The Manchu Transformation of Li: Ritual, Politics, and Law in the Making of Qing China, 1631-1690

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Abstract

In 1631, Manchu state-makers set up an administrative apparatus that included a ministry for implementing and legislating li (often translated as rites or ritual), the Board of Li. Over the next sixty years the Board of Li helped develop the rules and regulations of the Manchu state, which were codified in an administrative code in 1690. This dissertation looks at the role of li and the Board of Li in early Manchu state-making efforts, and finds that li was more than simply rituals and ceremonies, it was intimately tied to the formation of politics and administration. The dissertation argues that from 1631 to 1690, state-makers developed the practices of li as sociopolitical and cultural systems that made possible a unified political order that embraced disparate ethnic groups and facilitated the conquest and rule of a multiethnic empire, the Qing, which ruled China and parts of Eurasia from 1636 to 1911. It finds that contrary to conventional understanding, the Manchu practices of li were not copied from the Ming, nor were they inherently Chinese; rather, in response to the immediate political and social circumstances of the time, the Manchus remade and reimagined li through ritual, politics, and law.

This argument is made in three parts. Part one demonstrates the indeterminate nature of li and how it could be employed for different state building projects in different periods of Chinese history; part two looks at the Manchu transformation of li through political struggles for power, and the process of the formation of laws and practices to regulate the political settlements; part three takes up the codification of li, and examines the emergent system of political order and
administrative law. These three parts further build upon recent insights into the nature of the Qing as a multiethnic, expansionist empire, and show that the Manchus developed li in their construction of an inclusive political culture and administrative apparatus that enabled the Qing to succeed where previous conquest dynasties had failed in the building and running of a multiethnic empire.
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A philosopher once said, we need others but are ambivalent of others. This understanding of the human condition aptly captures the state of the dissertation writer: he must rely on others for the materials of his work and the development of his ideas, but he must also work alone and produce a monograph of individual scholarship. Fortunately for me, numerous individuals helped mediate this predicament, offering their time, energy, and insight.

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**Introduction: Li and the Board of Li in the Qing Dynasty**

Li is the ultimate principle. When all things are embodied by this principle, then there is order.

—Ritual manual for the Qianlong emperor

In the late nineteenth century, the Guangxu emperor commissioned an update of the collected statutes and codes of the dynasty, the *Da Qing Huidian*. These laws were the rules of administrative procedure for state institutions, which set forth binding regulations for social and political activity. They were both descriptive and prescriptive of life in the Qing, and this was to be the fifth edition of their compilation. The first such Qing *Huidian* was commissioned under Kangxi and published in 1690. Each subsequent emperor up until Jiaqing (1796-1820) also made revisions and updates, and issued their own edition of the codes under the title *Da Qing Huidian*.

“The sages of my state have complemented each other in continued harmony and prosperity for over two hundred years,” Guangxu wrote in his preface in reference to the past emperors. “They accomplished meritorious deeds and established rule; they discussed li and set the system.”

Throughout all of the changes and refinements over the centuries, the code had a core principle, which, according to Guangxu, was li. “The spirit of this book is of the established regulations of li for administration. Following and practicing it will achieve perfect goodness and perfect beauty [in governance].”

Elsewhere, the Guangxu emphasized the importance of li as a disciplinary mechanism in the organization of the state. “No matter if an official is civil or military, of the inner or outer court, pure or impure—no matter if his position big or small,

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1 HCLZ 1.1. 禮也者理也, 萬物得其理而後和.

2 GXHD, fanli. 我國家列聖相承, 重熙累治二百餘年, 功成治定, 議禮制度. My punctuation.

3 *ibid.* 至於本雕麟之精意, 著官禮之成規, 是訓是行, 盡善盡美.
superior or inferior—all are subsumed absolutely by li.” For the Guangxu emperor, the rules and regulations for administrative procedure and officials’ activity were embodied in li.

Often translated as “ritual” or “rites,” li has long been understood as the organizational principle of moral and social action in China. Confucius put li at the center of his teachings, and Xunzi refined the concept to mold it to an institutional form that subsequently served as the inspiration for the organization and operation of the imperial state from the Han onwards. As Guangxu’s emphasis made clear, the Qing were no exception to the integration of li into the running their state. The Manchus took the imperial model of administration set in the Tang as an example, and established six administrative boards with a stratified bureaucracy to run them. This included a comprehensive set of rules and regulations derived out of li to organize the government, which were then codified as a foundational legal document for the Qing, the Huidian. It also included a board in charge of legislation and enforcement of li, the Board of Li, the third ranking board among the six boards, behind only the boards of personnel and finance in the hierarchy, and possessed of the largest section of the Huidian. Guangxu’s emphasis on li as the basis of sociopolitical organization and its codification was not extraordinary.

Given the importance of li, it is not surprising to find historians exploring its manifestations in the Qing. At the state level, scholars like Evelyn Rawski, Wang Chen-main, and Angela Zito have looked at the political consequences of particular ceremonies held at

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4 Quoted in Lu Li, “Qing Huidian bianxi,” Fazhi yu shehui fazhan, no. 06 (2001): 54. 官無論文武內外清濁, 秩之崇卑大小, 咸一禮之所彌.

5 As McDermott wrote in the opening lines of an edited volume on state ritual in China, “Ritual has been a central concern of Chinese culture for at least four thousand years.” Joseph McDermott, ed., State and Court Ritual in China (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1.

6 This is equally true for the Ming Huidian, which, to quote Yun-yi Ho, “devotes seventy-five of its two hundred eight chapters to the responsibilities of the Ministry of Rites. This is more than the amount devoted to any other single branch of the Ming government discussed in the same work.” Yun-yi Ho, “The Organization and Functions of the Ministry of Rites in the Early Ming Period (1368-1398)” (University of Minnesota, 1976), 1.
particular times and shown the relation between state ritual and politics. Others have taken up li in Qing foreign affairs, showing the prominence of certain ceremonial and ritual proceedings in the reception of foreign embassies and the facilitation of diplomacy. Historians have also demonstrated that particular rituals served as the site for negotiation among political actors. Norman Kutcher, for example, looked at official mourning rituals as a point of tension and negotiation among the emperor and his bureaucracy, while Jeff Snyder-Reinke discussed rainmaking rituals as the medium through which politics was conducted in the locality. These studies have added greatly to our understanding of li and the Qing dynasty. They have convincingly shown the importance of li in the operations of the Qing state and how it worked in various cases, effectively tying li to Qing governance and thus broadening our knowledge of Qing statecraft.

As is the case with many such advancements, an increase in knowledge leads to more questions. Having come to grasp the significance of li in the Qing and garnered greater insight into the workings of the Qing state and its politics, greater curiosity about its nature and functions emerge. In specific, two key questions have been opened up by this research on li in

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10 Jeffrey Snyder-Reinke, *Dry Spells: State Rainmaking and Local Governance in Late Imperial China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2009).

the Qing—questions that lie at the heart of this dissertation. The first is how the different practices of li fit together as a system of organization, governance, and law. Throughout the Qing, actors frequently referred to li not just as a single practice or act—nor did they only refer to it at strategic times in reference to various events—rather, it was spoken of as a system. What was this system and how did it operate? The second question asks if and how the Qing changed the forms and practices of li. Having established the role and importance of li in the Qing, one wonders if this was the same li carried over from the Ming. To put it another way, did the Manchus as a conquest dynasty change the practices of li?

The first question is hinted at by Guangxu when he mentions a system, and it is fully illustrated by the Board of Li section of the Huidian. The Huidian was not a set of random codes, but a compilation of rules, regulations, practices, punishments, and symbolic meanings that fit together in an integral system of governance. The Huidian was the expression of that system in the language of law, or rules of administrative procedure for state institutions in the governing of a bounded territory with a large population. The section on li and the Board of Li was the largest section of this legal code, and it becomes apparent that it was put together with the intention of each act relating to the other in a complete system of government. What was that system and how did it work? Historians have looked at many of the individual practices of li, but have not yet fully explained the cultural system and how the individual pieces fit together.

The second question is on the nature of li in the Qing. Research on the Manchus over the past two decades has established that the Qing dynasty was not simply Sinicized, as long assumed, but rather a multiethnic empire that ruled over different cultural groups and preserved ethnic distinctions. This scholarship has shown that the Manchus had their own culture, traditions, and institutions, which they maintained throughout the course of Qing rule. If this is
the case, then one would expect that the institutions, practices, and laws borrowed from the Ming would have had to undergo transformation in form and function in the running of a multiethnic empire. What were those changes, how did they differ from the Ming, and how did they contribute to statecraft innovations that facilitated the success of Manchu conquest and eighteenth century prosperity?

These two inquiries cannot be separated from each other. Speaking about li as a system implicates the particular interpretations and practices of li made by the Qing and how this related to the organization and operation of the state. The stratified political order and the actions prescribed to each rank, for example, included imperial relatives, Manchus, Mongols, and Hanjuns—four groups not in the Ming interpretation of li, nor of any other dynasty. As the pages of the dissertation show, the Qing constructed a new system of li, neither borrowing an existing one in total from the Ming or any other previous dynasty, nor adopting a pre-existing culture. The Qing changed particular practices of li as they related to the emperor, imperial relatives, and officials in order to restructure the sociopolitical order according to the immediate social and political circumstances of the mid-seventeenth century.

To understand how this worked, this dissertation explores the Qing practices of li through both the code as inscribed in the *Huidian* and the activities of the contemporary political actors. The dissertation looks at how Qing emperors and officials talked about li as a system of government and politics, and how it developed alongside the struggles for power and the formation of the organization of politics and society. Li, as a form and practice of politics, was not some external thing that political actors employed after their relationships had been settled and the state had formed; it was not a piece of furniture set in the house of the sociopolitical order. Rather, as will be discussed in Chapter 1, li was the sociopolitical order; it constituted the
means by which political actors related to each other. It was law. And like law, li formed as the state formed. It emerged alongside the struggles for political power and the fight to organize social relations in a way that would empower some, giving them more access to more political and material resources as they set the terms over what others could and could not do. The settlements that arose did so as a social system that consisted of a hierarchical organizational structure with a single sovereign at the top governing a given territory and possessing the capacity to set binding rules backed up by force, which was integrated with a cultural system that was a set of organizational relationships and practices given meaning through symbols, prescribed behaviors, and repetitive group activities, or what contemporary actors referred to as li.

There are two key findings of this dissertation: foremost, that the li of the Qing was a li redefined for Qing politics and administration; and second, that culture and society are mutually formed, each constructed simultaneously by actors in order to organize themselves politically and to orient themselves ontologically. In the first case, to put it simply, the li of the Qing was

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12 For a view of law as the structure of society see Roberto Mangabeira Unger, Law in Modern Society: Toward a Criticism of Social Theory (New York: Free Press, 1976); Roberto Mangabeira Unger, What Should Legal Analysis Become? (New York: Verso, 1996). This theory is more fully explored in chapter 5.

13 The second finding must be understood as a “finding” from perspective of the historiography on culture and society, especially that of ritual. Studies often assume the existence culture as a complete system, which is then implemented into an already formed society. The two processes of cultural and social formation are treated as distinct, where one happens irrespective of the other and are then integrated after their respective formations. One example of this is Wechsler’s scholarship on state ritual in the Tang. Another is Ho Yun-yi’s study of the Board of Li in the Ming. Although rich and insightful, both of these works see the struggles for power and the formation of the sociopolitical order occurring first. After the stabilization of politics and society, they see ritual—i.e. culture—being implemented by various actors for strategic means. Yun-yi Ho, “Ritual Aspects of the Founding of the Ming Dynasty, 1368-1398,” Society for the Study of Chinese Religions Bulletin, no. 7 (September 1, 1979): 58–70; Howard J. Wechsler, Offerings of Jade and Silk: Ritual and Symbol in the Legitimation of the T’ang Dynasty (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

From the perspective of the social science literature, this “finding” is less a finding and more a reinforcement of the view of how social systems become institutionalized. The seminal work in this field is Peter L Berger and Thomas Luckmann, The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1967). A dominant opposing position would be Parson’s functionalism. Talcott Parsons, The Structure of Social Action: A Study in Social Theory with Special Reference to a Group of Recent
not the li of the Ming nor any other state. Rather the li of the Qing was made up of Manchu practices and Chinese traditions, shaped by the political environment of the times, and molded by state-makers to organize and discipline an administrative staff. The Manchus transformed li in practice to create new legal, political, and administrative institutions that enabled rule over a multiethnic empire. As will become clear in the chapters that follow, at stake for the Qing was not li as a philosophical concept, but rather the practices that defined political relationships. The Qing changed the practices of li to be in accordance with changes in the organization of society and politics. The activities of the emperor, the role of the imperial relatives, and the organization of the bureaucracy all underwent transformations in the early Qing and were subsumed under the understanding of the concept of li. Understanding how the Manchus transformed li is to understand the transformation in the practices of politics.

The second finding of the dissertation is that these legal, political, and administrative institutions developed in tandem with the symbols and cultural practices that gave them meaning. The formation of the institution of the Qing emperor, for example, cannot be separated from the ceremonies in which he partook nor the rituals in which he and others engaged. The emergence of the Qing state happened in concordance with the transformation of li, which both shaped and was shaped by the social order. In short, as society came into being, it did so simultaneously with culture. These two findings enable further insight into the Manchus and their Qing dynasty, and offer a greater understanding on the relation between culture and politics, especially in the case of late imperial China.

The rest of this introduction looks more closely at the historiography, presents the sources used, and outlines the timeframe and historical background of the study.

LI IN THE QING DYNASTY

The importance of li in the Qing has been explored in scholarship from both the state and local levels. Some of these studies look at the role of li in the performance of certain acts of government, while others highlight various changes in practice and the sociopolitical order in the Qing. This research exhibits key changes in li as it related to politics and the organization of the state and society. At the state level, li came to embody Manchu conceptions and practices, with an overarching trend of moving power away from the bureaucracy and concentrating it in the position of the emperor. Li in the Qing helped facilitate the formation and operation of a patrimonial state—that is, a government organization where the ruler’s authority is personal and his household is set up for political administration. At the local level, however, literati belonging to the Neo-Confucian tradition—the resurgence of which began in the Ming and accelerated in the early and mid Qing—developed a particular interpretation of li as an ideology of proper ritual practice at the expense of didacticism and debate. The enforcement by local literati and officials of the lineage and its ritual practices as the main institution in local society, for example, replaced horizontal networks and personal ties. Because this second direction has been discussed in detail by Kai-wing Chow, and is reflected to some degree in Angela Zito’s

14 For a good study of Qing patrimonialism see Michael G Chang, *A Court on Horseback: Imperial Touring & the Construction of Qing Rule, 1680-1785* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Asia Center, 2007).

work on the compilation of ritual texts in the eighteenth century,\textsuperscript{16} I will not deal with it here. The focus of this dissertation, and thus the literature it engages, is at the level of the state.

