Manchu-Language Archives and the New Qing History

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Ever since its fall in 1912, almost a century ago, the archives of the Qing dynasty have been attracting the attention of all kinds of people, from booksellers to antiquarians and museum directors, to social critics, politicians and literary types; even papermakers have had their reasons for being interested in the ocean of documents left behind by the last imperial government. The papermakers’ reasons, of course, are wholly different from those that have brought us together at this meeting. Yet, I cannot help wondering if even we historians are all here for the same reason. That is, is it the same Qing archive that has brought all of us here? For while all of us share a common interest in the Qing period, each of us ultimately has a unique relationship to the archive. I don’t mean simply that each of us has only seen our own part of the archive, each sampling being different, though this is of course true. What I mean to say, rather, is that we each have followed distinct paths to the doors of the various institutions around the world where Qing documents are kept, and, crucially, each of us has followed distinct paths back out again. If we accept that the Qing archive, like every other archive, is not simply the sum total of all those physical documents (or, collectively, their repositories) but is a site in our minds where the present asks questions of the past, a place where memory takes shape and is reshaped, then it is obvious that each of us constructs the archive individually; which means that no two archives are alike.
Such a statement may sound odd, but the truth of it is confirmed, I think, by the fact that each of us writes history in an individual way, too. Out of the uncomfortable recognition of the dual nature of the written document – an artifact that is simultaneously window and curtain – arises a creative tension. That buzz, that hum, that tension is itself the real archive; out of that tension are born our histories. For as we all know well, the documents are inert and cannot in any sense speak for themselves.

I begin in this way because I think it is important to establish the notion that the Qing archive is at once multiple and alive. It is not some dead thing we can easily circumscribe, classify, and pick at, as though from a carcass. The archive is living, it is changing all the time, it is boundless and varied. This much is obvious when we look at the papers being given here, or, better yet, at the entire historiographic panorama, which is so varied and so full of contradictions. And all of it, or a great deal of it, anyway, is based on Qing documents. I stress the multiplicity and animate nature of the archive – to which each of us contributes and of which each of us is a part – because these qualities lie behind the continual generation of new histories. One might even take this argument a step further to say that every new history requires its own new archive. I would perhaps reverse this, though, in this paper to argue that every new archive requires a new history. The new archive I am speaking of is built on the Manchu archives of the Qing.

In this paper I would like to describe what this new archive is, or what I see it to be, how it has grown, and where it is now. I aim then to review for you the new history that it has spawned. By way of conclusion, I plan to discuss briefly what seem to me to be the major implications of this new history for our understanding of the Qing period and of Chinese history generally.
The Manchu-Language Archive

Of the roughly ten million or so documents that have been preserved from the operations of the Qing government between the 17th and 20th centuries, somewhere in the neighborhood of two million, or 20%, are wholly or partly in Manchu. These include a whole range of materials, including memorials, edicts, record books, inscriptions, draft histories, personnel records, financial accounts, and so on. Virtually every major branch of the Qing administration produced some of its documentation in Manchu; depending on the department and the time period, some produced most of it in Manchu.¹

The existence of these materials has long been known. It was of course no secret during the Qing period that some portion of government business was transacted in Manchu. No one knew exactly how much, and few could read it, but everyone knew it was used. Manchu was one of two official languages in the Qing, and the distinctive Manchu script could be found everywhere in the country, including on copper cash, the most commonly circulated type of currency. At least through the 18th century, the court published major administrative compendia in both languages and openly advertised the importance of maintaining linguistic standards in Manchu. High-level officials were required to study the language, and anyone familiar with the operations of the imperial court knew it employed many people whose sole job was to translate back and forth between Manchu and Chinese versions of communications between different parts of the bureaucracy. To facilitate the needs of these different groups, Beijing publishers issued a considerable number of dictionaries, manuals, and grammars, which any visitor to Liulichang was free to peruse and purchase. ¹⁹th-century

¹ A more complete review of these materials may be found in my article, “The Manchu-Language Archives of the Qing Dynasty and the Origins of the Palace Memorial System,” *Late Imperial China* 22.1 (June 2001), pp. 1-70.
writers commented on the declining use of Manchu, but Westerners arriving in China in the second half of that century still found knowledge of Manchu useful in their interactions with Qing officials.

Thus, when Qing rule came to an end and papers of the old government began to appear in places they had not been seen before, no one could have been much surprised. On the contrary, it made all the sense in the world that such materials should have begun to circulate publicly in the 1910s, and that this continued through the 1920s and 1930s. The political order that was responsible for their creation existed no more, so these papers were no longer useful to the state or anyone else. Especially given that they were written in the indecipherable script of the alien Manchus, whose misrule had led the country to such desperate straits, who would want them any more? It was only natural that people sought to rid themselves of such useless debris. Furthermore, because strong nationalist sentiments during the Republican period had put an end, too, to the study of the Manchu language in China, a significant proportion of the Manchu-language material that hit the street ended up being purchased by foreigners. With but a few exceptions, during these decades only Japanese and European scholars displayed any energy in the collection and study of Manchu documents and books. Thanks to them, the traditions of Manchu studies that the Jesuit missionaries at the Qing court had inaugurated were carried on. But even these early- and mid-20th century scholars, as learned as many of them were, showed little interest in anything having to do with the post-conquest period. It was as if a sort of amnesia had set in, blotting out the memory that the Manchu language had continued in use beyond the middle of the 17th century.

Such an environment provided Qing historians of the 20th century small incentive to bother with Manchu. Compared to the large numbers of

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Chinese-language archival documents from the Qing that had been collected and published during these same decades, Manchu-language materials were exceedingly scarce, even non-existent. The little that was available often appeared to duplicate what was already in Chinese, leading to the widespread perception that, with the exception of the earliest records from the pre-1644 era, there was nothing in the Manchu sources that was not also in Chinese. Belief in the redundancy of Manchu was reinforced by another very widespread perception, namely, that after the conquest the Manchus had quickly assimilated and had lost whatever sense of separate consciousness that had once distinguished them from the Han Chinese. According to this line of thinking, since the Manchus ruled and thought essentially like the Han, Manchu-language sources could not possibly have anything to say that the historian could not already learn from sources in Chinese, a language, conveniently enough, that most everyone already knew. Even among scholars who knew Manchu, this became an *a priori* truth. Thus, in every sense, the ability to read Manchu was widely held to be superfluous when it came to knowing or writing anything about the Qing period.

Starting in the 1970s, this attitude slowly began to change. Interestingly, it began more or less at the same time in Taiwan, the People’s Republic, and Japan. In Taiwan, it was Ch’en Chieh-hsien 陳捷先 and Chuang Chi-fa 莊吉發 who first called attention to the importance of Manchu for post-conquest history. As they explored the holdings of the archives kept in the National Palace Museum (NPM) and began publishing their findings (often together with facsimile excerpts), these two pioneers found that, in fact, not everything in Manchu was duplicated in Chinese and that knowing Manchu was not without its rewards for the historian. The 1977 publication by the NPM of volumes 8 and 9 of the Kangxi-period palace

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3 “Almost all Manchu source material, even from the earliest period, was carried over in one from or another into Chinese. For historians of the middle and late Ch’ing, Manchu records can be useful, but they are not necessary.” Joseph F. Fletcher, “Manchu Sources,” in Donald Leslie et al., eds., *Essays on the Sources for Chinese History* (Canberra: ANU Press, 1973), p. 145.
memorials『宫中檔康熙朝奏摺』 also contributed to the shift in perceptions. Though it was not the first time that a significant group of Manchu documents from later than the Shunzhi reign were made available to historians’ use – that distinction belongs to the over 200 Manchu-language memorials written by Nian Gengyao 年羹堯 that were published in 1971⁴ – it was these materials, not Nian’s, and not the Yongzheng-era documents that were featured in the 1972 collection of Bordered Red Banner materials published by Toyo Bunko 東洋文庫,⁵ that attracted broad notice. Chuang Chi-fa seized on some of the most interesting of the documents, transcribing and translating them in Qingdai Zhun-ga-er shiliao chubian 『清代準噶爾史料初編』.⁶ The facsimiles contained in volumes 8 and 9 of the Kangxi emperor’s Manchu correspondence during the Galdan campaigns also inspired Japanese historian Okada Hidehiro 岡田英弘, who published his classic work, Kökitei no tegami「康熙帝の手紙」, in 1979 (a book that is still in print). Reading this new work, or Ch’en Chieh-hsien’s study of the Manchu versions of the Veritable Records (Manwen Qing shilu yanjiu 『滿文清實錄研究』)⁷ and examination of the Manchu imperial biographies (Manwen Qing benji yanjiu 『滿文清本紀研究』),⁸ made it plain that Manchu-language materials could be quite useful, after all, in the study of “regular” Qing history.

