A TRANSLUCENT MIRROR

History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology

PAMELA KYLE CROSSLEY

Contents

Introduction

For some time the sources of modern "national" and "ethnic" identities have appeared to lie in concepts of community, solidarity, and common interest that have taken various forms over the centuries and in the past hundred years have been newly refined by print and digital media, as well as by the recession of imperialism. This appearance cannot be entirely deceptive, particularly with respect to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when many peoples indeed imagined themselves into communities, to abuse Benedict Anderson's phrase. The explanation has an appealing versatility, in that it can be and has been imposed upon an infinite variety of national histories. Yet no matter how well the paradigm works in describing the processes by which communitarian concepts become propagated as national identities, the substance of any particular national narrative remains elusive. The cultural bits out of which such identities have been cobbled have vastly divergent origins, and the bits themselves are not theoretically neutral or interchangeable. That being the case, the historian wonders to what extent the variety of idols available to nationalist movements in the modern era represents continuing authority of earlier times. For some nations presently existing, those "earlier times" were centuries of government by empires of conquest, whose rulerships had need of constructing categories of affiliation that would correspond to multiple, simultaneously expressed codes of legitimacy in the rulership. The Qing empire (1636–1912) had a rulership that functioned in this way, and the historical result was a legacy of historical identities that exerted distinctive influence not only upon the particulars of national and ethnic concepts emerging in the nineteenth century, but upon the fundamental concepts of identity.
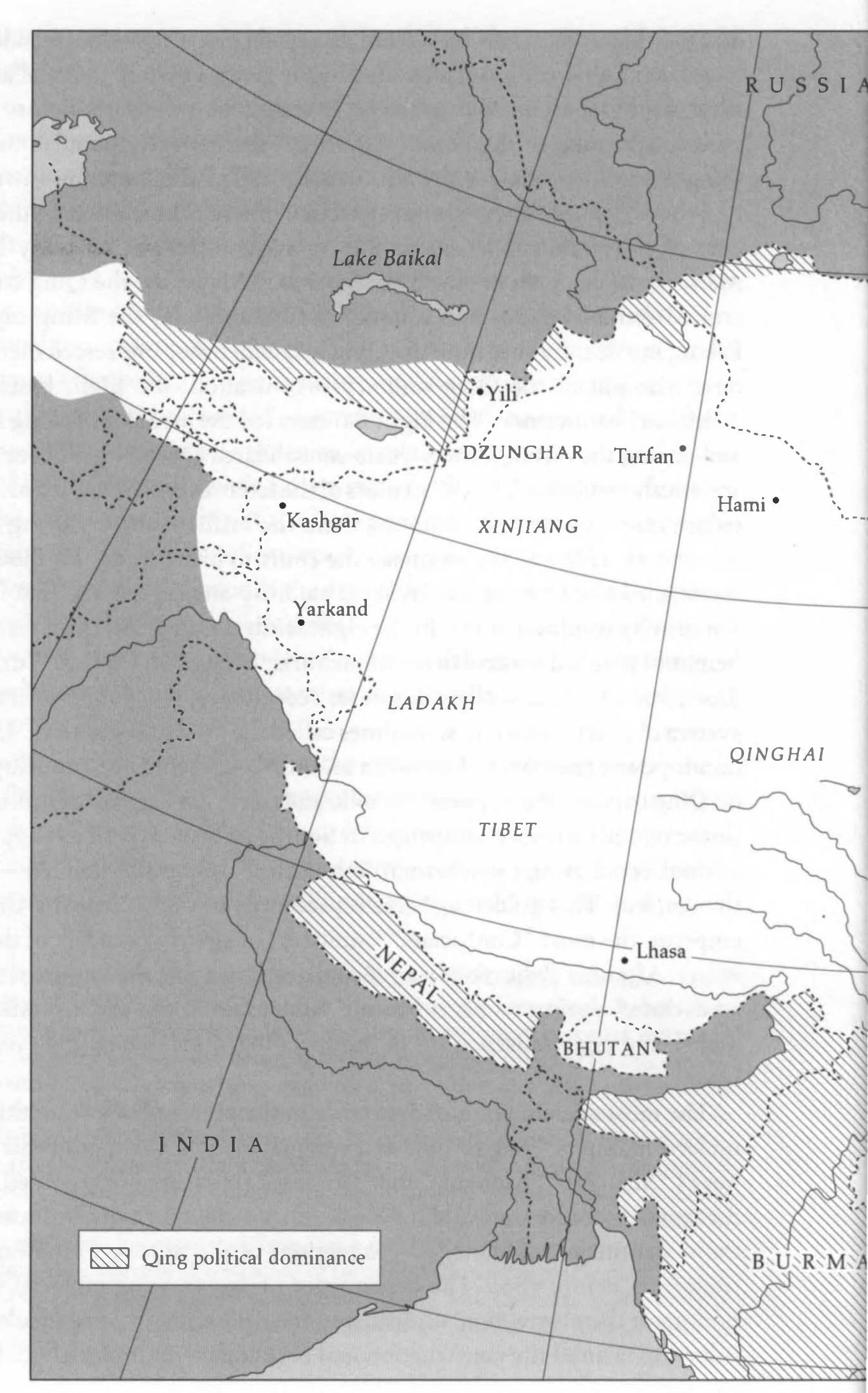
During the Qing, ideas about the ruler and ideas about the ruled changed each other. Seventeenth-century expressions of the relationship of the khan Nurgaci (r. 1616–26)[1] to peoples under his dominion differed fundamentally from concepts of subordination to the first Qing emperor, Hung Taiji (r. 1627–35, 1636–43). In the eighteenth century, particularly under the Qianlong (1736–95) emperor Hongli, the ideological relationship between the ruler and the ruled completed another turn. It gained not only new complexities but new purchase on the indoctrination of aspiring officials and literate elites outside of government as the motors of conquest slowed, then rooted into pillars of civil rule. The substance of these changes may, for purposes of introduction, be crudely simplified to this paradigm: Under the khanship created by Nurgaci, a symbolic code of master to slave (these terms used after some consideration and explained in Chapters 2 and 3) was amended to a highly differentiated system of cultural and moral identities under the Qing emperorship of the later seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century, the burden of the emperorship to impersonate its diverse peoples was a primary theme in the representations—historical, literary, ideological, architectural, and personal—of universal rule. Increasingly abstract court expression of undelimited rulership required circumscription of its interior domains, so that criteria of identity were necessarily embedded in this ideology.

To readers with a general interest, the above statements may appear self-evident. To specialists, they may appear sententious and problematic. What follows immediately is unfair to every scholar working on the Qing period and the many disciplines its history encompasses; all aim to deviate from the common narrative at some significant point. Nevertheless, in the field

---

1. This name is more frequently written Nurhaci or Nurhachi. The names Nurgaci and Hung Taiji are extremely rare in Manchu documents; they are, however, amply attested in contemporary Chinese and Korean records. The names were well known in the early seventeenth century, but for reasons of protocol (if this can include spiritual considerations) are expunged from the imperial records. Both names, in the forms known in Manchu, occur only in the "old" Manchu script, which did not distinguish between certain consonants and vowels that the reformed script had after 1632. This means that as written the name could have been pronounced as "Nurgachi," "Nurghachi," "Nurhachi," or "Nur'achi." I have chosen to follow the known orthography, though it seems to me that authors are perfectly justified in writing the name however they imagine it might have been pronounced. In the case of Hung Taiji, there is also a choice of following Chinese romanization, so that Hong Taiji or Hongtaiji both are reasonable. Huang Taiji however is not, since it is based on a mistaken Chinese interpretation of the name. See also Chapter 3, nn 81, 82, 83.

of Qing history certain basics are accepted. The empire is considered to have been founded by, or controlled by, or given a certain political and cultural cast by, the Manchus in the early seventeenth century. Before the institutionalization of the name "Manchu," the majority population of the Qing predecessor state—the Jin, usually called the Later Jin—were the "Jurchens," whose name was attested in Chinese characters over the better part of the period from about 800 to 1636. Jurchens officially became Manchus in 1635. Apart from the Jurchens/Manchus, the Qing court recruited some Mongols and conquered China, taking the Ming capital of Peking in 1644. By that time the Qing had enlisted or impressed many Chinese who joined the Qing military organization, the Eight Banners, as "Chinese" bannermen. The Eight Banners led the assault at Peking in 1644 and during the ensuing forty years consolidated Qing control over central and southern China. The Qing rulers of the later seventeenth and early eighteenth century—foremost among them the brilliant and enduring Kangxi emperor (r. 1661–1722)—remade the court to bring it into harmony with established Chinese values, giving it stability and legitimacy that it could not gain by conquest alone. In the eighteenth century, the Qing reached its height of political control (over Manchuria, Mongolia, Chinese Turkestan, Tibet, and China, as well as the states recognizing Qing superiority in the system of court visitation, sometimes called the "tributary system"); of economic power (ensnaring Europe in an unbalanced trade relationship based on Qing exports of tea, porcelain, silk, and other goods); and of military expansion (with ongoing campaigns in Southeast Asia as well as suppression of disaffected groups—whether "ethnically" or socially defined—within the empire). This golden age was represented in the rule of the Qianlong emperor, the most "Confucian," "sinified," or simply grandest of the Qing rulers. After his abdication in 1796 and death in 1799, the empire went into a "decline," during which it became vulnerable to the expansionist, colonialist, and imperialist actions of Europe, the United States, and eventually Japan.

The most evident point of departure in the present book from this usual understanding of Qing origins and conquest is that the monolithic identities of "Manchu," "Mongol," and "Chinese" (Han) are not regarded as fundamentals, sources, or building blocks of the emergent order. In my view these identities are ideological productions of the process of imperial centralization before 1800. The dependence of the growing imperial institution upon the abstraction, elision, and incorporation of local ideologies of rulership favored the construction and broadcast—in imperial publishing,

RUSSIA

Lake Baikal

•Yili

DZUNGHAR   Turfan •

Hami •

Kashgar •   XINJIANG

Yarkand •

LADAKH

QINGHAI

TIBET

NEPAL

Lhasa •

BHUTAN

INDIA

Qing political dominance

BURMA

Qing Empire Boundaries in the Qianlong Period, 1736–95

SIBERIA

Lake Balkash

Nerchinsk •

Amur River

HEILONGJIANG

Yilan
(Ilantumen) •

Ussuri River

Songari River

Ningguta •

KHARACHIN

KHALKHA

JILIN

KHORCHIN

Shenyang
(Mukden) •

Lake Tamun

Mt. Changbai

Yalu River

CHAKHAR

LIAODONG

SHANXI

Gobi Desert

Dolonnor •

• Chengde

Seoul •

KOREA

Huhhot
(Köko Khota) •

Great Wall

• Peking

Shanhai Pass

GANSU

NINGXIA

• Jinan

SHANDONG

Yellow River

Mt. Taixing △

• Hangzhou

Nanjing •

JIANGSU

ZHEJIANG

Yangzi River

SICHUAN

FUJIAN

TAIWAN

GUIZHOU

GUANGDONG

Canton (Guangzhou) •

YUNNAN

GUANGXI

VIETNAM
(ANNAM)

architecture, ritual, and personal representation—of what are here called "constituencies" but are usually reified as "peoples," "ethnic groups," and what were once called "races." If the precedence of these identities is removed as a motivation, other aspects of the usual narrative must also be reexamined. This particularly applies to the characterization of the Kangxi court as striving to present a "Chinese" or "Confucian" face to overcome antipathy of Chinese elites to the Manchu rulers, and to the greatness of the Qianlong era as being best understood as a zenith point in the power and influence of "Chinese" culture, or a Chinese "world order." In contrast to the more common treatment of the various peoples of the Qing empire, this work proposes that the process by which historicized identities were produced is obscured when the antiquity of those identities is accepted.

Since 1983 I have published some general ideas about the relationship of theoretically universal (culturally null) emperorship to idealized codifications of identity.[2] What remains is to attempt a more detailed account of the means of and, if possible, reasons for these synchronies of conquest, imperial ideation, and the erection of criteria of identity. The general story has many parallels in other work done on eighteenth-century China—as examples, P.-E. Will's *Bureaucracy and Famine in Eighteenth-Century China* (Stanford, 1990) and P. A. Kuhn's *Soulstealers* (Harvard, 1990), though many other works could be cited—which suggest that government elites were impatient with social, cultural, and political phenomena that were ambiguously positioned in relation to the umbrella of state influence or jurisdiction. But I have also become aware that subplots of the imperial narrative under the Qing had their cognates in other early modern empires, a reminder of the degree to which many supposed new things of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries may be seen equally well as reflexes against or revenants of the ideological legacies of the Eurasian empires.

The emphasis on continuities with the early modern period, however, should not be construed as a general proposition that remote phenomena of the medieval or ancient period are the sources of imperial expression in the early Qing. Although many elements of imperial speech or ritual will be noted as having antecedents distant in time or space from the Qing, this is not taken in any sense as explaining their uses, potency, or meaning in the period dealt with in this study.[3] In the same way, the discussion here will

2. See Crossley, "The Tong in Two Worlds"; idem, "*Manzhou yuanliu kao* and the Formalization of the Manchu Heritage"; idem, "An Introduction to the Qing Foundation Myth"; idem, *Orphan Warriors;* idem, "The Rulerships of China: A Review Article"; and idem, *The Manchus,* 112–30.

3. This should be particularly noted with respect to the word "emperor." The

often note parallels with other early modern empires. But this book has no ambition to be a comparative work, nor is observation of parallel phenomena intended to suggest explanations for those parallels. Finally, my arguments appear to me rather strictly limited to Qing imperial ideology (as manifested through several media), and its relationship to concepts of identity, with no obvious import for a reinterpretation of all aspects of Qing history. "Identity" is ambiguous itself, since there are many kinds of identities, some relating to nationality, some to religion, some to gender, some to class, and so on. Though to modern observers these may seem separate phenomena, there is no reason to assume that they represent separate historical processes (a point nicely represented in the eighteenth-century catalog of Qing tribute peoples, in which male and female costumes are almost without exception represented as distinct emblems of identification).[4] Moreover, none of these species of identity would conform to "identity" in the context of the Qing empire in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. First, the identities dealt with are predecessors of "national" or "ethnic" identities, and not in themselves demonstrably national or ethnic;[5] second—as historians of those other sorts of identities have commented many times—by the end of the imperial period national and ethnic forms of identity occluded in public discourse every other sort of identity one could hypothesize. Ironically this book has been organized around categories of identity whose realities it is obliged to discredit; historical argument has little

first uses of the word (*imperator*) for a single individual with supreme secular authority and unique supernatural approval are probably to be found in the reign of Augustus (27 BCE–14 CE). But invocation of this word here on the basis of sound parallels and continuities is not meant to suggest that Roman emperors were the source for emperorship in eastern Eurasia or that peculiarities of either the Roman or the Chinese institutions are unimportant.

4. *Huang Qing zhigongtu*, see Chapter 6. The relationship between sexualizing and "orientalizing" processes is a familiar one in modern scholarship, noted as early as Edward Said's *Orientalism*, but for a study more relevant to this discussion, see Rey Chow, *Woman and Chinese Modernity*, esp. 3–33; Millward, "A Uyghur Muslim"; Dikötter, *Sex, Culture, and Modernity in China*, esp. 8–13; and Dorothy Ko's study of the coinciding markings of gender and Manchu "ethnicity" in "The Body as Attire: The Shifting Meanings of Footbinding in Seventeenth-Century China," *Journal of Women's History* 8, no. 4 (Winter 1997).

