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# On the Tracks of Manchu Culture

1644-1994

350 Years after the Conquest of Peking

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Cover: Portrait of Nurhaci (Qing Taizu), 1559-1626.

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## Preface

The year 1994 marks the 350th anniversary of the conquest of Peking by Manchu troops and the establishment of the Qing Dynasty on the throne of the Chinese empire.

This date initiated the idea of publishing the photographic material we had collected between 1988 and 1994. The primary purpose of this field research was to record and to save what has come down to us and is still extant today of the Manchu culture after some three hundred years of intense contact with the Chinese world. There is, in fact, a danger that the traces of Manchu presence in Chinese history could actually and definitively disappear.

These days this danger is to be seen in the consequences of technological progress (urbanisation and pollution). There is, too, a lack to be felt in conservation and reconstruction skills, not to mention in the simple passing on of such traces of Manchu culture that have stayed intact up to now, to the next generation. This is greatly to be seen in some recent publications in the field of Manchu historic and cultural remains. Although these are of a very high scholarly level indeed and done with great accuracy of detail, what this scholarship tends to concentrate on is all but exclusively the "Chinese aspect" of Manchu reality. For example, for all the bilingual inscriptions, only the Chinese text is referred to and the Manchu one left out. Since, for the most part, this concerns inscriptions on steles, each one therefore unique in itself and also exposed to wind and weather, it is not hard to realise how vulnerable these are and what a threat there is to their survival. (On this subject there is some excellent documentation, edited by Fu Bo 傅波 et al., *Fushun diqu Qingqian yiji kaocha jishi* 撫順地區清前遺蹟考察紀實, Shenyang 1994, Liaoning renmin chubanshe, and *Shenyang shi wenwu zhi* 瀋陽市文物志, Shenyang 1993, Shenyang chubanshe).

The great value of any photographic anthology leaps to the attention when one thinks of similar works in the past, such as Naitō Torajirō's 内藤虎次郎 *Zōho Manshū shashinchō* 增補滿洲寫真帖 (Kyōto 1935<sup>1</sup>, Tōkyō 1969<sup>2</sup> [vol. 6 of his *Naitō Konan zenshū* 内藤湖南全集, pp. 537-702]). In some cases his work has been our guide to the very recognition of several particularly interesting remains. Unfortunately, despite all our efforts, our search for traces of the wonderful stele near Mardun (Naitō no. 109), the lamaist temple of Liaoyang (Naitō no. 131-132), which today has disappeared to sight under horticultural greenhouses, the "Imperial Temple" near Hetu Ala (Naitō no. 125-126) today represented by a solitary stele in the midst of cultivated fields, and the "Tangse" shaman temple complexes in Shenyang and Peking ("saved" in photographic form by Naitō no. 51-56 and by Ishibashi Ushio 石橋丑雄 in his *Peipin no shamankyō ni tsuite* 北平の薩滿教に就て, Tōkyō 1934) has turned out to be a fruitless one.

The fundamental monuments of the actual Sino-Manchu *dynastic* culture, however, are still today well documented: one has only to take up such publications as *Palaces of the Forbidden City*, by Yu Zhuoyun, Hongkong, Viking, 1984 or *Daily Life in the Forbidden City*, by Wang Yi et.al., Hong Kong, Viking, 1988, and - of particular value to the world of

learning - the *Jiujing daguan* 舊京大觀, whose English title is *Old Beijing in Panorama* (Beijing 1992, Renmin Zhongguo chubanshe), where, amidst many a photographic jewel, we also find the Peking "Tangse" (*tangzi* 堂子) on page 165 no. 324. (For a bibliography concerning 'Old China in photographs' see Lionello Lanciotti, *Vecchie foto di Cina*, in "Cina" no. 24 (1993), pp. 171-173.)

Precious to say the least, but especially so for what it tells us about the "Albazinians" - those descendents of the Russians who came to Peking after disagreements with the Manchus at Albazin on the Amur in 1685 - is the volume *China* in the series, "Caught in Time: Great Photographic Archives," edited by Vitaly Naumkin, London 1993 (Garnet Publishing Ltd).

Last but not least the excellent work of Hosoya Yoshio 細谷良夫, *Chūgoku tōhokubu ni okeru Shinchō no shiseki* 中國東北部における清朝の史蹟, Tōkyō 1991, with its very precious sketches of ancient Manchu settlements, must be mentioned.

That is why, with a few notable exceptions, we have intentionally skirted the "classic" areas of "Sino-Manchu" culture, well conserved and easily enough available elsewhere. Examples of these are the Imperial palaces of Peking and Shenyang, the Imperial tombs, or the great temples and architectural complexes of Chengde (Jehol). We have chosen rather to go into the details, the unusual curiosities, in other words those testimonies, tiny though they may be at times, that tend to escape notice. And in the case of some inscriptions which, more than the others, risk definitive destruction, we have transcribed the Manchu text.

Since this is an amateur photographic collection (except a few postcards [PC] or other sources indicated) we feel it incumbent upon us to express all our gratitude to those numerous Chinese scholars who helped us along the way of our field research. The list is too long to include everyone by name, but particular mention must be given to Professors Wang Zhonghan 王鐘翰, of the University of Nationalities of Peking (*Minzu daxue*, formerly *Minzu xueyuan*), Xie Zhaohua 謝肇華 (Liaoning Academy of Social Sciences, Shenyang), and to Jin Bingzhe 金炳喆 and his wife He Yuxiu 何玉秀 (Institute of Linguistics, Xinjiang Academy of Social Sciences, Urumqi).

With lasting gratitude and affection we should like to mention our friends of the Sibe People in Chabchal. First of all, Messrs. G'ujinan 郭基南, Fuluntai 富倫太, (Chinese name: Guo Gensheng 郭根生), Tacintai 塔琴太, Zhonglu 忠祿, Kiceshan 奇車山, Getuken 格吐肯, Tunggeri 佟克力, Heling 賀靈, Tong Yuquan 佟玉泉, but also many others too numerous to name here.

In Taipei precious help was constantly and generously given by Professor Ch'en Chieh-hsien 陳捷先 of the National Taiwan University and Mr. Kuang Ting-yüan 廣定遠 (Arbunsain Kunggur) of the "Manchu Association of China".

We also recall with gratitude Professor Han-Woo Choi of Seoul for his help with our research into the famous Samjeondo 三田渡 Stele.

Our thanks go too to the curators and staff of the following museums for having allowed us to take photographs on their premises and / or having in fact supplied us with photographs of the objects of our research: The *Völkerkundemuseum* of Berlin, under its then curator Dr. Peter Thiele, the

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*Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde* in Munich (Dr. Bruno Richtsfeld), the *Heeresgeschichtliches Museum* of Vienna, whose curator at the time was Hofrat Dr. Kaindl, and the *Kunstsammlung der Veste Coburg* and its then curator Dr. Kruse.

University of Venice, autumn 1994.

Giovanni Stary