

清乾隆时期的文物  
荷兰大使馆的香炉

## A QIANLONG LEGACY The Censer of the Dutch Embassy



© Capital Museum



封面照片  
北京首都博物馆

*Cover photo*  
Capital Museum Beijing

## 序言

多年以来，一只清朝铁鼎 - 一个进香的香炉，一直默默地贮立在北京荷兰大使馆的馆前。我沉迷于它的历史。了解过去有助于我们更好地理解现在和未来，因此，荷兰是一个非常重视文化遗产的国度。

很久以前，这一香炉属于北京的一个火神庙。我们不知道这个香炉是如何归属于中国的荷兰代表处的。现在，到了将这一香炉归还给中国人民的时刻了。文化遗产与一个国家的特性息息相关。香炉的状况非常糟糕，只有经过专业的修复，才能把它完好地归还给中国人民。在北京首都博物馆娴熟的修复技艺下，香炉恢复了其如初的美丽。这是中国与荷兰合作的典范。

这个香炉已被送回它曾经的所在，以供当今和未来人们的瞻仰。

这本小册子讲述了我们所知道的有关这个香炉的故事。它可以给我们以启迪，以促进中荷之间的友谊。

荷兰王国驻中华人民共和国大使 裴靖康

## Preface

For many years a Qing Dynasty pot, an incense vessel, stood idle on the premises of the Netherlands' embassy in Beijing. I was intrigued by its history. Understanding the past helps understanding today and tomorrow. Therefore, the Netherlands attaches great importance to cultural heritage.

A long time ago, the vessel belonged to a Fire God Temple in Beijing. It somehow came into the possession of the Dutch representation in China. Now the time has come to return the vessel to the Chinese people. Cultural heritage is inextricably bound to a nation's identity. The incense vessel was in a terrible condition and could not be returned without a professional restoration. The skillful restoration of the Beijing Capital Museum restored the vessel into its original beauty. A fine example of Chinese-Dutch cooperation.

The vessel has been brought back to where it once came from, for today's and future generations to be admired.

This brochure tells the story of the vessel as we know it. May it inspire us and contribute to the friendship between China and the Netherlands.

Rudolf Bekink

Ambassador of the  
Kingdom of the Netherlands

05/2011  
荷兰王国驻北京大使馆

05/2011  
Embassy of the Kingdom of the  
Netherlands in Beijing

### 一件年久失修的文物

位于北京朝阳区亮马桥路的荷兰大使馆的庭院内有一件久经岁月冲洗，不为人所识的香炉。这曾是一个什么样的香炉？它又是如何落入使馆的？无人知晓。香炉的情况不是很好，有多处有待修复，这点非常明显。无论是香炉还是其大理石底座都有多处受损，香炉里面也显示出严重腐蚀的痕迹。

荷兰大使馆决定修复并保护此香炉，以防止它遭受进一步的损坏，最终目的是将此文物归还给中国。2010年11月，使馆请北京首都博物馆开展修复工作。首都博物馆起草了一份报告，对香炉的状况及修复过程中的实施步骤进行了细致入微的描述。

### A cultural relic in disrepair

On the grounds of the Dutch embassy in Beijing, located on the Liangmaqiao Lu in Chaoyang District, a censer has weathered the seasons – unheeded and anonymously – for years. What kind of a censer it was, and how it had come into possession of the embassy, nobody knew. Its condition, so much was clear, left much to be desired. Both the censer and its marble base were damaged in several places, the inside of the vessel showing traces of heavy corrosion.

The Dutch embassy decided to have both repaired and protected against further damage with the ultimate goal to give this cultural relic back to China. In November 2010 the embassy asked the Beijing Capital Museum to carry out the restoration. The Capital Museum drew up a report, minutely describing the state of the censer and the steps that were to be carried out during the restoration.



© Capital Museum



寺庙道观内最重要的器物

在荷兰大使馆发现的这类香炉在中国一般是被放在在寺庙庭院内，通常被置于供奉有神仙及其弟子塑像的大殿前面。善男信女们使用香炉向天上的神仙进香：缭绕上升进入天空的氤氲烟气被认为是供给神仙的礼物，可以净化寺庙道观内的庭院，而香上闪闪发光的琥珀则被认为是引领神仙降至寺庙道观的指路明灯。适逢特殊时节和场合，道长会将自己的供桌放在香炉旁举行宗教典礼。其它日子里，香炉则为众人使用。寺庙道观周围上了岁数的母亲们会来到香炉前进香，为家人祈福。

进香的方法如下：解开香束，将香点燃，然后将香插入香炉内的香灰中，使其保持直立。之后，进香人会在香炉前跪拜叩头（以示对神的崇敬），然后站起身默念祷词并感谢诸神带给他们的庇佑。进香数量少的则是3支，多的则是一封，一封内含五束香，每束52支，进香时需一束一束地进。

由于香炉在与天上神仙的沟通中发挥着至关重要的作用，所以它是寺庙道观内最重要的器物。鉴于其规模，可以推测荷兰大使馆的香炉原来所在的寺庙道观应该是香火旺盛，周围居住的人群数目很大。首都博物馆的报告指出：“因大铁香炉是在露天供香客烧香用的，所以腹内部，尤其是腹内底部经多年使用腐蚀程度严重，腐蚀位置有长期使用过的特点，来分析年份时间很吻合。”

### Most important object on the temple grounds

In China censers of the type found at the Dutch embassy stand outdoors in a temple court, usually in front of a hall housing statues of a deity and its acolytes. Worshipers used it to make offerings of incense to the higher powers: the incense smoke curling up to the heavens was considered to be a gift to the gods, purifying the temple grounds, while the glowing ambers on the incense sticks served as a beacon to lead the gods down to the temple. On special occasions a daoist Master would set up his altar next to the censer to perform religious ceremonies. On other days it was used by private individuals. The old mothers of the district surrounding the temple would come to it to present their offerings for the wellbeing of their families.

