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The Limits of Tartary: Manchuria in Imperial and National Geographies

MARK C. ELLIOTT

THIS ESSAY EXAMINES THE TRANSFORMATION from undifferentiated frontier to geographic region of that part of northeast Asia controversially referred to as Manchuria. This transition—from space to place, as it were—long has tended to be seen primarily in terms of the extension of colonial interests into China in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, as I shall argue, the invention of this place began much earlier, in the seventeenth century, and owed substantially to the efforts of China's Manchu rulers, who claimed it as their homeland, the *terre natale* of the Qing dynasty (1644–1912). Even as the area was joined to the larger empire, Qing emperors took care to invest what I define as “Greater Mukden” with a unique identity. This early process of geographic imagination was intimately bound up with the emperors' wish to emphasize the distinctiveness of the Manchu people vis-à-vis the Han Chinese as well as with their desire clearly to demarcate the extent of the territory under Qing control. The second project relied on technologies imported by Jesuit missionaries; the first more on ritual, administrative, and literary strategies. The combination proved more effective than we are accustomed to thinking: By the 1830s “Manchuria” had emerged into view on the world's maps, gradually displacing an older and more elusive toponym, “Tartary.” Seventy years later, it had come into use as a place name on Chinese maps, too. Even today, though the use of “Manchuria” is gauche in some circles, the region continues to enjoy a special regional identity that owes considerably to its Qing—and colonial—legacies.

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The discussion below proceeds from an initial consideration of the difficulties of using Manchuria as a place name (which I adopt here, but which some readers may find questionable) to a review of four different approaches taken by the Qing court toward the Manchu homeland. The first approach centers on ritualized imperial visits to ancestral tombs in the region, as well as a 1677 expedition to the Changbai (“Long White”) Mountains, the birthplace of the mythical forebear of the Manchus, which later became the object of state sacrifices. Second, in its literary aspect, I take up the description of Manchuria in a 1743 poem by the Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–1795), the *Ode to Mukden*. Heavily annotated to elucidate its many historical and geographical allusions, this work was perhaps the most complete expression of Manchurian regionality the court ever endorsed. Administrative status is a third angle from which I evaluate the imperial imagination of the region. Because of immigration controls and differences in its government framework, Manchuria remained relatively isolated from the rest of China until the early twentieth century, circumstances that abetted the growth of an identity distinct from the rest of China. The fourth and final approach to the creation of Manchuria I discuss is the cartographic. This refers to the mapping of the Manchu homeland that took place in the early 1700s and the important influence this project had upon both local and global consciousness, in particular with respect to the emergence of “Manchuria” as a place name in world geography. The aim of this analysis is to address three basic concerns: Why was this area invested with a separate identity and made into a distinct region? How was this investiture carried out? How successful was this project in the end?

In addition to placing the transition from “Tartary” to “Manchuria” in historical context, the inquiry here also seeks to frame the imagination of the region in a larger comparative context that considers more broadly the importance of geography, place, and space in the formation of nationalism and identity generally. If we grant that the source of contemporary China’s spatial self-perception lies in the transformation that occurred under the aegis of the Qing imperial enterprise, what can the rise of a place called Manchuria—which by the 1930s ran directly contrary to the dictates of nationalism—tell us about the political use of geography/ies in Asia? What is the relation between the spatial identity of the Qing and that of modern China? These are some of the questions raised in the conclusion.

“Northeast China” or “Manchuria”?

The frontier region whence the Manchus came at first lacked an all-encompassing toponym, and was known for most of the imperial period only by the names of the various tribes who inhabited it. The southern zone east of the Liao River was familiar enough that it early acquired its own Chinese name, *Liaodong* (sometimes also *Guandong*), but there was no overarching label, no larger concept of “place” in this corner of the realm.¹ In the Manchu language, too, areas were at first identified mainly

¹Without going into the various debates over the difference between “space” and “place,” to distinguish them in the reader’s mind it may be worthwhile just to note some of the characteristics commonly associated with each, viz., space as global, universal, objective; place as local, particular, subjective. While some see place in dialectic opposition to space, others see it as the daily practice of space; in all cases, as in this paper, space and place are understood as mediated, historically inflected processes. This is a vast literature; Merrifield 1993 is one point of entry.

according to the people who lived there, e.g., *yebe-i ba*, “the Yehe land/s,” *jušen-i ba*, “Jurchen land/s,” *monggo-i ba*, “Mongol land/s” (Elliott 1996). After the conquest, however, the Manchus reorganized the administration of their natal territory, dividing it into three zones: Shengjing/Mukden (created 1646), Jilin/Girin Ula (created 1653), and Heilongjiang/Sahaliyan Ula (created 1683) (Figure 1).² Heavily garrisoned and mostly off limits to Han Chinese—access was controlled by a pass system and inspections at gates along the Willow Palisade (Ch *liutiaobian*³), which surrounded the perimeter of the Mukden district—these were in effect military districts, so that control over the region, as in Mongolia and, later, Xinjiang, was maintained by military men of the Eight Banners.⁴ The largest garrison was at the city of Mukden (Ming Shenyang), where the Manchus made their capital in 1625.⁵

Together, the three districts of Mukden, Jilin, and Heilongjiang constituted what eventually became known in most world languages as “Manchuria” (Japanese *Manshū*; German *Mandschurei*; French *Mandchourie*; Russian *Man'chzhuriia*), the interstitial region between China, Russia, and Korea.⁶ Yet the word *Manju* never acquired a geographical sense in Manchu, nor did *Manzhou* (the Chinese pronunciation of the characters read *Manshū* in Japanese) gain acceptance as an orthodox place name in Chinese. This raises some fundamental concerns about who exactly imagined this place into existence, and when and why they did so, concerns that are at the heart of this essay.

“Manchuria” is without question a troublesome toponym. Though it continues to be widely used by cartographers today—appearing in the 1992 *Times Atlas of the World*, the 1993 *Rand McNally New International World Atlas*, the 1996 *National*

²The Jilin garrison general was first posted to Ningguta; in 1676, the position was relocated to Jilin, and the area was afterward referred to by this name. The Heilongjiang garrison general was first stationed at Aihui, later moving to Mergen (1690) and then Qiqihaer/Cicigar (1699). The boundaries of the modern provinces of Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang provinces, created in 1907, correspond only roughly to the Qing districts of Shengjing, Jilin, and Heilongjiang.

³Where original terms are introduced, the abbreviations “Ch” (for Chinese) and “Ma” (for Manchu) are provided when the context demands. When both Chinese and Manchu terms are given, the first term is the Chinese.

⁴Beginning in the early seventeenth century, the “banner” (*qilgūsa*) was the basic unit of military and social organization in Manchu society. The system was preserved after 1644 to maintain a separation between the conquering people and the conquered. Thus banner people were required to live separately from the Han Chinese either in Beijing or in garrison cities (a number of which were in Manchuria), and their special status was heightened by a wide array of economic, social, and legal privileges.

⁵The new name derived from the Manchu word *mukdembi*, meaning “to arise,” a sense reflected in its paired Chinese name, Shengjing, “rising capital.” Mukden was also known as Fengtian fu, and Fengtian (Ma *Abkai imiyangga*, more commonly *Fungtiyan*) also referred to the southern Manchuria region generally. After the fall of the dynasty, the city was known as Fengtian until the name was changed back to the older Shenyang, which is how it is currently known. For more on names, see Lee 1971, 59.

⁶More strictly: the area bordered on the south by the Great Wall and the Bohai Gulf, on the southeast by Korea, on the east by the Changbai Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, on the north by Siberia, and on the west by the Lesser and Greater Xing'an (Khinggan) Mountains—though the western border was sometimes extended to include eastern Inner Mongolia and the area of northern Zhili around Rehe (Jehol). While the Amur forms the present northern border of Heilongjiang Province, for most of the Qing the northern border with Siberia was hundreds of kilometers further north. The Qing also claimed the entire coastal region, including Sakhalin. Large swaths of this territory were lost to the Russian empire in the treaties of the late nineteenth century.

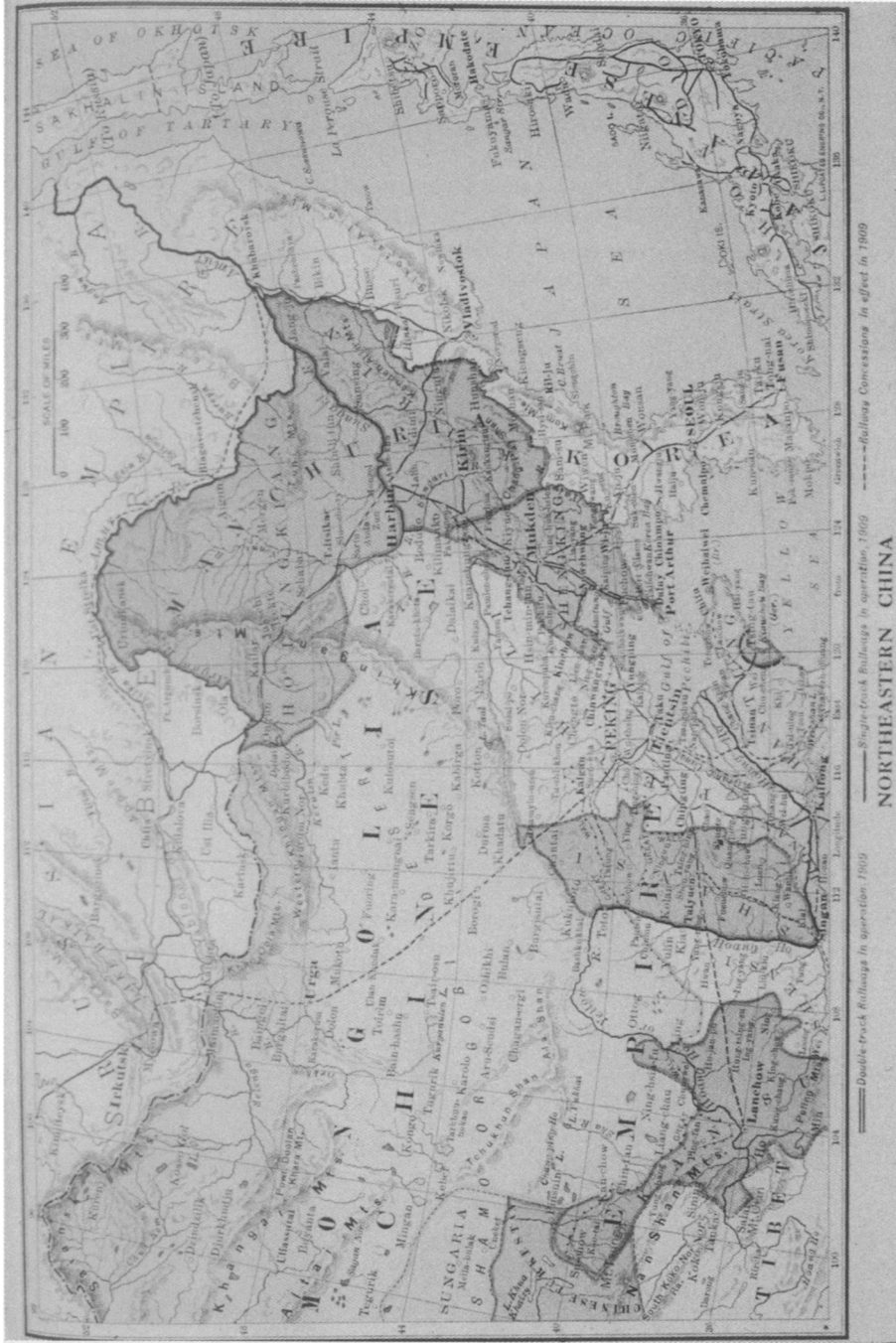


Figure 1. "Northeastern China." This map, made for Western readers in the early twentieth century, shows the position of Manchuria in relation to China and adjacent territories as well as the extent of the three newly created northeastern provinces of Shengjing, Jilin, and Heilongjiang. Reproduced from John Thomson, *The Chinese* (1909).

Geographic Atlas of the World, and the 2000 *Bertelsmann's World Atlas*—in recent years scholars have come to use it with caution, if at all. One reason is that “Manchuria” calls up unpleasant associations with Russian and, especially, Japanese imperialist designs on the Asian mainland, represented most notoriously by the 1932 establishment of the Japanese puppet state of “Manchukuo” (lit., “Manchu-country,” *Manzhouguo* in Chinese, *Manshūkoku* in Japanese; technically this became *Manshūteikoku* after the elevation of the former Qing emperor, Puyi, from Chief Executive to Emperor in 1934). Using the name “Manchuria” is thus not only inaccurate, but implies a sanction of odious colonial projects. “The Eastern Three Provinces” (Ch *Dongsansheng*), “Northeast China,” or simply “the Northeast” (Ch *Dongbei*) are therefore the preferred terms, and among Chinese scholars are the only acceptable references (Hosoya 1990, 105).⁷

Another reason for the taboo, as just noted, is that *Manzhou*, the Chinese equivalent of “Manchuria,” is acknowledged to function solely as an ethnonym, not as a toponym. That is to say, *Manzhou* in Chinese means “Manchu,” the name adopted in 1635 for the diverse Jurchen tribes grouped under Hong Taiji (1592–1643). It does not mean and never meant “Manchuria,” or so it is frequently asserted. Even Inaba Iwakichi, a staunch advocate of an independent Manchuria, insisted on this point (Inaba 1935, 546). For their part, postwar Japanese scholars have maintained the historical unjustifiability of using *Manshū* as a place name (although it still appears in popular writings in Japan). For example, as Nakami Tatsuo writes, “Originally, *Manzhou* was the name of the Manchu people or of their state; it was not the name of a region. In fact, neither Manchus nor Han Chinese have ever called China’s Northeast ‘*Manzhou*.’ ” Nakami, along with most other historians in Japan, China, and the West, scrupulously refers to Manchuria as “the Northeast”—though, as he points out, even this nomenclature is not free of baggage (Nakami 1998, 61).

There is no denying its colonial past or the tragic losses and suffering connected with disputes over who would rule this territory and its people. Furthermore, there certainly can be no question that external forces have been crucial in the formation of the region, since the 1689 Treaty of Nerchinsk (in Latin, Manchu, and Russian), which first occasioned the physical delimitation of a common border between the Qing and Romanov empires, must be regarded as an early landmark. But careful investigation raises serious doubts as to whether “Manchuria” is purely the product of the colonial imagination and whether the word *Manzhou* never acquired a toponymical meaning in Chinese. For these reasons, and partly also for convenience, I have elected to use the term Manchuria in this essay without quotation marks—unproblematically, as it were—except as I intend to emphasize its terminological status. The skeptical reader is invited to follow the reconsideration of the origins of Manchuria, both as a place and as a place name, in these pages.

