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MANCHU COLONIALISM

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veying, classifying, controlling, and measuring procedures to keep them within the empire and under state control.

Benedict Anderson's discussion of maps regards them, along with the census and the museum, as products of the nineteenth-century colonial era. He and Thongchai Winichakul distinguish sharply between pre-colonial maps, or 'sacred geographies', and colonial Mercator grids.¹ The maps discussed here do not fit well into this dichotomy. The Renat map has no grid or borders, but neither is it a religio-cosmographic diagram. The Jesuit and Strahlenberg maps use a Mercator grid, but they are products of European geodesists working under the command of indigenous rulers. All three are hybrid constructions created out of the interaction between the early modern central Eurasian empires, using both inherited constructions of space and the new cartographic technology of the European scientific revolution.

The question of secrecy and the distribution of knowledge is, however, connected closely to the impact of maps on popular nationalism. The mass distribution of a schematic representation of a country's shape, the 'logo-map' in Anderson's terminology, created for the broad population the fundamental image of the 'geo-body' of the nation, in Thongchai's terms. The earlier maps were not widely distributed, so they did not shape a mass public, but they did construct a definite image of the imperial realm in the minds of élites. Later, this image was transmitted to the public with few changes through the technology of print capitalism by nationalist ideologues in order to mobilize a mass movement. The national boundaries of these states were not laid down in the deep mists of history by timeless cultural forces; they were, rather, constructed during their interaction with each other as they engaged in a triangular struggle for power over the steppes, forests, and deserts of central Eurasia.

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

¹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 163-85; Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-body of a Nation* (Honolulu, 1994).

Qing Colonial Administration in Inner Asia

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE of the administrative structures set up in Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet, it appears that both the ideology of 'manifest destiny' reflected in the official compilations and semi-official historiography of the Qing period, and the modern notion of China as a timeless union of many 'nationalities', have obscured the tensions and internal contradictions inherent in the process of Chinese empire building.¹ The inadequacy of these historical narratives suggests the need to examine more closely a number of important issues that affect all empires and enable one to compare Qing China with its European contemporaries. Among these issues are: how Qing dominion was established and maintained; the place of colonized territories and peoples within the spectrum of Chinese political and social institutions; how and to what degree colonized societies changed under Qing rule; and how the international position of China was affected by its ability to expand.

Through a military and civil administrative organization known as the 'banner' system, the early Qing emperors began a 'nation-building' project intended first to unify the Manchu clans and subsequently to incorporate Mongol and Chinese subjects and allies.² With the exception of a few privileges reserved for the Manchus, the Qing did not promote ethnic discrimination, although ethnic classification remained an operating principle throughout Qing society and government. During the second half of the eighteenth century, the Qianlong emperor commissioned a series of monumental works that were meant to portray the history of the dynasty as the orderly union of peoples under a common political canopy, represented by the royal house. Thus, by the end of the eighteenth century, two essential dimensions of modern China's national identity – its territorial boundaries and its ethnic composition – had already taken shape.

By and large, later Western observers took China, as an historical abstraction, always to have been what it had become by the late eighteenth century: a multi-ethnic and multicultural union of peoples who lived in one of the largest land empires in history. The image frequently evoked by Western writers to describe the beginning of China's modernization was,

¹ Above all, the *Sheng wu ji* by Wei Yuan (1794-1856), completed in 1842.

² Robert H. G. Lee, *The Manchurian Frontier in Ch'ing History* (Cambridge Mass., 1970), pp. 24-40.

and still is, that of a colossus suddenly awakening from a thousand-year sleep.¹ The force that 'awoke' the Chinese, urging them to rise to a new level of political (as a nation) and psychological (as individuals) consciousness, was, of course, the impact of Western imperialism. The period before 1839 is relegated in modern Chinese historiography to 'ancient history', and is often treated as remote from the origins of modern China.

Yet eighteenth-century China was anything but asleep. The political achievements during the reigns of the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong emperors were exceptional in both domestic and foreign affairs. With its multinational and multilingual government, the embodiment of a political project that cut across ethnic and cultural boundaries, the Qing were able to give China an 'imperial' character it had not had previously, even though the character was the result of a process of expansion that lasted for almost two centuries and involved primarily areas outside China proper.

The Qing came as conquerors to the arch of lands that form the northern and western borders of modern China, and include the now independent Republic of Mongolia, at a time when European powers were starting to build empires of their own. Both the territorial expansion and bureaucratic apparatus of Qing rule in Inner Asia had no precedent in Chinese history: the Qing 'pacification' of independent territories to the north, west, and south of China proper was, in magnitude, one of the largest territorial expansions in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century world history.

Not unlike the European colonies in Asia, these territories were administered separately from the Chinese heartland. Within China, the conquest of Inner Asia affected government institutions and military apparatus;² for instance, the protracted military campaigns against the Zunghars led to the formation of the grand council (*chün-chi ch'u*) by the Yongzheng emperor. In deliberately conforming to the Law of Nations, the Sino-Russian treaties of Nerchinsk (1689) and Kiakhtha (1727) introduced China to a broader international society; the formation of a new frontier thus became central not only to the development of China's national identity, but to the modern diplomatic history of China.³ Indeed, if an empire can be defined by the different lands and peoples that identify themselves politically in relation to an imperial metropole, be it a royal house or an administrative structure, then the Qing state was more of an empire than the Ming and the Song states had ever been. And if territorial boundaries and ethnic composition

¹ E.g., W. A. P. Martin, *The Awakening of China* (New York, 1907); Robert Payne, *China Awakes* (New York, 1947); James H. Dolsen, *The Awakening of China* (Chicago, 1926); Arthur J. Brown, *New Forces in Old China: An Inevitable Awakening* (2nd ed., New York, 1904).

² Beatrice Bartlett, *Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council in Mid-Ch'ing China, 1723-1820* (Berkeley, 1991), pp. 120-34.

³ Vincent Chen, *Sino-Russian Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (The Hague, 1966), p. 96.

help to define the self-image of a nation, Qing expansion has a bearing on the origins of modern China's national identity.

Fin-de-siècle European writers about colonies regarded efficient administration, more than military strength and superior technology, as the key to European control: 'one of the most difficult problems of colonization is the mode of administering and governing the colonial establishments.'¹ Colonial empires were not only economic enterprises or military power-houses, they were also far-flung administrative networks. The most effective administrative structures for tropical colonies inhabited by a large majority of natives ruled by a few 'whites' had provided a ground for competition among European powers for more than a century, because the structures were assumed to reflect the moral fibre, ideals, and principles of the mother country.

If one looks at China's empire-building in this light, the new and original ways in which the Qing administered their dependencies after the conquest, are – together with the use of artillery, modern cartography, and the application of international treaties – an element of central importance in the historical assessment of the role China played at the global level of eighteenth-century history.

