

Research & Essay Report

Artist	: Qing dynasty (1644 – 1911 AD)	Width	: +/- 7.4 cm (the mouth)
Medium	: Chinese porcelain	Period/Date	: 1723 – 1735 AD
Signature	: Yongzheng reign on the base	Country	: Jingdezhen - China
Height	: +/- 4 cm	Condition	: Good

Title:
A Pair of Fine Doucai 'Sanduo' Wine Cups





DESCRIPTION

each thinly potted with slightly rounded conical sides rising from a straight short foot, around the exterior delicately painted in doucai palette with 'sanduo' or Three Abundances branches of three peach, finger citron, and lychee in shaded tones from yellowish green, pink to bright red enamels between double circled-line borders, the interior depicted with a central medallion inclosing a red rose and a bud on curled thorny stem, the base written with a six-character of Yongzheng reign mark within a double circle line in underglaze blue.

RESEARCH & ESSAY

Yongzheng emperor's embrace of Chan Buddhism added a new political dimension to the revival of Chan Buddhism. His engagement with Chan Buddhism suggests that a new pattern of legitimization of imperial political power and art, like this pattern, evolved. The emperor claimed to have achieved enlightenment, at least according his own standard, and empower himself as a judge of religious affairs within Buddhists communities.



Fig. 1

Three Abundances or *Sanduo* is one of the sublime patterns appealing the Yongzeheng emperor's taste as a religiously Buddhism patron. A gripping history reveals that the Buddha's Hand Citron, peach and pomegranate together form the Three Abundances (*sanduo*) symbolize a blessing, long life and many sons. In Chinese belief, the Chinese for Buddha's Hand Citron (*foshou*) is the homophone for 'blessing' (*fu*) and 'longevity' (*shou*) together. Meanwhile, the peach has long been associated with Shoulao, the God of Longevity. Thus, the idea conveyed that the *sanduo* design is a blessing of long life and prosperity with many generations of descendants to follow. Wine cups of this type were offered to



Fig. 2

the emperor and convey a wish of happiness for the emperor who is to enjoy a long reign and remain forever youthful.

Several sanduo wine cups like the present piece exist with different shaded tones of enamels though with the similar arrangement. See a pair of *sanduo* wine cups



Fig. 3

illustrated in *Yeh Pei-lang [Ye Peilan], Beauty of Ceramics, vol. 6: Gems of the Doucai, Taipei, 1993, pl. 78*; another in *The S.C. Ko Tianminlou Collection, Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong, 1987, pl. 98*; and in Julian Thompson, *The Alan Chuang Collection of Chinese*

Porcelain, Hong Kong, 2009, cat. no. 49. Another in similar design is a pair of cups from the Paul and Helen Bernat collection, sold at Sotheby's Hong Kong, 15 November, 1988, lot 6. A single wine cup was sold at Christie's Hong Kong, 29 May 2007, lot 1495. A pair of cups also with Yongzheng marks like the present cup is



Fig. 4

from the Paul and Helen Bernat collection, sold at Sotheby's Hong Kong, 15 November, 1988, lot 6. A single wine cup in similar pattern was sold at Christie's Hong Kong, 29 May 2007, lot 1495, and another was sold at Christie's Hong Kong, 29 May 2013, Lot 2268, for HKD1,230,000 or equivalent to USD 159,191, initially estimated between HKD 500,000 – HKD 800,000 (**See fig. 1**). See a pair of Sanduo cup sold at Sotheby's Hong Kong, 8th October 2014, lot. 3627, for HKD 320,000 or equivalent to USD 299,118, initially estimated between HKD 1,000,000 – HKD 1,500,000 (**see fig. 2**); another was sold at Sotheby's Hong Kong, 4th April 2014, lot. 26 (**see fig. 3**). A pair of wine cup (7.2 cm) in similar pattern was

sold at Christie's Hong Kong, 1st December 2010, lot. 2818, for HKD 3,860,000, initially estimated between HKD 2,000,000 – HKD 3,000,000 (**see fig. 4**).

Citation:

1. Beauty of Ceramics, Yeh Pei-lang [Ye Peilan], vol. 6: Gems of the Doucai, Taipei, 1993, pl. 78.
2. The S.C. Ko Tianminlou Collection, Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong, 1987, pl. 98.
3. The Alan Chuang Collection of Chinese Porcelain, Julian Thompson, Hong Kong, 2009, cat. no. 49.