At around the same time, on the mainland, the First Historical Archives (FHA) recruited a small group of young, specially trained experts, to begin to put in order that collection’s Manchu materials, some of which literally had not been touched for centuries. When, in the early 1980s, the FHA began to make available to the scholarly world some of its holdings, the fog began to lift there, too, on the importance of Manchu. Mostly this owed to the

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publication of translations of Manchu materials in the new journal *Lishi dang’an* 『歷史檔案』, which began to appear in 1981, and in other special publications like the *Qingdai dang’an shiliao congbian* 『清代檔案史料叢編』 series, which began to appear in 1978. Throughout the 1980s, in Taiwan, the mainland, and in Japan, more and more evidence began to accumulate on the importance of Manchu as a research language for the Qing.

As already indicated, the common factor for the sudden emergence both in Taiwan and on the mainland of new ideas on the importance of Manchu-language sources owes to the larger “return to the archive” trend of those years. This trend rapidly transformed the way that scholars everywhere approach Qing history, and I would like to be able to say that the new ideas about Manchu that were offered early on also effected a sea-change, and that large numbers of students starting out in the field all began to take up the study of Manchu in order to be able to apply it in their research. But this did not occur. With the exception of graduate students studying at the major centers in Japan, who continued (as before) to study at least a year or so of the language, there was no fundamental reappraisal either in Taiwan or the PRC of the need to include Manchu in doctoral training. Though a few enterprising individuals here and there (including some students of Wang Zhonghan 王鍾翰 at the National Minorities Institute 中央民族學院 in Beijing) decided to learn Manchu anyway, the tune remained more or less the same: Unless you plan on concentrating your research on the first half or so of the 17th century, you need not worry about Manchu; and even if it turns out there is valuable material in Manchu for your topic, you still need not worry, because you can always use the Chinese translation. The role of the translation in the Manchu archive is a separate issue, to which I should like to return later.

In the United States, as in China, the attitude toward Manchu was slow to change. Through the 1970s, the position remained that Manchu was unnecessary
except for the very early Qing. By the very early 1980s, however, the news arrived that this might not be true. The person most responsible for transmitting this news was Beatrice Bartlett, well known for her work on the history of the Grand Council. In the course of her research, most of which was accomplished here, she discovered – no doubt thanks in part to regular conversations with Chuang Chi-fa – that it was by no means true that Manchu sources duplicated what was in Chinese.

In an article published in 1985, Bartlett stated the point directly:

*The received wisdom on the Manchu language archives of the Ch’ing dynasty has been that historians of the Ch’ing have little need either to learn Manchu or to use Manchu materials for research on historical subjects. […] In contrast with what has hitherto been thought, . . . many unique Manchu documents, never translated into Chinese, were produced in the middle and even the late Ch’ing. Future Ch’ing historians may well find the study of Manchu worthwhile.*

The news confirmed what Joseph Fletcher (who was in touch with Bartlett) had written just a few years before: “A Ch’ing scholar who wants to do first-class work in the archives must, from now on, learn Manchu and routinely compare the Manchu and Chinese sources for their topics of research.”

Bartlett’s article appeared at a time when relations between the United States and the People’s Republic of China had already normalized and it was not only possible but practically *de rigueur* for graduate students to undergo a “baptism of fire” in the archives. Senior scholars were even better positioned to take advantage of the new research opportunities that had opened up. Even though the number of published Manchu documents remained relatively small, such materials were now easily accessible in the main depositories in Taiwan, Beijing, and Shenyang. Yet, as had been true in Taiwan and the PRC a decade or so before, students of the Qing did not all rush to learn Manchu so they could use Manchu-language archives at

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the Manchu archives not only did not duplicate what was in Chinese, but constituted a separate source altogether for research on the Qing raised a number of obvious and important questions: What did these documents say? More to the point, What did they have to say that was not in Chinese documents? Or, even in the case of ostensibly parallel texts, Manchu being so very different from Chinese, how did it say these things? What nuances did it contain that were not found in Chinese? How would our perspective on the Qing change if we started to read what they wrote in their own language, if we could query what had been up to now a silence on the part of the Manchus? It was as if suddenly we had captured a new radio frequency from the past, as if another voice from long ago could be recovered, a new voice, moreover, that could speak directly to new sorts of questions about the Manchus and the Qing that people wished to answer, questions that constitute the foundation of what some have taken to call the “New Qing History.” What were these questions? Where did they come from? What do we mean by the term, “New Qing History”? 

To be brief, as I see it, the main characteristic of the New Qing History is a common concern to evaluate seriously those elements of the Qing order specifically related to the fact that, while a Chinese dynasty, the Qing was a state founded and led by Manchus. The New Qing History takes issue with the characterization of the Qing as just another Chinese dynasty or as a replay of the Ming with a few superficial changes. It challenges some of the basic precepts of Chinese nationalism and Chinese nationalist historiography, precepts that guided most work on modern Chinese history in the 20th century. New Qing historians have begun to ask new questions regarding the meaning of Manchu rule for Chinese history generally as well as for the formation of the modern Chinese nation. Out of this
come two main questions: First, how were the Manchus able to succeed so long as rulers of such a complex polity when they were so few in number? Second, what difference did it make to China, its people, and narratives of Chinese history that its rulers during the Qing period were Manchu, and not Han? None of these fundamental issues is particularly new – indeed, one could say these have been the classic questions for every Qing historian – but newly altered perceptions of who the Manchus were suggest that the time has come to carefully reconsider them. That project is essentially what has driven the New Qing History.

There may be some who will perhaps disagree with the above characterization of the New Qing History as excessively narrow; to be sure, its comparative novelty means that the term remains somewhat open. (I seem to have used it first about four years ago, and began seeing it in print two or three years ago.) But this is the definition I would like to work with today.

As to the intellectual origins of the New Qing History, I would point to two main sources, both of which can be traced back to the 1980s. One is a shift in the mood of many younger scholars anxious to chart a different intellectual agenda where Chinese studies is concerned. Some in the field perceived an excessive preoccupation among Sinologists with philology and textual arcana and dissatisfaction with the Western-centered bias of much of what was produced by scholars operating in an “area studies” mode. The most famous example of such dissatisfaction is the 1984 critique of Paul Cohen, who called for a “China-centered” history of China that eschewed seeing change there primarily in terms of a response to the West.11 Criticism arose as well from younger scholars who saw in postmodernism useful correctives to what remained a theoretically relatively impoverished area of historical inquiry. What did it mean, for example, that for an influential thinker like Michel Foucault China remained little more than a cipher, a representation of all that was exotic?12 How was one to deal with the static

12 See, for instance, the discussion in Haun Saussy, Great Walls of Discourse (Cambridge, MA:Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), pp.146 ff.
culturalist mentality so deeply ingrained in much of the Sinological establishment in the United States?\(^{13}\) Others began to question whether Western historians of China were really alone in the cultural preconceptions they brought to their work, and whether certain interpretive paradigms entrenched in the Chinese scholarship were not also in need of reexamination, such doubts being shared most strongly by scholars interested in traditionally marginalized groups in Chinese society, including women and non-Han peoples.\(^{14}\) For them (for me), a China-centered history of China did not seem to offer enough. In a manner similar to the desire of Euro-American scholars to establish a non-Orientalizing approach to the subject, the New Qing History seeks to escape the confines of Sinocentrism to discover the viewpoint of the non-Han Other and integrate it into an expanded understanding of state and society as a whole; it seeks to put Manchu rule into comparative perspective and to find ways to align the study of Qing imperial history with the history of other empires, not only in China, but elsewhere, and so to lay the groundwork for a comparative historiography of empire that could embrace the rest of Asia and the Near East as well as Europe.

This impulse binds New Qing historians to other scholars who felt a pressing need to connect the study of China more organically and more emphatically to the study of history and human experience in general, both in terms of theory and in terms of methodology. Over the last generation, this has produced a major shake-up of the intellectual agenda traditionally held by China historians, and China specialists generally. Not everyone has been pleased by these changes, needless to say, and not everyone has gone along with them. But they have transformed the field in many ways. New work has appeared on women’s history; on medicine, health, and the body; on ritual and religion; on publishing and the history of the book; on demography; and on economic behavior. Slowly the terms of engagement


\(^{14}\) For example, see Dorothy Ko’s critique of the May 4th narrative of women’s history in the introduction to *Teachers of the Inner Chambers* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994) and James Millward’s call for a “Qing-centered” history in the introduction to *Beyond the Pass* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998).
are changing and debates are becoming more inclusive. A number of scholars have found an opening in the growing new field of world history in which to insert late imperial China. World history itself is the product of intellectual and political agendas that share a willingness to question systems of knowledge that privilege the West as the story of civilization. As undergraduates across the US enroll for their basic history course not in Western Civilization but in World History, and as faculty across the country then are required to teach these courses, China and East Asia generally suddenly begin to matter in very real ways that they did not before. The Qing is one of the most obvious places where World and Chinese history intersect, but thanks to a raft of new, critically engaged scholarship, deciding how to present the Qing period is a much more challenging job.

