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RESEARCH ON CONTEMPORARY QING IMPERIAL HISTORY: THE SITUATION AND OUTLOOK IN JAPAN

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS "QING IMPERIAL HISTORY?"

To understand what "Qing 清 imperial history" is, one must begin by inquiring what the Qing Empire is. This empire was a state established in Manchuria by Tungusic Manchu 满洲 (*Manju* in the Manchu language) people in the 17th century. Led by the Aisin Gioro 愛新覚羅 monarchs, it spread into Eastern Eurasia throughout the 18th century, and ruled the greater part of the area to the east of the Pamir Highlands, until its demise at the beginning of the 20th century. Nurhaci (Taizu 太祖) appeared at the end of the 16th century and unified Manchuria, and in 1616 (Tianming 天命 1) named his state the "Later Jin" (*Houjin* 後金; *Aisin* in Manchu). His son Hong Taiji (Taizong 太宗) later inherited this state, and declared his own enthronement as the Qing Emperor in 1636 (Chongde 崇德 1). After the subsequent 1644 (Shunzhi 順治 1) triumphal entry into Beijing and the commencement of Manchu rule over China, a Manchu emperor reigned over Eastern Eurasia until the empire's downfall in 1912.

While this state is normally referred to as the "Qing dynasty," one of the reasons this paper will call it the "Qing Empire" is because the correct name for the Qing state is the "Daicing Gurun" (Daqing state; 大

清国 in Chinese). In other words, "Daqing" does not mean the "great" (*da* 大) "Qing" 清—rather it corresponds to the Manchu "Daicing"; one of the two-character state names used since the adoption of the Mongol state name of "Dayuan" 大元. Consequently, the scale and form of the state was completely different during the Mongol period and thereafter. Another reason the author has chosen to refer to this state as the "Qing Empire" arises from the research strategy of avoiding the image and preconceived notions associated with the "dynasties of China," which come to mind when one hears terminology referring to an "XX dynasty." Of course, the phrase "Qing dynasty" can still be used, depending on one's stance. However, regardless of how one refers to it, what is notable is that one must not forget that the rulers of this empire were the Manchu people, and that its vast and diverse domain expanded more than twice as large as Ming 明 territory.

While not limiting oneself to the "Qing dynasty in Chinese history," it is important to ask how one can understand Qing imperial history — in other words, the history of the "Qing Empire in Eastern Eurasia," including the elements of "Chinese Qing dynasty." Furthermore, it must be explored how this differs from "Qing-dynasty history," "Manchu history," and so on. Finally, one should interrogate the path of, current standing of, and potential issues for the future of research addressing "Qing" or "Manchu" history. While each of these tasks represent large issues that cannot be handled independently, this paper will provide a sketch of their situational context in Japan. Therefore, it will focus on the Manchu people who presided over the empire, while also paying close attention to the state's entire domain.

While a vast array of literature should be cited in this study, only one limited aspect can be touched upon here, for which the readers' understanding is requested. Regarding trends in recent research on the Qing Empire, it is recommended that one consults Kishimoto Mio 岸本美緒's overview [2005] from an "the East Asian World" perspective, or the author's [Sugiyama K. 2001a].[1] While as a general rule the author refers to the political administration, group of people, and the geographical space in question as Qing, Manchu, and Manchuria, respectively, due to the nature of this paper, the usage and established practices found in previous scholarship will be followed; modifications have not been made for uniformity.

1. RESEARCH ON THE "QING DYNASTY-MANCHU HISTORY"

This paper is based on a symposium, the title of which included the phrase "Research on Qing Dynasty-Manchu History." Yet one must first ask what this refers to. The multi-faceted nature of and difficulty in grasping this genre and its object of research (the Qing Empire) is symbolized by the pairing of the "Qing dynasty" (a dynasty name) and "Manchu," a word that refers to both the Manchu ethnic group and the geographical area of Manchuria.

Upon reflection, it can be seen that in the academic study of Japanese post-World War II Oriental history (*Tōyō shigaku* 東洋史学), fields related in some way or another to the Qing Empire have been referred to in a variety of ways: "Qing-dynasty history," "Qing-era history," "Ming–Qing history," "Manchurian history," "Manchu history," and so on. The referents of these names have overlapped, while simultaneously differing in territory and nuance. For each of these related yet subtly differing names, unspoken unique distinctions and connotations exist. Mark C. Elliott [1993:149] offers a straightforward explanation of this when he writes, "Those who understand the Manchu language were called 'Qing-dynasty history' (normally meaning early Qing history) researchers, and those who cannot are called 'Qing-era history' (meaning socio-economic history) researchers." In other words, the field has generally been divided into two areas, based on the set of historical documents (and language) primarily used, as well as the issues interesting scholars.

As argued here, the unspoken understanding exists that "Qing-era history" is normally the research of early modern Chinese history, centered on socio-economic issues, and relying only on Chinese-language historical documents. To emphasize the continuity between the Ming and Qing, it is sometimes called "Ming–Qing history."[2] This represents a standpoint seeking to investigate aspects of Han-Chinese society under Qing rule, as based upon the perspective of diachronic Chinese history. In contrast, "Qing-dynasty history" has primarily included research in the Manchu language on the early history of the Qing. It focuses on the political and institutional history of the time before Manchu rule over China. In other words, it seeks to understand history by examining the Qing dynasty, and is thus inseparably related to the institutions, society, and culture of the Manchu people who comprised the influential ruling strata of society. Thus, while "Qing-era history" is connected to "Ming–Qing history," "Qing-dynasty history" has been thought to overlap with "Manchu history." One example of this can be found in the phrase "Qing dynasty and Manchu history," which was used as the aforementioned symposium's title.

However, it is unexpectedly difficult to define "Manchu history." This is because "Manchu" can refer to the Manchu ethnic group, the state name of the Manchu, as well as the region of Manchuria [Kanda 1972a; Nakami 1993]. *Manju*, the word that "Manchu" is derived from, was first used as the name of Nurhaci's state (*manju gurun*). Then, in 1635, the year before the adoption of the "Daicing/Daqing" state name, it was decided that this word would be used as the term for ethnic self-identification, in place of Jurchens (*Jušen* 女真/女直), which had been used previously. Consequently, since the end of the 18th century the land has come to be called "*Manshū*" 満洲 in Japan and "Manchuria" in Europe. Therefore, "Manchu history" refers to a wide range of things, but can be divided into several categories.

First, it includes the "history of the Manchurian region," in other words, research that treats the historical phenomena that took place in Manchuria. This includes prehistoric times, and the period after the expansion and colonization of Russians in the north and the Han-Chinese and Japanese in the south. Second, it encompasses "Manchurian history" in the narrow sense, in other words, "Jurchen/Manchu history," which traces the path of Jurchen/Manchu history during Jin 金, Yuan 元, Ming, and Qing eras. In its broadest sense it covers the history of the various Tungusic ethnic groups, from the Fuyu and Mohe to the Manchu. The meaning of "Manchu history" used in recent years is closer to this latter sense. This research also sometimes focuses not on Manchuria itself, but rather on the activities and aspects of society when the Manchu expanded or moved outside of Manchuria, for example during the Jin and Qing dynasties. "Manchu history" is also used in an even broader way to refer to research on historical phenomena recorded in the Manchu language, as well as to the historical records themselves. This meaning more closely resembles the "Manchu studies" found in the field of Oriental studies (*Tōyōgaku* 東洋学). This polysemy overlaps with the problems described by Elliott [2008a], with regard to the field of Manchu studies in the United States.

It must be remembered that these fields are not clearly distinguished. Rather, they are indistinct, and differ even while nonetheless overlapping. For example, in many cases, histories of the Jurchen people focusing on the Jin era are not the histories of the Jurchen ethnic group that continues into the Qing period. Rather, they use a Liao 遼–Jin–Yuan history framework. With regard to the earlier periods, such as the Goguryeo 高句麗 and Bohai/Balhae 渤海, it is more common to categorize them as Korean history or archeology. Furthermore, after the rise of the Qing, scholars' interests shifted to the dynasty itself (politics, institutions, etc.) rather than the Manchu people. In one example, while political institutions were studied, this focus meant that there was very little research being done on the land of Manchuria itself. In other words, "Manchu history" consistently refers neither to the history of Manchuria, nor to the history of the Jurchen/Manchu ethnic group; instead such an approach was found in pre-war Japan and can also be observed in present-day China. The body of post-World War II mainstream Japanese academic research focuses on the formation, development, and decline of the dynasty called the "Qing." In other words, this represents the history of the "Manchu" in connection with the "Qing dynasty," and this history is related to the Manchu people and language. Put in other terms, it is a "Qing dynasty-Manchu" history. Here one can observe the inseparable connection of the two, which can be also seen in the English title of this field's journal *Manzokushi kenkyū* 満族史研究: *Journal of Manchu and Qing Studies*.

