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Manchus: A Horse of a Different Color

by Hannah Knight

Abstract: The question of identity has been one of the biggest questions addressed to humanity. Whether in terms of a country, a group or an individual, the exact definition is almost as difficult to answer as to what constitutes a group. The Manchus, an ethnic group in China, also faced this dilemma. It was an issue that lasted throughout their entire time as rulers of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) and thereafter. Though the guidelines and group characteristics changed throughout that period one aspect remained clear: they did not sinicize with the Chinese Culture. At the beginning of their rule, the Manchus implemented changes that would transform the appearance of China, bringing it closer to the identity that the world recognizes today. In the course of examining three time periods, 1644, 1911, and the 1930's, this paper looks at the significant events of the period, the changing aspects, and the Manchus and the Qing Imperial Court's relations with their greater Han Chinese subjects. The Manchus were considered, at least to its newly conquered subjects, to be the foreign (or more commonly used) "alien" force. Outnumbered, the Manchus had every opportunity to assimilate, classifying themselves as "Chinese" rather than the standard "Banner" or Manchu. However, as this paper will exhibit through the very definition of who the Manchus were, and the events that surrounded them, as well as their poor relations with their non-banner subjects, the Manchus remained separated from the Han Chinese, continuously classifying themselves as Manchu until their official recognition in 1949.

Introduction

China is only for the Chinese. If this remark was made sixty years ago, many would have agreed with this statement and moved on. Upon recent discovery, this was not always the case. In 1949, the Manchu identity officially became recognized as a minority ethnic group (*shaoshu minzu*) within the People's Republic of China. Four years later, over two million registered as Manchus.¹ Prior to this event, many Manchus were thought to have either assimilated into the majority Han Chinese culture during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) or blended together with Japanese culture during the Manchukuo period (1931-1945). Either way, the Manchus were a small forgotten group among the majority. However, the Manchus were a separate group with their own unique identity. This paper will explore and map this identity throughout the course of the Qing Dynasty and part of the Manchukuo period.²

By looking at three distinctive time periods in Manchu History, (1644, 1911, and the 1930's), this paper shows examples of how, despite previously thought, the Manchu identity has never disappeared, though it was given the opportunity. These chances came in many forms as the small ethnic group from Manchuria took over the large Han Chinese Culture of the Ming Dynasty, faced European competition that presented the ruling ethnic group in a poor light, a revolution whose goal was the elimination of the Manchus, to finally face a controlling foreign government. There were many chances for the Manchus to disappear, yet they endured. Not only is it seen by the cultural traits that continued but in the relationship with their conquered Han Chinese, or as this paper will refer to them as the Han. If the Manchu identity changed, it evolved to resemble a more modern identity, not a Chinese one. So long as the Manchus claimed their identity, they had not disappeared.

¹ Mark C. Elliott, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 42-43.

² Throughout the course of the paper, Han will be interchangeably used with Chinese and Manchu with Qing or banner people.

Beginning: 1644

Before one can begin to see the evolution of the Manchus, one must start at the beginning. There are often two sides to the process by which a nation is formed. The first side offers a story based on vast imagination, involving impressive tales of heroism and mystical elements. The other side is commonly backed by tangible evidence, which can be traced and checked. The origins of the Manchu nation are no different. The mythical aspect tells the story of three maidens who one day decide to descend from heaven in order to bathe at a lake that lays at the foot of Mt. Bukuri. The youngest of the three discovers a fruit placed on her clothing by a heavenly messenger. Accidentally swallowing the fruit, the maiden becomes pregnant and human, and gives birth to a son. When asked his identity, the son claimed that his clan “descended from heaven, is the Aisin Gioro. I have no father. My mother was the third of heaven’s daughters... I was also a spirit of heaven above.”³ The son was said to have later become leader of the Jurchens, the forerunners of the Manchus. His descendants would come to live in the place where the Manchus’ first leader, Nurhaci emerged.⁴ For all of its glory and captivating storytelling, this narrative remains a myth.

The myth of the Manchus’ origins not only served to entertain, but to also claim ethnic authenticity for the nation. The tale may be fictional, but the places and people involved are not. Manchus who laid claim to the title of emperor also claimed themselves to be descendants of the Aisin Gioro clan. The claim of being Aisin Gioro connected one to the beginning of the Manchus as well as to claiming favor from the heavens. Ethnic authenticity is shown in name, but also location. The Odoli where the son’s leadership was established was the same Odoli where Nurhaci rose to power.⁵ A claim to the birthplace of the Manchus not only brought ethnic authenticity but established the nation’s legitimacy

³ Ibid., 44-46.

⁴ Ibid., 46.

⁵ Ibid.

as a separate ethnic group. Odoli was already recognized as part of the Jurchen history (rulers of the Jin Dynasty). This established geographical legitimacy. What is more is the boy's way of conception was his claim to his lineage of being from heaven. The idea of heaven was very important in the Asian culture, just as was Confucian belief of the Mandate of Heaven. The Mandate of Heaven is the belief that so long as the emperor was able to maintain the well being of a nation, the right to rule was his. For the Manchus, the ability to claim ties of such high elevation gave the Manchu rulers the legitimacy they needed to rule.

Myths hold their own importance in history, yet they are often quickly dismissed in favor of facts that can be proven. The factual side of the Manchus origins begins with several tribes rather than a single nation. Manchuria (the Northeastern Three Provinces of modern day China), often fell into the hands of foreign forces. Eventually the people of Manchuria would develop into three main clans. Of these three, the main line of the Manchus connects to a Tungus border tribe, known as the Ju-chens or Jurchens.⁶ These tribes, as well as the neighboring territories, were controlled by a feudal system. Though the feudal system had long been in place, it left much to desire in the ability to control the tribes. The weakening of the surrounding tribes left the opportunity for one to assert his power and to get rid of the feudal system in the process. That individual was Nurhaci (1559-1626). Inheriting the tribal chief position of his own clan upon the death his father, Nurhaci used his power to gain control over the rest of the tribes.⁷ How Nurhaci went from inheriting the rule over one tribe to the formation of a nation lies in the decline the Haixi-Jianzhou alliance, an alliance formed by Nurhaci's Jianzhou Jurchen clan and the Haixi tribes.⁸ The weakening of the tribes allowed Nurhaci to seize the opportunity to assert his leadership over all the tribes in

⁶ Franz Michael, *The Origin of Manchu Rule in China: Frontier and Bureaucracy as Interacting Forces in the Chinese Empire* (New York: Octagon Books, 1972), 23.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁸ Elliott, *The Manchu Way*, 54.

the alliance.⁹ While the unification of the tribes began in the late sixteenth century, a united Manchu regime did not fully appear until 1616 when “Nurhaci proclaimed his regime as the Latter Jin.”¹⁰ Nurhaci united the tribes, revealing his intentions when he took the title of Khan. By claiming the title of Khan, Nurhaci revealed his desire for imperial power.¹¹ Nurhaci’s proclamation was all he needed to convey his goal of expansion. However, Nurhaci did not merely state his intentions. As soon as the Manchurian tribes were brought under his control, Nurhaci moved into China, bringing about the fall of the Ming, (which had lasted from 1368 to 1644), leading to the rise of the Qing, in 1644.

Nurhaci may have been seen as the founding father of the great Manchu nation, but its true strength did not blossom until the rule of Hong Taiji (1592-1643). To further unite the tribes and gain additional control, Hong Taiji followed the example of the Chinese. Chinese dynasties were known to rule from the Dragon Throne, through a complex and extensive bureaucratic network of scholar-officials. Hong moved the Manchus away from the feudal system to a bureaucratic system based on the Ming political structure.¹² Hong’s goal was not to remodel the image of the Manchus in favor of the Chinese but gain a more centralized control over the Manchus. A bureaucratic government gave Hong Taiji the power to challenge the Ming. Unfortunately, the Ming Emperor failed to see the level of threat the Manchus posed. As Franz Michael points out, “in a letter of the Ming Emperor to Chinese frontier officials the statement was made that the Manchus were originally dependent; but their present status remained open. They were simply rebels.”¹³ According to the Ming, the Manchus were just another group of Chinese rebels. What they failed to notice was that the Manchus were a “horse of a different color.”

⁹ Ibid., 56.

¹⁰ William Rowe, *China's Last Empire: The Great Qing* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 15.

¹¹ Michael, 51.

¹² Rowe, 17.

¹³ Michael, 100.

The Ming may have seen nothing more than a group of rebels, but there were several ethnic traits that separated the Manchus and the Han, which established the Manchu identity; the first of these being their name. In 1635 the former Jurchen tribes dropped all ties to their tribal past and used the term “Manchu” to identify themselves.¹⁴ Some, such as Dorgon, the regent for the Shunzhi emperor in 1644, believed “the empire is a single whole. There are no distinctions between Manchus and Hans.”¹⁵ In reality, it would be the differences between the Manchus and the Han that would serve as a source of tension between the two groups. Moving beyond their history and name, religion also became a point of difference and a point of identity. Buddhism, Daoism, Shamanism and to some extent, Confucianism came to be the belief systems of China. Buddhism, Daoism, and especially Confucianism were the religious systems of the Han Chinese and were adopted. Yet shamanism remained the leading religion among the Manchus.¹⁶ The religious leaders, shamans, were individuals of unnatural ability, who were responsible for the communication with spirits. Out of the two forms of shamanism, primitive and domestic, the large majority of Manchus focused on the domestic practice. Domestic shamanism was “liturgically based sacrifices made to heaven and to the ancestors...”¹⁷ Shamanism held elements, such as the ancestral, patrilineal sacrifices, that closely resembled Confucian practices, which made the introduction of shamanism into the Chinese culture easier. Shamanism most importantly, provided a unity amongst the Manchus with a belief system as its center. “We Manchus have our own particular rites for honoring heaven.”¹⁸ The Yongzheng emperor made it clear in the previous statement that all cultures honor the heavens, but the Manchu nation had its own way. Its similarity to the other religions had made its introduction into

¹⁴ Elliott, 63.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 212.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 235.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 236.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 241.

Chinese culture easier. Shamanism, however, also showed the differences between the Han and the Manchus; this would ultimately create a barrier between the two.¹⁹

Religion was only a small factor in which the Manchus sought to establish their identity and distinction from others. A written script was also created to further strengthen their identity. Manchu dialect had long been established, yet script was one area in which it had not fully developed. “The Chinese write their own speech, the Mongols write their own speech. Are you telling me that it is better for us all to continue learning and writing a foreign language than for you to find a way for us to write our own?”²⁰ Extreme as they were, Nurhaci’s remarks served to enforce the need to establish their own written script in order to dominate over China. By mixing a Mongolian script with their own language, the Manchus provided credibility to their identity as an ethnic group. The Manchus now had a tool which marked their place in history and acted as a means of communication. A written script became an important part of the Manchu identity where deaths, weddings, and names could be recorded.

Names also served as both an identifying and separating factor especially with name changing. “The Emperor: You are a Hanjun. Why do you have a Manchu name? Arsal: My original name was Cui Zhilu. Since the time I was small, I have studied the Qing language [i.e., Manchu], and so I took a Manchu name.”²¹ Name and language were often used to identify one’s ethnicity. The problem for this defendant was that he was commonly mistaken as a Manchu, instead of Chinese, due to his ability to speak the Manchu language and the origin of his name. Chinese surnames are normally single character. Their given names are one to two

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Pamela Crossley, *The Manchus* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002). Kindle ed Chapter 2, Loc 550.