I would say that the New Qing History is an important product of this shake-up. As I said, its own particular charge has been to challenge Sinocentric narratives, to explore the past using alternative paradigms (e.g., imperialism and colonialism), and to examine historical developments from the periphery. You might say its philosophy, if it has one, is more or less that of Su Dongpo’s famous lines from “Ti Xilin bi” 題西林壁：不試盧山真面目，只緣身在此山中. It is a decentering project. As such, it has turned for inspiration to broader intellectual debates over identity, nationalism, and empire that have been very much on our collective mind in recent years. Thus “imagined communities,” “invented traditions,” “geo-bodies,” and national teleologies, concepts all related to the questioning of the naturalness of the nation-state, are relevant to the concerns of New Qing historians. Likewise, they embrace new notions of ethnicity and alterity that problematize the “fact” of identity. This theoretical orientation, of course, makes the New Qing History potentially subversive as far as the Chinese state is concerned in that it opens up for questioning precisely what “China” is and what it means to be “Chinese.” But it is only by asking such questions that the New Qing History is able to go beyond stale explanations of sinicization to penetrate the larger problems of Manchu rule.
The New Qing History is more than just an epistemological turn, however. It represents a linguistic turn as well. In other words, it has been the twin forces of the shifting intellectual climate just described, together with the rediscovery of Manchu as a research language, that have brought the New Qing History to the fore. Indeed, I think most would agree that a primary methodological hallmark of the New Qing History is the use of written sources in languages other than Chinese. These include not only Manchu, but also Mongolian, Tibetan, Chagatay (Uighur), Korean, Japanese, Yi, and even Russian, French, and English, though so far materials in the Manchu language constitute the most important such resource. I will confine my comments to Manchu. There are a couple of aspects I would mention. One is that Manchu documents, like most primary sources, reveal what published sources often conceal, that is, the voices of actors who were positioned in opposition to the state or outside the state, or whose relationship to the state was, at a minimum, problematic. Where published official sources tend to be prescriptive, documents generated in the actual execution of state business are usually descriptive. This does not by any means make them transparent, but such materials at least tend to reveal more of the raw stuff of life that lies below the surface of official narratives and as such they permit us to ask a wider range of questions.

Another aspect of the Manchu documents is that they often, though not always, reveal what is concealed in the Chinese. This brings us back to what is probably the single most important thing about the Manchu archive, which is also the most obvious thing: it is written in the Manchu language. What does this mean? First, it means that the archive is written in a different script, one that is alphabetic (or syllabic, depending on your point of view), and not character-based. That script automatically establishes a connection with a remarkable lineage of Inner Asian empires, including the Mongol and the Uighur, going back one thousand years. Second, it means that the archive is constructed largely outside the Chinese political vocabulary, using words and phrases that do not always have exact equivalents in Chinese, not to mention English. In other words, it is a different language,
expressing a distinct experience and a distinct sensibility. This does not mean it is a better language, or more value-free, than Chinese. But it is different. The implications of this, as I have earlier suggested, are profound. Being able to tune in Manchu voices is as if previously we had been listening to music being played by a soloist and all of a sudden we were now hearing a duet, with new harmonies and dissonances and syncopations; it is as if we found a new music. Even more profound, however, is the realization that because it is written in Manchu, in order to use the archive, we must learn Manchu.

This last point, strange to say, is perhaps the most difficult to accept. For one thing, it makes a demand on people and requires them to do something, to acquire a skill they have probably not already acquired. As someone once said, “To be in other people’s shoes, you have to get out of your own shoes.” Learning Manchu is not just a matter of reading more books, absorbing more theory, or examining more sources. It is a matter of gaining a new grammar, developing a new vocabulary, and cultivating a feeling for a new sort of text. (It also means buying more dictionaries.) It is not especially hard, but it is more than most of us have time for. Time is a factor also when you realize that learning Manchu imposes upon you the opportunity – or the obligation, depending on how you want to look at it – to actually read in Manchu. This also takes time. Not only do we read more slowly in Manchu than in Chinese, as we read, we find ourselves lingering over passages and rethinking what we thought we already knew. Even if it is a translation of something familiar to us, when we read it in Manchu, it is as though we are reading it for the first time, seeing it differently. Our perceptions change and deepen. This, of course, is the whole point.

Which is why, from the standpoint of the New Qing History, using Chinese translations of Manchu documents misses the point. Relying on a translation is not the same thing as using the Manchu archive – not unless the translation is your own. This is true not only because translations carry the risk of error, but also because no translation can duplicate the sense one gets from reading a text in the original.
How would Western historians of China be regarded if, instead of reading materials in Chinese, we instead settled for reading their translations into European languages? Would anyone take us seriously? For this reason, it is hard not to have mixed feelings about the continued emphasis on the publication of Chinese translations of Manchu-language materials. This tendency reflects an understandable wish for a short cut, and it does make available to a large number of people the basic information contained in the documents that are translated. But the very fact that they are translated deprives them of what is most important about them, which is their very foreignness. It is that strangeness amid the familiar that the New Qing History seeks to recover and to validate. It would be easier to love these translations if they were at least accompanied by facsimiles or transcriptions of the original Manchu texts. Need I say that this hardly ever happens? Sometimes I have the feeling that the ultimate goal of all this translation is to render it unnecessary for anyone ever to have to learn Manchu. If one regards the archive as nothing more than a lifeless accumulation of facts, then I suppose there is nothing wrong with this. For myself, I cannot help thinking that it would be an ironic outcome indeed if the translation of Manchu documents – which amounts to their sinicization – led to the destruction of the living Manchu archive. Yet I think this is a real fear.

If there is to be a future for the Manchu archive, then the New Qing History must be the one to guarantee it. By the same token, if we wish to create a fuller historical picture of the Qing period, then the Manchu archive is indispensable. In any case, the way forward is to continue to ask novel and important questions that original and compelling history can address, and thereby persuade the next generation of scholars that there is something to the New Qing History and that there is something unique to be gained from the Manchu archive.

A New Look at the Qing
Earlier I mentioned two basic questions that lay at the core of our understanding of the Qing period: First, how were the Manchus able to succeed when they were so few in number? Second, what difference did it make to modern China that the Qing rulers were Manchu, and not Han? In its effort, conscious or not, to transform “Qing” from a term with purely chronological connotations into a term that is descriptive as well of a certain political style, or mode, of rule, the New Qing History has begun over the last several years to lay out an alternative vision of the Qing. I would like now to briefly outline that vision, which, though hardly unitary, can be broadly characterized. Let me begin by sketching for you the new perception of the Manchus, which in a way got the ball rolling, and then proceed from there.

To put it in its simplest form, received wisdom long insisted that during the course of their long residence in China, the Manchus rapidly and inexorably assimilated until they were no longer distinguishable in any meaningful way from the majority Han Chinese. This was proved by the decline of the Manchu language, by the decline of Manchu martial spirit, and by the obvious enthusiasm with which many in the Eight Banners embraced the various attractions of Chinese civilization, including both intellectual, ritual, and aesthetic traditions. Once the Qing fell, the process of assimilation reached its natural conclusion as the Manchus melded seamlessly with the rest of the population, thus proving the truth of the old axiom that China always absorbs its conquerors. Revised views present a rather different picture. Though admitting the fact of assimilation (what I would prefer to call acculturation), the New Qing History argues that the Manchus in fact never lost their sense of themselves as a distinct group within Qing society and that, for their part, the Han Chinese never thought of the Manchus as anything other than different, either. There are disagreements among scholars as to the nature of Manchu ethnic identity and how best to understand its transformation over time, but there is general consensus that, in some
fashion and by some means, boundaries continued to divide Manchus and Han all the way through to the end of the Qing period and even beyond. This view has appeal, among other things, because it explains both why anti-Manchu rhetoric remained so powerful in the 19th and 20th centuries, and also why there is still a Manchu minority nationality today.

