

## "Making Mongols"

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Of the diverse processes of identity formation in very late Ming and early Qing eras, the emergence of the "Mongols" bears a striking resemblance to the emergence of the "Manchus," in this way: It shows, more overtly than many other cases examined in this volume, the persistent and deliberate imprint of the state. To a certain degree this is an artifact of the documentation. The Mongols, like the Manchus but unlike the Yao, Dan or She, were the objects of direct historicizing by the Qing, with extensive narrative, linguistic and geographical treatises devoted to them written and published under imperial sponsorship in the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These projects and the administrative programs that paralleled them could be influential in the identity choices of the individuals to whom they applied. Nevertheless the evidence is manifest that in the instances of the Manchus and the Mongols the pressures exerted by the Qing court were not decisive in determining affiliation, sentiment or behavior. "Ethnicity," for these groups, was in the end a product of dynamics that can be compared to the processes producing the same kinds of phenomena among the less directly documented peoples of central and southern China: stability of affective connection to the institutions of the state, local scenarios promoting greater or lesser degrees of integration, and coherence of

communities.<sup>1</sup> Thus making a distinction between the peoples sponsored by, or incorporated into the conquest elite of, the Qing empire (that is, the Manchus, Mongols, hanjun primarily) and other peoples of the early Qing era should be recognized as primarily an invention of the empire, for its own purposes.<sup>2</sup> Becoming bannermen, or objects of state historiography, cannot be shown to have produced more enduring or more consolidated concepts of identities among these groups; perhaps, on the contrary, it only subjected them to more systematic cultural stereotyping and social fragmentation.

Today we entertain a notion of "Mongol"<sup>3</sup> as a distinguishable cultural identity, but it is not limited to, congruent with, or intimately associated with the only state that at present uses the word "Mongolia" in its name. Though multilayered identity has been an inherent part of Mongol social and cultural history, the particular patterns it assumes in the present are to a significant

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1 For comparison see comments on the Manchu case in Crossley, A Translucent Mirror: History and Ideology in Qing Imperial Ideology and Orphan Warriors: Three Manchu Generations and the End of the Qing World; see also Elliott, The Manchu Way: the Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China, in addition to the preceding essay in this volume.

2 This argument is elaborated in much greater detail in Crossley, A Translucent Mirror, esp. pp.281-336.

3 In this essay I romanize Mongolian using "gh" instead of gamma and "kh" rather than "q." Of names for the Mongols: Mongolian mongghol, Jurchen munggur, Manchu monggo. As will become clear, the history of the Eight Banner Mongols is very different from that of other "Mongols" and Mongolian-speakers in the Qing empire. For background on Mongolia during the early Qing, see Bawden, A Modern History of Mongolia; Fletcher, "Ch'ing Inner Asia, c.1800;" Zhao Yuntian, Qingdai menggu zhangjiao zhidu, esp. pp.1-21; Chia, "The Li-fan Yüan in the Early Qing Dynasty."

degree a product historical changes of the period from 1600 to 1800. The Qing, particularly, both nurtured the establishment of criteria of Mongol affiliation and forced the political dismemberment of territories inhabited by a majority of those now considered Mongols. Resistance to this process among some Mongol groups was continuous, and contributed part of the momentum behind the reclamation of partial political sovereignty by Mongols in the last years of and after the fall of the Qing empire. That momentum, however, could not overpower the imprint of Qing policy upon the present cultural and political spectra of the Mongols.

### **Identities in Mongolia before 1600**

In the late imperial period (1368–1912) in China, many peoples of Inner Asian and Central Asia could claim descent or partial descent from the Mongols of the time of Chinggis khaghan (d.1227).<sup>4</sup> The destruction of the Yuan empire in 1368 accelerated the fragmentation of the Mongol population resident in China . Some merged with the Chinese and Tibetan populations. In addition to anecdotal fragments from the genealogies families such as the Mao family of Rugao, Jiangsu, (the lineage of Mao Xiang,1611–1693), the Pu family of Shandong (the lineage of Pu Songling,

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<sup>4</sup> For purposes of this essay, the terms khan and khaghan will be distinguished. "Khan" (Mongolian khan, sometimes khaa, Manchu han) will be used where it occurs in contemporary sources or in names in the traditional sense of a leader --often leader of an aimakh, which is sometimes rendered "tribe" in English. Khaghan will be used in the particular sense of "khan of khans," "Great Khan," "Grand Khan," and so on, the peculiar office of the ruler of the Mongol federated empires (and retrospectively attached to Chinggis by Mongol imperial historiography). I use it here to refer to those who aspired to or were acknowledged as supreme rulers in the Mongol confederacies from Chinggis to Lighdan. This is not the place to cite the disputes on meaning or chronological development of the term. See Lawrence Krader, "Qan-Qagan and the Beginnings of Mongol Kingship" for a summary of the debates on etymologies and relationships of the Mongolian terms khan and khaghan.

1640-1715), or the Xiao family of Shanxi (lineage of Xiao Daheng, 1532-1612) there is extensive if in most cases circumstantial evidence for local persistence of not only Mongol lineage affiliation but some cultural influence in disparate parts of China during the Ming.<sup>5</sup> In rare cases, very prominent Ming Mongols such as Khoninchi are well documented and provide some insight into the amalgamation of some Mongols with the Ming and subsequently the Qing elites.<sup>6</sup> Many Mongols remained within the confines of the Ming empire but withdrew to remote regions and retained a distinct identity.<sup>7</sup>

The largest identifiable group to withdraw north from China were the "six tümen," as they were called in the Chinese records --the

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5 See Serruys, The Mongols and Ming China: Customs and History, esp. selection VII.

6 See Roy Andrew Miller, "Qoninci, Compiler of the Hua-i i-yü of 1389" and, by the same author, Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368-1644, pp.1125-1127.

7 For example the Dagur, Santa (Dongxiang), Tu (Monguor) and Bao (Bonan). For a general introduction see Ramsey, The Languages of China, pp.194-202; 309-310.

Chakhar,<sup>8</sup> Uriangkha,<sup>9</sup> Khalkha, Ordos, Tümed, and Kharachin (Yüngsiyebü). These federations considered themselves the continuation of the Yuan empire, and in some records referred to themselves as the "Northern Yuan." The Six Tümen faced geographical and political competition from Mongolian-speaking groups with distinct histories from the former Yuan population of

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<sup>8</sup> Manchu chagar. The antecedents of the Chakhars are somewhat obscure. They occur in chronicle documents of Chinggis Khaghan only in connection with the conquest of the "Chakhar" region around Kalgan in the campaigns of Mükhali against the Jin in 1211/1212. This remains the territory most consistently associated with the Chakhars.

<sup>9</sup> Uriangkha, an old name with a great number of variants in Chinese, Korean and Manchu, has a complex and enigmatic history. "Uriangkha" had been incorporated into the Mongol populations under the Chinggisid empire, apparently as a lineage group. Federations with this name appeared in northeast Asia and in northern Mongolia during the 13th to the 16th centuries. Chinese chroniclers considered to the Uriangkha to be descendants of Sogdians (Yuezhi). In the eighteenth century, the Uriangkha were on the western lateral of Mongolia, sharing contact with both the Qing and the Romanov empires.

Mongols --including the Oyiroids<sup>10</sup> of the Lake Balkhash region, the Khorchins<sup>11</sup> at the perimeter with Ming Liaodong, and the Buryats of the extreme north. They had remained comparatively autonomous during the period of the Mongol empires, largely because of their peripheral locations.

10 Manchu urût. The name is unstable both in original citations and in transliteration. It apparently derives from a medieval Mongolian word meaning "a congregation, people who remain near each other" and became the dialect word for a federation. The Oyiroids of the time of Chinggis were residents of the wooded lands west of Lake Balkhash, apparently Mongolian-speaking, but not "Mongolized" in the sense of being incorporated into the Chinggisid empire. In post-Yuan times, the "Four Oyiroids" (dörbön oyirad) apparently included the Oyiroids proper, the Torghuuds, the Khoshuuds, and eventually the Dzunggars (that is, jegünghar, or "left wing"). By the eighteenth century the Oyiroids included other federations, among them the Khoyids and Chörös. Qing records of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries refer to them as moxi Elete Menggu, "the Oyiroid Mongols west of the Gobi." The Qing also considered the "Mongols of Qinghai" --probably the ancestors of the modern Santa-- as an alienated (Ming period) branch of the Oyiroid. Transliteration of the name can be a proprietary issue among specialists. There are several attested variants of the name in "Mongolian" records, including those in Oyiroid dialect and script. Including the Oyiroid texts, one finds at a minimum the name written as Oyirad, Oyiroid, and Oyirid. This would permit any of these as transliterations, as well as the frequently-found "Oirat." It would not, however, permit Olot or Ölot, which seem to be ersatz back-constructions from Chinese elate and weilate.