5. The phenomena relating to constituency construction with which I am dealing here do not appear to me to be the same as, but seem to predate and to have stimulated, what Dru Gladney has in the contemporary context called "overly structured identities" (see "Relational Alterity," 466–68, though this has been in one form or another the subject of a vast literature in cultural anthropology). See also Crossley, "Thinking about Ethnicity in Early Modern China" and the Postscript to this book.

choice but to acknowledge contemporary assumptions as beginnings and to tell every story backward.

More limitations should be noted. There is not much here about emperorship (or rulership) as a political factor, or about society, or about Qing history generally. Choices that had to be made regarding coverage of the period of Qing rule before 1800 aggravate these difficulties. Those periods best covered by earlier scholarship—the Kangxi (1661–1722) and Yongzheng (1723–35)—have been slighted to make room for earlier and later times.[6] I have treated some of the social and ideological mechanisms of identity in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in *Orphan Warriors*, and I have avoided extensive repetition in order to look at their sources. Many topics and the narratives of some individuals are broken up among two or more chapters. This has been necessary to allow the content of the book to be anchored by the two poles of rulership and of identity. I have intended that they will reflect each other in the chapter structures, and as a consequence some narrative sequences are refracted in the interests of the overall arguments. I hope that the annotation may help clarify any confusion resulting from this choice. Readers will also find that some central Qing subjects—for example, the Eight Banners (*jakūn gūsa*) and the garrisons;[7] the "tributary system;"[8] administration of the Mongol territories;[9] histo-

---

6. On the Kangxi period see Spence, *Ts'ao Yin and the K'ang-hsi Emperor;* idem, *Emperor of China: Self-Portrait of K'ang-hsi;* Kessler, *K'ang-hsi and the Consolidation of Ch'ing Rule;* on the Yongzheng period see Pei Huang, *Autocracy at Work,* and Silas Wu, *Passage to Power;* Zelin, *The Magistrate's Tael,* and Beatrice S. Bartlett, *Monarchs and Ministers* are two classic studies of the imperial administration in the Yongzheng and Qianlong eras. There are in addition many excellent specialized studies of court policy making in the early eighteenth century in particular.

7. The foundation modern study is Meng Sen, "Baqi zhidu kao" (1936), and there has been important research on individual banner or garrison histories by Ch'en Wen-shih, Okada Hidehiro, Liu Chia-chü, and others. For more general studies see Sudō, "Shinchō ni okeru Manshū chūbō no toku shusei ni kansuru ichi kō satsu"; Wu Wei-ping, "The Development and Decline of the Eight Banners" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1969); Im, *The Rise and Decline of the Eight-Banner Garrisons in the Ch'ing Period (1644–1911);* Wang Zhonghan, ed., *Manzu shi yanjiu ji;* Deng, *Qingdai baqi zidi;* Crossley, *Orphan Warriors;* and forthcoming work by Mark C. Elliott and Edward J. M. Rhoads.

8. Pelliot, "'Le Sseu-yi-kouan et le Houei-t'ong-kouan'"; Fairbank, ed., *The Chinese World Order;* Wills, *Pepper, Guns, and Parleys;* Crossley, "Structure and Symbol in the Role of the Ming-Qing Foreign Translation Bureaus"; Chia, "The Li-fan Yüan in the Early Ch'ing Dynasty"; Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar;* Howland, *Borders of Chinese Civilization,* esp. 11–18; Wills, "Maritime China from Wang Chih to Shih Lang," esp. 204–10.

9. The best short introduction to Mongol social history is Fletcher, "The Mon-

ries of the many Muslim groups who lived within the Qing borders,[10] the peoples of the Southwest[11]—receive truncated or even eccentric treatment. Fortunately, these subjects have been studied in other works and I have had the luxury of dealing with them only where they touch upon my subject.

IDEOLOGY, RULERSHIP, AND HISTORY

The Qing emperorships took in information, gave it associative forms, and sent it back out again. No agency performing these acts starts from scratch. Ideally one could isolate each moment in the transformation and dissemination of ideas, but since this is impossible it falls to the reader to remember that none of the Qing reign periods was static in this regard, and so much less the Qing era as a whole. The dynamism of the court's constant reworkings of its historical knowledge can only be suggested. The activity in its entirety—the taking in and putting out—is regarded as "ideological," a matter explored below. What is found herein is necessarily a circumstantial case, since an ideology that announced its presence and its intentions would not be an ideology. The subject cannot be seen, heard, counted, or in any satisfactory way verified, but only inferred from the shapings of language, ceremony, political structures, and educational processes. I have keenly experienced the doubts that enter into the study of such a problem, but I believe that the preponderance of evidence affirms a genealogizing historical idiom under the middle and late Qing, linked to the universalization of the emperorship in the eighteenth century. Present theory on the past has been adamant that "history" does not exist outside its sources, which appears to me to be an insistence that historical study can-

gols: Ecological and Social Perspectives," though it focuses almost exclusively on the imperial period from Chinggis to Möngke. For general histories see also Morgan, *The Mongols;* Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes;* Jagchid and Hyer, *Mongolia's Culture and Society;* and for the imperial period most recently, Allsen, *Mongol Imperialism;* Togan, *Flexibility and Limitations.* For the Qing period, Bawden, *The Modern History of Mongolia;* Bergholz, *The Partition of the Steppe;* Chia, "The Lifan Yüan in the Early Ch'ing Dynasty"; Fletcher, "Ch'ing Inner Asia, c.1800"; Crossley, "Making Mongols." In Chinese, perhaps the clearest and most comprehensive single volume is Zhao Yuntian, *Qingdai Menggu zhengzhi zhidu.*

10. See particularly Rossabi, "Muslim and Central Asian Revolts"; Fletcher, "Ch'ing Inner Asia, c.1800"; Lipman, *Familiar Strangers;* Gladney, *Muslim Chinese,* esp. 36–63; Millward, *Beyond the Pass.*

11. For background see Herman, "Empire in the Southwest."

not be other than an extension of the study of ideology. But the processes by which those sources are produced, are given their conceptual contours, and become matrices for the production of further documentation are often left in the abstract.[12] This study can forgo a prolonged rumination on the relationship of ideology to power, since in the instance of an imperial ideology that relationship is clear. More central are the tension between the imperial order of the eighteenth century and its own ideological past and the trace of this tension in historical sources, whether ceremonial, legal, literary, or architectural in nature.

Though that still leaves a bit to be said about ideology as a theoretical consideration, I will first describe the originator of historical production: rulership. The ruler as a person is important (more important, in some instances, than one would grant at first thought), but rulership here includes all instruments that extend the governing personality of the ruler—spiritual, ritual, political, economic, and cultural.[13] Rulership may, as I have written elsewhere, be seen as an ensemble of instruments playing the dynamic role, or the ascribed dynamic role, in the governing process. It orchestrated not only the ruler himself but also the nearer circles of his lineage; the rituals he performed; the offices that managed his education, health, sexual activity, wardrobe, properties, and daily schedule; the secretariats that functioned as extensions of his hearing in the form of intelligence gathering and expedited reports or proposals; the editorial boards that functioned as extensions of his speech in the generation of military commands, civil edicts, and imperial prefaces to reprinted or newly commissioned literary works. In many instances I will refer to the inmost ranks of the ensemble as "the court," which is what most writers on Qing history have meant in employ-

12. Often, but not always. China studies has for some time concretely explored the relationship between historical construction and the generation of literary categories. This was given large expression in the "Four Treasuries" project of the eighteenth century, but its roots date at least to the Tang—depending on definition, perhaps much earlier—in the attempts of scholars to codify the historical revelation of culture as the evolution of literary genres. On this, see Bol, *"This Culture of Ours;"* Wilson, *Genealogy of the Way;* and Elman, *Classicism, Politics, and Kinship.*

13. "Rulership" is the grammatical equivalent of "monarchy," which is both an idea and a set of institutions. See Crossley, "The Rulerships of China." My use of rulership is partly inspired by Perry Anderson's use of "monarchy" in *Lineages of the Absolutist State.* For comparative discussions of Chinese rulership (theory and practice), primarily before the Qing, see Chan Hok-lam, *Legitimation in Imperial China;* Ames, *The Art of Rulership;* Rule, "Traditional Kingship in China"; Taylor, "Rulership in Late Imperial Chinese Orthodoxy"; and Woodside, "Emperors and the Chinese Political System."

ing the term.[14] By viewing the rulership as these orchestrated parts, one sketches out both the possibilities for consonance among them, and also the possibilities for dissonance. In the case of the Qing empire, this rulership was definitively an emperorship: a mechanism of governance over a domain in parts.[15] The Qing emperorship was in its expression what I have called "simultaneous" (in Chinese *hebi*, in Manchu *kamcime*).[16] That is, its edicts, its diaries, and its monuments were deliberately designed as imperial utterances in more than one language (at a minimum Manchu and Chinese; very commonly Manchu, Chinese, and Mongolian; and after the middle eighteenth century frequently in Manchu, Chinese, Mongolian, Tibetan, and the Arabic script of many Central Asian Muslims that is often called "Uigur"), as simultaneous expression of imperial intentions in multiple cultural frames.[17] The simultaneity was not a mere matter of practicality.

14. I believe this is generally consistent with Rawksi's definition (*The Last Emperors*, 8), though lineage infrastructure of the court is far more important to her study than to this one. This leaves aside for the moment the important exception of Bartlett's *Monarchs and Ministers*, which for good reasons distinguishes between an "inner" and an "outer" court in the differentiation of bureaucratic functions during the eighteenth century. There is some antecedent to this in Chinese political writing, especially during the late Ming when reform parties from the Donglin to the Kuangshe (see Chapter 1) proposed that the "outer" court (its lecturers, middle bureaucrats, and censors) strive against the "inner court" (primarily the eunuchs) in order to eradicate corruption and restore the moral equilibrium of the emperor. I do not believe that either use is incompatible with my proposed use here of the single word "court."

15. I have tried not to use the word "dynasty" when I am referring to an order that clearly compares to what in European history would be an "empire." A dynasty is merely the collection (often familial) of people who form the main source of action (the "dynamo") in any order—be it extremely local or extremely vast, bureaucratic or royal, legal or criminal, artistic or economic. The inner branches of the Aisin Gioro lineage are clearly a dynasty within the Qing empire, and there are many examples of successive dynasties within single empires.

16. The meaning is quite different from what George Marcus has used in discussing ethnography, which relates to the modern phenomena of "nested," "hierarchical," "dialogic," and "relational" identities (all different, but similar). As I hope this study will suggest, such identities may well have existed—virtually necessarily existed—in eighteenth-century China but were not an important part of the historicizing process by which the "constituencies" were institutionalized. See also Gladney, "Relational Alterity," 466.

17. For a study very much in the interpretive frame of this study see Waley-Cohen, "Commemorating War in Eighteenth-Century China," in which are described the stelae of the Shishang si, the memorial temple that once stood in the Fragrant Hills west of Peking and at Chengde (Rehe), inscribed with Manchu and Chinese, and in instances with Mongolian and Tibetan also; Uigur script is found in the Peking environs. There were also local monuments celebrating putative Qing victories in the Jinchuan ward, the conquest of Xinjiang, and campaigns in Guilin

Each formally written language used represented a distinct aesthetic sensibility and a distinct ethical code. In the case of each language the emperor claimed both, as both the enunciator and the object of those sensibilities and those codes. The separate grammars must, in the end, have the same meaning—the righteousness of the emperorship. Or, to use the wheel metaphor that was common among those emperorships in the eighteenth century, the separate spokes must lead to a single hub. An aesthetic and ethical vector leading away from that hub was no less than a literal as well as a metaphorical vehicle for revolution.

This simultaneity in the Qing emperorship resembled a fashion of expression used in many earlier empires of Eurasia—as far back, at least, as the Achaemenids, but most famously the Mongol Great Khans.[18] I do not mean that land empires before the early modern period were precursors of or interchangeable with the Qing empire. On the contrary, the workings of the Qing appear to me meaningfully early modern—obviating the secular/sacred dichotomies of earlier political authority, establishing a transcendence over culture that would be the foundation of a new universalism. Nevertheless, the Qing construction of earlier empires, particularly the Tang (618–907), the Jin (1121–1234), and the Yuan (Mongol, 1272–1368), became important elements in the imperial ideologies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Certainly, elements of simultaneous expression do appear in medieval, and possibly in ancient times, and the Qing were one of those empires inheriting, elaborating on, and employing such practices, even if the context of that employment yielded an effect distinct from what can be observed in earlier periods. As a political and cultural mechanism, imperial simultaneity seems precisely captured in the word "persona," as a visage through which the voice is projected, and I will use the word in that sense. To ignore this quality of Qing emperorship risks misconstruction of the context in which Qing historical sources were formed.

Faulty characterization of the mode of expression of Qing rulership, however, is not as hazardous as the assumption that "racial" or "ethnic" condi-

---

and Lhasa. I wish to distinguish the form of imperial expression being described here from utilitarian multilingual inscriptions, which are found in much earlier inscriptions in Western Asia and the Mediterranean, and in China to commemorate local religious communities from the eighth century.

18. References throughout this book to the "Mongol" empire and to "Mongol" political traditions are made only in the context of the retrospective understanding of these items, particularly in the earlier Qing period. It will be impossible to note in every case where that retrospective departs from facts knowable in the Qing period or known today.

tions can explain change in the early modern period. Such ideas continue to inspire attempts by earlier scholars to resolve Qing political culture as either more "Chinese" or more "Manchu."[19] Among the more influential was Franz Michael, who in *The Origin of Manchu Rule in China*[20] wished to defeat a notion made fashionable by Karl Wittfogel[21] that Manchu rule had definitively "alien" origins. On the basis of work done in Michael's generation (and derived from Chinese scholars of the early nationalist period), the Qing was seen as a "sinicized" regime, in which issues relating to difference—whether earlier or later in the Qing period—were often dismissed as contrived or frivolous. Until rather recently the term "sinicization" was regarded as unproblematic by historians of China, though I have argued elsewhere[22] that the concept's lack of specificity muddles issues of cause and effect and inhibits questioning of a series of received notions about how and why the Chinese language, Chinese customs, and social structures have spread to various parts of East Asia. "Assimilation" and "acculturation" are not as words or concepts denied to historians of China. This being the case, "sinicization" has no purpose other than as a vessel for a set of ideological impositions describing assimilation and acculturation as having causes and meanings with relation to China that are somehow special.[23] As an idea in the intellectual history of studies of China, "sinicization" remains interesting and important; as a theorem in contemporary discourse, it represents only a tangle of undemonstrable but sentimentally charged explanations for cultural change in East Asia. This book dwells at some length on the transformationalist ideas of the Yongzheng emperor's "Great Righteousness Resolving Confusion" of 1730, but transformationalism of the sort described here is not an early form of sinicization discourse. The ideology of the Yongzheng emperor and his predecessors was focused on moral

19. See also Crossley, *Orphan Warriors*, 224–27.
20. First published as *The Origin of Manchu Rule in China: Frontier and Bureaucracy as Interacting Forces in the Chinese Empire*, by Johns Hopkins University Press, 1942, and reissued by Octagon Books in 1965.
21. Wittfogel and Feng Chia-shêng, *History of Chinese Society*, "Introduction."
22. "Thinking about Ethnicity" and *Orphan Warriors*.
23. For a diatribe on this see Ho Ping-ti, "In Defense of Sinicization," which argues that since assimilation and acculturation have happened in China and its environs in historical times, "sinicization" is proven. Not much of the current critique of sinicization is addressed by the essay. "Sinicization" is simultaneously a characterization of and an explanation for cultural change, and accepting it entails accepting an ideology of historical causation to which Ho subscribes (attributing it to weaknesses in non-Chinese cultures, strengths in Chinese culture, and the "magnanimous spirit" of the ancient Chinese). The facts would license others to dissent.

transformation of populations through systemic exposure to Civilization; "sinicization," in contrast, can sometimes be triggered by facts no more profound than adoption of the Chinese language.