The Ritualized Homeland

Recent scholarship makes it plain that group constructs such as the ethnos or the nation rely upon particular notions of place and space in their development. A common homeland (or the memory of one) is frequently observed as part of the

⁷In Chinese, it is rare to find *Manzhouguo* mentioned as such; even in scholarly literature today it is almost invariably preceded by the character *wei*, meaning “false, phony.”

repertoire of elements invoked by groups in affecting ethnicity, and the mapping of national territory is one way that modern states have been seen to consolidate themselves as “imagined communities” (Smith 1993; Anderson 1991; Winichakul 1994). This general pattern appears to hold among the Manchus, whose sense of who they were was very much wrapped up in their sense of where they had come from. Indeed, the very first lines of the *Manchu Veritable Records*—an account of the mythical origins of the Manchus and the exploits of the Qing founder, Nurhaci (1559–1626)—is a reference to geography:

The Changbai Mountains are two hundred *li* in height and one thousand *li* around. On the top of the mountains is a small lake called the Tamun, which is eighty *li* in circumference. From these mountains flow three rivers, the Yalu, the Sungari [Hüntung], and the Aihu. [. . .] The origins of the Manchu nation [Ma *gurun*] began on the eastern side of the Changbai Mountains, from Lake Bulhūri on Mount Bukūri.
(*Manzhou shilu*, 1–2)

This description is accompanied by a drawing of the mountains, with Tamun Lake near the summit and the three rivers flowing out from between the mountain peaks (Figure 2). The story goes on to relate the miraculous story of the conception by the shores of Lake Bulhūri of Bukūri Yongşon, the first progenitor of the imperial Aisin Gioro lineage, and as such the ancestor of all Manchus. Of course, as is well known, the account in the *Manchu Veritable Records* was the product of the eighteenth-century court. But it was based upon early seventeenth-century records, extensive fragments of which have come down to us, and when one examines these materials, the Changbai Mountains are there, too.⁸ It is plain, then, that the link between identity and geography was not solely the product of later imaginations, but was present from the beginning of the Qing imperial enterprise. Moreover, the common chords struck with other Inner Asian origin myths—among the Mongols, one immediately thinks of the miraculous conception of the ancestral line of Cinggis Qaγan and its origins at the sacred peak of Burqan Qaldun—suggest that the link was one generally shared in the Altaic world (Cleaves 1982, §1, 5, 21).

The inseparability of Manchu identity and Manchu place was reinforced in important ways once the Manchus took over China. Especially since most Manchus left Manchuria to fight in the campaigns of the conquest, later taking up residence in Beijing or in one of the provincial garrisons, the court found it necessary to remind itself and its people of their geographic roots, lest fading memories give way to the idea that the Manchus actually lived in China, and did not merely occupy it. One means by which the court did this was by incorporating Mukden and the Changbai Mountains into court ritual. This process began in 1671 when the eighteen-year-old Kangxi emperor returned to Mukden to pay respects to the Qing founders, whose mausolea on the city’s outskirts had just been completed (*Shengzu shilu* 36: 17a). Kangxi’s was the first visit back to Manchuria by any emperor since the conquest, and the first of three “Eastern Tours” (Ch *dongxun*) he would make in his long reign

⁸The *Veritable Records* for the reign of Nurhaci (called *Taizu Wu huangdi shilu*) provided the blueprint for the later *Manzhou shilu*. The *Wu huangdi shilu* was revised during the reign of the Shunzhi emperor (r. 1644–1661). The beginning passage there, quoted in part above, contains language identical to that in the *Manzhou shilu*. Furthermore, this passage, as Matsumura Jun has shown, was borrowed from an earlier text written in the second half of 1635. Thus we can confidently state that this legend, including the opening geographical setting, dates from before the Qing conquest. See Matsumura 1997.

(the second visit came in 1682, the third in 1698). The Qianlong emperor (grandson of Kangxi) continued this tradition, visiting Mukden in 1743, 1754, 1778, and 1783, even bringing his mother along on the first two visits. His successor, the Jiaqing emperor, went in 1805, and Jiaqing's successor, the Daoguang emperor, made what would be the last imperial visit in 1829 (Ma 1997).

Compared to the tours to Jiangnan, the Eastern Tours were excursions on a modest scale. The emperor typically stayed in the palace in Mukden for seven to ten days while he carried out various activities there and around the city. There were banquets for local Manchu officials and Mongol chieftains to cement the bonds between the Qing court and its representatives and allies; formal inspections of troops, equipment, and horses at Mukden and other points along the way; presentations of gifts and amnesties for the local people; and archery contests and hunting whenever the opportunity presented itself (a large hunting reserve was maintained north of Mukden). But most important was the sacrificial activity at the tombs and temples of the Manchurian capital. Sacrifices to ancestors were part of Manchu shamanic tradition, and involved rites, prayers, objects, animals, and foods very different from those used in Chinese rituals. Preparations were elaborate. Once the sacrifices were done (they took the better part of five days), the emperor would sometimes continue traveling farther north. In 1671, for instance, after quitting Mukden the emperor spent seventeen days touring northern Shengjing and southwest Jilin districts before returning to Beijing via Mukden (*Shengzu shilu* 37: 23a; 38: 3a).

That Mukden was not always the final destination suggests that the Eastern Tours were not necessarily just exercises in filiality, even though they were presented that way (*Shengzu shilu* 35: 3a–b; 36: 21a). Additional sightseeing served to satisfy the curiosity of the emperor and his entourage about the Manchu homeland. In the spring of 1682, on his second tour, the Kangxi emperor went with the ten-year-old crown prince to Mukden to give thanks at the tombs of Nurhaci and Hong Taiji for victory over the rebel Wu Sangui.⁹ Once this act of military ritual was accomplished, the emperor, according to the diary of an official who was part of the group, “wished to see more of the frontier (Ch *bianjiang*), to explore the land and personally inspect the difficult [circumstances] of his ancestors’ beginnings” (Gao 1986 [1684], 105). In his own letter to his grandmother, the emperor wrote that he wished to “admire the [place where the] ancestors lay their glorious foundation” (*Shengzu shilu* 101: 15b). The party thus ventured another 350 kilometers further north before reaching Girin Ula, on the Sungari River, stopping, naturally, to hunt along the way (they bagged thirty-seven tigers). The emperor was much moved by the landscape he encountered and left a number of poems, among them these lines about the Sungari, which the Chinese call the Songhua:

“Boating on the Sungari” (*Songhuajiang fangchuan ge*)

Pure is the water of the Songhua;
 Its spring waves, born of the evening rain,
 Mounting into glittering whitecaps of folded brocade.
 The colorful fishhawk-emblazoned sails follow the breeze,
 The music of Shun in accompaniment, singing down the middle channel,
 Lined on both sides by verdant slopes and emerald cliffs.

⁹On this visit, see the account in Gao 1986 [1684]. Verbiest, who accompanied the imperial retinue, also made a brief reference to these events. See Verbiest 1854. The prayer offered at Nurhaci's tomb is found in *Shengzu shilu* 101:16a–17a.



Figure 2. *Changbaishan*. This illustration, reproduced from the first page of the *Manchu Veritable Records*, accompanies the explanation of Manchu origins in the Changbai Mountains. Note the five peaks surrounding Tamun Lake, from which issue the region's three main rivers.



Figure 2. Continued

How brilliantly float the clouds below the dazzling sun;
 Coursing swiftly downstream, we startle the water-dragons,
 Our masts and vessels densely moored by the riverside gaoes.

Down to a man, our lion-hearted soldiers are peerless,
 Crimson cords dangling from pennants mirrored in the water;
 But I have come to survey the land, not to review the troops.

Pure is the water of the Songhua;
 Its waves billowing and roiling,
 Deep and clear they pass into the far distant clouds and mist.

(Li 1994, 183)

In addition to sightseeing, two immediate items of business brought the emperor to Jilin. One was to inspect the new shipbuilding works erected as part of the planned offensive against Russia. The other was to honor the Changbai Mountains. As soon as he reached Girin Ula in early May, the emperor led his party to the north bank of the river, where, before the Changbai range 200 miles to the south, all performed a complete series of three kneelings and nine prostrations. Later, after entering the city, the emperor dedicated the following words to the mountains:

“A Distant Offering to the Changbai Mountains” (*Wangsi Changbaishan shi*)

Famed mountain, surpassingly excellent, you are the true source of the two rivers,
 Cerulean mists encompassing the heavens, carmine clouds embracing the earth.
 Whence eternal rises the augur of fortune, we revere with one generation’s rites;
 Craning our heads toward the sky, your towering majesty overawes the imperial gates.

(Li 1994, 181)¹⁰

The emperor’s interest in the Changbai Mountains was not new. Five years earlier, in 1677, he had instituted a ritual sacrifice to the mountains. This was a second way, apart from ritual visits to Mukden, in which the geography of the Manchu homeland gained symbolic currency. The sacrifice began after an expedition was sent to the Changbai Mountains, the Manchu ancestral birthplace, and returned with a description of its exact location, heretofore unknown. A team of four, led by imperial clansman Gioro Umuna, left Beijing June 4 and arrived June 22 at Girin Ula. While there, Umuna recruited the help of a colonel at the garrison who had grown up in the shadow of the mountains. A small party then left Girin Ula on July 1, sailing up the Sungari for over a week, when they left the river and began a five-day overland trek. On July 16 they arrived at the foot of the Changbaishan:

We came across a round clearing surrounded by dense woods, where there was a meadow but no trees, and a stream in front. [. . .] When we walked out of the woods, the mountains were shrouded in fog and clouds and we could not see anything. We knelt down before the mountain and chanted a prayer. The moment we were done, the fog cleared and the Changbai Mountains leapt up vividly before us. We were thunderstruck. We continued climbing the path that led upward before us. [. . .] In

¹⁰A different poem by the same name is recorded in Gao 1986 [1684], 110): “Your sacred precincts are majestic and sublime, / More beautiful than the Water Spirit’s palace. / Sacrifices outside the cloud pavilion, / Spirit-money rising and falling within. / Ceaselessly your black waters flow, / You meet the distant ocean air. / We prepare the *fengshan* in your honor, / Making offerings as we pay our respects.” The *fengshan* sacrifice was the most important legitimizing rite the emperor could perform, as it symbolized his reception of the Mandate of Heaven.

the distance were the massive shapes of the peaks. On closer inspection, their form was very round, and everything shone bright white from the ice and snow. The mountains are about one hundred *li* high and there is a lake on top, surrounded closely by five peaks. The water is green and extraordinarily pure, the waves playing on the surface.

This could only be the Tamun Lake described in the *Manchu Veritable Records*! On their way back they reported an unusual occurrence when they startled a flock of deer on the mountain. Most ran away, but seven of the deer fell to the ground, “as if someone had pushed them over,” and rolled down the hill right where the group was standing. Thinking that this was a gift from the spirit of the mountain (Ch *shanling*)—they were hungry and their number was originally seven—they shot all seven deer: “We accepted the deer and bowed to the mountain again. [. . .] After taking twenty-three steps further down, we turned to look back and saw only clouds and fog once more. [. . .] We never saw the mountains again” (Yang 1993 [1707], 11–12).

Umuna’s account greatly impressed the emperor, who observed that “there are many miracles in this venerable place of providential origin,” and decreed that the spirit of the Changbai Mountains should be given a ritual title and that sacrifices should be made to it “mark the dynasty’s flourishing as a gift from the gods” (Hummel 1943–44, 625; *Shengzu shilu* 69: 3a–b). Shortly thereafter the Board of Rites responded by recommending the institution of semiannual sacrifices to the spirit of the mountain. The emperor approved this proposal, adding the significant stipulation that they should be carried out according to the same protocol used in the sacrifices to the Five Sacred Peaks (Ch *wuyue*) in China proper (Yang 1993 [1707], 11; *Shengzu shilu* 70: 8a; 71: 10b; Liu 1998).¹¹

The emperor’s satisfaction that the Manchus’ legendary place of origin had been established was well justified, for corroboration of the story of Bukūri Yongšon and the rise of the Aisin Gioro clan lent the Qing court—always anxious about how it was perceived by the Han Chinese—greater authenticity and prestige. In fact, it seems that the expedition’s success caused the emperor to refine somewhat his ideas about the relationship between Mukden and the Changbai Mountains. On his first visit to Mukden (1671), Kangxi referred to it using the stock phrase, “the momentous ancestral birthplace” (Ch *zuzong faxiang zhongdi*) (*Shengzu shilu* 36: 22b). But on his second visit to the tombs, he characterized Mukden as the “momentous land where the nation was established” (Ch *guojia zhaoji zhongdi*) (*Shengzu shilu* 101: 21a). It would seem that *zuzong faxiang zhongdi* was reserved for the Changbai Mountains after 1677—the expression is used in the edict commanding Umuna to explore the Changbaishan (Yang 1993 [1707], 10)—and was applied when the emperor went to Girin Ula and sacrificed there in 1682,¹² along with another term, “the place where the dragon arose” (Ch *longxing zhi di*) (*Kangxi qijuzhu*, 831). The shift may be explained by the Kangxi emperor’s recognition that, as the place where heaven had inaugurated

¹¹The “Five Sacred Peaks” are usually Taishan, Huashan, Hengshan, Songshan, and (with a different character) Hengshan. “China proper” refers to the core areas of Chinese civilization as distinct from the border regions. On some Chinese maps, one sees this conceptualization reflected in the term *Zhongguo benbu*; the corresponding Japanese term, *Chūgoku bondo*, is quite similar.

¹²*Shengzu shilu* 101: 25a. In 1698, he referred to Shengjing in slightly different terms again, calling it “the place where generations of ancestors founded [the Qing]” (Ch *liezu chuanxing zhi di*) (*Shengzu shilu* 190: 20a). On this point, see also the interpretation in Liu 1998, 38. My thanks to Ms. Liu for sharing her work with me.

the Aisin Gioro lineage, the Changbai Mountains ranked above Mukden in the hierarchy of Manchu origins. The elevation of the Changbaishan to the same standing as the Five Sacred Peaks (which had strong associations with Chinese emperors of antiquity) and the institution of the *fengshan* sacrifice was at once a gambit to underscore Qing legitimacy and a means of grounding the identity of the imperial lineage to a specific place, which, however remote, the court could claim had been surveyed.