This essay analyses the administrative system through which the Qing ruled the 'outer provinces' – Tibet, Central Asia, and Mongolia – until, nearing the end of the dynasty and under increasing internal and external pressures, the government introduced sweeping changes meant to assimilate the frontier dependencies to the rest of China. Indeed, these changes – making Xinjiang into a province in 1884; making the court for the administration of the outer provinces (Lifan Yuan) into a ministry (Lifan Bu) in 1906; setting up the department of colonization (*jichan si*) in 1907, in charge of emigration to Mongolia; and setting up the school for the colonization of the frontier (*jibian xuedang*) in 1909 – underscore the separate status of the dependencies from the mid-seventeenth to the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²

The essay outlines the goals and strategies underlying Qing expansion into Inner Asia and the different principles applied in the north and west and in the south. It describes the structure of Qing administration in Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet in order to illustrate the strategic unity of Qing rule and the colonial status of the local inhabitants. Lastly, it examines two factors that have militated against the notion that the construction of the Qing empire is comparable to Western colonial empire-building: namely,

¹ United States Bureau of Statistics, *Colonial Administration, 1800-1900* (Washington, 1901), pp. 1, 229.

² H. S. Brunnert and V. V. Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization of China* (Foochow, 1911; rpt. Taipei, 1978), nos. 491-6.

the territorial contiguity of the 'colonies' to heartland China and the history of Chinese expansion into these regions.

* * *

Unlike the Ming dynasty, the Qing never underestimated the potential menace posed by Inner Asian polities. Qing expansion in Tibet, Xinjiang, and Mongolia was partly a response to the threat that the Zunghars, a tribal confederation of the western Mongols, represented to the stability of the dynasty. As the frustrated Yongzheng emperor remarked of the cost of defending the frontier, 'a day of unrest outside the borders is a day without rest [for the people] inside the borders.'¹

In the late seventeenth century, the likelihood of the establishment of a Mongol-Tibetan political power that could challenge the Qing provoked a military response. Both the need to honour agreements to protect Mongol and Tibetan allies and increasing Russian pressure drew the Qing beyond the northern and western frontiers of the Ming state. The Qing eventually transformed the traditional Chinese system of tributary relations and so-called 'loose-rein' foreign policy into a new system of government in which territorial expansion was accompanied by military occupation and a new administrative structure. The transformation was not the result of a new doctrine of foreign relations, but of a process lasting several decades. The Qing 'empire-building' project was neither linear nor inevitable. It was the sum of strategic choices and responses to contingent events.

This phase of Chinese empire-building began with the relationship between the Mongols and the Manchus under Nurhaci.² By the end of the thirteenth century, the unity of Turco-Mongol peoples created by Chinggis Khan (r. 1206-27) had vanished, lingering only as an ideal whose centripetal force was never strong enough to counter tribal antagonisms. By the early seventeenth century, rivalries among Chahar, Khalkha, and Oirat Mongols objectively favoured the rise of Manchu power in the north-east; on the other hand, the need to deal with multiple centres of power made the subjugation of all of the Mongols a more arduous task, which would only be accomplished in the 1760s. The campaign in the 1630s against the Chahar leader, Lingdan Khan (1592-1634), not only eliminated a powerful rival, but also allowed the second Manchu ruler, Hung Taiji, to claim the political leadership of the Mongol world, expressed symbolically in the appropriation of the 'jade seal' of Chinggis Khan.³

¹ Quoted in Zhao Yuntian, 'Qingdai qianqi tongzhi xi, bei diqu de zhengce he cuoshi', *Beijing shifan xuebao*, ii (1982), 59.

² See David M. Farquhar, 'Origins of the Manchus' Mongolian Policy', in *The Chinese World Order*, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge Mass., 1968), pp. 198-205.

³ *Chiu Man Chou Tang: The Old Manchu Archives*, ed. Nobuo Kanda et al. (Tokyo, 1975), ii, 360.

The claim did not go uncontested. In the first half of the seventeenth century, the Oirats, having gained the upper hand in a long-standing rivalry with the eastern Mongols, defeated in 1623 the head of the Khalkha confederation, Šoloi Ubaši Khong Tayiji.¹ Following the victory over the Chahar in 1632, the Manchus under Hung Taiji created Eight Mongol Banners, which primarily comprised 'Inner Mongolian' tribes. Friendly relations with the Khalkha began in 1638, when Tüsiyetü Khan presented the Manchu court with the tribute of 'nine whites' (eight white horses and a white camel). After the Manchus conquered China, the support given by the Khalkha to an Inner Mongolian tribe – the Sünid – that had rebelled in 1646 against the Qing threatened to sour their relations, but the dispute was resolved shortly afterwards, in 1648.² The years from the early 1660s to the late 1670s saw a gradual weakening of the Khalkha, and a corresponding strengthening of the Zunghars, who, under their leader, Galdan Bošogtu Khan, forced the Kangxi emperor to step up his political and diplomatic activity among the Mongols.³

When Galdan attacked the Khalkha in 1688, the Kangxi emperor went to the Khalkhas' aid. The ensuing eight-year war was accompanied by intense political and diplomatic activity among Mongols, Manchus, and Tibetans. In particular, the Kangxi emperor feared that Galdan might develop an alliance with the Tibetan regent, or sDe-pa, which could have alienated the Tibetans from the Manchus and turned the position of the Dalai Lama into a rival source of political legitimacy among the Mongols.⁴ Unless the Manchus broke the political ties made in the sixteenth century between the Mongol aristocracy and Tibet's lamaistic hierarchies, they would not succeed in stabilizing their newly won power in Inner Asia. Qing hesitancy or ineffectiveness in dealing with the Zunghars would have eroded the dynasty's prestige among the Khalkha and Chahar Mongols, as well as the Tibetans, and provided the foundation for a rival centre of power.

The sense of danger aroused by developments along the Mongol-Tibetan borders, heightened by the Three Feudatories rebellion (1673-81) in the south and Russia's encroachment on the Amur, called for decisive

¹ Junko Miyawaki, 'The Qalqa Mongols and the Oyirad in the Seventeenth Century', *Journal of Asian History*, xviii (1984), 136-73.

² Veronika Veit, 'Die mongolischen Völkerschaften vom 15. Jahrhundert bis 1691', in *Die Mongolen: Beiträge zu ihrer Geschichte und Kultur*, ed. Michael Weiers (Darmstadt, 1986), pp. 400-6. The relations with the Khalkha must not have been affected too deeply by the Sünid incident, as on 11 June 1647, a delegation of Khalkha princes, including the head of the Mongol hierarchy of Tibetan Buddhism, the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu, went to Beijing to pay tribute to the Qing monarch; see Miyawaki, 'Qalqa Mongols and the Oyirad', p. 149.

³ Charles Bawden, *The Modern History of Mongolia* (London, 1968), pp. 63-76.

⁴ Zahiruddin Ahmad, *Sino-Tibetan Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Rome, 1970), p. 307.

action to ensure the loyalty of Qing allies and destroy its rivals: it propelled the Qing into full-scale territorial expansion. The beginning of Manchu rule in Outer Mongolia was signalled by the submission in 1691 of 550 Khalkha princes by the convention of Dolon Nor. Owing to the vastness of the country, the fragmented political organization of the Mongols in clans and tribes, and the Manchus' willingness to retain the Mongols as allies and as a reservoir of military manpower, the Qing did not try to organize a military occupation of Mongolia. Instead, they created a form of self-government in the 'colonies' within an 'imperial' judicial and administrative framework.