²¹ Pamela Kyle Crossley, Helen F Siu, and Donald S Sutton, *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press Berkeley, 2006), 27.

characters. In contrast, the Manchu names are longer than the two syllable names of Chinese. A Chinese name may look along the lines of “Wang Fuzhi,” whereas Manchu names resembled something more like “Niu-gu-lu E-bi-long.” In greeting, the Chinese used their surnames as identification, paying homage to their familial ties. Manchus, however, identified themselves not by their familial ties but by their banner affiliation.²² For Manchus, names were nothing more than a syllable to be recorded for later reference. Their main concern was representing the sounds of the Manchu language. To hold on to a true representation of the Manchu language, names used appearance, character, and even numbers.²³ The ease of naming practices was not one enjoyed by the Han. Han names were fraught with meaning.²⁴ Burdened by the belief that naming was tied directly to fate, words such as “sickly” or “weak” would not be found in Chinese names. Names were an important first step in a person’s life that professionals were often consulted. For the Han, every detail in regards to the naming process was taken into consideration, so much so that Han Chinese of the same generation would use common names, a process which the Manchus paid little mind to.²⁵ There were cases where Manchus had Chinese sounding names or Chinese had Manchu names. Yet it was a belief that Manchus were to have Manchu names and the Han, Chinese names.

Intangible characteristics alone did not make up the Manchu identity. Physical appearances were also observed, such as dress. The most notable stylistic choice for the Manchu was the men’s hairstyle. The queue required the men to shave their forelocks, leaving only a piece of long, braided hair at the back of their head. However, since its introduction into the mass Chinese public, it was no longer a clear marker for Manchu ethnicity. The women on the other hand, maintained their own identity. Where the Manchu men’s hairstyle became one of the masses, the

²² Elliott, 241-2.

²³ Ibid., 242-3.

²⁴ Ibid., 242.

²⁵ Ibid., 243-4.

Manchu women's became one of distinction. Han women wore a simple bun on the top of their head, leaving all décor to a variation of headdresses. The Manchu women were the innovators of the use of hair extensions. Worn back, the Manchu women would take their hair and wrap it around either a wooden, metal, or ivory fillet that fastened behind their hair, in an intricate triangle pattern. Extending dramatically, the Manchu women would dress their hair with flowers or other decorative pieces and earrings that helped set the Manchu woman and Han women apart.²⁶ At the appearance level, the Manchu women were the examples of separation between the two groups as by passing the Queue edict. Manchu men had a difficult time standing out from Han or Mongol.

For the Manchu women, beauty came to reflect in the style of their hair. For the Han women, foot binding was a mark of beauty. This often led to the painful process of wrapping a woman's, sometimes young girl's, foot until it turned into the smaller, deformed, "beautiful" one. The Manchus did not see small feet as a marker of beauty. "[There] were several women, natives of Tartary or Tartar extraction, whose feet were not distorted like those of the Chinese... The Tartar ladies have hitherto kept their legs at liberty, and would never submit to the Chinese operation of crippling the feet."²⁷ Foot binding was frowned upon by the Manchu women, who could not see the apparent beauty that came with the manipulation of one's feet. Though an attempt was made to ban foot binding, the ban was lifted in 1668 after the Han women refused to give up the practice.²⁸

For all for the importance of the previously discussed identity traits, the most important part to the Manchu culture, in terms of identity, was the banner system. The banner system was the division of the Manchus into different groups, resembling a class structure of. Typically, the top three banners were the upper class. From the beginning, the eight banners' purpose was to provide an efficient, quick way of "mobilizing an army" that at the

²⁶ Ibid., 250.

²⁷ Ibid., 246.

²⁸ Ibid., 247.

same time transformed the Jurchen tribes into a unified Jin state, moving away from tribal ties to a centralized power.²⁹ Building from hunting traditions and tactics, Nurhaci used the quasi-military maneuvers of the hunt to practice warfare skills. He also based the division of the Jurchen army, on the hunting experience of old.³⁰

The division of the banners extended beyond the military. The Manchus were divided into different groups whose boundaries would encompass not only the other males of the household but also their wives, children and servants.³¹ Typically, once the hunt was over, one was expected to return to their different regions all over the nation, as the units of the hunting parties were temporary. The banner organization changed this aspect of the hunt and with the division of the groups, the units were to remain in a designated area with their families always ready for battle. This factor served the Jin well in their goal of conquest. Beginning with four banner colors, in 1615 the system evolved into the well-known Eight banner system. Twenty years later, when the Manchus began their invasion of China, the expansion included all ethnic groups, including both the Mongols and the Han.³² The total number of banners amounted to twenty-four, yet the eight Manchu banners came to be known as the core of the banner system. The beginning of the banner system did not allow open enrollment. Even after Mongols and Chinese were allowed to join a banner society, it was mostly purely Han or Mongol, there was no intermixing. Complete integration was rare.³³

Division between the two ethnic groups came from all sides. A relatively large population, the Manchus' numbers in comparison to the Ming failed to compete. Many have adopted the Confucius saying that "Only by becoming 'Chinese' in their political organization had the 'barbarians' a chance of conquering

²⁹ Ibid., 57.

³⁰ Ibid., 58.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., 59.

³³ Ibid., 73.

the rule over China.”³⁴ After the Manchus adopted the Ming government system, it would be expected that the Manchus had willingly become Chinese or the Chinese had fed their standards to the Manchus. This logic fails to recognize the tools of control. The Manchus, before the introduction of any government structure, were a divided, tribal, and feudal system. With the goal of conquest in mind, some form of government was required, which led to uniting the Manchus under one political system which in turn made the conquest over the Ming easier. Despite the fact a new ethnic group was taking control of the country, the adoption of the Han Chinese’s bureaucratic government allowed for the daily functions of the government to go without interruption.

Conquest is not only made easier when political structures match, but also when the gates are left open. The actions of the Ming rulers provided opportunity for any looking to expand their territory. During the end of the Ming rule, the Han faced financial decline due to the corruption within the court. Officials would not only exempt their own property from taxes but would also lend money with high interest rates that would allow them to acquire more land that would be tax exempt.³⁵ The Ming scholar-gentry class worked for themselves by acquiring these lands, not the government, whose source of revenues were from the taxes collected.³⁶ These were the problems of the Ming government; central power was limited and with no ability to tax the land, funds were scarce. These were funds that could have potentially been used to repair irrigation systems, protect the lands from flooding, or to pay for soldiers. These signs of corrosion within the Ming Empire moved beyond the official level. Deterioration seeped down into the local level, and upon the recollection of Nanjing’s transition, an eyewitness recounted that in the absence of the Ming emperor, the palace began to be gutted by the people of Nanjing, including the eyewitness’s family: “The good things had all been

³⁴ Michael, 3.

³⁵ Ibid., 6.

³⁶ Ibid., 72.

looted; I got only the satins.”³⁷ Not even the emperor’s parrot was safe. The gates were open and the conquest had begun.

When the Manchus seized their opportunity and succeeded in their goal of defeating the Ming, conquest came in many forms. It was more than pillaging, murdering, or battles. Conquest often occurred in the lives of the Chinese at a quick pace.³⁸ In the case of Nanjing, Qing soldiers quickly replaced the original Ming soldiers. For many, the changing of protective forces was cause for concern; the Han’s safety was in the hands of foreign forces. Yet no change or act of Manchu domination came as great as the hairstyle of queue for the men. A mark of identity for the Manchu men, it soon became a mark of submission for the Han. At first, only officials and the military were forced to change their hair to the Manchu style. It was soon confirmed that all males of the Ming Empire were to wear the queue and, “anyone who didn’t conform was to be killed.”³⁹ For the Han, the opposition against the queue was more than a dislike of the hairstyle or its status as a mark of submission to the Qing, but a sign of disrespect. The shaving of one’s hair was seen as going against the Confucian belief of filial piety, or rather the need to honor one’s ancestors. Unfortunately for the Han, resistance to the queue made little difference.

The conquest of the Han Chinese began to change the relationship between the Han Chinese and the Manchus. Prior to the complete conquest, the Manchus had been Chinese rebels in the eyes of the Ming. When the queue was enforced, the Han became aware that the Manchus were anything but Chinese. To them, any modeling of the Manchu-styled haircut was inhuman, much less Chinese.⁴⁰ It was not only the Han who were quick to assume the Manchus were below them in status. The Manchus’ low view of the Han was seen in the example of the women who were captured in Yangzhou and were brought to Nanjing, who

³⁷ Lynn A Struve, *Voices from the Ming-Qing Cataclysm: China in Tiger’s Jaws*, Birmingham (New York: Vail-Ballou Press, 1944), 60.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 63.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 64.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

were tethered together, and given a price.⁴¹ To the Manchus, the Han were objects to be sold or reshaped in an image befitting what pleased them.

The Manchus were reshaping the Han to look like them, especially the men. At the same time, each group maintained their separation. Separation only seemed natural to the Manchus and the Han. According to one Chinese scholar, Wang Fuzhi, separation existed in nature thus it existed in society. “So it is that dew, thunder, frost, and snow all occur at their proper times, and animals, plants, birds, and fish all keep to their own species. There can be no frost or snow during the long summer days, nor can there be dew or thunder in the depths of winter.”⁴² In his own philosophical way, Wang commented that to mix the two groups together would be going against nature, which was one of two key elements to the Chinese culture as a way to maintain order and peace.

In order to govern an empire as large as China during the seventeenth and eighteenth century, peace was important. The purpose of the adoption of some of the Chinese culture, such as the political system, was to maintain peace. The hopes of the Manchus were not to become assimilated into the Chinese culture, yet the image had become an important part to the Manchus as they came into power. Hoping to rid their identity of the barbarian stigma, the Manchus had adopted the Ming bureaucratic style. The Confucian practice of widow chastity was also adopted. By adopting such a custom, the Manchus hoped it would work to “publicly demonstrate to their Han Chinese subjects their benignity and refinement,”⁴³ *not* to become assimilated into the Han culture. Widow chastity was adopted to change the image of the Manchus

⁴¹ Ibid., 65.

⁴² William Theodore De Bary, “Wang Fuzhi” *Sources of Chinese Tradition: Volume 2: From 1600 Through the Twentieth Century: Vol. 2* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 28-9.

⁴³ Mark C. Elliott, “Manchu Widows and Ethnicity in Qing China,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 41, no. 1 (Jan. 1999): 34.

as well as provided legitimacy to the Manchu rule.⁴⁴ The Manchus were an alien force, whose “crimes” against the Han made the acceptance of their rule difficult. Widow chastity helped to ease some of the tension between the two and allowed the Han to see beyond the perceived Manchu barbarianism. Even more, widow chastity served to show, not only the legitimacy of the Manchu rulers, but that the Manchu women were just as deserving of grace as the Han women.⁴⁵ The Manchus made it clear that they were on the same level, if not higher, to that of the “civilized” Han. The adoption of Chinese cultural practices, such as widow chastity, made the peace between the two possible. However separation still existed.

As Rana Mitter points out, “the Mandate of Heaven theory did not demand that China’s rulers be Chinese, only that they accepted the conceptual framework on which the Chinese imperial institution rested (cheng) and that they bring all the Chinese under one unified rule (t’ung).”⁴⁶ At the same time as the Manchus were bringing all under one unified rule, they were creating barriers between themselves and the Han. These barriers would far outlast the end of the Qing. Even in the adoption of Chinese practices, there was separation. In the case of widow chastity, chastity often brought recognition and awards from the imperial court. In turn, these awards brought substantial funds to the women and their family. However, the division of the awards caused strife among the two groups. The number of recipients of the awards tallied up to a high number of Manchus. This number far exceeded that of the Han recipients.⁴⁷

The extreme practice of widow chastity in some cases involved suicide. Suicides among these widows were a common and well respected practice during the Ming. The Manchus saw it

⁴⁴ Ibid., 38.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 39.

⁴⁶ Rana Mitter, *Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance and Collaboration During the Manchurian Crisis, 1931-1933* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 18-19.