General histories often identify the Oyiroids with the Kalmyks (Mongolian khalimakh), which may be slightly lacking in precision. "Kalmyk" is most often associated with Torghuuds. They had distinguished themselves from the majority of Oyiroids by seeking, under their leader Ayûki, to make peace with the Romanov empire. This ultimately failed and the Torghuuds were forced to "return" to Mongolia across the Volga in 1771. Thus, though all Kalmyks in the eighteenth century were Oyiroid-speakers and had Oyiroid antecedents, not all Oyiroids were Kalmyks.

11 Believed to be descendants of followers of Chinggis' brother Khasar, and so although not Chinggisids the Khorchin leaders were of Chinggis' Börjigid lineage (uruk, obogh). In the Dayan regime (see below) the Chinggisids and the Khasarids were distributed about equally as leaders of among the "right wing" (barunghar). See Veit, "Die mongolischen Vökerschaften" :390.

The world of the "Six Tümen" ( Northern Yuan) was consistently centralized or culturally stable before the end of the sixteenth century. The leadership of the federation was disturbed by the same internecine competition that had weakened and destroyed the Yuan in China. The regimes were further debilitated by the necessity to continue defense against Ming armies attempting to prevent a recrudescence of Mongol political power. By the early fifteenth century the leadership of the Northern Yuan had fallen into the hands of a family of Kirghiz rebels led by Ügechi (whom the Ming mistakenly identified as a Torghuud).<sup>12</sup> For three decades various uneasy coalitions in eastern Mongolia --some affiliated with the Kirghiz, and some with the Chinggisids who had brought the federations north from China-- attempted to fend off both Ming pressure from the south and increasing aggressive incursions from the Oyiroids in the west. These regional fragmentation came to a conclusion with the triumph of Esen [4.1439-1453], the non-Chinggisid Mongolian-speaking leader of the Oyiroids. But the political and cultural independence of eastern Mongolia was reasserted with the establishment of Dayan as the (Chinggisid) Great Khan in 1475, and by the end of the fifteenth century the Chakhar federation among the eastern Mongols was consolidated. It retained some measure of centralized authority in eastern Mongolia until the rise of Lighdan Khaghan in early seventeenth century. .

12 Grousse, The Empire of the Steppes, p.628 n.1-2, commented on the "confusion" (via Maurice Courant) over Ügechi's identity caused by a contradiction between the Ming shi and Sagang Secen's Erdeni-yin tobci. It is unclear why Sagang is not regarded as the more authoritative source here (though there are obvious problems elsewhere in his chronicle, often due to unresolved contradictions among his own sources). In fact, the passage on Ugeci, his brother Batalu cingsang (also known as Mahmûd, or Chinese Mahamu) and Batalu's son Toghon in Erdeni-yin tobci is detailed and consistent. See especially Veit, "Die mongolischen Völkerschaften" :381-384.

The early Ming court, particularly under the Yongle emperor (1403-1424), attempted to exploit divisions and rivalries among the groups who had withdrawn to northern Asia after the demise of the Yuan. Between 1399 and the victory of Esen in 1449, the Ming constantly swung the weight of alliance (bribes and promises of favorable military intervention) between the western lineage of Ügeci, the Chinggisid pretenders, and the durable Arughtai who worked for and against both. The obvious goal was to prevent the unification of Mongolia under any single leader by aiding challengers and subverting incumbents. Though this particular goal was achieved during the interval, its byproduct was the accumulation of leaders in Mongolia, of various cultural and political orientations, who gradually became united in their shared experiences of betrayal by the Ming. The result was that through Toghon and his son Esen the originally Kirghiz lineage of leaders among the Oyiroids displaced the Chinggisids and the more remote, more aggressively anti-Ming leaders of western Mongolia gained unified control over the region despite Ming plans. Indeed, Esen as is well known was not satisfied to merely control Mongolia and parts of east Turkestan but in 1449 kidnapped the Ming emperor and subsequently attacked the fortifications of the Ming capital at Beijing. The fiasco led to a major alteration in the objectives and the methodologies of Chinese ethnographic scholarship thereafter, and to new --though ineffective-- attempts to exploit the discovery that there were no longer "Mongols." There were only khans and followers.

The "followers" criterion was central. Though Oyiroid and Kirghiz invaders (and sometimes, rulers) of eastern Mongolia were not Chinggisids, they in no way rejected the political culture of



Chinggisid eminence. On the contrary they were eager to ally themselves with the Chinggisid lineage by marriage, to claim Chinggisid princes among their own children, and to sponsor the Chinggis cult (administered by the jinong --Chinggisid princes selected for this honor). Though political divisions among Chakhars, Oyiroids, Khalkhas and As may have been distinct, the ultimate goal of reuniting the region and bringing all the federations into a realm of Mongol identity through reverence for the Chinggis rulership was abiding. This ultimately proved the foundation for a resurgence of Chakhar Chinggisid rulership, a substantial reunification of Mongolia, and the formulation of a style of rulership that the Qing would, in a very authentic sense, inherit.

In eastern Mongolia the Chinggisid revival was sponsored by Mandughai Khatun, the widow of the deposed Chinggisid khaghan Mandaghol, who had died in 1467. Three years later Mandughai Khatun declared the child Dayan --a great-great nephew of Mandaghol-- as khaghan, and Mandughai herself led the Chakhar troops against the Oyiroids to protect the new khan's status. As late as the early 1490s Mandughai (who married Dayan in 1481) was still commanding eastern armies against the Oyiroid. By the end of the century the overt conflict between the Dayan regime and the Oyiroids had subsided, and Mongolia was again divided, east and west. Dayan in his maturity imposed several centralizing measures upon the eastern Mongols, and they are of interest not only because they created the foundation for a lasting unified government, but also because they generated both the prototype of pacification in Mongolia and the prototype of rebellion against it that would be familiar to the Qing. Dayan was wary of leaving the traditional hierarchies of the Six Tümen intact, since they had

been the source of much of the political instability that had plagued eastern Mongolia , had created opportunities for Ming interference, and led to the period of Oyiurod domination. He determined to modify patterns of leadership and affiliation within the khanate. Earliest, he redistributed the federations for purposes of tribute and command into two "wings" (ghar). The Chakhar, Khalkha and Uriangkha were to compose the eastern division, or "left wing" (jegünghar, dzunghar) under ownership of the khaghan. The Ordos, Tümed and Kharachin (Yüngsiyebü) were to compose the western division, or "right wing" (baraghunghar, barunghar) as a grant to the jinong (direct descendants of Dayan). Each wing was to have a commander, and the divisions regularized as much as possible in size. As a consequence , existing lineage and federations affiliations were liable to alteration by Dayan's regime. For good measure, Dayan's own sons and grandsons were given leadership of the separate federations, displacing the traditional leaders.

The Tümed revolted first, and Dayan had to bring in the forces of the Khorchins, who were not originally of the Six Tümen to suppress the revolt. The Uriangkha were even more recalcitrant, and Dayan disbanded their ancient federation, dividing it into five smaller (weaker) groups, each to be administered by a headman of his choosing. Leadership of the other five federations came into the hands of Dayan's descendants; after his death the eastern Mongol regime underwent a degree of decentralization, but remained intact. The khaghanship remained within a single lineage descended from Dayan's grandson Bodi-khan, and was based upon rule over the Chakhar federation. At times political and military leadership within the eastern Mongol regime drifted to other lineages but the eastern Mongols remained connected and formidable. They recovered

the ruins of Karakorum from the Oyiroids and in fact continued to drive their former overlords ever westward. Between 1543 and 1583 the Chakhar federations were led by Dayan's grandson Altan Khaghan, who forced all Oyiroid-affiliated groups from eastern Mongolia. At the same time, his pressure upon northern China was intense, and in 1550 resulted in an assault upon Beijing that wrested well-defined border and commercial agreements from the Ming court.