Incense was offered the following way: the sticks were unwrapped, lit and placed upright in the ashes filling the censer. This being done, the worshipper would prostrate himself before the vessel to make a *ketou* (reverence denoting submission), stand up again, murmur his prayers, and thank the gods for their blessings. A small offer consisted of three incense sticks; a large offer consisted of a *feng*, a set of five bundles counting 52 sticks each, that were burnt one after the other.

Because the censer played a vital role in the communication with the higher powers, it was the most important object in the temple. Considering its size, the vessel of the Dutch embassy seems to originate from a temple with a quite large, active community. The report of the Capital Museum states: ‘The censer has been standing in the open for a long time. Because of this the inside shows signs of corrosion, particularly the lower part of the inside of the bilge. This indicates that the vessel has been used intensively for a longer period of time.’

## 确定修复状况

首都博物馆的报告对香炉修复前的状况给出了详细描述：“铁香炉年代制造于中国清朝乾隆时期，材质为灰口铸铁铸造。炉体总高1060毫米，腹外径860毫米。铁香炉本体重1000kg有余。有残，原来进行过修复。炉体采用砂箱砂型一般型铸造。炉腹及耳表面铸造较好，其三足有明显二次补铸痕迹，铸造连接工艺性较差、粗糙，存有较大的铸造缺陷。”

此香炉的保存有许多有待完善的地方：“炉腔内原腐蚀严重，尤其是底部氧化更严重。香炉若干地方显示出受损的痕迹。其一耳部存在有两处断裂痕迹。应是在较大外力作用下受到损坏，并致伤残，断裂掉的残块应不少于两块。原来此部位进行过修复，是采用电焊在其不明显内侧部位进行的局部焊接，外观部有明显几处断裂伤缝，残块在对茬焊接时有0.5毫米左右错位茬。有害的雨水及空气中的污染物从缝隙中浸入到材质内部极易形成新的腐蚀，会受到进一步伤害。另一腿部距足底高250毫米左右处有明显修复过痕迹，并用填料—原子灰、树脂等填补。”由于这一修复不够完美（报告在其他地方对此也有指出），香炉缺乏足够的支撑力，所以，此腿未来断裂的几率很高。

关于大理石底座，报告指出：“汉白玉石座直径112cm，高20.7cm，约重近1000kg。”这部分也已受损。“有伤残并有残片七块，石座表面有多种污迹。未曾修复过。”



© Capital Museum

## Determining the state of repair

The report of the Capital Museum gives a detailed description of the censer before its restoration: 'The censer is made of cast iron. It measures 1060 mm in height. The bilge has a diameter of 860 mm. Its weight exceeds 1000 kg. The casting of the bilge and ears has been carried out fairly well. Traces on the legs, however, clearly show that these have been fixed to the vessel by a second casting. The parts have been fitted together quite coarsely, indicating a low standard of craftsmanship.'

The preservation of the censer left much to be desired: 'The inside of the vessel shows severe signs of corrosion, especially the lower part of the inside of the bilge. The censer shows traces of damage in several locations. One of its ears has been broken off in two places and was welded back again. On the outside of the ear the seams are clearly visible. The planes of fracture were welded back into place, without exactly fitting together. There is a deviation of 0,5 mm. Detrimental rainwater and pollution can easily seep through the cracks and damage the vessel. One of the legs of the censer shows signs of a previous restoration at about 250 mm from its foot. For this restoration filler and resin were used as filling materials.' Due to this imperfect repair, the report states elsewhere, the censer is not sufficiently supported, and chances are high that the leg will break off in the future.

Concerning the marble base, the report states: 'The base is made of white marble, has a diameter of 112 cm, is 20,7 cm high, and weighs about 1000 kg.' This part, too, has been damaged: 'The base shows several traces of pollution. Additionally, chips of marble have broken off in seven places. It has never been repaired.'



© Capital Museum

## 乾隆49年

报告还提到在香炉上发现的三条铭文。这些铭文为了解香炉的出处和制作日期提供了重要信息。

第一条铭文位于香炉的边沿，告诉读者该香炉的启用时间是清乾隆49年间，爱新觉罗·弘历（1711-1799）统治期间。铭文对于确切日期表示如下：“大清乾隆四[十]九年岁次甲辰夏四月吉日。”按照西方的公历来算，铭文所示日期为1784年5月19日。

乾隆皇帝（1644-1911）是满清的第四任统治者。他是中华民族历史上最伟大的皇帝之一。在他统治期间，清帝国的疆域被大大扩展，经济蓬勃发展。乾隆皇帝也因其大力修缮和保护中国的文化遗迹而名垂史册。他对位于北京西北方向的皇家游乐场所夏宫（圆明园）的兴建所做的贡献举世闻名。这对保护北京的文化遗产一直具有非常重要的意义。他在统治期间曾下令对京城内及其它地方的纪念性建筑予以修复。

## Qianlong 49

The report also mentions the three inscriptions found on the censer. Together they provide important information about the provenance of the censer and the date of its fabrication.

The first inscription, located on the rim of the vessel, tells us that the censer was taken into use in the 49th year of the Qianlong-period, during the reign of emperor Aisin Gioro Hongli 爱新觉罗弘历（1711-1799）。The exact date reads: 'Great Qing, Qianlong 49, *jiazhen* according to the cyclical count of the years, summer, fourth month, first day.' According to the western calendar this was May 19, 1784.

The Qianlong-emperor was the fourth ruler of the Manchu Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). He is one of the great emperors of Chinese history. Under his rule the territory of the empire was greatly enlarged, and the economy flourished. The Qianlong-emperor is also well known for his efforts to enhance and preserve Chinese cultural heritage. World famous are his contributions to the development of the Old Summer Palace (Yuanmingyuan), the imperial pleasure grounds north-west of the capital. It has been of great importance for the preservation of Beijings cultural heritage, that all through his reign he commanded the restoration of monumental structures, both inside the capital and elsewhere.