⁴⁷ Elliott, 40-41.

as a “lack of respect for life” and a minor reflection on their own supposed “barbarian” nature.⁴⁸ The Qing attempted to stop the practice by arguing that it went against Confucianism, masking the real motivation of their desire to separate themselves from the barbarian stigma.⁴⁹ Even with the disapproval of the Qing court, the Han and the Manchu women continued the practice of “following one into death,” a practice that existed before Chinese use. The difference of the Manchu use of the practice was in more cases that the wife was not the only one to accompany the man in death. Maids, consorts, and even other males followed the deceased man into death, as in the case of the Shunzhi emperor.⁵⁰ Suicides were not a source of pride or distinction for the Manchus as it was for the Han. Suicides were centered more on loyalty and death.⁵¹

The acceptance of widow chastity by the banner women extended beyond ancestral traditions or the loyalty to one’s husband. Financial rewards also played a role. Han widows were forced to rely on the family of the deceased husband for support. Manchu widows, due to the 1762 edict of the Qianlong emperor, received more assistance regardless of their age. Prior to this, chastity was only open to those over the age of forty.⁵² Benefits made it appealing for banner women to remain chaste. The benefits may have been appealing but the issue of choice also affected whether or not widow chastity was practiced. The Han women were to practice chastity, willing or not. For the Manchus, at times, chastity was never an option. To prevent the abuse of the assistance given to them exclusively, thus creating a pressure on the National treasury, Manchu widows were commonly forced to

⁴⁸ Ibid., 44-5.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 53.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 46. The Shunzhi Emperor was the son of Hong Taiji, who succeeded his father and became emperor at the age of six. His reign was from 1644 to 1661. Under him the queue edict was issued through his uncle, Dorgon, who served as his regent. Rowe, 19 and 40.

⁵¹ Elliott, 47.

⁵² Ibid., 61.

remarry. Pressures on the treasury and the population numbers became a concern for the Manchus. Already having less than their conquered subjects, widow chastity further lessened the population. In light of this, Manchu widows under forty were forced to remarry to continue the Manchu line.⁵³

The Manchu officials, by the adoption of certain policies, saw that: “if they publicly embraced the concept of China, such acceptance of Han culture would win them the support of the Han people.”⁵⁴ The Manchus had conquered a nation that far outnumbered their own. The adoption of some cultural customs, such as chastity and the bureaucratic government, served to appease the roaring, rebellious voices of the Han. The Manchus understood that concession was necessary in order to maintain peace. At the same time, they did not wish to discard their own cultural differences to conform to become fully Han Chinese. Anything of Han Chinese influence that was seen as unnecessary to maintain peace was changed.⁵⁵ It so happened that in the process of creating Qing China, the Manchus got rid of most aspects of Han China.

Among the first changes was the Ming’s geographical redefinition of China. Ming China encompassed fifteen provinces and the Han Chinese who resided within them. Under the Qing, China grew to include the lands of what once was Manchuria, and present day Mongolia, Xinjiang, Tibet, along with a number of other areas.⁵⁶ The expansion of China’s borders helped stabilize its economy and aided the newest residents of China. In stabilizing the economy, “the Manchu emperors not only legitimated their own rule but also opened the way for the banner armies to conquer and incorporate a range of ethnically diverse peoples into the

⁵³ Ibid., 55.

⁵⁴ Zhao Gang, “Reinventing China: Imperial Qing Ideology and the Rise of Modern Chinese National Identity in the Early Twentieth Century,” *Modern China* 32, no. 1 (2006): 7.

⁵⁵ Michael, 105.

⁵⁶ Zhao, 5.

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imperium.”⁵⁷ For as much as the Manchus used traditions, cultural practices, or government structures, they were not Chinese, thus they were not treated the same way. The Manchus changed the social hierarchy.

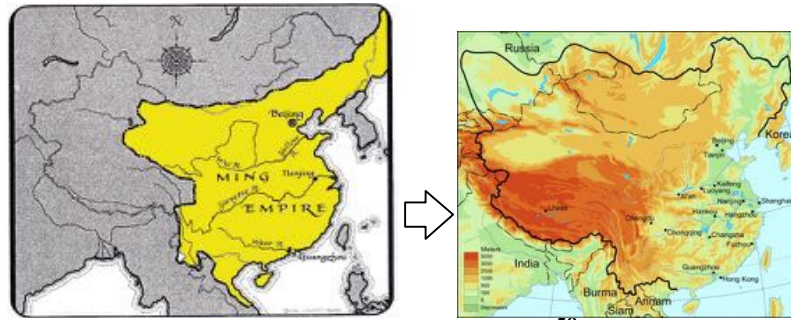


Image of Ming Empire. ⁵⁸

“They demarcated the whole area north of Tongji Gate and Dazhong Bridge and west of the place called Small Camp near Gem Pearl Bridge [for exclusive occupation by Qing bannermen], and they ordered everyone to move out of the dwellings in that area within three days.”⁵⁹ Nanjing was only one example of Han residents who were moved out of their homes in order to corner off a section of cities to accommodate the Manchus. The ability to do so exhibited the power the Manchus now had, a power envied by the Han. “Upon seeing the Prince of Yu at West Floral Gate, Zhang also told his circle that his own ancestors had been Tartars and that he still had a portrait of them in Manchu costume in his

⁵⁷ Ibid., 11-12.

⁵⁸ Image for Ming Empire courtesy of Kenny R. Gomez (“China Limits European Contacts” CDA’s World History Wiki, accessed December 12, 2014, <http://cdaworldhistory.wikidot.com/china-limits-european-contacts>. Image for Qing China courtesy of “A Visual Sourcebook of Chinese Civilization,” accessed December 1, 2014,

<https://depts.washington.edu/chinaciv/1xarqing.htm>.

⁵⁹ Struve, 64.

home, so it was fitting that he shave his head.”⁶⁰ Though stating the reason for the acceptance of the Manchu hairstyle so easily was his ancestral connection, in reality Zhang’s willingness to support the Manchu side shows the power they had, a power and status Zhang hoped to gain.

Zhang, as well as the other Han subjects, would soon learn that “Manchus [were] to be an example for the Han Chinese.” Separation between the two would lead to favoritism for one, mistreatment for the other.⁶¹ The Manchus had adopted the Ming’s bureaucratic government. However, banner appointments were not subjugated to the law of avoidance as the Chinese appointed officials were.⁶² Law of avoidance kept corruption within a government at bay by making it against the rules for an official to be posted in his home province or in a neighboring province. In the bureaucratic system the Qing had adopted, there was still room for change. The Manchus not only could serve within their own banners but also benefitted from many opportunities within the government and military. The Han, even those of the greatest talents, were confined to certain positions within the Chinese banners and the government.⁶³ Even those who had joined the Manchu side from the very beginning faced the same treatment. The once high officials of the Ming became the lowly ones of the Qing. “When my father was in the Ming court, was he not the exalted Duke of Pingguo? Now that he’s serving the Qing Court, how is it that he’s behind others? But it is that way even for those who went over to the Qing first.”⁶⁴

Favoritism had become another form of separation between the Manchus and the Han. Those who served in the banners and as banner soldiers were shown considerable amount of favor. Due to the amount of hardship and the possibility of death in service, the needs of the bannermen were met. Money was given in the form of

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Elliott, 164.

⁶² Ibid., 137.

⁶³ Ibid., 136.

⁶⁴ Struve, 185-6.

silver, households wanted for nothing as allowances were given to each man to cover the housing and food needs for him and his family. Weapons, as well as supplies to care for their horses, were also provided. Additional stipends were given to cover any financial circumstances; bravery in battle was rewarded with a monetary sum.⁶⁵ Debts, weddings, and funerals were paid for by the court; the banner soldiers had become known as the people who “ate the emperor’s rice.”⁶⁶ The costs of such care were taken from the imperial treasury. The source of income for the treasury was the taxes paid by the Han, who in the meantime were evicted from their homes for the Manchus. Even when the Chinese banners existed, they did not receive quite the same treatment and for sure the regular Han citizens did not.

Becoming an official in the imperial court was even more rewarding than being a simple bannerman. Salaries and benefits of officers, officials of the bannermen, were regularly higher and more favorable in comparison to the civilian officials (the Han). The route to these official positions required a three part civil service examination. In another cultural practice adopted by the Manchus, the Han had the advantage as they were more familiar with the texts that were tested upon. However even among the Han, who spent years studying, numbers of those that passed at the first level, let alone all three, were low. This was the problem that presented itself to the Qing court; they had adopted the system when they came in to power to appease the Han, but the Manchus themselves were not scholars. Out of the 108 first-place honors, only one was given to a bannerman, who was not even a Manchu but a Mongol.⁶⁷ For the Manchu officials, the question that arose was how to guarantee that Manchus would pass so that they would be able to hold posts within the imperial court? To solve this dilemma, the Manchus set up many methods to guarantee the acquisition of a government position was made easier for a bannerman. One method was by “imposing a quota of successful

⁶⁵ Elliott, 195.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 191-2, 195.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 203.

banner candidates, so that the examination standard was, so to speak, on a ‘curve.’”⁶⁸ Not trusting one method to guarantee the Manchus would dominate the official positions, the examination was easier for the banner soldiers, sometimes only requiring translations between Manchu and Chinese. The Manchus had the highest success rate of other ethnic group, including the Han. Again such favorable treatment was focused only on the Manchus, not the Han.⁶⁹

There was only one route to a government position for the Han, the examination system. The Manchus were not as unfortunate. Bannermen also had the option to work their way through the banner hierarchy, by creating successful careers within the military, or were awarded government positions. A bannerman could acquire a position in the government by either creating both a successful career and working his way through the Banner hierarchy or by being awarded for impressive performance in battle with a high position. Either method was accomplished without a degree or ever taking the examination. “And when have we ever relied on people who came up through the military examinations? Would we place our leadership and trust in them?”⁷⁰ Other bannermen relied on family connections as did Agui, whose father, Akdun, an important official, gave him a position as a secretary.⁷¹ Family connections were often the footholds to the life as an imperial official. As Evelyn Rawski points out, “the Qianlong Emperor frequently appointed banner nobles who were linked to him through marriage to the Grand Council: the number of Manchus on the Grand Council exceeded Chinese in 73 percent of the sixty years of his reign.”⁷² The

⁶⁸ Ibid., 204.

⁶⁹ Edward Rhoads, *Manchus & Han: Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861-1928* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 43-44.

⁷⁰ Elliott, 205.

⁷¹ Ibid., 205.

⁷² Evelyn S. Rawski, “Presidential Address: Reenvisioning the Qing: The Significance of the Qing Period in Chinese History,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 55, no. 4 (1996): 832.

methods opened to the Manchu bannermen were not opened to all. The Han did not have these same options and instead had to look for other positions.

While the bannermen dominated the government positions, the Han attempted to hold some presence in government. Most of the imperial positions that were held by the Han Chinese were local level positions, such as the magistrate. The magistrates oversaw the grievances of a number of towns. The magistrate could act as judge and jury, except when it came to legal cases concerning the Manchus. Any crime committed by a bannerman, even premeditated murder, could only be handled by the magistrate to the point of discovery. They were then required to hand the case to local banner authorities to be dealt with.⁷³ It did not stop there. Torture could not be used on bannermen in interrogations, they were held in their own prisons, and made it difficult for civilians (the Han) to bring charges against them as they held immunity from the regular prosecution ordinance. “[S]o there is no way to enforce the law inside the Manchu city.”⁷⁴ Even when measures were taken to enforce the charges, the punishment was left to garrison commanders. It was mandatory for punishments to be lessened for all bannermen.⁷⁵ Manchus were above the law and above the Han. They kept themselves separate at all times, even within their banner organization, separating the Chinese banners from the Mongols. Even though they could claim to part of the banner system, they received less than their Manchu counterparts.⁷⁶

The favoritism shown to the Manchus as well as signs of Han submission had come to resemble a form of conquest. The conquest of the Ming had come in the form of hair, social demographics, and ultimately separation. It also came in the form of death and destruction. By the time the conquest was over, many of Han descent shared the feelings of Shi Kefa, whose last diary

⁷³ Elliott, 197-8.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 199.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 77-78.

entry read: “To repay the nation with this one death is surely my destiny. I only regret not having earlier followed our former emperor to the grave... In a world like this, life is of no use anyway; one might as well come to this conclusion early on.”⁷⁷

What preceded this feeling of despair was a story of mass pillaging, rape, and murder as the city of Yangzhou fell. A survivor of the event, Wang Xiuchu, describes a scene of chaos as “the men guarding the wall came down, making a commotion, and scurried for cover, throwing off their helmets and spears, some even cracking their heads or spraining their ankles.”⁷⁸ In fear of what was to come, the city was left open, undefended, and ready for the invaders to enter.