There was also some distinction to be made between the two large groups on the basis of their use of the Chinggis cult. In the east, its political importance was paramount. With only a few exceptional interludes, the Chinggisid khaghans had been the real or titular rulers of the eastern Mongols since the transfer north from China at the end of the Yuan period. All claiming to share in Mongol identity had been united by their observance of the cult of Chinggis Khaghan (overseen by Chinggisid descendants of the rank of jinong) and by older shamanistic rituals. For the Oyiroids, the Chinggis cult had a slightly different meaning. Their ancestors (like those of the Khorchins on the other side of the Chakhar empire) had not been followers of Chinggis. Nevertheless, during their period of expansion the Oyiroids had actively pursued marriage connections with Chinggisid lineages, and had sponsored the Chinggis cult as a sign of their legitimate rule over Mongolia. They contributed to the tradition that Chinggisid affiliation need not be a matter of patrilineal descent, but a matter of devotion and family integration.

The legacy of Altan's rule drew more distinct divisions between the Chakhar regime in the east and the Oyiroid remnant regimes in the west. In the time of Chinggis and for a century after, eastern

Mongol elites remained familiar with the form of Tibetan lamaism practiced by the Sa-skya sect, which Chinggis had politically elevated congruent with his domination of Tibet. But the greater part of the Mongols did not have access to lamaist liturgies or know much about the tantric worship of the Sa-skya sect. When Altan Khaghan dominated the eastern alliance, he introduced Tibetan Buddhism as a means of securing greater unity among the federations. In 1576 he invited bSod-nams rGya-mtsho (Songnam Gyamtso), an elder of the reformed dGe-lugs ("Yellow Hat") sect to eastern Mongolia, and also requested printed lamaist literature from the Ming --who supplied it, believing that religious conversion would soothe the savage breasts of the Six Tümen. Subsequently Altan Khaghan endowed the Yellow Hat leader with the title dalai (in Mongolian, "oceanic," "universal") lama (guru or "teacher" in Tibetan), and recognized him as the third in a series of reincarnated religious teachers. Though Mongol elites at the end of the sixteenth century were familiar with Buddhist teachings and may even have had some interest in the doctrinal differences between Sasya and Ge-lugs sects, Buddhist influence in Mongolia generally was still sparse.

When a revival came, it originated in Oyiroad territory. One source was China, which for the strategic reasons mentioned above subsidized some lamaist institutions in parts of western Mongolia and also supplied fresh printings of Buddhist liturgies. Another was undoubtedly the repeated Oyiroad migrations into the Tibetan cultural region of Qinghai (Kökö nuur). It was in Qinghai that Altan Khaghan was himself awakened to the cultural and religious authority of lamaism. But Buddhism's power to legitimate rulers and unite followers made it appealing throughout Mongolia. This power was markedly increased in 1588 when it was revealed that the

Fourth Dalai Lama was the Mongolia-born son of a Khalkha prince. Instead of being taken to Tibet for training, the Fourth Dalai Lama was taken to Altan Khaghan's capital at K k  khota.<sup>13</sup> Reformed Lamaism had become nativized among the eastern Mongols.

In the ensuing half-century, Reformed Lamaism spread --with the vigorous support of the political leaders-- among first the T med, then the Ordos, Khalkha, Chakhar and Kharachin Mongols. It battled remaining pockets of Sa-skya teaching, and the more widespread -- and tenacious-- shamanic folk religion, which was explicitly outlawed in the federations. The height of political coherence and influence of Reformed Lamaism in eastern Mongolia was reached during the reign of the Chakhar khaghan Lighdan (r.1604-1634), who sponsored a spectacular program of building monasteries, schools for the study and translation of religious works and publishing shops to reprint both Yuan-period texts and newly-imported ones. Lighdan was also sponsor of the specialized cult of the lamaist manifestation Mah k la, which celebrated him as an earthly universal Buddhist ruler, a chakravartin, or "wheel-turning" king, giving him Chinggis' claim to unlimited dominion. The eastward reach of Reformed Lamaism also embraced the Khorchins, bringing them even closer to the Chakhar-dominated federations. Reformed lamaism proselytizing among the eastern Buryats had been continuous from the 1580s (the western Buryats remained shamanists), and by Lighdan's reign had integrated them into the religious system that was now firmly based at K k  khota.

For the Oyiros, the religious milieu was not nearly as centralized, standardized or nativized as was the case to the

<sup>13</sup> "Blue village," Chinese Guihuacheng, modern day Huhhot, the capital of Inner Mongolia.

east. Because of their geographical position so close to Kōkō nuur and to Tibet, the Oyiroids were inclined to send their religiously-minded elites to Tibet for study, and they remained open to the various religious doctrines --both old-style and reformed-- based in Tibet. They were also thrown increasingly into contact and rivalry with the Muslim rulers of the oasis towns of Turkestan. On those occasions when peace could be concluded between Oyiroid and Muslim potentates, the result was sometimes marital alliance, without or without conversion, by one or another of the parties. Islamic rebels from eastern Mongolia fled repeatedly to the Oyiroid territories in Turkestan. Finally, contacts with Russians made Oyiroids familiar to a slight degree with Orthodox Christianity. Like Mongols of Chinggis' time, the Oyiroid leaders were often syncretic in their religious practices and policies, and were most inclined to emphasize their lamaism when it would bolster their claims as rivals of the eastern khaghans.

By the early seventeenth century, the political fracture of Mongolia into Oyiroid and Chakhar-dominated halves was accompanied by cultural distinctions that were mutually noted. Their languages --to the Chinese and undoubtedly to many other outsiders seen as mutually-intelligible dialects-- were regarded between themselves as distinct. Oyiroid was also written slightly differently, in the "clear script" introduced by the Oyiroid official Zaya Pandita in the early 1600s.<sup>14</sup> The Oyiroids were also not accustomed to call themselves "Mongols," but the "Four Oyiroids" (dörbön oyirad).

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<sup>14</sup> Extant documents in Oyiroid are numerous, but perhaps most noteworthy here is the legal code of 1640, usually called the "Great Law Code," Yeke ca[aj]a (in Chinese, Weilate fadian). It has subsequently been published at Huhhot as Oyirad ca[aj]a (1985).

"Mongols" (monggoli) was their term for the eastern alliance under the Chakhar Khaghans.

So, at the end of the Ming period, who was a "Mongol?" To the Ming court, peoples living north of the Great Wall had all been liable to be called Mongols. Detailed reports from informants such as Xiao Daheng (himself of distant Mongol descent) or Ye Xianggao described a complex variety of cultures north of Beijing, and of economic milieux: Some Mongolian-speaking communities were not nomadic but were agricultural; many groups who migrated with "Mongols" were speakers of Turkic or Tungusic languages; many living among the Mongols were themselves Han or were the descendants of Han who were taken by the hundreds of thousands by eastern Mongol raiders in northern China. Neither nomadism, nor religion, nor language were, in the eyes of official and private observers along the borders, sufficient to identify any particular group as "Mongol." But to the Ming court in Beijing, all the warlike peoples north of the Great Wall and increasingly penetrating western China were regarded as one kind or another of "Mongol." The fact that these Mongols could not themselves maintain unity or acknowledge a single identity was to many Ming observers only evidence of their inherent barbarity, greed, and failure to observe higher loyalties.

One of the persisting difficulties of the emerging Jin state under Nurgaci in the late sixteenth century was that of differentiating his followers from the culturally diverse populations of the Ming territory of Liaodong and the further reaches of Northeastern Asia. Among his early enemies were the Mongol and Mongol-influenced populations of the general region of the Khingan Mountain ranges, roughly between eastern Mongolia and the Jurchen

territories. These included the Khorchins, but also the great Hûlun alliance, made up of the federations of the Hoifa, Yehe, Hada and Ula. The majority of Hûluns were Jurchen in origin, but by the late 1500s spoke a distinct dialect, with a much larger portion of Mongolian loan-words, and among them occurred a very high incidence of Mongolian names, marriage into Mongolian-speaking lineages (either Khorchin or Kharachin), and extensive acculturation with the Khorchin or Kharachin populations generally. These things happened among the southern population where Nurgaci had his base, also. But the incidence there was infrequent enough to allow a regional consensus that those living north of Liaodong, in the general Khingan region, were "Mongols," no matter what their ancestry.<sup>15</sup> Nurgaci used this consensus on the cultural character of the Hûlun --denominating the northerners as alien in culture as well as hostile in intent-- to reinforce the new identity of his followers in the south

While the Jurchens of Nurgaci's time used the word "Mongol" (monggo) for the Hûluns, they did not always use this name to refer to the Khorchin and Kharachin immigrants to Liaodong and what is now Jilin province. Many had come into the region to serve as mercenaries in the Ming forces in Liaodong, and others remained pastoral, fleeing famine or the increasingly chaotic political situation of the Chakhar-Khalkha region. The Korean visitor Sin Chung-il saw these nomadic bands in 1596, dressed in furs, with their felt yurts on wagons, moving their herds toward appropriate pastures. Many, he noted, were also agricultural, and would sow fields in the spring to which they expected to return in the fall to reap a meager crop of wheat or millet. Like the Jurchens, the

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15 Agui et alia, Kaiguo fanglue 3.3a.