This revisionist interpretation of post-conquest Manchu history is an obvious challenge to the idea that the Manchus managed to rule China for 267 years by essentially becoming Chinese. In place of that idea, I have argued that they managed successfully precisely by not becoming Chinese. That is, the Manchus understood correctly that their position as minority rulers depended simultaneously on their ability to make use of Chinese political traditions and on their ability to maintain a separate identity. By and large, this strategy governed their choices as rulers. How they accomplished this balancing act is a story that we do not have time for today (the Eight Banners is a big part of it). But we should at a minimum note that the Manchus read history carefully themselves, and were very familiar with the fate of the Liao, Jin, and Yuan dynasties.

New ideas about the Manchus also undermined many of the accepted truths about the 1911 Revolution and the genesis of the republic. Edward Rhoads, for instance, argues that while the interests of the Manchu and Han political figures who were part of the reform movement may well have overlapped, partisan Manchu interests remained an important element of political calculations. The revisions that the Manchu archive has forced

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18 Edward Rhoads, *Manchus and Han Ethnic Relations and Political Power in Late Qing and Early Republican China, 1861-1928* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000). Pamela Crossley also explores the links between Manchu identity in the Qing and the political ideology of the Republican period in the conclusion to *A Translucent Mirror*.
upon larger questions of the nature of the Qing state and the emperorship are potentially of even greater significance for Qing and Chinese history as a whole. For instance, if in addition to acting as rulers and officials, Manchus also behaved as Manchus in the Qing (beyond, say, the Sanfan Rebellion), then we should expect that Manchu rule would have had identifiable effects on Qing politics and political institutions of a sort we would not expect to have seen under the Ming. That this was indeed the case is borne out by a number of works ranging across the 17th and 18th centuries that make it clear that particular Manchu concerns very frequently came into play. Moreover, if the Qing emperors consciously modeled their rule on previous conquest dynasties, then we should likewise find reflections of such an orientation both in the construction of emperorship and of the empire itself. Proceeding from such a hypothesis, new research on the question of Qing emperorship has found that indeed this was a differently constituted institution than the emperorship of the Ming, that it was a hybrid of sorts borrowing from different political worlds, Chinese and Inner Asian. This work has shed considerable light on such issues as the prominence attached to Tibetan Buddhism by the Qing court; the phenomenon of multilinguality; the apparent preference for taking care of official business outside the usual formal venues; and the consistent and effective attention to problems on the northern and western frontiers, among other issues.


In this way, the New Qing History has pushed a number of other “big” questions onto the agenda. On one hand, looking back, there are a whole host of comparisons to be made with other so-called conquest regimes – Liao, Jin, Yuan – that will surely alter our views on the long-term dynastic pattern in Eastern Eurasia. By extension, a revision there is bound to change perceptions of who and what China and the Chinese are and to influence explanations of how we get from Tang to Qing. One can also imagine that this will prompt further explorations of the age-old interactions between sedentary and nomad, which also lend themselves to interregional comparisons. On the other hand, looking forward, there are connections to be made to the modern period. For instance, New Qing historians have begun to ask if the Qing can be called a colonial empire? They have compared Qing policies on its peripheral territories with those of Russia, Great Britain, the Ottoman Empire, and other early modern states and have wondered if we can even think of the Qing as “early modern” and if so, in what sense? What is there in the Qing worldview, in its epistemology that made it so? Can we see it in maps? In painting? In architecture? In diplomacy? What are the implications of doing so? How would such an approach affect our understanding of the formation of the modern Chinese nation-state out of the Qing empire? What contradictions and tensions ought we to see in such a transition?

Perhaps the biggest question the New Qing History wants to ask is whether we are justified in seeing the Qing unproblematically as China? Shouldn’t we see it rather as a Manchu empire, of which China was only one part? There exists the tendency among some historians of the New Qing History to draw a line between the

22 Cf. Perdue, *China Marches West* and various articles by him.
“Qing” and “China” as such, to refrain from calling the Qing “China” and to avoid referring to the Qing emperor as the “Chinese” emperor.

I sympathize with this point of view, to a certain degree anyway, since I think it helps to sensitize us, to remind us that the Qing and the ROC, not to mention the PRC, were different entities with different political agendas, and that while the demographic and geographic overlap between the Qing and modern China is perfectly obvious, it is not seamless nor is it perfect. There exist in fact many disjunctions. When we look at the writings of Gu Jiegang 郭家剛 and other intellectuals in the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s, it becomes clear that many of them grappled long and hard with the difficulties faced by having to make a new nation out of the Qing empire.24 It was not an easy job; in fact, we can probably say that it is a job that is not yet complete even today. So there exist good reasons to pause before calling the Qing “China,” since it was in many ways more than what we usually think of as China, certainly much more than China was under the Ming or the Song. At the same time, I confess a certain anxiety over drawing too thick a line between “Qing” and “China.” After all, we call France “France” whether it is a kingdom or an empire or a republic; there is not necessarily any implication of total symmetry or equivalence in this habit. Besides, the Manchus themselves sometimes referred to their empire as “China,” even when talking about the frontier areas. I have found instances in both Chinese and Manchu where this is so – demonstrating again the value of the Manchu archive.

Conclusion

Before concluding, I would like to make it clear that the focus of my remarks here has precluded my discussing parallel developments in other places. Especially in Japan, one can see concerns very similar to those of the New Qing

24 Wang Fansen’s study, Fu Ssu-nien: A Life in Chinese History and Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) is illuminating on this point.
History reflected in a large and growing body of scholarship. The intellectual roots of this work are largely distinct from those driving historian in the United States and Europe, and merit a separate discussion. In mentioning this, I want to state plainly that by no means should the limitations of this paper be taken to suggest that the Manchu archives are the exclusive property of the New Qing History, or that it is only American scholars who have begun to seize on their potential. On the contrary, I should rather say that, compared to Japanese historians of the Qing—some of whom began exploring these questions in the 1930s—we have come late to the game. In China and Taiwan, important work on related subjects continues to be produced by a small number of scholars, but it is difficult for me to gauge how firmly the idea of the Manchu archive has taken hold among the younger generation of scholars in these places. One area that has seen an appreciation in its importance, however, is the history of the Qing frontier, where a somewhat more open-ended perspective can occasionally be seen.

In the United States and to a degree also in Europe, the present generation of scholars has witnessed a fundamental reassessment of the perception of the importance of Manchu-language sources to research in Qing history. Where most specialists once dismissed such sources as all but irrelevant, a very significant number, if not a majority, came (or are coming) to recognize the vital role the Manchu archive has to play in reconstructing a more complete picture of many different aspects of Qing politics, society, economy, and culture. As this reassessment has taken place, there has also been a radical shifting of the methodological and theoretical terrain that China historians in the West must negotiate, such that previously suppressed voices and counter-narratives have come


26 Here the work of Liu Xiaomeng 劉小萌, Ding Yizhuang 丁一莊, Yang Zhen 杨震, Du Jiaji 杜家骥, and Lai Huimin 赖惠敏 seems most noteworthy.

27 Notably in the scholarship of Ma Dazheng 马大正, Cheng Chongde 成崇德, and Hua Li 华立.
increasingly to the fore. I think we must say that it is the coincidence of these two developments that has led to the emergence of what we now are calling the New Qing History. There is nothing really unprecedented in all of this – as every historian is taught, history is nothing if it is not revisionist and all good history has always been revisionist in some sense – and we must wait to see which of the arguments that have been put forward in the New Qing History will withstand the test of time. Speaking for myself, it has been very exciting to have been a part of this change and very gratifying to find so many colleagues and students coming to realize the enormous value the Manchu archive holds. Its potential has barely been tapped, and there is much we have still to learn. Thinking about that, I cannot envision a better outcome than that the New Qing History should someday be “old hat,” and that a new New Qing History will have taken its place in due course.
滿文檔案與新清史

歐立德
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自清朝於1912年結束距今已將一個世紀，清政府的檔案一直以來總是吸引著所有人的關注，自書商、古物收藏家、博物館人員，到社會評論家、政治家，與文學人士，甚至造紙業者，皆有各自理由對清朝政府所遺留下來浩如煙海的檔案抱有興趣。當然，造紙業者的興趣是完全與我們齊聚於此次學術研討會的理由大相逕庭。然而，我不禁好奇我們這班歷史學者們齊聚於此究竟為的是共同目的？真的是由於同一份檔案而來到此地嗎？儘管我們都同樣地對清朝有所興趣，但最終我們與檔案之間的關係還是各有不同。這不光是說我們每個人都只顧檔案中與自己相關的部分，雖然事實的確是如此。其實我想表達的，倒不如說我們這些有心於清代研究的人，在各自依循著不同的步調，佔向世界各個典藏清代文獻的機構，而更關鍵之處在於大家又會依循不同的途徑各自返回來。而我所說的這途徑一樣包括思路以及道路。如果我們相信自己所看到的檔案，就如其他個種檔案一樣，並非只是這些實體文件的總合體（或者整個的收藏），而是一個在我們腦子中今天對過去提出問題的地方，是一個對既有記憶加以形塑的地方。那麼明顯地我們每人中心各自建構自己獨特的檔案。再說，這意味著，沒有任何兩份檔案會是一模一樣的。