The soldiers fled, leaving the citizens to face the Manchus. As stated by Wang, those left in the city attempted to welcome the Qing troops and burned incense “to show they dared not resist.”⁷⁹ Many believed that peace could be reached between the two groups. Others, such as Wang, realized that the Manchus had not come for just their lands. Those who realized this turned to their wives and other female relatives to say: “Enemy soldiers have entered the city. If things go awry, you should cut short your own life.”⁸⁰ Wang’s wife response was that of appealingly logical, saddened mindset, “Women like me in situations like this no longer think to live in the human world.”⁸¹ To die appeared to be the better option than to be conquered by the Manchus. Bribes of silver or any other wealth delayed any acts against the Han but it could not delay the inevitable. “The sounds of lamentation and pain outside struck terror from the ears to the soul.”⁸² To maximize the destruction, the Qing set the city on fire and issued false promises to spare any who did not resist. Crowds gathered in the squares under the protection of these false promises where true terror

⁷⁷ Struve, 31.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 33, Wang Xiuchu.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 34.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., 35.

began. Women were tied together at the neck, babies were left on the ground, where trampled victims' organs began to blend in with the mud, and dead bodies decorated the streets.⁸³ The days of killing began to number and extermination appeared to be evident.⁸⁴ The feelings of resentment began to build. "Before my eyes I seemed to see countless souls [Buddhist] guardian demons driving a million souls to their deaths in hell."⁸⁵ The Manchus' goal appeared to be mass destruction as was as one soldier revealed to Wang. "If I don't kill you, somebody else is sure to."⁸⁶ By the end of massacre 80,000 had died by the hand of the Manchus in Yangzhou.⁸⁷

To repair the damage that events such as Yangzhou had caused, the Manchus attempted to change their image. The Manchus, aiming to be seen as benefactors than conquerors, started with the survivors where the attack was the greatest, i.e. Yangzhou. For the survivors, peace came in the form of rice and clothing.⁸⁸ The Manchus hoped to portray an image of benevolence, one that would be copied. An image they believed would only come across up close. At the same time as the Manchus were to be an example for the Han, they also forced them into subjugation. After the fall of the Ming, a large number of Han had become the slaves of the Manchus. Whether through capture or bankruptcy, the Manchus believed that while they were slaves, the Han had benefitted. In a 1723 report, it is said that Han came "to Manchu houses, dreaming of a place to rest their bodies and not wanting to go hungry, they all ask to stay. In this way Manchus also take on slaves [Ma aha]."⁸⁹ By taking them on as slaves, the Manchus were helping the Han by providing food and shelter, if they suffered in the process, it was rarely reported. The Manchus were the great

⁸³ Ibid., 36.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 44.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 45.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 46.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 48.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 47-8.

⁸⁹ Elliott, 228.

“providers” of the Qing Dynasty, rather than the murderers of the Han.



Image of Yangzhou massacre.⁹⁰

The case of Yangzhou served as an example of what Manchu rule looked like. It showed the power of the Qing, their ideas regarding their relationship with the Han. There is a question of whether the mistreatment of the Chinese was more extreme than other ethnic groups. The cities that were attacked were not of Mongol, or other, ethnicity; the cities were Chinese. At the mention of the treatment of the women during this period, one soldier made mention that when they had conquered Korea (1627, 1636-7) they “had captured women by the tens of thousands, and not one lost her chastity.”⁹¹ The repeated mentioning of rape that occurs reveals that the Han women were not treated the same as Korean women. The conquest of the Ming empire both helped define who the Manchus were and united them as an ethnic group. At the same time, the acts of subjugation, violence, favoritism, and separation ultimately established the tense relationship between the Manchus and the Han. A relationship that would not change for the next 276 years, leading to several of China’s key historic events.

⁹⁰ “Image of Yangzhou Massacre,” Wikipedia, July 27, 2014, accessed December 9, 2014, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yangzhou_massacre.

⁹¹ Struve, 37.

Change in Power: 1911

In the late nineteenth century, several decades after the Taiping Rebellion, the Guangxi Emperor saw the warning signs of a larger movement and took action. In 1898, the Guangxi emperor, the lone representative of the Manchu side, was joined by many Han Chinese reformers. Though many called for the end of Manchu design, which would change the social structure, or even the elimination of the queue, many believed it was not taking the reform movement far enough.⁹² The goal of the One Hundred Days of Reform was to eliminate the differences between the Manchus and the Han. To do so, one reformer, Zhang Yuanji, listed six reforms that would end the differences in the relations between the Han and the Manchus. These six would bring an end to administrative separation, social and occupational segregation by getting rid of the separate slots for Manchus and Han, and allow intermarriage. Zhang also hoped to end the stipends meant for banner soldiers and create schools that would work to give vocational training to unemployed bannermen. The banner system had made it impossible for its members to look outside of the military or government for work. Now, even the emperor called for the bannermen to move beyond the system.⁹³

The target of the reforms was the Manchu way of life. However, for Liang Qichao, disciple of Kang Youwei, this was not the goal.⁹⁴ Liang Qichao believed there was a need for the races to merge together, “only because they had mixed together were they able to survive. Meanwhile, numerous other groups had perished because they had not intermixed.”⁹⁵ China was facing increasing competition from the Western powers, that they could not win divided. Essentially, Liang believed that the superior race, the Han,

⁹² Ibid., 64.

⁹³ Ibid., 65.

⁹⁴ Kang Youwei was one of the leading reformers during this period. After its end, Kang fled to escape punishment. Kang (1858-1927) Liang Qichao (1873-1929).

⁹⁵ Ibid., 3.

had a chance at survival. The Manchus, inferior, ran the risk of dying out if they did not choose to intermix.

If their oppressive policies continue much longer, they will engender a great upheaval, in which resolute scholars all over the country will either declare independence, as in America, or start a revolution, as in France and Spain. By then, of course, it will be too late for the Manchus to regret. Or if it does not happen like this, then after a few more years of today's reactionary government, there will be partition. As partition takes place, the secret societies will rise and run amok. Since the government's authority cannot penetrate to the local level, the people will have free rein to take their revenge. Whatever else might happen, the Manchus in the provincial garrisons will surely be annihilated. After partition both Han and Manchu will be enslaved. But the Han, because they have a large population and are not lacking in intelligence, will still be able to conspire to join together to regain their independence. The Manchus, on the other hand, are not only few in number but also stupid and weak. Although they will have escaped the vengeance of the Han, they will forever serve as beasts of burden for the white people. Moreover, Han farmers and artisans are industrious and frugal.... Consequently, even if the Han territory is partitioned, the Han people will still have some influence in the world; though subjugated, they will survive in the end. The Manchus [on the other hand] have for the past two centuries eaten without farming and been clothed without weaving. Not one among their five million people is capable of being a scholar, farmer, artisan, or merchant. When partition occurs and their political, financial, and

military powers have all fallen into the hands of the white race, if they want some food or lodging then, will they still get it? Therefore, what the Manchus themselves have decided to do is precisely a self-chosen road to destruction. This truly is an example of “quenching one’s thirst by drinking poisoned wine.”⁹⁶

Liang sees the Manchus as parasites who would not survive if forced to do so on their own. Resentment over current policies and past attacks remained just as strong at this point as it did then. Should the Manchus wish to prevent any Han uprising, intermixing was the only solution according to Liang.

For others intermixing was not a solution, as there had never been any separation to begin with. A student of Charles Darwin, Yan Fu advocated the belief that today’s world features many different species. However all of these species came from one source.⁹⁷ Where Liang pits the Manchus and the Han Chinese as two opposing races, Yan Fu sees them not as competitors but belonging to the same race, the yellow race. Yan Fu claims that the rule of China has never been by an outside force. It is only now that the rule of China is threatened by another outside, race, the Westerners.⁹⁸

Separation or not, either thought did not stop the reforms of the 1898 Reform Movement from coming about with great speed. As stated earlier, the reforms attacked the Manchus’ way of life yet they were supported by the Guangxi Emperor. The emperor was the only Manchu to agree with the reforms. Liang was correct in assuming that the banner people had no way to support themselves outside of the stipends they received. The “preferential treatment” such as leniency in legal occurrences or favorable government

⁹⁶ Rhoads, 1, 4-5.

⁹⁷ De Bary, 256. Yan Fu.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 257-8.

posts would cease, thus ending the Manchus' way of life for the past two hundred years.⁹⁹

As quick as it started, the Hundred Days of Reform was brought to an end as the Empress Dowager Cixi placed the Guangxi emperor under house arrest. As many of the reformers fled from fear of punishment, many of the reforms set forth were discarded.¹⁰⁰ The Barriers were reinstated and life returned to the way as it was. The issue of reform was not revisited until the Boxer Rebellion. Imperialism and industrialization during the late nineteenth century had pushed Western nations farther into other nations, spreading new ideas and increasing pressure on the Qing. One of these ideas, Social Darwinism, was the pitting of the "white race against the yellow."¹⁰¹ With the failures of the Opium Wars, the Sino-Japanese Wars, and other disputes between China and foreign nations, many realized that China lacked the ability to compete with outside forces. "The arrival of Western merchants, industries, railways, gunboats and ideas upset and changed the usual course of events... The security and permanence of the Chinese system under whatever rule came to an end."¹⁰² The foreign nations, who had become a greater presence in China by the 1900's, would lead to its future problems.

The instigators to these problems were the Boxers. The Boxers, ancestors to China's Nationalist Party of 1911, were strictly anti foreign. Foreign competition had left the cotton production in Shandong in a state of poverty. The residents also faced flooding in the Yellow River, financial decline, drought, plus numerous invasions by foreign groups. Out of Shandong, the Boxers began their attacks against foreigners. What started as a fraction of a small group would help lead to the demise of Qing Rule and Cixi in particular. Cixi's court issued commands to tolerate, not suppress, the Boxers and soon joined the anti-foreign movement. Any within the Qing court who opposed were

⁹⁹ Rhoads, 68.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 70.

¹⁰¹ Rowe, 232.

¹⁰² Michael, 7.

executed. The national court did little to stop the Boxer violence and forced the involvement of foreign nations. The Qing lost and heavy reparations were issued, which the treasury had no way to pay. In light of this, foreign nations, such as England and France, took control over much of the revenue producing areas of the government, such as the salt administration, until the debt was paid. The power and safety the Manchus had known no longer existed.¹⁰³ Whatever power remained would only be preserved through reform.

The motivations behind the reforms that came about after the Boxer Rebellion were different than those of the reform of 1898. During the reign of Guangxi, there was a desire to reshape China to create a united nation through the blending of the two cultures. During the reign of Cixi, and that of Pu'yi, reform was for the sake of control. The January 29, 1901 Reform Edict stated that "the whole system of government must be radically transformed so that wealth and power might eventually be attained."¹⁰⁴ The Dowager Empress had ended the reforms of 1898 with a coup and executions. What had changed was that Cixi had invested in the wrong side during the Boxer Rebellion and lost. In an act of self-preservation, Cixi gave into the reforms.

Among the first reforms that the edict called for was the blending of both Chinese and foreign policies, to "suppress vigorously the use of the terms, 'new' and 'old', and to blend together the best of what is Chinese and what is foreign."¹⁰⁵ The policies of old that had been harmful to China included the ones concerning the Manchus. The banner system and the imperial court, which had closed the ranks to any non-Manchu groups, began to open its doors. Even with the end of the separation, the Manchus believed the barriers had existed for a reason. In the case of intermarriage, Cixi stated the rarity of intermarriage was due to unfamiliarity with each other's culture, customs, and language.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Rowe, 243-246.