The next section will provide a simple overview of how and when this genre was created, as well as an analysis of related issues.

2. THE PATH OF THE "QING DYNASTY–MANCHU HISTORY RESEARCH"

(1) The "Manchu-History" Era and "Qing-Dynasty" History

Research on the Qing dynasty-Manchu history dates back to the establishment of Oriental studies in Japan.[3] However, this field was originally referred to as "Manchu history"—although at the time the connotations of this phrase were somewhat different than today—rather than as "Qing-dynasty history." From 1900 to 1910, the Qing Empire was like a neighboring country, as it had not yet become an object of research in the field of history. This is nicely illustrated by the fact that the compilation of the *Shinkoku gyōseihō* 清国行政法 (1905–1913, The administrative law of the Qing state), which is still considered to be a foundational text regarding Qing political institutions and government administrative organizations, began after Japan's possession of Taiwan, "with the aim of fully surveying the current institutions of the Qing state" [Oda and Katō 1940:34].

However, while a journalist, Naitō Konan (Torajirō) 内藤湖南 (虎次郎) began to acquire basic historical documents around the same time. This collection represented the beginning of "Qing dynasty–Manchu history research" [Nakami 1992, 2006; Kanda 1979, etc.]. Konan, who at the time was a reporter for the *Osaka Asahi Shimbun*, visited the Mukden Palace in Shenyang and "discovered" the *Manbun Rōtō* 満文老檔 (*Manwen laotang*, The secret chronicles of the Manchu dynasty) during his survey of July to November 1905. In 1912 (after his appointment to Kyoto Imperial University), he visited again with Haneda Tōru 羽田亨, in order to photograph and bring back the *Manbun Rōtō* and *Wuti Qing Wenjian* 五体清文鑑 (known in English as the "pentaglot dictionary"). Having already learned the Manchu language, he engaged in his survey, and one can only marvel at the foresight and insight allowing him to immediately see the value of these texts as historical documents. Naitō's first history article was his 1900 "Min Tōhoku kyōiki bengo" 明東北疆域辨誤 (Misunderstanding about the northeastern border regions during the Ming period) [Naitō 1900a].[4] It became a pioneering article in research on the historical geography of Manchuria. Furthermore, in the 1900 and 1901 articles [Naitō 1900b, 1901], respectively, he discussed the financial and military affairs of the country when it was first founded,[5] thus demonstrating his wide knowledge and keen insight regarding both the past and the present. For these reasons, Naitō Konan is the founder of Japan's "Qing dynasty–Manchu history research," in terms of the introduction and use of Manchu-language historical materials, as well as the understanding of the "Qing dynasty" as a "Manchu" dynasty. When one reads Naitō's *Shinchō suibōron* 清朝衰亡論 (On the decline and fall of the Qing dynasty) [Naitō 1912a], which was given as a lecture and published during the height of the Xinhai 辛亥 Revolution, as well as his 1915 lecture "Shinchōshi tsūron" 清朝史通論 (An outline of Qing-dynasty history),[6] one is still struck by the aptness of their frameworks and the richness of the themes found therein.

However, at the same time it should be noted that, rather than conducting investigations into history itself, these texts originated from Naitō's contemporary interest in understanding the neighboring "Qing dynasty" and "China." People read these articles from a similar perspective. Although Naitō's interest in and exploration of Qing-dynasty history and Manchu history did not cease throughout his entire life, and individual articles that he wrote during the 1910s and 20s [Naitō 1912b, 1922] became starting points for the field,[7] for his contemporary researchers, the "Qing dynasty" was something to be covered by journalists and university law and economics departments. The themes Naitō presented did not immediately receive the attention of scholars of Oriental history, and Naitō's research also eventually shifted to pre-modern Chinese history [Nakami 1992:121–22].

Japanese studies during the 1910s and 20s were not focused on the present-day history of the Qing dynasty, rather on the historical geography of Korea and Manchuria themselves; both were areas into which Japan had fully advanced during this time. Shiratori Kurakichi 白鳥庫吉 of Gakushuin University and Tokyo Imperial University encouraged this. The basis for his own research was the historical survey office—called the "Manchuria–Korea Historical Geography Survey Division" (1908–1915)—located at the South Manchuria Railway Co., Ltd's Tokyo branch office.[8] There, Yanai Watari 箭内亙, Matsui Hitoshi 松井等, Inaba Iwakichi 稲葉岩吉, Ikeuchi Hiroshi池内宏, and Tsuda Sōkichi 津田左右吉 gathered. This office's project and library were later taken over by Tokyo Imperial University, where Wada Sei 和田清 and Mikami Tsugio 三上次男 inherited and developed these collections [Yanai, Inaba, and Matsui 1913; Tsuda 1913; Tōkyō Teikoku Daigaku Bungakubu 1915–41].[9] While this scholarly lineage, which began with Shiratori, took the Qing's land in Manchuria as its object, it did not originate from an interest in the Qing dynasty itself. Rather, it started from two contemporary interests and motivations that differed from Naitō's. The first was "the practical necessities relating to the management of Manchuria and Korea" [Shiratori 1913:1], while the second was to show to the world the academic accomplishments of the Japanese field of Oriental history, which took as its object Korea and Manchuria; themselves as-of-yet untouched by Western Orientalist scholars.

Generally speaking, during the first four decades of the 20th century, this field focused on events before the Yuan era, was particularly centered on ancient history, and primarily concerned itself with historical geography. It could be called "Manchu history" or "Manchu–Korean history." Before Puyi 溥儀 was driven out in 1924, the "Qing dynasty" existed in the Forbidden City, and at this time the Qing dynasty itself was not considered to be history. As such, there was little incentive or interest in researching the Manchu people, as they were perceived in a negative light due to the revolution. One therefore had to wait until the 1930s for the true starting point of "Qing dynasty–Manchu history research" that would bring together the "Qing dynasty" and "Manchu(ria)."

During the 1930s the Kyoto Imperial University graduates Oshibuchi Hajime 鴛淵一, Mitamura Taisuke 三田村泰助, and Imanishi Shunjū 今西春秋, as well as the Tokyo Imperial University graduates Hatada Takashi 旗田巍 and Nakayama Hachirō 中山八郎 began publishing papers in rapid succession, and research on late Ming and early Qing Jurchen/Manchu history and the Eight Banners system—previously unexplored areas—suddenly blossomed. Naitō's presented themes and the

Manbun Rōtō that he had acquired were finally developed and utilized by his disciples. On the other hand, attempts to criticize and reconstruct previous academic theories were flourishing in Tokyo under the influence of the rapidly spreading historical materialism. The December 1935 special issue of *Rekishigaku kenkyū* 歴史学研究 (The journal of the Historical Science Society) on Manchu history, which brought together these accomplishments, initiated a new epoch in scholarship. Even outside of Kyoto and Tokyo, many scholars, such as Sonoda Kazuki 園田一亀 and Ejima Hisao 江嶋壽雄, worked on the Ming era and early Qing Jurchen research, while Sudō Yoshiyuki 周藤吉之 (later known for his research on Chinese socio-economic history) studied the estates of bannermen, Abe Takeo 安部健夫 presented his unfinished voluminous work "Hakki Manshū niru no kenkyū" 八旗満洲ニルの研究 (1942–1951, Research on Manchu companies in the Eight Banners system), amongst many other scholars [Sonoda 1948–53; Ejima 1999; Sudō 1944, 1972; Abe 1971, etc.]. This situation led an observer to remark, "half of [the] Oriental history scholars are engaged in Manchu history." Notably, in addition to fundamentally criticizing the established theories of the time, Abe concluded that the Eight Banners state, i.e. the Manchu state before conquest of China, was a centralized system and a bureaucratic state. Even though this argument's framework was entirely refuted after World War II and is no longer supported, both the variety of the individual topics discovered in the process, as well as Abe's conceptual ability to present a unique systematization are striking. In all senses it can be described as a controversial work.

Of course, the backdrop to this scholarly flourishing included several causes, the first of which was Japan's full-on advancement into Manchuria during the 1930s. Access to historical materials and the convenience of moving around rapidly improved, and interest in the topic increased not only in the academic world, but also in broader society overall. Amidst the "founding" of Manchukuo and the subsequent tensions, workplaces and jobs were offered through various Japan and Manchuria-based research and educational institutions, related groups, a variety of commissioned research projects, and so on. Consequently, many researchers began working on "Manchurian history."