In Tibet, one outcome of the Qing victory over Galdan in 1696 was the decision that the Tibetan dGe-lugs-pa (Yellow Hat) sect and the authority of the Dalai Lama should always be tied to the dynasty. It was unclear, however, how the Qing were to achieve this goal. Although the Kangxi emperor garrisoned Lhasa in 1720, the Yongzheng emperor, upon his accession in 1723, recalled some of the troops. The decision proved short-sighted: in the wake of another expedition to suppress Lobjang Danjin's rebellion in Kokonor (Qinghai) in 1723, the decision was reversed.¹ In 1727, Kokonor and eastern Khams were carved out of Tibet; one was placed under the authority of the Lifan Yuan, and the other incorporated into the province of Sichuan. Wary of both sectarian rivalries and Mongol interference, the Qing established an imperial military and political superstructure in Tibet within which they tried to promote centralization under a native monarchy reconfigured, in 1750, into a semi-theocratic government under the Dalai Lama.²

The final act of the Qing conquest took place in the mid-eighteenth century, as the Manchus fought a campaign of extermination in the northwest against the divided and weakened Zunghars. Throughout the region known as the 'New Frontier', or Xinjiang, the Manchus set up permanent garrisons of Qing troops accompanied by Chinese colonists from Gansu and Shaanxi provinces as well as Chinese Muslims.³ To the south, indirect rule was practised through local Muslim administrators.

In Tibet, Mongolia, and Central Asia, the Qing tried to retain control over the administrative and social structure without committing large numbers of troops or spending large sums of money. Imperial residents with military and civilian powers would supervise an administrative structure based on local traditions and institutions and staffed by natives; con-

¹ Katō Naoto, 'Lobjang Danjin's Rebellion of 1723', *Acta Asiatica*, lxiv (1993), 57-80.

² Luciano Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early 18th Century* (Leiden, 1980).

³ Wang Xilong, 'Qingdai Xinjiang de zhufang baqi yu "qitun"', *Xinjiang shehui hexue*, vi (1987), 96-104; Joanna Waley-Cohen, *Exile in Mid-Qing China: Banishment to Xinjiang (1758-1820)* (New Haven, 1991), p. 28.

trol Qing troops, both bannermen and Green Standard soldiers (Chinese troops outside the banner system), either stationed permanently or sent on limited tours of duty; raise taxes to pay for the colonial administration; control foreign relations; promote economic integration with China proper; and control the movement of people across the frontier. The tasks were legion, but the Qing officials and troops remained few in number.

* * *

The Qing conquest of south China and Taiwan differed significantly from Qing expansion in Inner Asia. Unlike the northern and western regions which were placed under the jurisdiction of the Lifan Yuan, in the south the Qing gradually integrated newly acquired territory into the provincial administrative system. Even though much of the south had been under central Chinese control during the Yuan and Ming dynasties, it was still strange to the Chinese and inhabited by several large groups of non-Chinese peoples.¹ The Qing tended to favour the assimilation of these peoples, particularly the Miao, into Chinese society. To be sure, there was considerable ambivalence about the 'civilizing' process, and it is impossible to isolate a consistent strategy: the process of conquest proceeded amid policy debates. However, the administration, schools, and laws introduced in the south gradually marginalized the natives or forced them to give up their own customs. During the Yongzheng era, native administrators (*tuguan*) and chieftains (*tusi*) were replaced by officials from the interior, a policy known as 'replacing locals with external [residents]' (*gai tu gui lin*); schools were set up to foster Chinese culture; and men were forbidden to wear their traditional clothes.² Similarly, intermarriage between Chinese settlers and native women, discouraged at first on the assumption that children would follow the mother's customs, was encouraged during the Qianlong era in the hope that it would promote assimilation.

More thoroughly than the western and northern regions, the south was planted with settlers. For instance, although the emigration of whole families to Taiwan was discouraged in the eighteenth century, migrant labourers were welcomed, and as a result, owing to the inconsistent government policies and the strong economic incentives, Chinese settlement grew steadily.³ Aboriginal land rights were placed in jeopardy, and often

¹ Claudine Lombard-Salmon, *Un exemple d'acculturation chinoise: la province du Gui Zhou au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris, 1972), pp. 36-54.

² Siu-woo Cheung, 'Millenarianism, Christian Movements, and Ethnic Change among the Miao in Southwest China', in *Cultural Encounters on China's Ethnic Frontiers*, ed. Stevan Harrell (Seattle, 1995), pp. 222, 229-30.

³ John Shepherd, *Statecraft and Political Economy on the Taiwan Frontier, 1600-1800* (Stanford,

taken away altogether, despite the attempts by Qing officials to protect aborigines from aggressive colonization.¹

The Qing conquests of the south on the one hand, and of the north and west on the other, represent two distinct processes of colonization. The first was characterized by a stronger central government presence; more openness to immigrants from China; more active expropriation of land and mineral resources; and measures aimed at assimilating the natives. In Inner Asia, however, the Qing had no interest in assimilation, showed greater sensitivity towards Mongol, Tibetan, and Islamic cultures,² and left Manchu and Mongol officials, who did not push for sinicization, in charge.

The Qing preferred to seal off Inner Asia from heartland China. Although they introduced elements of Chinese law, and eventually tried to transform the traditional legal system, they took account of existing custom.³ Under the supervision of the Lifan Yuan, indirect rule through native chieftains and administrators lasted throughout the Qing era. The transformation of Xinjiang into a province in 1884 occurred only as a consequence of the need to consolidate Qing sovereignty in the face of foreign pressure: the change was not intended to be the prelude to assimilation.

* * *

Qing administration in Inner Asia stands apart from both the administration of China proper and the pattern of expansion and settlement in the south. Nor does it conform to the historical models of Chinese expansion into the northern and western frontier regions. The administration was divided into three: the Lifan Yuan in the metropolis, and the imperial residents and the native élites in the periphery.

The Lifan Yuan, often translated as court of colonial affairs or colonial office but more properly as court for the administration of the outer provinces, was the centrepiece of the military and civil bureaucracy of Mongolia, Tibet, Qinghai, and Xinjiang.⁴ Its evolution closely parallels the phases of the Qing conquest of Inner Asia. Modelled on the existing bureau of Mongol affairs (*monggo jurgan* or *menggu yamen*), it was set up in 1638 by Hung Taiji to manage Manchu relations with the Mongols.⁵ Its

1993), pp. 105-34, 142-76.

¹ John E. Herman, 'Empire in the Southwest: Early Qing Reforms to the Native Chieftain System', *Journal of Asian Studies*, lvi (1997), 47-74.

² Norma Diamond, 'Defining the Miao', in *Cultural Encounters*, ed. Harrell, p. 105.

³ Valentin A. Riasanovsky, *Fundamental Principles of Mongol Law* (Bloomington, 1963), p. 63.

⁴ Ning Chia, 'The Lifanyuan and the Inner Asian Rituals in the early Qing (1644-1795)', *Late Imperial China*, xiv (1993), 61.