© Capital Museum

冯先生，香炉的捐赠者

在旧时的中国，寺庙道观所在城区的家族通常是该寺庙道观的所有者。富有的个人或家族将寺庙道观的器物捐赠出来供周围的善男信女们使用，这在当时很常见。此种情况下，慷慨捐赠者的姓名会在器物上提及。本香炉亦是如此。在香炉底部左侧的铭文写着：“内务府慎刑司员外郎冯七十四诚造供奉。”

铭文表明，香炉是由一位在内务府某司供职的冯先生捐赠的。内务府负责管理皇宫中的日常工作，并负责皇帝及其家人所有用品的生产制作，从头饰到裘皮大衣，从书写文具到床上用品等。制作这些皇室宫廷用品的作坊也归内务府管理。冯先生可能利用其职务之便在其中一间作坊制作了这只香炉，虽然香炉的工艺质量似乎表明情况并非如此。

“冯”的意思是“飞奔”或“速度”，是被满族采用替换其满族姓氏的首批汉族姓氏之一。改用汉族姓氏这一做法在此香炉的制作时期是常见现象。

鉴于其官职和姓氏，我们可以推测冯先生是满族人。他姓氏后紧跟的“74”这一数字的含义很难解释。姓氏后面的数字通常表示某人在家庭中的排行顺序。但在这种情况下，这个数字似乎是太大了。也许这个数字是他的年龄。也许是表明他在某个组织内的继承顺序。

### Mr. Feng, donor of the censer

In Old China a temple was usually owned by the families living in the city district in which the temple stood. It was not unusual for wealthy individuals or families to donate temple objects for general use by the temple community. In such cases, the name of the generous giver was mentioned on the object. Like it is on this censer. The inscription on the left side of the bilge reads: 'In sincerity made and respectfully offered by Feng 74, Assistant-Director of the Judicial Office of the Imperial Household Department.'

It shows that the censer was donated by a certain Mr. Feng, who was employed at one of the offices of the Imperial Household Department. This Department – Neiwufu in Chinese – managed the daily routine in the imperial palaces and was responsible for the production of all goods that were used by the emperor and his family, from head ornaments to fur coats, and from writing materials to bedclothes. The workshops where the goods for use in the imperial court were made, came under this Department as well. Mr. Feng may have used his connections to have this censer made in one of these workshops – although the quality of the workmanship seems to indicate otherwise.

'Feng' – meaning 'to gallop' or 'speed' – is one of the first Chinese surnames to have been adopted by the Manchu's to replace their own Manchu family name. This was common practice at the time the censer was made.

Considering his office and his surname, we may surmise that Mr. Feng was a Manchu. The meaning of the '74', following his surname, is harder to explain. A number following a surname usually indicates a person's seniority within the family. In this case, however, the number seems to be rather high. Maybe it was his age. Or perhaps it indicated his position in the order of succession within an organization.

### 香炉的受赠者

香炉底部右侧的第三条铭文向我们揭示了冯先生将香炉捐赠给了谁，铭文为：“火神庙住持了兴。”

但铭文中的火神庙到底指的是哪座寺庙，目前尚不清楚。乾隆统治时期，有许多敬奉火神的寺庙，从结构单一的寺庙到大的寺庙群，规模不等。但从香炉的大小来判断，显然荷兰大使馆的这只香炉必定是属于一座规模较大的寺庙。

众多寺庙供奉火神，这表明了对火神敬拜的重要性。不仅是平民百姓，就连宫廷对火神也是高度崇敬。人为疏忽或是由雷击引起的一场火灾可以而且也确实给紫禁城造成了偶尔的巨大损失。所以，人们认为和火神保持良好关系是非常重要的。

每年在火神生日（农历六月22日）这天，负责祭拜的衙署官员们都会动身前往御用的火神庙进行供奉。对火神庙进行扩建或修缮也被认为是获得火神青睐的一种有效手段。但因为此香炉的工艺质量略微逊色，所以我们不认为它是属于朝廷御用的火神庙内的器物。



© Capital Museum

### To whom the censer was donated

The third inscription, located on the right side of the bilge, tells us to whom Mr. Feng donated the censer: 'Temple warden Liao Xing, Temple of the God of Fire.'

Exactly which temple is meant, is not clear. During the reign of the Qianlong-emperor, there were many sanctuaries dedicated to the God of Fire, varying in size from simple shrines to large temple complexes. Considering its size, however, it is obvious that the censer of the Dutch embassy must have belonged to one of the larger temples.

The large number of temples dedicated to the God of Fire indicates the importance attached to the worship of this deity. Not only commoners, but also the imperial court held this god in high regard. A fire, caused by human inattention or by a stroke of lightning, could – and did – occasionally cause great damage to the palaces of the Forbidden City. It was therefore considered of great importance to maintain good relations with this god.

Each year on his 'birthday' – the 22nd day of the sixth month of the moon calendar – officials of the Department of Official Worship would set out to the Temple of the God of Fire patronized by the imperial court, to bring the imperial sacrifices. The enlargement or restoration of his temple was also considered to be an effective means to obtain his favours. Because the censer is of lesser quality, however, we may assume that it did not belong to the temple patronized by the imperial court.