如此的論調或許聽來奇怪，但我認爲卻是有所根據，因爲事實上難道不是每個人以各自方式書寫歷史嗎？出自對歷史文書所隱含的二重本質（一面為窗戶，一面為窗簾）有一種令人疑惑的體認，這種認識就會在我們腦袋裡產生一種想像中的張力，而這想像中的張力本身就是真正的檔案。我們的歷史即是透過如此張力而誕生。就如同我們相當熟知，一件文件並非有自己的聲音，且無法为自己發言。
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我之所以由此論點切入，乃因爲我認爲必須事先建立一個概念，那就是清代檔案既多樣化而又充滿活力。它並非像分解無生命的殘骸那些東西一樣，可以任由我們輕易地加以定義，分類。檔案是活的，它隨時都在變化，它是沒有界線且呈現多樣性。很明顯，當我們審看研討會所發表的論文，或者更適切地說，在整個歷史撰寫的過程中，都是如此多變並且充滿許多矛盾。而所有這些，或其中絕大部分，都是以清朝史料為基礎而形成。我強調檔案的多樣性及其實富於活力的本質，而這些特質的形成我們都有所貢獻，同時也可以說我們是其中一部分。我甚至強調它是因爲這些特質正隱藏在使新的歷史持續形成背後。或許會有人根據此論點更進一步指出，每個新歷史的產生，都需要與其自身有關的新檔案。然而，在本文論文中，我或許要將此看法反過來主張每個新的檔案需要一個新的歷史。無論如何，檔案與歷史的關係很密切。至於我所說的新檔案，就是滿文檔案；至於我說的新歷史，就是建在清朝的滿文檔案上的所謂「新清史」。

在本文中，我將闡述此一新的檔案究竟是什麼，或者應該說我眼中的新檔案為何；它是如何發展而來？接著，我將爲大家回顧此新的歷史逐漸衍生的現況；在結論部分，我打算簡短地論述，對我而言，這個新歷史如何廣泛地啓發我們對清朝時期以及中國歷史的了解所具有的意涵。

滿文檔案

粗略估計，上千萬件的檔案被保有於十七至二十世紀清朝政府機構之中，而其中接近二百萬件左右，或百分之二十，是全部或部份是以滿文書寫。這些檔案包含了一系列的完整史料，其中有奏摺、諭旨、史書、碑刻、稿件、人事記錄、金融會計等等。事實上，每個政府的主要部門，皆產生若干滿文書寫的公文書，而依部門及時期不同，有些部門的文書幾乎是以滿文來書寫。28

這些史料的存在早爲衆所周知。當然，自清朝以來，官方事務中部份被轉譯成滿文亦非什麼秘密。只是難以確知其數量究竟有多少，而且只有極少數人能夠看懂，但無庸置疑地，滿文在當時確實是被使用的文字。滿語是清朝兩種

28 關於史料完整的回顧，可參考筆者論文："The Manchu-Language Archives of the Qing Dynasty and the Origins of the Palace Memorial System," Late Imperial China 22.1 (June 2001), pp.1-70.
官方語言其中一個，在當時中國，隨處可見獨特的滿洲字母，包括當時普遍所使用貨幣的銅錢。至少整個十八世紀，清廷頒布重要行政記要時，皆會以滿漢兩種語言同時公佈，並公開地宣示維持滿文在語言標準上的重要性。當時，高級官員被要求去學習滿文，任何熟悉朝廷事務的人也知道，這些機構聘用許多人的惟一工作，是從事滿漢文的翻譯，以利於不同官僚部門彼此的溝通。為了滿足這些不同單位的需要，當時北京出版商出版了相當可觀的辭典、手冊及文法書，任何到琉璃瓦的訪客都可隨意找到或購買。十九世紀作家批評滿文的使用持續衰退，但是在這個世紀的下半葉來到中國的西方人士，依然發現到與清朝官員交涉中，懂得滿語仍派上用場。

因此，當清朝統治結束後，舊政府的滿文公文書開始揭露於世，根本沒人覺得奇怪。剛好相反的，這些資料在一九一○年代公開流傳，並持續到一九二○至一九三○年代是一件理所當然的事。但由於以滿文書寫政令的環境已經不存在，因此這些公文書對新的共和國或任何機構已無任何用處。誰還會對錯誤領導而將國家邁入險境的異族政府所使用的艱澀文字感興趣？因此，大家自然會去想擺脫這些無用的廢物。而且，加上在民國時期民族意識的推波助瀾，更使得國人幾乎不再學習滿語，以至這些數量可觀的滿文資料棄置於市，最終被國人買走。29 除了少數例外的情況下，這個時期只有日本和歐洲學者傾注去研究與收集滿文檔案與書籍。由於他們的努力，使得始自耶穌會士在清廷研究滿文的傳統得以繼續。即使在二十世紀中葉的學者們，他們求知若渴的心態下，也對滿洲人入關後的歷史提不起興趣，好像得了失憶症一般，抹去了滿文自十七世紀中葉以來一直被使用的記憶。

在這樣的氛圍下，很長一段時間二十世紀清史學者較少投注心力於滿文文獻的研究。相較於同時期大量清廷的漢文檔案文書被收集並出版，滿文資料卻極度稀少，甚至並不存在。至於極少數有出版的資料，也大都覺得，早在漢文中已有副本。因此認為，除了一六四四年以前最早期的滿文紀錄外，所有滿文資料，同樣也有漢文紀錄。而普遍深信，滿洲人入關後快速的漢化，並且失去當初與漢族有所區別的個別意識時，滿文被認為是多餘的那種想法更進一步加強。依據這條脈絡思考，因爲滿洲人的統治思想與漢族的統治思想基本上一樣，

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所以滿文資料裡跟本不可能有任何不能夠同樣在滿文資料裡找到的什麼信息或觀點。那樣的話，我為甚麼有必要去學滿文呢？何苦？即使懂得滿文的學者之間，這樣的觀念也成爲先驗的事實。因此，一般認為，當開始了解或書寫任何有關清朝時期的歷史，具備閱讀滿文的能力，往往被認爲多餘的。30

從一九七○年代開始，這種態度慢慢地改變。有趣的是，在臺灣、中國大陸和日本大致上是同一時間開始。在臺灣，陳捷先和張吉發首先開始注意到滿文在滿洲人入關後統治時期的重要性。當他們發掘存藏於國立故宮博物院的檔案並開始出版他們的研究成果（多附有原文附圖）時，這兩位開拓者實際上發現，並非所有滿文皆被翻譯成漢文，並且瞭解到對於史學家來說，懂得滿文也未嘗不可從中獲益。一九七七年國立故宮博物院所出版的《宮中檔案康煕朝奏摺》第八輯和第九輯，對於此種觀念的轉變也是有所幫助。雖然這些檔案並非第一批晉於順治朝問世的滿文檔案（更早出版有一九七一年單獨發行年嚮的超過兩百件滿文奏摺，31 以及一九七三年東洋文庫所出版的雍正朝鑲紅旗檔），32 但畢竟是是這個康熙朝宮中檔滿文奏摺引起了廣泛注意。莊吉發利用其中一些極為有趣的檔案，將之抄寫翻譯為《清代滿文史料初編》。33 另外在第八、九輯中，噶爾丹戰爭時期康熙皇帝的滿文書信抄寫也對史學家間田英弘有所啓發，他在一九七九年出版其經典名作《康熙皇帝的信札》（此書仍在印刷出版）。披露這些研究成果，或陳捷先的《滿文清實錄研究》34、《滿文清孝陵研究》35 皆能夠清楚地瞭解到研究入關後的清代歷史滿文材料極其值得參考。

約在同一時間，在中國大陸方面，北京第一歷史檔案館招募了一批特別受過訓練的年青專家，開始有計劃地著手檔案館所收集的滿文史料整理工作，其中部份更是二三百年從沒有人接觸過。在八○年代早期，當第一歷史檔案館向學術界開放部份館藏後，滿文重要性隱藏也隨之消逝。在很大程度上，這都