More than the identity of the imperial lineage was at stake here. Because in the Altaic world “all members of the tribe, including the common people, were, by tradition, considered descendants of a single ancestor” (Fletcher 1986, 16), the ancestor of the Aisin Gioro was the ancestor to whom all Manchus traced their descent. This idea was unequivocally stated by the Yongzheng emperor, Kangxi’s successor, in 1728: “The Manchus are all the descendants of the August ancestors Taizu [Nurhaci], Taizong [Hong Taiji], Shizu [the Shunzhi emperor], and Shengzu [the Kangxi emperor]” (*Shangyu baqi*, Yongzheng 6: 2a–b). In other words, every Manchu shared the same origin, folded into the noble myth of the origins of the Qing ruling house, and every Manchu shared the same homeland, the Changbai Mountains.

That this was primarily an elite notion cannot be denied, and it is doubtful whether ordinary Manchus, especially if they served in garrisons in the provinces or in the far western frontier, thought very much about the “Long White Mountains.” Yet the court’s efforts to foster a regional identity focused on the Changbai Mountains did not go entirely unrewarded. For one thing, the mountains became a trope of later Manchu poetry, figuring in the titles of at least four different collections published between 1723 and ca. 1908. Some critics even speak of a “Changbai School,” referring to the large number of essays and poems on nostalgic, nature-related Manchurian themes (e.g., the Changbai Mountains, the Sungari River, hunting, ginseng) written during the Qing, much of which was penned by bannerman authors, such as Cao Yin and Singde (Guan 1997). This literary production testifies to the enduring place of the mountains and the importance of the Manchurian landscape in the collective imagination. Indeed, the Changbai Mountains themselves gradually came to be a symbol of Manchu identity. Whereas Manchus commonly identified themselves according to their banner affiliation, as the years passed, a growing number of Manchu literati chose instead to prefix their signature with the two characters *changbai*.¹³ Though few, if any, of them had ever been there, they were nonetheless moved in this way to pay tribute to the supreme site of ancestral memory.

I Sing of Mukden

The symbolic connection established in the seventeenth century between the Changbai Mountains and the Mukden tombs provided the foundation for the regional identity of what we might call “Greater Mukden.” By the Kangxi emperor’s definition, this extended well beyond the area under the jurisdiction of the Mukden garrison general to encompass “the land outside Shanhaiguan Pass as far as Ningguta and other places” (*Shengzu shilu* 101: 21a) (more on this is said in the section below

¹³This practice was remarked on even in the Qing. See Chen 1984 [1880], 95. A curious postscript to this use of the expression “Changbai” is that one of the five time zones declared in the first years of the Republic of China, applying to the northeasternmost reaches of Manchuria, was called “Changbai time” (*Changbai shijian*).

on cartography). Moreover, Kangxi's use of ritual and poetry to establish the Greater Mukden as a mnemonic site of Manchu identity set precedents that his successors, notably the Qianlong emperor, would follow. In 1743, after his inaugural pilgrimage to the Manchu homeland, Qianlong decided that a mere poem was not enough: he would write an ode (*Ch fu*), in the classic Chinese tradition of the "Capital Odes," collected in the fifth-century *Wen xuan* (Knechtges 1982–1986). The result was the monumental *Ode to Mukden* (*Shengjing fu/Mukden-i fujurun bitbe*), once described grandiosely as "one of the most involved and extravagant events in the annals of world publishing" (Etō 1956, 235). Five years after the initial publication of the bilingual oeuvre, the emperor ordered a jubilee printing in both Chinese and Manchu using thirty-two decorative styles, including fonts that carried fish-head, bird-head, and phoenix-feather serifs, fonts that were all right angles, fonts that were no angles, and so on. Some of the Chinese styles in the 1748 edition were genuine pre-Qin forms, but the Manchu styles had to be invented. It is doubtful that anyone could have read them; they must have been intended for collectors only.

The *Ode to Mukden* is an overflowing paean to the majesty of Greater Mukden. Where the Kangxi emperor had raised the Changbai Mountains to parity with such revered summits as Taishan, so the Qianlong emperor took to speaking of Mukden, "the place where our nation's foundation began" (2b/67:9)¹⁴ in the same breath as Bin and Qi, the homeland of the founders of the Zhou dynasty thirty-three centuries earlier. Apart from emphasizing the region's historical significance, the emperor referred also to its ritual importance: "Mukden," he rhapsodized, "is the most excellent place under heaven:"

As is proper, I admire from afar the imposing tombs at Yongling, Fuling, and Zhaoling. But unable to approach in person to perform the sacrifices, how should I be able to demonstrate my true reverence to later generations? Hence . . . I set out from Beijing. Arriving at the place we formerly made our capital, I beheld the traces of the ancestors, and was overcome with filial thoughts. On this occasion, I observed all the riches [of the land]: the firm strength of the mountains and rivers, the virtuous simplicity of the people and all their possessions, the excellent fertility of the grains and fields. Thus have I seen what is truly a country blessed by heaven, in its sum a place where khans arose.

(3b–5a/ 68:10–69:7)

Though it was the tombs that originally prompted his visit, the emperor makes clear here that he was just as impressed by the very land and its people, which, in his eyes, surpassed those of other places. The point for us is not that he was biased (that goes without saying), but that he chose to link the vitality of the dynasty with the vitality of the place, Mukden.

In invoking the name "Mukden," it appears that the emperor had more in mind than just the space within the walls of the old Manchu capital. His poem is a tribute to the entire region—to Greater Mukden—whose craggy peaks, wild forests, and fertile plains were unbelievably dense with life. The poem gives long lists of native animals ("tigers, leopards, bears, black bears, wild horses, wild asses, deer [four kinds], wolves, wild camels, foxes, badgers . . .") (20b–22a/76:1–3), birds ("pheasant, grouse, geese, ducks, herons, storks, cranes, pelicans, swallows, woodpeckers . . .") (22b–25a/76: 6–10), plants ("reeds [five kinds], thatch, water scallion, safflower,

¹⁴Citations are to Qing Gaozong 1743; second citation is to page:line from the text (minus annotations) reproduced in Klaproth 1828, which is more widely available.

knotweed . . . ginseng . . . iris . . .”) (25b–27a/77: 4–9), and trees (“ten-thousand-year cypress . . . the light green maple . . . the cedar, which makes spring last eight thousand years . . . the enduring oak”) (27a–28a/78:1–4). The list of fish and mollusks goes on for twenty lines. The profuse concentration of such vitality brought heaven and earth together “like a forge” to make Greater Mukden a “harmonious place,” which was then given to the Great Qing *gurun* “forever” (31b–32a/80: 5–7).

The praises of Greater Mukden’s natural wonders are further sung in passages on the sky, stars, and clouds, its fields and rivers, its herds of fine horses, and its grains and vegetables; its industrious and thrifty inhabitants are credited with the perspicacious husbanding of this land of plenty. Near the end of the poem, the language becomes even more fulsome:

Majestic Mukden was founded along the north bank of the Shen waters. Its mountains are high and its rivers broad. It is fixed as a universal model, a most wondrous place, great as a tiger or a dragon. [. . .] Established on a grand scale, it promulgates the rule of great kings. [. . .] The shining Long White Mountains, embraced on one side by the sea, attest to this. Such a propitious location will last forever, generation after generation. It surpasses and humbles all [other] places and has united [lands] within and [lands] without.

(65b–67b/95:6–96:5)

As this passage makes plain, the emperor saw Greater Mukden as a true “place,” a special region where the land, water, and air—indeed, the whole of nature—combined to form a distinctive environment. In the *Ode*, then, we are dealing with a true chorography and not a mere geography.

It is significant that for the Qianlong emperor, Mukden’s foremost qualities were its unusual ethereal characteristics, originating in the Changbai Mountains. Standing at last before the tombs of his grandfathers, he wrote of “reflecting upon the marvelous humors (*Ma ferguwecuke sukdon*) and admiring the display of virtue” (8b/ 70:9–10) at the site. The source of these “marvelous humors”?

In the beginning, our Great Qing dynasty arose from origins in the Long White Mountains. Marvelous humors there gathered—it was a most resplendent and auspicious [place].

(12a/72:6–8)

The emperor then quickly recounted the myth of Bukūri Yongṣon and the progress of the early Manchus in consolidating power until, in 1625, the “rising humors” amassed and the city of Mukden was settled (14a–b/73:5–6). The connection here with the Changbai Mountains was fundamental. The belief—upheld by locals until the early twentieth century—was that a “dragon vein” (Ch *longmai*) ran between the Changbaishan and the imperial tombs at Mukden, along which was transmitted the animating force (Ch *longqi*) that had brought the Qing dynasty to power.¹⁵

One is reminded here not only of the power of geomantic beliefs, but also of the environmental determinism of the twelfth-century philosopher Chen Liang, who believed that the essence of the Han people depended upon the unique “humors” (Ch *qi*) of the Central Plain, which he feared would be dispersed after their long occupation by alien conquerors (Tillman 1979). Similarly, the Qianlong emperor saw in the superior environment of Greater Mukden, above all its *sukdon* (translated above as

¹⁵Enatsu 1994, 107–10.

“humors,” but also understood to mean “atmosphere,” “ether,” “airs”), the source of Manchu greatness and imperial superiority over lesser peoples. This was surely his meaning when he wrote of Mukden’s having “united [lands] within and [lands] without”—that the Manchus, on the basis of their ancestral association with such an exalted place, had unified the realm. His point was simple enough: Mukden was an imperial place and had produced an imperial people.

The irony here, of course, is that by 1743 acculturation was already making inroads on the “ancient virtues” of the Manchu conquerors. Many bannermen had lost the ability to speak the Manchu language or even to shoot properly, and the frugal ways of the conquest generation had long since been forsaken for the pleasures of China’s urban centers. The publication of the *Ode* ought therefore be seen as part of the Qianlong emperor’s larger scheme to rekindle Manchu ethnic pride and encourage the preservation of putatively traditional customs, a program which mostly failed (Crossley 1987; Elliott forthcoming). His pleas to uphold “the old Manchu way” (*Ma Manjusai fe doru*) falling on deaf ears, one can easily imagine that as the *Ode* was being disseminated to Manchus around the country, the emperor was thinking to himself, Now if only the people would prove themselves worthy of the place!¹⁶

Manchuria for the Manchus

The Qianlong emperor’s literary vision further promoted the idea of a Manchu homeland at a time when Manchu identity was in crisis. But even as he wrote the *Ode*, the emperor was painfully aware that his beloved Mukden was, demographically speaking, slipping from his grasp. Qianlong hence went even further to explicitly associate Manchu identity and Manchu space by espousing the idea not only that Manchuria was different from Chinese territory, but that it should be reserved for Manchus. He therefore imposed for the first time a legal ban on Han settlement in the Manchu homeland.

These notions seem to have long been in the air: In 1679, the Kangxi emperor wrote to the Mukden garrison general that, “Mukden and associated places are incommensurable with lands in the interior [i.e., China]. [They are] Manchu places, and Manchu soldiers have dwelt [there]” (*Gongzhongdang Kangxichao zouzhe* 8: 27).¹⁷ That Manchuria was a Manchu place was implicit also in the policy (effective until 1756) requiring the bodies of bannermen who died “abroad”—that is, in the Chinese provinces—to be repatriated to Beijing, while permitting the local burial of Manchus who died on duty in Mukden, Jilin, and Heilongjiang (Elliott forthcoming). Qianlong’s administrative approach to the creation of a Manchu geography was likewise inchoate in earlier policies. Han emigration to the Northeast was actually officially permitted only in the very early Qing, notably between 1653 and 1668, when the “Regulations on Recruitment and Cultivation in Liaodong” were in force.¹⁸

¹⁶Significantly the 1743 edition I have consulted is stamped with the seal of the library of the Beiping No. 1 Middle School. Renamed in the 1910s, this was originally the school for members of the imperial lineage, which, like other educational institutions, held the poem in its collection.

¹⁷Edict to Anjuhū of KX18.9.18 (22 October 1679). The original reads: “*mukden-i jergi babe. dorgi bade duibuleci ojarahū. manju-i ba manju cooba tebebi.*”

¹⁸During this time, Han settlement in the area near Liaoyang was encouraged to compensate for the depopulation that occurred during the conquest. The regulations were suspended under the Oboi Regency and never revived (Inaba 1935, 305–9; Diao and Yi 1994, 7–10).

After that time, Han Chinese required special permission from the Board of War to enter the area—unless, of course, they were being sent into exile, in which case permission came from the Board of Punishments, or the emperor personally.

In fact, however, many thousands of Chinese moved illegitimately to the region, the gates and checkpoints along the Willow Palisade unable to check the influx of peasants hungry for fertile land. Much of this land was nominally in the hands of banner people, but as few seem to have had much interest in farming it, they were happy to sell it for short-term gain. By early in the Qianlong reign the numbers of emigrants grew so large, and the alienation of banner land so intense, that the emperor was moved to act. In 1740 came a decree forbidding further Han emigration beyond Shanhaiguan, a ban that remained in effect until the implementation of an entirely new set of policies for the Northeast in the early twentieth century.

The closing (Ch *fengjin*) of Manchuria—the ban included Jilin and Heilongjiang, too, which the emperor also considered to be “the Manchus’ roots” (Diao 1995b, 181–82)—owed partly to practical considerations, including the desire to assert control over agricultural production by protecting imperial estates and limiting ginseng poaching. But political considerations were not absent. Robert H. G. Lee conjectured that, “The emperors might have reasoned that only in the Manchurian frontier region, where the Manchu and tribal population outnumbered greatly the Chinese population in the beginning of the dynasty, could the tradition and spirit of Manchu culture remain unsullied by contacts with the Chinese” (Lee 1971, 183). This indeed seems to have been the case. The wording of the emperor’s edict makes the point in a slightly different way:

As Shengjing is the Manchus’ place of origin (Ch *Manzhou genben zhi di*), [matters] concerning it are extremely important. [. . .] It must naturally be kept orderly, and groups of peasants living here and there is not [a situation] to be tolerated. The fruits of the land should all be made to revert to those in the banners.

(*Gaozong shilu* 115: 17b–18b)

The concern here for the well-being of banner people reflected both an awareness of the economic predicament that many Manchu families faced when Han farmers took over as well as a recognition that the presence of so many Han was having a deleterious effect on Manchu customs. Limiting Han numbers, and preserving the region for Manchus, thus would be doubly beneficial for the dynasty’s long-term welfare. It is no coincidence that shortly after closing Manchuria to Han settlers, the emperor closed off Mongolia, too, citing the negative impact of Han immigration on traditional Mongol lifestyles (Diao 1995a, 170–71).