⁵ *Huangqing kaiguo fanglüe*, compiled 1786, ch. 25; 5b; *Huang-Ts'ing K'ai-kuo Fang-lüeh*, trans. Erich Hauer (Berlin and Leipzig, 1926), p. 462; *Tonki fuka sindaha hergen i dangse AD 1607-37*, ed. Nobuo Kanda et al. (Tokyo, 1962), vi. 942; Ma Ruheng and Ma Dazheng, *Qingdai de bianjiang zhengce*

functions expanded after the Qing conquest of China and, by 1661, it was ranked just below the six ministries,¹ and became a key department within the central government.

From the outset, the Lifan Yuan was the preserve of Manchu and Mongol administrators, and the only body in which ethnic Chinese were excluded from positions above the rank of clerk-translator. It included a chancery, headed by a minister, a vice-minister, and a supernumerary vice-minister, and a number of departments and subordinate agencies. Initially divided into four departments, in the eighteenth century the number was increased to six:² the Inner Mongolian bureau (*qijisi*), in charge of the Chahar banners; the Inner Mongolian reception bureau (*wanghuisi*), created in 1757 by renaming the receptions bureau (*binkesi*); the Outer Mongolian bureau (*dianshuisi*), responsible for relations with Zunghars and Tibetans; the Outer Mongolian reception bureau (*rouyuansi*, literally office for cherishing those from afar), which handled the reception of Outer Mongolian chieftains, received their tribute, and prepared gifts for presentation to them at court; the Eastern Turkestan bureau (*laiyuansi*, literally bureau for causing distant people to submit), set up in 1760 and responsible for relations with Xinjiang; and the judicial bureau (*lixingsi*), responsible for judicial matters throughout Inner Asia.³ The departments were supplemented with the treasury, the Mongol translation bureau, the Manchu archives, the Chinese archives, and the pay office. Finally, the Lifan Yuan included affiliated agencies such as the Mongol officers' school, the Tibetan Buddhist printing office, and the office for the compilation of the Lifan Yuan's regulations (*zeli*).

The statutes and regulations governing Qing rule in Inner Asia are contained in the *Qinding lifanyuan zeli* (*Imperially Commissioned Norms and Regulations of the Lifan Yuan*), which dates from 1696, the year of the Kangxi emperor's victory over Galdan,⁴ when he ordered the compilation of a list of the ordinances and edicts issued since 1627 which bore on Qing rule over the northern and western regions. Divided into 152 articles, the list became the first edition of the *Regulations*. A second edition, ordered by the Qianlong emperor in 1789, contained 209 articles; third and fourth editions followed in 1817 and 1826.

The *Regulations* prescribed the treatment of local élites, in particular the

(Beijing, 1994), pp. 159-68.

¹ These were the ministries of civil appointments (*Li Bu*), revenues (*Hu Bu*), rites (*Li Bu*), war (*Bing Bu*), justice (*Xing Bu*), and works (*Gong Bu*).

² Brunnert and Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization of China*, no. 495.

³ Charles Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Stanford, 1985), nos. 614, 3062, 3557, 3603, 3608, 4654, 6648, 7646.

⁴ *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period (1644-1912)*, ed. Arthur Hummel (Washington, 1943), i. 267.

Mongol aristocracy, and the powers to be granted to them. Ranks, posts, promotions and demotions, salaries, visits to court, ceremonies, banquets, and funerals were all meticulously regulated. The *Regulations* next dealt with the appointment of officials, rewards and punishments, military matters, political gatherings of the Mongol chiefs, and, in general, the functions of the military and civil administration. It also fixed the punishments for crimes such as robbery, theft, and murder.

Below the Lifan Yuan, a network of regional military and civil residences was created, responsible for enforcing Qing policy in their jurisdictions. The imperial residents were introduced into Outer Mongolia between 1733 and 1762 following the change of policy in the late Kangxi and Yongzheng eras that accompanied the mobilization against the Zunghars. Typically, the residents were high officials of the banners stationed in Beijing, or, in the case of the Mongols, members of the higher ranks of the aristocracy.

Most of the first imperial residents were soldiers, though they also took care of the civil administration. Their forces included both troops permanently settled in the newly acquired territories, and troops serving tours of duty lasting from three to five years. Structural links were created with neighbouring provinces: Shaanxi and Gansu provided supplies and troops for Xinjiang, and Sichuan provided funds and troops for the Qing administration in Tibet. An examination of the regions individually reveals how local posts created for imperially appointed officials were defined primarily to meet local needs. Eventually, beginning in Outer Mongolia, an administrative layer of 'frontier specialists' was developed, known as *amban*.¹

* * *

The establishment of Manchu rule in Khalkha Mongolia after 1691 occurred in two phases. Between 1691 and 1724, the Manchus decentralized, dividing the Mongols among a compartmentalized administration in order to undermine their political and religious leaders. From 1725 to 1762, on the other hand, a centralizing Qing military administration subordinated the Mongol nobility to the authority of the imperial residents. The military mobilization of the Khalkha could be attempted only within a hierarchical military and administrative system resembling the banners.²

The first of the three most senior Qing officials in Outer Mongolia was the military governor (*jiangjun*) of Uliasutai, who also bore the title of Lieutenant Military Governor for the Pacification of the Frontier (*dingbian*

¹ *Amban* is a Manchu term that simply means 'official' but it was adopted in the frontier regions to indicate high-ranking members of the Qing bureaucracy.

² Udo B. Barkmann, 'Die manjurische Banneradministration in der Qalq-a-Mongolei des 18.-19. Jahrhunderts', *Archiv Orientalní*, lvi (1988), 27-41.

zuo fujiangjun). Created in 1733, the post was among the first in the outer territories. The senior military command in northern Mongolia, it was responsible for mobilization in the four provinces (*ayimaghs*) into which Outer Mongolia had been divided, relay stations and guard posts, communications, and the conduct of important legal cases.¹ The military governor was also expected to suppress insurrection and to punish deserters.

In practice, the military governor of Uliasutai controlled only the western half of Outer Mongolia, that is, the two western provinces, the Uriyangkhai, the relay stations, the nineteen garrisons stationed to the west of Kiakhta, the pasture assigned to the army of Uliasutai, and the regulation of Chinese trade with the west. The most important among the military governor's numerous staff were the two assistant residents (*canzan dachen*), one a Manchu bannerman, the other a Mongol nobleman. With the gradual cessation of fighting in Outer Mongolia in the nineteenth century, the military governor's status declined in comparison with the theoretically lower-ranking imperial resident at Urga (*Kulun banshi dachen*).

Although Urga did not replace Uliasutai as the capital, it did become the de facto centre of Mongolia. The imperial resident there was usually a Manchu official appointed from within the banner hierarchy in Beijing. A post for a Mongol assistant resident (*banshi dachen*) was created in 1758, following the repression of the anti-Manchu rebellion of Chingunjav (1756-7), and in 1761 a second post was created.² In addition to keeping order, the imperial resident regulated the growing trade with Russia by way of Kiakhta and tried to limit the prestige of the head of the Buddhist church in Mongolia, the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu. The Qing were worried that the Khutukhtu might otherwise become an effective symbol of 'national' unity for the Mongols.³

The third senior official in Outer Mongolia was the imperial assistant resident (*canzan dachen*) at Kobdo. Although Kobdo became an important military post in 1730, it acquired its political status only in 1762, primarily to strengthen Qing presence in the territory formerly ruled by the Zunghars. The various Mongol *ayimaghs* were forced to contribute to the residency's military budget.