The second reason for this explosion in scholarship was the influence of the accomplishments and methodologies of related fields, such as the social sciences. During this time, the originals and translations of Shirokogoroff's [1924] and Vladimirtsov's [1934] works were published. These texts went beyond providing historical geography studies, and opened paths for elucidating the Jurchen/Manchu social system and political organization, as well as the social structure at its base. Mitamura's article [1936], which fully utilized Manchu-language historical documents, raised the level of research immediately. It represented a landmark study, written under the influence of these texts. Notably, Hatada's clear introduction of the concept of development in Jurchen/Manchu society (which had previously generally been perceived as stagnant and regressive) under the influence of Marx's theory of social formation created considerable advancements in the field [Hatada 1935]. This is particularly notable in the various articles included in the aforementioned special issue of *Rekishigaku kenkyū*.

The third reason was the rapid improvement of the research environment and access to historical documents. The Palace Museum (*Gugong bowuyuan* 故宮博物院, est. 1925) began to organize and publish public records and historical documents, such as the *Zhanggu congbian* 掌故叢編 (Collected historical documents) and *Ming Qing shiliao* 明清史料 (Ming and Qing historical documents), while in 1937 Manchukuo the facsimiles of Qing historical records were published as *Daqing lichao shilu* 大清歴朝実録 (Veritable records of the successive reigns of the Qing dynasty). In terms of Manchu-language historical documents, Imanishi Shunjū published an annotated translation of *Manzhou shilu* 満洲実録 (Manchu veritable record) that is known for its unique trilingual Manchu–Mongol–Chinese format [Imanishi 1938]. In 1939 the linguist Fujioka Katsuji 藤岡勝二's Japanese translation of *Manbun Rōtō* was published posthumously [Fujioka 1939], and both it and Imanishi's translation came to be used in research.[10] Simultaneously, in 1937 the *Manwa jiten* 満和辞典 (Manchu–Japanese dictionary) was compiled under the direction of Haneda Tōru, and remains a foundational reference to date.[11]

In this way, the previous situation that had existed up until the Taishō 大正 period (1912–26) changed during the first part of the Shōwa 昭和 period (1926–45). The temporal focus of research expanded to the Ming era and the period before Manchu conquest of China, especially focused on the reign of Nurhaci. Approaches also expanded beyond historical geography, and began to include politics, institutions, and social organizations. At this time, the process by which Nurhaci rose to power, and the Eight Banners system responsible for this ascendancy, became the focal point of research. This was examined in a threefold manner, as scholars examined: first, the formation and development processes of institutions; second, the relationship between the Eight Banners system and Jurchen social groups, family organization, and social statuses; and third, the estates of bannermen.

On the one hand, the government administration after the conquest of China had barely been previously researched. Regarding institutions, the *Daqing huidian* 大清会典 (Collected statutes of the Qing dynasty) and *Shinkoku gyōseihō* were used as they were, and in terms of political history only an outline of the development of power struggles was known. On the other hand, as for Manchuria, empirical historical research was carried out mainly on the period before Ming rule, and the Qing era was studied from the viewpoint of its social and legal system, rather than its history. This was the case for both scholars of Chinese history and Manchu history. In this sense, it could be said that "Qing-dynasty history" and "Qing-era history" had not yet come into existence.

Furthermore, "Manchu history" was not yet established either. While pre-World War II "Manchu history" in Japan had constructed a diachronic history instead of limiting itself to individual micro-studies, it was simultaneously tied to bestowing a theoretical basis to the Manchurian separatist position, which considered Manchuria not to be part of China [Inaba 1915; Yano 1938, etc.]. While this stance was academic, it was also firmly tied to current affairs. The field therefore also expanded alongside Japan's political advancements, rather than for the purpose of finding out the internal autonomy or cohesiveness of Manchuria as a region. From the 1890s to the 1940s, it shifted from "Manchu-Korean history" (*Man-Senshi* 満鮮史, in the beginning it was called *Man-Kanshi* 満韓史) to "Manchu history," and then to "Manchu-Mongolian history" (*Man-Mōshi* 満蒙史).[12] Furthermore, from 1938 onwards, successive studies were commissioned by the national-policy organ, the "East Asia Research Institute" (*Tōa kenkyūjo* 東亜研究所), such as "Examples of Rule over China by Other Ethnicities" and "Qing Dynasty Control and the Public Servant Appointment System." One should note that these studies left behind research accomplishments, which would later connect to the post-World War II "Qing-dynasty history" and "Qing-era history." One of the representative benefits from these commissioned studies was Miyazaki Ichisada 宮崎市定's masterful work [1947].

(2) The Establishment and Development of "Qing-Dynasty History"

This situation completely changed after Japan's 1945 defeat in World War II. Along with losing rights to the Asian continent, they lost both the national-policy support for and the people's interest in "Manchu history," and it was no longer possible to visit this place. Furthermore, "Manchu history" became taboo, as it was considered inseparable from "aggression" even more so than other related areas. In contrast, as Marxist history became prominent, socio-economic history research focusing on the late Ming and early Qing flourished. "Ming-Qing history" and "Qing-era history" formed one new and extensive field, which does not require any explanation.

However, while the number of researchers in "Manchu history" significantly decreased, on the other hand, new movements emerged from their different interests and differing approaches from the latter half of the 1940s. These new scholars inherited the accumulated accomplishments of "Manchu history" research of pre-World War II. Generally speaking, this was comprised of two large currents. The first was the early Qing history research, based out of the Toyo Bunko Seminar on Manchu History (*Tōyō bunko shindaishi kenkyūshitsu* 東洋文庫清代史研究室), and still known for its annotated translation of *Manbun Rōtō*; the monumental achievement of Manchu studies and Oriental history in Japan. The Manchu-language study group, which began at the University of Tokyo during the chaotic times immediately after the end of the war (later the Toyo Bunko), grew into the *Manbun Rōtō* research group. Its researchers collectively produced a seven-volume annotated translation of *Manbun Rōtō* [Manbun Rōtō Kenkyūkai 1955–63]. The disciples of Wada Sei involved in this work included Kanda Nobuo 神田信夫, Matsumura Jun 松村潤, Okada Hidehiro 岡田英弘, and Ishibashi Hideo 石橋秀雄, and they came to lead the scholarly community through research organizations and/or academic theories [Kanda 2005; Matsumura 2008; Ishibashi H. 1989].[13] One can argue that a field called "Qing-dynasty history" was newly established here, based primarily on the use of historical documents in the Manchu language.

The second current consisted of Kyoto University research on Yongzheng 雍正-era history, which is known to public, due to Miyazaki Ichisada's work [1950], and was compiled in *Yōsei jidai no kenkyō* 雍正時代の研究 (Research on the Yongzheng era) [Tōyōshi Kenkyūkai 1986 (Orig. pub. 1957–63)]. This work immediately raised the level of research on politics and institutions after the Manchu conquest of China—or, rather, truly established it for the first time. However, while the work was centered in Kyoto, it was not part of the lineage of the early Qing history-Manchu history research that had been inherited from Naitō by Mitamura and Imanishi. Rather, it emerged from the context of the Chinese history research that had begun with Naitō and was developed by Miyazaki, and which consisted of theories regarding Song 宋 and post-Song early modernity and the monarchical dictator system. Manchu elements were not its primary concern, but rather were seen as additional aspects that disappeared or fused with Chinese elements. In contrast, research that arose from the former current was considered to be part of the older Kyoto University field of North Asian historical research, which had also existed since pre-war times. It was carried out with a focus on pre-Qing rule/pre-conquest history, and was conducted separately from Chinese early modern historical research or the research on the Qing dynasty itself. Its products can be found in *Mindai Man-Mōshi kenkyū* 明代満蒙史研究 (The Mongols and the Manchus under the Ming dynasty) [Tamura 1963], which Tamura Jitsuzō 田村実造 edited and to which Mitamura and Kawachi Yoshihiro 河内良弘 contributed papers.

In this way, after World War II the Qing dynasty finally became an object of historical research. However, this development was divided into "Qing-dynasty history," which emphasized Manchu-language historical documents, and "Qing-era history," which completely relied on Chinese-language sources and treated the era as part of Chinese history. The former focused on politics and institutions, and the latter focused on socio-economic history. However, in the field of political history scholarship considering things from the perspective of the monarchical dictatorship system, and relying on Chinese-language texts, was actually part of the latter, and was considered to be "Qing-era political history." This newly established "Qing-dynasty history" could be seen as "Qing dynasty–Manchu history," as it focused on eras and issues that overlapped with Manchu people, Manchuria, and the Manchu language. Considering its use of Manchu-language texts, and that pre-war "Manchu history" was not focused on the Manchu language but rather on the geographical space of Manchuria, it could be argued that the Manchu language itself divides not only "Qing-dynasty history" and "Qing-era history," but also pre-war and post-war times.