The historiography on li in the Qing state reflects three key changes in the practices of li and the structure of sociopolitical order. The first was an increase in the position and power of the sovereign. Changes in the conceptions and practices of li in the Qing show greater patrimonialism, whereby the primacy of authority and loyalty was with the emperor. For example, Norman Kutcher argues that a fundamental shift in the concept of social relations occurred in the Qing, where loyalty to the sovereign in the ruler-minister relationship was emphasized and then standardized at the expense of filial piety, or the father-son relationship. Whereas competing loyalties of an official to his sovereign and his parents framed ideas and behaviors in previous dynasties, and the Ming even made a point of placing the father-son relation before the ruler-minister relation, the Qing emphasized the primacy of the ruler-minister relation over the father-son relation. This became manifest in mourning rites, or the proper li upon the death of one’s parents. In the Ming, the standard was for an official to take leave of office for three years while he mourned his dead parents; during this time, his behavior was subject to regulations like wearing certain clothes or not being allowed to marry. Ming Taizu outlawed the practice of *duoqing*, or mourning while in office, and demanded the upholding of proper filial relations. This shifted in the Qing, at first slowly, as Kangxi allowed and encouraged *duoqing* on a case-by-case basis in his communications with his officials, and then it became instituted as regular practice by Yongzheng and Qianlong. The effect was a complete transformation of the meaning of li, both in terms of the conception of proper relations and the

\textsuperscript{16} Zito, *Of Body and Brush*. This monograph does deal with state ceremony and ritual but it draws on eighteenth century texts that are a product of contemporary emperors and officials to standardize an interpretation of li and associated practices. See Joseph W. Esherick, “Cherishing Sources from Afar,” *Modern China* 24, no. 2 (April 1998): 147.
practices of mourning. Similarly, Evelyn Rawski and Angela Zito show in their respective studies how certain acts, such as banqueting, annual ceremonies, and imperial rainmaking rituals, conferred power to the emperor and helped reproduce Qing imperial rule, where some groups had more access to human and material resources and could set the terms over what others could and could not do. In this way, the focus of li under the Qing came to emphasize loyalty and service to the emperor.

The second change, as seen in the historiography, was the use of li to integrate different social groups. In a Han-Chinese dynasty like the Ming, li meant adherence to a particular interpretation of the classics along with ethnic exclusivity in the social hierarchies. The composition of the Qing state, however, included other ethnic groups and its jurisdiction expanded to embrace surrounding states. Evelyn Rawski argues that the Qing was successful in its enterprise because of its flexibility and capacity to accommodate other cultures, especially non-Han cultures. She shows that Manchu institutions, including state ritual, were built around Manchu and other Inner Asian cultural practices and traditions. An adroit symbolic expression of this phenomenon was in military rituals, which were reconfigured through Inner Asian traditions. Ritual inspection of the troops, for example, saw the emperor donning a ceremonial helmet with Sanskrit inscriptions, the use of a Mongol horn in addition to the usual conch shell,

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17 KutcHER, Mourning in Late Imperial China.
15 Rawski, The Last Emperors; Zito, Of Body and Brush.
21 Rawski, The Last Emperors.
and a display of horse riding and archery skill. This all expressed what Mark Elliott calls “ethnic sovereignty,” which he defines as “the special position of the Manchu emperor at the apex of a universal empire composed of multiple hierarchies of lordship based on differing types of authority.” In terms of foreign affairs this meant transforming li from an exclusive practice of keeping foreign states at arms length, to integrating them into the Qing empire. To this end, James Hevia shows that the Qing conducted intimate “guest rituals” (binli), that were hierarchical in nature and placed the Qing emperor in a position of supreme ruler, with the lesser rulers in the periphery. Li here included receiving the rulers of foreign states, and was built around specific Qing notions of rulership and the inclusion of surrounding territories in the purview of the Qing imperial system. In doing so, Hevia writes, “Qing rulers were fundamentally concerned with claims about the proper way of constituting supreme lordship in a world made up of a multitude of lords and multiple centers of power.” During the ceremony, the emperor would bestow grace upon the lesser ruler, giving him things like clothing, jade scepters, his own calligraphy, calendars, or food. The lesser ruler would offer items in return, including his family genealogy, products of his country, and thanks for the imperial grace. Furthermore, the dress, speech, and gestures of the visiting ruler adhered to an interpretation of Qing li that would manifest his loyalty to the Qing emperor. The result, Hevia argues, is that the peripheral country was encompassed.

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24 Hevia, Cherishing Men from Afar, 55.

There is a third general change in li in the Qing that is implicit in much of the literature but not yet fully articulated. This change involved the composition and organization of the bureaucracy. In contrast to previous dynasties like the Song and Ming, the Qing integrated their imperial relatives into the political order, giving them ranks and positions and employing them in office. This effectively diluted the administrative staff of professional bureaucratic-scholar elite, infiltrating it with members of the imperial family.26 These imperial relatives were of higher rank than the professional bureaucrats, however, forcing a refashioning of the hierarchy, the ranks, and the codes of conduct, comportment, and dress associated with the positions.27 In addition to introducing a new social class into the administration, the Qing employed different ethnic groups, further necessitating changes in those aspects of li pertaining to the organization of the administration, hierarchy, and legal codes. Consider the fact that there were three distinct bureaucracies in the Qing, the civil, Eight Banner, and Imperial Household Department, officials of which, although separate, did interact. In 1713, for example, the proper li for the celebration of Emperor Kangxi’s sixtieth birthday were performed by the garrison general and lieutenant generals of the Eight Banner bureaucracy together with the governor-general and governor of the civil bureaucracy. Similarly, when a garrison general returned from imperial celebrations in Beijing that year, the lieutenant general and governor-general undertook a form of li by going together to greet him at a certain prescribed distance outside the gates of Xi’an.28

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26 These developments are also observed at an institutional level by Beatrice S. Bartlett, Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council in Mid-Ch’ing China, 1723-1820 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); Jonathan D Spence, Ts’ao Yin and the K’ang-Hsi Emperor: Bondservant and Master (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966).

27 This point is explored in full in chapter 3. For a general overview see Rawski, The Last Emperors, ch. 2 and 3. For a detailed exploration of the Qing hierarchy see Du Jiaji, “Qingdai zongshi fenfeng zhishulun,” Shehui Kexue Jikan 4 (1991).

defining of the sociopolitical positions of these different bureaucracies, as well as the codes of interaction in the Qing hierarchy, could not rely on the old practice of li but had to be rewritten.

These three key changes in li in the Qing dynasty are expressed in detail in the body of the dissertation. They are outlined here in reference to the existing historiography in order to show how scholars have recently arrived at new understandings of li in the Qing and how this helped distinguish the Manchus from previous dynasties. To date, however, no one has explored the system of li in the Qing as it is expressed in the *Da Qing Huidian*, nor outlined the changes to and emergence of the Qing form of li as the basis of sociopolitical order. Furthermore, much of this scholarship takes the practices of li as pre-existing acts and then attempts to explain their function or performance. This has given insight into the use and the practice of the ritual, to be sure, but not into the formation of the rite nor the rational behind its adoption. The following chapters not only address these gaps, but also show why certain forms and practices of li emerged and not others.

THE BOARD OF LI

One way of understanding the system of li and its relation to the state is through the organization in charge of legislation and implementation of li: the Board of Li. As a bureaucratic organ of the central government, the Board of Li was the organization responsible for drawing up and putting into practice the abstract notions and ideas of li. For ritual activity, this included preparing, holding, and carrying out all state rites and ceremonies. These things required specific preparations and special knowledge, after all. A ceremony had to be planned, and it had to be

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29 Whereas someone like Zito, for example, is concerned with exploring the logic and importance of Qing rituals and ceremonies, I ask a slightly different question about the relation between culture and society, and explore the construction and transformation of the cultural practices as they emerged in tandem to shape and be shaped by contemporary politics. Zito, *Of Body and Brush*. 

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executed. This began with the choosing of the correct date that the ceremony or ritual would be held. New Year’s Day or the Winter Solstice was not arbitrary; it involved exact calibration. Days before the scheduled event, the halls had to be prepared, the throne installed, banners erected, ritual implements put in place, and sacrificial foods procured. On the day of any given ritual or ceremony the actors had to be instructed on what to do—officials had to be told at which gate to congregate and wait, the emperor on when to make his entry, and the honored and ranked personnel at what point to come forth and do their kowtows. Banquets had to be prepared, animals slaughtered for sacrifice, and wine poured. All this work fell to the Board of Li. More importantly, the Board of Li wrote it all down and codified the ritual activity as precedent, making it knowledge for future occasions. With the Board of Li, the instrumental work of administrative organization and activity happened in the codification of rites, helping to further institutionalize social and political relationships.

As one of the six ministerial-level administrative organizations, the Board of Li was under the Grand Secretariat and its senior officials could memorialize directly to the emperor, which Qing board presidents did regularly. Initially, upon the establishment in 1631 of the administration, the younger brothers and nephews of the new khan, Hong Taiji, who supported him at the expense of others, were put at the head of the six boards.\(^{30}\) Hong Taiji-confidant Sahaliyan was the first Board of Li president. From the record, he appears to have had no special training or knowledge of li, ritual, or ceremony that would have made him particularly eligible for this position. In fact, none of the presidents or vice presidents assigned to the Board of Li possessed any unique skill-set that set them apart and landed them at the post; rather the position

\(^{30}\) This was later abrogated in the Shunzhi period and eventually a dual presidential command was set up with one Manchu and one Han jointly serving as the presidents of a board.
was an appointment given to capable officials or personnel based on rank and merit, not expertise.

Some inside certainly had an understanding of li, to be sure. Take for example one of the first vice presidents of the Board of Li, Li Bolong. A Han Chinese appointed by Hong Taiji when the boards were set up in 1631, Li ostensibly had been a Ming subject and may have served in office, although we know nothing of his background. The first mention of Li Bolong in the documentary evidence from the Ming or Qing is his intervention in Manchu discussions on the 1632 New Year’s Day ceremony, where he informed the inner political council on the proper procedures and positioning for the ceremony. Similarly, the permanent personnel in the various divisions of the Board of Li were hired with a specialized knowledge of their posts. The ritual specialists and ceremonial musicians of the Board of Li, for example, were often drawn from Daoist priests. There is also a reference from the early Kangxi period of a call sent out to the provinces to recruit diviners to staff the office of the astronomer. Apart from such random documents, however, there is little material to help us understand the hiring practices of personnel into the boards. It does seem plausible, however, that in the same way that yamen

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31 Many of these early Han Chinese officials serving the Manchus had been living in the northeast and dropped off the Ming radar. We know very little of their background. See Tsai Sung-yin, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan, 1627-1643 (1627-1643)” (MA Thesis, National Taiwan Normal University, 2011); Frederic E Wakeman, The Great Enterprise: The Manchu Reconstruction of Imperial Order in Seventeenth-Century China (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 37-49.

32 See below, chapter four.


34 GSA 278678-013, Kx7.2.16.
clerks acquired an expertise, the people staffing the permanent posts in the Board of Li came to learn their duties and acquire an intimate knowledge of the ritual.\textsuperscript{35}

The Board of Li under discussion in this dissertation is the Qing incarnation, which differs in design and function from its counterparts of the earlier dynasties.\textsuperscript{36} The Board of Li and the five other administrative boards—collectively known as the six boards—took form in the sixth century, and by the Tang had assumed the general structure, name, and duties that the Qing would model. These were the boards of personnel, revenue, rites, war, punishments, and works (here listed in hierarchical order, as seen in the position of the board presidents in line in ceremony). The duties of these six boards can be spoken of very generally across dynasties in the following way: the Board of Personnel (Libu) was charged with making administrative appointments, evaluating the bureaucracy, and making recommendations of promotions and demotions; the Board of Revenue (Hubu) collected taxes and conducted population censuses and cadastral surveys; the Board of Li regulated hierarchies, held annual ceremonies and rituals, hosted the civil examinations, managed foreign affairs, and looked after foreign guests; the Board of War (Bingbu) oversaw army personnel and supplies; the Board of Punishments

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\textsuperscript{35} Bradly Ward Reed, \textit{Talons and Teeth: County Clerks and Runners in the Qing Dynasty} (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2000).

(Xingbu) administered criminal cases and formed legal code; and the Board of Works (Gongbu) undertook palace construction and civil engineering projects, such as the Grand Canal.\textsuperscript{37}

The Board of Li evolved in form and function throughout history (as did the other boards). Its main duties in the Tang were to supervise state sacrifices and rituals, and for these duties it had a full staff of ritual officials. In the Song, due to the internal politics and the structure of the Song state, the president of the Board of Li took on greater administrative responsibility and often left many of the internal board offices unfilled. The Yuan restricted Board of Li activity to the oversight of religious practices, and stripped it and the other boards of much of their administrative authority. Under the Mongols, the Board of Li became a ceremonial office with no power and few responsibilities, and was soon collapsed into the Boards of Personnel and Revenue, the three forming what was called the Left Board. Despite these changes in practice across these three dynasties, the chain of command remained the same: the six boards were under the control of the Department of State Affairs (shangshu sheng), which was under the Prime Minister (zaixiang). The boards here were two steps removed from the emperor and reported directly to the Department of State Affairs. This made the boards more like bureaucratic operatives with little political capacity or policy-making capability.\textsuperscript{38}

The Ming reformed the role and responsibilities of the Board of Li. Foremost, the Board of Li, along with the six boards as a whole, began reporting directly to the emperor rather than through the Department of State Affairs and Prime Minister. This was a result of Ming Taizu overhauling the chain of command and abrogating the position of prime minister. The Board of


Li, along with the other boards, memorialized directly to the emperor and now had the power to make policy and affect politics. This new administrative power also came with greater responsibility. Under the Ming, the Board of Li began to take on a more intimate role in the dealings with the emperor and inner court affairs. Ming Taizu subsumed the Court of Imperial Sacrifices under the jurisdiction of the Board of Li, charging the board with the duty of holding worship and sacrifice for the imperial family in addition to public sacrifice and ceremony. Furthermore, all entertainment duties, including music and dance was folded into the Board of Li, as was oversight and regulation of local sacrifice and worship.