## 火神

火神受到敬拜的原因是不言而喻的。可以控制的火是一种积极力量，可以用于做饭和取暖。但是火苗一旦不受约束蹿至屋顶，就会变成地狱般的威胁。

对火神完整的尊称是“火德真君”，它是由众多神和魔组成的一个完整群体的最高权威，不仅有生火的能力也有灭火的能力。其中大多数是天神，住在天界的一颗星上，他们会根据需求随时降临人间。

对于火神是谁，说法不一。其中最著名的一位是古代圣君之一的祝融，他统治华夏两百年，教会人们用火焊接金属，用火烧灌木烟熏的方法来消灭有害的昆虫和有毒的爬行动物。

祝融似乎是相貌庄严而非相貌可怕的一位神，对他的描画是：举止庄重、身着与其崇高地位相符的长袍，端坐在他的四位弟子之间。祝融是众所周知非常拘谨的人。因为他的这一个性，人们想出了一个简单的伎俩使他离开自己的家园：他们将有伤风化的图片贴在灶房火炉旁边的墙上，希望这能赶走他，让他离开自己的家门，从而使自家避免火灾的危险。

祝融也许能轻易地被吓走，但他的四个弟子却没有那么容易对付。虽然和他们的主人一样拘谨，但他们非常可怕。其中最可怕的无疑是回禄。这位人类行为的严厉判官在额头正中长有第三只眼睛，使他能够对周围的世界进行详审。他的整个外观都令人生畏，因为他不仅是面色通红（面呈重枣色），而且他狂乱的头发、胡须和长袍都是火焰的颜色，这使他看上去非常凶猛。他性格火爆，骑坐在一条火龙上巡视四方，对有恶行的人们进行惩罚。

## The God of Fire

Why the God of Fire was worshipped, goes without saying. A controlled fire is a positive force, providing heat for cooking and warmth for heating. Once unfettered flames settle in a roof, however, they turn into an infernal threat.

The God of Fire (*huoshen* 火神) – whose full honorific title was ‘True Lord of the Element Fire’ (*huode zhenjun* 火德真君) – was the highest authority of a whole department of deities and demons, that not only had the power to light, but also to extinguish fires. The majority were star gods, who dwelled on a star in heaven, and came down to the world of men whenever this was demanded by the occasion.

On the identity of the God of Fire, the sources vary. One of the most prominent candidates is Zhu Rong 祝融, one of the Lords of Antiquity, who ruled the People of Hua for two hundred years, learned them to weld metal by the use of fire and to extinguish harmful insects and poisonous reptiles by burning the undergrowth.

Zhu Rong seems to have been a dignified rather than a fearsome godhead: he is described as a figure with a stately bearing, sitting – in robes fitting his high standing – among four of his acolytes. He is known to have been a prude. Profiting of this idiosyncrasy, the people devised a simple trick to keep him out of their homes: they stuck obscene pictures on the kitchen wall next to the stove, hoping that this would put him off, and make him pass their door, so that their home would be spared from the treat of fire.



火神的弟子可以根据其特性来加以识别。回禄携带一对火鸟，这对火鸟从一个地方飞到另外一个地方，扇动翅膀来助长火势，蔓延火情。其余三个弟子携带的神物分别是一个有五条火龙的轮子、一个装有一万只火鸟的葫芦和一条吐着火舌的长蛇。

对许多人而言，可怕的回禄是火灾的化身。难怪经常是他而不是祝融被人们视为火神。所以，后来火神的第四个弟子的位置由一个手持登记册的神所取代。该册子上列有火神将要造访的住户的姓名。

Zhu Rong may have easily been put off. Not so, however, were his acolytes. As prudish as their master was, so terrifying were his acolytes. The most fearsome of them all, no doubt, was Hui Lu 回禄. This fierce judge of human behaviour had a third eye in the middle of his forehead, which enabled him to scrutinize the world around him. His entire appearance inspired fear. Not only his face was red (‘the colour of a ripe fruit of the jujube tree’), his wild hair, ferocious beard and robe all had the colour of fire. He was of a peppery disposition, and chased the heavens on the back of a fiery dragon to punish the people for their evil deeds.

The acolytes of the God of Fire can be recognized by their attributes. Hui Lu carried a pair of fire birds that spread fire, flying from one place to another and stirring up the flames by flapping their wings. The other acolytes carried a wheel with five fire dragons, a gourd holding ten thousand fire birds and a snake with a fiery tongue respectively.

To many the gruesome Hui Lu was the personification of the calamity of fire. No wonder that often he – and not Zhu Rong – was considered to be the God of Fire. The position of the fourth acolyte was then taken up by a god carrying the register listing the names of the households to be visited by the God of Fire.

## 对火神的崇拜

当火灾发生时，老北京人都认为，一定是有其原因的。因为火神不会无故出来的！一定是有人不知怎的惹怒了火神，所以，火神来到此人家里惩罚他。为了平息火神的怒气，遭受火灾的人家会派人去火神庙，祈求火神离开他们家。

火灾在周围邻里间引起的感情是复杂的。因为害怕火神将怒气迁至自己身上，周围的邻居们不敢收容从火灾中抢救出来的人或物。他们也会派人去火神庙，向火神供奉，祈求火神不要放火鸟飞临他们的家院。一旦火灾了，人们会向火神进行新的供奉，以感谢火神对他们的庇佑。

老北京大都是木房子，火灾造成的损失会非常巨大。因此，人们完全有理由一年从头到尾不停地安抚火神。仅仅因为惹怒火神而未能及时进行供奉就会损失昂贵的存货，这会是怎样的灾难啊！难怪商人和店铺主人似乎都已成为火神最忠实的仆人了。

## Worship of the God of Fire

When a fire broke out, so the people of Old Beijing believed, there had to be a reason. The God of Fire did not ride out for nothing! Somehow, someone had incurred his wrath, and he had come to strike this persons household with his punishment. To soothe his anger, the afflicted family would send someone to the Temple of the God of Fire, and beg him to leave their home.

Among neighbouring households the fire aroused mixed feelings. Afraid to call down the anger of the God of Fire upon themselves, they would hesitate to accommodate people or goods that were saved from the flames. And they too would send someone to the temple of the God of Fire, to bring him an offer, and plead him not to let his birds of fire descend on their home. Once the fire was over, new offerings were made to thank the God of Fire for his blessings.