During the 1960s, this re-launched "Qing dynasty–Manchu history research" began to develop notably, although with considerably fewer researchers. The text *Manbun Rōtō* was completed in Tokyo, while Mitamura, who had led the field since pre-war times, finished his masterful work [Mitamura 1965] in Kyoto. The value of the works contained therein—such as the masterpiece "Mukun-Tatansei no kenkyū" ムクン・タタン制の研究 (A study of "*Mukun-Tatan*" system)—have not decreased since publication, but rather are classics that should still be used to date as the starting point for further research. [Mitamura 1969] and [Kanda 1968], which include the essences of these papers, are excellent surveys in which each scholar used their individual abilities and positions to the fullest. They should still be used to obtain an overview of the era before engaging in further related research.

Furthermore, while no new researchers in the field appeared after

World War II, Hosoya Yoshio 細谷良夫 published successive articles primarily focused on the Yongzheng period. In his most famous work [Hosoya 1968], Hosoya did not simply limit himself to researching the Eight Banners system after the conquest of China. Instead, this landmark work also touched upon Qing history before Manchu conquest, as well as the Yongzheng reforms. Simultaneously, Anami Korehiro 阿南惟敬—an individual with an unusual background as the son of Anami Korechika 阿南惟幾 (the war minister when Japan surrendered), alumni of the Army Preparatory Academy (*Rikugun yoka shikan gakkō* 陸軍予科士官学校), and post-war graduate of the Oriental History Department at the University of Tokyo—devoted himself to researching the military-related aspects of the Eight Banners system, and energetically published articles on the subject. The accomplishments of Anami, who died young, have been brought together [Anami 1980]. Somewhat unexpectedly, research directly addressing the Eight Banners system itself was rare since pre-war times,[14] and thus the activities of these two individuals from the 1960s onwards were significant. As is well known, Hosoya has led research on the Eight Banners system from that time until the present.

Advancements in the organization and public release of historical documents in Taiwan during the 1960s and 1970s also greatly influenced the field. The most significant result of these developments was the discovery of the Manchu archives "Manwen yuandang" 滿文原檔, which contained the original text of *Manbun Rōtō*. A facsimile of this text, which was "rediscovered" at the National Palace Museum in 1962, was published in 1969 as the large volume [Guoli Gugong Bowuyuan 1969]. An annotated translation of this archive, which included the Tiancong 天聰 9 (1635) entry that was missing from the *Manbun Rōtō*, was immediately published by Kanda, Matsumura, and Okada [Tōyō Bunko Shindaishi Kenkyūshitsu 1972–75].[15] Furthermore, stimulated by the Kyoto University research on Yongzheng's edicts and vermillion endorsements, facsimile palace memorials of the Guangxu 光緒, Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong 乾隆 dynasties were successively published under the title *Gongzhongdang zouzhe* 宮中檔奏摺 (Palace records, 1973–1988). Thus dawned an era in which the use of Manchu and Chinese-language public record historical documents became common in not only "Qing dynasty–Manchu history" but also "Ming–Qing history." From the latter half of the 1970s onwards, the organization and publication of historical documents also began in China. Historical document collections, such as *Qingdai dangan shiliao congbian* 清代檔案史料叢編 (Compilation of Qing era public record historical documents), as well as facsimile and letterpress editions of palace memorials, imperial decrees, court diaries, and so on were published one after another.[16] Although only partially, scholars were once again able to engage in field research, which had been impossible after Japan's defeat in World War II. From 1986 onwards, a research group that included Kanda and Matsumura carried out continuous surveys of early Qing remains.

In this context, a Manchu history research group led by Mikami Tsugio was launched in 1986, and published its newsletter *Manzokushi kenkyū tsūshin* 満族史研究通信 (Journal of Manchu and Qing studies, –1991; in 2002 it was renamed *Manzokushi kenkyū*) On the other hand, the activities based in the Toyo Bunko Qing Era History Research Office, which had flourished since the publication of the annotated translation of *Manbun Rōtō*, continued without any signs of tiring. The individuals involved steadily organized and produced annotated translations of historical documents, and this group continued to serve as the site for training new researchers [Tōyō Bunko Shindaishi Kenkyūshitsu 1972; Tōyō Bunko Shindaishi Kenkyū Iinkai 1983–93, 2003; Kanda 2001; Tōyō Bunko Tōhoku Ajia Kenkyūhan 2009, 2011–13]. From the 1980s onwards, the number of scholars with Manchu-language abilities rapidly increased. Not only did they support the field during this time, but Japan also became the world base for Manchu studies; something that could not have happened without the faculties, organizational abilities, and enduring strength of senior scholars.[17]

In the 1990s, the publication and public release of historical documents further progressed in terms of quality and quantity, and the field's situation changed drastically. Accessing the field became much easier, studying abroad and viewing historical documents on the ground became common, and, due to the spread of computers and the Internet, the research environment rapidly advanced. From the latter half of the 1990s onwards, and in the context of these improvements to the accessibility of historical documents and the progress of research environment, as well as the expansion of graduate schools, the number of young scholars rapidly increased and became very active. Consequently, Tsukuba University developed into a giant research hub in this field.

In this way, efforts that have even transcended the framework of previous "Qing-dynasty history" research have flourished in recent years. Therefore, the next section will reflect upon the characteristics of and tasks for post-World War II "Qing-dynasty history," as well as provide an overview of the new trends emerging in recent years.

3. "QING DYNASTY–MANCHU HISTORY RESEARCH" TODAY

As summarized in the previous section, "Qing-dynasty history" or "Qing dynasty–Manchu history" were newly developed after World War II, while drawing from accumulated pre-war accomplishments. This field took Manchu-language historical documents as its entire basis, and chose themes not centered on Manchuria, but rather in accordance with the rise and fall of the Qing dynasty. In other words, it traced developments by focusing on the dynasty and its leaders. The focus of this research moved and expanded in accordance with changes in the center of the dynasty's political administration, as well as the expansion of its territory.

This kind of research direction has the merit of being able to aim for a continuous political and institutional history that does not posit a gap between the periods before or after the Manchu conquest of China. On the other hand, it faces the danger of considering the rise, development, height, and decline of the dynasty to be inevitable, as well as the risk of developing gaps between Qing-dynasty history and histories of the periods preceding and follwing it. In fact, its research focused on the dynasty's rise and golden age (until the mid-18th century), and paid very little attention to times thereafter. Furthermore, scholarship on the first half of the Qing era only focused on the dynasty's rise before the Manchu conquest of China, as well as the reform period during the reign of the Yongzheng dynasty. Even research on the famous Kangxi and Qianlong periods was lacking. In other words, while this research followed the rise and fall of the dynasty, it was not able to contribute a diachronic history of the dynasty from its start to finish. Regarding "pre-Qing history," usually "Ming-era Jurchen history" ended in the 1580s with Nurhaci's becoming an independent leader of a military force, when "Qing-dynasty history" was perceived to begin. In other words, this was a "history beginning with the rise of the Qing" that existed in contrast to Ming-era Jurchen history; a gap existed between it and Jurchen history. Furthermore, when expanding one's gaze to East Asia or Eastern Eurasia, one notes a lack of perspectives related to contemporaneous situations. In "Qing-dynasty history," it was normal to begin with Nurhaci's independence and continue by writing about Jurchen unification, the establishment of the state, and the formation of the empire. The surrounding circumstances making unification and expansion possible were almost entirely ignored. However, if one only adopts a perspective following the dynasty's rise and development, and even if one can explain the process of this growth, one nevertheless cannot account for the background and reasons making this growth itself possible. In order to overcome this lack, the rise and development of the Qing within the context of trends existing on an East Asian and worldwide scale must be investigated, while paying close attention to the situation in Eastern Eurasia and Maritime Asia, as well as to the causes of that situation. However, this type of viewpoint remains rare.[18]

As a result, and despite the fact that there were rich research accomplishments that made full use of Manchu language historical documents, the existence of the Qing dynasty was dissolved into Chinese history as "Qing-era history" when those in the field crafted world history, and the Qing was seen as equivalent to China from the perspective of Central Eurasian history. As pointed out earlier, the pronounced decline of the field's presence in survey books [Sugiyama K. 2001a:117–18] is a reflection of this situation, which existed until the 1980s/1990s. However, during this very time (particularly from the 1990s onwards), new research rapidly began to develop, while influencing and being influenced by the drastic changes in both the situation of historical documents, as well as the research environment described in the previous section. This scholarship can generally be described as follows.[19]