¹⁰⁴ Rhoads, 73-4.

¹⁰⁵ De Bary, 285.

¹⁰⁶ Rhoads, 76.

After several hundred years of social separation, one would think that the unfamiliarity between the two would have grown. Even if it did, the desire to maintain control over the empire took precedence over the desire for separation.

The forced end of separation between the Han and the Manchu did not only focus on social aspects but moved on to the political theatre. December 29, 1903 marked the end of Manchu monopoly on posts in the banner system and the ban barring all non-Manchu entry into Manchuria. In the process of reforming China, Cixi reshaped the social and political demography by taking several steps to move the government from a monarchy to a constitutional monarchy, giving the people more power. Set to be implemented over a number of years, this was to be Cixi's last attempt to maintain control over China. However for all the changes and reforms that were implemented, the circumstances in China did not improve. Outside voices praised the reforms that worked to end the "distinctions between Manchus and Chinese," but also cautiously watched over the new Chinese parliament.¹⁰⁷

With the Qing working to end the distinction between the Han and the Manchus, the late nineteenth to early twentieth century Manchus no longer resembled their ancestors who had conquered the Ming in the 1640's. Some key ethnic traits, such as the banner system, began to show signs of decay as early as the Taiping Rebellion. Archery, once an often practiced skill, now began to be seen as a novelty as guns became the weapon of choice. Yet to say that the Manchus had acculturated into the Chinese culture would be dismissing the other traits that did survive, such as the Manchu language. The Yongzheng emperor was correct when he stated: "If some special encouragement as this is not offered, the ancestral language will not be passed on and learned."¹⁰⁸ In the beginning of the Manchu conquest, schools were created with the purpose of teaching and preserving the

¹⁰⁷ "China Takes Another Step," *Los Angeles Herald* 34, no. 39, November 9, 1906.

¹⁰⁸ Rhoads, 53. The Yongzheng Emperor (1678-1735) ruled during the High Qing.

Manchu language. However, by the Revolution of 1911, Chinese had become the main script, with little as one percent in cities being able to read Manchu, even less were able to speak it.¹⁰⁹ Chinese may have been the main language used in the cities, but the usage of Manchu increased as one ventured farther out, even in Manchuria. In the Imperial Court, documents were recorded in Chinese and Manchu.¹¹⁰ Banner schools also continued in its instruction of Manchu. The Manchu language, though limited in its use, remained a distinctive identity trait for the Manchus.

Naming practices were also preserved by the Manchus. Over the course of Han and Manchu interaction, Manchu names began to reflect more Han monosyllabic style names. Manchu personal names (first names) became shortened to disyllabic and meaning was also taken into consideration.¹¹¹ The first names had changed but the family names (last names) were not. When certain Manchus, who were in no way attached to the imperial clan, changed their polysyllabic surnames to the monosyllabic style of the Han, the Qing officials were displeased. The changing of the personal names held no importance to the Qing, however to change their surnames would come to mean they had “forgotten their roots.”¹¹² The surname was the connection to their past. At the same time as the surname was being preserved, the Manchu identification was also maintained. In the beginning, Manchus identified themselves by their banner affiliation rather than their familial lineage, as the Han did. Still true, the Manchus preferred to use other choices in place of their surname, in this case their personal names. Though small, seemingly unimportant ethnic traits, these traits still presented an image of who the Manchus were, as well as maintaining their separation from the Chinese culture.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 53.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 54.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 55.

¹¹² Ibid., 56.

At this point it became evident that the Manchus had not sinicized into the Chinese Culture, as stated by Zhang Binglin:

Today, have the Manchus assimilated to the Han people? Or have they conquered the Han people? Manchu shamanism is not the orthodox imperial religion, queues and jeweled necklaces are not the Chinese caps; and the documents of the Qing in its own language are not traditional Chinese orthodox... Their talk of the 'same race' is not to turn the Manchus into Han people, but to make the Han people Manchus!

The Han may have grown accustomed to the lifestyle of the Manchu and had grown accustomed to the queue, but for the Han, it was not their natural lifestyle.¹¹³ Nor did they agree with the favorable treatment shown only to the Manchus. General Zeng and General Zou had been the heroes of the Taiping Rebellion. The Generals were also Han Chinese. They were given the titles but commanded local forts with no real power. On the other hand, a Manchu governor who suppressed an uprising in Taiwan, less significant, was made a "Beile Commandery Prince."¹¹⁴

Cixi and the imperial court had taken measures to unite the Manchus and Han under one culture. Upon her death, these reforms were then entrusted to the three-year-old emperor, Pu'yi, and his father Zaifeng, who served as Pu'yi's regent.¹¹⁵ The first steps in Cixi's plan to reform the Manchu/Han relations encompassed reforms such as reorganizing the banner system, eliminating the banner stipends, and dissolving the eight banner system to end all differences between the Manchus and Han.¹¹⁶ But the retaining of such traits as names and language, made it clear

¹¹³ De Bary, 310-1.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 311.

¹¹⁵ Pu'yi (1906-1967), Zaifeng (1883-1951) served during the final years of the Qing Dynasty. Zaifeng's formal name is Prince Chun.

¹¹⁶ Rhoads, 137.

that, despite their best efforts, the barriers would not come down. The ones holding onto these barriers were the Manchus. All Manchu men had been restricted on where they could seek occupations, either within the banner system or state bureaucracy.¹¹⁷ When jobs proved to be difficult to find, the stipends became the supplement to their livelihoods. The increased burden and pressure on the government to reform occurred when the Manchus began to live above their means. The reforms of the 1900's, threatened to take away their only source of income, their lifestyle, and thrust them into jobs they were not equipped to handle. As soon as it became clear this was to be their future, the bannermen pressured Zaifeng, who eventually succumbed to their demands.¹¹⁸

Any attempt by Zaifeng to consolidate control through the means of reform, failed. The bannermen feared any change that would remove their social status, such as a change in the mourning period. Han tradition calls for the mourning period to last twenty-seven months. Due to the length of time, Han officials were forced to resign from their posts, which were then given away. The Manchus were not faced with this problem. The Manchu mourning period lasted only a hundred days, a time that did not force them to resign from their posts. Upon the movement to end ethnic differences, the Ministry of Rites mandated that the Han mourning period would be observed by both sides in order to create equality. Instead Zaifeng, upon the request by the Manchus, left a loophole which made it possible for officials to remain in their positions during the mourning period, so long as they petitioned to do so. Han officials rarely petitioned to remain in their positions. The largest number of officials who used this loophole was the Manchu officials.¹¹⁹ Zaifeng also attempted to reinstate a small fracture of the power the Qing once held by making the emperor the direct commander over the military.¹²⁰ While Zaifeng had hoped for the

¹¹⁷ Elliott, 200.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 138.

¹¹⁹ Rhoads, 141.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 144.

revival of the Manchus as the dominating ethnic group, revolution forced him to eliminate all differences, including Manchu women's dress, opening Manchu cities, etc. Yet all of this did little to diffuse the spread of revolution.¹²¹

Many doubted the effectiveness of these reforms. "It is predicted that unless the Manchus immediately demonstrate the sincerity of the imperial edicts being issued at Peking the slaughter will exceed that of the Taiping rebellion."¹²² Zaifeng had his five-year-old son, Pu'yi, issue an edict taking the blame for appointing too many officials that were imperial relatives and also enacted the reforms of the Guangxi emperor.¹²³ All were done to preserve the power and control of the Manchus and the Qing Court. However this edict and any that followed were seen as an act. "All today's edicts, like that of yesterday, are written in the first person, as coming from the infant emperor himself. This is unusual and apparently a device adopted by the throne's advisers in a pathetic attempt to create among the people a feeling of personal loyalty for their sovereign."¹²⁴

This tool did not work. Further complicating the problems arising was the poor financial state China was in. Upon the conquest of the Ming, the financial state was also in decline, due to the decadence of the court. Just over two hundred years later and the banner people faced the same problem as they lived above their means, placing a burden on the government. Decadence was still a weakness of the court as descriptions of Cixi's funeral portray scenes of splendor as her body is wrapped with pearls, gold, gems, things the treasury could not afford.¹²⁵ The overspending of the court, along with the pressures incurred upon the Han became too great and the revolutionists issued a proclamation to the people that stated: "In order to establish a reign of liberty, equality and

¹²¹ Ibid., 184-7.

¹²² "Manchus in Desperate Stand at Canton." *San Francisco Call* 110, no. 154. November 1 1911, accessed December 1, 2014, <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/>.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ "Manchus in Desperate Stand at Canton."

¹²⁵ Brackman, 46.

fraternity the Manchus must be driven out at once; the people must unite together to form a new government.”¹²⁶ The Qing Dynasty was at an end.

The Revolutionaries had many reasons to justify their attack on the millennium old monarchial system and the Manchus. Among those justifications was a seven point argument taken from the 1898 Affair, first being the Manchus was an alien group. Social Darwinism had developed the idea that the five races had subgroups that continuously had divided down. The “yellow race” included the Chinese and Siberian as its subgroups. From the Chinese came the Han, Korean, and Japanese. The Manchus were thought to have come from the Siberian subgroup.¹²⁷ According to this ideology, the Manchus held no link to the Chinese, therefore they held no right to the throne. “China belongs to the Chinese” as one reformer, Zhang Ji, stated.¹²⁸ If their lack of Chinese ties did not prove their illegitimacy as rulers, their crimes against the Han Chinese in 1644 did. The words of Wang Xiuchu, survivor of the Yangzhou massacre, became a lesson for the revolutionaries: “All I intend is that people of later generations who are fortunate to live in a peaceful world and to enjoy uneventful times, but who neglect self-cultivation and reflection and are inveterately profligate, will read this and be chastened.”¹²⁹ The acts of cruelty and murders of the 1644 conquest had made the Manchus a long lasting enemy of the Han.

The points against the Manchus varied in gravity from mass murders to the implementation of their own culture upon the Han Chinese. By forcing their culture upon the Han Chinese, the Manchus had “barbarized China.”¹³⁰ The culture of the Ming, a culture of scholars, was no more. The Manchus had adopted Confucianism and the civil examination system into their own culture, but rejected the core beliefs, and by having the Han shave

¹²⁶ “Manchus in Desperate Stand at Canton.”

¹²⁷ Rhoads, 14.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 13.

¹²⁹ Struve, 48.

¹³⁰ Rhoads, 15.

their forelocks in submission, they disregarded filial piety. Not only that but a culture based on the importance of meritocracy witnessed a minority group place itself over the majority.¹³¹ Privileges, key government positions, and promotions were given to Manchus, whereas the Han were pushed out. Divisions throughout the empire had become the standard way of life. “Although it has been over two hundred years, the Manchus stick with the Manchus and the Han stick with the Han; they have not mingled. Clearly there is a feeling that a lower race does not rank with a noble one.”¹³² Neither was on the level of the other, so relations between the two never occurred.

By stating the reasons as to why the Manchus were the illegitimate rulers of China, it created an opportunity for the Han to examine their identity as a nation. Many scholars of this period, including Zhou Rong, made the claim that to have the legitimacy to rule over China, one had to be a descendant of the Yellow Emperor, the very first ruler of the first dynastic cycle.¹³³ Han were said to be these descendants, establishing theirs as the only legal ethnicity of China.¹³⁴

The seven points to discredit the Manchus, plus the idea of a need to separate themselves from the Manchus all marked the true unifying tool for the Han, Anti-Manchuism.¹³⁵

How could we have allowed the unworthy tribes of Mongolia and Manchuria, who knew nothing of China or Confucianism, to steal China by means of their barbarism and brutality! After stealing China, they controlled the Chinese by means of the system they had stolen, and they shamelessly made use of Confucianism, with which they had been

¹³¹ Ibid., 16.

¹³² Ibid., 16-17.

¹³³ Zarrow, 157.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 147.