Impatience with the tautologies and historical thinness of the sinicization hypotheses later led to interpretations of the Qing as more "Manchu."[24] The politics of the eighteenth-century court have for some time been construed in terms of imputed racial allegiances and tensions. In the same vein, there have also been attempts to ascribe the Chinese defeat in the Opium War (1839–42) to preexisting "racial" conflicts in Chinese society.[25] It is important to establish a threshold for what a "racial" phenomenon is.[26] The proposition that racial differences caused things to happen in the Qing period assumes that such differences existed before the Qing state did. Through history some groups distinguish themselves from others, and there is frequent hostility between groups. Neither phenomenon appears to me to be racial. Even comment in the historical record on physical differences between groups would not qualify. Further, the attribution of physical differences to genealogical affiliations, or in modern times to some mechanism of heritability, would not yet be racial. But the explicit attribution of a fixed moral or cultural character, based on ancestral affiliations, and making individuals or groups unassimilable, or untransformable, would certainly satisfy my criteria of "racial." Indeed, in this light racism and racial thinking must always be theories of the future. In any event, "race" is nothing more in this study than a phenomenon of social, cultural, and intellectual history.[27]

24. Most recently and specifically Rawski, *The Last Emperors*. Bartlett, *Monarchs and Ministers*, stresses the political importance of the Grand Council in the eighteenth century, its domination by Manchus, and the Qianlong emperor's "preference" for Manchus, while being based in part upon Manchu documents. See also Hevia, *Cherishing Men from Afar*, 29–49.

25. On racial politics as a prelude to the Opium War see, most recently, Polachek, *The Inner Opium War*. On the ascribed role of racial conflict in the Qing loss in the Opium War see Crossley, *Orphan Warriors*, 259 n 127, and Elliott, "Bannermen and Townsmen."

26. For fuller argument see Crossley, "Thinking about Ethnicity," and the Postscript to this book. See also Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity*. On China particularly see Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China*.

27. It appears that one cannot be too clear about this. A previous short study by me ("Thinking about Ethnicity in Early Modern China") that as its title suggests was devoted to discursive contradictions in extant writing on "sinicization" (*hanhua*) has been taken by several writers to be commentary on assimilation and acculturation as historical processes, and at least one writer has been concerned that I have "conflated" race and ethnicity. In the essay at issue and elsewhere I have ad-

There is an implied comparison in claiming a "racial" product of eighteenth-century Qing imperial ideology, as there is in the proposition that ideology is present in the behavior of the Qing court. As used in this book, "ideology" has a basic and perhaps unsophisticated meaning. My referent is to the watershed discussions of "impressions" and the "association of ideas" by David Hume. Some of Hume's discussion was derived from John Locke, but it appears to me that Hume's skepticism regarding language in particular is the direct ancestor of modern discussion of ideological issues. Destutt de Tracy assigned the term "ideology" to the associative process (and "sensations" to "impressions") Hume had defined, a helpful addition. Succeeding scholars, from Kant to Todorov, who have explored the impact of social and political ideology upon individuals or societies have contributed many grace notes and specific insights into the workings of ideology, but without varying much from the basic discursive notions of Hume. Certainly, Hume's comment on identity fully covers the theoretical ground, such as it is, of the present study: " . . . all the nice and subtile questions concerning personal identity can never possibly be decided, and are to be regarded rather as grammatical than as philosophical difficulties. Identity depends on the relations of ideas; and these relations produce identity, by means of that easy transition they occasion."[28] The early modern phenomenon of the imposition of historical identity through the process of imperial centralization has as its enduring analyst an early modern writer. Of course Hume's "identity" is essentially the problem of the differentiation of the experiencing self from what surrounds it, and not, as in many modern discussions of identity, the positioning of any self relative to social or cultural structures. But contemporary theory on ideology and identity is not consistently informed by this distinction (or cannot demonstrate a factual distinction between the processes of individuation as understood by thinkers well into the twentieth century and the processes of solidarity with which it is now associated). In any event Hume's "identity" problem is much closer to the facts of the Qing case than a twentieth-century theoretical imposition could be. A more serious objection, it seems to me, is that

---

dressed such a conflation as a property of scholarly discourse. For clarity I would repeat that I do not acknowledge race as a historical phenomenon but do confirm the existence of and importance of racial discourses in many societies at many times. And I believe that assimilation and acculturation occur, even if they are not distinguished in received discourse on "sinicization." But for alternative views of my view, see Brown, "Becoming Chinese," 42–44, and Shepherd, *Statecraft and Political Economy on the Taiwan Frontier,* 521.

28. *A Treatise of Human Nature,* Book I:321.

my use of Hume is specious; he intended his view of identity to apply to Europeans, certainly to exclude all peoples of Asia and Africa, due to his belief that morally informed cultural advance (that is, history) was the exclusive property of European peoples. Nevertheless, a part of Hume's philosophy has continued to animate modern theory on identity, memory, sentiment, and interpretation.[29] With respect to the role of emperorship particularly, Talcott Parsons pointed out that while the intake and output of ideological content could certainly affect collectivities on a national or international scale, it was also a property of "sub-collectivities," even down to a sub-collectivity of "one." In the case of the Qing emperorship, it is probably not necessary to rely upon that "one," but allowing the emperorship to be understood as an ideological "sub-collectivity" is useful and allows entry to the ideological life of the eighteenth-century Qing state.

Still, the means by which one orders one's sensation of the past (or of remains of the past) as an objectified phenomenon is not well explained by this. Herman Ooms commented upon the relationship of the contemporary historians to their subjects, "In structuring the case they want to make, they often play out one historical personality against another, one Zeitgeist against another."[30] Though Ooms continues with his reasons for disapproving of this, he is surely correct that it "often" happens, and it has affected not only historians of the present attempting to construct the past but past historians attempting to construct pasts of their own. I share Ooms' conviction[31] that the historian's task is to understand the meaning of writings in the context of their original suspension between contemporaneous

---

29. Goldberg, in *Racist Culture*, makes the important point that in eighteenth-century Europe racism and rationalism were indispensable to each other. In my reading this is a comment not only on content, but on function: Racism was the necessary underpinning to subject-object relations between European empires and their non-European victims, and at the same time offered an elusive hope of reintegrating the disintegrating cosmologies on which Peter Burke has made comment with respect to the public presentation of Louis XIV (see below). As I suggest elsewhere, these general observations have considerable use in understanding the Qing world of the eighteenth century, too. And, *mutatis mutandis*, one has a slight fear that Goldberg, like some other authors, has mistaken the product for the method: Presenting eighteenth-century European thought as more or less monolithic in its views and argumentation leaves unanswered the question of whether that homogeneity is not largely a result of the choice made by those of a subsequent era to enshrine such works as the "classics," the representatives, the epitome of the previous age.

30. *Tokugawa Ideology*, 6.

31. "It is the task of the historian, then, to locate those particulars that are plausible subsidiaries for the meaning that is already located in the text" (*Tokugawa Ideology*, 11).

writers and readers—for though writers may anticipate the existence of future readers, they cannot foresee those readers' language. This study, in turn, shares Ooms' goal of placing texts and individuals within the larger frame of changing rulership. I hope this discussion will provide a reminder that "historicism" is not a problem whose fundamental conceptual mechanics are limited to the "West." Edward Said commented on this in 1978 and in 1985, to the effect that historicizing premised on a concept of time and change leading toward the triumph of Western rationalism (of which historicizing itself is a part) and the perceived deviance of other cultures were constructs from which historians had not freed themselves (and to which putative "new" historicists adhered in spite of their protestations). Partly under the inspiration of Said's own suggestions but more as a result of over-credulous adaptation of his writings, Said's ideas have been transmitted as the tenet that only the imperializing West historicized in this self-referential way and deformed the epistemological field for large masses of humanity. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries certainly have been affected by European and American historicisms to a degree that earlier cultural centers had not achieved. But there is reason to be skeptical that historicism is peculiarly "Western" or that historicizing by other orders had a parochial or ephemeral impact.[32] Indeed, the sort of historicizing

32. I am equally skeptical of the narrowness of Derrida's idea of "logocentrism" as a peculiar idol of European thought and as the unique self-referential quotient in the "West's" myths of rationality, superiority, and centrality. I should think that scholars of the Islamic empires would find the notion of logocentrism (except in the smallest and most technical sense) as absent from the historical theory and cultural legitimation of other traditions rather troubling. In Central Asian empires and empires based in China, a logocentrism is impossible to distill from early and enduring political expression (and this is literally true of *dao*, which means "utterance," "expression," "channel," and, best known, "way"). Post-imperial China is more problematic, though tempting: Levenson was being, I think, metaphorical but nevertheless serious in describing Maoist China as "a Word for the world, beginning with all its Bolivias." (*Revolution and Cosmopolitanism*, 25). One could possibly re-Westernize Derrida's logocentrism by insisting on an unexceptional noumenal or ideal derivation, but again, this would be easily challenged by any close examination of the origins of political and cultural ideology in China. As for the association of rationalism and imperialism, the parallels in early modern Chinese thought are also strong, and only a determined narrowness would seem capable of denying comparison to Derrida's "Reason." The theory's internal contradictions have been noted by Robert C. Young (see *White Mythologies*, 9–11; 63–68), but without reference to whether truly comparable dialectical critiques cannot be found in other imperial or post-imperial cultures. On the question of very late discourses on historicism and nationalism in India and China see also Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation.*

done by Chinese of the very early twentieth century, in which even the near past was alienated—orientalized—as "tradition," was one of the phenomena of great interest to Joseph Levenson.[33] Nevertheless, the second part of Said's observation is certainly relevant to this study: Historicism and imperialism must certainly go together, and this appears to me to be demonstrable in many case studies, even without reference to European imperialism or the massive propagating effects of nineteenth- and twentieth-century technologies.

The emperorship before 1800, then, was author of many of the sources by which the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries can be known. Placing the emperorship as author of texts requires some notes on epistemology, ideology, and identity. For some readers it will be enough to say that the Qing emperorship, like all governing regimes, was eager to affirm its legitimacy, displace coercion with persuasion whenever possible, and maintain its hegemony over instruments of violence in its domains. This may explain why all governments need ideology but does not explain why all government ideologies—or even all imperial ideologies—are not the same. With respect to ideology in the Qing, many aspects of this book complement the only long study in English of the Qianlong emperor, Harold Kahn's *Monarchy in the Emperor's Eyes* (1971).[34] Kahn focuses on historical construction and imperial ideology ("self-image") as both the subjects and the objects of that construction. Given the prodigious literary agenda of the Qianlong period, the role of history in creating personae within the emperorship is perhaps an obvious focus of inquiry. But where Kahn finds the Qing emperors to have been indifferent in their accomplishments in the study of conventional philosophical works, I find the emperors to have been indifferent to the philosophy itself. Where Kahn describes the emperors cultivating a conventionalized imperial demeanor based on abstractions from Chinese history, I describe the crafting and use of a China-oriented imperial persona in relation to progressive historicization of a "Chinese" identity and attempt to place this process alongside a series of other pro-

---

33. Levenson's first publication of the "Confucian"/"Modern" argument in book form was in the 1958 edition of *Confucian China and Its Modern Fate*, later restructured, augmented, and revised, leading to *Modern China and Its Confucian Past: The Problem of Intellectual Continuity* in 1964. The original book was enlarged again into a "trilogy" and published in 1968 by the University of California Press.

34. Kahn has supplemented his characterization of the Qianlong reign with his study of the Qianlong love of display, "A Matter of Taste." See also Chun-shu Chang's short study of imperial presentation in "Emperorship in Eighteenth-Century China."

cesses that were equally fundamental to Qing rule. Where Kahn finds little ideological import in the wide range of Buddhist imagery, cultic initiations, and shamanic[35] activities of the emperors, I view them as indispensable to the coherence of imperial authority and the graduated refinement of certain constituencies within the realm. There are nevertheless points where the ground relating to ideological aspects of the Qing emperorship has been well covered by Kahn's work, and I have found little cause to revisit them.

Ideology in historical writing works backward and forward. As suggested above, the instruments of ideological propagation author views or reviews of earlier periods and also shape the narrative language(s) of succeeding

---

35. For background on shamanism and Tibetan Buddhism (which can be difficult to differentiate) at the Qing court, see Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 231–63. Studies such as S. M. Shirokogoroff's and Ling Chunsheng's on early-twentieth-century people of Heilongjiang must be used with great care, though Shirokogoroff's work, in particular, often remains the only source used by those studying Tungusic or particularly Manchu shamanism (see for instance Siikala and Hoppál, *Studies on Shamanism*, 13–40). This is not to forget that Shirokogoroff placed Manchu shamanism, particularly, so firmly in the center of shamanic studies that it remains a pole around which much theoretical discussion of shamanism rotates; indeed the recent enthusiasm for international release of shaman documentaries has drawn heavily on the work of the Nationalities Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, which since the 1950s has accumulated film of ostensibly "Manchu" (this can sometimes subsume Evenk, Hezhe [Gold], Oronchon, and other Northeastern peoples) shamanic behaviors (for discussion of some aspects of the work see Siikala and Hoppál, *Studies on Shamanism*, 191–96). Fu Yuguang and Meng Huiying's *Manzu samanjiao yanjiu* is a valuable synthesis of their own and previous fieldwork on shamanic survivals in the Northeast, Mongolia, and some parts of China, but its historical perspective cannot transcend the limitations of available information on earlier periods. The Qianlong court commissioned and published a review of imperial ritual liturgies and objects, very many of them shamanic in origin or application; see *Manju wecere metere kooli bithe*, later *Manzhou jishen jitian dianli*. For the Qing Manchus, there are specific indications that some lineages retained their patron spirits—the Šumuru clan, for instance, had venerated and continued to venerate a sable spirit. But in Liaoning in the early twentieth century, household shrines to the magpie spirit were common. See Mo Dongyin, *Manzu shi luncong*, 178–79. In light of consolidation of Qing imperial influence over the shamanic practices and folklores of Northeastern peoples, Humphrey comments (after discussion of Daur myths): "The imperial dynasty had recourse to the periphery in its attempt to define its identity and reaffirm its power. The people on the frontier, too, people who were not even Manchus, had at least one shamanic idiom of self-definition that spanned the distance between the village and the capital city in metaphors of effortless travel and self-transformation. It is a mistake to suppose that the practice of shamanism in face-to-face social groups limits its concerns to the local or restricts imagination" ("Shamanic Practices and the State in Northern Asia," 223). See also Chapter 4.

times. Indeed it is a desideratum of ideology to control the distinction be-
tween past and present, sometimes bleeding the evident ideas of one into
the other, sometimes creating new thresholds between "then" and "now."
In the case of the Qing, my attempt to see these aspects of the imperial ide-
ology in motion is predicated upon a distinction between the evidence of
early documents and the imposed narrative that reached full form in the
Qianlong period. The problem is how to see the seventeenth century before
the eighteenth century—or, how to distinguish the presence of the eigh-
teenth century atop the remains of the seventeenth century. By virtue of
its extraordinary expressive capacities the Qianlong court obscured much
of what it inherited from the ideologies of the Qing courts that preceded it,
though a surprising amount of earlier ideology can still be traced. It is justi-
fied to say, though it is puzzling to understand, that historians of the Qing
still have not broken the spell of the eighteenth century in interpreting the
origins of and early history of the empire. This phenomenon is more pro-
nounced for American and European scholars, who work when they can
from published documents that were either written or last revised during
the Qianlong period. Historians from China and some from other parts of
Asia have slightly readier access to what pre-Qianlong "originals" exist. Yet
there are other reasons for the discrepancy. The following example might
at first glance appear a trivial diversion to European or American readers,
but to many Chinese and Russians today, as well as peoples without na-
tional states in Northeast Asia, its implications are burning.