First, research expanded specifically on the Eight Banners system, which served as the core of the empire. This was a multifaceted development. The Eight Banners organizational system was pyramidal, and consisted of the basic unit called *niru* 牛彔 (*zuoling* 佐領, translated as "company"), which served as the basis source of able-bodied men for military service, and the largest unit called *gūsa* (translated as "division"). Normally the Eight Banners are explained only by using this famous hierarchical system. However, recent and flourishing research on the Eight Banners system treats it not as a single system, but rather as the state itself prior to the Manchu conquest of China, and the ruling stratum and organizational structure itself after the conquest of China, attempting to concretely elucidate their internal structures. Starting points for doing so include focusing on (1) the lord-vassal relationship established between banner princes (high level royalty assigned to each banner) and bannermen, (2) their intermarriages, which formed a finely meshed net, and (3) their clan groups (*hala, mukūn*). Suzuki Makoto 鈴木真 [2007] and the author [Sugiyama K. 1998] have reconstructed in detail the internal composition of the Eight Banners during each period, and have uncovered such various relationships contained therein. Based on this research, the organizational principles, operating rules, and political history background of the Eight Banners have been elucidated.[20] In doing so, researchers have clarified not only the hierarchical organizational structure, which appears as a bureaucratic system and a modern army at first glance, but also the dual structure in which banner princes divided up and ruled over bannermen and *niru*. This work has showed that, behind the world of statute law, which is depicted as "one sovereign and a myriad people" (*yijun wanmin* 一君万民) system, a more concrete world of common law existed, including lords and vassals, as well as chiefs and retainers. This could actually also be found in the ruling system in Outer Mongolia (a place commonly understood as being on the receiving side of the empire's rule) as well as other preceding or contemporary Central Eurasian empires such as Mongol Empire [Sugiyama K. 2008b].

On the other hand, scholarship has also progressed on the Eight Banner system's inner categories, such as Mongol banners and Chinese-martial banners, which—while commonly known to exist—were rarely previously researched. In addition to Hosoya's Chinese-martial Banners research that has accumulated over the years [Hosoya 1986, 1995, etc.], Murakami Nobuaki 村上信明 has recently been working to elucidate the aspect of personnel affairs in Mongol banners, which for many years has been solely approached by studies seeking to construct chronologies.[21] These studies examine a situation in which the Three Feudatory (三藩), Zheng family power of Taiwan and Mongolians were incorporated, militarized, and utilized as bannermen, rather than being punished or just allowed to keep their previous status and rights.[22] When this scholarship is combined with the above-described research on Manchu Eight Banners, a portrait emerges of an Eight Banners system that acted as a source for supplying human resources for imperial rule. This differs from its image as the military itself, or an "ethnically divided" organization.

Additionally, elucidation of the peripheral and diverse Eight Banners that developed throughout the empire has also noticeably advanced. From the Kangxi to the Qianlong era, groups residing from Manchuria to Eastern Mongolia, such as the Kūyala, Sibe, Daγur, and Barγu, were organized into garrisons under Eight Banners. Some of them also comprised the Ili Garrison Eight Banners after the conquest of Dzungar. In this process, which has been clarified by Matsuura Shigeru 松浦茂, Kusunoki Yoshimichi 楠木賢道, and Yanagisawa Akira 柳澤明 [Matsuura 2006; Kusunoki 2009:chaps. 6–7 (Orig. pub. 1989, 1995, 2003); Yanagisawa 1997; Chengzhi (Kicengge) 2009:chap. 9 (Orig. pub. 2001); Onuma 2014:chap. 5 (Orig. pub. 2005), etc.], a posture can be observed that sought to efficiently organize and militarize these groups, while preserving their hierarchies and social organizations as much as possible, as well as the flexibility of the Eight Banners organization that fostered this structure. While the Eight Banners system appears to be uniform at first glance, in fact it was an organization that expanded to include the Mongol and Chinese-martial Banners, although it kept Manchu banners as its core, as well as including various types of garrisons. While concretely depicting the multi-faceted nature of these Eight Banners, the above-mentioned research also explains that the system existed throughout the empire from its center to its borders, and was indispensable for rule. This therefore also connects to the issue of the empire's ruling order, which will now be discussed.

The second aspect of this scholarship after the 1990s includes a new approach to this widely spread order, including international relations with areas outside of the empire's territory, as well as the domestic rule of the so-called Outer Feudatories (*fanbu* 藩部). When previously thinking about China Proper, Qing imperial rule was understood from the perspective of the Han-Chinese as "rule by another ethnicity" or a "conquest dynasty"; in other words, the "Manchu control over China." On the other hand, when discussing so-called Outer Feudatories[23] such as Mongolia, Tibet, and so on, the Qing were seen as a Chinese dynasty within the framework of "China's rule of its periphery." In other words, imperial rule was seen through a strange and contradictory schema. The widely spread order that extended outside of the empire's territory was again explained using the concept of civilized/barbarian order, Sinocentrism, and the Qing was seen as a Chinese dynasty. In this case as well, imperial rule was located within a contradictory construct that treated Manchuria as its periphery, even though Manchus were its rulers.[24] In all of these cases, a schema existed that understood things based on hierarchical and differentiated relationships, such as "center–periphery" and "Chinese–barbarians," as well as a concentric model with a "Chinese dynasty" at its center. Individuals tried to fit specific aspects of the Qing dynasty into this schema, which led to the emergence of this kind of ambiguity.

In contrast to this kind of understanding, recent years have witnessed a trend towards not simply emphasizing the Qing's unique nature, but rather relativizing this type of model itself and instead depicting the empire from various agents and values. Oka Hiroki 岡洋樹 [1994, 1998] has criticized the China-centric concentric model, pointing out that the Mongol aristocracy formed the top of the empire's social status order, along with the banner princes, while locating the Qing in the context of trends in "Northern Asian states." Similarly, Kusunoki Yoshimichi [2009:chaps. 4–5] has noted that the base of the empire contained a "Khan system" centered around the emperor, while the banner princes who led the Eight Banners, and the Outer Feudatory aristocracy *J̌asaγ* banners surrounded him. Kataoka Kazutada 片岡一忠 [1998] has depicted the empire's overall order as a dual-structure "Khan system" and "Chinese dynasty system." Furthermore, Ishihama Yumiko 石濱裕美子 [2001, 2011] has made it clear that Manchuria, Mongolia, and Tibet shared a "Tibetan Buddhist world"-view, and that the Qing Emperor ruled over the Central Eurasian world amidst this logic as Mañjuśrī-Khan (文殊菩薩皇帝) and Chakravartin, or wheel-turning Buddhist sage kings (*zhuanlun shengwang* 転輪聖王).[25]

Each of these works commonly share a position conceiving of the empire's ruling structure as something in which the Outer Feudatories were not ruled by the center, but were rather built into the center of rule. Similarly, while there is tendency to see these as scholarship on Outer Feudatories or Mongol/Tibetan history, itself belonging to a different field than the discussion surrounding international order and ruling principles (such as the "tribute system,") this is not the case. These research accomplishments focus not on issues such as "periphery rule," but rather seek to reconsider images of the empire's overall order in a way that connects it externally and internally. This resembles how the context of Chinese history and the East Asian world international order is seen as an extension of domestic rule. Here, it can be observed that rather than dividing things into, for example, the "Eight Banners system," "diplomatic history," "Outer-Feudatories rule," "religious policies," and so on, it is necessary to think holistically, and locate these aspects within the empire's overall order.[26] This conceptualization connects to the next and third point.

The third issue in scholarship since the 1990s is how to understand and locate the structure and character of the Qing Empire. In the past, it was considered adequate to understand the Qing as both the "last Chinese dynasty" and "a conquest dynasty by Manchus," and to unite these two understandings via concepts such as "dual-sidedness" or "the Sinification of the Manchu." Alternatively, the Qing state before the conquest of China was explained as a Manchu–Mongol–Han three-ethnicity alliance state, while the Qing state after the conquest of China was explained as being comprised of five ethnicities (Manchu, Mongol, Tibetan, Uighur, and Han). However, these ideas were largely descriptive, rather than representing the results of analyses based on proofs, or models constructed from such analyses. The concrete reality of these descriptions, and the logic for explaining these multiple aspects in a consistent way, were almost never discussed. However, recent efforts do not simply perceive the Qing as a Chinese dynasty based on Sino-centrism, while removing elements that could not be explained through this framework as "two-sidedness." In contrast, these approaches collectively attempt to comprehensively explain the unique order of the Qing, which cannot be reduced to just "Chinese" or "Manchu."

In this regard, Ishibashi Takao 石橋崇雄's theory of the Qing state should be mentioned first [Ishibashi 1997, 1998, etc.]. In order to further integrate and understand the Qing's two-sided nature, he perceives it as a "unified (composite) multi-ethnic state" (*tōitsu* (*fukugō*) *taminzoku kokka* 統一(複合)多民族国家), and proposes to understand its ruling structure as a threefold "banner–Han Chinese–feudatory" one. Amidst the lack of state theories, Ishibashi's discussions are significant. However, as pointed out before, his handling of what should be central concepts, as well as the empirical research-based corroboration of his claims are somewhat inadequate [Sugiyama K. 2001a:118–19; Tanii Y. 2005–13, pt. 1:98], and his trinary-structural theory remains an abstract expression that has not yet reached the level of a schematized model.