31 《滿國史蒙古實錄》。3 vols.（台北：國立故宮博物院，1971）。
32 神田信夫等編，《鑲紅旗：雍正朝》（Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 1972）。
33 台北：文史哲出版社，1977。
34 台北：大化書局，1978。
35 台北：明文書局，1981。
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要歸功於創刊於一九八一年新雜誌《歷史檔案》所刊載的滿文史料翻譯，以及其他專輯，如一九七八年問世的《清代檔案史料彙編》系列，整個八○年代期間，在台灣、大陸和日本，愈來愈多證明開始顯示出，作爲一種學術語言，滿文對清朝史研究上的重要性。

如上所述，海峽兩岸開始對滿文史料重要性新觀念產生的普遍因素，主要由於這些年來更大規模的「回歸檔案」趨勢。這個趨勢很快地改變了各地學者對清史的研究方法。我希望能夠說對滿文新觀念的構成，是在兩岸交流下相互影響的結果。加上許多在這個領域的學生開始學習滿文以期能應用於他們的研究上。然而卻成效不彰，除了在重要學術中心研究的日本學生，他們至少持續工作一年或以上的語言外，台灣與大陸方面並未要求將滿文納入博士班訓練作基本的評鑑方式。雖然有少數專業人士（包含北京中央民族大學王鑾翥教授的學生）決定學習滿文，然而上述基調仍大致相同：除非你計劃將研究主題放在十七世紀或其前半，否則是不需擔心滿文；即使所轉向的研究主題存在滿文資料，你仍無需擔心，因爲總有漢譯資料可供使用。滿文檔案漢譯資料的角色是另一個問題，這將在稍後回到此一課題。

在美國，則與中國相同，對滿文的態度改變的相當緩慢。整個七○年代的立場仍維持在除非研究相當早期的清朝歷史，否則滿文並非必需。才到八○年代初期，出現了一個嶄新的看法。在她進行對軍機處歷史研究的過程中，白彬菊（Beatrice Bartlett）發現到滿文資料絕非全然在漢文中找到複本。在一九八五年所發表的文章中，她直接陳述其論點：

對清朝滿文檔案所接受的常識，是清史學者很少為其研究的課題中學習滿文或引用滿文資料。……對照迄今的想法……許多獨一無二且從未被譯成漢文的滿文文件，是產生於清朝中期甚至晚期。未來清史學者將發現更多有價值的滿文研究。36

這個新論點證實了Joseph Fletcher（曾與Beatrice Bartlett有所接觸）曾在數年前所撰寫的：「從現在起，一個想要在檔案上得到一流成果的清史學者，必須學習滿文，以及經常比較與其研究主題相關的滿漢文原本。」37

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自氏的文章正好聯繫於中日關係正常化，而且這篇文章非但不可能，而且實
際上要求研究生去經歷檔案的「火的洗禮」。資深的學者處於更好的優勢以利
用檔案開放的新時機。雖然已出版的滿文檔案數量相對地仍非常稀少。這些資
料在台北、北京與瀋陽等地的重要檔案庫中亦可容易取得。然而，早在十年前
或更早的台灣或大歲，研究清史的學生即使在這些地方可以使用滿文檔案卻並
不急於學習滿文。人們似乎仍在期待如果通曉滿文的話，則會有何不同的結果。

新清史的邏輯

我們發現滿文檔案不但並非被複抄成漢文，並且構成一個對清朝研究獨特
的史料，此產生了許多顯著且重要的課題：這些文獻說了什麼？重點在於，有
什麼是滿文文獻中陳述卻在漢文文件所沒有提及？或者，甚至在所謂相同文本
的情況下，滿文與漢文的內容卻相差甚大，這要作何解釋呢？而當漢文文獻中
所沒有的內容，其中語言上的差異又隱含什麼？如果我們開始閱讀清朝以其自
身文字所書寫的文獻，如果我們可以對至今一直沉默無聲的滿文檔案提出問
題，那麼我們將會對清史的觀點有何改變？如同我們捕捉到一種來自過去的新無
線頻率，又如同發現另一種來自遙遠過去的聲音。而這種新的聲音能直接回應
人們對有關滿洲人或清朝歷史的各式新問題提供解答。這些問題就是構成所謂
「新清史」的基礎。

這些問題到底是什麼？他們從何而來？我們對「新清史」這個詞彙該作
出什麼定義？

簡單地說。如我所見，新清史的主要特徵，就是共同關注並審慎評估清朝
統治的構成要素，特別是事實而言，雖然清朝是中國的王朝，但與此同時也
是由滿洲人建立以及領導的國家。新清史所提出的議題中，僅將清朝視為與明
朝大致一樣的又一個中國王朝是一種有所改動令史學家們不滿的看法。這樣以
來，新清史自然就挑戰了帶中國（或滿洲族）民族主義色彩的歷史編纂之基本
原則。而正是這個道理引導了二十世紀現代中國史的許多研究。新清史家們所
開始提出的新問題，既涉及到滿洲人統治在中國歷史上的重要性，並且注意到
近代中華民族構成的意義。由此出發，有兩個主要問題：第一，滿洲人在人口
數量上如此稀少，何以能夠成功地長期統治如此地盤大及政治傳統複雜的國
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家？第二，在這段期間，清朝統治原屬滿洲人而非漢人，其對中國，中國人民，以及中國歷史論述，將產生什麼樣的差異？這些基礎課題沒有一個是特別新的——確實，我們可以說這些對每一位清史學家而言都是典型的問題——然而重新地體認「滿洲人是誰？」此一議題，正暗示認知的重新轉換，審慎再思考的時機已到。此課題正是引導新清史發展的基本要素。

或許某些人並不同意上述有關「新清史」所描述的特質，而認為過度狹隘；的確，其相對性的嶄新意義，反映出此詞條保留了若干開放性。（我大約在四年前曾第一次使用，而用在出版品上約在兩三年前。）今天，我希望對此一詞

彙進行定義。

就新清史的思想起源而言，我將指出兩個主要因素，兩者都可以追溯到一九八○年代。一個是氣氛的轉換。自從八十年代開始，很多年輕學者渴望可以

改變有關中國研究的基本方法論。在這個領域中，有些人意識到漢學家之間考據學與版本學的高度預設立場，並且不滿於西方中心偏見，這些造成學者運用

此一偏見主要是來自「區域研究」的模式所產生。不滿的立場最著名的例子就是柯保安（Paul A. Cohen）在一九八四年所提出的批評，他呼籲以「以中國為中

心」（China-centered）的中國史，以跳脫所謂從「回應西方」的觀點。38 同樣，

批評也來自年輕學者有感於後現代主義的觀點，有助於他們彌補歷史研究中，

理論以及相對地貧乏的領域。這就是我要談的第二個因素。這樣的新方向意味

著什麼？舉例來說，假如對於具有影響力的思想家傅柯（Michel Foucault）中國

只不過是一種代表西方世界的希奇古怪之符號而已，這是怎回事？39 再舉一個例

子，我們要如何處理深植在美國漢學機構的這個靜態文化心智（culturalist

mentality）？40 此外，也有其他人開始質疑是否西方的中國史家在其研究中真的

獨處在文化偏見。應該把那些已在中國學界中確立的舊解釋範式再驗證。抱持

這些疑問，有志於研究中國社會傳統邊緣群體，包括女性群體及非漢族諸群體

39 以一個例子，參看 Haun Saussy (蘇源熙), Great Walls of Discourse (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2001), pp. 146 ff.
（non-Han peoples）的學者中依然佔有極大多數。41 對他們（對我）而言，一個「以中國為中心」的中國歷史概念，似乎還不夠充分。在方法態度上，類似歐美學者渴望建立非東方化的主體研究，新清史也尋求打破大漢族主義的禁錮，找出非漢族（non-Han Other）的觀點並將之整合，以擴大對國家與社會整體的了解。此觀點將滿洲統治放入比較的視界中來探究，並尋求將清帝國歷史研究與其他帝國歷史並列，不只是在中國，而是各地，藉以構建一個帝國的比較史學基礎，其中將包括亞洲其他地區，以及近東與歐洲。