¹³⁵ Zarrow, 155.

unfamiliar, to oppress China, to which they had been strangers.¹³⁶

A fault of the Manchus, according to Tan Sitong, a former pupil of Kang, was that they knew nothing about the political system or Confucianism before their conquest of China. This did not stop the Manchus from using these cultures to keep people ignorant and under the Manchu's control. In the end, the Han's own culture had played a part in their conquest and their subjugation. "Today five million Manchus rule over more than four hundred million Han only because rotten traditions make the Han stupid and ignorant. If the Han people should one day wake up, then the Manchus would be totally unable to rest peacefully."¹³⁷ On October 10, 1911, the Han did wake up and so did their resentments for the Manchus.

On the surface, the revolution was a chance for China to join the modern political systems of the world. Below the surface, the revolution gave the Han a chance to act upon their anti-Manchu sentiments. In Wuchang, where the Revolution began, the Taiping Rebellion had left a large concentration of Manchus. At the outbreak of the Revolution, as they headed for the arsenal, one revolutionary cried: "Slay the Manchu officials and the banner people." Despite the lack of resistance, many Manchus were slaughtered. The Hubei Military government's goals were to "elevate the Han and exterminate the Manchus."¹³⁸ Students were convinced to join the cause of revolution through the argument of filial piety. The nationalists claimed it was their duty to avenge their ancestors who had suffered at the hands of the Qing.¹³⁹ The elimination of the Manchus began with the taking down of the imperial flag over the imperial customs office and ended with the extermination of the Manchus. "Brutal treatment of Chinese by Manchus has created bad impression, and slaughter that will

¹³⁶ De Bary, "Wang Fuzhi," 282.

¹³⁷ De Bary, *Sources of Chinese Tradition*, 311.

¹³⁸ Rhoads, 188.

¹³⁹ Zarrow, 160-1.

exceed that of the Taiping revolution is predicted.”¹⁴⁰ Manchu cities became drenched with the color of red. Those who managed to escape the bloodshed in the Manchu cities were no safer as they were killed upon entering Chinese cities. Tales of mass terror came forward as Chinese military leaders told the soldiers to spare any except the Manchus. “One banner woman, about to be killed, piteously cried, ‘We are guiltless; we detest our ancestors for their mistreatment of the Han people.’ Another old woman pleaded, ‘What is to be gained by murdering us worthless women and children? Why not release us as a show of your magnanimity?’ The soldiers, though moved, dared not reply but killed them anyway.”¹⁴¹ No help came for the Manchus as foreign nations’ concern turned to pulling out their missionaries instead of listening to the cries of Yuan Shikai.¹⁴²

Violence reigned throughout the Qing Empire. Manchus also participated in the killings as Han Chinese were no safer than the Manchus. The violence during this period not only showed the resentment between the two, but also how the barriers, though officially removed, still existed. The Manchus

were known by their clothing, by their cast of countenance, by their speech. Their fondness for reds and yellows, their use of white linings, their high collars and narrow sleeves . . . their belts, their shoes; all gave them away. With the women the unbound feet were the fatal distinction. Their peculiar headdress, their clothing they might change, but there was no disguising their natural-sized feet.¹⁴³

¹⁴⁰ “Manchus in Desperate Stand at Canton.”

¹⁴¹ Rhoads, 189-91.

¹⁴² “Bandits are Beheaded in Turn.” *San Francisco Call* 110, no. 178. 25 November 1911. Yuan Shikai (1859-1916) General for the Qing Imperial Court.

¹⁴³ Rhoads, 192.

The Manchus had changed since 1644, but not enough that they were unable to be signaled out by “their speech.”¹⁴⁴ The Manchus’ separate identity had been part of their downfall.

As the Qing Dynasty and the Manchus fell, the Republic of China rose to power along with a new sense of Chinese identity. China underwent a severe transformation, as any remnants of the Manchu rule were removed. As Sha Tauk Kok related: “the Revolution has succeeded and my elder brother has cut his queue... The Manchus have starved to death, their intestines shriveled to nothing... Do not fear the Manchus will use their sharp knives.”¹⁴⁵ As the Han cut their queues, they were cutting away all signs of Manchu submission. The queues had reverted back to being an identity marker for the Manchu males. The Chinese looked to rid China of all remnants of the Manchus’ past involvement. Part of this involved the political structure.

The political change that China underwent was larger than the transition between a millennium old monarchical system to a republic. Upon the defeat of the Qing, the demands given to the Qing side included that the capital no longer be in Peking, which Yuan Shikai could not serve at the provincial level until the republic was recognized outside of China, and more importantly, that Manchus would not be allowed to serve at the provincial level.¹⁴⁶ For as long as the Manchus restricted the participation of the Han in the government, after the revolution they faced the same treatment. The Han Chinese sought to eliminate any credence the Qing had gained during their time in power. “Old myths assumed new significance in the political context of the late Qing. They now spoke not merely to flexible ways of distinguishing ‘us’ from ‘them’ through ethnicity and culture but also to the early growth of a specific ‘Chinese’ nation that –by implication–grew like the tree

¹⁴⁴ Arnold Brackman, *The Last Emperor* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 1991), 56.

¹⁴⁵ P.H. Hase, “A Song From Sha Tauk Kok on the 1911 Revolution,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch*, 29 (1989): 383.

¹⁴⁶ “No Place for Manchus Say Chinese Leaders,” *San Francisco Call*, 111, no. 51, January 20, 1912.

from the seed into today's Chinese nation."¹⁴⁷ Meaning that the Han stated that the beginning of the Chinese nation began with them, not the Manchus. As part of the process of establishing their own identity as the "Han People," the revolutionaries dated the calendar to begin with the Yellow Emperor. The revolutionaries, in the process of creating their identity, took away the right of the Qing to set the calendar. To them, the entire period of the Qing Dynasty was an illegitimate period.

The U.S. as well as other nations credited the new Chinese government, seeing the Chinese as "a patient people, peace-loving, law-abiding and with a fine respect for law. They are easily ruled if fairly ruled, but stroke them the wrong way and it is just the opposite."¹⁴⁸ Both a complement to the Han and an insult to the Manchus, this article that appeared in *The Sun* in February 1912, supported the new Chinese government due to the closed door/anti-foreign policy the Manchus had adopted during the last years of the dynasty. The article credits the Boxer Rebellion for opening China to Western ideas. The Manchu rule was over, the Han people had taken over, and China belonged to the Chinese.

The only issue remaining was Manchuria. *The Sun* article states that if China had succeeded in strengthening its forces and had acquired a stable government, Japan and Russia would have no choice but to relinquish their claim to Manchuria and Mongolia. Then again, if China failed to put forth an image of strength, or was "sick at that time," outside forces would take over.¹⁴⁹ Manchuria would become available to any strong nation, except to those who can claim ancestral ties to it, the Manchus. Enter Japan, China, and a desperate ethnic group.

¹⁴⁷ Zarrow, 172-3; 178.

¹⁴⁸ "The Chinese Government Yesterday and Today," *The Sun*, February 18 1912.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

Manchuria Turned Manchukuo: The 1930's

Nearly twenty years after the fall of the Qing, the issue of sovereignty over Manchuria was still a problem. The Manchu emperor, Pu'yi, remained a resident in the Forbidden City in Peking, kept his title as emperor, and received an annual income of four million dollars.¹⁵⁰ Because he still claimed the title of emperor, false hope was given to Pu'yi and all other Manchus that the resurrection of another Manchu dominated dynasty was possible. As the years passed, this false hope began to dwindle. After a failed attempt at a restoration in 1917, the emperor and his court were confined to their living quarters at the imperial palace in the Forbidden City. Whether or not by choice, Pu'yi had not left his area of the palace, not far from the throne. In a New York article written ten years after the revolution, author Nathaniel Peffer describes the scene "Of the once hallowed Forbidden City a large part is now trod by profane feet."¹⁵¹ Once walked by tribute bearers who wore the finest jewels, the Forbidden City now acted as a public park where tea, cakes, even American sandwiches and beers are enjoyed.¹⁵² The Qing splendor had left Peking, as had their claim to Manchuria.

With this in mind, awareness shifted to a question of who would take over first. Japan had long been a residential power in Manchuria, since Russia had signed over all rights of the South Manchurian Railway to Japan at the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905. In the same treaty, the Treaty of Portsmouth, Japan gained complete control of Korea.¹⁵³ Logically, Manchuria was next on territory acquisition list. Japan supported the warlord of the region Zhang Zuolin in the hopes of having a

¹⁵⁰ Brackman, 65.

¹⁵¹ Nathaniel Peffer, "Monarchist Plot have China Seething," *New York Tribune* 6, August 14, 1921.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ "Russo-Japanese War," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, last edited November 28, 2014, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/514017/Russo-Japanese-War>.

hand in the running of the country. When Zhang's goals ventured away from the ideals of Japan, he was assassinated.¹⁵⁴ Zhang Xueliang's, Zhang's son, support of Nationalism led to the intervention of the Japanese. This began the 1931 conflict with China for Manchuria.

It is believed that the conflict was ignited by an attack on the railway. The attack was staged to give Japan reason to counter attack on the Chinese, claiming self-defense.¹⁵⁵ China had long held anti-Japanese sentiment, taking every opportunity to exhibit their feelings, one being their refusal to lease Manchuria to Japan.¹⁵⁶ To China, Manchuria was a piece of their territory (disregarding that its acquisition had more to do with their Manchu rulers). Japan's move towards Manchuria reignited ill feelings, with commands such as "Kill Japanese on sight" being the first and only command given.¹⁵⁷ Japan, on the other hand, claimed that they "do not want conquest there anymore than in China... Japan's position there, as is well known, is strategical and political as well as economic."¹⁵⁸ Japan was a small island, whose own land was running out with the expansion of its population. Manchuria had miles of land unsettled, with bountiful resources. It seemed that for all purposes, Manchuria was to become a resource base for Japan, not part of its territory. Japan's goal was to "foster friendly relations between Japan and China."¹⁵⁹ If China didn't believe them, they had no problem stating "It may be superfluous to repeat that the Japanese government harbours no territorial designs in Manchuria."¹⁶⁰ Rather, Japan looked to create a new government

¹⁵⁴ Rana Mitter, *Manchurian Myth: Nationalism, Resistance and Collaboration During the Manchurian Crisis, 1931-1933* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 21.

¹⁵⁵ Louise Young, "Twentieth Century Japan: The Emergence of a World Power," *Volume 8: Japan's Total Empire: Manchuria and the Culture of Wartime Imperialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 24, 40.

¹⁵⁶ Sino-Japanese Entanglements, 8.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 111.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 29.

and the campaign against the Chinese would act as a way to “clear North Manchuria of what remained of the old military power, this removing an obstacle that had stood on the way of bringing the new state into being, materially clearing the atmosphere for the outlook of the future.”¹⁶¹ Japan won the war with China and Manchukuo was named an independent state in 1932.

Once the battle was done, Japan had no reason to remain in Manchukuo. However “evidence” presented itself to the Japanese government that said otherwise. Seeing as the “Manchurian government at present is not strong enough to suppress them,” it was only natural that the Kwantung army took over to guarantee the safety and success of Manchukuo.¹⁶² The Manchus in power slowly faded into the background as Japan worked in Manchukuo to remold it. As its presence in Manchukuo, Japan’s actual purpose for freeing Manchukuo from China was revealed. Instead of its growth as an independent nation, Manchukuo was part of the evolution of the Japanese imperialism, one to rival the Western powers. Their goals represented their commitment to that dream. Japan, once a colonial prize for other nations, proved its own abilities at becoming a rival to Western powers. With its victories against China in 1894-5 and then again against a western power, with Russia in 1904-5, Japan proved its strengths.¹⁶³ The first step was Korea. By acquiring Korea, Japan had acquired a “guest seat” at the imperial table, taking itself off the market as an area to conquer by the Western Powers.¹⁶⁴ If Korea was to serve as a way to secure Japan, Manchuria was to secure Korea. In 1905, Manchuria became the buffer zone between the Japanese and the Chinese and any other western powers as Russia signed over any rights, interests, or influence it had acquired during the nineteenth century. Japan had already integrated itself into the elite of Manchuria; it wasn’t long before they took complete control.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹ Young, 99.