Ming Taizu’s vision of social and political order drove these changes, and served as the common orientation for the activities of the Board of Li. In establishing the Ming, Taizu faced three fundamental challenges: legitimizing his conquest and the new regime, attracting capable people into service of the state, and promoting imperial unity between the political vision of the state and the social order of the localities. Li was one of the key mechanisms in meeting these challenges. The holding of state ceremonies and the creation of a discourse about Taizu and the Ming as inheritors of the Mandate of Heaven helped legitimize the new state; adherence to an annual ceremonial schedule and sacrificial practice also promoted the Ming as a Chinese state in contrast to the Mongol Yuan. The commitment to such ritual activities furthered the second goal of attracting scholar officials into service by showing them that the dynasty shared their interests in returning to the conduct and adherence to these state ceremonies and rituals. These

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39 The establishment of the Grand Secretariat later in the Ming put the boards under its direct responsibility and collectively became known as the outer court.

40 Ho, “The Organization and Function of the Ministry of Rites,” 11-12.

41 Ho, “The Organization and Functions of the Ministry of Rites in the Early Ming Period (1368-1398),” 6-8, 61.

42 Ho, “Ritual Aspects of the Founding of the Ming Dynasty, 1368-1398.”
were the people who came to staff the Board of Li, among other boards, and were given the capacity to mold a political order through ritual practice.\footnote{On the employment of literati in the early Ming see John W Dardess, 
*Confucianism and Autocracy: Professional Elites in the Founding of the Ming Dynasty* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).} In addition to the political relations at the level of the state, ritual also informed social relations at the level of the locality. Through the regulation of local worship practices and lineage organization, the Board of Li codified social relations and developed a standard of ritual practices throughout the Ming empire.\footnote{See Bol, *Neo-Confucianism in History*, chap. 4; David Faure, *Emperor and Ancestor: State and Lineage in South China* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2007); Michael Szonyi, “Local Cult, Lijia, and Lineage: Religious and Social Organization in the Fuzhou Religion in the Ming and Qing,” *Journal of Chinese Religions* no. 28 (2000): 93–125; Zheng Zhenman, “Shenmiao jidian yu shequ fazhan moshi: Putian jiangkou pingyuan de liezheng,” *Shilin* 1 (1995); Zheng Zhenman, *Xiangzu yu guojia: duoyuan shiyezhong de Min-Tai chuantong shehui* (Beijing: Sanlian shudian, 2009).}

The Qing re-invented the Board of Li again. Foremost, the operations of the six boards under the Qing were initially more political. Established by Hong Taiji in 1631 as part of his effort to build a centralized administrative apparatus and monopolize political resources in the office of the sovereign, the Board of Li, along with the other six boards, had a uniquely political function. The boards were employed in a process of undermining the banner owners and focusing administrative control in the person of the sovereign and his staff. This saw the employment of Hong Taiji supporters as the presidents of the boards, and, in comparison with their Ming counterparts, the increased capacity to wield political resources. Although board operations became more routinized over time, and power institutionalized, the boards continued to play a large part in the political operations of the dynasty, especially those with Manchu presidents holding honorary ranks and titles.\footnote{See chapter 5.} The Qing Board of Li had to deal with an entirely different political situation than the Ming, or any other dynasty, and this was reflected in its operations. At once it had to handle the Manchu aristocracy, which it did by categorizing,
organizing, and regulating them through honors, ranks, and ritual prerogatives. Simultaneously, it had to employ rituals and ceremonies that projected the emperor and helped him monopolize political resources. There is no better indication of this than Hong Taiji himself articulating the duties of the Board of Li as those of instilling and maintaining political order among the Manchu aristocrats, banners, and Chinese bureaucrats.

The Board of Li is to investigate the princes, beile, and officials for the following: causing trouble; negligence and idleness in their duties; engaging in drinking and sex, or partaking in games and pleasure; taking things from the common people or violating common women. In terms of li (doro), [the Board of Li should go investigate] if they are being disrespectful of li (doro) and not wearing their ritual cap and gown. Even if they are at a ritual place or at the yamen as normal, [the Board of Li should investigate] if they have the intention of working or if they are making excuses of sickness to evade responsibility.46

These particularities of organizational orientation were reflected in ritual activity. Take the New Year’s Day ceremony, which is discussed in detail in chapter 2. The Ming designed their New Year’s Day ceremony on the pretense of re-instating traditional Chinese ritual practices to meet the state-making challenges of legitimizing the dynasty over the Yuan Mongols and to attract scholar officials in service of the new state. The ceremony, therefore, was concerned with the proper staging and placing of actors, while the emperor had barely a role and not much of a presence throughout. It is as if the Book of Rites weighed heavy on the minds of the Ming officials of the Board of Li and they needed to revive antiquity to validate the present. Contrast this with the Qing, which emphasized the movement of actors on and off stage, at the center of

46 MR 6.1049, Cd1.5.14. jai geren wang sa, beile se, geren ambasa inu afabuha jurgan be heoledeme, nure boco de dosire, efìn sebijen de urhure, irgen i sain jaka be gaijara, sain hehe be durire gidašara, amba doroī bade doro be weihukelemé doroī etuku mahala eturakū, yaya doroī bade ocibe, an i yamulara de ocibe, ini günin de acarakū ohode, beye nimembi seme siltara, ere gese habe doroloni jurgan baicambi.
which sat the emperor. At the core of Qing activity concerning li was the organization of political actors into their appropriate ranks and their acts of deference to the emperor. This shaped the relations among the different ethnic groups, imperial relatives, and officials as a single political order with the emperor at the head. The Qing actively changed, made up, and manipulated li in order to facilitate certain political effects.

Even banqueting reflected this difference of activity. Ming banquets were events that organized political and military actors by rank at tables with various kinds and grades of foods placed in greater or lesser amounts according to the hierarchical order of the table. Here again the emperor had no role and but a minor place in the ritual. The Qing, by contrast, could not take for granted a structured and disciplined political order. With Manchu, Mongol, and Chinese officials and military personnel present, imperial relatives playing an outsized role in the new state, and foreign embassies often in attendance, discipline in rank and position had to be imposed and constantly re-enforced—the banquet was no exception. Where the Ming banquet was concerned with foods on tables, the Qing focused on the entering, exiting, and kowtowing of aristocrats and officials. The Qing emperor was also ever present: arriving, ascending, consuming, and moving about. In this way, the Qing ritual brought together political actors in structured interactions to create a particular order that incorporated groups of different backgrounds, cultures, and socio-political practices, and did so in the formation of a single inclusive organization of a stratified hierarchy with a sovereign at the focus. Where the Ming assumed the position of the sovereign, the Qing had to construct it.

47 DMHD 3.1669.

48 KXHD 720.3813. For a discussion of banquets in the Qianlong court see Zito, Of Body and Brush.
All this ensured that the work of li and the Board of Li in the Qing was distinct, much as it was in the Ming. But whereas the Ming employed ritual and ceremony to create Chinese authority and legitimacy based on a notion of the past, the Qing used it as a platform to contest political control and position, and to integrate political actors. The Qing use of what is often referred to as the “Ming model” was less one of copied institutions in form and function, but rather of drawing on similar tools for different needs in their state-making efforts. The concern of this dissertation is to show why the li of the Qing took the form that it did.

THE TRANSFORMATION AND CODIFICATION OF LI IN THREE PARTS: CHAPTER OUTLINE

An exploration of the Board of Li provides a vantage point to examine li in the Qing, and points towards the structure of political and legal orders and their formation. In undertaking such a study the logical place to begin is the very beginning: the Qing establishment of the Board of Li and the making of rules and regulations for administrative procedure that would come to form the Huidian. An investigation of the early struggles and their settlements in the formation of the sociopolitical order would yield insight into how the system of li was made and imagined, and in the course of doing so show the injection of particular Manchu characteristics that enabled its development. Towards this end, the chapters of this dissertation look at the construction of the social and cultural systems in the mid-seventeenth century as they emerged in the process of Qing state-formation. The dissertation begins in 1631 with the formation of the six administrative boards and charts the political struggles and the rules that arose in the midst of their outcomes to preserve newly determined relations of power. The dissertation climaxes with
the publication of the first *Huidian* in 1690, which codified the emergent sociopolitical order and articulated a vision of the Qing state and its operations as a form of li.

The dissertation is divided into seven chapters, organized into three parts. Part One discusses the meaning and history of li, Part Two shows how li was changed by the Manchus in the early Qing, and Part Three takes up the codification and practice of the system of li.

Part One, “Li,” lays out the framework used for understanding and investigating administrative and political practices as expressed in li. Chapter 1 categorizes the historiographical understandings of li into five different interpretations: ritual, cosmology, social order, law, and administrative order. The fifth category of li as administrative order is well recognized, and scholars are quick to point to the classics in highlighting the importance of this aspect of li. What it actually meant in practice, however, is a lacuna addressed by this dissertation. The chapter then discusses how li changed over time, and situates the dissertation among a new generation of scholars recognizing the indeterminate nature of li, which could be manipulated and remade in relation to different circumstances. Given this indeterminacy, the chapter then asks how to investigate li. Although equating li to ritual is resisted throughout the dissertation, advances in ritual theory do provide useful analysis to help understand the nature and practices of li. The last section thus explores three important theories of ritual and the contributions and advances the dissertation makes in the study of ritual and ritual-like activity.

Having outlined li as a system of symbolic meanings and administrative operations, and explored methodologies, the next part, Part Two, turns to the empirical work on the Manchu transformations of the social and cultural systems. It consists of three chapters, each of which focus on a key transformation of li as part of Manchu state formation. Chapter 2 maps fundamental changes in the New Year’s Day ceremony of 1632 onto political struggles for
power, arguing that the ritual and its symbolic forms of the positioning and organization of actors was integral to the act of dividing political resources and defining the form of the emerging state. The chapter argues that li cannot be separated from the battles for political power, and that the two emerged and developed in tandem. Turning from the sovereign to his kin, Chapter 3 takes up the problem of the imperial relatives, demonstrating that their threat to the ruler was nullified through the creation of a system of ranks, positions, and regulated activities that incorporated them into the political order. Li was developed here as a system of stratification and organization in response to the immediate political situation, and it facilitated the construction of a new sociopolitical order that embraced rather than excluded the imperial relatives. This shift in the organization of administrative personnel and the cultural forms that accompanied it also included military centralization and territorial conquest. Working from the understanding that integration of other ethnic groups was key in the Manchu conquest and the formation of the Qing state; Chapter 4 explores the expansion of the Qing polity in the 1630s to include other ethnic groups in political and military ranks. The chapter argues that the repeated use of a Manchu surrender rite for Ming generals helped integrate Han Chinese into the Manchu socio-military system and facilitated the formation of the Hanjun banners. This chapter shows that li in military affairs was developed simultaneously with efforts to curb the autonomy and power of Manchu military leaders and centralize command of the armed forces.

Part Three explores how the practices for the sovereign, imperial relatives and bureaucracy, and military explored in Part Two fit together as a system. The three chapters that comprise part three together argue for li as the administrative law of the Qing dynasty. They further show the integrated emergence of cultural and social systems of the Qing state. Chapter 5 discusses the compilation of the first Qing Huidian in 1690, and argues that although the Qing
Huidian was based on the structure of the Ming Huidian, the content was written anew from regulations that emerged out of the transformations of li. The final two chapters then turn to the implementation and practice of the code for the emperor and the bureaucracy. Chapter 6 shows how the office of the emperor was instituted and performed based on particular ceremonies and rituals that represented the sovereign, delegated power, and legitimized the office holder. The chapter makes the case that these li-based practices enabled the emperor’s command of political resources. Chapter 7 turns to the stratification of political offices of the bureaucracy, and demonstrates how the codified order and regulated political activities invested political actors with a sense of common purpose in the operations of the Qing state. The chapter argues that there were four key components in the regulations and practice of the political order: clothing to reflect the level of rank of political actors, the size of one’s entourage, rites for greeting each other, and position in ceremony. A short concluding chapter sums up the findings.

SOURCES AND DATA ANALYSIS

The research for these chapters has drawn on Chinese- and Manchu-language archives and other types of documentary sources. The bulk of the material has come from court histories and their unofficial drafts, official statutes of the dynasty, and memorials and edicts.

Among the court histories, the published version of the Shilu, or “Veritable Records,” is the most basic reference to the history of the Ming and Qing dynasties. The dissertation made ample use of the Chinese-language edition of the Shilu, and consulted Manchu-language editions in Taipei and in Beijing.\(^4^9\) Of even greater value and interest to the historian is the Dorgon-era draft of the Shilu for the Hong Taiji period, the Da Qing Taizong wen huangdi shilu, which is

\(^{49}\) The editions consulted were all published or re-published in the Qianlong era and had little discrepancy in content or language. Indeed, they appeared to be exact translations of each other.

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closer in time to the period it discusses, and covers ground that the later finalized editions do not. It is written in less-literary, more colloquial Chinese; and the only known copy is at the National Palace Museum library in Taipei. The Manchu-language court records of the seventeenth century offer greater detail, depth, and content than the *Shilu* for the periods under study here. All of the various editions of these records in both their published and archival forms have been consulted. The *Manbun roto* and *Manwen yuandang* are the two most commonly used modern-day published versions of the Manchu records from the Nurhaci and Hong Taiji periods, and the *Neiguoshiyuan dang* are those for the later Hong Taiji and Shunzhi periods. The dissertation also drew on the originals at the Taipei National Palace Museum library and the First Historical Archives in Beijing, checking the published transliterations and peeking behind the lines of text crossed out by contemporary editors.