此衝擊給予新清史研究者帶來一種壓力，迫使他們感受到對中國的研究，必須與探討歷史學以及人類經驗作更有關的、更全面的聯繫。大體上，經過上一代，造成傳統中國史學者以及中國專家學術議題的主要變革。固然，有的人不願受到這樣變化的影響，也不是所有的人願意與之爲伍。然而我們這領域在各方面早已轉變。新的成果已展現於婦女史；而醫療、衛生、以及身體；禮儀、宗教；出版與書籍史；人口統計學以及經濟行爲等。慢慢地，辭彙的使用改變，而爭論也逐漸統整起來。正在成長中的世界史新領域上，許多學者已發現到已開始把帝制中國納入其中。世界史本身是學術與政治議題的產物，此領域投注於以往把西方視為文明特權的知識體系提出質疑。就如美國的大學生，在選修他們的基礎歷史課程中，不是西方文明史，而是世界史，同樣，在全國課程中被要求講授此課程時，突然普通地把中國與東亞納入其中視之為理所當然，這是從前沒有的事。清朝，是世界與中國歷史相連的一個最顯著部份，感謝大量新穎的，批判性的積極學術研究，而要如何展現清朝時期，將是一項極具挑戰性的工作。

可以說，新清史是此變革的重要產物。就如我所說，它所具有的獨特任務是去挑戰大漢族主義（或著說「中原主義」）的論述，探索過去所運用的其他範式（諸如帝國主義和殖民主義），並且從邊陲去審視歷史發展。你可以說新清史的哲學，假如它有一個的話，或多或少近似於蘇東坡「題西林壁」著名詩句：「不識蘆山真面目，只緣身在此山中」。這是一個去中心的計畫。就其本

身而論，它超越了近年來有關認同、國家主義、以及帝國等深植於我們集體性思維，而轉向於鼓動更為寬闊的學術議題。因此，“想像的共同體”（imagined communities）、“創造的傳統”（invented traditions）、“地學實體”（geo-bodies），以及國家目的論，這些全都涉及有關民族國家本質問題的概念，都和新清史歷史學者的開放息息相關。同樣，他們接受有關民族與異己此新觀念，而將身份的“事實”（fact）予以問題化。當然，就中國人國家而言，正好掀開了關於「中國是什麼？」，以及「成為中國人的定義是什麼？」等問題，以致此一理論性的傾向，使新清史潛在地具有顛覆性。惟有藉著提出這些問題，新清史才能夠超越陳舊的漢化解釋，進而明瞭滿洲人統治更大的問題。

然而，新清史並非僅僅是知識上的變化，它同時也展現在語言上。換言之，護如剛剛所描述，它一直是日漸轉移的學術環境下的生長力量，伴隨著滿洲語的重新發現，進而引領著新清史向前邁進。確實，我認為大多數人將會同意，新清史主要方法論上的特徵，就是使用漢語外其他語言所撰寫的資料。此不僅包括滿語，而蒙古語、藏語、維吾爾語、韓語、日語、泰語，甚至俄語、法語與英語，不過這些資料當中，滿語的資料目前仍然佔最重要的地位。因此我的評論將只侷限於滿語部份，並提出以下幾個面向：其一，滿文文獻，如同大多數的一手資料那樣，經常透露出已出版資料中經常遭隱藏部份，像對國家處於反對立場的人物，或於國家之外，或其關係至少對國家而言是有問題的人物的聲音。已出版的官方資料傾向於指示性，而文獻則是形成於國家事務的運作過程上，屬於描述性。雖然這些文獻內容並非全然清晰透明，但至少這樣的資料透露出許多官方敘述表象下未經修飾要素的狀況，而且就其本身而言，這些資料讓我們提出更為廣泛的問題。

満文文獻在另一方面，雖然並非總是，卻經常透露漢文中被隱藏的事情。此引領我們回到什麼有關満文檔案中應該會是單一而又最重要的東西，而且又是最為明顯的東西：因爲它是以満洲語言來書寫。這是什麼意義呢？首先，此意義著檔案以一種不同的字體書寫，是一種字母（或音節，依照你個人的觀點），而不是以漢字為基礎。這種字體可以追溯至千年以前，是與亞洲內陸帝國非凡的世系，包括蒙古與維吾爾，自然聯繫中建立。其次，此意義著檔案是大量形成於中國政治用語以外，其所使用的的辭彙與字句，並不一定要在漢文中有確
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切的同義詞，更不用說是英文了。換言之，這是一種不同的語言，表達一種獨
特的經驗以及特有的感覺。這並非意味相對於漢語，滿語是較佳的語言，或更
不受到價值觀念的影響。但它確實有所不同。如同我稍早前的建議所言，其言
外之意是很深奧的。假如像從前那樣，能夠唱出滿語的歌聲，使得我們一直以
來只聽到獨奏曲的音樂，而現在突然間聽到的是伴奏曲。它有著新的和弦音、
不和諧音以及切分音的二重唱，就像發現一種新的音樂。然而，在更深的層
次上，還有一點值得指出，就是因為它是用滿文所寫成的，為了使用滿文檔案，
我們必須學習滿文。

至於最後一點，說來有點奇怪，或許是最難以接受的部分。為什麼呢？首
先，要求人們去作一些以前沒做過的事情，去培養他們沒有的技能決非一件很
容易的事。但學習滿文不僅僅是讀更多的書，吸收更多理論，或學習更多材料，
而是獲得一種新文法，發展新字彙，並對一種新的文本培養感覺（這也意味著
要買更多的字典）。這並非特別困難，但卻是需要更多我們所有的時間。時間
也是一個要素，當你認爲學習滿文是賦與自己一種新的機會，還是一種責任，
去看滿文書寫的文獻。而兩者皆要花時間。不僅是閱讀滿文比起漢文更慢，
而當我們去讀，我們還要讓自己反覆爬梳各篇章，並須重新思考以往已經知道
的想法。即便已經翻譯成我們所熟悉的東西，但當我們閱讀滿文時，也要像是初
次閱讀到一樣，以找出其不同之處。改變並深化我們的觀點。當然，這才是整
個重點所在。

從新清史的立場來看，這就是為什麼我們使用滿文文獻的中譯本將會誤失
重點。依賴翻譯本和使用滿文檔案並不是同樣的東西，除非你自己去翻譯。這
不僅是翻譯具有錯誤的風險，而且因為沒有翻譯本可以完全複製另一人從研讀
原文所得的領悟。西方漢學史家如果開始不研讀中文資料，而僅限簡單的翻譯
翻譯，中國史學家會有人重視我們這樣的研究嗎？當然不會。因此，對於一來
強調滿文史料的漢文翻譯那樣的心態，難免有一種啼笑皆非的感覺。固當然，這
種傾向反映出一個可以理解的渴望，在翻譯文獻中，確實給許多人提供有用的
基本資訊。然而，實際上文獻被翻譯過程中，已經被奪走屬於其中最重要的部
分，這就是它們自身最明顯的外來特質。新清史試圖恢復與重新檢驗的就正是這
種外來特質。假如這些譯文至少附上附圖或滿文原件的抄本，也將會更容易被
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滿學專家們所懷疑，需要我來給這幾乎從未發生過嗎？我有時覺得，所有這些譯文的最終結果（我想是這並非譯者的目的），是要讓每個人都感到學習滿文還是沒有必要。就我個人而言，這或許是一個荒謬的結局，我忍不住想到，假如相當數量被譯者的滿文文獻譯件造成現存滿文檔案的漢化，那將是相當可怕。

如果滿文檔案具有未來性的話，那麼新清史就是保障它的力量之一。同樣，如果我們希望去開創一個更完整的清代歷史圖象，那麼滿文檔案是絕對必要的。無論如何，往前的方法是不斷地提出新的以及重要的問題，從而說服下一代學者們，對新清史的在意，並且也只有從滿文檔案中獲得特有的知識。

清史的新視野

稍早之前，我曾提及兩個基本的問題，此問題存在於我們對清朝所了解的核心當中：第一，滿洲人究竟如何以少數的人口能夠長期統治中國？第二，清朝統治者屬於滿族而非漢人，對近代中國造成什麼不同之處？在考慮這兩個問題的同時，過去數年中新清史已經開始呈現出對清朝的另一視角。儘管意識到與否，新清史致力於將“清朝”，從一個單純的編年史，轉向描述一個具體的政治作風或形式，把它變成新的形容詞。現在我對這種視角做個簡短的簡述，雖然很難簡單地描述，但也可以具體地勾勒出其特性，讓我藉由關於滿洲人的新觀念來開始掌握這個話題。

以最簡單的形式來說，歷來一般史學家都認為長期定居於中國內地的滿洲人迅速且無法抵擋被同化，直到他們在任何方式上，都被大多數的漢族人民不再有任何區別。這點可以由滿文語言的衰落，滿洲人向武精神的衰退，以及在許多八旗子弟明顯熱衷於對中國文明的追求，包括學術、禮儀、和美學傳統去證明。當清朝崩解後，漢化過程達成其自然的結果，因爲滿洲人已經和其他人民緊密地融合在一起，也因此證實了一句古老格言的真諦，那就是中國總是吸納它的征服者。