The emperor’s sense that Manchuria belonged to the Manchus manifested itself also in a 1736 decision to end the practice of exiling Han Chinese there while continuing to send Manchu convicts to penal servitude in Jilin and Heilongjiang (Diao and Yi 1994, 51–52).¹⁹ The same conviction was reflected as well as in the structure of appointments. As mentioned above, administration of the Northeast differed from that of China proper in that civil authority rested in the hands of the garrison generals of Mukden, Jilin, and Heilongjiang. Normal divisions such as

¹⁹This decision was partially reversed the next year, and small numbers of Han offenders continued to be exiled to Manchuria, provided they had families to accompany them. Banishment to the region was suspended once again in 1813, by which time Xinjiang had replaced Manchuria as the destination of choice for serious offenders. See Waley-Cohen 1991, 60. My thanks to Prof. Waley-Cohen for additional information on this point.

prefectures (Ch *fu*), departments (Ch *zhou*), and counties (Ch *xian*) were at first lacking. As the Chinese population increased, these levels of administration were gradually instituted, mostly in Mukden (a few were established in Jilin during the Yongzheng reign). Such posts, along with positions in the Mukden secondary capital bureaucracy, were originally also open to Han Chinese. The Qianlong emperor, however, changed the rules: After 1751, all officials serving in Manchuria, civil as well as military, were henceforth to be Manchus (Diao and Yi 1994, 52).

The prohibition of Han immigration into Manchuria does not appear to have been very effective even during the Qianlong reign, and it grew less and less effective as time passed. Nevertheless, the mere existence of the court ban on Han settlement served to confirm the notion that the Northeast was a frontier—a liminal region separate from China, governed by Manchus only, home to a small, but distinct indigenous population, and subject to separate rules. It was this same peripheral status, of course, that facilitated Russian occupation of Manchuria's northernmost stretches in the later nineteenth century. Only gradually did it dawn on the court that the land it had been trying so hard to save for Manchus by keeping it out of Chinese hands might well end up all in foreign hands. A radical revision of the administrative policies concerning Manchuria finally took place in 1907, when the provinces of Fengtian, Jilin, and Heilongjiang were created and the region brought into line with the government of the rest of China (though Manchus still monopolized the top positions) (Lee 1971, 152–64). But this last-minute change could not undo two centuries and more of attempts to foster a separate sense of place here. However it might be tinkered with administratively (under the Republic of China it would later be divided into nine provinces; under Manchukuo, fifteen), “Manchuria” was here to stay.

The Mapping of Mukden

As we have seen, the ritual, literary, and administrative strategies the court pursued formed part of a coherent, if not explicitly articulated, program to foster Manchurian regionality. They were complemented in significant ways by the imagination of Manchuria into cartographic form. Probably the earliest unified projection of the region made by the Qing that has survived to this century is a map made ca. 1690 that shows not just Manchuria but all of northeast Asia, including Siberia. This map—almost certainly copied from a Russian original (many of the place names, all in Manchu, are indisputably phonetic transliterations from Russian) (Fuchs 1933, 8–13)—lacks a grid, but it may have helped orient policymakers as to the geographic relationship between Manchuria and the rest of Asia.²⁰ Another early attempt to map the Manchu homeland was a map of the Changbai Mountains, commissioned in 1691, fourteen years after Umuna's explorations (Yang 1993 [1707], 9). This map is apparently not extant, but a photograph of a “Manchu Map of the Changbai Mountains,” included in a 1935 collection of photographs of Manchuria by Naitō Torajirō, may possibly be the Umuna map, or, more likely, a later version of it (Naitō 1935) (Figure 3). These initial efforts were superseded when, at the end of

²⁰As Yoshida Kin'ichi has shown, there are at least three such maps, all of the same vintage: the “Fuchs map” (now in Dalian), the “New Langtan map” (in Taipei) and the “Thomas map” (in Rome). It seems that there was also at least one other map of the region before this, which the Manchu negotiators had with them at Nerchinsk, but its whereabouts are unknown (Yoshida 1992, 51–63).

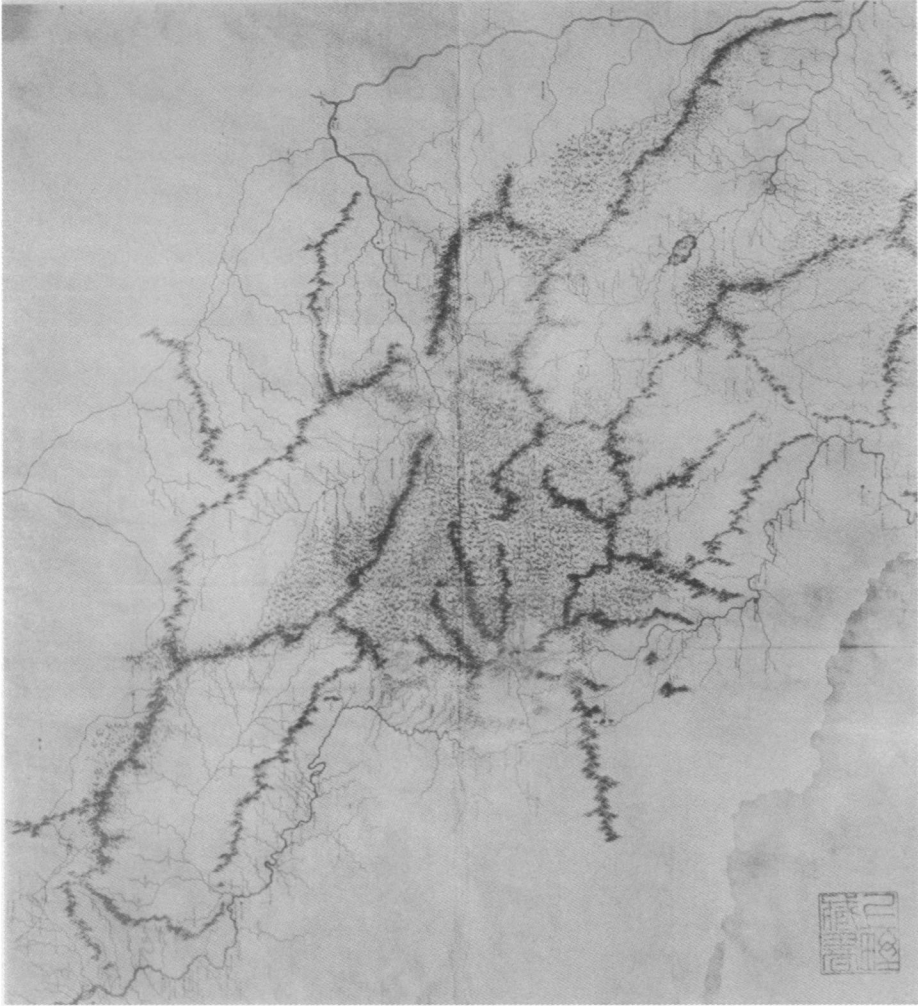


Figure 3. “Manchu map of the Changbai Mountains.” According to Naitō Torajirō, who found it stored in the palace complex at Mukden, this map (now lost), followed the surveys made for the *Huangyu quanlantu*. Annotated entirely in Manchu, it is centered on the region of the Changbai Mountains (the Willow Palisade is shown at left, but place names inside it are omitted) and faithfully reproduces the description in the *Manchu Veritable Records*: the main summit (labeled *amba sanggiyan alin*, i.e., “great white mountain”) consists of five peaks, with a lake in the middle. Other details, such as the location of waterfalls, suggest that some of the information may have been come from actual exploration, such as the 1677 expedition led by Umuna. Reproduced from Naitō 1935.

the 1690s, the Kangxi emperor embarked on a much more ambitious plan: With assistance from European Jesuits in the service of the court, he would map in detail all of Manchuria, and the rest of the empire, too.

The well-known story of the Jesuit role in the Qing mapmaking enterprise can only be briefly sketched here. From the time of Matteo Ricci a major contribution of Jesuit missionaries in China had been to introduce European ideas of cartography and information about world geography that the Chinese largely lacked, and to send back to Europe more accurate maps of China (Needham and Wang 1959; Bernard 1938; Yee 1994). Under the Manchus, however, the Jesuits' role changed. After twice overcoming challenges to the accuracy of their calendars (in 1644 and 1669), they were employed for the first time to make maps of the realm for the court (though this did not prevent them from continuing in their old role of passing information on to European contacts). The Jesuits first proposed the idea of a map of the entire empire to the Kangxi emperor in 1698 and received an encouraging response. Ten years later, after more missionaries had been recruited to carry out the work, a trial expedition was sent to map the Great Wall. Impressed by the results, the emperor authorized the real work to begin. Finally, in 1717 a complete set of maps of the empire was presented to the emperor. A copperplate version was prepared the next year, and a woodblock print published in 1721.²¹ Known as the *Huangyu quanlan tu* ("Map of a full view of the imperial territory") this atlas—sometimes called the "Kangxi Atlas" or the "Jesuit Atlas"—was the basis for numerous other maps, not all of them court-sponsored, throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Some, such as the *Huangyu shipai quantu* [1726–1729] and *Qianlong shisanpai ditu* [1760], also known as *Huangyu quantu*, were expensive productions only for the palace (Gugong bowuyuan tushuguan et al. 1995, 264–266). But others, such as Zou Boqi's *Huangyu quantu* [1844] and *Da Qing Zhongwai yitong yu(di)tu* [1863, 1889] were for general consumption. The *Huangyu quanlan tu* was also, until the early twentieth century, the basis for almost all later Western maps of China.

It is beyond question that a major impulse behind this project, particularly as it unfolded in Manchuria, was strategic. As Peter Perdue has recently shown, the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries represented a critical moment in world history as the Qing and Romanov empires bumped up against one another and boundaries were drawn (Perdue 1998). The Manchu court desired as much information as possible on the border with Russia, and made no secret of this (Gaubil 1970, 171–73). But there were other impulses, too, behind the wish to improve the level of knowledge about Manchuria. Jesuit accounts tell how, a few months before the proposal for the Jesuit Atlas was suggested to him, the emperor was informed in a conversation with missionaries that the city of Mukden was located to the north of Beijing, and not on the same latitude, as he believed. A curious man, and known to dabble in Western astronomy, mathematics, and music, the emperor decided to test this assertion himself. First he sent one of the fathers to make celestial observations in Shandong and Liaodong. Then he availed himself of the opportunity when visiting Mukden in 1698 (the third Eastern Tour) to make some observations himself. After

²¹The publication history of the Jesuit Atlas is somewhat complex. The first edition of the maps (xylograph, 1717) appears to have included only twenty-eight maps; the second edition (copperplate, 1718) and the third (xylograph, 1721) both contained thirty-two maps. See Fuchs 1938; Funakoshi 1986, 19–26; Yee 1994, 181–84. The xylograph edition (minus the general map) was reprinted in Fuchs 1943a; a chart of the different editions appears in Fuchs 1943b, 60.

making the calculations using the three sets of readings, he realized his error and acknowledged it openly before the Jesuits and others at court. At this point he consented to the Jesuit cartographic undertaking (Gaubil 1970, 541–42). This incident suggests that the wish to know Mukden better was of fundamental importance in going ahead with the Jesuit map project, and reveals incidentally that when the Manchus entered the Shanhaiguan pass to conquer China in 1644 it seems they did not know they were moving south. (In this light, the appellation “*Eastern Three Provinces*” suddenly makes sense.)

The first map in the Jesuit Atlas series was in fact a “Complete Map of Mukden” (Ch *Shengjing quantu*), and its completion marked a crucial point in the development of Mukden as a site of Manchu identity. Based on three surveys made between 1709 and 1712, the map was supplemented by information provided especially by additional surveyors (bannermen, not Jesuits) sent out by the court (Fuchs 1943b, 20–28).²² Significantly, this map was not limited by the formal administrative boundaries of the area governed by the garrison-general at Mukden, typically understood as “extending east to west one thousand li from Xingjing to Shanhaiguan, and north to south one thousand li from Kaiyuan to Jinzhou” (*Shengzu shilu* 2: 25a–b, cited in Inaba 1935, 307–8). Rather, it presented a swath of territory corresponding to the idea of “Greater Mukden,” from the Liaodong peninsula in the south (roughly 39 degrees of latitude) to Bedune and Ningguta in the north (roughly 45.5 degrees) and from the Willow Palisade in the west (119 degrees of longitude) to the Yalu and Tumen Rivers in the east, along with, of course, the Changbai Mountains (about 130 degrees) (Fuchs 1943a, Map 1) (Figure 4). According to Jesuit accounts, when the full image of Manchu ancestral territories was shown to Manchus at court, the effect was dramatic: “Those who had been born in Beijing saw in it their old country [*patrie*] and could learn more about it in one quarter-hour than all they had ever heard said by travelers (Bernard 1938, 459; Fuchs 1943b, 62, both citing the Introduction to Du Halde 1735). Of course, it should not be forgotten that by spreading the news of the impact their maps had made, the Jesuits, always anxious to communicate the usefulness of their mission back to Europe, were also able to win some good publicity.

The imperial charge for the making of the Mukden map was broad, beginning with a specific justification for the project:

Since ancient times mapmakers have not followed in accordance with the principles of measuring the heavens by degrees to determine distances on the earth, and as a result these maps contain many errors. I have thus especially sent out people gifted at making such observations to draft a detailed map on which one might observe the topography and geography of the northeast region projected according to astronomical calculations.

This was followed by an explanation of where his agents were to go:

The Sungari River flows north from the Changbai Mountains, past the [Jilin] shipyards and northeast beyond Dasheng Ula, where it joins the Heilongjiang and flows to the sea. All of this is the territory of China [Ch *ci jie xi zhongguo difang*]. The Yalu River flows southeast from the Changbai Mountains, then to the southwest

²²According to a 1726 Jesuit report, the surveying of Manchuria was done almost exclusively by triangulation; there were only very few astronomical measurements taken. Moreover, the Jesuit survey team was not permitted to travel to the mouth of the Amur on the eastern coast, concerning which reliable information could only be obtained from the Russians (Gaubil 1970, 120, 715–16).