Other primary sources include Qing legal codes, memorials, and edicts. The five editions of the collected statues of the Qing dynasty, or *Huidian*, are a most useful resource for the scholar of the operations of the Qing state and its variations over time. The following chapters drew most heavily on the Kangxi-era published edition of the *Huidian*, as it is the subject of analysis on the codification under question. Other editions from the Yongzheng, Qianlong, Jiaqing, and Guangxu periods were also consulted in order to note the changes and evolution of various practices. Memorials and edicts from the pre-conquest and Shunzhi period, although nowhere near the extent of those from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, are more abundant than scholars have been led to believe. Documents from both the Hong Taiji and

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50 I refer to this in the notes and bibliography by its moniker in the archives in the National Palace Museum: Chuzuankan shilu (CZBSL) 初纂本實錄. For discussions of this source see Chuang Chi-fa, *Qing Taizong Hanwen Shilu chuzuanben yu chongxiu ben de bijiao*, in *Qingshi lunji*, vol. 14 (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 2004), 167-188; Matsumura Jun, “Junchi shosan shin taisōjitsuroku ni tsuite,” *Nihon daigaku jimun kagaku kenkyūjo* (March 1973): 65-78
Shunzhi periods can be found in the Grand Secretariat Archive at Academia Sinica, Taipei, and the First Historical Archives. The latter has a small but rich and underutilized cache of documents from the Shunzhi period called “Beida yijiao tiben,” or “routine memorials moved from Peking University.” Documents from these archives have usually been written in both Chinese and Manchu—the Chinese reading right to left front to back, and the Manchu left to right back to front. In such memorials there are discrepancies in wording and content between the two languages, especially in the early period, and it is not unusual to find the Manchu more explicit and containing greater detail. In some documents only one language has been preserved.

On li in the documents

When reading a source like the court histories from the period under investigation, one is struck by the frequency of the mention and practice of li. At every turn, contemporary actors discuss or engage in some kind of li, whether it be a rite, ceremony, or ritual in meetings, military affairs, and on days of significance and calendar importance. Most surprising—but not explored in the historiography—is the emphasis that state-builders placed on li in the discussion and articulation of the form of the political order. Sources often bring up activities of li surreptitiously, such as dropping the mention of a banquet or mentioning rain prayers in the midst of a dry month; or they may elucidate in great detail the Winter Solstice ceremony. Each reference to li, whether abbreviated or full, points to an entire world of activities and concepts, which can be illuminated and understood from other sources. Banquets are a good case in point. Texts such as the court histories and officials’ memorials often speak of a ceremony and indicate that a banquet was performed.  

51 In reflecting on the Ming, Charles Hucker once wrote, “Anyone who works extensively with the Ming documents...cannot avoid the conclusion that proper government in the Ming view was largely a matter of performing the proper rituals.” Charles O Hucker, The Traditional Chinese State in Ming Times (1368-1644) (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1961), 68.
thrown afterwards; or someone came to court, or the emperor accepted the surrender of some Ming general and held a banquet. Details of events, such as the banquet attendance, seating, timing, acts of subjugation, and preparation have to be sourced elsewhere, however. That one line in the document might be a profound signifier to the contemporary actor, but for any interlocutor removed from the time and place, the practices and array of activities it connotes needs to be decoded in other texts like the *Huidian*.

Manchu-language sources often give a fuller account of the activity than do the Chinese, at least in the early period. This is especially the case in the records from the history offices, such as the *Shilu, Manwen laodang, and Neiguoshiyuan dang*. Where the *Shilu* might have a short mention of the practice of some ritual on a certain day, the Manchu records go into great detail on what transpired. Take for example the New Year’s Day ceremony of 1636. The Chinese-language *Shilu* gives a simple account of the emperor visiting the Manchu temple and returning, and then lists the high-level participants of the ceremony including the foreign embassies.\(^52\) The Manchu version, by contrast, considers all the officials and military personnel in attendance, whom they led in acts of subjugation to the emperor, and the sequence of their actions. The Manchu further details the organizing activity of the Board of Li officials, indicating which officials gave certain instructions at certain times.\(^53\)

One explanation for this difference is that by the time of the final compilation of the *Shilu* in the mid-Kangxi period, editors assumed that readers would know what occurred during such rites, and that the use of the correct signifier in the text would be enough to give all indication of what transpired during, say, a sun-saving ritual, and stimulate the proper associations for readers.

\(^52\) TZWSL, p. 344:2, Tc10.1.1.

\(^53\) MR 6.885, Tc10.1.1.
Furthermore, if more detail was required, the reader could turn to the *Huidian* that had recently been compiled. The fact that the Manchu-language *Shilu*, which was issued simultaneously with the Chinese, is similar in its brevity further makes sense of this explanation. For the Manchu reader in the 1630s and 40s, however, no such understanding could be assumed; everything needed to be spelled out. The details of *li* had to be recorded because the Qing *Huidian* was still a long way off and practices not yet standardized. The meaning of *li* had to be made clear, precedents set, and the regulations laid out. This was not just a symptom of the assumed audience of the day, but also an effort in codification and clarification at a time when activities, relationships, and institutions were still being formalized. This necessitated full explanation and clarification.\(^{54}\)

The culmination of the Manchu transformation of *li* was the compilation and publication of the first Qing *Huidian* in 1690. Organized according to the activities and duties of the ministerial boards and departments, the *Huidian*, laid out the guidelines and operating principles of the state. It contains cumulative chronological developments for many of the activities that came to be standard operating procedure. The *Huidian* served as a type of handbook for administrators and bureaucrats, providing instruction for the fulfillment of duties and laying out normative description of department functions. It also was a codebook, laying out the regulation for proper administration and administrative practice.\(^{55}\) Over the course of the Qing, five editions of the *Huidian* were produced, with each new edition being commissioned by an emperor to add new precedents and account for changes over time in practices. Historians using the *Huidian* often rely on the 1899 Guangxu edition, assuming that the codes of the earlier editions were


\(^{55}\) For more on the *Huidian* see Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A New Manual*, 645, 843.
merely transcribed and new codes appended. This is a mistake, as the subsequent editors often
decided what was important to keep and what could be discarded. Thus the Kangxi edition and
the Guangxu edition can vary drastically. Research for this dissertation has relied on the Kangxi
edition of the Huidian published in 1690. It takes this edition as the first codification of the
practices and regulations of the Qing state, and the expression of li as administrative order.

Data analysis

The Qing Huidian was not produced ex nihilo. But neither was it a replica of the Ming Huidian.
Rather, as this dissertation argues, the Huidian was compiled out of the rules and regulations
created throughout the early process of state-making. The formation of the laws (which included
the regulations of li) and the construction of the state were intimately intertwined, each relying
on the other to produce a cohesive order. In order to get at the creation of the initial regulations
and the role of li in the process it is necessary to look beyond the formal code and to the initial
activities, practices, and understandings of the contemporary actors. The origins of the rules for
political and administrative engagement not only needed to be uncovered, but also the political
struggles and their settlements that led to the formation of those rules. In short, beyond the
Huidian, it needed to be ascertained how the Manchus understood and changed li.

To this end, investigations began with extensive searches across all materials for the
mentions and practices of li, along with anything involving the Board of Li. The aim was to get a
list of all the uses in the existing documents of li and Board of Li. Search conditions were
simple: that the document mention the Board of Li, or that it use the terms li 礼 (ritual/rite), si 祀
(sacrifice) or yi 儀 (ceremony). With these criteria, the court histories, both published and
archival, were scoured; archives for all memorials, edicts, and correspondence relating to the said
topic were exhaustively combed. This yielded some two thousand or more references, not
counting the *Huidian*, which was read line by line and chronicled separately. These references
were then grouped into categories according to the general type of social or political activity
related to li. Categories were broadened until they were general enough to incorporate most of
the practices of li catalogued, but specific enough to have meaning in relation to general forms of
social organization. Five categories emerged:

1. Power struggles and imperial politics
2. Organization and reproduction of the sociopolitical order
3. Military affairs
4. Foreign relations
5. Day-to-day administrative operations

The last two categories in this schema are important, to say the least, and comprise a good many
references, but must be left for a future study that can deal with them in turn when space permits.
Efforts here are focused on the activity of the first three categories because they comprise the
core activities of social organization and state-formation, and because they are interconnected
processes. The setting up of a system of foreign relations and the running of foreign affairs in the
Qing deserves a study in and of itself, as it was a highly complex and unique development in the
history of China and Inner Asia.\(^5\) An exploration of the day-to-day administrative operations of
the Board of Li, which consisted of things like procuring wax for ceremonies and raising animals

for sacrifice, while interesting for what it can tell us about the internal workings of the Qing bureaucracy, is more appropriate for an institutional study of the Board of Li.

The materials mobilized for this study comprise an exhaustive collection of all the ritual and ceremonial proceedings, and all of the activity of the Board of Li in the early Qing state. This material has been drawn from nearly all of the archival and published sources extant and available to the researcher today.

TIMEFRAME AND BACKGROUND

A word about the timeframe of this study and the chronological bounds of analysis: two dates can be put forth to frame the archival work: 1631 and 1690. The former date is the year of the establishment of the Board of Li along with the five other boards. It is a good starting point, for this initiated the creation of the bureaucratic organizational structure and the codification of administrative practice, including the rites of the social and political organization, and the institutionalization of order. Furthermore, with an administrative body now charged with articulating and employing li in state activities, the importance of li became clearly manifest. The later date, 1690, is the year of the completion of the first Qing Huidian, now commonly referred to as the Kangxi Huidian. This codification formalized the institutionalization of the political and cultural orders of the early state. Having been in formation for sixty years, the practices were now made law.

As tidy as these dates are, the reality of human activity can never be contained by such strict lines of demarcation. It quickly becomes apparent that much of the action of the 1630s was premised on ideas and practices of early times, either from Ming or Jurchen/Inner Asian traditions. Furthermore, the background to the state-making activity and even li went back much
earlier than 1631. The first chapter on the New Year’s Day ceremony, for example, although
takes the 1632 ceremony as its focus, also explores the earlier Manchu practices as well as the
Ming ceremonies. Likewise, the 1690 cutoff date is transgressed in cases where the importance
of li and its effects on statecraft need to be emphasized. Not only was it advantageous to the
argument to draw on later sources, such as later editions of the *Huidian* and even the *Draft
History of the Qing Dynasty (Qingshigao)*, which was published in 1922, but more so, events
from the Yongzheng and Qianlong periods offered adroit illustration of li as administrative law.
Officials fighting over clothing or their place in line at state ceremonies in the mid-eighteenth
century, for example, make appropriate examples of the structure of the socio-political order.
Furthermore, the structures of the formed orders are often more clearly seen in their mature
formation of a hundred or more years hence. For these reasons, it was beneficial at times to push
past the 1690 date into the eighteenth century, and to draw on a much larger and richer set of
documents.

The dates of 1631-1690 ended up serving as the marker for the scope of the research, but
not the bounds. The chapter on the formation of the Manchu aristocracy, for example, has a
section discussing Ming Taizu of the fourteenth century, while the chapter on the sociopolitical
order draws on events in the mid-Qianlong era of the eighteenth century. What can be said is
this: the discussion that follows focuses primarily on the Manchu construction of li and the state-
making activities of the 1630s and 40s, and pushes forward to 1690 in exploration of how the
practices and rules developed. It is this narrow range of a chronology that comprises the
trajectory of the story about the Manchu transformation of li and the making of the Qing state.
The general outline of events that the chapters hinge upon begins in the sixteenth century. Those who would later come to be known as Manchu were formerly called Jurchens, a semi-nomadic peoples of northeastern Eurasia. Living in villages and organized into clans and sub-clans, they relied upon hunting, fishing, and some agriculture. They gathered pearls and ginseng, which they traded on border markets. During the Ming, Jurchen chiefs acquired titles and trading patents that gave them access to Ming markets and allowed them to pay tribute to Beijing. They traded items such as horses, furs, wild foodstuffs, and pearls for grains, livestock, silk, textiles, and iron tools. In the sixteenth century, weakening tribal and clan cohesion led to internal political and social unrest, creating opportunities for military entrepreneurs. Under these conditions, in the late sixteenth century, Nurhaci, the future founder of the Qing, got his start.

Nurhaci was was born in 1559. He initially made his living collecting ginseng and cones and selling them on the Fushun market. He lived with a Ming general in Fushun for a time and there learned Chinese and studied military history and strategy. When intra-tribal feuding among the Jurchens drew in the Ming and led to the death of his father and grandfather, Nurhaci picked up arms and swore revenge. He set about sacking towns and increasing the men and territory under his control. He formed alliances with the Mongols and slowly began to incorporate all of the Jurchens under his leadership. By 1619 he had conquered or subdued most of the Jurchen tribes, and incorporated them into a powerful military alliance under his command. Although the Ming had recognized Nurhaci’s strength and given him patents, and then granted him the title of general in 1595, he broke with them in 1616, and two years later penned a note of aggression against the Ming on account of a number of grievances, including the

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responsibility for the death of this father and grandfather. With this, Nurhaci began the first steps in establishing his own state and mobilization for war against the Ming.

Nurhaci’s capacity to unite and conquer was founded upon the organization of autonomous military units. As he began to absorb other tribes and military strongmen in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Nurhaci took to dividing them into companies (niru) headed by a commander (ejen). Several companies were joined together to form a banner (gūsa), named for the flags they would fly. Conquered or surrendered tribes were usually kept together as a company, or folded into an existing company as a unit, and their tribal chief given the designation of commander. As will be discussed in Chapter 4, this method preserved the existing social organization, and allowed men and their families to be easily absorbed and their capacities to fight utilized, which enabled a great degree of flexibility in tactic, and facilitated the quick expansion of men and territory. Initially there were four banners, each flying a different color—yellow, white, red, and blue. As the number of men grew this was expanded to eight, with the four new additions receiving colors based on the original four but with colored borders, and referred to as bordered colors, e.g. bordered yellow, etc.

As Nurhaci’s operation expanded he worked to centralize authority and set up institutions for rule. Around 1613 he appointed five grand ministers (sunja amaban) to advise in governing and help formulating policy. He further set up a justice system with ten judges who would try cases and refer their decisions to the ministers, who in turn would pass recommendations to Nurhaci. Nurhaci then held court every five days to review the findings. Around this time he also restructured the banners to standardize the numbers and account for the influx of men. A company would have around three hundred men; five companies would form a regiment (jalan); five regiments would form a banner led by commander (ejen), who was assisted by two vice
commanders (meiren i ejen). A single banner owner would be in charge of the entire banner. In these early years, the banner owners were the sons and nephew of Nurhaci.