A very different administrative structure was established in Xinjiang, a vast region comprising the territory to the north and south of the Tianshan mountains, and divided into three discrete areas: the Ili region (Zungharia) in the north, the eastern region, and Kashgaria in the south. Troops were

¹ Jacques Legrand, *L'Administration dans la domination Sino-Mandchoue en Mongolie Qalq-a* (Paris, 1976), p. 166.

² On this rebellion, see Charles Bawden, 'The Mongol Rebellion of 1756-7', *Journal of Asian History*, ii (1968), 1-31.

³ Bawden, *Mongolia*, p. 56.

mainly deployed in the north, which bordered on Russia and had been the base of Zunghar power. During the Qing conquest, in the late 1750s and early 1760s, Sibe, Solon, and Chahar tribesmen were brought in from Manchuria and Mongolia to provide permanent military garrisons. The Qing forces in the region, comprising 'ethnic' (Sibe, Solon, Daghur, and Chahar), Eight Banner, and Green Standard troops, were under the supreme command of the military governor of Ili, based at Huiyuan (modern Yining).

In eastern Xinjiang, which included Urumqi and the oases of Turfan and Hami, the administration was headed by the lieutenant governor (*dutong*) of Urumqi. Divided into prefectures and districts (*zhou* and *xian*) like the provinces, the region was placed nonetheless under the authority of the Lifan Yuan and cities such as Turfan and Hami were administered by appointed representatives of the local élite. North of the Tianshan, the Qing established military colonies of peasants to provide economic support for the troops. Although the colonists were mostly soldiers and labourers moved from other parts of Xinjiang, some settlers were allowed to immigrate from heartland China (*hutun*).¹ Finally, south of the Tianshan, in the area known variously as Kashgaria, Altishahr (the 'six cities'), or 'Little Bukhara', Qing administration was left as far as possible in the hands of local Muslim notables.

Imperial officials were in charge of military matters and supervised the civil administration in all of the major cities, including the Muslim oasis-cities of Kashgaria. The senior ranks were councillor (*canzan dachen*), commandant of the forces (*lingtui tachen*), agent (*banshi dachen*), and assistant agent (*xieban dachen*); below them were clerks and junior military officers. Their responsibilities differed considerably according to the area to which they were assigned. In the north, they had to set up a self-supporting military system and oversee frontier relations and trade with Kazakhs and Russians. In the south (*Tianshan nanlu*), however, they had merely to supervise the native officials (*begs*) to whom the Qing entrusted most of the work.

Imperial officials had to train troops; keep up relay stations and garrisons; manage foreign trade and relations with Kirghiz nomadic tribesmen and the state of Kokand; raise taxes; ship valuables, such as money or jade, from Xinjiang to the metropolis; and judge legal cases.² Only important cases involving Qing personnel or ethnic Chinese were tried in front of Qing imperial officials; other cases were tried before the local Muslim

¹ Waley-Cohen, *Exile in Mid-Qing China*, pp. 24-32; Dorothy V. Borei, 'Economic Implications of Empire-Building: The Case of Xinjiang', *Central and Inner Asian Studies*, v (1991), 22-37.

² Zhao Yuntian, 'Qingdai qianqi tongzhi xi, bei diqu de zhengce he cuoshi', pp. 60-2.

judge (*qādi*). One of the most delicate tasks was making arrangements for the obligatory triennial visits to court of the members of the native élites. Every detail, including their stopovers and the type of reception they were to be given, was carefully planned.

As in Mongolia, officials were typically Manchu and Mongol, and, while in the beginning the military posts were the more important, by the late Qianlong and Jiaqing periods the balance had shifted to civil administration. This was especially true of Kashgaria, where the inhabitants, although nominally subordinate to the military governor of Ili, gradually became virtually self-administering.

The structure of Qing administration in Tibet was historically and culturally different from that of both Outer Mongolia and Xinjiang. Although Manchu involvement in Tibetan affairs preceded the conquest of China, Tibet was not placed under Chinese suzerainty until 1720, when the expeditionary force sent to Tibet by the Kangxi emperor temporarily took over the government. The Manchu troops were recalled in 1723, but returned soon after it became clear that a politically volatile Tibet required close supervision by a power capable of rapid military intervention.

The Qing residency system was introduced in Tibet in 1727 with the arrival of two imperial officials, the senior an imperial resident (*zhu Zang banshi dachen*), the junior his assistant (*zhu Zang bangban dachen*), and both usually referred to collectively as the *ambans*. They were selected from high-ranking bannermen, placed under the general direction of the Lifan Yuan, and had at their disposal approximately two thousand troops. After the changes in 1750 to the government of Tibet, the powers of the *ambans*, previously limited to supervision and arbitration, were extended.

Further reforms followed the Gurkha wars (1788-92), when the *ambans* were given equal status with the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. They had to approve appointments to the government, including ministerial ones, and all promotions, demotions, and punishments. They supervised the criminal justice and revenue systems, correspondence with the court, and foreign affairs. In the early 1790s, the garrison of Lhasa was raised to three thousand men.¹

In Kokonor, the head of the Qing administration was the imperial superintendent of Qinghai (*zongli Qinghai shiwu dachen*) based at Xining, the administrative and political centre of the area, who commanded the Qing troops stationed there but otherwise ruled through tribal chiefs known as *tusi* or *jasagh*.²

¹ Josef Kolmaš, *The Ambans and Assistant Ambans of Tibet (A Chronological Study)*, *Archiv orientální Supplementa VII* (Prague, 1994), pp. 7-9; Hsiao Jin-song, 'Ch'ing-tai chu Tsang ta-ch'en ti chih-ch'ian', *Bulletin of the Institute of China Border Area Studies*, viii (1977), 241-90.

² William Frederick Meyers, *The Chinese Government* (3rd ed., Shanghai, 1897), no. 562; Hucker,

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The Manchus, like other colonial rulers, could not have ruled Inner Asia without the collaboration of native élites, who were transformed by the relationship. As Rudolf von Albertini explains, 'no [colonial] rule, no matter how direct, could dispense with the native chiefs or village elders, yet even under indirect rule such authorities became in practice executive agents for the administration. One way or the other, their social position changed decisively, because their authority no longer rested on traditional canons of legitimacy but on their appointment or recognition by the colonial power.'¹

If the success of a colonial state in establishing its rule over a dependency is determined by the strategies used to co-opt the native élites into the local administration, the key aspect of Qing rule in Mongolia was the relationship established, through the Lifan Yuan, between the Qing and the Mongol, Tibetan, and Turkestani élites. Although the imperial residency system provided a model throughout the territory controlled by the Lifan Yuan, its application varied widely. The Qing adapted the administration of each region to the existing social and political structures.