Koreans called these populations not Mongols but "Tatars" (dazi, daji).

By 1599 Nurgaci felt that his followers were well-enough distinguished from the Khorchin-Hûlun populations for him to style himself headman of the "Jurchens and Wildmen" (Manchu weji, Chinese yeren, Korean ya'in--the Tungusic-speaking hunting-gathering peoples of the Northeast), and to sponsor the development of a script derived from Mongolian (which had been the lingua franca of the region) for the writing of the Jurchen language. The wars against the Khorchins and the Hûluns had reached a critical stage, with the capture of leaders of the Hûlun federations and the beginning of negotiations that, after twenty years of fits and starts, would obliterate not only Hûlun power in the Northeast, but the federations themselves. In the meantime, the Khorchins, Kharachins and some portion of the Khalkhas worked toward an agreement of submission to Nurgaci that would spare them the slow but inevitable obliteration to which the Hûlun populations were being subjected. By this time the Khorchins were ready to formally transfer their loyalty to Nurgaci , and in 1606 presented him with his first title of "khan" --Kündülün khan (Jurchen Kundulen han) or the "Revered Khan.

Very soon communications and amicable overtures came from other groups of eastern Mongolia --particularly the Khalkhas, who though nominally subjects of the Chakhar khaghan were actually suffering under the fierce centralizing and particularism of Lighdan. The headmen of parties of significant strategic status were, like others with whom Nurgaci was forging alliances, incorporated into Nurgaci's family by marriage. The most highly favored married

Nurgaci's daughters, and sat at his court (after he declared himself khan of the Jurchens in 1616) as efu,<sup>16</sup> or princes by virtue of being his sons in law. The institution of the "five princes" (tabun ong) was the early definition of a "Mongol" elite within the Nurgaci state, and the delineation of a new pattern of leadership for those Khorchins, Kharachins and individual Khalkhas who had offered their followership to Nurgaci instead of to Lighdan

While Nurgaci competed against Lighdan for the loyalty of Kharachins and Khorchins at the eastern edge of Lighdan's domain, he does not appear to have been motivated to make a thoroughgoing imitation of Lighdan's style of ruling. But after the death of Nurgaci in 1626, his son Hung Taiji assumed the khanship and began to aggressively and imaginatively co-opt the fundamental features of Lighdan's regime. This meant active sponsorship of both Saska and Ge-lugs clergy, a widely broadcast appeal to inhabitants of eastern Mongolia to join the Jin cause, and growing ambition to excel Lighdan in publishing, the establishment of a capital, and reorganization of traditional military units. The climax of both Hung Taiji's ambitions to destroy Lighdan's regime and to create a grand scheme for ruling all of northeast Asia culminated in 1634, when Lighdan was deposed by revolts of his own military commanders at the encouragement of Hung Taiji. Symbolic artifacts --including the purported seal of Chinggis-- that had been in Lighdan's possession were carried to Hung Taiji. Teachers of the Mahākāla cult that had bestowed upon Lighdan the consciousness of Chinggis moved to Mukden to begin the preparation of Hung Taiji for the same indoctrination. The immediate result was the creation of Hung

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16 See also Crossley, A Translucent Mirror, pp.156-157.

Taij's status as Qing "emperor" (huangdi, hûwangdi), which was literally the amalgamation of Lighdan's Northern Yuan rulership with the Jurchen khanship inherited from Nurgaci. A new reign was begun, the Chakhar leaders were welcomed at Hung Taiji's capital at Mukden (Shenyang) and given new titles by their new ruler, and --signally-- the Mongol Eight Banners were created. These were different aspects of the same phenomenon, and all underscore the importance of Mongolian rulership as it had culminated in Lighdan to subsequent Qing efforts to define Mongols, give status to selected Mongol elites, and control Mongolia.<sup>17</sup>

### **Qing Innovations: the Lifan yuan and the Mongol Eight Banners**

After the deposing of Lighdan (who fled toward the Oyiroids and died shortly after), Hung Taiji convinced Lighdan's son Erke Khongghor (aged twelve) to join the Qing. He became a prince of the first degree (qinwang) by marrying one of Hung Taiji's daughters. Sixteen federations (their names largely corresponding to Dayan's organization of his two "wings") of Mongolia were recognized at Hung Taiji's court as loyal followers. Titles of regional leaders used under Lighdan, some dating back to the time of Altan, were coopted by the new Qing court and made the gift of the Qing emperor. These were spectacular additions to the small core of mostly Khorchin-originated "Mongols" who already constituted a small part of the Jin elite. But with the fall of Lighdan, new adherents to Hung Taiji came briskly from eastern Mongolia. Hung Taiji's primary ambition was to recruit the

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<sup>17</sup> Grupper, "The Manchu Imperial Cult of the early Ch'ing Dynasty: Texts and Studies on the Tantric Sanctuary of Mahâkâla at Mukden" presents the evidence for this from both the Mongolian and the Manchu texts. The entire work is indispensable but see particularly pp.76-99.

Khalkhas, who since the time of Dayan had represented the purest political traditions of the Chinggisids and constituted the heart of the Chinggisid khaghan's command. Indeed, between 1634 and 1636 a large number of Khalkha submitted themselves to Qing rule.

These were not direct conquests, but are best understood as a sort of compact into which the new Qing court and the populations of eastern Mongolia had entered. While Hung Taiji was careful to make the elites in this group directly beholden to him for their status and directly responsible to him for their actions, he had no interest in administering their populations directly. This was a contrast to Qing government in Liaodong, which was moving toward a model provided by the Chinese bureaucratic practices of magistrates responding more or less directly to a central government. For the management of affairs in eastern Mongolia Hung Taiji created a parallel government, based on indirect relations between the court and the distant populations. It began in 1636 as the "Mongol Department" (Manchu monggo yamun,<sup>18</sup> Chinese menggu yamen). One of its chief duties in these days was to track the titles awarded to Khorchin, Kharachin and Khalkha nobles who declared allegiance to the Qing. In the case of the leaders of the three large divisions of the Khalkhas --the Tüshiyetü (Manchu Tushetu), Jasakhtu (Manchu Jasaktu) khan, and Sechen khans-- the "Mongol Department" had not only to record their domains and the details of their estates, but also to record their entitlement by

18 Yamun being in this case an obvious loan from Chinese yamen. In the eighteenth century the Manchu name of the institution was changed to monggo i jurgan, after the Manchu word jurgan, which originally had no meaning associated with government, was invented to mean a bureaucratic department and displaced the Chinese loan-word. See also Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror*, pp.177-178.

Hung Taiji as first-degree princes (qinwang) in 1636 and arrange their ceremonial presentation. The "Mongol Department" also began assuming responsibilities --previously vested in the khans themselves of eastern Mongolia-- for the adjudication of disputes among the Khorchin, Kharachin, Chakhar and incorporated Khalkha (now, in Qing nomenclature, all "Mongol") populations. This meant on occasion delineating boundaries and institutionalizing new terms for economic interaction. These two functions were soon generalized to relations with the Romanov empire, so that by the 1650s the "Mongol Department" had in fact become the diplomatic office and colonial authority of the Qing empire in Inner Asia. During the later years of the Shunzhi reign (1644-1661), the "Mongol Department" was brought under the jurisdiction of the Board of Rites (libu --the umbrella department for foreign relations) and its name changed, in Chinese, to "Court of Colonial Affairs" (in Chinese, lifan yuan).<sup>19</sup>

Though the Manchu title, tulergi golo be dasara jurgan ("Office for Administering External Provinces") better reflected the functions of the institution, it left unresolved its actual spatial jurisdiction. All affairs relating to the "Mongols" (the populations of eastern Mongolia who had formally affiliated themselves with the Qing so some degree) came within its purview, but were managed in the spirit of what would now be called "distinct societies:" local traditions in law and religion were given priority whenever they did not conflict with the immediate imperial agenda. This precedent was followed in later years, as

<sup>19</sup> For background see Chia "The Li-fan Yüan," 30; Zhao, Qingdai menggu, pp.45-69; Veit, "Die mongolischen Völkerschaften," pp.408-410.

the lifan yuan assumed responsibility for governing other absorbed distinct societies and managing the interface between their semi-autonomous leaders and the Qing court. These included the tusi headmen of the indigenous populations of Sichuan, and the khôjas of Turkestan (both discussed in other chapters of this volume). These regions were ruled as military provinces outside the civil, bureaucratic government, and both had their civil affairs administered through the lifan yuan.