¹⁶² Sino-Japanese Entanglements, 318.

¹⁶³ Young, 22.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 23.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 21.

The real power holders in Manchukuo were the capitalists and the military. Manchukuo served Japan in its attempt at imperialism, at the same time renovating “[Kaizo] Japan.”¹⁶⁶ “The Manchurian paradise depicted by Manchukuo government planners was intended to become the model of state capitalism, with industrialization proceeding in steps according to a well-ordered plan.”¹⁶⁷ Manchuria was said to be enough to satisfy everyone. However its main purpose was to satisfy one group, the Japanese army, the Kwantung Army, who saw Manchuria as a resource base.¹⁶⁸ The emperor of Japan had no more say in the matter of Manchukuo than Pu’yi or the other non-Japanese residents. Japan transformed Manchukuo, the banner soldiers were replaced by the Kwantung Army as the main fighting force, and the governments allowed for risky investments by the banks. All of these factors were signs that the military had taken control of the government.¹⁶⁹

Japan remained in control of Manchukuo until the end of World War II. It’s only goal for Manchuria was to fortify its place among the imperial powers of the world. Aligning with Pu’yi had been for the purpose of using his alliance with the Mongols and to serve as a buffer zone as the Manchus were on the border and Japan was under constant threat from Russia and China.¹⁷⁰ “Japan has brought this situation to pass as a means of securing essential raw materials and food products for her own people and a market for her manufactured goods.”¹⁷¹

Some would state that the 1895 Sino-Japanese War had been warning enough for the Manchus at the motives of the Japanese. However it made no difference to the Manchus and Pu’yi. During the Qing Dynasty, the Manchus had been the ones in power, the leading ethnicity. To be allied with the Manchus meant to hold a title of prominence. The Manchu banners were awarded

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 196.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 200.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 203-204, 207-208.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 30, 217.

¹⁷⁰ Brackman, 178.

¹⁷¹ “Editorial Comment,” *World Affairs* 95, no. 2 September 1932.

stipends to cover all of their costs, extra for courage in battle, but they did not face the same grueling civil service examination that the Han did and official posts were easier to come by. By 1911 the Chinese declared that the Manchus would no longer be eligible to hold positions at the provincial level.¹⁷² Pu'yi may have bared the title of emperor, but it was a title with little power, as his salary was now dictated by the Republic and decreasing from the initial millions to 500,000.¹⁷³ Pu'yi was faced with the reality of his actual power in China during his flight from Peking, where he was addressed as "Mr. Pu'yi."¹⁷⁴ Nor was it more obvious that the revival of the Qing in China was unlikely to happen as once it was made by a declaration in the *Washington Times* that "it was decreed that the Manchus should never again hold power."¹⁷⁵

Power was not the only motivating factor for Pu'yi's decision to side with the Japanese. As commented upon continuously, resentment between the Han and Manchus persisted throughout the Qing Dynasty. It also persisted long after. On November 5 1924, Warlord General Feng Yu-hsiang invaded Peking. The General's attitude was one that fell along the same sentiments of 1911, sentiments that had led to the extermination of Manchus. The Manchus in Peking feared that the General's anti-Manchu beliefs would lead to a massacre and Pu'yi and his court finally vacated the old capital of the Qing Dynasty. However, no act showed the resentment shared between the two more than the final act that pushed Pu'yi to seek aid from China's enemy, Japan. In 1928, one Chinese group, in an act of Cultural Revolution, desecrated the tombs of the Qianlong Emperor and the Empress Dowager Cixi. Jewels were stolen, statues smashed, and the bones of the dead were scattered. While the republic celebrated the action as "heavenly justice," it angered Pu'yi. "My heart smouldered with

¹⁷² "No Place for Manchus Say Chinese Leaders," *San Francisco Call* 111, no. 51, January 20, 1912.

¹⁷³ Brackman, 129.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., "China Warfare is Seen Due to Hate For Japs," *The Washington Times*, May 3, 1922.

a hatred I had never known before... Standing before the dark and gloomy funerary hall I made an oath before my weeping clansmen: 'If I do not avenge this wrong I am not an Aisin-Gioro.' i.e. a faithful member of the imperial Manchu clan."¹⁷⁶ Pu'yi sought every opportunity for the revival of the Manchus and revenge against the Chinese. His advisors warned him against the division between the military and the citizens of Japan, foreseeing the power the military would hold. However Pu'yi leapt at the chance, with no regards to the repercussions.¹⁷⁷

There were many reasons for Pu'yi's decision. Among the reasons, personal revenge remained among the strongest motives. Pu'yi looked for revenge against the Republic for the crimes against the Manchus and the revival of the Qing. Second, Manchuria had been the homeland to the Manchus. Closed off to foreign occupants until the early twentieth century, to the Manchus, Manchuria was a sacred site. However, by this point, it was not only the Manchus who had made Manchuria their home. The Japanese made it clear of their goal to help the "Manchurian people win their freedom from Chinese rule." There was an element of disingenuity in the exchange which both accepted Manchuria consisted largely of Chinese; why would Chinese free themselves from Chinese?"¹⁷⁸ Pu'yi's personal goals were not those of the remaining Manchurian residents. Open to the public, Manchuria's demographic had drastically changed. Manchu once again was the minority. The only difference this time is the majority agreed with the minority. Manchuria had disagreed with the Republic from the beginning, choosing to remain loyal to the emperor.

Loyalty alone did not motivate the residents of Manchuria to fight against China. The current residents, including Manchus, Mongols, and Japanese, had been left in the hands of warlord Zhang Zuolin. With the goal to establish himself as the ruler of China, Zhang started a military effort to achieve this goal, an effort

¹⁷⁶ Brackman, 159-161.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 174.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 188.

that required funds. “Civilian elites in the region were unhappy at the way in which Zhang raised taxes and overrode their newly constituted assemblies, and even some of his military subordinates, notably Guo Songling in 1925, attempted to overthrow him.”¹⁷⁹ Even after his assassination in 1928 and the takeover of his son Zhang Xueliang, Manchuria’s current situation failed to improve. His alienation of the locals and the military, through the means of abolishing both the provincial governments and military, led the way to the acceptance of the Japanese in 1931.¹⁸⁰ In turn, it forced Zhang to turn to Nanjing for support against the Japanese backed opposition.¹⁸¹ This proved to be a poor decision for Zhang, as the Nationalists Chinese government held no favor in the eyes of the Manchus. During the 1911 Revolution, the Manchus were seen as a foreign force and targeted. Zhang Xueliang and his associates’ decision to not only support the nationalist movement, but to allow its legalization within Manchuria and for some to become members had meant that they were inviting the Manchus’ enemy into their house.¹⁸² Resentment for the Manchus and their crimes during the 1644 conquest had been held onto for nearly three hundred years; there is no doubt that the Manchus could do the same.

Aside from questionable alliances, the financial state of Manchuria was in decline. Though promising the installation of industry and commerce and emphasis on education, Zhang Xueliang’s spending resembled that of his father, who had created the financial burden in the first place. Had it not been for the money spent on the military, as noted by the Japanese upon their intervention, “the finance of the Three Eastern Provinces would show a good surplus.”¹⁸³ Japan appeared to be no different from China, whose goal of “reclaiming” Manchuria was proclaimed with every maneuver. However, Japan proceeded with caution. Its

¹⁷⁹ Mitter, 21.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 22.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 28.

¹⁸² Mitter, 31.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 36.

already conquered territories in Korea and Taiwan were colonized but this was not the route that could be taken with Manchuria. Instead, the independent state of Manchukuo was formed.¹⁸⁴ The formation of the South Manchurian Railway and immigration had been Japan's beginning as a presence in Manchuria.

There was no greater show of Japanese control in Manchuria than in their involvement in the economy in Manchuria. With plans of a centralized dictatorship, the Kwantung Army was in charge of all future Manchurian expansion in the interests of Japan. Part of their plans involved creating a planned economy, with the army playing the role of the creators. An attempt to reign in the growing debt, the Kwantung Army stated, "In view of the evils of an uncontrolled capitalist economy, we will use whatever state power is necessary to control that economy."¹⁸⁵ For some, this was a saving act against a high debt. Yet many opposed to a government economy. It meant losing control of all decisions, of all businesses, such as the Railways. For many, Manchuria presented an opportunity of freer politics than in the surrounding nations. However many of the policies made came from a Japanese perspective as that was the dominating group in power.¹⁸⁶

Acceptance of the local government had given the Japanese an advantage in their taking of Manchuria. Their increased involvement in the economy, plus their planned attempt to expunge the Manchurian economy of its debt, also aided in the conquest of Manchuria by the Japanese. While the national level was reconstructed to rid the policies of Zhang, it appeared that Manchuria, now Manchukuo, was formed without bloodshed. Yet the supposedly peaceful take over covered resistance from volunteer armies, supported by China, and mostly composed of bandits. With the purpose to oppose the intrusion of the Japanese on what was once consider to be part of China, dissension came not between the Kwantung Army and the "volunteers" but between

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 41-42.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., 76.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 77.

these volunteers and the ordinary people.¹⁸⁷ The volunteer army was not alone in their willingness to attack to maintain their claim to Manchuria. The Kwantung Army not only quickly put down these attacks but put on hold their peaceful conquest to exhibit their willingness to acquire Manchuria by force. The city of Fushun saw much bloodshed as houses were burned and lives were lost, all at the hands of the Kwantung Army. Blame for the massacre was laid at the feet of the villagers when rebels had left many Japanese dead. In reality, Fushun was one of many examples of the Japanese's strength and willingness to use brutal force as a tool in the acquisition of Manchuria.¹⁸⁸

For all Pu'yi's attempts to restore the Manchus, it appeared that the identity of the Manchus was slowly changing. It was not changing to model a traditional Chinese culture, but a western one. Pu'yi's tutor after the 1911 fall was the English bred Reginald Fleming Johnston, whose influence began to reshape Pu'yi. Johnston's influence came to touch every aspect of Pu'yi's life, from using a fork instead of chopsticks, to prizing wool instead of the silks and satins of China. However, no greater influence, or greater change for that matter, was as great as Johnston's role in the cutting of the queue. Despite the pleas of the republic over the course of the years, one remark from Johnston referring to the queues as "pigtailed," pushed Pu'yi shed the queue in 1919. Many would follow within the Forbidden City.¹⁸⁹ Pu'yi adopted an English name, Henry, and so the transformation appeared to be in the favor of modernization.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 187.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 112-4.

¹⁸⁹ Brackman, 105-106.



Sir Reginald Fleming Johnston. China Institute in America.¹⁹⁰

The outside world was changing. The 1900's had brought change in technology, fashion, thought, as well as political structures. These changes were not central to nations such as the United States or Europe. Rather, the ideas of modernization spread as trade between the many nations expanded. As the modern world put forth the image of the ideal style, the queue quickly lost its place of importance, as did other traditional garb. Though modernization had transformed the exterior side of the Manchu identity, it did not transform its ideals. At the time when marriage came into question, many encouraged the marriage of Pu'yi to a Chinese girl, seeing it as a political strategy. However the desire to "maintain the 'purity' of the royal bloodline too overpowering" in order to compromise their beliefs for an upper hand.¹⁹¹ Even with the policy of intermarriage put forth by Cixi, it was still a taboo for a Manchu to marry a Chinese, especially if he should be wearing the crown.

If there was to be one lasting physical trait that continued for the Manchu identity, it would be the dress. After finally being made emperor of Manchukuo, Pu'yi sent for the Qing imperial

¹⁹⁰ "Image of Sir Reginald Fleming Johnston," China Institute in America, accessed December 11 2014, <http://www.walfc.org/play/gallery-of-historical-characters/>.