In Old Beijing, with its wooden houses, the damage caused by fires could be enormous. People therefore had every reason to placate the God of Fire all through the year. Traders and shopkeepers seem to have been among his most loyal servants. Small wonder. What a disaster to lose one's costly stock only because one had roused the wrath of the God of Fire by failing to bring him a timely offer!



## 今日北京供奉火神的寺庙

老北京曾经有无数的神龛和庙宇供奉着火神。但只有少数庙宇得以保存至今。大部分都在城市近百年来的发展进程中消失了，特别是过去三十年中。在此发展过程中，庙宇的陈设器物分散流落在四面八方。幸运的是少数寺庙 - 或者至少是寺庙的建筑物 - 依然幸存并在近几年得到了修复。

在修复的火神庙中，最大最漂亮的是位于什刹海附近地安门外大街的火神庙。这是清朝官员进奉火神的寺庙。



该庙建于唐代公元632年，并于元代末期1346年得到首次修复。当紫禁城连续几年遭遇火灾后，明朝万历皇帝（1573-1619）下令扩建火神庙，以期安抚火神。随后对其进行的大修缮是清乾隆皇帝于1759年下令进行的。他向寺庙敬献了他亲亲手书的几块匾牌和对联。

## Temples dedicated to the God of Fire in present-day Beijing

In Old Beijing there used to be countless shrines and temples dedicated to the God of Fire. Only a small number have been preserved until the present day. The majority have disappeared in the speed at which the city developed over the last hundred years, notably the last thirty years. In the process the furnishings of the temples have been scattered in all directions. Fortunately a small number of temples - or at least their buildings - still stand and has been renovated in recent years.

The largest and most beautiful of the restored temples dedicated to the God of Fire lays on Outer Di'anmen Street, near Shishahai. This was the temple in which the Qing-emperor's officials brought their sacrifices to the God of Fire.

The temple was built in 632 A.D., during the Tang Dynasty, and was first renovated in 1346, at the end of the Yuan Dynasty. When the Forbidden City had been struck by fire for a succession of years, the Wanli-emperor (1573-1619) of the Ming Dynasty ordered the temple to be enlarged, hoping thereby to placate the God of Fire. The next major renovations were carried out in 1759 by order of the Qianlong-emperor. He presented the temple with several name plates and scrolls with parallel phrases in his personal handwriting.

清朝末期，该寺庙在民众中享有巨大声誉。每年农历七月十五日的中元节（饿鬼节）都会在该寺庙前面焚烧一座被称作是“普渡船”的纸制大厦。这一景象吸引了全城数千名的围观者。

自上个世纪中叶直到1981年，火神庙一直被普通百姓用作民居。2002年开始对该寺庙进行翻新修复，2010年完工。目前翻新后的火神庙，建筑精美，是北京向公众开放的唯一一座专门供奉火神的庙宇。



第二座火神庙位于崇文门附近的西花市大街。它始建于1568年，于清乾隆1776年得到修缮。和地安门的火神庙一样，该庙在上世纪中叶被普通百姓用作民居。大约在十年前，该地区的胡同被拆毁以便腾出地方兴建现代化的公寓楼。但此庙得以幸存并得到了修缮。它是该地区为数不多、能令人依稀想起昔日的古建筑之一。但翻修后的建筑不再用作寺庙了。目前，第一个大殿是附近一个正在翻修的图书馆的备用仓库；第二个大殿及庭院都不得入内。

At the end of the Qing Dynasty, the temple enjoyed great fame among the population. Each year on the day of the Hungry Ghosts Festival – *zhongyuanjie* 中元节, on the 15th day of seventh month of the moon calendar – a huge paper edifice called the ‘Boat of Universal Salvation’ (*puduchuan* 普渡船) was burnt in front of its premises. This spectacle attracted thousands of spectators from all over town.

From the middle of the last century until 1981 the temple grounds were used as living quarters for commoners. Renovation of the temple commenced in 2002, and was completed in 2010. At present this temple, with its beautifully refurbished buildings, is the only temple in Beijing dedicated to the God of Fire that is open to the public.



A second Temple of the God of Fire is located near Chongwenmen at Xi Huashi Dajie (West Flower Market Street). It was built in 1568, and renovated in 1776 during the reign of the Qianlong-emperor of the Qing Dynasty. Like the temple at Di'anmen, the grounds of this temple were taken into use as living quarters for commoners in the middle of the last century. Some ten years ago, however, the hutongs in this area were pulled down to make room for modern apartment buildings. The temple, however, was spared and renovated. It is one of the few old buildings in this area reminding of the days of yore. The renovated buildings are no longer in use as a temple though. At present the first hall serves as an auxiliary depot of a nearby library, that is currently being renovated; the second hall and courtyard are not accessible.

第三座火神庙位于东琉璃厂29号。该庙始建于明代，于清乾隆1786年得到翻修。因热闹非凡的厂甸庙会而为大众所知，每年春节期间举办的厂甸庙会已经举办了数百年。清朝末期，厂甸庙会成为一个颇有人气的艺术品及古玩市场，因京城知名的古董商在此展出的独特艺术品而获得盛誉。

目前，该庙已不再使用。漫步在琉璃厂的许多古玩店，人们很容易路过这座寺庙而浑然不觉。该庙后面部分的建筑已被用于民居，且已面目全非。前面部分的建筑现为一家会所，只有会员才能进入。此前面部分已经翻修过，且翻修明显体现了对其曾为火神庙的敬重。在曾是寺庙正殿的会议室里，部分放低的天花板处使用的是玻璃格板，所以，这座古老建筑的百年横梁透过玻璃依然可以看到。厢房内的一个小神龛里还保留着对火神的记忆。



A third Temple of the God of Fire was located at East Liulichang 29. The temple was built during the Ming Dynasty and renovated in 1786, during the reign of the Qianlong-emperor of the Qing Dynasty. It was well known for the bustling Changdian Temple Fair, that for hundreds of years was held on the temple grounds during the Spring Festival. At the end of the Qing Dynasty the Changdian Temple Fair became a popular market for arts and antiques, acquiring great fame for the unique objects d'art that were put on display by the city's renowned antique dealers.