The lifan yuan, it is well known, was also the locus for early communication with Tibet, but it is less widely noted that this was done after 1650 through the specifically Mongolian department within the lifan yuan.<sup>20</sup> The relationship of the Qing emperor to the Dalai Lama (now based at Lhasa and not at Kôkô khota) was formalized face to face during the much-celebrated visit of the Dalai Lama to Beijing in 1651, and the lifan yuan was thereafter the bureaucratic arm of the Dalai Lama in his role as judge and administrative among the populations of eastern Mongolia and Qinghai. As the Dalai Lama was given delegated authority for the mediation of Mongol life, however, the Dalai Lamas themselves were brought increasingly under the observation and regulation of the Qing court, so that by the end of the Shunzhi era the lifan yuan was overseeing the selection of the Dalai Lamas. This reinforced the very strong relationship, in Qing eyes, of Tibetan religion to legitimate political rule over Mongolia. Together with the Mahâkâla cult that preserved and transmitted the chakravartin consciousness, this tradition was a direct and acknowledged legacy of Lighdan to the Qing rulers. Though Hung Taiji had destroyed

20 Chia, "The Li-fan Yüan," p.41.

Lighdan as a ruler, he had had no wish to destroy the tradition of rule that Lighdan had represented.

As the Qing rulers assumed Lighdan's mantle, they also assumed his problems, including resistance or rebellion from groups who did not wish to join their neighbors in submission to the centralization and reorganization of the region any more than they had wanted to submit to similar impositions by Lighdan. A major outbreak occurred in 1646 (three years after Hung Taiji's death), when Chechen-khan rose in rebellion and was joined for a time by the Tüshiyetü khan Gömbodorji and by Tenggis (leader of the Sünids who had joined the Qing in 1637 but subsequently thought better of it). The uprising was suppressed near Urga in 1648, and featured a stratagem that would be used by the Qing repeatedly in their progressive conquests of Mongolia and Turkestan: Commanders of "Mongol" ancestry (that is, Khorchin, Kharachin or Chakhar) were dispatched by the empire to suppress uprisings of "Khalkha" or "Oyirod" groups --in the case of the Chechen-khan rebellion, the Qing forces were headed by Minggadari (d.1669, Surut clan of Khorchins). Gombodorgji returned to the Qing fold and not only retained his title, but gained Qing recognition of his eldest son as the Jebcundamba Khutukhtu, an "incarnate lama" with a juridical and spiritual authority among the Khalkha intended (by Gömbodorji) to parallel that of the Dalai Lama in Tibet.<sup>21</sup>

Minggadari was exemplary of the population that was regarded by the Qing as truly "Mongol" --those who submitted early, supplied

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<sup>21</sup> Khutukhtu (Tibetan trulku, Manchu hutuktu) was a title acquired by Lighdan, giving him both secular and spiritual authority over the Chakhar. It was not a part of a political title in Mongolia again until Qing recognition of the Jebcundamba Khutukhtu in 1650.

Nurgaci with his first khal title, intermarried with the Nurgaci lineage, brought to the Qing emperors descent from and the symbols of legitimacy of Chinggis Khan. The eighteenth century and nineteenth century Qing nobility was adorned by the descendants of these early "Mongol" adherents, including Songyun (1752-1635 -- descendant of the Marat lineage of the Khorchins); Qishan, a descendant of the Khorchin leader Enggeder, who married a niece of Nurgaci; Sengge Rinchin (of Börjigid lineage of the Khorchins); Changling (1758-1838) Sartuk clan of Khorchins, son of Nayentai (1694-1762) and Chingsang (Qingxiang, d. 1826, Mongol bannermen of the Tubet lineage). Beginning in 1636 this ancestral group also formed the core of the Mongol Eight Banners.

Originally the banner organization had been composed of units of Jurchen and nikan<sup>22</sup> and soldiers of Nurgaci. After several stages of regularization, the scheme of eight banners was established in 1616 with the creation of Nurgaci's khanate. When the Mongol Eight Banners were organized during 1636-1638, the existing Eight Banners were for the first time distinguished as "Manchu" (the Hanjun would have no Eight Banners of their own until 1642, on the eve of the conquest of western Liaodong and northern China). The Chakhar Mongols, the smallest component of the Mongol banner population, were to a large extent unmodified by the institutionalization process, since their economic life, historical heritage and crucial association with the traditions of the khaghans gave them a pre-Qing identity that could be little affected, with any profit to the new regime, by reformation. But they were joined in the Eight Banners by some groups who were indistinguishable from others who were confirmed in the Manchu

<sup>22</sup> On the background of the nikan and the origins of the banners see Crossley, A Translucent Mirror, pp.53-128.



Eight Banners, and who were significantly changed by the incorporation process. These were the descendants of the Mongol immigrants to Liaodong who had served both Ming and Nurgaci for generations, and some portions of the erstwhile Hûlun confederacy (most of whom had gone into the Manchu banners by virtue of Nurgaci's declaration that they were "Jurchens" in the late sixteenth century). For this population, recreation as "Mongols," accompanied as it was by the requirement to be proficient in written Mongolian and to play the Mongol role in the state religious cult, represented a distinct alteration in their lives and careers. And, as with his criteria of Manchu identity, Hung Taiji applied the criteria of Mongol identity aggressively, insisting that Mongols in the employ of Ming fortifications in western Liaodong defect to him, as the new ruler of Mongolia.

The three khans of Khalkha, who had established close ties with the Qing in the Hung Taiji reigns, were unwilling in the early decades after the conquest of north China to have their territories incorporated into the empire. The young Kangxi emperor (r.1662-1722) was eager to achieve this annexation, since control of Mongolia was an important part of his attempt to contain the Romanov empire. But the Oyiroids to the west of Khalkha, and their leader Galdan, were opposed to Qing acquisition of the Mongol heartland, where the Oyiroids themselves sometimes took their herds when grazing lands were sparse. Diplomatic negotiations with the Romanovs, a tenuous partnership with the Dalai Lama, and handsome rewards to the Khalkha khans resulted in a pact that would have brought submission of central Mongolia to the Qing by the end of the 1680s. But Galdan intervened, attacking the Khalkha lands before they could be occupied by the Qing. The Kangxi emperor personally led Eight Banner contingents with heavy guns into the

field against Galdan's Oyiroid forces. In 1691 the Khalkha khans were received into the conquest elite, and by 1697 Galdan had been defeated, dying soon after.

The Khalkhas as a group were not brought into the Mongol Eight Banners, but were kept in their recognized three khanates (a fourth was added in 1706), "leagues" (aimagh), "banners" (khôshun) and "companies" (sumun). As had been the practice in the days of Nurgaci and Hung Taiji, the Khalkha nobles were given a very high niche in the elite (and now intermarried with the Qing imperial lineage), and like others of their station took to living in Beijing –by 1698, as many as 10,000 Mongols, mostly noblemen and their entourages, had established themselves in the city.<sup>23</sup>

Matters of land ownership and the legal problems resulting from it, market and currency management, the welfare of the herds, and the opening of Urga to commerce were brought under the jurisdiction of the lifan yuan. The khans of Khalkha were permitted by the Qing court to control regulations relating to growing trade at Urga, and the attendant affects of economic development on the littoral.

Acknowledged noblemen of the Mongol Eight Banner and of the Khalkha khanates lived much as Manchus of the Aisin Gioro or the titled families. It is worth noting, however, that Mongols were disproportionately represented among title holders. At the time of the Qing conquest of Beijing in 1644, registrants in the Mongol Eight Banners as a proportion of all Bannermen were a meager eight percent. But Mongol Eight Banner title-holders as a percentage of all title-holders were 25 percent –more than three times the proportion of Mongol bannermen among all bannermen. These

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<sup>23</sup> Chia, "The Li-fan Yüan" :177.

mismatched proportions among the Mongol Eight Banners were partly due to the very small number of Mongol bannermen in total. But there are other factors that tie this phenomenon to structural issues and identity politics in the early Qing. In the first decade after the creation of the Qing empire through the melding of the Jin khanate and the Chakhar khanate, Chakhar nobles incorporated into the Eight Banners were still being lavished with titles, stipends, and imperial favors. More generally, the relative privileges of title-holding Mongol bannermen reflect the critical role played by the elites of the Mongol Eight Banners in policing of Chakhar territories and in the campaigns against Galdan.