As mentioned above, concrete state structural models have actually been presented within the context of "Outer-Feudatories" research, such as Mongol history. In addition to Kataoka's aforementioned "Khan system–Chinese dynasty system" dual-structural theory [Kataoka 1998], Oka [1994, 1998, 2002] has presented a "Northern Asian" segmented state/social structure model, which he describes as being hierarchical while also comprised of highly independent individual units. Furthermore, Kusunoki [2006, 2009:chaps. 3–5 (Orig. pub. 1999, 2000, 2002)] has depicted the order of the Eight Banner system, the Outer-Feudatory ruling order, and the overall empire order—which otherwise tend to be perceived as individual, separate themes—as instead being connected through military organization and actions.[27] The author has proposed a unified model depicting a composite formation comprised of aristocracy, who ruled over their retainers and residents in their domain, as well as the Han Chinese that directly followed the emperor without the mediation of the feudal lord class [Sugiyama K. 2008b:chap. 4]. Furthermore, in the process of pursuing the connections between Ming-era Jurchen powers and the early Qing state, Masui Kan'ya 増井寛也 [2001, 2006] and I [Sugiyama K. 2003, etc.] have clarified from another perspective that Nurhaci's combination of existing powers acted as the nucleus of the empire's formation, based on blood and merit, and using strong lord-vassal unions as a foundation. However, in recent years Tanii Yōko 谷井陽子 [2005–13] has directly confronted such understandings emphasizing Northern Asian structures and Manchu characteristics, and instead defines the Eight Banners as a centralized organization under unified rule. In a similar vein, Tanii Toshihito 谷井俊仁 [2005, etc.] asserts that the Qing state was an absolutist system based on integrated relationships between lords and vassals, and which transcended the categories of Manchu and Han. These understandings will be examined in the next section.

In all these trends, one can observe an orientation that both focuses on the Qing state itself, and attempts to construct an overall picture starting from specific points—the Eight Banners, Outer Feudatories, and so on—instead of relying on existing models and descriptions such as "Chinese dynasty" or "conquest dynasty." While these discussions continue to take place, as discussed in point two above, the empire's order itself was pluralistic, and there is no need to reduce it to a single logic.

These trends are characterized by an increase in interdisciplinary endeavors and the development of diverse research. For example, as will be touch upon in the next section, Iwai Shigeki 岩井茂樹 and Kishimoto Mio have been carrying out research regarding the personality of the Qing state and the historical context of its rise. This has been done not from the perspective of "Qing-dynasty history" but rather of "Ming–Qing history," with an eye to the overall East Asian context, while focusing on changes in international trade. Ueda Hiroyuki 上田裕之 [2009] is reconsidering Manchu and Chinese-language historical documents while focusing on the Eight Banners system, in order to elucidate the issue of money supply, which up until now has been solely carried out from a financial affairs or general monetary perspective. Similarly, work has appeared that takes note of the aforementioned lack of connections in previous research between Ming-era Jurchen history and "Qing-dynasty" history. Particularly thanks to the energetic and detailed empirical research of Masui Kan'ya, the connections between the Jurchen clans and Manchu bannermen have become clear.[28] In this way, efforts to overcome traditional field divisions have expanded both qualitatively and quantitatively with regard to both the selection of research topics and the use of historical documents.

In the first place, the scholars introduced in this section, who research and write about ruling structures and organizations and/or are able to read the Manchu language, are not necessarily within the field of "Qing-dynasty history." In fact, such researchers represent the minority. Efforts to work with Manchu language historical documents, and to write about the Qing state, actually expanded because the research object (the Qing Empire) has a proportionally wide scope. This is the result of the incrementally increasing awareness of this fact in individual fields, which tend to be divided into separate genres.

4. TOWARDS THE CONSTRUCTION OF A QING IMPERIAL HISTORY

These recent trends and accomplishments demonstrate that one cannot describe the characteristics of the Qing Empire without taking into account the fact that it had a Manchu emperor at its top, and used the Eight Banners as the core of its rule. In other words, it is necessary to return to what are, in a sense, simple facts and start again: the ruler of the Qing emperor was a Manchu, its limbs were the Eight Banners, and its tool was the Manchu language. In order to do so, the above-described efforts should be further advanced. Here, this text will point out some aspects in preparation for constructing an overall picture of the empire.

First, there is the issue of how to understand the Eight Banners system—the basis of the empire—and the ruling system that contained the Eight Banners as its nucleus. The Eight Banners were not simply military institutions or militaries; while their priority was military affairs, they were also social status organizations bearing wide responsibility for engaging in activities related to ruling. The Eight Banners system was the organized form of these ruling groups. Under this well-structured organizational system, which at first glance appears to resemble a modern army, units comprised of lords and their vassals (similar to *han* 藩 in Japan) served—especially at first—as its actual building blocks. In this way, the Eight Banners contained a dual structure, comprised of both institutional hierarchical organizational structures, as well as the banner princes who ruled over vassals not in possession of a written rule. Therefore, in order to increase the depth of research on the Eight Banner system, scholars must work towards elucidating these common laws. Furthermore, based on this elucidation, they must also recreate the political-social order, which originated during a time that combined both codified and unwritten systems. Powerful posts that are almost never mentioned in the *huidian* 会典 (statutes) include princes and grand ministers of the Deliberative Council (*yizhengwang dachen* 議政王大臣) and adjutant generals (*yuqian dachen* 御前大臣), as well as the elite groups such as imperial guards that surrounded the emperor and banner princes. These positions transcended the Eight Banners system, and were involved in the empire as a whole. They must be combined, elucidated, and contextualized within the world of government control described in *huidian*.

When doing so, focus should especially be placed upon understanding the (de)centralized nature of this system and state. As mentioned in the previous section, based on a careful examination and criticism of previous scholarship, Tanii Yōko has recently strongly asserted that the Eight Banners system should be understood as a centralized system. While this issue should be discussed at another point, from the author's perspective it appears that peoples' understanding of this issue diverges, depending on their definition of "centralized" and "decentralized." In other words, people arrive at different conclusions depending on their assumptions and assessment of the existence of various common law norms, such as the lord-vassal relationship between banner princes and bannermen (decentralized), as well as the non-existence of clearly outlined and unique rights for the emperor, or domains for vassals (centralized). However, contrasting assessments also exist regarding these same phenomena. In terms of the nature of the Qing dynasty's political power, a split arose between the understandings of two groups. On the one hand, Naitō Konan and Miyazaki Ichisada examined the continuity and historical development since Qin Shi Huang 秦始皇 and saw it as a "monarchical dictatorship." On the other hand, a theory regarding a "decentralized state" was found in the *Shinkoku gyōseihō*, and was derived from a comparison of the late Qing state with other modern states [Banno 1973:16–18]. Regarding the Eight Banners, a decentralized theory also originated with Meng Seng 孟森, who presented it against contemporary understandings that considered the Eight Banners to simply be military institutions, while the centralized theory does not share this premise. To clarify, it is not the case that correct and incorrect theories exist on this topic. Rather, the core of this problem lies in the adaptability of the Eight Banners system and the Qing Empire, which can be explained by these theories without contradiction, in accordance with each of their contexts and objects of research.

The author posits that it would be more appropriate not to consider the emperor and banner princes/powerful bannermen as competing over power distribution, but rather as seeking a better method for realizing strong rule, while simultaneously assuming this rule to be a self-evident premise or objective. In fact, after considering things in this way, it is important to engage in multi-perspectival research on the logic that dominated the entire empire, as well as its concrete methods and structures. To do so, one must first engage in multiple concrete investigations into the official rank and pay system, which in the literature is alternately described as decentralized or centralized, as well as customs related to personnel affairs. While overestimating the meaning of individual cases and easy generalizations are of course not permissible when conducting this research,[29] one must carefully extract and reconstruct the unique logic of Manchu society and the Eight Banners system.