At present the temple is no longer in use. Strolling along Liulichang's many antique stores, one will easily pass it by unnoticed. The buildings at the rear end of the temple were taken into use for housing purposes, and have changed beyond recognition. The buildings at the front part accommodate a *huisuo*, an exclusive club, accessible to members only. This part of the former temple has been renovated with obvious respect for the former use of its buildings. In the meeting room – once the main hall of the temple – glass panels have been used in the partly lowered ceilings, so that the century old beams of this ancient structure can still be seen. In a side room a small shrine keeps the memory of the God of Fire alive.



## 厂甸庙会

琉璃厂火神庙的厂甸庙会在北京的中国人和西方人中间同样受欢迎。上个世纪20年代中叶，朱丽叶·布雷登（Juliet Bredon）和伊戈尔·米多范诺（Igor Mitrophanow）对春节期间在此举办的著名庙会做了描述：“琉璃厂的集市分为两个不同部分。一个大都是有钱阶层经常光顾的地方，他们装有铜饰的人力车和现代化的豪华轿车挤满了通往火神庙的狭窄街道。这里的庭院都变成了展示古玩的地方，京城重要的古物收藏家在此展示他们收藏的玉器、瓷器和珍珠。这些拥挤的摊位一直延伸到靠近供奉火神的神龛，以至于虔诚的信徒（我们发现其中许多是商人）几乎没有空间给在这种场合身着灿烂绣袍的红脸火神在其神像前跪拜叩头。沿着这条狭窄的街道继续往前就是一个露天广场，这里是身着当地清一色蓝色棉服的普通老百姓的聚集地。这是一个充满乐趣和欢乐的地方，让人想起法国奈伊的集市（the foire de Neuilly）。伞棚下排列的五光十色的水果特别引人注目。露天茶馆及户外食肆里不断飘出嘈杂的喧嚣声。”

## Changdian Temple Fair

Changdian Temple Fair at the Temple of the God of Fire in Liulichang was popular among Chinese and Western citizens of Beijing alike. In the mid 1920's Juliet Bredon and Igor Mitrophanow described the famous fair that was held here during the Spring Festival: 'The Liu Li Ch'ang bazaar is divided into two distinct parts. One is frequented mostly by the well-to-do-classes, whose brass-trimmed rickshaws and modern limousines fill the narrow streets leading to a Temple of the Fire God. Here the courtyards are turned into a curio exhibition where the important antiquarians of the city display their jades, porcelains, and pearls. Their stalls crowd so close up to the shrine of the deity that the pious (among whom we find many merchants) have scarcely room to k'o t'ou before the red-faced Fire God, dressed for the occasion in a splendid embroidered robe. Further down the same narrow street, an open square is the resort of the common people in blue cotton coats, the uniform of the land. This is a place of fun and jollity, reminiscent of the foire de Neuilly, translated into the terms of Chinese amusements. The gay hues of patterned fruits set out under umbrella-tents catch the eye. A babelish clamour of voices arises from the open tea-shops and out-door restaurants.'



## 香炉和荷兰大使馆

我们不知道这个香炉属于哪个寺庙。也不知道荷兰大使馆是何时获得此香炉的。多年来，它曾坐落在北京三处不同的地方。19世纪末，它坐落在紫禁城东南的原东交民巷；1965年，它被移至三里屯东四街10号；1994年2月4日，随使馆迁至现在的地址-亮马河南路4号。

香炉是随着其它物品从东四街移至亮马河南路的。它是在位于东四街时（即1965年至1994年期间）落入使馆的吗？这似乎并不可能。因为那时北京的寺庙早已停止使用，曾是寺庙财产的文物已经散落分散在了四面八方。像这样的香炉已经变得非常稀少。所以，更大的可能性是香炉在位于原东交民巷时就已为荷兰大使馆所有了。

香炉如何最终落入使馆更是无从知晓。使馆从来没有坐落在以前曾是寺庙的地方。所以，一定是有人将此香炉带到了使馆。那又会是谁呢？显然，一定是对此类文物有兴趣的人。在这一点上，可以引用J·范·哈芬（J. van Haften）所写的《在中国当卫兵的三年》（Drie jaar op wacht in China）中的一段摘录。他在1907年10月10日至1909年8月1日担任荷兰使馆的卫队指挥官。在他到达使馆的那天，范·哈芬（van Haften）写道，使馆的一切似乎都非常欧洲化。但在使馆内散步时，他有了一个令人振奋的发现：“你看，在这里-在我们自己的院子里，突然又能看到北京了。一座中国寺庙引起了我们的注意。陪我散步的这位年轻的荷兰工程师读懂了我的心思，他告诉我说这是他的家。他邀请我进他家。（...）除了一些欧洲的必需品外，他家中的一切都是中国的。色彩美丽的中国纺织品和寺庙耀眼的蓝色天花板相匹配，而各种各样的艺术品给人的印象就是屋内的主人对中国的东西很有品味。”

## The censer and the Dutch embassy

To which temple the censer belonged, we do not know. Nor do we know, when the Dutch embassy obtained the censer. Over the years it has had its seat at three different locations in Beijing. At the end of the 19th century, it was situated in the former Legation Quarter, southeast from the Forbidden City; in 1965 it moved to Dong Si Jie 10 in Sanlitun; on February 4, 1994, the embassy moved to its present address at Liangmahe Nanlu 4.

The censer was among the goods moved from Dong Si Jie to Liangmahe Nanlu. Did it come into possession of the embassy while it was located at Dong Si Jie, i.e. in the period from 1965 to 1994? This does not seem likely. By that time the temples in Beijing had long gone out of use, and the artefacts that once were part of their property, had been scattered in all directions. Censers like this one had become very scarce. Therefore, it seems likelier that the censer was already in possession of the Dutch embassy, when it was located in the former Legation Quarter.