Two places in the Northeast[36] have similar names: Ninggūda in present-
day Liaoning province of China and Ningguta[37] in Jilin province. In the early
seventeenth century these two places had nothing whatever to do with each
other. Ninggūda was a small settlement, once the home of the ancestors of
Nurgaci, near the borders of Ming (1368–1644) territory. Ningguta was an
isolated region of hunting, pelting, gathering, and trade in modern Jilin
province. When writing their history in the later seventeenth century, the
Qing began to suggest an identity between these two places, by the handy
device of using the Chinese characters for Ningguta to make reference to

36. The region now called "the Northeast" (*dongbei*) in Chinese encompasses
the provinces of Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang, including the Korean Autono-
mous District (*Yanbian chaoxianzu zizhi zhou*) and the UNESCO preserve at Chang-
baishan. Westerners have traditionally called part of the region "Manchuria."

37. This romanization is based upon the convention of *Mambun rōtō* (see *Tian-
ming* [hereafter *TM*] 10:8:23 and elsewhere). Ninguta, which is often used by
modern geographers (perhaps to avoid the confusion being discussed here) I would
consider correct by convention.

Nurgaci's ancestors, the "six princes" of Ninggūda (who had neither been remotely like princes nor lived remotely near Ningguta).[38] How many people were deceived by this is irrelevant, since the purpose was not to falsify, but to create what I refer to as "a consistency of figuration"—in this instance, that Qing origins lay in the bosom of the traditional Northeast. In happy fulfillment of the intentions of the eighteenth-century Qing court, modern American and European scholars do indeed get themselves confused about Ninggūda and Ningguta.[39]

But the distinction between Ninggūda and Ningguta is not trivial in Russia and China, where one of the immediate concerns of the Qing court in promoting an identification of the two places remains a thorny issue. Russian scholars (led primarily by Georgii Vasil'evich Melikhov)[40] and Chinese scholars (led primarily by Ji Ping)[41] have debated the matter in the context of historical claims to the general region of the Amur River. Ji and

38. *Ningguta beile*, from *Manzhou shilu*. This term is interesting on several levels. It was a linguistic impossibility that it was ever actually applied to Nurgaci's ancestors. The place name, Ninggūda, was derived from the Jurchen terms *ninggū*, "six," and *da*, "headman." In the invented title for these progenitors, *da* has been retained (transmuted into *ta* to accommodate the Chinese characters for Ningguta) but is followed by the nonsensical repeating word *beile*, a grander term (see Chapter 3). The six headmen became not the inspiration for a place name but the "princes" of the place itself. Thus the later seventeenth century both upgraded Nurgaci's predecessors and suggested that they originated very far from their actual locality.

39. Hummel et al., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period* (hereafter *ECCP*), spells the place near Liaodong as "Ningguta" and identifies it accurately in the account of Hōhōri (291) but with the same spelling refers to Ningguta in Jilin in the account of Kanggūri (410); two more references to Ningguta are correct. Wakeman's index refers only to a "Ningguta," the correct Chinese pinyin transcription for the characters used to transcribe the Jilin place-name. Like the index, the citations for this "Ningguta" unwittingly treat the two places as if they are one. Thus, 47 n 58 apparently intends to state that Hūlan Hada (see Chapter 3) was another name for "Ningguta" (not literally correct, but the two places were very close if Ninggūda is in fact intended). The next reference (370 n 163) to "Ningguta" is as the place of exile of Hong Chengchou—this is indeed Ningguta, the place in Jilin. Next comes "Ningguta," mysteriously removed to Heilongjiang, as the place where women seized in the conquest of Nanjing were seen during the Kangxi years as aged and abused captives. Finally "Ningguta" comes back again (1000 n 28) as the place in Jilin to which Zhang Jinyan was exiled. So far as I can see, the first mention of Ningguta in Jilin in the Manchu annals occurs for 1626, when some "military guard people" (*tuwakiyara coohai niyalma*, later the normal Manchu term for "garrison") were sent there (*TM* 10:2:18).

40. Melikhov's studies on the subject have been drawn together in *Man'chzhury na Severo-Vostoke*. See also Chapter 4, n 46.

41. The responses were primarily published in the journal *Lishi yanjiu*, in 1974 and 1975. In addition to those authored by Ji Ping, there are additional contributions by Shi Youxin, Liang Xiao, You Shengwu, and others. In those days *Lishi yan-*

others argue that because the Qing imperial lineage were originally part of the cultural population that had lived in the Amur region for thousands of years and because they created a unified rule over China and the Northeast, this is legitimately Chinese territory. Melikhov and others replied that Jilin and Heilongjiang (from the upper bend of the Amur[42] to the northern border of Korea, including the Qing sacred mountain of Changbai) were not the ancestral territory of the Qing but were merely constructed as such in imperial documents of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; that the peoples of the area acknowledged suzerainty to the Romanovs before the Qing, expressed in their payment of tax or tribute in the middle seventeenth century; and that the area was only superficially controlled by Qing troops after violent campaigns of conquest in the later seventeenth century.

Boundary marking, nominalizing, historicizing, and valorizing are now frequently cited as the capacities of "centers," "hegemons," and other power orders. In this book these faculties are more specifically related to imperial expression in the earlier Qing period.[43] The "Ningguta" problem is an example not only of the ways in which historical facts relating to boundary marking may appear trivial or momentous from the various perspectives of historians today but also of the importance of attempting to disentangle successive layers of historical authority in the Qing record. In theory few readers should object to this, though in practice disentangling present from past habits of thought and expression is doomed never to be perfectly realized. Yet without the attempt knowledge that before the later seventeenth century was not really obscure would remain obscured today, and our ability either to discern the workings of eighteenth-century imperial ideology or to guess its motives would be obstructed. There is no need here to ascribe comprehensive, minute, or subtle manipulation to the Qianlong court. What is important is the manifest alteration in expression (from which the historian deduces an outlook) of the rulership in this period.[44] The

---

jiu contributions were occasionally written by committee and published under pseudonyms.

42. In modern China this is the name of both a province and a river. To avoid confusion I use the name "Amur" for the river and "Heilongjiang" for the province.

43. I find my theoretical views here consonant with those reviewed very clearly in Hay, "Introduction," esp. 6–23, in Hay, ed., *Boundaries in China*.

44. My understanding of the irrelevance of intentions in this particular respect agrees with Peter Burke's (*The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, 49): "Whether or not there was a master-plan for the presentation of the king in the age of Mazarin, such a project can certainly be documented in the period which followed."

eighteenth-century changes required recasting of the history of the rise of the Qing state, of the conquest of China, and of the origins of legitimacy for the Qing empire. Disparities between public discourse and ritual, on the one hand, and covert institutions—historical, ritual, religious, and familial—on the other, produced a tendency in the eighteenth century to use the cultural authority of the court to taxonomize culture, space, and time.

The incongruities between seventeenth- and eighteenth-century evidentiary layers have inspired the title for this work. From the perspective of the Qianlong court, history might be seen as a translucent mirror, in which was reflected not only the bright present but the darkened past behind it. The metaphor of "mirror" as historical narrative having a didactic, morally informative, or partisan import was widespread throughout Eurasia, from ancient to early modern times. "Mirrors" in this sense could also be rulers, who in life or retrospectively were regarded as providing instruction for their successors. Much of this meaning of the historically instructive mirror was captured in Tang Taizong's[45] comments, "One may use bronze as a mirror to straighten one's clothes and cap; antiquity as a mirror to understand the rise and fall of states; a man as a mirror to correct one's judgment."[46] We should not be too ready to associate the mirror with reflection of oneself, though modern academic theory predisposes us to see all as our own projection and to regard self-narrative as the only authentic enterprise. In earlier uses, "mirror"—whether the historical narrative, the model ruler from the past, or the tool used to inspect one's own image—was associated with words for looking, and especially for "light." The ability to capture light as an emanation from its supreme, original source was probably behind the magical properties attributed to mirror surfaces in early times. It is the image of light, more than self-reflection, that best applies to Qing use of "mirror": light as knowledge and intelligence (also the meaning of *sems,* the central cultic theme of the Qianlong emperor's personal religion), light as time, light as the matrix of all image and sensation. The historical mirrors intended to idealize rulership were, one expects, intended to be opaque; their sources, motives, and means were obscured, the more brilliantly to reflect the subject at hand. In this book I hope that the

45. Li Shimin (r. 627–49), second emperor of the Tang but the architect of its expansion and consolidation, especially in Central Asia. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, Tang Taizong was a special focus of ideological attention in the Qing period.

46. Quoted in Wechsler, *Mirror to the Son of Heaven,* frontispiece, from Taizong's eulogy to Wei Zheng.

back layers may be exposed (if by necessity dimly) and the images made translucent as a result.

This brings us to a point of approaching a theory of Qing documentation. I have said that the emperorship is best thought of as a loose but viable organism, or an orchestra, or a sub-collectivity, but it remains to suggest how that entity communicated its ideology to its contemporary audience and its successors. One might additionally provide a sense of the impact, if any, of that ideology upon the society or societies exposed to it, but that is a task which, with a few important exceptions, I have placed almost entirely outside this study. Still one is obliged, by common sense and all common theory, to examine the process of documentation, and here I would like to switch metaphors. The sub-collectivity of emperorship becomes a single object: a star, generating heat and light. It exists within a gravitational field, though whether the field is produced by the mass, or the mass by the field, is irresolvable and in its deepest elements imponderable. I have found it useful to think of documentation not in terms of "official" or "unofficial" [47] but in terms of a "main sequence" and an "off-sequence." The first of these terms will be recognized as lifted from the field of astronomy, where it is used to describe a star of mass sufficient to attain generation of a high rate of heat and light. [48] One might in this respect think of stars as born in nebulosity, then either aborting because of insufficient mass or beginning the consumption of internal resources that incorporates them into the main sequence. Finally they die either in diminution, cooling, and darkness or in explosion.

By the "main sequence" in Qing historical ideology I mean materials that have been used to contribute to the central ideas of the eighteenth-

47. This was the dichotomy suggested by Kahn in his approach to historical narrative in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (*Monarchy in the Emperor's Eyes*, 37–64), in which the court, the bureaucratic sphere, and a "private" space are demarcated and the content of some historians' writings associated with their placement in one of these implied categories. This works well enough for histories generated under the direct surveillance of the court but does not account for the fact that many "private" histories subscribed to the imperial model, while imperial works over the course of time were affected by changes in the ideological outlook of the court. The documentary model I discuss below makes a much weaker connection between the historian's personal geography with relation to the court and the outlook of his writings.

48. Astronomers amateur or professional will readily recognize that my "star" incorporates the dynamics of a proto-star (as described before the use of the Hubble space telescope) and conflates variations on main-sequence types. Such is metaphor.

century universal emperorship (the stable generation of the ideological force behind state documentation), and by "off-sequence" I mean materials that either did not lend themselves to such purposes or have been neglected for some other reason (aborted because of insufficient mass). The notion of a main sequence and an off-sequence in materials that either have been generated by the court or have come under court control (including private writings that for some reason adopt elements of the court narrative) may have a general applicability to many kinds of historical documentation. In the same way, there is a gravity in the formation of a heavy, or "orthodox," narrative that curves the perception and organization of new information and experience.[49] What is important here is not truth or falsehood but the process, to the extent it can be made visible, by which accretions in the main sequence have contributed to a powerful documentary basis for the imperial vantage, which in turn has controlled the generation of further documentation. The mode of translation from a dominating organization of sensation to the molding of language, history, and affiliation is what is under review.

In the present work, these thoughts have been brought to bear upon several forms of imperial documentation, including but not limited to the annals (*shilu*) of the reigns from Nurgaci[50] through his great-great-grandson Yinzhen (the Yongzheng emperor), the late eighteenth-century compendia "An Account of the Founding of the Qing Empire" (*Daicing gurunni fukjin*

49. The primary sustained English-language discussion of "orthodoxy" in the Qing context is the volume edited by Kwang-ching Liu, *Orthodoxy in Late Imperial China*. The authors offer several meanings of "orthodoxy," but Liu's "Introduction" to the volume is surely most persuasive in describing orthodoxy as socially and politically applied ideas that are both "accepted" and "enforced." Liu's discussion here captures the process by which principles of interpretation are shaped and reshaped by persisting pressure by the center(s) of governance upon institutions of education, accreditation, publication, adjudication, and intimidation. Liu associates the Chinese term *lijiao* ("right and correct teaching") with orthodoxy, which does seem to me about the closest we can come (but for a different view see Chen Chiyun, in the same volume). Liu's definition has the important virtue of allowing ideology to be distinguished from orthodoxy.

50. The annals of the Nurgaci period were collated, edited, and revised in both Manchu and Chinese under the Hung Taiji court, resulting in their first printing as *Qing Taizu wuhuangdi shilu*, December 11, 1636; they were revised again for the Kangxi printing, *Qing Taizu gao huangdi shilu*, 1686. In the Qianlong period, they were reprinted twice: in 1740 and in 1781 as *Manzhou shilu tu*, *Taizu shilu tu* (with illustrations by Meng Yingzhao, a bannerman who later served as a magistrate in Anhui). The 1636 edition was reproduced under the auspices of the Japanese-sponsored Manchukuo publications office in 1932.

doro neihe bodogon i bithe, [Huang Qing] Kaiguo fanglue),[51] "General History of the Eight Banners" (*Jakūn gūsai tongjy bithe, Baqi tongzhi*), "Collected Genealogies of the Eight-Banner and Manchu Lineages" (*Manjusai mukūn hala be uheri ejehe bithe, Baqi manzhou shizu tongpu*),[52] "Researches in the Origins of the Manchus" (*Manzhou yuanliu kao*), "Rituals for the Manchu Worship of the Spirits and of Heaven" (*Manju wecere metere kooli bithe, Manzhou jishen jitian dianli*),[53] "Biographies of the Twice-Serving Ministers" (*Erchen zhuan*), and the twentieth-century composition "Draft History of the Qing" (*Qingshi gao*), derived from these sources. In total these works present a self-referential and in an ideological sense coherent imperial narrative, not very surprising since in their present form they were issued by or are directly derived from works issued by the Imperial Historiographical Office (*Guo shi guan*). A parallel sort of government production is represented by the maps, dictionaries, language primers, and encyclopedias drawn partly from the accretion of materials and published compendia of the "Translators' Bureaux" (*siyi guan*) and related offices that continually reworked the imperial "knowledge" of certain peoples foreign to the empire, living at its borders, and at the internal interstices where "Confucian" or "Chinese" culture was seen as not having completed its work by the beginning of the nineteenth century.[54] But they are supplemented by some private writings, among them [Aisin Gioro] Zhaolian's "Miscellaneous Notes from the Xiao Pavilion" (*Xiaoting zalu*), the large collation "Overview of the Unconfirmed Histories of the Qing Dynasty" (*Qingchao yeshi daguan*), and [Suwan Gūwalgiya] Jinliang's extensive series of historical essays, some based on his access to early Manchu documents in Shenyang.[55]

---

51. Commissioned in 1774, completed in 1786, and printed in 1789. See *ECCP*, 685, and Chapter 6. In 1926 the annotated translation into German by Erich Hauer was published; hereafter *KF*.