In Mongolia, the Qing ruled primarily through the aristocratic nomadic élite. Although the domains of the Mongolian princes had been redesigned according to the strategic interests of the Qing, the princes themselves remained autonomous within their own territories. After 1691, however, the Qing divided Outer Mongolia into three *ayimaghs*,² territories based on a previous division of power among the Khalkha Mongols and named after three important Khalkha political figures, the Tüsiyetü Khan, the Sechen Khan, and the Jasaghtu Khan. The Sayin Noyan *ayimagh* was added in 1725 and, in 1778, the *ayimaghs* were designated as leagues (*meng*) and subordinated to league chiefs appointed by the emperor upon the recommendation of the Lifan Yuan. The nobility of each league, led by the banner chiefs (*jasagh*), met every three years to decide major policy issues and criminal cases.³

Ayimaghs were divided into banners or *qosighus*, corresponding to an aristocratic retinue or 'princedom'. Only eight in 1655, their number increased sharply after the Khalkha submitted to Manchu rule: in 1691, there were thirty-four; in 1725, fifty-three; and in 1765, eighty-six. Under

Official Titles, no. 7123; Brunnert and Hagelstrom, *Present Day Political Organization of China*, no. 905.

¹ Rudolf von Albertini, *European Colonial Rule, 1880-1940: The Impact of the West on India, Southeast Asia, and Africa* (Westport, 1982), p. 491.

² The word *ayimagh* means 'tribe' or 'clan' in Mongolian. The word did not acquire the meaning of administrative division until after 1691. See Legrand, *L'Administration*, pp. 87-8.

³ Bawden, *Mongolia*, p. 107.

the Qing, the banners, each headed by a *jasagh*, became territorial units with military and administrative functions. Whenever a new *qosighu* was created, it was headed by a *jasagh* appointed by the Lifan Yuan.

The *jasagh* was the central figure in the Qing system of indirect rule in Outer Mongolia. The position was hereditary, and the holder enjoyed almost complete autonomy to act within the boundaries of the regulations fixed by the Lifan Yuan. His civil responsibilities included the recommendation of bannermen for appointment to high office, subject to ratification by the Lifan Yuan; the appointment of junior officials; the supervision of the census, which determined the recruits, taxes, and corvée he must supply; the decision, subject to appeal, in family and criminal law cases (crimes committed while holding public office, such as miscarriage of administrative duties or corruption, were referred to higher authority); the supervision of trade and the property of foreigners (essentially Russians); participation in the *ayimagh's* triennial assemblies; and the enforcement of the observances of the Tibetan Buddhist church.

The *jasagh* was also in charge of tax collection (the rate was fixed by the Lifan Yuan) and communication. He kept watch on movement across the borders, maintained the relay stations, and provided horses for travelling officials. His military duties included the command of the banner's troops, and the maintenance of their weapons and training camps.¹ Naturally, his most important duty was to ensure that no seditious activities occurred, for which he would be held responsible and liable for punishment. Any abuse of power was dealt with harshly by the Qing authorities.

The system differed widely from the frontier management strategies of former dynasties. The tributary relationship between the Ming and the Mongols, for instance, had not implied that the Ming claimed to supervise the Mongol chieftains, nor that they could enforce regulations governing, for instance, taxation and criminal law. In contrast, the control exercised by the Manchus extended to the introduction of a *qosighu* bureaucracy, which included a formal staff for the office of the *jasagh*, with military and civilian 'assistants' (*tusalaghçi*). Officials chosen for these posts were required not only to be of noble birth, but also to be competent enough to do the work. In the nineteenth century, possibly as a consequence of the economic and social decline of the Mongol aristocracy, the posts were also filled with commoners.²

The bottom rung of the administrative reconfiguration engineered by the Manchus in Outer Mongolia was the *sumu*. This term, a Mongol translation of the Manchu word *niru* (lit. 'arrow', usually rendered as 'com-

¹ Udo Barkmann, 'Die manjurische Banneradministration', p. 31.

² Legrand, *L'Administration*, pp. 121-2.

pany'), was borrowed from the Manchu banner system. The adult male population of a *sumu*, approximately 150 people per unit, was subject to taxation and to sudden mobilization in a crisis; thus, the chief of the *sumu* had an obligation to keep fifty armed men in permanent readiness. However, not everyone in Mongolia was administered at the *sumu* level. The nobles, for instance, were mainly organized by clans (*otoghs*); the people who worked for them were regarded as dependents (*khamjilgha*) and escaped taxation and military service. Buddhist clergy and anyone attached to a monastery were also exempt. Indeed, tax-exempt subjects became so numerous that their total number could exceed the taxable population (*albatu*).¹

The highest religious authority in Mongolia was the head of the Tibetan Buddhist church there, the Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu. Created by the Tüsiyetü Khan, Gombodorji, as religious head of the Khalkha in 1639, the post was tied from the beginning into the Mongol aristocracy, the first Khutukhtu being Gombodorji's son. The close association between religious authority and Mongol nobility worried the Manchus; at the death of the second Khutukhtu in 1759, shortly after the Chingunjav uprising of 1756 – the only serious uprising in Mongolia against the Manchus – the Qing court determined that future incarnations could only be found in Tibet, a rule broken only for the selection of the last (eighth) Jebtsundamba Khutukhtu (1869-1924).

For geographical and historical reasons, immigration policies were more restrictive in Outer Mongolia than in Inner Mongolia. The Qing court wished, first, to preserve Mongolia as a military reservoir – to keep the fighting spirit of the Mongols unadulterated by contact with the 'soft' Chinese – and to anticipate social and political disturbances caused by popular resentment against the predatory conduct of Chinese merchants and moneylenders.² Thus, the Lifan Yuan carefully regulated all movement into and out of Outer Mongolia. Before a nobleman travelled to court, for instance, he had to report the details of his visit: the number of people in his entourage and even the weight of his luggage, which could not exceed sixty *jin* (about 30 kilograms), was precisely stipulated. Chinese merchants could obtain permission to enter Outer Mongolia only by paying for a special licence issued by the Lifan Yuan. Although the system was not foolproof, as only half of the merchants seem to have held licences at any time, it demonstrates the degree to which Mongolia was closed to immigration.

¹ Legrand, *L'Administration*, p. 131.

² Joseph Fletcher, 'Ch'ing Inner Asia', in *The Cambridge History of China: X: Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911*, pt. 1, ed. John K. Fairbank (Cambridge, 1978), p. 57; M. Sanjdorj, *Manchu Chinese Colonial Rule in Northern Mongolia* (London, 1980), p. 36.

The changes brought about by Qing rule in Outer Mongolia had economic as well as social significance. Although Chinese shops in Urga, for example, hardly created a huge demographic imbalance, the Chinese merchants were so successful as moneylenders that the Mongol nobles, heavily indebted, began by the nineteenth century to entrust the collection of taxes to their Chinese creditors.¹ Noblemen also assigned land in payment of their debts, thus turning an inalienable common good into private property. Many impoverished people flooded the few urban centres where they were often reduced to begging, while others entered the monasteries as lamas or became bandits. Throughout the nineteenth century, widespread discontent among the herdsmen added to the misery of the population in general, which, on the one hand, strengthened the Tibetan Buddhist church and, on the other, aggravated the ethnic and economic antagonism between poor Mongol debtors and wealthy Chinese creditors.