Commoners of the Mongol Eight Banners, distributed among the capital and provincial garrisons with others of bannermen, were perhaps the most privileged group within the garrisons. The roots of some of these families lay not in what would now be considered Mongolia, but in northern Liaodong and Jilin. This spectrum had been long occupied by groups who were probably of early Jurchen origin, but in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries had become involved with the growth of the Mongol empires under Chinggis and his successors in ways that stamped them with an enduring association with the languages and cultures of eastern Mongolia. Both Nurgaci and Hung Taiji exploited these ambiguities, and only well after the conquest did the Qing court seek to construct a history of both Manchuria and Mongolia that would establish certain peoples as unalterably "Mongol." They were constantly pointed to by the court as examples of military prowess for the

Manchus and Chinese-martial to emulate.<sup>24</sup> Though the Mongol bannermen as a group were never distinguished for success in the examinations, the blandishments heaped on them by the court for participation were at least equal to those given Manchus. Moreover, because those of Mongol registration within the Eight Banners were by far the smallest category, the quotas for Mongols passing the examinations were markedly more generous than for Manchus, and overwhelmingly more generous than for Chinese-martial by the end of the seventeenth century. This may have contributed to the prominence of Eight Banner Mongols in the officer ranks of garrisons throughout the empire.<sup>25</sup>

For Mongol commoners outside the Eight Banners, and in the Khalkha territories particularly (now the greater part of "Inner" --that is, pacified-- Mongolia), the political reorganization of the khanates displaced a portion of the traditional leadership and bureaucratized political processes that had previously been socially negotiated. The policies contributed to the economic transformation and gradual impoverishment of pastoral Mongols in the eighteenth century, as Chinese encroachment on grazing lands, usurpation of land rights by both Chinese officials and Mongol nobles eroded the basis of traditional economic life in Mongolia.

To the Qing court, the Mongol elites of the Eight Banners were as essential to the integrity of the empire as were the Manchu Eight Banner elites. As Hung Taiji had appreciated, they were the avenue

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24 For a typical pronouncement from the Nurgaci annals see Mambun rôôtô for TM 10:1:26 (1626).

25 On the Mongol Eight Banners see also Crossley, "The Ch'ing Conquest Elites," pp.??

to claiming the mantle of the Chinggis, and were cultivated largely for that reason. Mongol noblemen of the Eight Banner lineages were present for even the most carefully guarded shamanic rituals of the Qing imperial lineage, they were represented on all military councils, campaigns, and history projects. Qing princes learned Mongolian as well as Manchu, the better to maintain intimate connection with the Mongol nobility. At the same time, the court actively patronized education programs for the Mongols themselves. The Chakhars and Khalkhas had extensive literary traditions, and since the sixteenth century their elite had used Tibetan as their common written medium. Qing imperial printing houses produced both religious literature and poetry in Tibetan and Mongolian for this class. In 1716 the Kangxi court had already printed part of the Geser epic (a Tibetan folk cycle becoming more familiar in Mongolia at the time) for the Khalkhas. The Qianlong court continued such publishing also introduced a novel criterion of Mongol identity when it aggressively enforced policies to establish written Mongolian as the emblematic language of the Mongols. Eight Banner Mongols in particular were plied with educational and didactic texts that paralleled the cultural indoctrination program for the Manchus: language primers, historical origin narratives (most based on "Secret History of the Mongols," which the Qing first printed in 1662), translations of the dynastic histories of China, and religious liturgies and manuals.<sup>26</sup>

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#### **-The Qianlong Project: Define and Conquer**

<sup>26</sup> e.g. Menggu huaben (1761), the Menggu wenjian (redacted from the Qingwenjian of 1708. See also Crossley, A Translucent Mirror, pp. 264-265;322-323.

When the fourth Khalkha khanate, the Sayin Noyan khanate was created for Chering in 1725, it was clear acknowledgment from the Qing court that they had found a model of Mongol loyalism. Chering was of the Börjigid lineage of Chinggis' ancestors, and moreover was a descendant of Chinggis in the twenty-first generation, as well as a direct of descent of Dayan's first son Gerensje, the progenitor of nearly all the Khalkha Chinggisid nobles in the late Ming and Qing eras. Chering had been a child at the time of the wars against Galdan, and his household had surrendered to the Qing at the time of the Dolonnor conference in 1691. The Kangxi emperor personally selected Chering to be educated at the imperial schools in Beijing, and in 1706 gave his tenth daughter to Chering in marriage.<sup>27</sup> It was very shortly afterward that the Mongol bannerman (and fellow Chinggisid) Lomi was commissioned to write, in Mongolian, the "History of the Börjigid Lineage."<sup>28</sup> In it, the Qing rulers are praised as the inheritors of Chinggis's legacy and protectors of all Mongols in the present: "Can we say that it is not a great good fortune for us descendants of Chinggis that we have continued to have the grace of the Holy Lord Chinggis constantly bestowed on us? In my opinion, the fact that our Mongol nation, when about to collapse, was restored again, and when on the point of falling apart was reborn, is in truth entirely due to the amazing mercy of the Holy Emperor [of the Qing]."<sup>29</sup> For the remainder of the Qing period, Chering individually and the Börjigids as a class would define Mongol loyalty to, and

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<sup>27</sup> Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period, 756-757.

<sup>28</sup> Mongghol börjigid obogh-un teüke, 1732-1735. See also Veit, "Die mongolische Quellen," p.9.

<sup>29</sup> Mongghol börjigid obogh-u teüke. Translated and cited by Bawden, p.114 [original changed to conform to romanization].

legitimation of, the Qing. For his part the Qianlong emperor avidly played the role of curator to what he considered to be "Mongol" culture. Overall the features of the Qing construction of Mongol culture are clear: It was based on Buddhism, chakravartin rulership, hunting, holding court in giant yurts, seasonal sacrifices, and Mongolian literature (nearly all produced in the eighteenth century under Qing auspices).<sup>30</sup> In the Qianlong period it was increasingly important to introduce Mongolian into the "simultaneous" literary productions that had previously consisted of Manchu and Chinese exclusively.<sup>31</sup> In short, Qianlong representations of "Mongols" and "Mongolia" had become indispensable to the structure of Qing rulership. The Eight Banner Mongols, in particular, were encumbered with the responsibility of manifesting the Mongol identity that reinforced the emperor's universalism.

But the real Mongolia --and particularly western Mongolia-- remained pressing matters of policy and strategy. Groups in the regions might attempt to play the Qing and Romanov empires off against each other, which some Khalkha leaders had attempted in the 1660s. In another possible scenario, emerging leaders in the west might attempt to enlist the Tibetan clergy in their cause,

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<sup>30</sup> See also Veit, "Die mongolische Quellen," pp.8-9.

<sup>31</sup> In the latter field the ideological universalism of the Qianlong court, which had at its root the chakravartin conceit, produced a considerable number of literary monuments, among which was Yuzhi Man Han Menggu Xifan hebi dazang quanzhou (Han-i araha manju nikan monggo tanggût hergen-i kamciha amba g'anjur nomun-i uheri tarni, Qaghan-u bicigsen manju kitad mongghol töbed kele qabsurughsan бүкүли ганjur-un tarni), the imperially-published Kanjur in Manchu, Chinese, Mongolian and Tibetan (the publication had previously been sponsored by Lighdan Khan during his own days of chakravartin aspiration).

and thereby regain influence in eastern Mongolia. Galdan, who had been educated in Tibet, had in fact attempted this very thing. Though the Kangxi emperor had not returned to the battlefields in Mongolia after the defeat of Galdan and the Yongzheng emperor had made no serious attempt to extend Qing control to western Mongolia, the Qianlong emperor put the full weight of the empire behind a successful --but prolonged-- campaign to eradicate the political and cultural independence of the old Oyiurod territories. As was characteristic of many Qianlong policies, these were not simply military campaigns, but encompassed a major cultural offensive to seize, reshape and manipulate the language and symbolism of identity in throughout Mongolia.