The second aspect of constructing an overall picture of the empire is the issue of how to represent the reality and ideals of the overall order, having taken into account the first point above [Sugiyama K. 2008b:chap. 4; Oka 2003]. First, regarding the reality of the order's ruling organizations and mechanisms, one should focus on situating the ruling Outer Feudatories in their contexts. From the perspective of the Han-Chinese, the "Qing dynasty" appears to have pushed the "one sovereign and a myriad people" system to its limit. However, from the perspective of the Outer Feudatories, this was a system in which imperial clansmen and Outer-Feudatory aristocracy were located at the top of the state's various social statuses. Along with the other ruling strata of the various groups comprising the empire, these members of the aristocracy presided over their vassals and domain residents, while following and being unified under the empire. As described above, the Outer Feudatories owened by rulers, such as the Mongol aristocracy, were located on the periphery of the Inner Feudatories led by imperial princes (*zongfan* 宗藩), i.e. the Eight Banners, and at the same time represented truly important pillars of the empire, which supported the emperor. Therefore, while closely cooperating with fields such as Mongol history, and while not bracketing off research on these frontiers as "regional history" or "ethnic history," it is also important to understand how each political block (aristocracy and their domains) supported the empire, and to elucidate each of their concrete characteristics.

In this process, one of the characteristics that can be observed throughout the empire is the strategy of a focused investment in resources. Confronted with the issue of how to maintain a minority rule over a large area occupied by the majority, the Qing Empire chose to control its vast territory by establishing footholds via a focused investment in human resources, such as the garrisons of the Eight Banners, imperial manufactory of textiles, and maritime customs taxes. It is unfortunate that research was delayed on the garrison of the Eight Banners, as it represents the core of the empire's rule over a wide area. Furthermore, research on the system for ruling over a wide area, encompassing former Ming territories that included governor-generals (*zongdu* 総督) and provincial governors (*xunfu* 巡撫), is still lagging, even in "Qing-era history." As such, research on the topic is still sorely required. The field particularly needs a perspective that does not get caught up in distinctions, such as "state-controlled territories and Outer Feudatories," or "civil servants and military officers," but rather surveys the overall form of the empire's rule over a wide area.

On the other hand, in regards to the ideals of the empire, the ideology of its overall order and the international order outside of its territories has traditionally been seen only in terms of civilized/barbarian order and Sinocentrism. However, as observed above, in recent years its plurality has gathered increased attention. Keys to increased understanding of the problem should not be excluded, and include: the Manchu khan that led the Eight Banners; the Confucian emperor that succeeded the Ming emperor and assumed the imperial throne in the Forbidden City; the Great Khans that received tributes from Mongol rulers in the steppes; Chakravartin and great Buddhist donors (*datanyue* 大檀越); protectors of Muslim. In addition, the author does not argues that the Qing emperors generally chose which of their many possible faces they would use, depending upon each unique circumstance, but that individuals only perceived the imperial face that best suited them. Scholars should turn their gaze to this multi-faceted nature, which changed depending on peoples' perspectives, as well as to the balance between the empire's universality making this possible, versus its uniqueness, such as is indicated by the Eight Banners and the Manchu language. Hirano Satoshi 平野聡's opinion on this matter is worth considering [Hirano 2004:chaps. 1–2]. He has criticized both dualistic and pluralistic views, emphasizing that the empire was instead a composite fusion containing individual diversity.

This paper argues that the empire's overall order should be approached via a focus on the composite nature of the fundamental ruling principles discussed above. This not only regards the issue of the philosophical ruling ideology; it also can be applied to the empire's concrete operations. Two differing principles existed together within the philosophy of personnel affairs supporting the empire. First, the blood lineage-based ideology that relied on the aristocracy and Eight Banners, and second, the meritocratic ideology, (which contained a diverse set of definitions and standards of "merit,") and was represented by the civil-service examination system. In addition, and in terms of the empire's treatment of its own various regions, while on the one hand spatial isolation was adopted as a principle, the empire did not perceive itself as a set of various independent parts, but rather as an overall unity. Scholars should focus on these composite characteristics, rather than on reducing them to a single explanation, such as "civilized/barbarian order" or "one sovereign and a myriad people."

Third is the issue of how to contextualize and interpret the background to the formation of the empire and the state's characteristics. In order to do this, it is necessary to consider both the contemporary situation that served as the backdrop for the empire's rise, as well as the diachronic viewpoint explaining the genealogy and origins of the state's characteristics.

From the former perspective, there have recently been proposals within the fields of "Ming-Qing history" and Japanese foreign relations history to understand the formation of the Qing state and its characteristics, particularly as part of the political and social changes in the 16th to 17th century world in and around East Asia [Murai 1993; Iwai 1996; Kishimoto 1998b, etc.]. In other words, instead of understanding Japanese pirates (*wakō* 倭寇), sea merchant powers, warlords in Ming border regions, and Mongol/Jurchen powers through the distinctions of ethnicity and nationality, this scholarship instead understands the newly formed military powers during this period within the context of the flourishing of frontier trade in international goods and silver. It perceives the 17th to 18th centuries as a time when early modern states existed side by side with those still ruled by the survivors of this earlier period. This viewpoint overcomes the deficiencies in the history of dynastic progression, as mentioned in the previous section, and is very important to take into account when thinking about the empire's place in world history. However, it has been pointed out that, at the same time, and despite the Qing and Japan emerging from a shared context, the methods for organizing state and society chosen by each also lent their own unique characteristics: Manchus formed a vast and multi-cultural empire, while on the other hand the Tokugawa shogunate constructed a homogeneous and fixed social structure in Japan [Kishimoto 2001, etc.]. It could be argued that the Eight Banners system was the very core that characterized the Qing Empire.

Turning now to the characteristics of the Eight Banners system and its origins; rather than being unique or native to Jurchen/Manchu society, this was a new organization created by Nurhaci for aiding ruling, and it shared the same central-structure characteristics as other Central Eurasian states, such as the Mongol Empire: (1) organizational formation based on a hierarchical organizational structure; (2) enfeoffment of royal family and the distribution of subordinates based thereon; (3) arrangement of forces based on left-right wings formation; and (4) the existence of imperial guards to the monarch.[30] In other words, while the Qing Empire, which rose and grew during the first half of the 17th century, certainly emerged from the same context as the other powers and government administrations appearing during that time, the organizational methods of its state were fully of the Manchu and Central Eurasian state. This paper argues that the contemporaneous and diachronic contexts of the Qing Empire intersected in this way.

Further expanding the scholarly field of vision, three comparative perspectives can be considered when considering the personality and characteristics of the Qing Empire in the context of world history: (1) the Mongol Empire (which is also the source of the Qing Empire); (2) the Eurasian "early modern" states of the Tīmūr dynasty, Safavid dynasty, Mughal dynasty, Ottoman dynasty, and so on, which split off from the Mongol Empire and ruled over wide areas; and (3) the contemporaneously formed Japanese Tokugawa shogunate, which shared the same background as these states, while differing and having no mutual relationships with them.[31] For example, when considering the structure and characteristics of the Eight Banners and the Outer Feudatories, some important clues for this research can be found if they are compared with these examples from Mongol period history, early modern Central Eurasian history, medieval/early modern Japanese history, and so on, while focusing on the variously sized hereditary feudal lords' organizational bodies and their responsibility for national policies. On the other hand, after having done so, it is also important to *newly* investigate the Qing dynasty as a Chinese dynasty, rather than see it a priori as such. By reconsidering continuity and discontinuity between the Ming and Qing dynasties, and without being caught up in preconceived notions, one will also be able to shine new light on "Chinese history."[32] Furthermore, but from a different angle, one could also explore calling the Qing the "Aisin Gioro dynasty," in the sense that it was a giant diverse and plural order unified by the descendants of Nurhaci located at its peak [Sugiyama K. 2009:301]. If one thinks in this way, the method of comparing the Qing to the various early modern Eurasian empires described above will become clear.

CONCLUSION: REVISITING THE QUESTION, "WHAT IS QING IMPERIAL HISTORY?"

This paper has provided an overview of the past and present of "Qing dynasty–Manchu history research," as well as offered some opinions regarding how the Qing Empire should be understood. Due to the author's area of expertise and interest and, above all, his limited abilities, this has provided a very slanted overview. However, the fascination of Qing imperial history lies in nothing other than the subject's scope and multifaceted nature, which allows for such an approach.

Therefore, one must return to the question asked at the beginning of this chapter, namely what "Qing imperial history" is. Of course, this is not the history of solely Manchus, nor is it a Manchu-centric view of history. Neither is it a topic only assembled from Manchu-language sources. However, at the same time, as discussed here at great length, it is also inappropriate to discuss the Qing Empire without taking Manchus and language into account. This is a position that approaches all issues regarding the empire, based on the fact that Manchus were ruling, as well as the image of history they constructed while doing so.

It goes without saying that the archival documents will here serve as foundational historical sources. However, the author would like to again emphasize that this statement assumes the full use of historical sources already known. Well-known compiled historical sources, such as *Baqi tongzhi* 八旗通志 (Comprehensive history of the Eight Banners) and *Daqing huidian* are still not being used to their full extent. The same goes for the vast, published archival documents, such as *Ming Qing shiliao* and *Ming Qing dangan* 明清檔案 (Ming-Qing archives). It must be noted that the usage of anthologies and stone engravings is still partial, and that the results of the field surveys that have been carried out by Hosoya will be further incorporated into research, and will certainly increase in importance in the future. Yet amidst a flood of historical sources, one cannot solely rely upon newly discovered sources and archival documents: one must not lose sight of the importance of both having and maintaining a road map while also discovering new issues.