52. Commissioned in 1739, completed in 1745, revised in 1747; hereafter *BMST*. Since the Manchu and Chinese titles do not have quite the same meanings, and since the genealogies are not exclusively Manchu, it is difficult to know how to title this work in English. At any rate I like this better than the more cumbersome title used in *Orphan Warriors*, 21, 37.

53. The Manchu original of 1747 was not commissioned in Chinese translation until thirty years later. It is extensively discussed in Zito, *Of Body and Brush*.

54. A source that will be used here is "Illustrated Tributaries of the Qing Empire" (*Huang Qing zhigongtu*), published by the court in 1805, based on the *Zhigongtu* ("illustrations of tributaries") of 1790. This was an illustrated companion to geographical works and was so classified by the *Siku quanshu* compilers.

55. Zhaolian (1780–1833) was a descendant of Nurgaci through Daišan (see Chapter 3) and thus a collateral kinsman of the imperial lineage. *Xiaoting zalu*

There is a large pool of off-sequence materials (this can be discerned better in retrospect), which allow the formation of the main sequence to be more visible. These encompass the works of the Ming ethnographers based in the Northeast (most of these works were suppressed by the Qianlong literary encyclopedia—the "Four Treasuries" [*Siku quanshu*]);[56] the annals of the Yi court in Korea (*Yijo sillok*);[57] the records left by Korean travelers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, including the famous report of Shin Chung-il;[58] private Qing writings, as those of the nineteenth-century

---

(hereafter *XZ*) was evidently completed and privately circulated in 1814 or 1815, and Zhaolian appears to have continued to add notes to a sequel (*xulu*) until about 1825. The work was not published until about 1875, when it was brought out in an edition from the printing house of Yihuan (then Prince Chun), and soon afterward a similar edition was published by the newspaper *Shunbao* in Shanghai.

56. The "Four Treasuries" is a reference both to the process and to the result of literary review, censorship, and republication that occupied the greater part of the Qianlong reign. In imitation of several earlier emperors in China (and quite possibly of emperors elsewhere in Eurasia), the Qianlong emperor established a parallel bureaucracy that would work on new histories—including the uncompleted history of the Ming empire; histories of the Qing conquest in the various regions of China, Taiwan, Mongolia, and Central Asia; and origin histories of the imperial constituencies—as well as review "all" existing literature, using "evidentiary" (see Chapter 6, n 15) techniques to discriminate between the authentic and the false, establishing criteria for good literature and bad literature, and finding treasonous writing. The encyclopedia of literature, when produced, was housed in seven imperial libraries built in China and the Northeast to house it. The best-known recent study is Guy, *The Emperor's Four Treasuries*; see also Goodrich, *The Literary Inquisition of Ch'ien-lung*; Elman, *From Philosophy to Philology*, 65–66; Wu Che-fu, *Siku quanshu xuanxiu zhi yanjiu*. For the "Four Treasuries" in the lives of the bannermen, see Crossley, *Orphan Warriors*, 123–24.

57. The annals of the Yi period in Korea have been issued in several forms, with both Japanese and Chinese annotation. The entire series, edited by Yi I-hwa, has been reissued in paper by Yogang Ch'ulp'ansa (Seoul, 1991–93), after original publication by Minjok kojŏn yŏn'guso in Pyongyang (1975–91). The series for Sunjo taewang through Sunjong (that is, volumes 373–400) are relevant to the early Qing state and its antecedents.

58. Shin's report has been briefly summarized by Giovanni Stary, "Die Struktur der Ersten Residenz des Mandschukhans Nurgaci." The manuscript was discovered in 1938 by Yi Yinsong and the next year was reproduced in *Xingjing er dao hezi jiu lao cheng*, a publication of the Manzhouguo daxue (Manchukuo University) in Mukden. It afterwards was published under the title *Kŏnju jichŏng dorok*, in Korea. In 1977 a new, corrected, and partially restored edition by Xu Huanpu was published (in *jiantizi*). It appears that the original manuscript was lost long ago, but the text was entered into the *Yijo sillok* (*Senjo* reign). A well-known but less widely consulted account is that of Shin's rough contemporary Yi Minhwan, whose account of Hetu Ala and its environs was submitted to the Yi court in 1619–20. An introduction, translation, and annotation is found in di Cosmo, "Nuove fonti sulla formazione dello stato mancese."

bannerman Sayingge, which preserve independent historical traditions; and probably other sources yet undiscovered. The Manchu materials, particularly the annals normally called "Manchu Old-Script Archives" (*Mambun rōtō*[59] and "Written Laws in Manchu" [*Manju i yargiyan kooli*]) are, to my mind, the superheated protoplasm of the Qing ideological body. They are in some ways ideologically symmetrical (unvoiced) but contain the inchoate expression of the khanal political personality, which not everyone in the empire was intended to hear. These are the most problematical documents, since they are close to the sources but all revised afterward. It would be nice to find, as one can in the case of "Written Laws of the Manchus," surviving originals with the emendations actually on the page. But these visible moments in the historicizing process are rare.

More often the transitions in imperial ideology are only suggested by the condition of extant documents and documentation about the documents. This study is heavily invested in examining the change from and the persisting tensions between the ideology of the first Qing emperorship (of the Hung Taiji through Yongzheng periods) and a second Qing emperorship under the Qianlong emperor, Hongli. It is built upon a periodization that distinguishes an early phase in state-building and identity demarcation under Nurgaci and the first reign of Hung Taiji. Paucity of surviving documentation is the superficial criterion for this, but what is of deeper interest is the relative scarcity of documents actually produced, and the minimal development of the institutions needed to produce them. A second phase is characterized as that dominated by conquest and occupation from the second Hung Taiji reign to the middle eighteenth century. In this period, not only did the capacities of the state for documentation of present and past expand very rapidly, but so did the articulation of what will be called a "transformationalist" ideology of identity. In the third phase of Qing emperorship, the progress of conquest was halted for various reasons, and at roughly the same time the ideology of the court turned sharply from a transformationalist one to another, accepting essentialist identities throughout the empire and an exclusive universal identity for the emperor. That universalist, self-referencing Qianlong emperorship was not to endure. Its expressive energies declined very rapidly after Hongli's death in 1799 (at which time he was no longer emperor in name), and its institutions mutated somewhat in the early nineteenth century. But this imperial style did not come to an end until the 1860s, in the late stages of the Taiping War

---

59. See also Fletcher, "Manchu Sources"; Crossley and Rawski, "Profile."

(1850–64). It was replaced by the series of archly particularist, fastidiously "Confucian"[60] regencies and aristocratic alliances that carried on the Qing imperial name and some of its symbolism until 1912.[61] This last period is of little interest in the present study, since its ideological bases were alienated from that of its predecessors and, for many reasons relating to the attenuated structure and function of the emperorship, the later Qing court neither aspired to nor attained a coherence of view and authority over documentation comparable to its predecessors. It is noted in the Postscript, however, that the enemies of this particularist, post-Taiping emperorship positioned themselves well within the universalizing imperial idioms of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

CONQUEST AND THE BLESSING OF THE PAST

In recent writing on the Qing period, it has become normal to mute the characterization of the empire as a conquest regime. The reasons are various, and may all be laudable. For instance, in Japanese scholarship of some generations ago, the Qing was often classed with other empires in China—the Liao, Jin, and Yuan particularly—as a "conquest dynasty" (*seifu ōchō*). This corresponded, with too much ease, to the Chinese (and English-language) category of "non-Han" (*fei han*) "dynasties" (an improvement on the former description as "barbarian" dynasties). The resulting monolithic assumption that there were "Chinese" dynasties that were somehow not conquest dynasties, contrasted to "conquest" dynasties, all of which had

60. Since this is not an intellectual history, I do not feel obliged to define "Confucianism." This is as well, since from the perspective of the history of thought there is no such thing. From the perspective of political ideology and rhetoric, however, "Confucianism," "Confucius," "neo-Confucianism," and so on are all identifiable objects. After this Introduction, I will not put words connected to "Confucianism" in scare quotes, but the reader may mentally insert them. There is further comment in Chapter 5 on the exploitation of selected terms and exegetical practices in creation of a state rhetoric that I term, as I think a few others do, "imperial Confucianism." The general idea was to convey, through some public media, that the legitimacy of any empire was based upon its commitment to modeling state relations on those of the (prescriptive) household, by stabilizing society through the enforcement of a (natural, just, wise) hierarchy, and demanding that all in the polity conduct themselves according to the moral requirements assigned to their statuses.

61. Wright, *The Last Stand of Chinese Conservatism;* Bastide, "Official Conceptions of Imperial Authority at the End of the Qing Dynasty"; Onogawa, *Shimmatsu siji shisō kenyū;* Dikötter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* (esp. 61–163); and forthcoming work by Edward J. M. Rhoads and Peter Zarrow.

been perpetrated by foreign (barbarian, non-Han, alien) dynasties, was not credible. All empires in China, from that of the Qin in 221 BCE, are manifestly conquest empires, regardless of the origins of the ruling house. A related objection was against the constant focus on the "Manchus" as conquerors. It was a very old obsession, first established in Europe by the seventeenth-century histories (really journalistic accounts) of Martini and Bouvet, and was a subject of intense propagandizing by Chinese nationalists at the beginning of the twentieth century (see Postscript). This, too, came to be regarded as a distasteful subject for scholarly discourse, particularly after the rise of the policy of "nationalities unity" (*minzu tuanjie*) in the People's Republic of China, which discouraged any reference to historical conflicts between peoples construed as "Chinese" and those alien peoples who could be connected with a living "minority nationality" (*shaoshu minzu*). Since the Manchus as a people could not be conquerors, the Qing empire ("Manchu dynasty") could not be treated as a conquest empire. In modern fulfillment of the famous logic problem posed in the *Gongsun longzi* (" . . . a white horse is not a horse . . . "), a Manchu conquest was not a conquest.

Two difficulties have resulted. The first is that the received association of "Manchu" with conquest has been expunged rather than qualified, and the second is that the history of the Qing tends not to be written in its rather obvious context of conquest and occupation. On the first issue, it has long been established that the Qing forces between the time of the conquest of north China to the completion of Qing control of south China contained only a small proportion of "Manchus" (itself a complex matter of definition, as discussed in Chapters 2, 4, and 6). The conquest was effected by a diverse group of people, the overwhelming majority of whom would by any definition simply be called Chinese men—most of whom had lately been serving in the Ming armies or militia. Their leaders were largely, but not exclusively, Qing bannermen, and of the bannermen a (declining) portion were registered as "Manchu." The conquest, then, was primarily a phenomenon of Chinese fighting Chinese. One might argue, on consideration of modern as contrasted to early modern writing, that characterizing the conquest as "Manchu" is a reference not to the combatants in the field, but to the empire itself—or, to make a rare precision, its ruling family. The Aisin Gioro were certainly as "Manchu" as anybody was, and they continued an ostensibly Manchu style of rule in some aspects of their regime for centuries. But a person, or a family, is not an empire. As suggested above, nominalizing the Qing empire as "Manchu" is an error, and here the error

has again been costly to historical inquiry. For though the Qing conquest was not a Manchu conquest, it was indeed a conquest.

Conquest regimes have particular ideological needs. Whether conquest is by the Qing empire in China, or by the British empire in South Africa, or by the United States of America over the middle width of the North American continent, its dynamics impose at least two imperatives. The first is that distinctions of identity between conquerors and the conquered must be plastic, subject to arbitrary alteration by the state as its needs change and its local mission metamorphoses from conquest to occupation to governance (should that sequence be completed). Second, the arbitrary alteration of identities must be legitimated by an axiomatic assertion that lines of identity—or "difference"—are in fact natural. The state does not invent them but discovers them and proceeds from that discovery to the enforcement of distinctions, whether that requires it to engage in war, in the inequitable distribution of privilege and resources, or in segregation of groups within territorial, economic, or cultural limits. It will be observed that the first of these two needs is strategic and the second ideological. Moreover, the second is, in its central meaning, a direct contradiction of the first, which is only a reflection of the latter's ideological character. But the conflict between the ideology of identity in a conquest regime and the facts of conquest dynamics is not enough to explain its particulars (which become more particular as one examines any case history). If one could assume that the ideologies of identity under conquest regimes were unexceptionally "racial," then one could draw upon points made above and suppose that conquest regimes are in need of ostensibly natural lines of identity in order to give an aspect of futurity to their enterprises; the end of conquest would be mandated only by the end of nature, or "the world"—as it happens, this is indeed where the Qing drew the limits of their moral authority. But looking, again, at the back layers and not the reflections from the mirror (that is, at the past of the event and not its future), one finds a possibly more compelling scenario. Conditions of the early modern period had created cultures all over Eurasia, Africa, and the Americas in which economic livelihoods, religions, languages, and in many cases gene pools were distributed according to the common routes of commerce, war, and pilgrimage and mixed as the flow of goods and people determined. Many of these cultures existed in environments of exclusively local political organization. Over the course of the past five hundred years, virtually all these areas came under the control of one empire or another. In this process, identities in these regions were aggressively clarified by the dynamics of conquest and the adminis-

trative practices of occupation. Very often, this produces a glamorization of genealogy, both as a genre of social or political documentation and as a metaphor.[62] The reason, I think, is not that genealogies show the depth or breadth of ancestry (which is surely the same for everybody). Rather, in imperial settings association with a written (or better, published) genealogy means that an individual's antecedents (real or fictive) have been clarified, subjected to the processes of regularization that are generally connected to some status (whether land owning or military command or access to bureaucratic office) that the court endorses. Genealogy is a sign that the individual's social identity has been objectified through the imperial documentary process; and empires have a way of persuading their subjects that objectification is an honor.

This process was so profound that at present we hardly have words to describe pre-imperial societies without recourse to distortions such as "hybrid,"[63] or "transfrontier" (since the dynamics of empire tended to promote such societies at its margins).[64] Such words, suggesting a crossing of two or more distinct layers of cultural or political orientations, may well apply to milieux at the end of imperial or colonial processes; what one wishes to avoid is confusion of these conditions with pre-imperial or un-imperial life. The need to discriminate between conquerors and conquered—and to translate individuals and groups across these lines as necessary—was fundamental. The ideological matrices for this were cultural and in some cases constructedly racial. These particular forms occur again and again in the facilitation of identity between the center of empire and its local agents of conquest and occupation. The first reason, I would suggest, was the in-

62. There is a distinct but related phenomenon of genealogical discourses in reaction to imperially imposed identity and status. Dru Gladney has characterized this in one instance as "nomadic nostalgia" (see "Relational Alterity," 461–66). These reactions seem to come after and in complex reaction to the "glamorization" I am suggesting here, even though oral genealogies have a revered place in many of the cultures of Central and Inner Asia.

63. A similar idea is called by Akhbar Abbas "hyphenation" (a precursor to a "postcultural" condition); see *Hong Kong: Culture and the Politics of Disappearance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997). But see Robert C. Young's particular objections to the ubiquity of "hybrid" in *Colonial Desire* and Dru Gladney's more general one in "Relational Alterity." In a different vein see the insightful discussion of "hybridity" in the work of John King Fairbank by Barlow, "Colonialism's Career in Postwar China Studies," 386–94, which if generalized would point to several possible routes of escape for contemporary scholarship out of the slough of hybridity.

