawn up, spaces and roles defined, and rules laid out. Participants investigate particular aspects of the working palace concentrating on either a material (such as jade, porcelain, silk) or a producing and controlling unit (regulations, medical treatment, interior decoration) of the “machine.”

Which knowledge spheres evolved within this administrative setting and how did they influence each other? How was planning structured by the materials used, and adapted to changing needs or outside influences? What kinds of small and big planning were involved — what was important, what neglected, what ignored or “black-boxed”?

故宮



## Organizers

Martina Siebert & Kaijun Chen  
Department III  
Artefacts, Action, and Knowledge  
“Histories of Planning”

## Venue

Main Conference Hall  
Max Planck Institute for the  
History of Science,  
Boltzmannstraße 22, 14195 Berlin

## Web Presence

<https://drupal.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/workshops/node/55>



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# Making the Qing Palace Machine Work

28/29 May 2015





## Thursday 28.05.2015

**09:15-09:30**

### Welcome and Introduction

**09:30-11:00**

### Session I

Chair: Martina SIEBERT, MPIWG

Presentation 1: Dorothy KO, Barnard College, Columbia University  
“The Workshop of the Imperial Household as a Machine: A Case Study of the Inkstone Works in the Kangxi (1662-1722) and Yongzheng (1723-1735) Reigns”

Presentation 2: LIU Lihong, Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC  
“Plate Glass Planned: Material Logic in the Architectural Space of the Qing Palace”

Discussion (including following papers)

Paper 1: ZHANG Shuxian, Palace Museum Beijing  
“Ruled and Ordered: Codifying Knowledge of Interior Decoration for the Qing Palaces”

Paper 2: GUO Fuxiang, Palace Museum Beijing  
“Constructing a Prospering World: The History and Technology of Jade in the Qianlong Era”

**11:00-11:30**

### Coffee Break

**11:30-13:00**

### Session II

Chair: CHEN Kaijun, MPIWG

Presentation 3: Elif AKÇETIN, University of Illinois at Chicago  
“Thinking and Writing about Furs at the Qing Palace”

Presentation 4: XU Xiaodong, Art Museum, Hong Kong  
“Copying Hindustan Jade: Choice, Divergence and Reinterpretation in the Dissemination of Knowledge of Foreign Jades”

Discussion (including following papers)

Paper 3: WANG Guangyao, Palace Museum Beijing  
“Shards and Money: Managing Quantities, Qualities, and Finances in Ming-Qing Imperial Porcelain Production”

Paper 4: ZHANG Qiong, Palace Museum Beijing  
“Organizing Quality, Designing Beauty: Changes and Development in the Production of Silks for the Qing Palace”

**13:00-14:00**

### Lunch

**14:00-15:30**

### Session III

Chair: Dorothy KO, Barnard College, Columbia University

Presentation 5: Martina SIEBERT, MPIWG  
“Interlocking Workflows, Overlapping Spaces, Situating Knowledge: Growing and Organising Lotus in Qing Imperial Spaces”

Presentation 6: YU Hui-Chun, National Donghwa University, Taiwan  
“Elephant Stable, Tiger Cage, and Zoo of Ten Thousand Creatures: Captive Wild Animals in the Qing Court”

Discussion (including following papers)

Paper 5: GUAN Xueling, Palace Museum Beijing  
“Making the Emperor Work: Producing and Ensuring Health in the Qing Court”

Paper 6: LUO Wenhua, Palace Museum Beijing  
“Budgeting and Planning Religion: Cost Estimates and Their Realities for Buddha Statues and Paintings, 13th to 19th Century”

**15:30-16:00**

### Coffee Break

**16:00-17:45**

### Session IV

Chair: Anne GERRITSEN, Leiden Institute for Area Studies

Presentation 7: LAI Huimin, Institute of Modern History, Academia Sinica, SU Techeng, Department of Materials, Imperial College London  
“Golden Splendor: Gilding Technology and Applications in the Qing Court”

Presentation 8: Christine MOLL-MURATA, Universität Bochum  
“Labour Relations at the Palace: Who Worked for Whom?”

Presentation 9: CHEN Kaijun, MPIWG  
“Manager or Craftsman: Skillful Booi Bondservants of the Qing Dynasty”

Discussion (including following papers)

Paper 7: SONG Lingping, Palace Museum Beijing  
“Regulating ‘Regulations and Precedents’ (*zeli*): Framing the Shape and Change of Technological Knowledge at the Qing Court”

**19:00**

### Dinner

## Friday 29.05.2015

**09:30-10:45**

### Sources Session I: Numbers & Rules

Chair: CHEN Kaijun, MPIWG

**10:45-11:00**

### Coffee Break

**11:00-12:00**

### Sources Session II: Materials & People

Chair: Martina SIEBERT, MPIWG

**12:00-13:00**

### Lunch

**13:00-15:00**

### Wrapping up and Moving on

Chair: Martina SIEBERT & CHEN Kaijun, MPIWG