The Mongol military elite of the Eight Banners was critical to the Qianlong program because of the role the emperor expected them to play in furthering the Qing conquest in western Mongolia, Turkestan and in Tibet. The aftermath of Galdan's destruction in 1697 had in some ways followed a familiar pattern: Galdan's heir and nephew Danjira accepted the appointment that Galdan had rejected, and in 1705 was appointed the governor (jasakh) of those Oyiurods who had submitted to the empire. Though the symbolism was the same as other Qing successes in turning resisters into collaborators, the scale was insufficient to achieve Qing ends. Only a small number of Oyiurods surrendered to the Qing after Galdan's demise. More --calling themselves "dsuun gar" (later written as Junghar or Dzungars as a variation on jegün ghar, the term for the khaghan's own divisions in the days of Dayan-- fled



westward and regrouped to oppose further Qing expansion."<sup>32</sup>

Because of their location the Dzunghars maintained strong connections with a variety of religious establishments in Tibet, including not only Buddhist but also openly shamanist sects. Through their religious and trade connections, Dzunghar leaders functioned within an extremely wide geographical range in the early eighteenth century, including all Mongolia and Tibet, large parts of Central Asia, and the western portion of the Northeast.

The Dzunghars were also thrown increasingly into contact and rivalry with the Muslim rulers of the oasis towns of Turkestan. On those occasions when peace could be concluded between Dzunghar and Muslim potentates, the result was sometimes marital alliance, without or without conversion, by one or another of the parties. Though the Oyiroids had preceded the Dzunghars in the region (and most Dzunghars were of Oyiroid descent), it became a distinctive feature of Qianlong rhetoric to neutralize the Oyiroid heritage of the Dzunghars. There was no delicacy at the lifan yuan regarding whether the Dzunghars were or were not Mongols (and therefore subject to Qing authority) --they were moxi elete menggu "the Oyiroid Mongols west of the Gobi."<sup>33</sup>

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32 A valuable narrative in English based on Russian sources is Bergholz, The Partition of the Steppe (1993). On the history of the Dzunghar (Zunghar) khanate see pp.31-68, 243-390. It is especially useful for those who have no access to Ilyia IAKovlevich Zlatkin's Istoryia dzhungarskogo khanstva (1964, 1983), the most distinctive work on the Dzunghar regime. Earlier work from Russian sources is Mark Mancall, Russia and China but concentrated on diplomatic exchanges among the Romanov and Qing empires with the khanates Central and Inner Asia. For an informative note on the sources for and modern historiography of Qing conflicts with the Dzunghar khanates see Millward, Beyond the Pass, pp.26-27, 266-267.

33 Qingshi gao, pp.14319-14528.

Qing treatment of the Dzungars and their leaders in the eighteenth century is the benchmark of Qing expansion. Galdan's nephew Chewang Arabdan, who had played a large role in Galdan's undoing, was himself ambitious. He defeated the Kirghiz and dominated them as far as Lake Balkhash, and also absorbed the Torghuuds. In the early eighteenth century Chewang Arabdan was successful in controlling part of Tibetan territory and deposing the last secular king of Tibet. His expansion stalled there, where the Qing --with the support of some Tibetan factions-- fought ferociously to establish a military outpost after 1718. He died in 1727 with the Tibetan situation unresolved, but his son Galdan Chering and other members of his family held out so tenaciously against further Qing expansion that the Qianlong emperor, continuing the policies of the recently deceased Yongzheng emperor, agreed to a truce in 1738, drawing a line at the Altai mountains between the Qing empire and the territories of "Dzungaria."

At the time the Qianlong emperor was new to the throne and was by default extending his father's policy of coexistence with the regimes of western Mongolia. His own inclination was to return to the strategic interests of his grandfather, who had viewed Qing control of western Mongolia and eastern Turkestan as indispensable to a secure hold over Tibet, Yunnan, Qinghai, Ningxia, and perhaps even Sichuan. Qing policies already in progress in eastern and central Mongolia were designed to weaken Mongolian leadership in such a way that Qing conquest of western Mongolia would in fact be necessary if central Mongolia were to remain securely in Qing hands. The tendency over the course of the earlier eighteenth

century was to further fragment and taxonomize the existing confederations of Khalkha particularly, so that the Mongols were eventually reduced to lineage groups or small administrative groups within the Mongol Eight Banners. Qing usage is summarized in "Draft History of the Qing" (Qingshi gao), where the peoples of parts of Mongolian and Xinjiang are called fanbu (dependent tribes), of which there are thirty-eight.<sup>34</sup> As a product of the fragmenting Mongol federations (aimagh) into progressively smaller portions, the names and divisions multiplied. Before 1757, the lifan yuan listed eighty-six Mongol "banners" (khôshun) in four khanates (Mongolian aimagh, Chinese bu) of Khalkha. The addition of Ningxia, Gansu and Qinghai increased this by 29 banners in 5 khanates. After 1757, the regions of Hami, Turfan, and the rest of Qing-occupied Turkestan were described as having 86 banners in ten khanates. Thus, by about the middle of the eighteenth century, the political decentralization of Mongolia, Turkestan and Qinghai was posited on a total of 149 banners, under 19 khans. The trend continued to the end of the imperial period, when parts of Mongolia and Xinjiang were administered under thirty-eight khanates (fanbu).

The events attendant upon the dramatic expansion of Qing political control across Mongolia and Turkestan, as well as the coeval political fragmentation, was the final Qing war against the Dzungghars and the suppression of series of revolts across the Khalkha territories. Soon after Galdan Chering had succeeded his father Chewang Rabdan as leader of the Dzungghars, he had decided not only to try to block the Qing military advance but also to

34 Qingshi gao, p.14528.

create a political alliance with Khalkha leaders that might disturb Qing control in the central Mongolia. As part of the plan he wrote to Lamajab, an officer of the Sayin Noyan khanate who was then living at Beijing, a remarkable appeal for resistance against Qing reorganization (and by implication a call to arms). The letter, often quoted, is worth reproducing again in Bawden's translation:

"We are of one religion, and dwell in one place, and have lived very well alongside each other... Considering that you are the heirs of Chinggis Khaghan, and not wanting you to be the subjects of anyone else, I have spoken with the Emperor of China about restoring Khalkha and K  k   nuur as they were before. But now the emperor of China wants to organize us, too, like Khalkha and K  k   nuur, into banners and sumuns, and grant us titles, wherefore I am going to oppose him by force of arms. If all goes well, I shall restore Khalkha and K  k   nuur. May it soon succeed! Mover over to the Altai, and dwell together with us in friendship as before. If war comes, we can face it together, and not be defeated by any man."<sup>35</sup>

As Bawden remarks, the letter is striking for its reversal of the very terms of loyalty the Qing had been using: Veneration of the living spirit of Chinggis determines the present loyalties of all Mongols. But where the Qing claimed to step into Chinggis' place by using a variety of institutions and implements imported to them from Lighdan's court, Galdan Chering claimed that loyalty to Chinggis meant rejection of Qing rule. There is, also a closer correlation to be made. The discovery of this letter to Lamajab

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<sup>35</sup> Bawden, The Modern History of Mongolia, p.114 (from Khalkhyn t   kh p.65 -- quote altered to make romanization consistent).

and his prosecution for being in communication with the Dzungars (which resulted in the loss of his title, a heavy fine, and a brief imprisonment) coincided almost exactly with the commissioning of Lomi's "History of the Börjigid Lineage" and its effusive praise of the ancestors of Lamajab's superior Chering (who at that moment was leading his troops westward to continue the war against the Dzungars). The Qing court not only fought Galdan Chering on the military front, but the ideological front as well.

There was reason for them to do so. The circulation of Galdan Chering's appeal in 1731 was known to have resulted in defections among Sechen Khan forces based at Erdeni juu, and other Mongol officers of the khanates were punished along with Lamajab for having contemplated defection.<sup>36</sup> But the document --or more precisely the logic and sentiment it captured--continued to stir insurrectionist talk and action among the Khalkha in particular. The truce between Galdan Chering and the Qing in 1738 may have caused some relief among the Dzungars, but certain of the Khalkha clearly saw the arrangement as only aggravating their own problems. When Galdan Chering died in 1745 and a succession dispute erupted among the Dzungars, the ambitious began to see a Khalkha revolt as the key to disrupting Qing control of Mongolia and allowing a new Mongol unifier to arise.