64. See Wakeman, *The Great Enterprise*, 44 n, where he explains his adaptation of the term from the work of Philip Curtin.

escapable need to maintain subject-object relations between the imperial regime and its zones of conquest and occupation. This need was inescapable because in every instance the empires of this period were themselves the products of undistilled societies in which construction and relative placement of identities had been a necessary precondition to emergence of a conquest state; to fail to establish the state's prerogative in the imposition of clarified, if fictive, identities would prevent the distillation of subject and object roles that made possible the basic elements of organization, language, hierarchy, aggression, allegiance, and submission. So far we have only got as far as "alterity"—the usefulness of identifying the Other for purposes of identifying Oneself, of justifying One's action upon the Other, and placing Oneself within an aggrandizing political, cultural, or gender schema. Modern readers do not need to be told about alterity any more. Indeed it is not much use in understanding empires (in which the problem is not Other but Others), unless we go further to make distinctions between emperorships and other forms of conquest rule. As will be suggested in the Postscript, the conquest ideology works in markedly different ways in post-imperial environments than it did under emperorship. But across early modern Eurasia, one finds imperial ideology tending toward a universality of representation that depended not upon all-as-one (as many modern republican ideologies have done) but upon one-as-all, that "one" being the emperor. I have called it concentric in its political cosmology and simultaneous in its expression.

Perhaps the most stimulating study (or suggestion of what could have been accomplished in a major study) of the role of conquest in the development of Qing emperorship has been that of Joseph F. Fletcher, Jr. (1934–84).[65] Until shortly before his death Fletcher was working on the problem of monarchical development in the post-Mongol regimes of Eurasia. Those empires with a connection to the Mongol political tradition—Fletcher concentrated on the Qing and the Ottomans—had experienced progressive

65. For Fletcher's best-known work published in his lifetime, see "China and Central Asia, 1368–1884," "Ch'ing Inner Asia c. 1800," and "The Mongols: Ecological and Social Perspectives." Much of Fletcher's work remained in manuscript at the time of his death and has since been revised by other authors for publication. See particularly that revised, reshaped, and edited by Beatrice Manz, *Studies on Chinese and Islamic Inner Asia* (Aldershot, U.K.: Variorum, 1995), which for the first time presents in complete form Fletcher's remarkable discoveries on the connections among the religious cultures of West Asia and China in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. See also "A Bibliography of Published and Unpublished Work" printed in the issue of *Late Imperial China* dedicated to Fletcher—vol. 6, no. 2 (December 1985).

formalization in accession to rulership and gradual institutionalization of the personal power of the ruler himself. At the threshold from legitimation by a group of political peers to individual transcendent rule dependent only upon an ascribed relationship to conquering predecessors, Fletcher marked the transition from "khan" to "emperor."[66] This, in my view, corresponds to the (possibly prolonged) ideological moment discussed by other writers, at which the rulership becomes self-legitimating by rooting itself in its own constructed past rather than in contemporary mechanisms of political affirmation. In proposing a meaningful comparison between the Qing and Ottoman regimes, Fletcher was noting that in each case elements of rulership evidently transmitted from Mongol khanship had generated conflicts in institutional development. His tendency was to associate collegial rule with a conquest posture and institutionalized monarchical power with the adapted political technologies of the conquered traditions. The evolution of new, centralized, bureaucratized orders from the interplay of these two was, for Fletcher, virtually ineluctible. In his brief study of the seventeenth-century Ottomans and the Qing, he described the development of the state from one in which the khan, as a war leader, was recognized only after prolonged power struggles and attendant instability to one in which a single ruler could obviate the succession struggle through his control of the bureaucracy, the military, the aristocracy, and the instruments of dynastic domination. Whatever the factual support for Fletcher's view—which is now regarded very skeptically by Ottoman historians[67] and used so simplistically by some Qing historians that it invites skepticism there too—it is certainly the case that the process of transition from more corporate to more personal rule was much on the minds of Qing court historians, who did their best to create a retrospective imperial heritage for the Jin and Qing states, and expected this to address the strains in the political culture posed by ongoing centralization of imperial power in the earlier eighteenth century.

Emperorship must understand itself as a complete history, with interior origins, impulses, and ends. In its narrative (which must be repeatedly revised), it tends to far predate the empire it rules (indeed emperors tend to be heralded as reincarnations of "past" conquerors and simultaneous rulers,

---

66. Fletcher, "Turco-Mongolian Tradition in the Ottoman Empire," 251. See also Crossley, "The Rulerships of China," 1473–74.

67. Verbal criticisms are common, but for a written critique of Fletcher's larger idea and the Ottoman case, see Heywood, "'Turco-Mongolian Kingship?'" By contrast, see the Fletcher-inspired interpretation of medieval Inner Asian Turkic/early Mongolian political history in Togan, *Flexibility and Limitations*, 109–11.

whether Solomon, Ašoka, Alexander, Caesar, Constantine, Clovis, or Tang Taizong) and clearly points toward future incarnations in future empires.[68] Thus alongside of (or woven among) the prosaic bureaucratic annals and detailed narratives of episodes in linear time there exists imperial non-time (another simultaneity) of the "once-and-future" emperor—a concept that was a comfortable parallel to the personal religious concepts of the Qianlong emperor. A cogent discussion of this conflation is offered in Peter Burke's *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, where the author contrasts imperial time, or "medallic time," to "the time of events."[69] Yet the imperial narrative is not limited to the looping of one imperial image into another. Emperorships also generate a progressive history of their own—cognate to Louis' "l'histoire du roi"[70]—that is not a national history, but the punctuated epic of the ruler's (or the dynasty's) progress as a purposive, universal conqueror.[71] Whether and under what circumstances those aspiring to lead "national" republics have appropriated these imperial narratives and agenda has been one of the great dramas of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[72]

68. For discussion of this in the founding of the Safavid empire in Iran, see Garthwaite, *The Persians*.

69. Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, 3.

70. Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, 6–13.

71. Resistance to this time dominance could take many forms. The problem of time-rebels, of the sort represented by Lü Liuliang, will come up at various points in this book. They certainly had a concern with time discipline as a marker of legitimacy, and on the implications of this see the discussion in Hay, "The Suspension of Dynastic Time." With regard to China, and to the Qing in particular, the theoretical aspects of this become a bit confused. Hay invokes, for instance, Ricoeur's notion of an "axial moment"—that event in relation to which all other events are marked (172)—and suggests that 1644 worked as this time/space marker for writers, artists, loyalists, and so on who wished to express loyalty to the Ming by perpetuating the Ming calendar (that is, 1644 is purported to be the axial moment they flaunt). As will be suggested in Chapters 2 and 6, the Qianlong court occasionally used 1644—that is, the Great Wall—as a marker, but this was indeed occasional. Earlier markers had been 1618 (the "Seven Great Grievances" and establishment of the Jin dynasty name for Nurgaci's khanate), 1634 (the incorporation of the Chakhar khanate into the Jin rulership), 1636 (initiation of the Qing empire), and later markers would arise. This floating axial moment does not seem to fulfill Ricoeur's criteria, and indeed there is no single axial moment in Chinese history before the twentieth century; the most an eremite could achieve in time rebellion was loyalty to the last emperor of the former dynasty (the exact practice followed by Qing loyalists after demise of that empire). The only axial moment known by me to be observed by a people considering themselves Chinese is in Taiwan, the Republic of China, where secular time still begins with outbreak of the Republican revolution of 1911.

72. For a related discussion see Duara, *Rescuing History*, 17–50.

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the Qing emperorship was required to revise both its simultaneous components and its imperial narrative. Some of the changes were gradual, and all had some kind of antecedents in previous decades. But there came a strong shift with the consolidation of the rule of the Qianlong emperor, particularly from the 1740s on. Qing tolerance of the complexities and ambiguities that underlay the identities of the original conquest elite had been challenged by the uprising of the Three Feudatories in the 1670s, by the changes in cultural practice and regional affinity of the conquest forces, and by the ambitions of the court itself as it moved closer to domination not only of China but also of Mongolia, Central Asia, and Tibet. The test of the early Qing imperial ideology of cultural (and moral) transformation through imperial leadership came with the inquisition against Zeng Jing in 1730, which was remarkable not only for its subtle handling by the Yongzheng emperor but the vigorous rejection of that verdict by the yet unenthroned Hongli (soon to be the Qianlong emperor) soon after his father's death in 1735. Ultimately, the regionalist, particularist, transformationalist character of the original regime gave way before the universalist and idealist developments of the Qianlong (1736–95) era, with profound resonances for the terms of identity that would pertain in modern China and other parts of eastern Asia.

IMPERIAL UNIVERSALISM AND CIRCUMSCRIPTION OF IDENTITY

"Universalism" is sometimes used in a very hazy sense, to indicate that people of one belief assume that all other people think or should think the way they do. This appears to be what a majority of writers mean by "Confucian universalism"—that is, that "Confucians" assumed their moral system was applicable everywhere, and should be everywhere applied. In the same sense there is "Western" universalism (everybody will be happy being rational) or "American universalism" (everybody should be democratic and capitalistic). It is not clear what universalism might be contrasted to. Presumably every philosophical system is universalist, in that most have cosmological underpinnings and none known to me assume the existence of sectors corresponding to human societies in which their principles do not apply. Even relativism, which one is often instructed to contrast to universalism, is universalistic, since everything everywhere is relative. If universalism is taken to mean, then, the assumption that there are no discontinuities in the fabric of reality (that is, to coincide with a "rationalist,"

"objectivist," or "scientific" view of causes and effects in the world), and that truths discovered in the shadows of Ayer's Rock are by induction also truths at the juncture of Twelfth Street and Sixth Avenue, then it is still faithful to the meaning of "universe"—all things turning one way.

These reductionist comments are meant only half in jest; they have helped me to see how attempts to better define the workings of universalist philosophies or ideologies illuminate some aspects of the problem, but not all. One can use universalism in slightly more effective ways. This was done by Joseph Levenson, who contrasted the universalism of "traditional" Confucian thought to the particularism of nationalist thought. Levenson was dealing with a specific form of late Qing Confucianism based upon a universalistic historical paradigm: Civilization and its values bringing humane, orderly, creative existence to all people, largely through the medium of Chinese political transformation and subsequent world leadership. Slightly more will be said on Levenson's interpretation in the Postscript to this work, but the point here is that by contrasting the capacity to have a universalist conviction to the fragmented, particularistic, self-preserving, self-alienating wariness of nationalism, he built his famous contrast of *tianxia* ("world") to *guojia* ("the nation"). What had been "benevolent" or "righteous" or "filial" actions in the earlier ideology became "Chinese" specialisms. Not everything in political philosophy or even personal ideology, Levenson showed, was universalist.[73]

With reference to Qing emperorship, universalism can be used effectively by building a slightly different context. It is common for a reference to Chinese, or Confucian, universalism to be followed by some allusion to *tianxia*.[74] I find the equation in English writing of *tianxia* with "universe" misleading, and instead translate it as "world."[75] World is not the same as universe. Indeed, world can be not only distinguished from universe, but opposed to it: Universes, like the early modern emperorships, can contain worlds, and thus the finite, local, consistent qualities of a world contrast to

73. Some scholars of the Song period in particular would claim that this transition occurred earlier, but in that case the meaning is not as Levenson proposed; his discussion marked a threshold between "modernity" and "nationalism" to coincide with the ideation of "tradition," as an idol of nationalist thought.

74. For meditation on this from another perspective see Duara, "Knowledge and Power in the Discourse of Modernity," 70.

75. "World" here is used with a consciousness of the parallel meanings of the English word (*wer-eald, woruld*), the Chinese *tianxia* and its Manchu cognate *abka fejergi*, and the Tibetan *nödchöd* (part of the Qianlong emperor's personal understanding), all of which denote the human plane, as contrasted to the divine, in which time and form exist (or, in Buddhist references, give the illusion of existence).

the infinitely heterogeneous qualities of a universe. It is relevant to a discussion of the Qianlong emperor to note that many expansive religions, including branches of Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam, with which the Qing had contact, could be said to distinguish between a "world" of the present in which their doctrines prevailed and an undelimited "universe" of the future in which there were no competing truths; a universalist ruler's mandate could parallel the teleology of such a religion, should he engage in mutual legitimation with it (as indeed the Ottomans ruled the Muslim world as sultans and caliphs, contained within the more universalist personae by which they ruled non-Muslims). By the Qianlong period, it is evident that the emperorship had assumed a style of expression that claimed the capacity to contain worlds. A frequently invoked metaphor for the position of the emperorship with respect to these worlds was the wheel, in which spokes beginning in unique places all met at a single hub. And a common feature of such imperial expression, across Eurasia, was the tendency to miniaturize, whether in encyclopedias, zoos, gardens, or curiosity cabinets. The abstract as well as concrete aspects of this will be discussed in Chapter 5. At this point it must be connected to an overt value of the early modern era, the universal man, a source for secular aspects of the universal ruler and the universal emperor. As an individual, the universal man had aspired to all art and science, and the universal ruler had patronized all, and the universal emperor had expressed all. The European idiom of the universal man was woven into the representations of the Qing emperors, primarily through the contributions of Jesuits from Joachim Bouvet to Giuseppe Castiglione. But Qing universalist representation had another source, in the transcendent pose retrospectively attributed to rulers in late medieval Central Asia and to the Great Khans of the Mongol empire; having constructed such a legacy, the Qing lay a direct claim to it.

Joseph Fletcher's interest in the ways in which the attributed universalism of the Great Khans had animated Qing political culture had some parallels in the earlier work of Michael Cherniavsky (1920–73),[76] who was also interested in the ways in which khanal traditions had informed the po-

76. The early part of Cherniavsky's career was dedicated to the study of the political culture and traditional institutions of rule. The theme was introduced in his 1952 doctoral thesis at Berkeley, "The Concept of the Prince in Medieval Russia, 1300–1500," and continued in his seminal article "Khan or Basileus," first published in 1959 and reprinted several times thereafter. *Tsar and People: Studies in Russian Myths*, first published by Yale in 1961 and republished by Random House in 1969 and 1971, was the last extended study by Cherniavsky on this theme, which has been little pursued since.

litical development of Eurasian land empires. Cherniavsky's case study was Romanov Russia, and his understanding of a "khan" was different from Fletcher's. For Cherniavsky, a "khan" was a proprietor, who ruled his state as his possession, standing above law and above custom. It was a resonating khanal image in Russian political tradition that permitted the transformation of the state under Peter the Great from a theocratic princedom to a secular empire. Where Fletcher had seen the khan transformed into emperor, Cherniavsky saw the competition within the early modern Russian rulership between the person of the "khan" and that of the "king" (*basileus*). The khan triumphed,[77] resulting in a new order of rule, the Petrine emperorship.

Despite differences, there remains this similarity between Cherniavsky and Fletcher: Both observed the fashion in which progressive centralization of power in land-based, early modern Eurasian empires with khanal pedigrees resulted in differentiation and transcendence of monarchy over other cultural authorities of the realm. Each noted the self-conscious transformation of the ruler into an emperor—in the Ottoman and the Russian cases, the word *imperator*[78] signaled the change. The qualities of emperorship were consistent with a developing myth of self-generation and self-sufficiency. In the Ottoman case, this was reflected in the choice of the monarchical title *pādishāh*, the reference to the self-legitimating rulership of the Il-khans as contrasted to the *sultān*, who had been endorsed by the caliph.[79] The title, when referring to a leader who sought no legitima-

77. Cherniavsky, "Khan or Basileus," 459–76. See also the remarks on Cherniavsky's work by Grupper, "The Manchu Imperial Cult of the Early Ch'ing Dynasty," 4, 28.