修整觀點展現一個相當不同的圖像。雖然承認漢化的事實（我比較傾向稱它做文化適應），但新清史則辯稱事實上滿洲人從未失去其在清朝社會中獨特群體的自我意識，而對他們而言，就如漢人同樣也從未沒有認爲滿人和他們一樣。雖然對於滿人的種族身份，以及如何更好地理解整段時間中滿洲人的轉變，
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學者之間有不同的看法，但卻有一點普遍共識，那就是在於某種風格，或一些手段上，直到清初結束甚至往後，在各種形式上依然繼續區分漢人與漢人的界限。\(^{42}\) 這樣的論點可以解釋為何排滿論者仍然到十九與二十世紀中依然強而有力，以及為何今天中國仍存在一個叫做滿族的少數民族，因此引起了史學家的較廣泛興趣和支持。

這些對滿族人的新解釋，就給予許多同行們一種挑戰諭。\(^{43}\) 我曾主張滿族人之所以能夠統治中國 267 年的基本原因，不是因他們成為了中國人而卻是因他們沒有成為中國人。這就是說，滿人正確了解到他們身為少數民族統治者的立場，必須同時依靠其能夠利用中國的政統，以及能維持及利用其獨特的身份。\(^{44}\) 總的來說，這種策略支配了他們身為統治者的種種選擇。他們如何達到均衡的做法是另一回事，但我們今天沒有時間去詳述（其中八旗制度是最重要的部份）。但我們至少應該注意到滿族人仔細地閱讀歷史，並且對於遼、金、元王朝的命運非常熟悉。

有關滿族人的新見解，同樣逐漸瓦解許多年十一二一年辛亥革命與共和政府出現所接受的解釋。例如 Edward Rhoads 主張當滿漢政治人物是參與改革運動的成員時其利益是重疊的，但首領滿洲思想依然以政治考量為重要因素。\(^{45}\) 對於滿文檔案的新認識將闡出清朝國家本質上的問題，關係甚為重要。例如，清代假如除了扮演統治者與官員外，清朝的滿洲統治者在行為上亦表現得像滿洲人，那麼我們應該料想到滿族人的統治對當時的政治與政治制度將有獨特的影響與效果。而我們將無法在明朝統治下找到這些效果。這方面的案例確實在十七與十八世紀的許多研究中有所涉及，具體地顯示出滿洲人所關心的事。

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\(^{44}\) Elliott, The Manchu Way, p.3.

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經常發揮作用。46 此外，假如清朝君主有意識地徵用以往征服王朝的統治方式，那麼我們應該同樣找到包括君權以及帝國建構中類似方針的反映。從這樣的假說出發，新的研究中有關清朝君權的問題已發現到確實相較於明朝的君權，清帝建構出不同的制度，而這是借取自不同的政治世界，中國與內陸亞洲的混合物。這項研究已經注於諸如清廷與藏傳佛教顯著的連繫、多種語言的現象、在正式管道以外明顯喜愛官員事業的態度、以及相較於其他議題上特別對北方與西方邊陲問題的專注與成效。47

如此一來，新清史在議題上推動許多其他的大問題。一方面，若往後看，可以產生相當多與所謂征服政體如遼、金、元等相比較的研究所，確實修整我們對於東方國祚長久的王朝模式之觀點。

擴大來說，修整的觀點必然改變舊和什麼才是中國與中國人的看法，以及必然影響到我們如何去理解自唐朝到清朝的歷史詮釋。有人可以想像得到，這種觀點將喚起定居者與遊牧民族之間古老的互動方式，並且引導他們去探索區域之間的比較；另一方面，若往前看，將會與當代時期形成連結。例如新清史學者開始提出是否可以將清朝稱做殖民帝國？48 他們將清朝對邊界的政策，與俄國、英國、鄂圖曼帝國，以及其他早期近代國家進行比較，並且好奇假如我們甚至將清朝視為「現代初期」，假如是，那意味着什麼？49 清朝的世界觀有些什麼，是他的認識論使之如此？我們可以從地圖、繪畫、建築、外交找到嗎？50


49 見 Perdue, China Marches West and various articles by him.

50 見 James Hevia, Cherishing Men from Afar (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1995); Philippe Forêt, Mapping Chengde: The Qing Landscape Enterprise (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2000); Laura Hostetler, Qing Colonial Enterprise: Ethnography and Cartography in Early Modern
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這麼做有什麼啓示？這樣的做法將如何影響我們對來自清帝國之中近代中國民族國家架構的理解？在這樣的轉變中，我們應當如何去審視那些矛盾與對立？

或許最大的問題是，新清史試圖詢問我們將清朝毫不懷疑地看作中國是否合理？我們是否該將其視為滿洲帝國，或中國只是其中一個部份？在新清史學者存在的趨勢，傾向於將「清朝」與「中國」之間畫清界線，禁止稱呼「清朝的中國」，也避免將清朝君主稱為中國的皇帝。

我在某程度上會欣賞這樣的看法，因爲我認爲它使我們更敏銳，有助於提醒我們清朝與中華民國以及中華人民共和國，其在不同政治制度上屬於不同主體。清朝與當代中國之間雖然入口與地理明顯重疊，但並不完整的，事實上存在著許多的出入境。當我們審視顧韋剛，以及一九一○年代，一九二○年代，與一九三○年代其他知識份子的文章，可以看出他們一直面對著從清帝國中創造一個新的國家的難題。51這可不是一件輕鬆的工作。實際上，我們可以說這個工作甚至到今天尚未完成。如果“清朝＝中國”這個說法會讓一些搞新清史人士稍為不舒服，這完全沒有理由的。同時，我承認對於將「清朝」與「中國」之間畫下一道深厚的界線感到相當不安。畢竟，我們稱法國為「法國」，儘管它是王國，或是帝國，或是共和國，這裡沒有必要在習慣上考慮其總體的相稱或等同的問題。而且，當當提及其邊疆地區時，滿洲人自身經常也將其國家視為「中國」。我在漢文與滿文中都找到例子，這再次說明滿文檔案的價值。

結論

在下結論之前，我希望清楚地指出我在這裡講述的趨向，非美國惟有的現像。特別是日本可以注意到一個類似「新清史」範疇的課題以及學術著作。52這

52 在學者中值得注意者有岡田英弘、片岡一忠、中島立夫、石黴敬謙、橫木賢誠、柳澤明、石濱裕美子、向洋樹和杉山清彥。最近一份有關這個趨勢有用的調查可以在岸本美緑的文章中找到。岸本美緑著，“The Ch‘ing Dynasty and the East Asian World,” Acta Asiatica 88 (2005), pp. 87-109.
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些研究成果的學術基礎與美國的大不同，在此值得分開討論。提到這點，在此有限的篇幅中我很想簡略說明，我絕非認為滿文檔案僅是清史獨有的財產，或只有美國學者是開始發現它們的潛在價值。相反，毋寧說，相較於日本的清史學者中，部份人已在一九三〇年代開始探討這個問題，我們在這場領域中是晚進的。在中國大陸和台灣，在相關主題的重要工作仍持續由少數的學者提出，

但對我而言很難去評估這些地區年輕一代學者之間對滿文檔案所抱有的強固理念。雖然一個在領域上可以看出其對滿文檔案重要性的重視，那就是清朝邊疆史。

在美國和歐洲某些地區，當代學者見證了重新評估滿語資料對清史研究重要性的看法。不久以前，許多專家曾經忽略這些資料甚至漠不關心，但最近相當數量的學者已經（或正在）了解滿文檔案在重建清朝政治、社會、經濟與文化許多不同層面的完整圖象中所扮演的關鍵角色。當這樣重新定位出現時，西方的中國史學者必須協調，以往壓抑的聲音以及相反論述也將逐漸浮上檯面，皆促使方法論與理論領域的激烈轉變。我必須指出，這兩項觀點的同時發展，引導出我們現在正所謂的新清史出現。所有這些並沒有什麼是空前的——就像每位歷史家都被教導，所有的歷史在某些層面上總有修整主義的作用。

我們期待著，經過時間的考驗，看那項論點將使新清史邁步向前。就我本身而言，能成為這場演變中的一員，並發現許多同行和學生們逐漸體會滿文檔案所擁有的莫大價值，感到非常有幸的事。我們還有好多要學，想到這裡，我難以想像一個更美的結局，那就是有一天新清史終會成爲「老古董」，而新的新清史將在適當時候出現。

53 這裡是指劉小萌、宋宜莊、楊貞、杜家騫、和賴惠敏等研究，他們的研究似乎是最值得注意。
54 特別是馬大正、成魯德和華立這幾位學者。