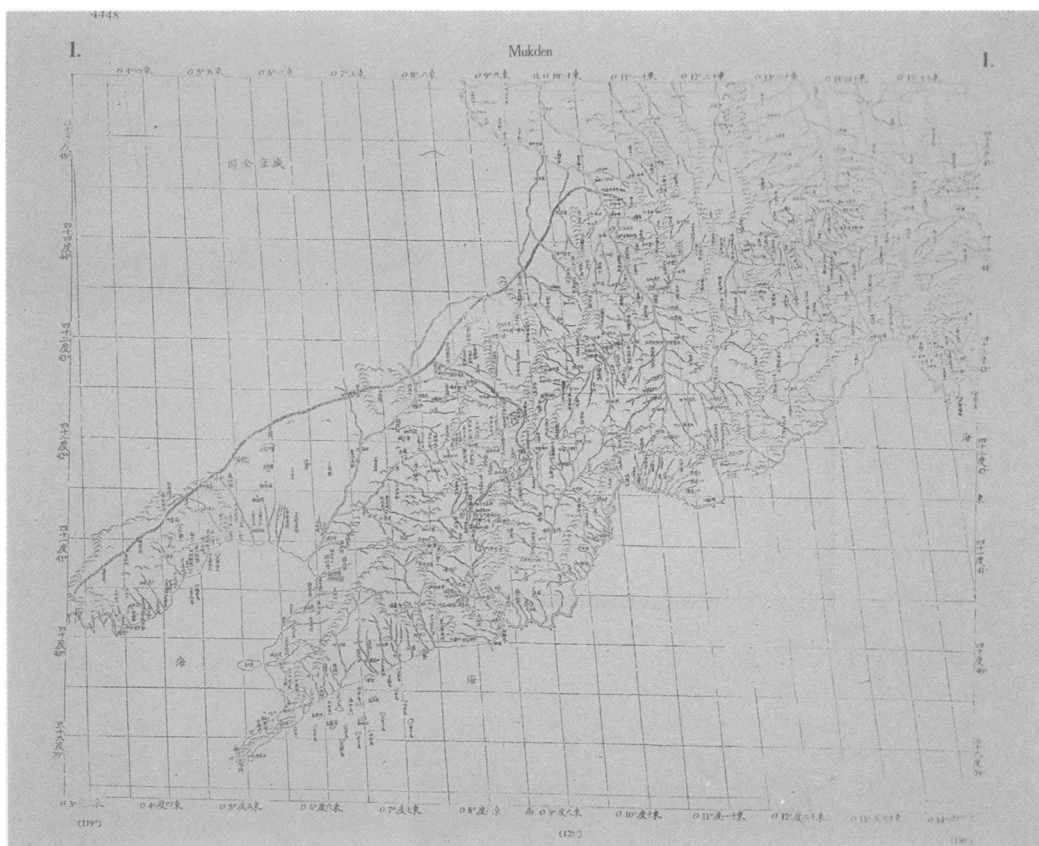


Figure 4. *Shengjing quantu*. This “Complete Map of Mukden” was, after the general map of the empire, the first sheet in the atlas presented to the Kangxi emperor by Jesuit missionaries in 1718. The area represented here extends significantly beyond the bailiwick of the military governor of Mukden to include all of “Greater Mukden.” Reproduced from Fuchs 1943a by courtesy of Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo, University of Tokyo.

between Fenghuangcheng and Yizhou, on the Korean border, to the sea. Northwest of the Yalu River is all the territory of China; to its southeast is the territory of Korea, and the river is the boundary. The Tumen River flows east along the perimeter of the Changbai Mountains, then southeast to the ocean. Southwest of the Tumen is the territory of Korea, while to its northeast is the territory of China, and the river is the boundary. All of these places are already known, but the area between the Yalu and the Tumen is still unknown.

(*Shengzu shilu* 246: 9a–10b)

The emperor’s wish was to fill in this gap, and his interests, like those of other early modern monarchs, were obviously geopolitical in nature, insofar as a clarification of the border with Korea was a goal: along with the map of Mukden there were also detailed charts of Jehol, the Ussuri and the Heilongjiang rivers, which contained a wealth of new information about Manchuria, much more than that shown on Ming

and earlier maps.²³ At the same time, however, it should be pointed out that the very mode the emperor used to define the “northeast region” (Ch *dongbei yi dai*) hewed very closely to the landmarks established decades before in the *Manchu Veritable Records*—that is, the Changbai Mountains and the rivers that flow out from between its peaks. In this sense, the Mukden map, like the Umuna expedition, was the product of two intersecting urges: one to enhance Manchu identity by inscribing Manchu place, the other to define the extent of Qing imperial space.

Though the Jesuit maps were not published as such in China—maps being considered sensitive, secret texts by the Qing state—much of the information on them was distributed indirectly on maps included in various editions of the *Da Qing yitong zhi* and the *Da Qing Huidian*, which were available to scholars at the time. By the middle of the eighteenth century the familiar outcropping on China’s northeastern frontier was very clearly rendered in maps of the eastern hemisphere of the globe, on which the Qing empire itself was quite plainly delineated (Figure 5). Significantly, however, though these maps thus made the enclosure of the Manchurian frontier explicit, at the same time they could also accentuate its distinctiveness: on a number of them—such as one now preserved in London, on which the entire expanse of Inner Asia, from Lake Balkhash in the west to the lower course of the Amur in the east, is represented²⁴—all place names are in Manchu, with only those south of the Great Wall in Chinese (Fuchs 1943b, 81). One reason for this may simply have been that it was easier to transcribe non-Chinese names into an alphabetic language like Manchu than it was to approximate them using Chinese characters. Yet we have many maps from the 1700s on which Chinese is the only language used, apparently without undue difficulty on the cartographer’s part. Another explanation is that by this sleight of hand the state was able to declare its claim of sovereignty over these frontier territories while simultaneously announcing to all concerned parties that said territories remained separate even as they were cartographically merged into a single empire. Operating like a linguistic parallel of the Great Wall, the strange writing on the map made it clear that this was a Manchu space—or, for places outside Manchuria, *Qing* space—and helped bridge, at least temporarily, the geographic estrangement that threatened to deprive the deracinated conquest group of its sense of where “home” properly was.

From “Chinese Tartary” to “Mantchooria”

Apart from giving shape to Manchu consciousness by presenting a snapshot of Greater Mukden, the Kangxi cartographic project made an enormous impact upon European awareness, and in this way, too, contributed signally to creating the idea of

²³Cf. the count of hundreds of place names on the Kangxi atlas maps in Fuchs 1943b: 81–2.

²⁴I have not seen this map, which is in the collection of the Royal Geographical Society, but it is described in Simon and Nelson 1977, I.30, where part of it is reproduced in Plate VI–VII. In style it resembles the map in Naitō 1935, though it is much larger. Unfortunately, the image is out of focus and place names are extremely difficult to make out. Neither this nor the Naitō map is dated, but both differ greatly from the 1690 map of northeast Asia shown in Fuchs 1933. Naitō was of the opinion that his map was based on the Jesuit maps of the region; Simon and Nelson write that theirs may precede the Jesuit enterprise. A preliminary comparison with the Jesuit Atlas maps suggests that Naitō was correct—i.e., that both of these maps date from the 1710s or slightly later, but further work on this problem is needed.

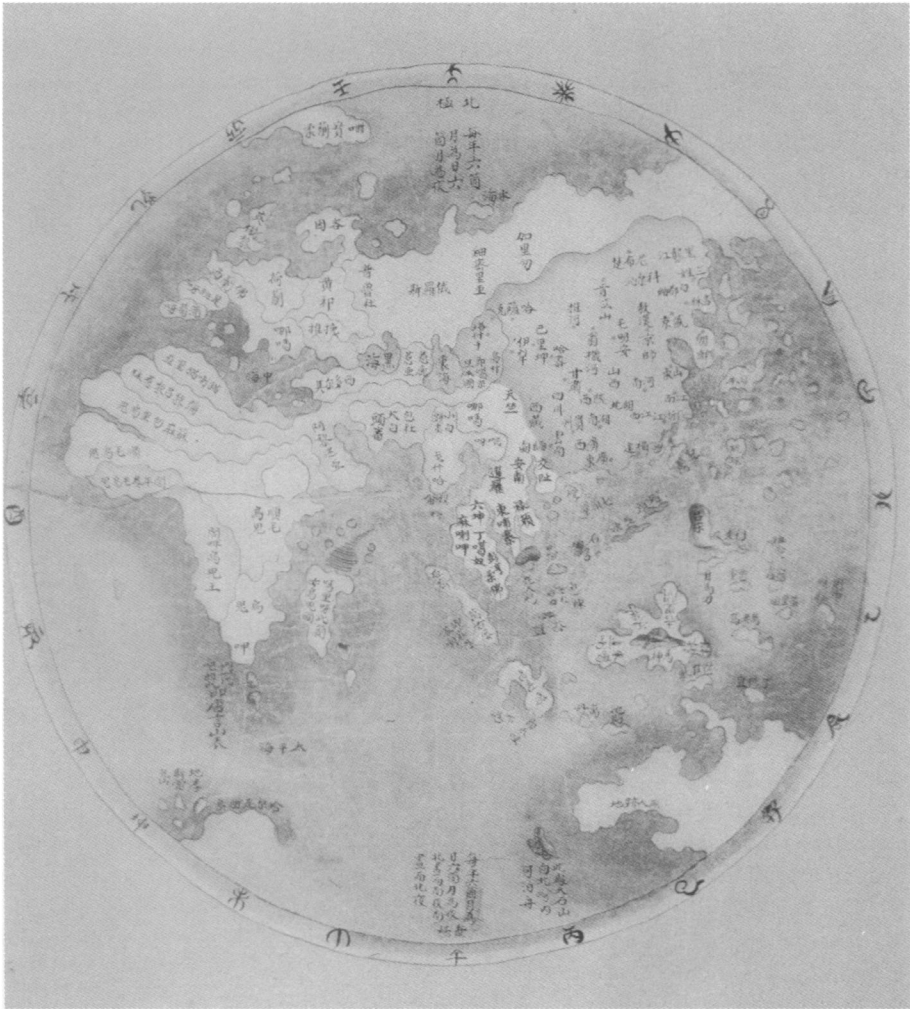


Figure 5. Map of Eastern Hemisphere, from *Haijiang yangjie xingshi quantu*, ca. 1790. This image is from a popular type of coastal map, in scroll form, copies of which exist in (among other places) London, Berlin, and Washington, D.C. All of them are preceded by a map of the eastern hemisphere (itself based on a 1730 map by Chen Lunjiong, *Yanbai quantu*), on which the contours of the Qing empire are highlighted by a bright saffron coloring. Note the incorporation of Manchuria, together with China proper, Mongolia, Xinjiang, and Tibet, into one whole. Reproduced by courtesy of Staatsbibliothek der Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin.

Manchuria. Before the eighteenth century, Western knowledge of this part of the world was extremely limited: the area was known, along with almost all the rest of Central and Inner Asia, simply as “Tartary.” The etymology of this name is not entirely clear. The ultimate source was most likely the Chinese *dada*, a name for northern nomads, which dates from at least the ninth century C.E. and was borrowed into European vocabularies after the Mongol invasions. Because the hellish destruction

wrought by Mongol armies called up associations with Tartarus, the Latin name for Hades, the original form, “Tatar,” changed to “Tartar”—at least, this is the story given by the medieval chronicler Matthew Paris, who ascribed the pun to King Louis IX of France (Morgan 1986, 57). “Tartar” was used in English for the first time by Chaucer (who may well have read Paris), and in later centuries the name was indiscriminately applied by the members of sedentary populations in both Europe and East Asia to nomads of north and central Asia, from Turkey to Siberia. The breadth of meaning of these terms invited attempts to be more precise—hence we find “Greater Tartary” and “Lesser Tartary,” “Eastern Tartary” and “Western Tartary,” “Chinese Tartary” and “Independent Tartary;” to distinguish them from other “Tartar” groups, the Manchus were spoken of in some early texts as “Manchu Tartars.” But the level of understanding was still crude.

The arrival of the Jesuit Atlas maps effected a revolution in European cartography of East Asia. Sent first to France by 1725, when they were presented to the French king, they provided the basis for new, authoritative maps drawn by Jean-Baptiste D’Anville, which accompanied Jean-Baptiste Du Halde’s four-volume *Description géographique, historique . . . de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise*, published in Paris in 1735. These maps, in turn, were the basis for another, modified, set of maps made for the English translation of Du Halde’s work, which appeared in London in 1738–1741. After further editing, the maps were also published separately by D’Anville in his 1737 *Nouvel Atlas de la Chine* (Foss 1985).

The European maps differed from the original maps made for the Kangxi emperor in a number of ways. Not only were there more of them (forty-two, all told), but the European maps also combined information from several of the original maps and included data taken from other sources that were not part of the compilation of the Jesuit Atlas. The impressive general map of “la Tartarie Chinoise,” absent from the original Jesuit Atlas, is the result of just such an effort. This map includes all of what we might call today Inner Asia, covering the entire area from Hami in the west to Sakhalin and Japan in the east, and from the 34th parallel in the south to the 54th parallel in the north (the London maps extend as far west as the Caspian Sea). It includes a large amount of ethnographic information indicating the areas that were home to various ethnic groups (“les Tongouses,” “les Oeluts,” etc.). On the Paris maps, the Manchu homeland is singled out with the legend “Ancien pays des Mantcheou qui ont conquit la Chine”; on the London maps, the description of the same area is shortened to “the Manchew” (D’Anville 1735; Green 1738–1741) (Figure 6). As will be explained below, it seems probable that this information was ultimately the source for the renaming of one part of “Chinese Tartary,” first as “*Mansbū*” and then as “Manchuria,” around the turn of the eighteenth century.

The first occurrences of Manchuria as a toponym appear in Japanese maps of the late 1700s.²⁵ There is no mistaking the Chinese characters for *Mansbū* on two different maps: *Asbia zenzu* (“Complete Map of Asia”) and *Chikyū hankyū sōzu* (“General Hemispheric Map of the Earth”) (Funakoshi 1986, Plates 12, 15, and 15b). The author, Katsuragawa Hoshū (1751–1809), hailed from a prominent family of Dutch-learning physicians retained by the Tokugawa shoguns and was also something of an expert on Russian relations. Both of the above maps were included in his 1794 work,

²⁵A similar conclusion is drawn in Nakami 1998, 62, which I came across in the course of revising this paper. Yano’s assertion, that Japanese *Mansbū* was borrowed from English “Manchuria” sometime in the 1840s, is not tenable under the evidence (Yano 1941, 7). See also Nakami 1993.



Figure 6. Portion of *A General Map of Eastern and Western Tartary*, commonly called *Tartary*, by John Green, 1741. The maps for the English translation of J.-B. Du Halde, *A Description of the Empire of China and Chinese Tartary*, were made independently of those made by J.-B. D'Anville for the original French version. Where the French read, "Ancien pays des Manchou qui ont conquit la Chine," the English read simply "the Manchew." Reproduced by courtesy of Tōyō Bunko, Tokyo.

Hokusa bunryaku, an account of a Japanese shipwreck on the Kamchatka peninsula. That *Manshū* on these maps is a place name and not a tribal name is fairly certain, since tribal names are most often written in *katakana*.²⁶ The similar diagonal placement of the characters (in both cases to the northeast of Mukden, between the Long White Mountains and the lower course of the Heilongjiang [i.e., the Amur River]), clearly denote the area as *Manshū*. Legends in the same style also appear for *Shibori* (Siberia), *Chōsen* (Korea), *Shina* (China), and *Mōkō* (Mongolia).