The challenge for any khan was maintaining central authority among autonomous military leaders. For Nurhaci and his eventual successor, the problem was always the banners and the banner owners. Although the banners were under the control of Nurhaci’s sons and nephew, these kin still ran the banners as semi-autonomous lords, as discussed in Chapter 3. Ambitious men in their own right, the banner owners had complete jurisdiction and control over their men, finances, and territory. They saw themselves as independent leaders, and struggled amongst themselves for power, as well as entertained ideas about establishing their own status as a khan. When Nurhaci died it was inevitable that they would contest for his position and power—a succession struggle was not unusual in steppe politics, after all. What was unusual was the direction that the informal organization of semi-autonomous socio-military units would take.

Nurhaci’s seventh son, Hong Taiji, won the succession struggle, as discussed in Chapter 2, and began to further centralize power and construct state institutions. He built a bureaucracy, set up a censorate, established record-keeping offices, and organized methods and institutions to oversee foreign relations. Against the opposition and political inclinations of the banner owners and relatives, he built up a central agrarian-bureaucratic state. As discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, this involved transforming the sociopolitical order from one based on military prowess and merit to a system of standardized ranks and titles that would operate in direct relation to each other and give deference to bureaucratic superiors. It further involved remaking the nature of political relations, whereby a single sovereign would control political resources and dictate policy.

The making of a centralized state also necessitated political cohesion and the investiture of actors with a sense of common purpose. To this end, in 1635, Hong Taiji declared that the
Jurchen peoples would be called Manchus, uniting them in name and culture, and the next year, 1636, announced the founding of the Qing dynasty. It is unclear whether Hong Taiji had plans to conquer all of Ming China, for the evidence points to a vision of a northern dynasty, but by the 1640s the Ming was under threat from peasant rebellions and would soon collapse on its own accord. The Manchus, now organized politically, socially, and militarily under Hong Taiji’s state apparatus were poised to rule Ming China, which is exactly what they did in 1644, occupying Beijing and beginning the conquest of China proper.

The military conquest of China and the consolidation of Ming controlled territory and subjects was complete by 1683. That date marks the defeat of the three feudatories in the south and the capturing of Taiwan from the Zheng family. Two imperial successions since the passing of Hong Taiji in 1643 further institutionalized the position of the Qing emperor and his status as sovereign. Furthermore, as demonstrated in Chapter 5, the compilation and publication of an administrative code in 1690, the first Da Qing Huidian, formalized the rules and regulations of the dynasty. What was once a loose organization of disparate tribes in the northeast, now was a centralized state with a rigid hierarchy and clear lines of command. As taken up in Chapters 6 and 7, formal procedures for government operations were in place, and ethnically diverse actors were communally invested with a sense of common purpose to conquer and rule. The foundation had been laid for the building of the Qing empire.
PART 1: LI
Chapter 1: The Meanings of Li and Ritual Theory

Li has long been understood as the bedrock of Chinese history and society by both historical actors and modern scholars. Confucius built an entire orientation to life around a particular interpretation of li, after all, and subsequent scholars and officials throughout Chinese history have spared no effort in furthering discourse and commentary on the importance of li. In the modern period, Brunnert and Hagelstrom in their work during the late Qing on the imperial Chinese bureaucracy spoke of li as the core principle of Chinese society. They saw li “supervising the code of ceremonies, rites and forms binding every man… in society, from the Emperor to the most humble subject.”\(^1\) Charles Hucker drove the point home in his work on the Ming dynasty, when he said proper governance in the Ming meant performing li properly,\(^2\) and Noah Fehl devoted an entire book to an exploration of the concept in early Chinese thought and literature.\(^3\) Most recently, Zhang Jinfan has attributed all of China’s past accomplishments and future development to li: “It was li that had brought about the ancient Chinese civilization and formed the unique cultural tradition in the history of world civilization... li not only influenced the ancient society, but will continuously influence the modern society as well as the modern life. Although li belonged to the past, some part of it surely belongs to the present and the future of China.”\(^4\)

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Amidst the declamations on the importance of li, questions arise: what is li and how did it work? This chapter argues that despite the large body of literature attempting to determine the meaning and practices of li, the term has no translatable equivalent, and the concept no single philosophical or institutional essence. Rather, li generally referred to a means of social organization and comportment, which was re-conceived in different ways by different thinkers, officials, and rulers in different times. The following pages show that li changed and that it was constantly open to interpretation and negotiation.

The chapter makes this argument in two parts. The first part surveys the literature on li, dividing the scholarship into five categories of interpretation: ritual, cosmology, social order, law, and administrative order. None of these interpretations are exclusive of the other, and scholars working within one interpretation make the case for understanding that particular aspect of li over others as the core of li, basing their investigation and analysis accordingly. Those works that equate li to ritual, for example, will acknowledge the aspects of li as cosmology and social order, but cast these aspects in terms of ritual activity. Of these different interpretations of li, those that take li as ritual or rites are the most prevalent, which is a result of a branch of anthropology understanding ritual as social order.\(^5\) Li as the basis of law in imperial China has also received much attention, especially by Chinese scholars in search of an understanding of China’s independent legal development.\(^6\) What has not received much attention is li as the foundation of administrative order and operations. Often noted by scholars in passing, or stressed by means of rich quotations but with little substance, this aspect of li has yet to be fully explored


in detail or shown in full, a shortcoming this dissertation addresses. The second part of the chapter looks at how li changed over time. Much of the scholarship on li aims to understand the nature of li and to pin down its meaning, either through investigation of its development in early China or through an exploration of its characteristics. While this work has done much to enlighten our understanding of li overall, scholars have recently begun to look at how li not only changed throughout time, but also how the philosophy and practices of the concept were constantly open to debate and negotiation, especially in the imperial and late imperial periods.

Having addressed the meanings and nature of li, the chapter then turns to the problem of methodology. If li is open to interpretation and its meaning changing over time, then how to analyze it? Many of the forms of li taken up in the scholarship, including those of this dissertation, are discreet, formalized acts done repeatedly and involving more than one actor. These kinds of actions and events have also been examined in religious studies and ritual theory, both of which offer a rich literature of different analytical methods. This part looks at the three dominant methodological approaches in analyzing such events, functionalism, meaning-making, and subjunctivism. The section then discusses why functionalism fails to be able to account for the evidence at hand, and how the case of the early Qing contributes to further theorization of the other two methods.

ASPECTS AND MEANINGS OF LI

Scholars are at odds on how to translate the term li. It is spoken of in English most often as ritual or rites, but also frequently translated as priority or etiquette. Homer Dubs drew up a list of thirteen different English translations that all fit the term: religion, ceremony, deportment, decorum, propriety, formality, politeness, courtesy, etiquette, good form, good behavior, good
manners, and the rules of proper conduct. In the end, he settled on “rules of proper conduct” as the appropriate phrase. Similarly, John Knoblock grappled with a suitable translation, finding that the term could mean both “the highest sense of morality, duty, and social order;” and at the same time also encompass “the most minor rules of good manners, the minutia of polite forms, and insignificant…details of costume and dress.” Despite this complication he chose to continue using what he saw as the common usage: “ritual principles.” More recently, Joachim Gentz outlined four core meanings of the term li in early China, which included religion, sociopolitical order, Heaven, and human sentiments, all of which he argues continued to be part of the system of li throughout the imperial period, and thus leaving the translator in a bit of a conundrum. The problem for these scholars is that li has never just been descriptive of some kind of activity—ritual or other—it has also implied normative rules long debated by Chinese thinkers, all of which does not lend to an easy translation or conceptual correlation. For these reasons, scholars have found it better to not translate the term, a practice followed in this dissertation as well.

In addition to efforts at finding a suitable translation, no small amount of research has gone into attempts to understand the essence of li and the meanings that it holds. As discussed below, scholars have delved into the concrete aspects of li in the form of its rituals, as well as the abstract concepts of morality that have long been captured in the idea. Differing approaches from

10 This point is made by Christian Meyer, “Negotiating Rites in Imperial China: The Case of Northern Song Court Ritual Debates from 1034 to 1093,” in Negotiating Rites, ed. Ute Hüsken and Frank Neubert (Oxford University Press, 2012), 99–100.
11 Noah Fehl remarked that there is “no suitable translation.” Fehl, Li, 3.
Meanings of Li

diverse fields have explored the notion and offered an array of interpretations, and while there is no consensus on a proper English translation of the term, a general understanding in the literature has emerged on the meaning of li as the idea of social hierarchy coupled with prescribed acts for each social position. There the interpretive agreement stops, however, diverging into five different approaches to understanding li: as ritual, cosmology, social order, law, and state administration. The following explores each of these areas of historiographical approaches in detail.

Li as ritual
The understanding and investigation of li as ritual is one of the most common approaches in the literature on li. Studies using this approach often look at the various ritual activities from the earliest times through the Qing, illustrating the general ritual principles and focusing on the recorded practices of the different eras. One of the most ambitious projects to take this approach is Chen Shuguo’s comprehensive multivolume series on all the ritual practices throughout Chinese history. The series is aptly titled The History of China’s Ritual System (Zhongguo lizhi shi), and explores the tangible activities that have been written down and recorded as li in each period. It is akin to a catalogue of the various codified performances throughout history. Other scholarship, such as Hu Ji’s Rituals of Ancient China (Zhongguo gudai liyi) attempt to distill the common ritual activities of ancient and imperial China and explicate the practice. Hu lists six such core ritual practices—capping, marriage, mourning, sacrifice, wine drinking, greetings—

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12 Chen Shuguo, Zhongguo lizhishi (Changsha: Hunan jiaoyu chubanshe, 2002).
and discusses the components of each.\textsuperscript{13} Studies of this approach are largely descriptive, with little analysis.\textsuperscript{14}

The li-as-ritual approach often begins with the ritual origins of li. Studies argue that li was the term to refer exclusively to formal religious events held at preordained times by the aristocracy of the late Shang and early Zhou dynasties (ca. 11th-9th centuries BCE). Over the next millennium the definition and practice of li expanded to include the propriety of stylized, routine practices in human interactions, as developed by Confucius and his successors. Under this narrative, the general trend of evolution of the meaning of li in this early period began with reference to a certain type of ceremonial vessel and progressed to the use of such a vessel for ceremonial purposes. The meaning expanded beyond just the object to embrace ceremonial performance in general, which gave way to other activities that accomplish a similar function of defining rank and social positions. It then came to mean hierarchy in general with set behaviors and performances attached to the social rank.\textsuperscript{15} In this view, there was a progression from the specific object or act to the general organization and practice in terms of standardized comportment.\textsuperscript{16}

In addition to the recognition of the evolution of li to embrace the organization of a sociopolitical order, scholars investigating li as ritual have also emphasized the performance of li. Yuri Pines, for example, argues that Confucius added a moral dimension to li by associating

\textsuperscript{13} Hu Ji, \textit{Zhongguo Gudai Liyi} (Xi’an: Shanxi renmin chubanshe, 1994).

\textsuperscript{14} For a study of the Ming and Qing dynasty rituals in this manner see Li Baochen, \textit{Li bu yuan ren : zou jin Ming Qing shi shi li zhi wen hua} (Beijing Shi: Zhonghua shu ju, 2008).


\textsuperscript{16} This insight is found in Michael David Kaulana Ing, \textit{The Dysfunction of Ritual in Early Confucianism}, Oxford Ritual Studies (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 21.
particular practices with normative behaviors that were attached to social positions. For Confucius, he argues, ritual regulated the sociopolitical order and upheld sumptuary and behavioral norms, and thus led Confucius to oppose the usurpation of a superior’s ritual prerogative by an underling. Pines thus argues that the practices of certain rituals made up the core of the meaning and system of li.\(^\text{17}\) Similarly, Joachim Gentz notes the multiple aspects of li—including sociopolitical order and cosmology—but directs his inquiry to interpreting li as the practices of rituals, and maps the practices of li onto modern ritual theory.\(^\text{18}\) More generally, Roger Ames makes the case that li must be understood performatively, for the very principle of the social relations contained in the concept of li are practiced and permeate daily life. “Without sustained ritual awareness,” Ames writes, “there is no Confucianism.”\(^\text{19}\) Angela Zito’s work on li in the mid Qing dynasty explores the ritual performances, which are mainly ceremonies in her case. Although she acknowledges the many different aspects of li, for her, the realization of li through ritual practice gives it meaning. She thus looks at this through the grand ceremonies of the Qing, discussing how the practices themselves structured power relations and reflected authority. In Zito’s view, to understand li we must “ritualize” it—that is, we must look at the

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performance of the acts and what they did. She effectively shows the performances of li, which were formed in early China, at work in the Qing.²⁰

More recently, scholars have moved away from attempts to explain li as ritual, and turned the equation around to make a definition of ritual based on the concept of li. Taking aim with the narrow understanding of ritual produced in the West as formal rules of routinized conduct performed at preordained times in a ceremonial setting, scholars have begun find inspiration in the broad meaning of li to revise contemporary theories of ritual. Michael Puett has been at the forefront of this movement, redefining ritual as a socialized form of interaction done in repetitive ways. He and his coauthors have targeted everything from handshakes in greeting to words of politeness as everyday rituals that shape our social interactions and help us navigate uncertainty in a fractured world.²¹ His work on sacrifices and the ceremonies surrounding them in early China charts a new understanding of ritual as embracing human interactions and everyday comportment, not just as formal religious acts.²² For Puett, the diversity in the meaning of li, which includes things like social order and our everyday actions, should be included in our definition of ritual. “We should in fact think of issues such as politics, innovation, and ethics as essentially involving the same processes that are involved in the seemingly mundane dialectic of ritual and everyday interactions.”²³ Michael Ing also takes this position in his work on the failure

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of ritual in early China, treating li as rituals that are “not just ceremonial moments held at predetermined times, but are a fundamental element of everyday life.”24 This redefining of ritual as li enables Ing to delve into how people dealt with the problem of ritual failure, or when a ritual does not achieve its desired effect.