How the censer ended up at the embassy, is even more difficult to establish. The embassy has never been seated on former temple grounds. So, someone must have brought the vessel on the grounds of the embassy. Who was it? Obviously it must have been someone with an interest in artefacts of this kind. At this point it is interesting to quote an excerpt from *Drie jaar op wacht in China (Three Years on guard In China)* by J. van Haften, commander of the guard of the Dutch legation from October 10, 1907, until August 1, 1909. On the day of his arrival, van Haften remarks, everything in the embassy seemed to be very European. While taking a walk over the embassy grounds, however, he made an exciting discovery: 'Look, here suddenly Peking is visible again in our own courtyard. A Chinese temple demands our attention. The young Dutch engineer who accompanies me on my walk, reads



陪同范·哈芬 (Van Haaften) 散步的这位工程师是荷兰工程师约翰·罗伯斯 (John Robbers)，他是受荷兰政府委派负责对荷兰使馆建筑施工的完工阶段予以监督的。罗伯斯先生弄到自己家中的小寺庙从何而来？是否可以追溯到帝国政府各部被安置在此的那段时期？这是有可能的。这里一直是一座火神庙吗？但清乾隆时期1750年绘制的一张著名的京城地图并没有提及在此处有任何庙宇。但话又说回来，并不是所有的寺庙都在那张地图上有所标明。抑或是它根本就不是一座寺庙，而是当时仍然坐落在荷兰使馆处的一座中国古建筑。或许是范·哈芬 (Van Haaften) 将其错认为一座寺庙了。

my mind, and tells me this is his home. He invites me to come in. (...) Except for some European necessities, everything in his house is Chinese. Beautiful Chinese textiles in delightful colours match with the dazzling blue of the temple's ceiling, while all sorts of objects d'art give the impression that the inhabitant has a taste for things Chinese.'

The engineer that accompanied Van Haaften on his walk was John Robbers, a Dutch engineer, appointed by the Dutch government to oversee the completing phase of the construction of the buildings of the Dutch Legation. Where did the small temple that Mr. Robbers made into his home come from? Did it date back to the period when at this site the Ministries of the imperial government were housed? Possibly. May it have been a Fire God Temple? A famous city map made in 1750, during the reign of the Qianlong-emperor, does not mention any temples here. But then again, not all temples were indicated on this map. Or was it not a temple at all, but one of the old Chinese buildings that at this time still stood on the grounds of the Dutch Legation. Maybe Van Haaften mistook it for a temple.

这个记录可以明确的一件事情就是罗伯斯先生 - 和他同时代的很多人一样 - 是一位中国珍品的收藏家。可能是他得到了这个香炉 - 因为这个香炉和他的“寺庙”非常相配。也许是在著名的厂甸庙会上发现了这个香炉，因为春节期间举行的这个庙会距离荷兰使馆并不远。但当然也可能是某个在大使馆工作并对中国古董感兴趣的其他人。1911年，清朝垮台后，许多寺庙进入困难时期，一些寺庙被迫关门，另外一些寺庙不得不为京城的现代化腾出地方。其中一座寺庙就是供奉火神的，这座火神庙在1750年的那张地图上有所标明，它位于20世纪50年代北京新火车站的所建地，在前东交民巷东边一点的地方，距离前荷兰大使馆不远。当然，这些都是猜测。这个香炉也可能是送给荷兰大使馆的一件礼物。我们缺乏细节来说明这件笨重的香炉及其大理石底座是如何进入荷兰大使馆的。

One thing this story makes clear, however, is that Mr. Robbers - like many of his contemporaries - was a collector of Chinese curiosities. Possibly it was he who obtained the censer - it would have matched wonderfully with his 'temple'. Perhaps he found it at the famous Changdian Temple Fair, which was held not far from the legation grounds during the Spring Festival. But of course it may also have been someone else, someone who worked at the embassy and was interested in Chinese antiques. After the fall of the Qing Dynasty, in 1911, many temples fell upon hard times, and some were forced to close their doors. Others had to make room for the city's modernization. Among them was a temple dedicated to the God of Fire - indicated on the map of 1750 - on the site where in the 1950's Beijing's new train station was built - slightly to the east of the former Legation Quarter, not far from the former Dutch embassy. But of course, these are all speculations. The vessel may, for example, have been a gift to the legation. We lack the details to clarify how this bulky censer and its marble pedestal have found their way to the Dutch embassy.





© Capital Museum



© Capital Museum



© Capital Museum



© Capital Museum

### 修复过程

香炉如何落入荷兰大使馆的，这还是个体谜。但如何为子孙后代保护好这个香炉及其底座等问题却是非常具体的。为了确定要怎么做，首都博物馆修复部对香炉及其底座进行了彻底的调查。

先是用纯水对香炉进行超声波清洗。对残留物的分析提供了香炉材料构成的有关信息。接下来是对香炉及其底座进行详细检查，以找出所有的瑕疵，并确定它们今后是否会带来问题。本次研究的发现及结论都已记录在报告中，报告还确定了应采取的步骤。对于不会在以后造成问题的瑕疵，我们保留原状，不做修复。因为它们可以对了解香炉制作时期的中国工业发展水平提供重要信息。对于今后可能会引起问题的瑕疵，我们已进行了修复。例如，对于香炉右耳上的裂缝，先是略微放大，然后进行无缝焊接，使用磨头、磨片和砂纸将接缝部位理平，然后进行修复上色等特殊处理，使它们和香炉整体的色调一致。也对受损的香炉腿进行了修复。首先是除去以前修复时所用的填充材料。接下来，对缺损部分采用焊接技术使用特质铁焊条及铸铁切片加以修复。这样不仅使香炉腿的承重力得以恢复，而且使香炉腿部保留了其全部是铸铁造就的特征。为了加强和保护被修复的部分，修复过程中使用了化学工艺，使用的化学制品包括无水乙醇、硝基稀料、丙酮和氩气。之后，使用矿物质颜料和丙烯颜料使被修复的部分恢复了它们原有的颜色。最后，将香炉全部涂上了进口封护材料丙烯酸树脂（B72），这样一来，香炉置于露天时便不会再受到腐蚀了。

### The restoration process

How the censer has come into possession of the Dutch embassy, may be shrouded in mystery. The questions how the vessel and its base were to be protected for posterity, however, was very concrete. In order to determine what was to be done, the Restoration Department of the Capital Museum carried out a thorough investigation of both objects.

