

## **Ritual Vessels Presented to the Qufu Temple of Confucius by the Yongzheng Emperor: The Five Offering Enamelware Vessels and Bronze *Fu* and *Gui***

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### **Abstract**

The enamelware offering vessels and bronze *fu* and *gui* ritual vessels presented by the Yongzheng emperor to the Temple of Confucius in Qufu have perhaps received much less attention from scholars in terms of significance than those of the Kangxi and Qianlong emperors in the collection of the Qufu Temple of Confucius due to the fact that Yongzheng was on the throne for a much shorter time.

The present study examines the five painted enamelware offering vessels and their forms to demonstrate a complex context of a network involving the patron himself, the production of the objects, and the displacement involving different uses, offering a perspective for examining their visual characteristics that should not be overlooked. The study first attempts a discussion of this group of vessels from a point of view in which they were most directly used but have not yet been fully studied; i.e., the history of ritual vessels for ceremonial libation. From there, it is hoped that the confluence in studying painted enamelware and the history of the five offering vessels can highlight, via both “object” and “person,” the complex context of the patron’s status as emperor at the time of patronage, which is quite important for understanding this group of objects. The complex context of the patron in the confluence of the history of libational vessels, the history of painted enamelware, and the history of five offering vessels can help explain the significance of copper-body painted enamelware in the history of Chinese arts and crafts as well as the history of ritual systems.

The present study discusses the significance of the five copper-body painted-enamel offering vessels presented by the Yongzheng emperor to the Temple of Confucius in Qufu within the history of crafts and the history of rituals. The complex context of the patron can offer a perspective for understanding the five copper-body painted-enamel offering vessels in the confluence of histories involving libational ritual vessels, painted enamelware, and five offering vessels. Furthermore, in addition to the five copper-body

Painted-enamel offering vessels, the bronze fu and gui vessels dated to the gengxu year of the Yongzheng reign (1730) are discussed in the present study in relation to the ritual system later formed in the Qianlong emperor's *Illustrated Book of Ritual Vessels for the Imperial Court* as a way to restore the overlooked importance of the Yongzheng reign in the history of the formation of national ritual vessels in the Qing Empire.

**Keywords:** five painted-enamel offering vessels, Queli, Shouhuang Hall, ritual vessels for ceremonial libation

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