The cosmology of li

Closely related to the treatment of li as ritual is the exploration of li as cosmology. Scholars have equated li to the concept of natural law, whereby the prescribed activities embodied in li are the actions that align properly with the cosmos. Under this view, to do the rituals and to act in accordance with the rites is to follow the Way—that is, the natural order of things. Geoffrey MacCormack writes, “The sun moving across the sky acts in accordance with its own nature and so plays its part in maintaining the ‘order’ of the universe. Humans likewise actualize their own natures and contribute to the ‘order’ of the universe by behaving in the manner appropriate to being a human and to the specific social role which they occupy…The Chinese term primarily used to express the behavior required by particular social roles is li.”25 MacCormack here finds that li is tied directly to ideas of the order of the universe and the place of humans within that order. The cosmology is as follows: all phenomena in the universe have a fixed place within which they reside and through which they interact with other things in a regular fashion—the sun moving across the sky as a regular occurrence, for example. Human action takes place within this universe and among these phenomena, and it is necessarily integrated so that if human action

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is contrary to what is deemed proper or in tune with the cosmos, consequences ensue, such as
natural disasters.26

Scholars of the li-as-cosmology thesis note that contemporary actors understood the acts
of the ruler to hold the greatest significance, followed by those of officials. If an act disturbs the
balance of the cosmic order, disasters will occur or heaven will issue warnings or punishments.
Ho Yun-yi uses an example from the Ming to illustrate this point: during his reign in the
fourteenth century, Ming Taizu blamed a prolonged drought on his surveillance commissioners
and regional inspectors, who had abused the law and imprisoned innocent people. In his
understanding, they did not follow li, which disturbed the order of the universe and led to
warnings from heaven. He thus ordered the arrest of these offending officials and tied them in a
horse stable. One of his advisors, Liu Ji, remonstrated that it was in fact the sovereign who was
to blame for the offenses. First, he said, tens of thousands of soldiers’ widows had been retained
in the military compounds. Second, too many people died in a major construction project and
were left unburied. And third, followers of the Red Turban leader had been forced into military
service. Fearing further retribution from Heaven and hoping to set the world aright again, he
allowed the widows to remarry, released laborers from corvee service, and freed the Red Turban
followers.27

26 MacCormack, “Natural Law and Cosmic Harmony,” 254-273. For a brief discussion of li as cosmology in the
Qing see Richard J Smith, “Ritual in Ch’ing Culture,” in Orthodoxy in Late Imperial China, ed. Kwang-Ching Liu

27 Yun-yi Ho, “Ideological Implications of Major Sacrifices in Early Ming,” Ming Studies 1978, no. 1 (January 1,
Li as social order

The problem with interpreting li simply as ritual or cosmology is that the term has long meant much more than that. As early as the ninth century BCE, writings in texts like the Book of Odes (Shijing) discussed li encompassing social norms and manners in addition to rituals and ritual paraphernalia. On the basis of such evidence, scholars like Sato Masayuki argue that contrary to the ritual interpretations discussed above, by the time of the Analects and the Mencius in the late Warring States period, li had taken on a sociopolitical meaning and referred to hierarchy and the proper form of interactions between inferiors and superiors: “li was recognized as a setting out of social manners which would no longer be directly associated with rituals…it was interpreted as a fundamental value by which human individuals should live their social life.”

In this way, scholars such as Sato who take li as social order argue that translating li as rites, rituals, or ceremonies is, as Ch’ü T’ung-tsu bluntly put it, “inaccurate,” for, in the words of Benjamin Schwartz, “the order that li ought to bind together is not simply a ceremonial order—it is a sociopolitical order…involving hierarchies, authority, and power.”

There is much evidence found in early texts supporting this view, and it is quoted liberally by proponents of this position. As an illustration, take two passages from the fourth century BCE text Zuo Zhuan discussing ceremony and li, and mobilized by Ch’ü T’ung-tsu in a detailed discussion of li as social order. The first passage is of Ru Shuji observing the Duke Chao

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28 Sato, The Confucian Quest for Order, 179-186, 190.
of Lu partaking in the proper actions of ceremony for arrival and departure. Ru criticized him for not knowing li. “These are ceremonies and should not be called li,” Ru said. “Li are those things by which [a ruler] maintains his state, carries out his policy and order, and does not lose people.”

The next passage cites Zhao Yang’s response to a question about the li of bowing, yielding, and intercourse. “These are ceremonies, not li.” Zhao replied. Rather, li for Zhao was “the rule of heaven, the principle of earth, and the actions of men,” which included social hierarchy and the relations and actions that governed those hierarchies, the institutions of husband and wife, the system of kinship and relatives, and punishments and politics.32

Scholars who take li as the system of social order often leave the term untranslated due to its complex nature. They chart the meaning of li as a system of rules of behavior appropriate to rank and social status. Ch’ü T’ung-tsu identifies at least four key characteristics of li as sociopolitical order. First, li is relative to one’s status, which means different practices and behaviors correspond to different positions. Second, those acts that are not li (feili 非禮) are practices done by a person of a rank who is not entitled to practice the said li, not necessarily that the li is done improperly. Third, each person is expected to act according to his status and to perform the proper practices fit for his social station. Fourth, following li enables good human relations and proper government. This last point implies that li should be embodied by the state and made the basis of action and behavior for both ruler and officials.33 Li, according to the

32 Ch’u, Law and Society, 230 n11.
33 Ch’u, Law and Society, 230-241. Ishikawa maps out five characteristics that correspond roughly to Ch’u’s. They include customary codes of conduct, normative standards for action, formal external expressions, hierarchical, and reciprocal in that it creates relations. Ishikawa Hideaki, Chūgoku kodai reihō shisō no kenkyū (Tokyo: Sobunsha, 2003), 76-83.
proponents of this position, is an entire system of state and society, which generates order. In the words of Sato, “Li is order itself.”

Li as the basis of law

A subset of the scholarship on li as sociopolitical order is the research on li as the basis of law in imperial China. Scholars of this position focus on the relation between li and fa (often translated as law). They accept the characterization of li as sociopolitical order and add a fifth dimension to the points outlined in the previous section: li as the positive guideline for organizing society. Scholars see li as the principle for actively preventing crime and social disorder, and argue that li provided a model to guide people in doing what was deemed right and proper. In this way, the function of li for these legal scholars is the laying out of rules for maintaining proper relationships and ensuring that all members of society had an integrated place within the social order. Li here actively organizes society—as a legal system, it stops wrongdoings and social disruption before it begins. Scholars argue that li had a moral force that was imposed upon individuals of various ranks and through which it made ethical demands of social roles. A ruler must act in a certain way and be possessed of certain comportment, including the proper practices of ceremony and sumptuary, as well as upholding correct reciprocal relations towards his ministers. Similarly, officials must adhere to the code of conduct through which their performance and moral disposition were measured. This system went on down to the level of the family, stipulating the proper behavior of fathers, sons, wives, and daughters. As Benjamin


Schwartz put it, “A man in whom moral force has won the ascendancy will naturally live up to the ethical demands of his social role. He will submit to li without hesitancy.”

In studies of law, li is often contrasted to fa. Although fa is frequently translated as law, in the pre-modern usage it is more akin to punishments, or the mechanism and rules by which the state maintains social order through the application of physical force. Schwartz puts this succinctly when he contrasts the moral force of li to the physical violence of fa. “Where li cannot be made to apply, fa must be employed to maintain order. Fa is the enacted law designed to keep order by the appeal to fear of punishment. It is thus based directly on the sanction of force.” In other words, fa began where li ended, at the point when the individual failed to adhere to his social status and position and created disturbance in the social fabric around him. Li offered a model of behavior and normative codes of conduct for the occupants of various social stations and their relations with others, whereas fa was the enforcement and sanctions of transgressions against these codes and the social order. Fa enabled standardized punishment for

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38 This is especially the case in studies of comparative law. Especially see Roberto Mangabeira Unger, Law in Modern Society: Toward a Criticism of Social Theory (New York: Free Press, 1976), 93-100. This work sparked two substantive critiques which pursued the contrast of li and fa in comparative history and in light of modern legal studies: William P. Alford, “Inscrutable Occidental - Implications of Roberto Unger’s Uses and Abuses of the Chinese Past,” Texas Law Review 64 (1986 1985): 915-972; Ishikawa, Chūgoku kodai reihōshisō no kenkyū.

39 “So closely is fa associated with punishment, that the word has become a synonym of the word punishment.” Schwartz, “On Attitudes Towards Law in China,” 32. Also see Benjamin I. Schwartz, “Review of Law in Imperial China,” in China and Other Matters (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1996), 70.


offenses and an active means of social control through the use and threat of sanctioned violence.\(^43\)

Scholars of this position see four stages in the development of law in pre-modern China, an elucidation of which makes clear the emergence of fa from li. In the first stage, they argue, ritual and sacrificial practices arose in the Bronze Age, which came to be associated with the proper social organization of an elite. In the second stage, early Zhou kings began to enforce the proper practices of ritual relations, making filial piety the central value, whereby the worst offense was the failure to show proper respect to one’s father and elder brother. The third stage began in the Warring States period and reached a zenith with the Qin state, and was characterized by punishments taking precedent over li, so that equal punishments were issued for crimes and done so without discrimination to social class. The fourth stage was the integration of li and punishments, which began in the Han, when the penal code was reconstructed to reflect the principles of li and the core of hierarchical social relations, so that, according to MacCormack, “the penal codes became…vehicles for the enforcement of the moral values…”\(^44\) This became the basis of the legal order in imperial China.\(^45\)

Ishikawa argues that up through the Warring States period, li continued to be understood as an internal group norm—that is, a type of customary law. “There thus emerged a consciousness that fa would mediate the conflicts and issues outside of the community or among

\(^{43}\) Ishikawa, *Chūgoku kodai reihōshisō no kenkyū*, 57-61.


\(^{45}\) These stages are discussed by Lu Li, Ma Xiaohong, and MacCormack. Geoffrey MacCormack, *The Spirit of Traditional Chinese Law*, The Spirit of the Laws (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 2-3; Ma Xiaohong, *Li yu fa: fa de lishi lianjie* (Beijing: Beijing daxue chubanshe, 2004), esp. ch. 3; Lu, “Lun Zhongguo gudai de liyifa.” Ma identifies a fifth stage, which she calls the modern stage. This stage begins in the late 18th century with economic and demographic changes that start to break down social status and its signifiers. This leads to the major legal reforms in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries that strip li from the legal system and model it on the West. Zhang Renshan makes a similar argument for this stage of development in the modern period. Zhang, *Li fa shehui*. 
people of different social status.\footnote{Ishikawa, \textit{Chūgoku kodai reihōshisō no kenkyū}, 77} Although the aristocracy had already begun to face challenges from below and become unraveled in the Chunqiu period, Ishikawa sees that the idea of the force of li remained attached to the internal dynamics of the group and became the ideal of social organization. In this way, he argues that li as sacrificial and ritual obligations translated into the practices of the Zhou aristocracy and were abstracted to the concept of the moral codes of social organization, while fa, or punishments, was conceived of as the means to enforce this order. The system of law then—the codified expression of the interests and ideals of the society—was articulated in the regulations of li and fa.\footnote{Ishikawa, \textit{Chūgoku kodai reihōshisō no kenkyū}, 76-79; Also see Unger, \textit{Law in Modern Society}, 86-110.}

One useful way of talking about li as law is in terms of what Ch’u T’ung-tsu called the “Confucianization of law,” and Ishikawa termed the principle of “same crime, different punishment” (tongzui yifa 同罪異罰). Beginning with Xunzi, they argue, regulations and punishments were built around the principles of li, especially the obligations inherent in social relations. Code was written to account for the social position of the accused in relation to guilt, so that hierarchies were protected in the legal code. Thus the son who killed the murderer of his father would escape harsh punishment, or the adulterous father who killed the protesting son would also receive light punished. But the wife who beat her mother-in-law was sentenced to death. Similarly, codes upholding mourning made it punishable for sons to do things like marry, take office, or entertain with music during periods of mourning for dead parents.\footnote{Ch’u, \textit{Law and Society in Traditional China}, 267-278; Ishikawa, \textit{Chūgoku kodai reihōshisō no kenkyū}, 61; MacCormack, \textit{The Spirit of Traditional Chinese Law}, esp. ch. 4; Schwartz, “Review of Law in Imperial China.”}

Scholarship on li-as-law points to the codification of li and fa beginning in the Tang dynasty. Around the seventh century, regulations of li and fa were compiled as legal doctrines,
not just left in philosophical texts like the *Rites of Zhou (Zhouli)*. These compilations were ordered by the state and laid out in code through which state and society were organized. The code consisted of specific interpretations and concrete practices of li, and was complete with punishments for not following.\(^4\) Three types of codes came to be issued in late imperial China, and the legal system that emerged can be talked about in the three corresponding parts: administrative, penal, and ritual.\(^5\) Take the published codes as representations of this legal system. In the Tang, the three corresponding codes were the *Tang liudian*, the *Tang lü*, and the *Da Tang kaiyuanli*. In the Ming, the codes were the *Da Ming huidian*, the *Da Ming lü*, and the *Da Ming Jili*. Similarly, in the Qing, they were the *Da Qing Huidian*, the *Da Qing lüli*, and the *Da Qing Tongli*. Each of these codes was informed by the conceptions of li and the regulations themselves guided by the principles of li.

**Li as administrative order**

There is a fifth aspect of li, which is implicit in many studies, but largely unanalyzed. This is li as the principles of bureaucratic organization or administrative order. This aspect is key to both the concept of li and the codes that were developed to express it.\(^6\) From the beginning, li was employed as a means of governance and political organization. Zhou Gong in the eleventh century BCE saw the ritual and sacrificial practices of the time as the foundation of political order, giving ranks and positions to the Shang aristocracy in accordance with li. The development of li over the centuries, as outlined above, continued to become even more

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\(^4\) Lu, “Lun Zhongguo gudai de liyifa,” 64


\(^6\) Zhang Jinfan writes, “The most important function of li was to administer the government and to stabilize the state.” Zhang, *The Tradition and Modern Transition of Chinese Law*, 19.
articulated as the basis of the state, with the practices of li becoming intimately intertwined to the political positions, so that hierarchical ordering according to li became synonymous with the political and administrative organization of the state.\textsuperscript{52} Then, Xunzi more fully articulated li as the center of a sociopolitical system, whereby the ruler would use li to cultivate himself and become moral, which would allow proper fa throughout his realm and result in benevolent rule over the people. At the root of Xunzi’s conception of li were three key administrative principles: li as the maintenance of social distinctions and classes; li as the instrument for measuring subjects and choosing appropriate officials; and li in the implementation of state rituals, which would lead to proper fa and thus harmonious rule.\textsuperscript{53}

What this came to mean in practice can be seen in the administrative statutes that first appeared in the Tang. Codes like the \textit{Tang liudian} and the Ming and Qing \textit{Huidian} lay out rules for the operations of the state and the proper activities of officials. Divided into administrative departments and functions, these codes translated the principles of li into the fundamentals of administrative activity. Foremost were political relations, which were laid out in terms of individual duties associated with the position and obligations to superiors and inferiors. The emperor, for example, had a rigorous ritual schedule that he had to attend, while officials had to uphold specific practices and standards in sending memorials. The idea was that proper enactment of each position of the hierarchy would create harmony and order, and the code was to articulate exactly what that meant in practice. Official positions were ranked hierarchically, and to each position a set of social, behavioral, and dress codes were attached, including how to interact with superiors and inferiors—such as greetings and written communications—how to


\textsuperscript{53} Sato, \textit{The Confucian Quest for Order}, 343-423.
mourn for parents, and the proper attire each rank was to wear on various occasions. As argued in the following chapters, these normative aspects of official activity were the basis of administrative law as expressed in the *Huidian*. Whereas others sections of the *Huidian* laid out the organizational structure, finances, punishments, and infrastructure projects of the state, the section on li spoke directly to the activity and conduct of officials.