78. In Turkish, *imparator*, in Russian, *gosudar' imperator*. In both cases, the literal referent of the title was the Byzantine emperorship (which based its mandate upon a retrospective construction of the Roman empire as created by God to end the chaos of the political fragmentation of mankind). Mehmet II adopted it after his conquest of Constantinople in 1453, and Peter adopted it during his campaigns to wrest the city from the Ottomans. Louis XIV, though not directly engaged in the struggle for Constantinople, from afar appropriated the mantle of the Byzantine universal emperors: he reproduced work of Byzantine historians and adapted terminology of universal emperorship ("monarque de l'univers," "universe" here equated with the Byzantine *oikumene*); Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, 184. Though the Qing knew little of and cared nothing about the furor over the loss and imagined reconquest of Constantinople, they were aware of some "medallic" elements in the European imperial narrative and managed to incorporate a reference to *ceasar*, in their cult of Geser of Ling. See Chapter 5.

79. The Seljuks, whose empire preceded that of the Il-khans in Iran, had used the title *sultān* and depended upon the Abbāsid caliphs for legitimation. The Mongols, however, had killed the last caliph of Baghdad in 1258 and the local Mongol

tion external to the group he led, was known among Turkic-speaking peoples of Central Asia before the Mongols, and after the Mongols became even more widely used; the Yongle (r. 1403–24) emperor, who of all the Ming rulers most starkly emulated the Mongol Great Khans, had used it (*Dāyming pādishāh*) in claiming simultaneous, secular supremacy in both China and Central Asia.[80] In the case of Peter the Great, the capacity of self-legitimation elevated him over his Romanov predecessors by lessening the legitimating function of the clergy. He acted the role not of a prince of the church but of a living, self-contained god (a pose adopted earlier, and for the same reason, by the Byzantine emperors from whom Peter and the Ottomans adapted their title).[81] And typically the emperorships posited an intuitive connection between themselves and their subjects which cut out not

---

regime of the Il-khans set about legitimating themselves with the title *pādīshāh*, the "ultimate, supreme" kings, a practice later continued by the Ottomans (who retained function as *sultāns*). For a succinct discussion see also Gibb and Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West*, vol. 1, *Islamic Society in the Eighteenth Century*, 33–35.

80. See the quotation of the Yongle emperor's letter to Shahrukh (addressed as a limited-domain *sultān*) in 1418 in Fletcher, "China and Central Asia," 212–13.

81. Early rulerships came before the ideologically self-contained emperorships of the period under discussion here, and so the distinctions between sacred and secular realms were more clear and functioned in ways that do not appear to have been duplicated in later eras (with respect to material treated in this book, the distinction might be made between the carefully dichotomous formulations—*khoghar ghosun*—of the medieval "White History" [*Chaghan teüke*] of the Mongols and the universalist [in S. M. Grupper's phrase, "absolutist"] ideology of the late Ming and Qing period Mahākāla cult of the *čakravartin*). In Chapter 5, the secular/sacred distinction codified in the "White History" is characterized as "Tibetan" (as contrasted to Central Asian) and contrasted to the later ideology of the Qing. The antecedents of sacred accoutrements were there in medieval legitimation ideologies to be extracted by their successors, and the Byzantine system (though having its own antecedents in Rome and elsewhere) was the direct source of important imagery for the Romanov and Ottoman courts. Moreover, Mango's description (*Byzantium*, 219) of the forbidden precincts of the Byzantine emperors will sound familiar to those contemplating the Qing, Ottoman, and Mugal periods particularly: "His palace was likewise sacred, a *domus divina*, and surrounded by a protective zone of 'apartness' (*nam imperio magna ab universis secreta debentur*). When he appeared in public, this was done through a medium of ceremonial which was a reflection of the harmonious working of the universe and was itself synonymous with order (*taxis*). His subjects communicated with him by means of acclamations which were rhythmical and repetitive as in the divine liturgy, and when received in audience prostrated themselves on the ground" (for graphic discussion of the reflection of these ideas in Ottoman imperial architecture, see Necipoglu, *Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power*). According to scholars as early as Ostrogorsky, performance of the *proskynesis*, the prostration (Chinese *ketou*, Manchu *hengkilembi*) was introduced to Europe from Persia by Alexander the Great (Mango, *Byzantium*, 192–93).

only intermediary religious and ethical but also bureaucratic agents. The Byzantine concept of *philanthropia* (which has a parallel in the Chinese imperial concept of *ren*) adapted by the Ottomans characterized this imperial "love of man": the peculiar, original insight of the emperor into the feelings, needs, and desires of people (that is, subjects). In the development of this ideology of imperial self-generation, the Ottomans, the Qing, and the Romanovs all found affirmation in self-referential poses. "The source of his power," Cherniavsky noted of Peter, "lay in itself, in its ability to conquer, rather than in any unique quality or myth of Russia."[82]

The narrative and moral autarchies achieved by these emperorships were associated with a marked abstraction in the ways they expressed or projected themselves. This was partly manifested in archetypal representations of the rulers, as in the formulaic portraits of the Ottoman and Qing emperors where dress and pose are prescribed by the imperial status of the subject and not by individuality. But the emperorship tended toward liberation from the limitations of a single cultural affiliation. The Ottomans distanced themselves from an exclusive identification with the Turks by using Arabic and Persian as the languages of the court.[83] Louis had his epigrams in Latin rather than any vernacular, and—probably in conscious imitation of Louis' model—Peter insisted that inscriptions referring to him as emperor should be in Latin rather than Greek or Russian. The point here is not so much the proximate causes of these language policies, but the consistency of their effects. Secularization under the Ottomans and under Peter removed from them the particularizations of religion (and subordination to clerical injunctions), while making more abstract and unbounded the innovative capacities of the emperorship. In the case of the Petrine emperorship particularly, the abstraction became so extreme that, as Cherniavsky observed, "a German woman could fill the position."[84]

This ideological transcendence of the emperorship allowed the state wide latitude in the manipulation and representation of cultures, even as the

---

82. Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People*, 89.

83. The Ottomans used many languages, including—in the period after conquest of Anatolia—Greek. In the early fifteenth century Mehmet I, usually described as motivated by Turkic enthusiasms (certainly expressed in his historical projects) and a kind of Muslim piety, banned Byzantine influences from the court. But despite a strategic reorientation of the empire toward Central Asia in the rest of the century, neither Mehmet nor his successors installed Turkish as an official language. In accord with the traditions established by the Seljuks (and continued in modified form under the Il-khans), Arabic remained the language of religion and law, Persian the medium for some administrative functions and of the arts.

84. Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People*, 91.

rulership itself was freed of cultural limitations. In Peter's case this was accomplished by retaining some archaic images having powerful cultural resonance. Thus, despite his imperiality and divinity, Peter could claim that within his enlarged self there still dwelt the traditional sentimentality of the Father of the Orthodox Church. Similarly, the Ottoman *pādishāh* and self-styled emperor would claim the dual traditional functions of *sultān* and *khalīfa,* both distinct and resident within his larger imperial self. These concentric personae were indispensable to the functioning of imperial institutions in early modern times and were frequently imitated by local power holders seeking the new cachet of the emperorships. The self-description by Selīm II is only a slightly overdone version of such sobriquet bouquets: " . . . we who are the Caliph of God Most High in this world, far and wide; the proof of the verse 'and what profits man abides in the earth'; the Solomon of Splendor, the Alexander of eminence; haloed in victory, Farīdūn triumphant; slayer of the wicked and the infidel, guardian of the noble and the pious; the warrior in the Path, the defender of the Faith; the champion, the conqueror; the lion, son and grandson of the lion; standard-bearer of justice and righteousness, Sultān Selīm Shāh."[85] These conventional epithets were not metaphorical descriptions of the imperial roles. They were the literal enumeration of the imperial presences.

In these processes of ideological abstraction and cultural refraction, the Qing empire evinced the tendencies toward self-legitimation and ideological self-generation that paralleled the Ottoman and Romanov orders. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the state underwent a transformation from a khanal to an imperial regime. Like the Ottomans and Romanovs, the Qing emperors retained their earlier monarchical structures, including a regional tradition of khanship, within their imperial selves. Weber noted, and historians have since commented, that the Qing rulership (as contrasted to the Tang, one supposes) did not experience the overt struggle against politically entrenched religious authorities, nor was society under the Qing rent by cultural realignments in the way that Europe was in the early modern period. It is true there was no "Confucian" clergy or pope, no alternative establishment (before the nineteenth century) around which dissidents could rally or whose ancient authority they could invoke. But Qing rulership had its moral enemies, who were sometimes louder and sometimes softer, and like early modern dissenters elsewhere looked to an authoritative past of their own making for language and for legitimation. To rein-

85. McNeill and Waldman, *The Islamic World,* 338–39.

voke the analogy used above, they were simply—for a time—outshone by the court, which until the nineteenth century had the raw power and the ideological resources to isolate, mutate, or obliterate (singly or in series, as necessary) its interrogators. A rhetoric of identities emerged from these struggles.

An imperial narrative required the establishment of histories for the values upon which the emperorship, in different periods, depended. In his own study of the Qianlong ideology Kahn, quoting Bagehot, has suggested one means by which definition of imperial status mirrored the definition of common status. Elevating the emperor created value for and strongly suggested the reality of undifferentiated "equality" in his subjects (an observation that in fact works much better for the state under Nurgaci than for the Qianlong era).[86] Cherniavsky suggested something similar, but for the realm of historical identity, not political status. Each imperial persona derived its animation from, and remained dependent for its meaning on, a delimited audience. In this observation is found the point of contact between ideological abstraction in the emperorship and the foundations of early modern national identities. "By the eighteenth century the myth of the ruler had acquired sufficient complexity, a sufficient number of different aspects, facets, and possible interpretations to perform the function of myth: to allow individuals and groups to express, with ever-growing variety, their personal and collective problems and aspirations within its framework."[87] In the Romanov emperorship the church could see reflected the traditional image of the pious prince, and the serfs could see the enduring patriarchal figure. The gentry found in Peter a concept of the archetypal Russian. For Cherniavsky, a "myth" of the people was a necessary corollary to the "myth" of the ruler. The emperorship's abstraction made increasingly ideal the identities whose expectations were putatively cast upon it. Under Peter, the land of the Rus became the abstract Russia, and Peter extended the archetypal national entity in his innovative reference to himself as "Father of the Fatherland" (*Otets Otechestva*).[88] Mythicizing that worked similarly, but with a different content, is remarkable throughout the histories generated by the post-conquest Qing courts.

Such myths were a necessary but not sufficient mechanism for the empire building in which the Qing were intensely engaged during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The process required changes in the ways

86. *Monarchy in the Emperor's Eyes*, 8 n 1.
87. Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People*, 95.
88. Cherniavsky, *Tsar and People*, 80–81, 93, 99.

emperorship saw, named, ranked, and narrated its parts. New identities could be created, encouraged, or affirmed by these processes, others could be ignored, diminished, or disappeared. I call the constructed audiences to which the multiple imperial personae addressed themselves "constituencies." One could also think of these as "peoples," but there is the hazard that some readers could be led to believe that there was always a reliable historical or cultural content in these constructions. As will be underscored later, each imperial persona had of necessity to address itself to a constituency. Nominalization and historicization of these constituencies were primary functions of the conquest emperorship. In fact imperial expression tended to demand increasing rigidity in the recognition and assignment of ostensibly special qualities to the constituencies. Cultural components of simultaneous rulership were not chosen at random. The Qing, like their Eurasian predecessors and contemporaries, employed diverse idioms intended to represent the relationship between distinct and finite cultural spheres—not always strictly geographical and rarely relating to the real life of anybody—and the imperial elements as they were imbricated in the process of conquest. Those peoples, rulers, cultures, or rhetorical systems that had been instrumental in the conquest were represented, while many other cultures under Qing rule were ignored. The Qianlong era was marked by greater idealization and stereotyping of the constituencies and decreasing tolerance for those that displayed no external, conspicuous (or conspicuously representable) systematic differences from others.

Early modern emperorships needed to be able to legitimate or delegitimate certain criteria of identity. Some constituencies had to be laden with codified distinctions to become objects to which the emperorship addressed itself, and to function as presences in the imperial narrative; those less amenable to such representation were liable to be shrunken or obliterated. Since action in this respect was related in important ways to the motives of the emperorship itself, one should find examples of identity groups who did not survive the formative era of some imperial institutions. A case of this type is offered in the Chinese-martial bannermen (*hanjun baqi*),[89] who are examined in Part I. Among recent studies with a striking parallel to the problem of the Chinese-martial is Benzion Netanyahu's *The Origins of the Inquisition in Fifteenth-Century Spain*, which describes the "New Christians" as pressured by racializing criteria championed by the emerging emperorship of Ferdinand and Isabella. Netanyahu puts aside the narrative

---

89. For explanation of this term please see Chapter 2, n 23.

that had characterized victims of the Inquisition as Jews who had resisted forced conversion to Christianity by privately adhering to Jewish beliefs and practices.[90] Instead, using sources from the Jewish community, Netanyahu concludes that those persecuted in the Inquisition were largely not Jews who had superficially yielded to the demand for conversion. He considers the targets of the Inquisition to have been Christians descended from Spanish Jews—Conversos, Marranos, New Christians, none to be understood in the sense of "crypto-Jews," "Judaizers," or "heretics."[91] Netanyahu links the elimination of the New Christians to the necessity for the emperorship to patronize urban elites who combined anti-Semitism with economic rivalries against the New Christians. In reifying the racial axioms behind the Inquisition, the new emperorship positioned itself as a champion of orthodoxy, the protector of the peace in the cities that had experienced turmoil at the hands of discontented merchants, and inventor of a Spanish identity, consummated in the emperorship itself as the joining of Aragon and Castile, and precipitating—among other upheavals—the expulsion of the Jews in 1492.[92] Netanyahu's is an extended study of the destruction of an identity group by the imperial process, and many others could be examined.[93]

The eradication of Chinese-martial identity was far less violent, dramatic, and sudden than that visited upon Netanyahu's "New Christians" of Spain. But it shares with that story the features of an existing cultural group being newly bisected by superimposed genealogical affiliations—as the New Christians were required by the emperorship to be resolved as either Jews or Christians (Spaniards), so the mass of the Chinese-martial were eventually required to be resolved as either "Manchu" or "Han." Perhaps more profound, the crushing of these identities under the prow of advancing emperorship was repeated by historians who until recently con-

90. The New Christians in Amsterdam are treated in Miriam Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation: Conversos and Community in Early Modern Amsterdam* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997).
91. Netanyahu, *The Origins of the Inquisition in Fifteenth-Century Spain*, xvii.
92. Netanyahu, *Origins of the Inquisition*, 925–1094.
93. Spain during the Christian reconquest, culminating in the empire of Ferdinand and Isabella, is rich in cases for studying the relationship of changes in the rulership to concepts of identity. There are grounds for seeing the Spanish empire in its continental phase as the vanguard Eurasian agent for the processes of conquest, genealogization, and racialization. See also L. P. Harvey's *Islamic Spain, 1250–1500,* which in my reading is not so much a history of the period as a study of the transformation of Muslim communities into "minorities" with progressive extension of the Christian political realm. On an ideological legacy of imperial Spain see also Chapter 5 of this book.