Where did this *Manshū* come from? As Funakoshi Akio has demonstrated, Japanese mapmaking came under the strong influence of European, especially Russian, maps starting in the later 1700s. Funakoshi persuasively shows that the *Asbia zenzu* and *Chikyū bankyū sōzu* were based mainly on Russian originals. He also demonstrates that these Russian maps, in turn, relied heavily on other European maps, which were themselves made on the basis of the Jesuit Atlas, and that it was in this roundabout way that the *Huangyu quanlantu* eventually made its way to Japan (Funakoshi 1986, 29–50). We may therefore conclude that Katsuragawa's identification of the region between the Heilongjiang and the Bohai Gulf as *Manshū* depended on information taken from European maps. I have not been able to determine whether any word like *Manshu* appears on Russian maps of this period. If so, then this is the likely source; if not, then Katsuragawa must have borrowed it elsewhere. The original D'Anville map is one possibility, but given the close ties between Japan and Holland at this time, a Dutch map, such as the 1751 *Kaart van Oost-Tartarye*, by Pieter de Hondt, which explicitly acknowledged its Jesuit origins, is more likely (Figure 7). Now in the Tenri University Library, it was used as the template for two Japanese maps made in 1809 (Funakoshi 1986, Plates 47, 37, 38). Correctly associating the legend on this map—"Manchews" (similar to the English "The Manchew," save for the missing definite article)—with the Manchus he knew ruled China (Japanese intelligence on this point surpassed that of the West), but perhaps encouraged by the autonomous meaning of the character *zhou* ("region, land") typically used to write *Manzhou*, Katsuragawa (if indeed he was the first) apparently understood this as a place name, thereby unwittingly introducing *Manshū* to the world as a place name.²⁷

Manshū's passage from tribal name to place name proceeded quickly, though not systematically. Within a decade a number of prominent Japanese cartographers, including Yamada Ren, Baba Sadayoshi (1787–1822), Kondo Jūzō (1771–1829), and Takahashi Kageyasu (1785–1829) began to use the characters *Manshū* as a toponym on their maps (Funakoshi 1986, Plates 16, 28, 29, 35, 36, 37, 53, 54, 57, 60, 62c) (Figure 8). Thanks to the Dutch japanologist Philipp von Siebold (1796–1866), some of these maps were soon circulating in Europe (Figure 9). By the 1830s, roughly a generation after the appearance of Katsuragawa's maps, various Indo-European forms of *Manshū* had emerged. A very early use is in an 1830 history of China, *Geschichte*

²⁶This identification is firmer for the *Chikyū bankyū sōzu* than for the *Asbia zenzu*. On the latter, some place names are also written in *katakana*, and at least one tribal name appears in Chinese characters. Moreover, *Asbia zenzu* includes the legend "Chinese Tartary" (written in characters as *shina dattan* but glossed as *kitaisukaya tarutariya*)—a second, and possibly overlapping, toponym written in larger characters to the west of *Manshū*. There are no conflicting or competing legends on the *Chikyū bankyū sōzu*.

²⁷*Manchiu-koku*—*manchiu* in *katakana*, *koku* in Chinese characters—appears on another Japanese map, titled *Hokubai* ("Northern Seas"), also based on a Russian original, that possibly predates the maps in *Hokusa bunryaku*. While *Manchiu-koku* might be "Manchu-country," it could also mean "country of the Manchus." For this reason, it is impossible to be certain whether it functions here as an ethnonym or a toponym.

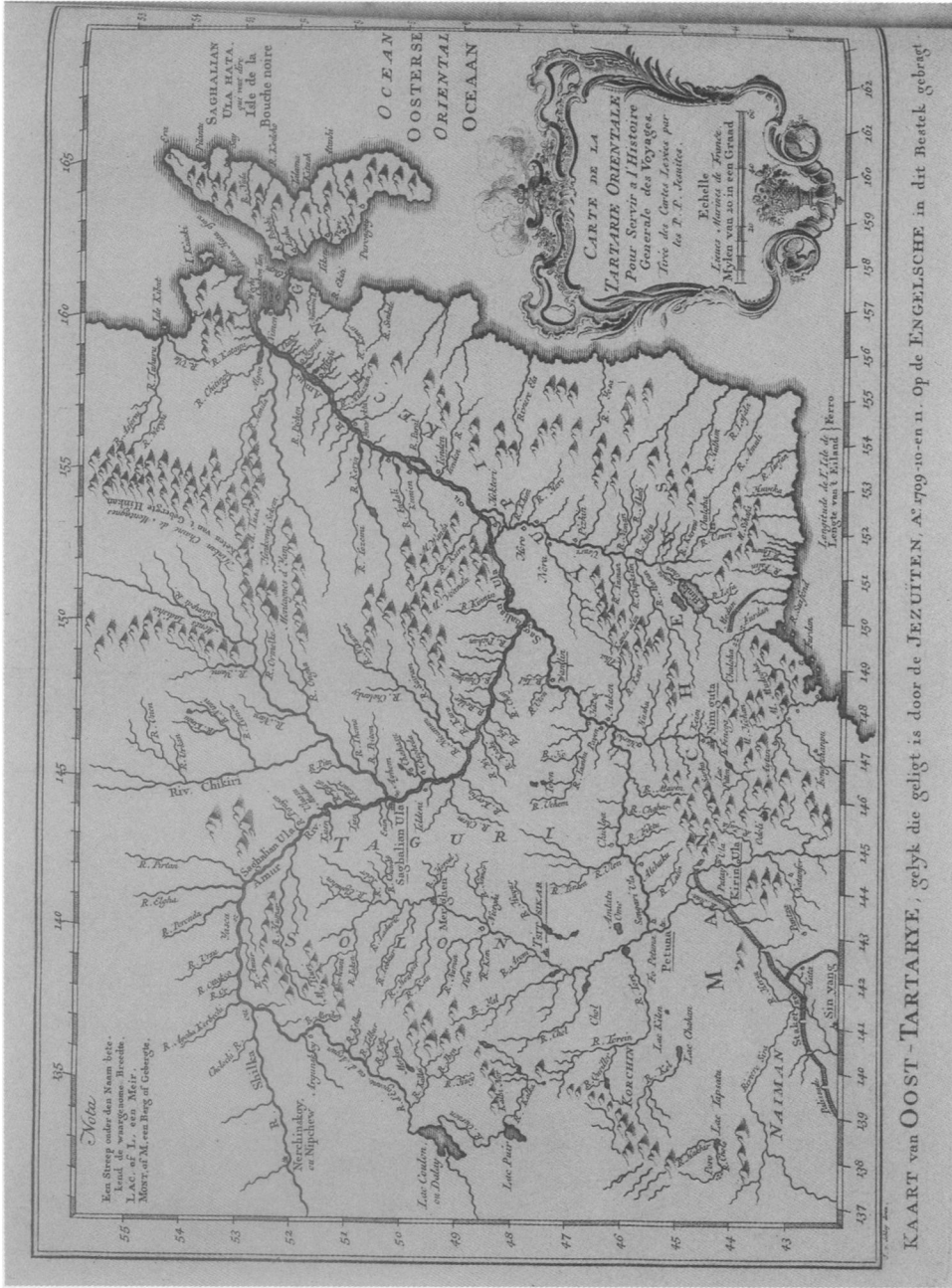


Figure 7. *Kaart von Oost Tartarye*. The author of this 1751 map, Pieter de Hondt, explicitly noted in the text that he had based himself on the Jesuit surveys. This was one of a number of European images of “Tartary” produced in the eighteenth century, all inspired by the D’Anville maps, that made their way to Japan. The legend “Manchews” is in the lower section. Reproduced by courtesy of Tenri University Library, Tenri.

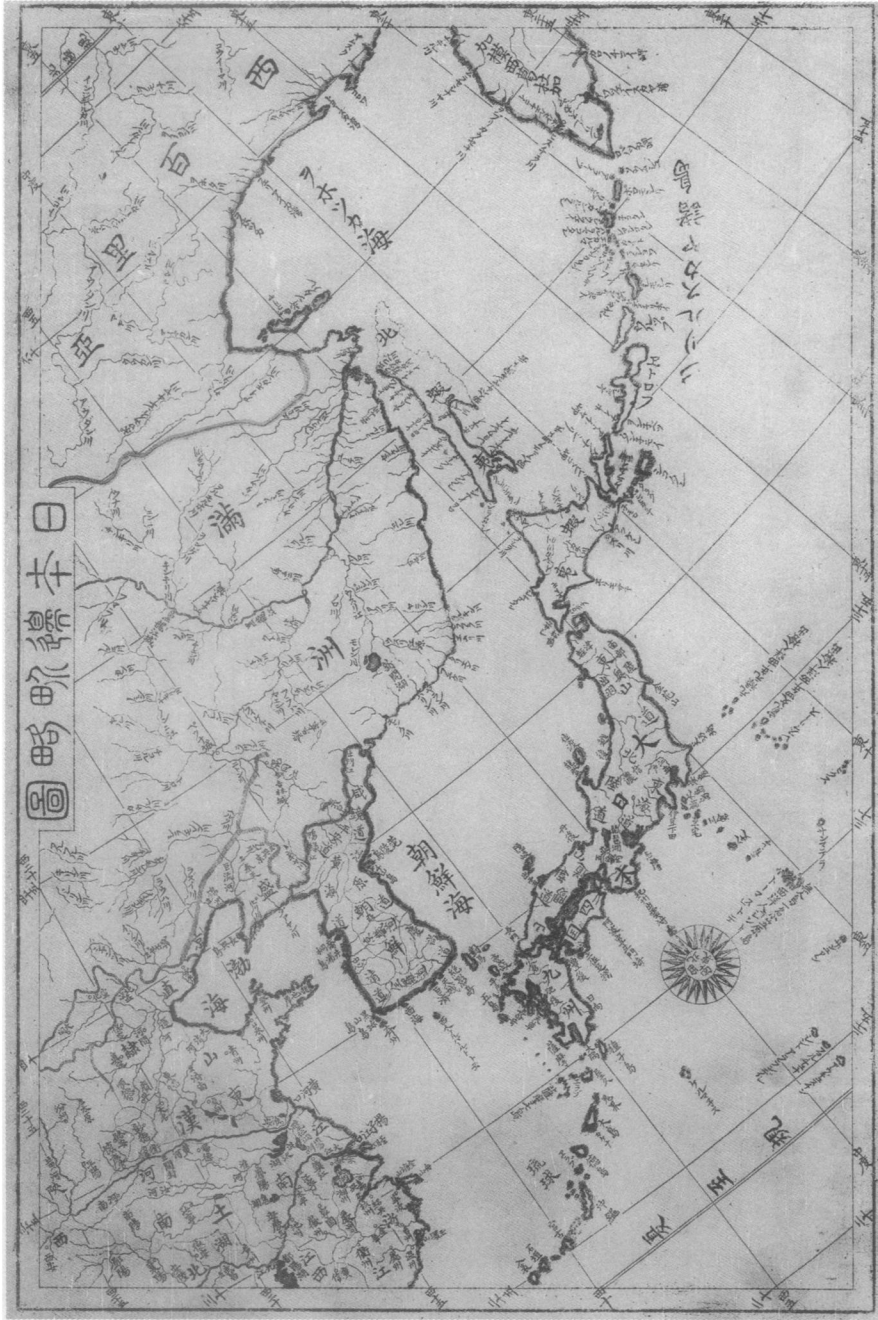


Figure 8. *Nihon benkai ryakuzu*. Executed by Takahashi Kageyasu in 1809, this map of Japan—which owes considerably to the de Hondt map in Figure 7—is one example of the early use of *Manshū* as a place name on Japanese-made maps. Reproduced by courtesy of Naikaku Bunko, National Archives of Japan, Tokyo.

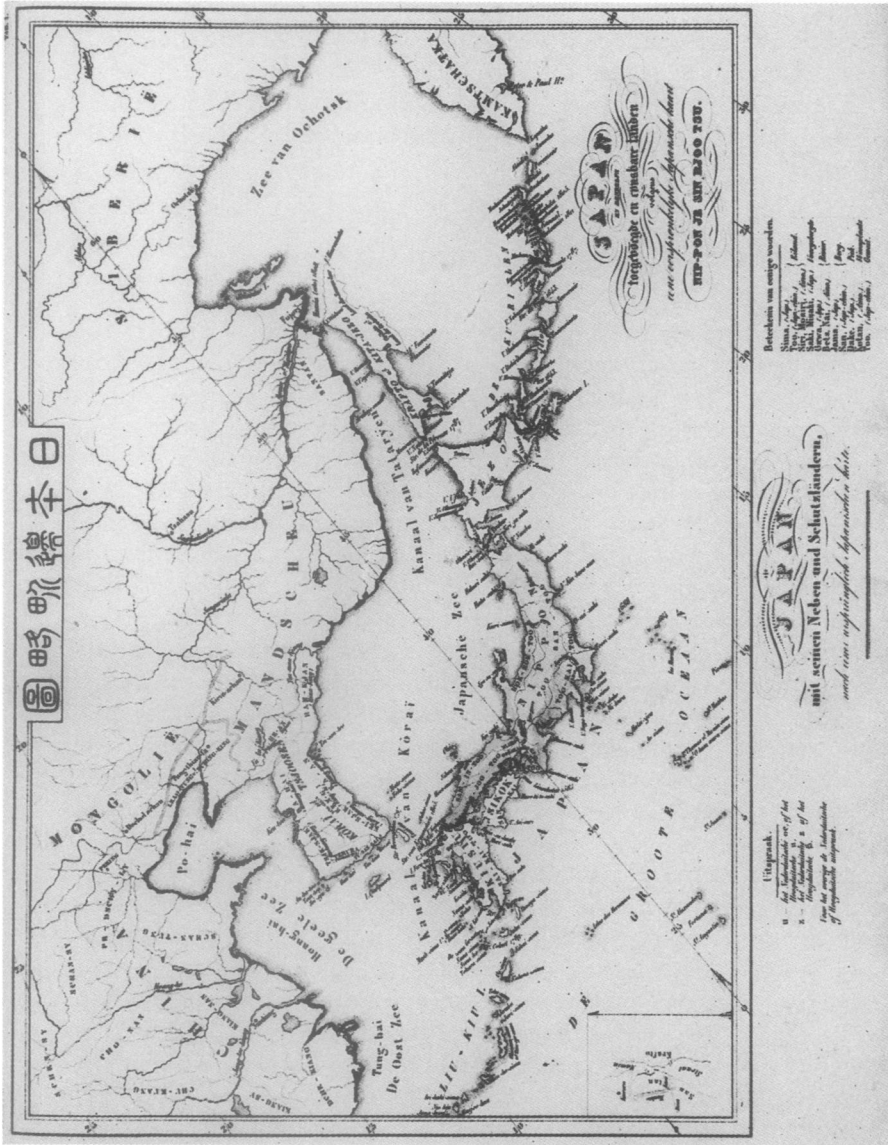


Figure 9. *Japan en dezelfs toegevoegde en eynbare landen volgens eine vorpronkelyke Japansche kaart 1832.* Clearly working from the preceding map made by his friend and colleague, Takahashi, Philipp von Siebold published this map (labeled in Dutch and acknowledged to be based on a Japanese original) in Leiden. In place of *Manshū*, Siebold opted for the ambiguous *Mandscheu* (alongside *China*, *Mongolië*, and *Siberië*), but in an 1840 German-language map of the Korean peninsula (a later part of the same multivolume work) adopted the unequivocally toponymical form, *Mandschurei*. Reproduced from Siebold 1832–52 by courtesy of Tōyō Bunko, Tokyo.

des Östlichen Asiens, by Johann Heinrich Plath, who employed *Mandschurey* routinely as a place name (e.g., “die Völker der Mandschurey”) throughout the book, suggesting that it may already have been in use before this (Plath 1830–31).²⁸ The author, who taught at the University of Göttingen, drew heavily on Jesuit sources: no doubt he had seen the D’Anville maps, and his account was certainly also influenced by the 1770 French translation by Amiot of the *Ode to Mukden*, which was widely publicized at the time, not least by Voltaire (Amiot 1770; Etō 1956, 235–236). (He could not have been ignorant of this, as the poem’s original Manchu text, minus the annotations, had been published just two years before Plath’s own work by the German orientalist Jules Klaproth [Klaproth 1828].) By the end of the decade, “Manchuria” (written variously as “Mandshuria,” Mantchooria,” etc.) was appearing in United States atlases (Tanner 1836; Mitchell 1839), and had entered common usage in English and other European languages.