This brief survey of the literature on li highlights the various interpretations of the meanings and understandings of the term. Li has played an instrumental role in the history of Chinese politics and society, and it has occupied the efforts of many scholars to get at exactly what it has meant and how it manifests in ritual action and social and political organization. Each interpretation complements the others in uncovering the complexity of the concept and how it was developed and employed. To the detriment of a more complete understanding of li, however, li as administrative order has received scant attention in relation to the other four areas. The few discussions on the matter emphasize the importance of li in administrative organization and cite ancient texts to drive home the point, but no work has yet explored what this meant in practice and how the administrative apparatuses of the various governments were built through li and employed the practices of li in their operations. This is most likely the case because work on the administrative order has emphasized legal code and bureaucratic process over ritual, rites, and interpersonal relations. This dissertation addresses this lacuna by exploring li as the basis of the state and the core principles of the administrative and ruling apparatuses *in practice*. It builds

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54 See Lu Li “Qing Huidian bianxi,” 59-60; Lu Li, “Lun "Qing Huidian" de genbenfa yu xingzhengfa de heyixing,” 31-32; Zhang Renshan, *Li fa shehui*, ch. 4.

55 The four works reviewed here that take up li as administrative order do not speak substantively about how it worked or was translated into practice. Rather, they leave the discussion at the level of abstraction, citing the *Zhouli* or *Liji*, and emphasize how instrumental li was to the state.
upon other studies that have focused on aspects of li in the bureaucracy by taking up the practices of li as a system, and illustrating how it helped organize the state and its means of political control. In pursuit of this analysis, the following section explores changes in li over time.

CHANGE OVER TIME

What most of these works on li have in common is their attempt to find the essence of li. They focus on li in early China, charting its development as a signifier for a system of sacrifices and rituals to the philosophy of a sociopolitical order, and attempt to understand how it came to structure state and society. In this way, the inquiry of this body of scholarship remains focused on an explanation of the phenomenon of li as the foundation of Chinese thought, practice, or government. Such an approach has contributed immensely to our understanding of early China and the influence of the ideas and institutions that shaped later periods of Chinese thought and politics. What it does not do, however, is help explain how li continued to develop. This becomes particularly evident in speaking about the imperial period, where, from the Han onward, the states and societies of China are inadvertently spoken of as some manifestation of the core principles of li that were worked out and implemented in the Han. Ma Xiaohong, for instance, in her study on law, posits a fifth stage in the evolution of li as fa, which begins in the modern period, implying that li remained static for two thousand years after the fourth stage in the Han.56

Li did change, however. As much of the scholarship cited above already notes, it lacked a single philosophical or institutional meaning, and it evolved over time. In early China and

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56 The five stages are as follows: 1) pre-history, 2) Shang-Zhou sacrifice and system of rules, 3) Chunqiu and Waring States integrate punishments, 4) Han-Qing promote li and use punishments, 5) Modern. Ma Xiaohong, *Li yu fa*. 

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throughout the imperial period, the term and concept were open to different interpretations and practices by different rulers and staff, and subject to different understandings and institutional forms by the actors of different periods. Take, for example, what is often considered to be the core of li: the nature of human relations. The institutional form of the hierarchy and proper relations among occupants of the social stations as dictated by li has long been considered by scholars to be that of the “five human relations” (wulun 五倫) and “three bonds” (sangang 三綱).

Supposedly based on the Confucian teaching of li, these principles are at the heart of the organization of society and the proper comportment of individuals. The five human relations are those between father and son, ruler and minister, husband and wife, older and younger brother, and among friends; the three bonds refer to the first three of these relations—father-son, ruler-minister, and husband-wife. All of these relationships imply specific duties and obligations of each party, and it is often understood that the relationships are necessarily unequal and are “formulated in terms of superordination and subordination.”

These relationships are frequently understood to inform the basic principles of li and to be without change. Hsū Dau-lin has shown, however, that this institutional form of proper relations was a Neo-Confucian invention in the Song dynasty, and that the idea of the hierarchy and proper relations within it was long contested among early Chinese thinkers and went through numerous permutations. Foremost, he points out that Confucius never spoke of the five relations or three bonds, but rather only mentioned the importance of ruler-minister and father-son relations. Not until the Mencius does an articulation of the five relations first appear, but with the emphasis first on the father-son relation, followed by ruler-minister, husband-wife, brothers, and friends. The Zhongyong later spoke of the five

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58 Ch’u, Law and Society in Traditional China, 236-237.
Meanings of Li

relations, but it differed from the *Mencius* in the omission of the various principles governing the relations, and most importantly, in placing the ruler-minister relation first, before the father-son relation. Similarly, Hsü shows that the three bonds were first articulated by Han Feizi, who emphasized the need for these three relations to “run in harmony” so that “all under Heaven will have order.” These two forms were later combined by eleventh and twelfth-century Neo-Confucians in the formation of a comprehensive social and political vision. In doing so, they rethought the nature of the relationships in terms of strict one-way obedience, and removed the original notions of reciprocity.  

In addition to philosophical interpretations of li, practices were also open to negotiation and change. Christian Meyer has shown that li was hotly contested in the Northern Song. One key issue he points to was the case of address for the Prince of Pu, the biological father of emperor Yingzong (r. 1063-1067). At stake was the correct interpretation of father-son relations. Because Yingzong had been adopted by the previous emperor, who was the elder brother of the Prince of Pu, many considered emperor Yingzong’s ritual responsibilities to lie with his adopted father. The Prince of Pu, therefore, should not be addressed as the emperor’s father, but rather as uncle, and he should not receive sacrifice in the Taimiao. The emperor and a group of his supporters, however, argued that because the father-son relation was the most important and could not be broken, the emperor must consider his biological father as his father and the correct rite was to address the Prince of Pu as the father of the emperor. Similarly, they held that the Prince of Pu should receive sacrifice in the Taimiao as the father of the emperor. In the end, the

emperor’s position won out and the Prince of Pu received address as the biological father. He never received sacrifice in the Taimiao, however.\textsuperscript{60}

The suburban sacrifices were another key aspect of li that was open to debate and change. Initiated in the early Han dynasty, the suburban sacrifices were annual rituals done at set times in different parts of the capital city to various deities, including Heaven and Earth. These sacrifices were instrumental in the system of li, for they were could only be done by the emperor in order to establish the relationship between emperor and Heaven. The ceremony reflected the cosmology and organization of social relations in the concept of li, as it ensured that all phenomenon and people had their place and that the relationships were stabilized. Three issues continuously plagued emperors and officials, however, leading to political debates throughout history. These issues were the following: what deities should be worshiped, where they should be worshiped, and during which seasons. Initially, under the advice of Confucian scholars, Emperor Cheng (r. 33-7 BCE) set up northern and southern suburban altars to worship Heaven, Earth, and local deities of the mountains and rivers. Wang Mang (r. 9-23) later combined these sacrifices to accord with a particular reading of the Li ji, Chun qiu, and Zhou li that interpreted li as the integration of Heaven and Earth like the bodies of husband and wife. The imperially commissioned ritual text of the Tang, the Da Tang kai yuan li, later codified the suburban sacrifices as taking place together at the southern alter at the same time, and predominately focused on the sacrifice to Heaven.

Neo-Confucians in the Song rejected the combined sacrifice on grounds of the need to segregate sacrifices to give primacy to Heaven as accorded with their interpretation of the hierarchical system of li. Although the Song state did not embrace their position, they came to influence Ming Taizu, who built separate altars to Heaven and Earth for the separate sacrifices in different locations for different times of year. That changed in the summer of 1376, however, nine years after the establishment of the sacrificial system of separate sacrifices. That year, Taizu interpreted heavy rains and flooding as a sign that Heaven was displeased and the sacrifices were improper. He thus switched to follow the Song state’s interpretation of a principle of li of “Heaven as the father, and Earth as the mother,” which entailed performing combined sacrifice to Heaven and Earth together at the same location at the same time. A century and a half later, this system was again changed when the Jiajing emperor in 1530 decided to revert to the Neo-Confucian interpretation of the ceremony of separate sacrifices. His reasoning was twofold: foremost was a call to adhere to what he and his advisors interpreted as the ancient form of li and the original practice of the sacrifices; furthermore, they claimed that sacrificing Heaven and Earth together offended the hierarchical principle of superior and inferior. This system of separate sacrifices was deliberated on briefly in the early Qing, whereupon a decision was made to continue the Ming practice.61

These three examples illustrate the flexibility of interpretation of li and how it was continuously translated and molded throughout imperial Chinese history into different institutional forms and practices. In each instance, contemporary actors struggled with each other over interpretations

and visions of society and politics. Christian Meyer argues that the political and philosophical debates that took place surrounding li, and the changes to be made, occurred at three levels. The first was about imperial power and the use of ritual for state legitimization. Sacrifice to Heaven, for example, was a validation of the position of the emperor and reflected his authority at the head of the state. In the Jiajing sacrificial reforms, for example, Ho Shu-yi argues that the emperor used the changes in the sacrifice to strengthen his position and increase his control over the bureaucracy. The second was as a continuation of the bureaucratic struggles, where factions would stake out a position on a practice or interpretation of li and use it to gain an advantage over their opponents. An ambitious individual could also do so in order to stand out. The third level was out of personal conviction. Scholars and officials, like the Neo-Confucians, made claims about li based on their ideas of social order and convinced of their interpretations of li.

The question then arises, why was it that li need to be discussed over and over again? And what exactly was being negotiated? Meyer offers a convincing four-part answer to these questions. Foremost, li was not just a ritual, whereby the proper sequences of bowing only needed to be determined and then all was set. Rather, li also involved ethical norms, which required interpretations and negotiations over correct behavior, such as the meaning and practice of being filial. Similarly, it was political and worked to legitimize social and political order. The symbolic meaning of li in terms of the normative claims and the politics meant not only that li was open to interpretation, but also that it required adjustment and reinterpretation according to the times. Second, li was a key medium of power struggle among the various social and political groups, namely, the emperor, officials, literati, and commoners. Because interpretation over li

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62 Ho, “Ming Jaijing chao de jiaosili gaige,” 18-19.

was always open, different groups had different ideas about what should be practiced and how it would empower some over others. Third, li was both interpretation and public performance. For example, nominating a heir or forms of address to the emperor’s biological father enabled questions of legitimacy and public opinion to emerge, engaging other actors in debates. Fourth, a school of thought represented by Ouyang Xiu and Su Shi saw li as instrumental in expressing and strengthening natural feelings; this required the remaking and refashioning of the practices of li according the situation. This position inherently called for changes to li, but it also came into conflict with the Neo-Confucian position, which had formed its own interpretation of li and the proper practices to be adhered to for the cultivation and attainment of sage-hood.\textsuperscript{64} These aspects of li ensured that it continued to be a concept and principle that was constantly open to interpretation and change throughout Chinese history, not just in early China. This persisted in the Qing.

METHODOLOGY: THREE APPROACHES TO ANALYZING LI

Before turning to investigate how li in the Qing was shaped by the specific historical circumstances and needs of the Manchu state, it is first necessary to consider a method for analyzing the practices of li. These practices include ceremonies and rites, greetings, labeling and titling, hierarchical ordering, welcoming, banqueting, annual observations and celebrations, as well as political meetings and negotiations. More than just a collection of random events and activities found in the documents of a premodern society, these things all share certain attributes: they bring people together, occur regularly and repeat in the same way at various intervals, are fixed in format and often formalized, and they involve hierarchy. They also share a common

\textsuperscript{64} Meyer, “Negotiating Rites in Imperial China,” 106-109.
identifying signifier: they are all called li by contemporary actors and come to be codified in the Qing administrative statutes as the key practices of li.

The preceding sections of this chapter argued that li is open to interpretation in the scholarship, and that its form and practice has changed over time. To study li, however, one must look at certain manifestations that contemporary actors understood to be li. These are often discrete events involving one or more actors partaking in fixed sequences, which are done repeatedly and are formalized—an annual ceremony, for example, or an ancestral sacrifice. Such activity is often called ritual, a designation of li that I resist in light of the previous discussion of the multiple meanings and indeterminate nature of li. Still, the methods developed by ritual scholars to explore this kind of activity are immensely useful in helping bring about a better understanding of concept and act. Indeed, ritual theory offers many insights and an array of approaches that enable the historian of China to get at the practices of li in new and innovative ways.

This section explores three influential methods for studying ritual: functionalism, meaning-making, and subjunctive. These three methods are chosen on account of their importance in application to historical materials, and for their capacity to help explain the evidence drawn upon in exploration of the early Qing. They are not all equal. Functionalism is discussed because much of the historiography on China tends to adopt this position of ritual as a reflection of pre-existing structures and relations, an approach avoided in the chapters that follow. The analysis throughout the dissertation is influenced by the other two approaches discussed in detail below. The section further explores each of these approaches in light of the questions put to the sources and how they help explain the evidence used in this dissertation.
Three theories of ritual

Functionalism. The functionalist approach sees ritual as an instrument of social order. In this view, ritual resides outside of society (rather than constituting the social relations themselves, as in the subjunctive theory) and performs a function of creating and maintaining social order. The ritual in this approach is seen as standing apart from the actors and their interactions, existing as something that can be studied from afar in order to get at fundamental aspects of social relations, the human psyche, or language. As one critic of this approach nicely summed up, "In such a view, the thing itself always resides beyond the ritual, and the ritual acts is only its instrument."65 Thus, the scholar of a society in question looks at ritual in order to come to an understanding of the more fundamental order of the pre-existing organization and operation of the society. The ritual here is a reflection of something else. That something else is usually social solidarity.