With this in mind, one must aim to construct an overall "Qing imperial history" that transcends divisions between fields. Parallel development and cooperation with "new Qing history"[33] in the United States represents both encouragement, as well as a source of tension. Compared to research conducted overseas, Japanese research can be characterized as unequaled and detailed empirical research. However, in the past it has not always clarified the historical meaning of the historical facts elucidated in the process, or the framework within which they are located. In order to respond to this "new Qing history," an adequate amount of resolution and effort is necessary. However, as can be markedly observed in the research of recent years, if Japan's special expertise in making full use of primary historical sources were to be combined with an exploration and construction of an overall image for contextualize the findings of this research, Japan's "Qing imperial history" research would undoubtedly play a significant role on a worldwide scale. The opportunity is ripe.

—Originally written in Japanese
translated by the Toyo Bunko

NOTES

* This paper is a revised and enlarged version of an article with the same title [Sugiyama 2008a]. This in turn is based on a presentation from the first section ("Qing Dynasty-Manchu History Research Today") of the Gakushuin University—Harvard University international academic symposium "The Frontier of East Asian Studies" (*Higashi Ajia gaku no furontia* 東アジア学のフロンティア, January 13th, 2007).

1 In addition, Tsukase Susumu 塚瀬進 [2011, 2012] has recently also engaged in detailed research on the history of the field.

2 However, the phrase "Ming–Qing history" in the field of Chinese history does not reflect an attitude that considers both eras to be one whole. Rather than seeking the discontinuities and transitions between eras in the changing of dynasties, this approach finds era-making changes between the first and second halves of the Ming era, and understands the latter and pre-modern Qing times as comprising part of one whole. However, this means that it is a framework that does not really recognize the significance of Manchu rule.

3 However, this is only in regards to the field's existence within the modern academic system in modern Japan. "Qing dynasty–Manchu history research" originated in the Edo 江戸 period of contemporary historical research on the Qing dynasty [Naitō 1936; Wada 1932; Kusunoki 1992]. Texts relating to the historiography of the field of Oriental history are too numerous to mention, thus this section will only touch upon those that are directly related to the issues at hand. For more details, see [Tsukase 2011, 2012].

4 The July, Meiji 33 "Nenpu" 年譜 (Timeline) entry [Naitō 1969–76, 14:662].

5 This is included as the supplement to "Shinchō suibōron" 清朝衰亡論 (On the decline and fall of the Qing dynasty) in *Naitō Konan zenshū* 5:259–290. Neither of these papers are included in Heibonsha Tōyō Bunko's version of *Shinchōshi tsūron* 清朝史通論 (An outline of Qing dynasty history) (Heibonsha, 1993).

6 "Shinchōshi tsūron" was subsequently published with *Shinchō suibōron* [Naitō 1944].

7 These articles on early Qing history can mostly be found in [Naitō 1929].

8 Regarding the Manchuria Railway's historical geography survey project, as well as the organization's name and history, see [Inoue 2013].

9 In addition, for an overview of the achievements of these individuals, see the annotated bibliography of [Kishimoto 2006:1–41].

10 Oshibuchi Hajime and Toda Shigeki 戸田茂喜, Imanishi Shunjū [1943–44], and Mitamura Taisuke published other partial translations.

11 Furthermore, Mitamura and Hatada took part in compiling the histori-

cal documents that originated as part of the "Manchu and Mongolian Cultural Research Project," which was run by Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Cultural Projects Division (*bunka jigyōbu* 文化事業部). The results came together and were released after World War II (–1959) [Kyōto Daigaku Bungakubu 1954–59; Tōkyō Daigaku Bungakubu 1954–59].

12 With regard to issues regarding the "Manchu-Korean history" characteristic of pre-World War II times, see [Hatada 1964; Terauchi 2004; Inoue 2013].

13 Furthermore, while his focus on Mongol history limited him to only a few papers, Okada Hidehiro 岡田英弘 published nonetheless important studies [Okada 1972, etc.]. He also wrote many surveys [Okada 1979, etc.], which presented a vivid sketch of the era.

14 For an overview of the situation up until around the 1970s, see Ōtani Toshio 大谷敏夫's article [1974].

15 Regarding the circumstances surrounding this publication, see [Kanda 1972b; 1979; 1992–94], and so on.

16 For an overview of these, including the storage and publication situation in Republican China and post-1949 Taiwan, see Qin Guojing 秦国経's work [2005], which contains an exhaustive explanation.

17 It also should be noted that Kawachi Yoshihiro is publishing annotated translations and dictionaries almost entirely independently [Kawachi 2010, 2014].

18 While Mitamura astutely pointed out at an early time that the flourishing of 16th-century international trade and silver circulation was behind the rise of the Qing [Mitamura 1963–64], this point was not further developed in the field of "Qing-dynasty history." Furthermore, Wada Sei noted that the aftereffects of changes in society during the late Ming extended to Jurchen society [Wada 1951].

19 An overview of the newest research accomplishments is provided in Okada Hidehiro's collection of overview articles [Okada 2009]. Furthermore, [Hosoya 2008] also includes important papers.

20 Scholarship from the period considered in this section is easy to search for, and therefore only representative works will be mentioned here.

21 The essence of Murakami's research can be found in [Murakami 2007].

22 Regarding the concrete nature of the incorporation and militarization of outside powers, and the organizational methods seen therein, see the author's article [Sugiyama K. 2004].

23 Regarding the concept and term *fanbu*, see [Kataoka 2004].

24 These situation and their problems are also mentioned in [Watanabe and Sugiyama K. 2008:chap. 2; Sugiyama K. 2008b:chap. 4].

25 Furthermore, while drawing attention to Tibetan Buddhism, Hirano Satoshi 平野聡 [2004] asserts that the principle of a higher-level universal unity existed. Regarding Hirano's claims, see the book reviews by Ishihama [2005a, 2005b] and the author [Sugiyama K. 2006]. In addition, regarding the Qing's Tibetan Buddhist policies and system, as well

as the activities of the monks and religious organizations under them, see [Ikejiri 2013].

26 During and after the 1980s, concrete research on foreign relations developed markedly. Yanagisawa Akira 柳澤明 and Shibuya Koichi 澁谷浩一 began to energetically work on Qing-Russia relations (which for a long time had been the sole domain of Yoshida Kin'ichi 吉田金一). Miyawaki Junko 宮脇淳子's research on the Dzungar Empire, which existed alongside the Qing and Russia, progressed considerably. Furthermore, the work of Noda Jin 野田仁 [2011] on Kazakhs has recently appeared, while Watanabe Miki's research on the Ryukyu (including its relationship to the sea-bordering world) has also emerged [Watanabe 2012]. Both are progressing remarkably.

27 In addition, the "Ejen–Albatu relationship" presented by Onuma [2014:chaps. 6–7 (Orig. pub. 2006)] should also be noted.

28 The author has provided an overview of this theme [Sugiyama K. 2010a].

29 Uchida Naofumi 内田直文 [2003], who works on the Shunzhi and Kangxi periods while drawing from the author's work, hastily connects marriage-based relations, belonging to the same banner, and so on, to political history, which leads to gaps. See, for example, Tanii Toshihito's critique of it [Tanii T. 2006:353]. In contrast, the author was trying to bring people's attention to the grouping of the same clans and relatives by marriage, which forms organizational formations that should be thought of separately from individual political activities [Sugiyama K. 2001b:30; 2001c:76].

30 Regarding the characteristics of the organizational forms and methods of Central Eurasian states, see [Sugiyama M. 2003:67–70]. Regarding the Central Eurasian characteristics of the Eight Banner system, see [Sugiyama K. 2010b]

31 For a comparison of the Qing and various Eurasian empires, see [Sugiyama K. 2009]. For a comparison of the Qing with Japan's Tokugawa shogunate, see [Sugiyama K. 2008c; Kishimoto 2005:100–101]. A comparison of the Qing with the Ottoman Empire can also be found in [Yoshizawa 2003:203–12]. The above comparative viewpoints are also touched upon in [Sugiyama K. 2005:41–42].

32 In her reexamination of continuity and discontinuity between the Ming and Qing dynasties, conducted via research on bureaucracy and document administration, Tanii Yōko points out that fundamental changes occurred in the background of matters that have been perceived as internal changes in Han-Chinese society, due to the shift from the Ming to the Qing. This is a very interesting argument.

33 For an outline of "New Qing history," see Elliott's work [2008a, 2008b].

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