The Qing moved immediately to exploit dissension among the Dzungars after Galdan Chering's death by renewing its war. A minor Dzungar headman of the Khoyid federation, Amursana, defected to the Qing in 1755. In the characteristic Mongol-against-Mongol practice of the Qing he was dispatched by the

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<sup>36</sup> Veit, "Die mongolischen Völkerschaften," p.454.

Qianlong court back to Dzungharia to finish off the last resistance. His forces easily took Ili, in Turkestan, but Amursana then decided to rebel.

The story of the defection of Amursana and his attempts to coordinate military opposition to the Qing among the Uriangkha and the Khalkha, as well as to keep up a coherent Dzunghar resistance, is complicated but well known. What is more important to emphasize here is that the outbreak and suppression of the Amursana rebellion took place against a backdrop of rising tension between the Qing government and the Khalkha nobility. Among the best known of the Khalkha rebels at the time was the Chinggisid descendant and middle-ranked military officer Chenggünjab. But it is clear that the Qianlong court feared significant defections among the highest ranking and best trusted Khalkha leaders. The first flash point was the Qing arrest, torture and execution in 1756 of Erinchindorji, who had permitted Amursana to escape after arresting him on reports that he attempted to rebel. Erinchindorji was a younger brother of the current Jebcundamba Khutukhtu, and probably a grandson of the Kangxi emperor. He was a member of the highest-ranking family of Tüshiyetü khanate, whose relationship to the Qing court predated the conquest of China. Sympathy for rebellion on the part of Erinchindorji implied a possibility that the Jebcundamba Khutukhtu himself might rebel or give his approval to rebellion by other Khalkha nobles. And dissatisfaction among the nobles was known to be widespread because of the Qing court's tendency to blame Khalkha commanders for setback in the war against Amursana, resulting in demotions, fines, imprisonments and occasional executions.

Chenggünjab was so sure of general Khalkha disaffection that he

took his plans for revolt to Chebdenjab, son of the late Qing exemplar Chering, suggesting that the Jebcundamba Khutukhtu would lead troops against the Qing. Here the impetuous Chenggünjab had overreached himself: Chebdenjab in fact informed the Mongol Eight Banner general Bandi<sup>37</sup> of Chenggünjab's plans. Before his superiors could arrest him, Chenggünjab deserted with his troops (most Khalkha and Uriangkha in origin) and went west to join Amursana. They were never able to coordinate communications or actions, partly because Amursana had already suffered such serious defeats that he was constantly on the run and in jeopardy from a rebellion among his own followers. Chenggünjab continued to argue, by letter (written by himself in Mongolian) that other Khalkhas should desert the Qing, not only because of the conquest of Mongolia and the execution of Erinchindorji, but also because of the progressive impoverishment of the Khalkha populations under Qing rule. Responses were weak, and in early 1757 Chenggünjab was arrested and taken to Beijing where he was executed.

The real question for the Qing court was the Jebcundamba Khutukhtu. The Qianlong emperor had no difficulty understanding why the Khalkha leader might be wavering. His brother had been executed, and the Qing suppression of the Amursana and Chenggünjab revolts were resulting in the arrest and trial of thousands of looters, rebels and traitors across Mongolia, but particularly in Urga and Khiakhta. The Qing had ordered mercy (meaning slavery instead of execution) for the youngest of the participants, but overall the suppression of the revolts was not creating any love of the Qing among the Khalkha. The emperor considered whether to arrest the Jebcundamba Khutukhtu and assume control of the office

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<sup>37</sup> ECCP, p.10-11. Bandi was a Börjigid of the Mongol Plain Yellow Banner, fresh from pressing the Qing military occupation Lhasa.

in order to pre-empt any untoward acts (a policy being pursued with Dalai Lamas in Tibet). But the Tüshiyetü khanate general Sanjaidorji and others who remained trusted counselors advised against any attempt to interfere with the Khalkha leader. Instead, they suggested, the Jebcundamba Khutukhtu should be treated with heightened favor, "and get him to pacify the Khalkhas."<sup>38</sup> This was the course the Qing followed. As a result, the Amursana and Chenggünjab revolts were suppressed while lamas traveled the countryside carrying the Jebcundamba Khutukhtu's message of venerating Chinggis in his current incarnation as the Qing emperor. Chebdenjab was made general commander of the Mongol forces. And the Qianlong emperor, now in firm control of Dzungharia as well as Mongolia, concentrated on completing the military occupation of eastern Turkestan under Joohui and elaborating his cultural curatorship of the Mongol world.

## **VI. Conclusion**

The eighteenth century Qing relationship with Mongolia, its inhabitants, and a constructed "Mongol" history demonstrated the intense and complex relationship between the Qing rulership and its subjects. Though there were hints in the time of Nurgaci that the Qing predecessors knew something of the importance of religious presentation to legitimacy, it was primarily the example of Lighdan that taught the Qing how to claim authority in "Mongolia." But for the authority to be exercised, Mongolia had first to be constructed as a venue in which Chinggisid descent, inculcation of the Chinggisid consciousness via the Mahākāla rituals and Mongolian language as a medium for historical narrative and political speech, were all institutionalized and

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<sup>38</sup> Bawden, The Modern History of Mongolia, p.121.



persuasive. Through the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Qing court became better at all the general tasks -- administrative, ritual and historical-- necessary, and exercised them in addressing their various historical constituencies. In Mongolia, the relationships between the symbolic posturings of the Qing and the reception of the same symbols among the subject population was contested to a degree unusual among either the Manchu or the hanjun components of the Eight Banners.

Part of the reason was proximity. The Manchu and hanjun bannermen were moved, by the process of the conquests, from their respective origins in (modern) Jilin and (modern) Liaoning provinces respectively to China. Those living at Beijing in particular proved to be trustworthy at every critical passage of the consolidation of Qing rule. This was generally true also for Mongol nobles who had migrated from their ancestral lands to Beijing. Though Chenggünjab and Chebdenjab were both Chinggisids, their perspectives were clearly opposed on the legitimacy of the Qing. Chenggünjab viewed the issue from the perspective of a tradition of independence from outside rule, of the Qing condemnation of Mongol dignity in the execution of Erinchindorji, and of the loss of land rights and impoverishment through taxation of the Khalkha commoners. Chebdenjab, on the other hand, saw the Qing as promoting and enhancing the Mongol nobility, preserving and exalting Mongolian language and literature, and incarnating the spirit of Chinggis to which all Mongols should accede. It is hardly surprising that in the later Qing period Chebdenjab's perspective (backed as it was by the formidable military and printing resources of the empire) was the one that prevailed.

What is more worthy of remark is that the terms of identity

established by the Qing in Mongolia demonstrated enough congruence with historically embedded political ideology to be persuasive without the constant application of force. The unity which the Qing were determined to force upon the "Mongols" (though the former Dzungars would not be included) was in fact indistinguishable from the definition of "Mongol" that Chinggis had imposed upon the diverse groups of what is now the Mongolian steppe. It was not language or religious affiliation or even economic life that defined a Mongol, but the act of affiliating with Chinggis' organization and acknowledging him as the only (and later, as the eternal) leader. As noted in the beginning of this essay, many Mongolian-speaking groups did not get "Mongolized" (really, Chinggisized) in this process, and many Turkic-speaking groups did. It was this equation between followership and being Mongol that the Qing depended upon to give themselves legitimacy with the Mongol nobility and the religious establishments of the region. This was the model appropriated from Lighdan (as he had appropriated it from Altan and Dayan).

But the Qing also changed the criteria, opening the way to concepts of affiliation that we would now regard as "ethnic" or "national." They firmly installed linguistic unity and standardization as a criterion of identity, neither of which had any traditional standing. Through his idolization of regional types and nostalgia, the Qianlong emperor in particular inspired Mongols living in Beijing to identify with Mongolia as a place. And the style of government introduced via the lifan yuan preserved the credibility of the hereditary ranki systems. The purpose, of course, was to make these traditional institutions amenable to Qing manipulation, but the fact remains that at the end of the Qing it was the durability and the historicity of the

"traditional" Mongol organizations that were available to separatists and nationalists. But it is ultimately the Qing legacy of relative autonomy that has left the deepest mark on our notions of Mongol identity. For while language and place are constructs that all nationalists have in common, toleration of a Mongol identity that nevertheless is compatible with rule by a supranational entity (such as the Qing) is uncommon. A durable notion of coherent Mongol identity within within a non-Mongol state not only made the Qing empire possible, but has made the People's Republic of China --encompassing "Inner Mongolia" while bordering on an independent Mongol state-- possible.

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