The censer was first cleansed with demineralized water. An analysis of the residue provided information on the composition of the materials. Next the censer and base were scrutinized in order to trace all defects and determine whether or not they might cause problems in the future. The findings of this research were recorded in the report, and determined the steps to be taken. Defects that would not cause future problems, were left for what they were. They provide important information on China's industrial development in the era the censer was made. Defects that might give rise to future problems, were repaired. The cracks of the right ear, for example, were first slightly enlarged, then seamlessly welded together, smoothed and given a special treatment, so that they got the same colour as the entire censer. The damaged leg, too, was repaired. First the filling materials, applied during the previous restoration, were removed. Next the defect was repaired by a welding technique using small pieces of cast iron.

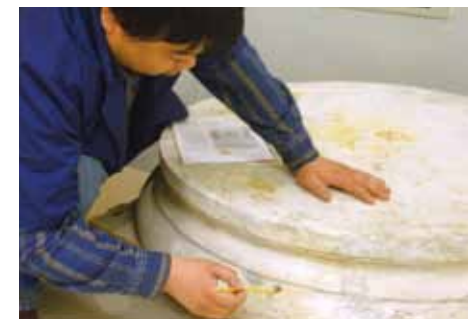
对大理石底座也用软化水进行了超声波清洗。使用环氧树脂将剥落的碎片固定在了底座上，使用环氧金刚砂和白色大理石粉的混合物对破损的斑点进行了填充。然后将处理过的部分理平，涂上矿物质颜料和丙烯颜料，使底座恢复了其原有的颜色。在整个修复过程中，对所有可能提供原来制作工艺信息的痕迹都非常细心地做了保留。

In this way the bearing power of the leg was restored, while the leg itself retained all characteristics of cast iron. To reinforce and protect the repaired parts, a chemical process was applied. Next a natural dye was used to give the prepared parts back their original colour. Finally the entire vessel was impregnated in a protective coating of paraloid B72, so that it will not corrode any further when the vessel is exposed to the elements in the open air.

The marble base, too, was cleansed with demineralised water. The chipped off pieces were then fixed to the base with epoxy resin, and the damaged spots filled in with a mixture of epoxy, diamond dust, and pulverized white marble. The treated parts were then smoothed, and a natural dye was applied, in order to give the base back its original colour. During the entire process great care was taken to preserve all traces that might provide information about the original production process.



© Capital Museum



© Capital Museum



### 重返家乡的文物

关于香炉的许多问题仍然没有答案。谁是使此香炉得以制成的满族人冯先生？香炉曾用在哪座寺庙里？它又是如何落入荷兰大使馆的？

但香炉已经不再是过去那个立在荷兰大使馆庭院内的无名器物了。我们知道了它的制作年份，知道它是用在供奉火神的寺庙中，且该寺庙香火旺盛，信徒数量相当大，香炉在该火神庙中站立了相当长的时间。我们也知道以前曾有人尝试过修复有瑕疵的香炉腿。

曾经属于北京众多寺庙的陈设器物的真品已经变得稀少。所以，这个227年前由一位“冯先生”捐赠给某个“火神庙”的香炉是见证北京丰富文化传统的独一无二的证物。将它归还给中国似乎为此划上了圆满的句号。我们非常高兴，这个香炉在结束了它在京城的漂泊之后，最终找到了实现其制作初衷的所在：火神庙的庭院。

### A cultural relic returns home

Many questions about the censer remain unanswered. Who was Mr. Feng, the Manchu who had the censer made? In which temple was the censer used? And, how did it come into possession of the Dutch embassy?

The censer, however, is no longer the anonymous object it used to be when it stood on the grounds of the Dutch embassy. We know the year in which it was made, we know that it has stood in a temple dedicated to the God of Fire, a temple with a quite large, active community of worshippers, and that it has been standing there for quite a considerable period of time. We also know that a previous attempt has been made to restore its faulty leg.

Authentic objects, once belonging to the furnishings of the temples of Beijing, have become rare. This censer – donated 227 years ago by a certain ‘Mr. Feng’ to a certain ‘Temple of the God of Fire’ – therefore is a unique testimony of the rich cultural heritage of the Chinese capital. By returning it to China, the circle seems to draw full close. We are very happy that the censer – at the end of its wanderings through the capital – has found a place in a spot that it was intended for: the courtyard of a Temple of the God of Fire.



© Capital Museum

供稿/鸣谢  
荷兰王国  
驻北京大使馆  
施鹤玲, 许美英

概念、文本和设计  
Mingbai: 杨英子  
Ongerijmd: 韩善德

翻译  
北京轩颀文化交流有限公司

图片  
北京首都博物馆  
杨英子  
韩善德  
*Azië gespiegeld*  
*China-album*

#### **CREDITS**

Embassy of the Kingdom of the  
Netherlands in Beijing  
Machtelt Schelling, Inge Wesseling

#### **Concept, text and design**

Mingbai: Inge Jansen  
Ongerijmd: Sander Hendriks

#### **Translation**

Beijing Xuan Jie Translations

#### **Images**

Capital Museum Beijing  
Inge Jansen  
Sander Hendriks  
*Azië gespiegeld*  
*China-album*