However, the degradation of the social fabric of Mongol society derived not only from the financial success of the Chinese, but also from aspects of Qing rule, such as the encouragement of parasitism among the aristocracy and the restrictions on the movement of nomads, which in turn affected the production of livestock. In fact, although the Qing increased the number of *jasaghs*, the bureaucratization of the Mongolian nobility limited its social role and access to power. By the nineteenth century, the two hundred positions of provincial or district 'chief' were too few to accommodate all the tribal leaders. Destitute and deprived of their traditional leadership role, these nobles could have formed the nucleus of sedition. Only the traditionally close association between the Mongol aristocracy and the Manchu ruling house prevented social and economic degradation from evolving into an anti-Qing political movement.

* * *

Manchu military and administrative presence in Xinjiang was stronger in the north and east than in Kashgaria. Unlike Mongolia, where there was no bureaucratic tradition, the Qing integrated the local Turco-Muslim social structure into the framework provided by the Lifan Yuan. This undiluted form of indirect rule through local Muslim officials is known as the 'beg system'. A *beg* was a specialized administrator, either a mayor or governor (*hakim beg*); an assistant governor (*ishikagha beg*); a collector of revenues (*šang beg*); a building inspector (*naqib beg*); a treasurer (*khazânachi beg*); or a judge (*qâdi beg*).² Each title was ranked in the Qing system from the

¹ Wang Chen-main, 'The Ch'ing Dynasty and Its Influence and Effect on Mongolia', *Chinese Culture*, xxvi (1985), 76.

² On the *beg* system, see Saguchi Tōru, *Jūhachi-jūkyū seiki higashi tokurisutan shakaishi kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1963), pp. 103-92; Lin En-hsien, *Qing chao zai Xinjiang de Han Hui geli zhengce* (Taipei,

seventh to the third rank (*pin*). A *beg*, though autonomous, was required to enforce the regulations of the Lifan Yuan, and worked under the supervision of the imperial resident.

Two complementary aspects of the role of native élites in Xinjiang illustrate the nature of Qing indirect rule. The first is the system of taxation of the Muslim population of Kashgaria. In 1765, the Qing began a land survey for tax purposes, relying on local Muslim officials known as *bashi* (village heads) to carry out the survey and report to the appropriate *beg*. The tax registers were subsequently transmitted to the Qing regional authorities, and, from them, to the Lifan Yuan and to the board of revenues.¹ Based on this survey, quotas were set for two types of levy, in grain and cash, corresponding to two different forms of taxation. The first, the grain levy, a traditional Muslim tax pre-dating the Qing conquest, was assessed on land, calculated in *batman*;² the second, a poll tax introduced by the Qing, was paid in cash and based on the number of adult males per household. Significantly, tax registers from Yarkand show an increase in grain revenues between the early period of the Qing conquest and the mid-nineteenth century, but no increase in cash revenues. Recent studies have attributed this fact to the reluctance of Muslim tax-collectors to impose a foreign tax on their co-religionists and compatriots. They point to it to illustrate the range of forms of resistance to the imposition of foreign rule.³

The second aspect of the role of Muslim élites illustrating the limits to Qing rule was the relationships between the *beg* and both the Qing authorities and the local population. A *beg* was selected by the Qing authorities from among influential local families on the basis of his skill, loyalty, and especially local authority. Local notables were best qualified to ensure that no anti-Manchu activity developed in the territory under their jurisdiction.

By contrast, the appointment of the highest-ranking *begs*, of third and fourth rank, followed a different pattern. They were chosen from among families who had joined the dynasty at the time of the Qing expedition against the Zunghars, whereas the local *begs* had surrendered only when the Qing forced the local rulers, the Khwajas, to flee.⁴ Hence, the most influential families in Xinjiang were those who had lost power in their own cities, and hoped to regain it in the wake of a Qing victory. These early allies were used by the Qing to control the local *begs* and, supported by the

1988), pp. 72-3; *Ch'in-ting hsi-yü t'ung wen chih* (Tokyo, 1961-3), i. 735-9.

¹ Nicola Di Cosmo, *Reports from the Northwest: A Selection of Manchu Memorials from Kashgar (1806-7)* (Bloomington, 1993), p. 15.

² A *batman* is both a measure of weight, corresponding to 573.44 kg. and an area unit indicating the land that can be cultivated with a *batman* of seed, corresponding approximately to 1.76 hectares.

³ Hori Sunao, 'Shinchō no kaikyō tōchi ni tsuite no ni-san no mondai - Yārukando no ichi shiryō no kentō o tsūjite', *Shigaku zasshi*, lxxxviii (1979), 1-36.

⁴ See Joseph Fletcher, 'China and Central Asia', in *Chinese World Order*, ed. Fairbank, pp. 219-20.

superior authority and military force of the Qing, were less restrained by personal and family ties with the local population. Indeed, their rule was often marked by brutality and rapine. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, it became clear that they were often able to circumvent both local traditions and Lifan Yuan regulations, and were levying extra taxation and demanding additional compulsory labour.

The abusive and exploitative attitude of the high-ranking Muslim officials became the primary cause of social unrest in Kashgaria, and was denounced by Qing officials. Of course, the local population saw the rapacity of the *begs* for what it was: a form of oppression by people elevated to a position of power by alien rulers.¹ The degree of identification of the upper-ranking *begs* with the conquerors, and their partial cultural assimilation, was exemplified in outward signs such as the honorific insignia of Qing officialdom, in particular the peacock feathers, the golden buttons on top of the hats, and hair fashioned in a queue.

* * *

Both the Xinjiang and Mongol élites were very different from the Tibetan élite, whose predominantly ecclesiastic political class held a position of pre-eminence over the lay aristocracy. The monarch P'o-lha-nas had gained control of the country with Qing support in 1728. After his death in 1747, the political instability - culminating in the assassination of the two *ambans* - forced the Qianlong emperor to reconfigure the form of the government. As a result, in 1750 the Qing restored the Dalai Lama as the highest temporal and religious authority in Tibet, presiding over a local Tibetan government whose defining characteristic was its dual structure, part lay and part monastic.

The Dalai Lama, as the highest authority, headed a council of four ministers (*bka'-blon*), three of whom were from the lay aristocracy and one from the clerical establishment (*bka'-blon bla-ma*). However, the composition of the council was not always strictly observed. There were one hundred seventy-five government posts in all, open to members of the aristocracy only, and they were ranked from the seventh to the third rank of the Qing honour system: the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama were the only individuals holding higher rank. The four ministers, without any administrative specialization, were equals. Below them, several government departments handled financial matters, among them the accounting department and the treasuries.

The monastic establishment was structured along similar lines, with a

¹ Sanada Yasushi, 'Sōsetsuki Shin "bake" sei kara mita Kashugaria oashisu shakai', in *Nairiku Ajia - Higashi Ajia no shakai to bunka*, ed. Mori Masao (Tokyo, 1983), pp. 437-58.

council of four lamas headed by a chief abbot, the main link between the monastic administration and the government. The ecclesiastic officials, who also numbered one hundred seventy-five, managed the administration of the large monastic population and economy, with the exception of the three monasteries of 'Bras-spuns, Se-ra, and dGa'ldan, which were directly subordinated to the Dalai Lama.