Manzhou as a Toponym in Chinese

The above is a particularly striking instance of the interaction of European and Japanese cartographies in the early modern period. But it is worth remembering that the original impetus for this exchange came from the Manchu court, which had sponsored the cartographic work that made it all possible. Thus when *Manshū*—i.e., *Manzhou*—was eventually adopted as a place name in the Chinese language, the circle was closed. This happened at least by 1877, when the term is used in an essay titled, “Manzhou kaolüe” (A Brief Study of Manchuria), in a well-known geographical collectanea, *Xiaofangbuzhai yudi congshu*. The author, Gong Chai, a scholar from the southern coastal city of Ningbo, began with a nod to the historical importance of the region, writing, “Manchuria [*Manzhou*] is to the northeast of the capital and is the dynasty’s auspicious place of origin [*fa xiang zhi di*]”—this latter the exact phrase, of course, introduced by the court two centuries earlier—before going on to stress the strategic urgency of improving border defenses here and in Xinjiang (Gong 1877, 139a). Twenty years later, prominent Qing officials such as Liu Kunyi and Zhang Zhidong also invoked *Manzhou* as a place name in their own writings (Yano 1941, 7–8). Hence, contrary to received wisdom, “Manchuria” did once function as a place name in Chinese, after all.

This conclusion is borne out in cartography, too. An examination of early twentieth-century Chinese-made maps of China reveals that *Manzhou* had begun to be used as a toponym by the first decade of the 1900s, roughly seventy years after it was introduced in Europe and about a century after it began to be used in Japan. Employing the same characters as those for “Manchu” (i.e., the name of the ethnic group), *Manzhou* appears precisely in the spot one would expect it, in the northeast sector of the empire, sandwiched between the Amur and the Bohai Gulf (Figures 10, 11). Some of these maps date from the late Qing and bear the imprimatur of the Education Bureau, an indication that they were officially approved and intended for use in classrooms. Others date from the Republican period (one as late as 1932) and include maps published by Commercial Press, the largest publisher at the time, which

²⁸*Mandschurey* may owe its specific form to the combinative form of German *Mandschu*: “Mandschuren” (Manchus), “Mandschurisch” (Manchurian) (the latter, referring to the Manchu language, was in use no later than 1810). Alternatively, it may derive from the Russian “Man’chzur,” meaning a Manchu (person).

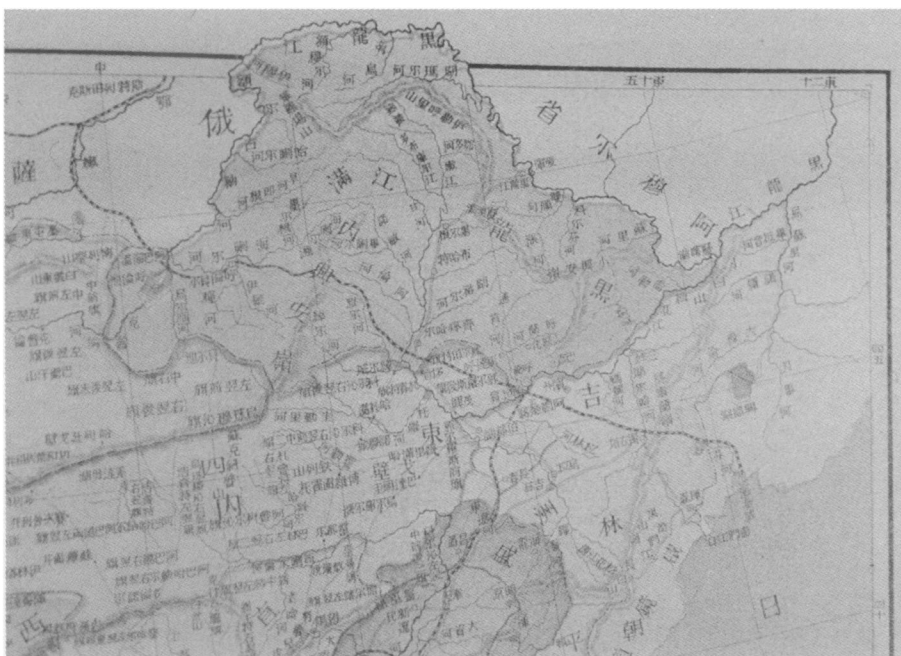


Figure 10. Portion of *Huangchao yitongtu*, 1905. As seen in this map, by the early 1900s, *Manzhou* had entered standard usage as a place name. The volume in which it was published was endorsed by the Qing educational ministry. Reproduced by courtesy of Tōyō Bunko, Tokyo.

reprinted them again and again—a good sign that they enjoyed a very wide circulation (Yudi xiehui 1903, Map 2; Yudi xiehui 1905, Map 1; Wu Xianxi 1918, Maps 5, 7, 9; Yaxin dixueshe 1915, Map 1; Ouyang 1932, Map 2; *Zhonghua minguo yuannian lishu* [1912] in Smith 1993, Plate 17). While it is often impossible to distinguish toponyms and ethnonyms on earlier Chinese maps, here the distinction seems plain. The type fonts used for *Manzhou* are consistent with those used for other place names, and where there is text, its usage supports an interpretation of *Manzhou* as a toponym (e.g., *Manzhou sangshi tu*, “map of the lost territories of Manchuria,” in Yaxin dixueshe 1915).

In fairness it should be said that the majority of maps from the early Republican period use only the names of the northeastern provinces and avoid *Manzhou*. One might well be inclined to interpret this apparent reluctance on the part of contemporary mapmakers as evidence of nationalist sentiment at a time when first the warlord Zhang Zuolin and then Japanese imperialist expansion sought to hold the region under their exclusive control. Patriotic insistence on the unity of China and Manchuria would logically seem to have favored the use of a term like “The Eastern Three Provinces,” a relativistic expression (“Eastern in relation to what?”) that expressed the unity of China and Manchuria in an essential way, rather than a term like *Manzhou*, which granted the region a *prima facie* separate existence.²⁹ It is all the

²⁹This is not to suggest that the term was invented for this purpose at this time. On the contrary, *dongsansheng* is attested during the Qing (see, for instance, *Gaozong shilu* 324: 12a). The point is that this usage became *de rigueur*.



Figure 11. Portion of map of Asia, *Shijie xin yutu*, 1918. Even after the fall of the Qing dynasty, *Manzhou* persisted as a place name in Chinese. Here it appears on a map of Asia included in the third edition of a popular world atlas published by the Commercial Press. Reproduced by courtesy of Tōyō Bunko, Tokyo.

more surprising, then, to discover that *Manzhou* continued to be used as a place name well into the 1930s by an organization no less prominent than the Chinese Communist Party. It appears in the official name of the Party branch in the region, its publications (e.g., “Manchurian Worker” [*Manzhou gongren*]), and in propaganda until 1937, when the Party’s organization was crushed (Zhang 1987). That even Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai saw fit to use *Manzhou* in their official correspondence suggests that, contrary to what might be expected, the name “Manchuria” did not grossly violate everyone’s nationalistic sentiments at the time. Japanese colonization notwithstanding, in the early twentieth century *Manzhou* was on its way to becoming a regular toponym in Chinese and already occupied a well-defined spot in educated minds of the day.³⁰

At what point political expediency decisively intervened to expunge *Manzhou* from the Chinese vocabulary remains uncertain. By the 1950s, even the memory of its toponymical meaning had seemingly been obliterated, though some writers found it hard to shake the habit.³¹ Its original sense as an ethonym was lost, too, replaced by the newfangled formulation, *Manzu* (“Man[chu] national minority”), an abbreviation that has resulted in the bizarre identification of the Manchus in some quarters as the “Man” nationality. Yet even though the Chinese word *Manzhou* has receded into the historical vocabulary, the distinctive identity of both people and region remains part of the contemporary scene. Ask a Chinese person where he is from, and the answer is likely to be “Zhejiang,” “Anhui,” or the name of some other province. Ask a resident of Liaoning, Jilin, or Heilongjiang, and the answer will almost always be, “I’m a Northeasterner [*dongbei ren*].” People from the Northeast—even if they immigrated from Shandong only a century ago, as many did—take pride in the region’s historical importance, its fabled “three treasures” (ginseng, sable, and Ula grass), and its cuisine (“Northeast style [*dongbei wei*]” restaurants abound in Beijing, usually offering boiled *jiaozi* dumplings and simple, down-home cooking). Travel agencies advertise the wonders of the Northeast’s scenic beauty, its “white mountains and black rivers” (*baishan heishui*), along with such winter attractions as “iced trees” (*guashu*), the Harbin Ice Festival, and skiing vacations—where else?—in the Changbai Mountains. Administratively, the Northeast also constitutes its own military region, possesses its own educational institutions (e.g., Dongbei Normal University, Dongbei University of Finance) and pursues similar industrial and export policies focused on Japan, Korea, and Russia, all of which confirm the impression of continued regional coherence. In other words, in its latest incarnation as “the Northeast,” Manchuria appears to have survived as a distinct regional entity.

Geography and Imagination

In *Landscape and Memory*, historian Simon Schama explores the ways in which literary, artistic, and historical perceptions of forests, mountains, and rivers contribute to individual and group identity. Investigating the development of German identity, always in tension between a sylvan “barbarian” past and the “civilizing” tendencies of the Latin world (first Rome, later Italy and France), he finds that the forest played

³⁰The lack of Manchu-language maps from the period makes it hard to say for certain, but it would seem that the Manchu word *Manju* never gained the additional geographical sense that the Chinese word *Manzhou* did.

³¹In his 1958 history of the Manchus, Mo Dongyin occasionally slipped into calling the Northeast “Manchuria” (Mo 1958, 170 n. 96).

a key part in the German imagination, particularly in the early 1500s, when the stirrings of the Reformation kindled a new self-awareness. With the rebirth of German history at this time, centered on the antique hero Arminius (Hermann), came also the rebirth of German geography and natural description. As the home of the noble rustic, the German forest was of special interest for writers and artists. Yet Schama notes that it was just at this time that the forests were being cut down: "So the geographers who wanted to celebrate the organically living world of the German woods . . . needed to replant it with their literary and visual imagination." Moreover, he concludes that although this effort at "cultural afforestation" failed to achieve its desired goal (Germany lay in ruins at the end of the Thirty Years' War in 1648), it provided the material for an eighteenth-century revival, when the Romantics would get a second try (Schama 1996, 95, 102).

There are a few similarities here with the Manchu case, which I think are instructive. First, their "barbarian" origins, documented in Chinese texts from the Ming, meant that, like the Germans, the Manchus had to deal with a negative historical legacy. One approach was to deny it; this was essentially the tack in the *Manzhou yuanliu kao* (*Researches on the origins of the Manchus*), published in 1783 (Crossley 1987). Another way was to glorify it, as the Germans attempted to do. We see this approach in the *Ode to Mukden*, its verdant forests bursting with game and its hard-working people bringing forth abundance from the soil. The superiority of the order here, of the land and the very air, presented an obvious (if unstated) contrast with the decadence and excess of Chinese cities, where most Manchus lived. Through his poem the emperor wished not just to sing the praises of the cradle of Qing greatness but also to impress upon them the values of the Mukden world as a way of counteracting the harmful influence of Chinese "civilization"—a leitmotif in elite discussions of the fate of the supposedly rustic Manchu warrior from the time of Hong Taiji on (Elliott forthcoming).

A second similarity with the German case is that, like the sixteenth-century attempt to renew rustic Teutonic virtues, the eighteenth-century attempt to renew the "Old Way"—the virtues of riding, shooting, speaking Manchu, and living a Spartan life—also failed. For all the hyperbole of the *Ode to Mukden*, its verbal lushness mimicking the animal and vegetal lushness of the landscape it was describing, the poem probably did not do much either to halt the decline of ancestral institutions or to improve the region's popularity. Qianlong's was an imaginary landscape, and one that people were probably content to experience vicariously. As the travel accounts all told (though they were no doubt embroidered, too), the real Mukden was a harsh and unforgiving place, bleak, cold, and dangerous. Not for nothing were the regime's enemies exiled here in the early Qing. Later in the eighteenth century, Manchus who were sent from Beijing to live in Manchuria—part of the court's plan to relieve overcrowding in the capital—tried everything they could to return. The fact is that, with the exception of the banner garrisons (home to about 20,000–30,000 soldiers and their families) and one successful military colony at Shuangchengpu (established in the 1850s), Manchuria was a land virtually without Manchus, or, indeed, very many people at all. When the region finally began to repopulate in the nineteenth century, the settlers were Han Chinese: by 1900, there were 170 million people living in Manchuria, of whom 150 million were Han with no connection whatsoever to the Eight Banner system (Mo 1958, 169–70). By the time the dynasty fell in 1912, Mukden was overwhelmingly a Chinese place, and the Manchus remained where they were in Beijing and the garrison cities in China proper.