tinued to interpret these ages of change and cultural destruction in the static vocabulary of identity that had been a leading instrument of the destruction in the first place. The Chinese-martial have not, perhaps, needed to be discovered anew. But their history and cultural identity may need to be characterized anew. In many ways, the demise of Chinese-martial identity (that is, imposition of an undifferentiated "Chinese" identity) that occupies the early part of this book was a function of the construction of "Manchu" and "Mongol" identities. The Qing court observed a distinction between the Liaodongese and the more recently incorporated populations of north China until the end of the seventeenth century, and in the middle of the eighteenth century dismantled the distinction for reasons that are well reflected in the changing imperial ideology. The result was a constructed, monolithic identity for "Chinese" (Han) under the later Qing empire.[94] Parallel processes were imposed upon Manchus, Mongols, and other peoples subject to invention as imperial constituencies. I have discussed the history of Manchu identity and more particularly its later shaping by the emergence of Chinese nationalism in my earlier work *Orphan Warriors*, and I have no wish to repeat material I treated there. The Mongol story, to the extent that it too has felt the effects of Qing imperial evolution, figures in the present discussion, though readers are advised that a great part of

94. There can be confusion, as many scholars have recently noted, in the use of the word "Chinese"—for instance, in the twentieth century one can be a "Chinese" (*Zhongguo ren*) without being a "Han." This is fairly easy for modern readers to understand and does not seem to require belaboring. But though this distinction would be transparent to most people now alive in China, it would have been difficult even two generations ago, and at the beginning of the twentieth century most people in China (and, indeed, elsewhere) would have found it nonsensical. The Qing emperors regularly distinguished in their Chinese writing between the "people(s) in China" and "Han" people. One of the central texts cited in this book, the Yongzheng emperor's *Dayi juemi lu*, uses the phrase "people(s) of China" (*zhongguo zhi ren*) rather than "Chinese people" (*zhongguo ren*). See also remarks on the Manchu word *nikan* in Chapter 2. One presumes that this phrasing was inspired by Manchu and its own antecedents, which much more frequently than Chinese used the genitive case to identify people "of" a certain territory (*Ming i niyalma*). This is like, but not the same as, the distinction we would now make between "Chinese" and "Han." In this book I follow a convention established by my co-authors and me in our "Introduction" to a forthcoming volume on ethnicity issues in the early Qing. "Chinese" is freely used to refer to the cultural style associated with the general region of China, and *han* to suggest a distinction based upon ostensibly genealogical criteria. For precision I have sometimes referred to "Ming Chinese," meaning the cultural complex (and those perceived to be subsumed under it) formed under and associated with the Ming empire.

early modern and modern Mongol history lies outside the perimeters of the history of Qing imperial ideology and can be followed in works with a more general historical view.

Though in the eighteenth century the Qing emperorship was mythically self-legitimating, earlier Qing rulership had not been so self-sufficient. Its sources of political rhetoric were partly derived from peoples of Liaodong and Jilin who were enticed or coerced into subscribing to Nurgaci's leadership. Earliest of these were portions of the Jianzhou Jurchens who for some time had been led by Nurgaci's family, and close behind were the Chinese-speaking populations of Liaodong and western Jilin. Later were added portions of the Kharachin and Khorchin federations and the hunting peoples of upper Jilin and Heilongjiang. As the Nurgaci regime grew and eventually assumed the form of a khanate in 1616, it acquired a complex and not always orderly intertwining of political cultures. Under Nurgaci's successor Hung Taiji, the state attempted to view more systematically the simultaneous codes it commanded. The culmination of this early ordering process was the proclamation of the first Qing emperorship, in 1636—a prophylactic against, but not an antidote to, the profound disordering of patterns of loyalty and identity that would result from the conquest of China. This instance is a reminder that emperorships in conquest are required to create constituencies, if only to stabilize affiliations in highly destabilizing circumstances.

There is nothing new about the starting point—fungible identities in seventeenth-century Liaodong and Jilin—of this story. Owen Lattimore was able to guess that the region prior to the Ming-Qing transition was a "reservoir" in which the fluid elements of Chinese, Mongol, Korean, and native cultures swirled in response to political and economic currents.[95] From this he speculated that the Jurchens *cum* Manchus must have been cultural "chameleons," blending alternately with the Mongols, the Chinese, or the Koreans as advantage dictated. Historical work since Lattimore's time has elaborated his description of the cultural character of Liaodong and Jilin in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. What has not been done, however, is an examination of the interaction of those processes with the evolution of rulership. I read Lattimore's "chameleon" description of the Jurchens

95. See *Inner Asian Frontiers of China,* first issued by the National Geographic Society in 1940 and reprinted as late as 1988 (with an introduction by Alastair Lamb) by Oxford University Press. A similar idea is developed for medieval China in Eberhard, *Conquerors and Rulers,* esp. 5–11.

as an attempt—like "transfrontier," or "creole"—to give name to what is not readily named in our present vocabulary. Again following the cues of the eighteenth century, modern writers on the seventeenth century have demonstrated a very limited ability to describe seventeenth-century identities that appear to us to be ambiguous, complex, or difficult to place. The reading back of modern "racial" (now referred to, with little further qualification, as "ethnic")[96] identities to times when they did not apply is ubiquitous. A frequently invoked object of such discussion in the very late Qing is the bannerman Duanfang (1861–1911), a loyalist martyr in the 1911–12 revolution. His family, who were registered with the Tokoro lineage, claimed to have been Chinese, surnamed[97] Tao, who moved in the Wanli period (1573–1620) from Zhejiang province on the China coast to Liaodong, a largely sinophone area just outside the Great Wall, north of the Shanhai Pass. On the basis of this, Duanfang's *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period* biographer Hiromu Momose notes that, in spite of his Manchu registration, his subject was "not a full-blooded Manchu."[98] In earlier Qing times stories like that of the Tao/Tokoro lineage were not rare and were not regarded as compromising Manchu status. The idea that "blood" had anything at all to do with being a Manchu arises from a reading back of later Qing racial taxonomies to a time and place in which they did not yet exist. Unfortunately this is not a quaint, discarded notion of earlier scholarship, but continues to animate some current writing on Qing history.[99]

96. Crossley, "Thinking about Ethnicity."
97. Throughout this book I have used "surnamed" for the Chinese verb *xing*.
98. *ECCP*, 780. For more comment on the possible significance of this case for understanding "Manchu" and "Han" relations at the end of the Qing period, see forthcoming work by Edward J. M. Rhoads.
99. See, for example, the strangely two-dimensional discussion of the "ethnicity" of inhabitants of Daoyi, Liaoning, in James Lee and Cameron Campbell, *Fate and Fortune*, 7. The problem, as stated, is that eighteenth-century immigrants to the Daoyi military farm were "considered" by the Qing court as being "ethnically Han" but to outside civilians were considered "Manchu," and their descendants at present all consider themselves "Han." Since in fact the Qing court did not "consider" anybody to be "ethnically" anything, what is evidently being said here is that the eighteenth-century Qing court was aware of transferring companies of Chinese-martial bannermen, all or most of whom had genealogies tracing their ancestors to northern China, to Daoyi—or it might merely mean the bannermen in question were all registered *hanjun*, which would be a distinct matter. Civilians often abridged the identities of all bannermen to *qiren*, which in the nineteenth century could indeed be equated in casual speech to "Manchu" (which was uncommonly used). I hope that this book will make clear (as has already been argued in "The Qianlong Retrospect on the Chinese-martial Banners") that these were nor-

The ascribed "betweenness" of the Chinese-martial has captured the imagination of the field for some time. In *Ts'ao Yin and the K'ang-hsi Emperor* (1966), Jonathan Spence explored the culture of the family Cao. They had a legendary but uncertifiable origin in Shandong and had lived for generations in Liaodong province. The process of state-building in the early seventeenth century that resulted in the rise of the Qing empire brought the Cao into the Manchu fold, as "bondservants," or bound household managers, of the Qing imperial line. Spence was unwilling to portray the Cao as fully Chinese, but attributed their cultural character to generations of intimate contact with the Qing court. As a consequence the family—progenitors of the best-known Qing novelist, Cao Zhan (Xueqin, c. 1715–63)—were, in Spence's words, "balanced between" the culture of China and the culture of the Manchus.[100] "Balanced between" evidently recalled itself to Frederic Wakeman as he worked on the central analytical passage of *The Great Enterprise* (1985). Wakeman invoked Spence's discussion of the Cao family as a prelude to his discussion of an entire class of bureaucrats (the "twice-serving officials," *erchen,* who began their careers in the Ming and continued under the Qing).[101] Many of them, Wakeman recognized, had actually come to China with the Qing, but he described that portion as "transfrontiersmen," or putative Chinese who had gone eastward from the Great Wall into Ming Liaodong, become caught up in the wars of Nurgaci and Hung Taiji to unify the Northeast, and returned to China with the new regime. They were, in Wakeman's text, the "Chinese" bannermen, the representatives of the Chinese population among the Eight Banners. They lived, like Spence's Cao family, "between."

Since the time that Spence published *Ts'ao Yin,* our general ways of talking about culture have changed surprisingly little. I would not expect myself to be alone in objecting to the idea that any culture is properly described as a balance, mixture, or amalgam of two or more others. The culture of which the Cao were exemplars was not in its own context "between," or "hybrid." It was a coherent one with a history and a discrete geographical contour. It may, however, have been without a future. Qing rhetoric of the

mal and predictable arrangements for the earlier empire and had nothing to do with "ethnicity" and not much to do with identity.

100. Spence, *Ts'ao Yin and the K'ang-hsi Emperor,* 53. There are some parallels here to Wittfogel's characterization of the Han of lineages of the Liao period as representing a "third culture" (that is, neither Kitan nor "Chinese"); see Wittfogel and Feng, "Introduction" to *History of Chinese Society.*

101. *The Great Enterprise,* 1016 n 62. See also Chapters 2 and 6 of this book.

late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was inexorably eroding the historical context from which the Cao and many other families emerged. In the lifetime of Cao Zhan, the Qianlong court distilled the regional cultures of Liaodong into what it conceived as two categorical and contrasting realms, one "Chinese," one "Manchu." Thus "balanced between" reflects not a demonstrable amalgam of two antecedent cultures but the imposition of retrospective incoherence upon what in its own time was a coherent—though not homogeneous—cultural milieu. What is likely to appear to many modern readers as nameless (and in need of naming) can be shown to have been unnamed (and in need of having that process described). Obscuring the terminology of the seventeenth century by calling this group "Han" or "Chinese" bannermen is like editing the word "water" from our language and permitting only "hydrogen" and "oxygen" to be used.[102]

The writers identified here as conceptual sources of this study have insisted that the generation and the reception of the ideologies of universal emperorship were facilitated by larger social, political, and cultural changes. In my view, none of these approaches to imperial universalism in the early modern period excludes the others, and none is peculiarly applicable to only the empires on which these authors have focused. Fletcher associated the emergence of emperorship in the Qing and Ottoman contexts with the transition from conquest to stable regimes. Cherniavsky saw the invention of the Petrine rulership as marking the secularization of the state in Russia, a line of argument not inconsistent with Netanyahu's understanding of the foundation of the emperorship of Ferdinand and Isabella. Peter Burke's explanation of the meaning of the universalism of Louis XIV's representations is complex, and not precise in all its particulars. In general he argues that a local (European) epistemological reordering was in process and cen-

---

102. Discussion along these lines was nearly opened up by Lawrence Kessler, whose work on the institutional history of Chinese-martial civil officials is fundamental. In *K'ang-hsi and the Consolidation of Ch'ing Rule*, 117–18, Kessler warned against reading Fairbank's ideas of the Qing as a Manchu-Chinese "dyarchy" back before the nineteenth century, because so many officials who might otherwise be considered "Chinese" were actually "Chinese bannermen." But the discussion was truncated by Kessler's following definition of "Chinese bannermen" as "those Chinese politically allied with and controlled by Manchus." Thus, every "Chinese bannerman" being exposed as an element in Manchu political control, the early period becomes for Kessler more "Manchu" than "dyarchic." Bartlett, however, proposes a Manchu-Chinese dyarchy at the highest level of bureaucratic government for the early eighteenth century; see *Monarchs and Ministers*, 33–37, and elsewhere. Allowing for differences in definition and period, these views are not incompatible; where they contrast to the approach of this book is in permitting assumed "ethnic" phenomena to control their characterization of large expanses of Qing history.

trally featured a dissipation of the habits of "organic analogy" that had been characteristic of earlier times.[103] Concepts of cause and effect displaced theories of correspondence (in astrology and numerology, medicine, and historical thinking). This was accompanied, as historians of literature, philosophy, and science have already pointed out, by an awareness of and a theory of metaphor; reality and its representation could now be divorced— "disenchanted" in Weber's phrase—and "magic" excised from the practice of rulership. In Burke's explanation, the diminution of the influence of religious establishments and even of folk religion enhanced the centrality of emperorship. The comment underscores the irony of the way the early modern emperorship schematicized its relation to the "world." Emperorship contained worlds, and worlds comprised emperorship.

In this scenario, the ideology of universal emperorship was an attempt to encompass and on an idealized plane reintegrate the apparently disintegrating systems of culture, society, and politics of the early modern world. If the cosmos were a machine—as it was often allegorized—then emperorship would remain its pivot, its axle, its point of orientation and integration. The rulers could accommodate both the irrational (as in Louis' healing touch) and the rational, as they became the patrons of universities, encyclopedias, and philosophers.[104] The urge to control was paramount, and the universal capacity to nurture knowledge through education, publishing, libraries, and international communications was also the power to suppress it (as when Louis forbade the teaching of the dangerously dichotomous Descartes). Readers with even a cursory acquaintance with the Qing empire of the eighteenth century will see the potential points of comparison. I should like to make them clearer and to connect them to ideations of identity rooted (though not flowering) in the eighteenth century and influencing the political development of China and related territories in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. To the extent possible, I have tried to avoid analyzing these topics as mere preludes to "nationalism." But I cannot expect to have been wholly successful, nor can I expect the reader not to remember that na-

103. The same theme has been invoked by Antony D. Smith to examine the rise of early modern nationalism (without special reference to rulership) in *The Ethnic Revival*, 87–104, and by David Theo Goldberg to help explain the institutionalization of racial concepts (see *Racist Culture*).

104. Burke, *The Fabrication of Louis XIV*, 127–29. There are strong parallels here to Dumont's discussion of "traditional" hierarchies (which would include imperial systems) as capable of accommodating contradictions and a lack of limitations in ways that "modern" forms of political and social organization (being border-oriented rather than center-oriented) are unable to do (*Essays on Individualism*).

tionalism, whatever one may mean by that, is the next chapter of the story. There are several problems interwoven. One, already thrown profoundly into doubt by the work of Frank Dikötter and others, is the extent to which racism and nationalism could actually be distinguished from each other in radical speech in eastern Asia at the turn of this century. This depends on definitions to a great extent, but also on being able to guess what people meant in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as contrasted to what people in the nineteenth century said they meant. In the Postscript I have chosen two of the most over-researched and over-written writers of the very early twentieth century, Liang Qichao and Zhang Binglin, and related selected elements in their ideas to the substance and the effects of Qing ideology. What is remarkable with each man is that he recognized that affirming the manifest tendency of humans to form groups did nothing to explain or justify racism or nationalism; for that, sources much nearer were necessary, and the historical narratives generated by the Qianlong court were indispensable. Even closer to the center of this work, each man recognized (and was in a minority in his own time for it) that the transition from an empire with an emperor to an empire without an emperor would be historic, overwhelmingly complex, and likely to end in one form or another of disaster. Their proposed solutions were different, though each showed himself strongly subject to the imperial ideologies of the eighteenth century.