¹⁹¹ Brackman, 120.

Manchus: A Horse of a Different Color

robes for his ascension to the throne. By doing so, Pu'yi marked how heritage still held a place of honor among the Manchus.¹⁹² Pu'yi still claimed his lineage to the Aisin-Gioro clan of old, whose opinion was of concern to Pu'yi when the Japanese rejected his plan to wear the imperial robes. Pu'yi still held ties to Aisin-Gioro just as he held ties to shaman practices. For as much as modernity rejects these practices, on the day of his enthronement, Pu'yi said a prayer while a "snow-white bull" was sacrificed and the rising smoke of the altar symbolized "the transmission of his prayers to the spirits of the dead."¹⁹³ Had the Manchus assimilated, Confucianism would have been the major belief system, a belief system that itself was faltering at the end of the Qing Dynasty and blamed for the loss of the Opium War.¹⁹⁴ Much of what was the Chinese culture at the end of the Ming had fallen to modernity, as outside and inside influences had changed as the definition Chinese Culture during that time.¹⁹⁵



Image of Pu'yi/Emperor, 1909-1911. China Institute in America.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹² Ibid., 200.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 200-01.

¹⁹⁴ Brown-Galido, 5-6.

¹⁹⁵ Ho Ping-Ti, "In Defense of Sinicization: A Rebuttal of Evelyn Rawski's 'Reenvisioning the Qing'," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 57, no. 1 (1998): 125

¹⁹⁶ "Image of Pu'yi/ Emperor Xuantong," China Institute in America, accessed December 11 2014, <http://www.walfc.org/project/emperor-xuantong-puyi-r-1909-1911/>.

It was not only religious standards maintained but also ideas about social stratification. The banner system, a core of Manchu identity, had long lost its warrior side and thus was replaced by Japan's Kwantung Army as the main fighting force.¹⁹⁷ However the banner system still remained. Upon his entry into Hsinking on route to the throne Pu'yi was greeted by five Manchukuo banners.¹⁹⁸ If only ceremonial, the presence of the banners, as well as claiming the Aisin-Gioro title, shows Pu'yi's and the Manchu's connection to the past. While others followed Pu'yi to modernization, others remained deeply loyal to the Manchu ethnic identity and kept their queues when Pu'yi cut his.¹⁹⁹ In the end, the agreement between Japan and Manchukuo spoke to certain guidelines to their relationship. For example, each would respect the others territory and rights. None had the allowance to cross the other's borders or specifically, change those borders. Also, Manchukuo was required to respect the rights, interests, and treaties already established within Manchukuo at the same time provide aid for each other if the need arises. The last requirement made the presence of Japanese troops in Manchukuo required.²⁰⁰ Japan's take over not only overshadowed Manchu rule but also their identity.

Outside forces offered different opinions on Manchukuo and who the Manchus might be. In a news article that came out in 1934, one philosophy/economics professor from the United States, Charles F. Stickle, spoke on the circumstances in Manchukuo. While the article fails to address the actual lecture, it does mention how the United States sees the Manchus. Not only does the professor dress in "full regalia" but he is assisted by a woman, also dressed in Manchu fashion, who plays the role as "his number one wife." "His wife" and he then "made obeisance to the incense altar in the approved Manchu fashion, where a statue of Buddha and

¹⁹⁷ Young, 30.

¹⁹⁸ Brackman, 193.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 106.

²⁰⁰ "Editorial Comment," *World Affairs* 95, no. 2 (September 1932).

ancestral tablets were placed.”²⁰¹ The article focused on the different dress styles and the fact that having more than one wife was the standard in Manchukuo instead of the circumstances in Manchukuo, as the professor was playing the role as a second class Manchu. However, the article shows that the Manchu’s ethnic distinction still existed, even if it was not as prevalent as it had once been. As one may recall, though the Manchus adopted the religions of China, such as Buddhism and Confucianism, shamanism was the core religion of the Manchus. Disregarding the mention of the Buddha statue, the article mentions the act of respect shown for the altar and to the ancestral tablets. Part of the Shaman culture involved performing ceremonies or sacrifices to spirits or ancestors to signal respect. This part of the Manchu identity had not disappeared over the course of the years. Not only did the United States observe this custom, but Pu’yi also exhibited this cultural aspect as he made his way to the tomb of Nurhaci and made an offering and said a prayer to his deceased ancestor.²⁰² While conversion to the western religions was encouraged, the Manchus held on to their own.

The U.S. did recognize the culture but, along with the Chinese government, failed to recognize Manchukuo as independent state. Part of the purpose of the Lytton Commission of 1933 was to address the current problems within Manchuria, and its solutions to those problems. The administration of Manchuria was created by the Chinese to protect it from neighboring nations who would take advantage of the weak state, such as the Japanese. The administration developed into a complex system, whose purpose was to strengthen the internal government to defend itself. However, the understanding between China and Manchuria was that “even during these political changes, the laws promulgated by the Central government with reference to civil, financial and judicial matters, were completely enforced as before.”²⁰³ The

²⁰¹“School Closed Until Monday, April 2,” *Cosair* 5, no. 23 (March 14 1934).

²⁰² Brackman, 193.

²⁰³ V. K. Wellington Koo, “The Lytton Commission,” *Vol. III. The Chinese Cultural Society* (New York City, 1933), 100.

political changes, the Lytton Commission describes, is the move from the Monarchical system of the past to the Republic, who retained the power to make appointments over Manchuria, such as the creation of a provincial government and its appointments in 1928.²⁰⁴ These powers, as well as its claim to Manchuria, came from the argument that it not only was part of China but also based on population. The Lytton Commission believed that the “term immigrants” had been incorrectly used to describe those who had made their way into Manchuria. Blaming this mistake on the Japanese government, the Chinese government stated that since most of the new residents had come from other parts of China, the term that should be used is migrants.²⁰⁵ Seeing many of the residents of Manchuria had come from China, the only logical thought is China had governance rights to Manchuria.

Thomas Jefferson once stated, “We surely cannot deny to any nation that right where on our own government is founded—that every one may govern itself according to whatever form it pleases... The will of the nation is the only thing essential to be regarded.”²⁰⁶ It seems natural that the U.S. would then side with the newly formed Manchukuo, seeing it as the will of the government and its leader lies with its formation. However this was not the case. On January 7, 1932, at the conclusion of the Sino-Japanese war, U.S. representative Henry Stimson created the Stimson Doctrine of Non-Recognition. The doctrine simply states that “the United States ‘does not intend to recognize any situation, treaty or agreement which may be brought about by means contrary to the covenants and obligations of the Pact of Paris of August 27, 1928.’”²⁰⁷ This included the creation of Manchukuo. Few within the US, such as George Bronson Rea, saw this as going against the core belief of the United States and how it came into existence; if the people had of Manchukuo have recognized it as a

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 105.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 39.

²⁰⁶ George Bronson Rea, *The Case For Manchukuo* (New York: D. Appleton-Century, 1935), 3.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 4.

state, follow its laws, then it is a state, “recognition does not create the state,”²⁰⁸ he reasoned.

Rea echoed the claims of the Manchus that Manchukuo, or Pu’yi, were not Chinese. To the Chinese, Pu’yi was a traitor and thus, they refused to recognize Manchukuo’s independence.²⁰⁹ As stated by Rea, “no proof can be adduced to support the contention that the Manchus have died out...”²¹⁰ Even if the only recognized Manchu was Pu’yi and his court, it is evidence against the idea that all Manchus had ceased to exist. Due to the fact that Manchus still exist, by example of Pu’yi and the anti-Manchuism of the time, China had no right to Manchuria based on this claim. Furthermore, by the time of the Japanese takeover, approximately three percent of the population was made up of Manchus.²¹¹ Though their numbers had decreased immensely since they first came into power in 1644, action of tracking their population shows that the Manchus were still a recognizable part of the population in China. The parts of their ethnic identity they had kept were enough to make a clear distinction between the Manchus and the Han. The Han Chinese have always outnumbered the Manchus, a fact that argued against Manchu rule. The Han could see no reason as to why the minority ruled over the majority. Nor does it have a claim to Manchuria based on immigration numbers. If this were so, the U.S. would have lost Hawaii to Japan.²¹²

The Manchus have long held the right of possession to Manchuria as their homeland. The right to govern Manchuria belongs to the Manchus.²¹³ Manchuria has long been a place by which to draw replacement troops from during conquest and a safe haven. To preserve the purity of the Manchus in their homeland, the Qing rulers barred all Chinese from entering and residing in Manchuria, a ban that lasted until the end of the Qing rule.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 12.

²⁰⁹ Brackman, 195.

²¹⁰ Bronson Rea, 115.

²¹¹ Mitter, 23.

²¹² Bronson Rea, 122

²¹³ Ibid., 114.

Furthermore, said purity was also ensured by the banning of marriage between the bannermen and the Han. Any claim the Chinese held in the past was removed with the Manchu occupation during the Qing Dynasty.²¹⁴ Rea's claim against Chinese sovereignty shows that even the Western forces were divided over the question of whether Manchukuo was its own state and whether or not the Manchus were its own people. At the same time, his claims also showed that the Manchu were a recognized ethnic group. The outsiders, such as the United States or Europe, only justification for its support of Han rule was they could not tell the difference between the two.²¹⁵ Then again, can one tell the difference between an American and a Canadian? Physically no, as was the case for the Manchus, once the queue was removed in 1919. Yet as seen, the traits that identified them as an ethnic group were there and the fact that they still claimed to be Manchus also showed that they did not belong to any other group.

Conclusion

By the end of World War II, Japan had lost its claim to Manchukuo and the Manchus lost whatever false sense of power they held. Manchukuo was absorbed back into China's dominion and the Manchus were officially recognized as a legal ethnic group in 1949. Despite their recognition, many believe that "when the barbarian enters China (i.e. Chinese civilization) he becomes Chinese."²¹⁶ Over the centuries the Manchu identity had changed. Events such as the Opium War, the Taiping Rebellion, the 1898 Affair, the 1911 Revolution, and the rise of Manchukuo in 1932 have forced the Manchu identity to evolve. Yet while the Manchu identity has changed, it has not disappeared.

In 1919, Pu'yi was the first Manchu to cut his queue, a long standing symbol of Manchu identity and conquest. Many may look at this as the Manchus' move to assimilate. However the Manchus

²¹⁴ Ibid., 115-6.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 120.

²¹⁶ Michael, 9.

did not claim to be Chinese. Modernity had forced these changes, not Chinese culture. The biggest influence on the Manchu identity was an individual not of Chinese or Japanese nationality but an Englishman by the name of Sir Reginald Fleming Johnston. For sinicization to occur, one of Chinese culture must be present. The biggest sign that the Manchu identity still remained separate were the actions and beliefs of the Manchus and the Han.

The Manchus saw themselves to be different from the Han. Part of the problem that arose was the generalization of the two races, in part due to the opinions of outside forces, such as the U.S. as seen from the newspaper clippings and special reports seen throughout this paper. Over time the opinion may begin to become fact but it disregards actual events and circumstances. The Manchus were persistent on maintaining the border between themselves and the Han. Part of this barrier was constructed of biased testing, enforced hairstyle, and preferred treatment in political and social aspects. The Manchus were not alone in their desire to maintain ethnic borders. Just as the Manchus showed their contempt for the Han by the violence of the Yangzhou massacre, the Han showed that the border had lasted throughout the Qing Dynasty by the violence of the 1911 Revolution. Even as the twentieth century brought modernization, political change, as the Manchus faced the loss of their native land, their grasp of their identity did not falter. The only change in the identity of the Manchus went from being based on physical elements and more to an ideal and an ancestral connection. Until a law made it official, the only sign of the recognition of separate identities was usually through violence. Even with the confusion or the idea of their sinicization, the Manchus, by their own recognition, maintained their distinct ethnic identity, an identity that has lasted to this day.

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