The provincial administration was concentrated in the regions of dBus and Ts'an, which were divided into districts subordinated to governors, who could be one or two per district, and whose ranks ranged between the fifth and the seventh, according to the importance of the district. When there were two governors, one would be a monk, the other an aristocrat. In addition, Tibetan commissioners were appointed to supervise trade and monasteries in regions that had been separated from central Tibet, such as A-mdo and Khams.¹

* * *

It may be possible to treat the Qing empire, and especially the history of its imperial expansion in Inner Asia, as an example of colonial rule. European colonial empires, too, responded to both local situations and strategic goals by developing complex bureaucratic mechanisms that permitted more secure and efficient economic penetration and military protection. These apparatuses, which often mirrored the political and legal traditions of the motherland, were also subject to changes and modifications based on specific historical experiences. Qing rule in Tibet, Mongolia, and Xinjiang did not differ in principle from the European penetration of overseas dependencies: the Qing, too, developed original systems of administration for newly acquired territories by relying on native élites and separating the dependencies from metropolitan China. The number of Chinese troops and settlers in relation to the natives was kept small, and religion and local custom were used to induce submission. Above all, the sophistication of the Qing administration of Inner Asia, its existence and evolution outside a logic of pure territorial conquest and assimilation, and its prolonged success in the face of internal political unrest and powerful external threats bring it closer to its European counterparts and separate it from anything else in Chinese history.

Yet the notion that the Qing administration of Inner Asia can be regarded as colonial, and that colonization was an essential attribute of the Qing empire, has gained little currency. Two counter-arguments are commonly used; namely, the geographical contiguity between Inner Asia and China, and the previous history of Chinese domination.

¹ Ram Rahul, *The Government and Politics of Tibet* (Delhi, 1969), pp. 22-50.

In the definition and classification of colonies, overseas location has been more a 'rule-of-thumb' than a prerequisite. However, neither ancient nor modern definitions of colony or, more properly, dependency, require them to lie overseas. The separate geographical, ethnic, and cultural nature of the dependency, on the other hand, is treated as a prerequisite.

The issue, then, is not whether the territories administered by the Lifan Yuan were regarded as being overseas but whether they were effectively separate from China. The Manchu name of the court of colonial affairs, even more than its obliquely literary Chinese translation, affirms that the dependencies were 'outer provinces' (*tulergi golo*). Nor should contiguity be confused with accessibility or geographical similarity. Although commercial caravans had long travelled to Xinjiang and Mongolia, it was not easy to transfer soldiers and administrators and to establish a reliable line of communication across forbidding mountain ranges and deserts.¹ Just as physical obstacles had historically isolated Tibet and Central Asia from China, the steppe and sown had constituted an equally effective frontier between Mongolia and China. Although frontier societies had existed before the Qing, they had been largely confined to border towns where 'mutual markets' allowed peoples from both sides of the frontier to meet. Under the Qing, the geographical and cultural differences between the peoples of the *fan* (outer regions) and the peoples of China were not only maintained but also legislated and adopted as a criterion for the establishment of native self-governing communities. By issuing passes and checking credentials at border posts, the Lifan Yuan enforced its control over the boundary between the dependency and the motherland.

Moreover, the Russian conquest of Central Asia, overland like the Qing, is certainly regarded as colonial expansion, both for sending in colonists to settle the land, and for establishing a colonial administration.² The governorship of Turkestan, established by the tsarist authorities after the conquest of Tashkent in 1868, faced many of the problems faced by other colonial empires when native institutions were retained to foster imperial interests. Indeed, Prince Alexander M. Gorchakov, in a circular sent to the other European powers, claimed that Russia's policies were similar to those of France in Africa, Great Britain in India, and the Netherlands in Indonesia.³

¹ Peter C. Perdue, 'Military Mobilization in Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century China, Russia, and Mongolia', *Modern Asian Studies*, xxx (1996), 757-93.

² Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, 'Organizing and Colonizing the Conquered Territories', in *Central Asia: 130 Years of Russian Dominance: A Historical Overview*, ed. Edward Allworth (Durham, NC, 1994), pp. 151-71.

³ Włodzimierz Baczkowski, 'Russian Colonialism: The Tsarist and Soviet Empires', in *The Idea of Colonialism*, ed. Robert Strausz-Hupé and Harry W. Hazard (New York, 1958), p. 81.

Finally, a true conquest and incorporation of contiguous territories within the administration of metropolitan China did, in fact, occur in the south. By extending the powers of the central state, and importing both provincial bureaucracy and immigrants into the new land, the Qing advance into these regions was broadly comparable to the United States's conquest and colonization of its western territories. The policies carried out in the Inner Asian dependencies were of the opposite type. If one compares the two processes, the Qing conquest and rule of the Inner Asian dependencies more closely resembles the acquisition of overseas colonies than the conquest of adjacent territory.

Some of the Inner Asian territories conquered by the Qing had been subject to Chinese rule in the past. In the first century BC, for example, the Han dynasty set up military colonies in the Western Regions (roughly equivalent to today's Xinjiang). In the seventh century, Tang China renewed its control over western Central Asia under the Taizong emperor (626-49), and several protectorates were established under the Gaozong emperor (649-83). Chinese authority, however, was intermittent, never particularly stable, and constantly challenged both by foreign powers – including the Xiongnu, the ancient Türks, and the Tibetans – and by military governors who showed a pronounced tendency to secede from the central government. The Tang were, in fact, the last Chinese dynasty to rule Central Asia, hardly a historical precedent for events that occurred a thousand years later, and after the Mongol conquest and the Islamization of Turkestan had radically changed the social and cultural context.

Tibet came under the sway of the Mongols in 1240; however, although the Yuan dynasty retained political control over Central Tibet, the entire region became independent during the Ming dynasty. Mongolia was never ruled by China, and the limited control established over the Mongols by the Liao dynasty is an occurrence that cannot be regarded as part of a 'Chinese' historical tradition.

In fact, the Qing dynasty was the first to bring all of these Inner Asian regions under the sovereignty of a central government based in China. Moreover, the central instrument for the bureaucratic management of these regions, the Lifan Yuan, was not a Chinese institution: it was created by the Manchus to facilitate territorial expansion in specific historical circumstances. Although the history of Chinese penetration of Xinjiang and of Mongol relations with Tibet was used as a rhetorical device to support the ideology of conquest, it provided no precedent for the type of administration.¹ The one possible exception is the system of military settlements (*tuntian*), self-supporting military units first established for the purpose of

¹ H. E. Richardson, *Ch'ing Dynasty Inscriptions at Lhasa* (Rome, 1974), p. 46.

frontier defence during the Han dynasty (206 BC-AD 220). This system, however, was less the defining characteristic of Qing *administration* in the dependencies than a military-economic device *adapted* to suit a new administrative structure.

These Inner Asian regions had a long history of interaction with China; nor were they 'discovered' by Qing exploration into uncharted territory. The pertinent issue here, however, is the extent to which this 'deep' history affected the manner in which the Qing ruled them. In practice, the peoples of Tibet, Mongolia, and Eastern Turkestan, as conquered societies, stood in relation to China in a position similar to that of most of the dependencies of the European colonial states.

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