Here I would like to suggest a third, and final, similarity with the German case as described by Schama, which is that although Manchu space could not be preserved, and although the Manchu identity that the Qing emperors were at such pains to cultivate through maps, ritual, and poetry failed to undergo a dramatic revival, the project itself and the rise of a place called Manchuria had important historical consequences later on—most violently in the early twentieth century as attempts to follow through on its incipient territoriality came to loggerheads with new doctrines of nationalism in China. For though it was under Manchu rule that Manchuria became a permanent part of the Qing empire, as the example of Mongolia demonstrates, it did not necessarily follow that by grace of this it would eventually have to become a permanent part of China. This is merely what transpired. By way of conclusion, I would like to consider the implications of the emergence of Manchuria for the modern Chinese geo-body.

Conclusion: The Limits of Tartary

The term “geo-body” was coined by Thai historian Thongchai Winichakul, who defined it as “the operation of the technology of territoriality which created nationhood spatially” (Winichakul 1994, 16). Arguing that the hardening of state boundaries during the age of colonialism and nationalism conferred legitimacy upon the resulting geopolitical shapes once they were projected onto maps, Winichakul showed that these shapes (Italy’s “boot,” for instance, or France’s trademark hexagon) then assume identities of their own, as if a country’s appearance on the globe were somehow a unique, timeless, “natural” geographical form. Moreover, as Winichakul found for Siam, this form—that is, the geo-body—often carries political weight, as when a government decides to use it as a symbol of the inviolability of national territory. This has been true for China, too, and China’s territorial integrity continues to be defended today on the basis of the eighteenth-century geo-body. The projection back in time of essentially Qing-era boundaries may raise some eyebrows (though China is by no means the only place where territorial claims are made on such grounds), yet this very reflex allows us to identify the source of modern China’s geographical self-perception in the boundary shifting that took place under the aegis of the Qing enterprise.

Much the same point has been made before. In a seminal 1967 article, Ping-ti Ho argued that China looks the way it does today because of the Manchu dynasty’s success in expanding the area under its domination and in devising a system of administration that integrated the inner provinces of China proper with areas of Inner Asia newly brought under Qing control. “Geographically,” Ho wrote, “China could never have reached its present dimensions without the laborious, painstaking, and skillful work of empire building carried out by Manchu rulers between 1600 and 1800. . . . The contribution of the Ch’ing period to the formation of modern China as a geographic and ethnic entity is of the greatest significance” (Ho 1967, 189). In noting that the incorporation of Manchuria, Mongolia, Tibet, and Xinjiang owed to the stewardship of the alien Manchus, Ho drew attention to the fact that it was the boundaries of the territory administered by the Qing state which (for the most part) shaped the geographic contours of the modern Chinese republics and their look on the map. For though the Qing enclosure of the historic frontier in the north and west was not unprecedented—the Han, Tang, and Yuan empires were similarly

expansive—it was, for the most part, final. It thus marked an epochal turning point in the historical process of Chinese geography. By the end of the 1700s, once the centuries-old tension between the “Central Plain” (Ch *zhongyuan*)—long a synecdoche for China itself³²—and the frontier (what the poets called *saiwai* or *guanwai*, “beyond the pale”) was largely resolved, the terms of the ancient differentiation between interior and exterior were fundamentally altered. With this, the meaning of “China” began to change. “China” was no longer simply the territories inhabited by the people of the Central Plain; it became a space, the territories over which the state claimed sovereignty—and which, like other early modern states, it had mapped. In this sense, China’s spatial transformation under the Qing can be said to correspond to the creation of the Chinese geo-body.

In this connection, the state’s use of cartography, “a form of political discourse concerned with the acquisition and maintenance of power,” is particularly noteworthy not only because maps are the “prime technology” of the geo-body (Winichakul 1994, 17), but also because the appeal to cartography may be seen to herald the primacy of “space over place” (Harley 1988). That said, place did not suddenly cease to matter: it would be wrong to assume that the Qing spatial transformation left a unified legacy or that the geocorporation of the modern Chinese state was a linear process. Different parts of the empire developed different types of connections with the center, each at the same time evolving in separate ways as places. In this sense, the Qing imagination of empire produced not one, but many territorialities, mostly compatible so long as the Manchus were in power. The fall of the dynasty, on the other hand, resulted in an immanent tension between these places and the new national center—dedicated upon radically different bases than the old imperial one—which in some cases created (and continues to create) serious problems for what would be called “national unity.”

For Manchuria, as we have seen, the transformation of the region in the Qing depended upon a variety of processes: ritual and literary celebration, administrative calibration, and cartographic imagination. Through these means, by the early 1700s, Manchus, Chinese, and Europeans had agreed that this corner of “Tartary” indeed constituted a distinctive region, though they had not yet agreed on a common name for it. Thanks in part to Japanese mediation, the outlines of an agreement on “Manchuria” were in place a century later, by which time the other northern and western frontiers (Mongolia, Tibet, and Xinjiang) had also been blocked out and named. The outline of the Manchurian region that had taken shape was, as shown above, framed around an imperially defined Manchu identity that depended on ancient origin myths and sacred mountains—elements shared across Inner Asian civilizations—as well as on imaginary landscapes and ancient rituals that bore closer resemblance to Chinese antecedents. But Manchuria was as yet relatively weak, a hybrid construction founded as much on memory as on geography. We might think of it as a geo-body in the making, a place in the process of becoming (also) a space, particularly given the important role played by cartographic technologies in giving it clearer geographic form, drawing “Manchuria” and delimiting it on the world’s maps in the nineteenth century.

As could be predicted from the case of Siam, colonialism and capitalism at the same time accelerated the pace of Manchurian geo-body-building. The adoption into

³²The equivalence of these two expressions is nicely demonstrated in a 1747 Manchu sacrificial text: where the author of the text had written *jung yuwan-i ba* (i.e., *zhongyuan*), the Qianlong emperor corrected this to read instead *dulimbai gurun* (i.e., *Zhongguo*, China) (First Historical Archives of China, *Manwen zhupi zouzhejigou bao*, “Manjusai wecere fe baita be šošome ejehengge”).

Chinese of *Manzhou* as a place name in the 1870s occurred as concerns over the empire's general weakness were rising and immediately after Russia had taken advantage of Qing debility to win cession of major chunks of territory in both Manchuria and Xinjiang. Disputes over control of Manchuria—its labor, railroads, ports, mines, and crops—increased thereafter, particularly with the arrival of the Japanese and their 1905 defeat of the Russian army in a war that was fought on Manchurian soil and in Manchurian waters. By then, *Manzhou* was in play as a toponym on Chinese maps and general curiosity about the region was mounting. Not just the colonial powers, but Manchurians themselves awoke to their identity and the role their homeland could play in politics: If Zhang Zuolin failed in his mission to permanently carve out a separate place for Manchuria in a newly globalized “Asia” (Karl 1998), it was in part because the Japanese army thought it could do a better job of it.

The rise of Manchukuo after 1931 brought the contradictions between the Chinese and the Manchurian geo-bodies into open and ultimately disastrous conflict, as Manchuria was joined to a different (and a different kind of) empire. As Prasenjit Duara has recently pointed out, one of the motivating ideologies in the Manchukuo state was a kind of pan-Asian “redemptive transnationalism” that was directly opposed to the “territorial nationalism” centered on the sanctity of a fetishized national space (i.e., the geo-body), which was what animated most Chinese politicians and intellectuals at the time (Duara 1997). On the one hand, it is entirely fitting that “redemptive transnationalism” should have turned up in Manchuria, since, as we have seen, transnational impulses, transmitted most notably through cartography (but also through poetry), figured so importantly in its creation as a local, Manchu place. At the same time, however, we should note that the spatialization of Manchuria as a new, “transnational” Manchukuo ironically ended up putting more meat on this geo-body's bones. Though of course politically heavily dependent on Japan, at no time in its history did Manchuria enjoy a more independent identity than in the 1930s and early 1940s. Its emergence as a center of global attention spawned a flood of Manchuria-related books, pamphlets, and articles in all languages, analyzing its strategic centrality as the “cockpit of Asia” and a “cradle of conflict” (Etherton 1932; Lattimore 1932) and debating its proper status (Shao 1998). And while there are important differences, to be sure, between the imperial and the colonial visions of Manchuria, underlying both one can detect a similar imagination at work.³³ Nothing illustrates this better than the 1932 reprinting in Dalian of the *Ode to Mukden* in both Manchu and Chinese decorative scripts, deluxe copies of which were given to members of the Lytton Commission sent by the League of Nations to investigate the circumstances surrounding the declaration of an independent Manchukuo.³⁴ We can imagine what the presenter—Count Uchida, president of the Southern Manchuria Railway

³³One might point here to the romanticized accounts of Manchuria (and Mongolia) produced by Japanese authors in the 1930s and 1940s, portraying it as a land of abundance and opportunity (Kleeman 1999). While this literature shares more, probably, with the literature of imperial travel and colonization as described in Pratt 1992, its attention to the area's natural features strikes some of the same notes as the writing of the so-called Changbai School. The region continues to exercise a fascination upon Japanese writers today, as seen in the novels of Murakami Haruki, most particularly in *A Wild Sheep Chase* (*Hitsuji-o meguru bōken*) and *The Wind-up Bird Chronicles* (*Nejimakidori no kuronikkuru*).

³⁴For this piece of information I am indebted to Nakami Tatsuo. Though I have been unable to examine them personally, copies of the 1932 edition of the *Ode to Mukden* (Dalian: Shiwen ge) are to be found in libraries in Hohhot, Shenyang, and Dalian. See Huang and Qu 1991.

Company—was trying to say: “Here is proof that we did not invent ‘Manchuria’ ourselves.”³⁵ It is hard to imagine a gesture that could more effectively illustrate the complex and unexpected ways in which different imaginations of this particular region of East Asia continued to circulate for over two hundred years.

Despite this history, of course, the Manchurian geo-body did not last: With the Japanese defeat, it was incorporated once and for all into the larger Chinese geo-body. Afterward, as noted, even the mention of its name was forbidden, annulling the process of onomastic convergence that had begun in the 1790s and leaving the impression that no unified name for the region had ever existed. One might disagree that there had ever even been a geo-body there at all, since no “nation” ever emerged, but surely this is a teleological reading backward from a national narrative. For however it came to be defined (politically, demographically, nationally), as the foregoing has shown, “Manchuria” has been its own place since the eighteenth century, and to a degree remains so even today.

“Tartary” as a general name for the unknown territories of Central and Inner Asia worked well for centuries, but it had its limits. As the Manchu and Russian empires expanded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the strategic importance of these areas grew, and the learned and powerful in Europe as well as in Asia desired more information and better maps. This process, in tandem with the Qing court’s wish to substantiate its claim to imperial legitimacy and defend the ramparts of Manchu identity, gave birth to “Manchuria” in place and time. The notion of region here thus arose first, not as a result of colonialist schemes, but as a result of the cross-pollination of texts, images, and technologies transfixed upon a previously uncharted part of the globe. This nascent territoriality received a fillip in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when colonialism and capitalism combined to create a separate geo-body on the ritual, literary, administrative, and, especially, cartographic structures of Manchurian regionality built by China’s Manchu rulers. From this perspective, the most important Qing bequest to modern China—its geography—appears far more complex than the straightforward “transfer of title” it might seem at first glance. The creation of what became the Chinese geo-body in fact combined contradictory impulses of local and global definition and a range of national and transnational programs, which scholars have lately begun to reexamine. The Manchurian case shows clearly that the geographical instantiation of the modern Chinese state involved, not so much the preservation of what was, in the end, a highly problematic legacy from the Qing, but the reconstitution of national territory. That this required a new imagination of the Chinese nation is obscured by the choice that was made in the end, namely, to rebuild on the lines of the Qing empire. But it was a reconstitution, nonetheless.

³⁵According to the catalogue prepared by the Mukden Library, the original 1748 edition of the *Ode*, along with works by Amiot, Klaproth, and other Westerners who had written either about the poem or about “Manchuria,” were all put on exhibit for the delegation to inspect (Eto 1932).

Glossary

- liutiaobian 柳條邊
longmai 龍脈
longqi 龍氣
longxing zhi di 龍興之地
Manshū 滿洲
Manshūkoku 滿洲國
Manshūteikoku 滿洲帝國
Manzhou 滿洲
Manzhou genben zhi di 滿洲根本之地
Manzhou gongren 『滿洲工人』
Manzhou sangshi tu 滿洲喪失土
Manzhou shilu 『滿洲實錄』
Manzhou yuanliu kao 『滿洲源流考』
Manzhouguo 滿洲國
Manzu 滿族
Nihon henkai ryakuzu 『日本邊界略圖』
qi (banner) 旗
qi (humors) 氣
saiwai 塞外
shanling 山靈
Shengjing fu 『盛京賦』
Shengjing quantu 『盛京全圖』
shina dattan 支那韃靼
Songhuajiang fangchuan ge 『松花江放船歌』
Taizu Wu huangdi shilu 『太祖武皇帝實錄』
Wangsi Changbaishan shi 『望祀長白山詩』
wei 僞
wuyue 五嶽
xian 縣
Zhongguo benbu 中國本部
zhongyuan 中原
zhou (district) 州
zhou (region, land) 洲
zuzong faxiang zhongdi 祖宗發祥重地
Asia zenzu 『亞細亞全圖』
baishan heishui 白山黑水
bianjiang 邊疆
changbai 長白
Changbai shijian 長白時間
Changbaishan 長白山
Chikyū bankyū sōzu 『地球半球總圖』
Chūgoku hondo 中國本土
ci jie xi zhongguo difang 此皆系中國地方
Da Qing Huidian 『大清會典』
Da Qing yitong zhi 『大清一統志』
dada 韃靼
Dongbei 東北
dongbei ren 東北人
dongbei wei 東北味
dongbei yi dai 東北一帶
Dongsansheng 東三省
dongxun 東巡
fa xiang zhi di 發祥之地
fengjin 封禁
fengshan 封禪
Fengtian fu 奉天府
fu (poem) 賦
fu (prefecture) 府
Guandong 關東
guanwai 關外
guashu 掛樹
Gujin tushu jicheng 『古今圖書集成』
guojia zhaoji zhongdi 國家肇基重地
Hokubai 『北海』
Hokusa bunryaku 『北槎聞略』
Huangyu quanlantu 『皇輿全覽圖』
koku 國
li 里
Liaodong 遼東
liezu chuangxing zhi di 列祖創興之地

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