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown is a good representative of this theory. In his work, Radcliffe-Brown turned to ritual in attempt to understand "the contribution that they make to the formation and maintenance of a social order."66 At the heart of his inquiry was how societies hold together and the individual actors achieve harmony. He saw ritual performing this function of producing and maintaining social solidarity through the generation of sentiments. "Rites can be seen to be the regulated symbolic expressions of certain sentiments. Rites can therefore be shown to have a specific social function when, and to the extent that, they have for their effect to regulate, maintain and transmit from one generation to another sentiments on which the constitution of the society depends."67 For Radcliffe-Brown, then, society exists apart from practice, and rites and

65 Seligman et al., Ritual and Its Consequences, 4.
Meanings of Li

rituals act to both reproduce the social bonds and maintain the necessary degree of social solidarity. Ritual does this, he held, through the use of commonly understood symbols and actions that unite individuals in harmonious order, and periodically reminding them of their social bonds.

Radcliffe-Brown pointed to lineages and ancestor-worship as an example of how this works. The lineage often includes living and dead persons descendant from the same ancestor, living members of which partake in joint sacrifice to the dead members. These rites include offerings of food and drink. Radcliffe-Brown placed the lineage within the wider society and said that what “gives stability to the social structure is the solidarity and continuity of the lineage.” The individual has ritual duties to his lineage, the carrying out of which “controls” and “inspires” sentiments within the individual that further the lineage and the wider social order. “The social function of the rites is obvious,” he wrote, “by giving solemn and collective expression to them the rites reaffirm, renew and strengthen those sentiments on which the social solidarity depends.”

That is, ritual is an instrument of a more basic purpose of power, politics, and social control.

System of symbolic meanings. Whereas the functionalist approach is concerned with a social reality represented by the ritual, the meaning-making theory of ritual asks what the ritual means. Moving from the question of function to the question of meaning, scholars of this approach analyze culture independent of the social system, positing ritual, rites, and symbols as the

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68 Radcliffe-Brown, Structure and Function in Primitive Society, 163-164.

fundamental reality itself. In this view, symbols influence motivations by formulating coherent conceptions of existence and actually shaping social order rather than just reflecting it. In the words of Clifford Geertz, “To construe the expressions of the theatre state [i.e. ritual], to apprehend them as theory…the prejudice…that the dramaturgy of power is external to its workings, must be put aside. The real is as imagined as the imaginary.” Geertz’s critique of functionalism continued in an articulation of the concrete workings of politics and the state not just as “dances and incense,” but also in terms of “the exemplary ceremonial, model-and-copy hierarchy, expressive competition, and iconic kingship; organizational pluralism, particulate loyalty, dispersive authority, and confederate rule.” In his study of the Balinese state, Geertz showed that “the men who made their way through this reality—building palaces, drafting treaties, collecting rents, leasing trade, making marriages, dispatching rivals, investing temples, erecting pyres, hosting feasts, and imaging gods—were pursing the ends they could conceive through the means they had. The dramas of the theatre state, mimetic of themselves, were, in the end, neither illusions nor lies, neither slight of hand nor make-believe. They were what there was.”

This approach sprang foremost out of a critique of functionalism. In another influential piece on the failure of a funeral ritual in contemporary Indonesia, Geertz argued that functionalism could not explain social change and transformation. Pointing out the static picture of society portrayed by functionalism, he criticized the theory as having “a bias in favor of well-integrated societies in a stable equilibrium and to a tendency to emphasize the functional aspects

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of a people’s social usages and customs rather than their dysfunctional implications.” This led to an “over conservative view of the role of ritual” and tended to give it a harmonizing function. Such a view, Geertz argued, could not explain disruption, disintegration, change, or transformation. Geertz accounted for this problem in functionalism by its tendency to treat culture and social processes unequally. He found that the theory reduced one to the other, making one a “mirror image” of the other, so that either culture was “wholly derivative from the forms of social organization,” or “the forms of social organization are regarded as behavioral embodiments of cultural patterns.”

To address this shortcoming in ritual theory, Geertz moved to distinguish between cultural and social systems. Culture, he said, is the meaning that people rely upon to interpret their lives and guide their action; whereas the social structure is the form that the action takes, or the network of social relations. For Geertz, a successful ritual is one where the different forces of cultural and social systems are integrated. For example, the roles and positions in a funeral ritual and banquet correspond to the social positions of the community. When they are not, then the ritual can fail to achieve the desired effect of bringing people together and reproducing the existing social order, as occurred in Geertz’s example of the tensions at an Indonesian funeral as a result of shifting social positions and community geographies. Such a theory can account for change, he claimed, both culturally, i.e. in the ritual, as well as socially in the structure of social or political relations.

73 Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, 143-144.
74 Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, 145.
75 Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, 153-169.
With this critique in hand, proponents of the meaning-making theory of ritual came to see rituals as comprising a system of meanings that actively constructed people’s reality. Distinct from the functionalist approach, which took ritual as an indication of something more fundamental, the meaning-making approach sees ritual as the very constitution of that fundamental thing, whether it be society, politics, or power. The ritual makes the power rather than reflecting it, and does so by constructing a web of symbolic meanings that ties individuals into a system of relations, interactions, and power. As Geertz put in in analysis of nineteenth-century Bali, “the state cult was not a cult of the state. It was an argument, made over and over again in the insistent vocabulary of ritual, that worldly status has a cosmic base, that hierarchy is the governing principle of the universe, and that the arrangements of human life are but approximations, more or less, to those of the divine.”76 Geertz illustrated this through the example of a state ceremony, which he called a “metaphysical theater” that expressed a view of ultimate reality that simultaneously shaped life to be in line with that reality. This consisted of both a specific social organization and a cultural construction of symbols. Socially, it meant a hierarchy of relations of individuals in distinct social stations that had various roles in the ceremony, and who achieved their power through the ceremony, e.g. the king projected as king by dint of his position at the head of the ritual. Culturally, there were symbols such as a lotus seat of the god referring to his power and energy, and oblong rocks in the temples that stood for divine kingship, each of which had a place in an intricate articulation of a certain world view.77 These two aspects aligned to create the Bali state, Geertz argued, by defining how reality was arranged. The court, traditions, and the temples and palaces defined what power was—they

76 Geertz, Negara, 102.
77 Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, 104-106.
constructed the state by constructing the king, and the king was constructed by constructing a god.  

**Subjunctive theory of ritual.** The subjunctive theory of ritual focuses on the practice and the work of fixed, formal, and repetitive actions. According to the subjunctive theory, ritual is a socialized form of interaction repeated consistently among the performing groups or actors, and thus has been formalized by code or custom. Usually, a normative rule has established the performance and context of the ritual act, making non-participation a transgression of social values and practices. This characteristic gives ritual a binding prerogative in the minds and bodies of actors. Those of the social group partaking in the prescribed activities must make a decision to either follow social norms and enter into predetermined social relationships—i.e. do the ritual—or reject the prescribed activities and suffer the consequences of punishment or exclusion. Either way, the ritual sets up a context through which social action occurs.

A subjunctive theory is not focused on meaning, but rather with what people do. It looks at the actions and practices themselves. Although participants may partake in ritual acts without fully understanding the meaning, they end up producing a social world. In this theory, aspects of daily life, like courtesy and politeness are considered modes of ritual action. The use of accepted forms of behavior that signify deference and formality invite others to join in imagining a particular symbolic universe within which we act. The use of words like “please” and “thank you” recognize the other’s agency by creating an illusion of equality. These acts of politeness

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78 Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 121-136.

offer to the other an opportunity to decline, even if it is an illusionary opportunity, for what the ritual of “please” and “thank you” embodies is an entire understanding of human interaction—in this case premised on the equality and autonomous agency of individuals. As will be shown in subsequent chapters, this particular “ritual” form of politeness in the context of China marked hierarchy instead of imagined equality. The prescribed forms of presentation, greeting, and interpersonal action among different social stations projected a social world of segregated positions and social ranks.

In the subjunctive theory of ritual, ritual creates “as if” worlds. The ritual provides a framework for individuals to interact, and in doing so they pretend for that moment that they actually do embody the roles that they project and the social relations that they partake in. Participants of the ritual perform acts as if the world produced in ritual were in fact the real one. “It is not enough for kings to be king,” write Seligman, Weller, Puett, and Simon, “they must act as if they were kings. Justice must not just be meted out, it must be seen to be meted out.” The ritual here does the work of socializing actors, both to each other and for a particular context—the ritual shows people how to navigate confused and fractured relationships and interactions. What does it mean to be king? It means acting like a king would act; the rituals show one how to act like a king, and also informs others on how to act towards a king. It thus both creates the king and the context within which he can be king.

Robert Sharf likens ritual to play, whereby an object’s sign is displaced onto something else. He gives the example of a child’s game, where a stick becomes a horse. The child straddles the stick and “rides” it around as if it were a horse. This make-believe game is not a retreat from

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81 Seligman et al., Ritual and Its Consequences, 25.
the real world, according to Sharf, but rather a foray into the world. The child comes to understand the logic of signs; he learns to interact with the world as a social actor. The horse is not an actual thing that must be confronted, but rather a category of object that one relates to in a certain way: in this case, by riding on it. According to Sharf, the ritual is not the symbol of an actual object standing behind it—it is not a reflection of some more fundamental reality—but rather an orientation to an object or person that helps create the world. As Seligman, et al. put it, “It is the framing of the actions, not the actions themselves, that makes them rituals. Thus both partaking of the Eucharist and shaking hands can be understood as actions that are framed ritualistically. They can also be understood nonritualistically, at least on their margins.”

Projecting this to religious acts, we take the wafer as if it were the flesh; interact with the shaman as if she were the ancestor; or worship the icon as if it were the god. We do not believe that the wafer is the flesh itself; only proceed as if it were the case.

Methodologically, the subjunctive theory of ritual looks at the work that ritual does to bring actors together and knit together a fractured world. It does not look at the meanings of the ritual, but rather sees ritual doing things rather than an activity or system of meaning making. The ritual activity in this approach embodies a social and political world; it constitutes the relationships of the social actors and takes an active role in creating a particular order.

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83 Seligman et al., Ritual and Its Consequences, 5.

84 Sharf, “Ritual,” 256-257.

Each of these three approaches to ritual have given insight into various aspects of human activity and shown the importance of ritual, rites, and symbols in the workings of human societies. Functionalism emphasized ritual acts in the building of social solidarity and led to new understandings in religion, politics, and society. Meaning-making approaches turned from a purely instrumentalist view of ritual to an exploration of its meaning and brought to light the key role of culture and its dialectic with society. The subjunctive theory of ritual builds upon these two approaches to develop an understanding of ritualized human activity; it furthers the endeavor into understanding ritual by taking an interest in what ritual does rather than how it functions or what it means. The subjunctive theory differs from functionalism in that it recognizes conflict and accounts for change, and further holds that actors know very well what ritual does and why they do it. Whereas functionalism posited a harmonious world maintained by ritual acts that only the analyst could make sense of, subjunctivism takes the world as fractured and actors consciously engaged in the constant work of ritual to navigate their interpersonal dealings and social interactions. The subjunctivist theory also departs from Geertzian and meaning-making interpretations, which are concerned with what symbols and ritual mean, and elaborates the intricacy of the connection of the ritual acts, symbols, and culture. By contrast, a subjunctivist theory looks at the ritual practice and its performance; it takes account of the context within which the ritual is framed and examines the work that the ritual does in managing interpersonal relations. Whereas a meaning-making approach would look at all the symbols, acts, and organization of a society as a comprehensive system of coherent meaning and then deduce an entire worldview out of it, the subjunctive approach takes these things not as an expression of a coherent worldview but rather activities that bring people together in certain ways. In the
subjunctive approach, the ritual is understood as the constitution of the messy and at times contradictory world of social relations, politics, or power.

Application and shortcomings
Each of these key methodologies offers something to the student of ritual, and each has been employed to illuminate ritual activity in Chinese history. It thus must be asked how and why to employ one method. As stated above, this dissertation bases its analysis on the meaning-making and subjunctivist approaches to ceremony and ritual-type activity, and does so because they enable a better analysis and explanation of the evidence at hand. In short, functionalism fails to be able to account for the historical context and activities under discussion in the case of li and the early Manchu state. Only by looking at li under a method influences by the meaning-making and subjunctivist approaches can the development of early Qing politics, society, and culture be adequately explained.

Take for example one of the key state ceremonies under investigation in the pages that follow: the New Year’s Day ceremony. This event repeated regularly, involved a group of actors engaged in routinized practices, and had various forms of formalization, first by custom then by code. This annual event, celebrated on the first day of the lunar new year, brought together all of the political and military actors of the Manchu state, and a fixed protocol of action evolved to organize ceremonial actors and activity, which was gradually formalized and latter codified. The ceremonal form the Qing made law was initiated in 1632 in the midst of internal political struggles and underwent minor changes in tandem with a changing political environment in the 1630s and 40s. Regulations were set over the performance, and in 1690 it was codified in Qing law.
A functionalist theory of ritual approach would see the ceremony as a reflection of preordained power relations. The political positions would have been previously settled behind the scenes, political resources already divided, and actors aware of the extent or limitations of their power in the corresponding sociopolitical structure. In this view, the ritual is seen as inscribed on top of this system as an instrument for exhibiting and preserving its operation. The ruler at the head of the ceremony would be representative of his superior status in relation to the ministers and officials, and the hierarchical ordering of all other actors in the ceremony representative of their positions in the sociopolitical order. The ceremony would then further function to preserve these positions and maintain the nature of the political relationships and the existing order. It would do so by reinforcing the structure of society and reminding actors of the presence of the state, its organization, and their place within it. The ceremony, in this view, functions to uphold the balance of power. The frequent ritual testifies to the harmonious agreement of all actors in this arrangement.

The problem with the application of this theory to the Manchu New Year’s Day ceremony is that it does not account for the historical context. Foremost, power relations were not yet determined when the ceremony was initiated in 1632 and remained tenuous over the next decade. The khan, Hong Taiji, was locked in a struggle for power with his brothers, and when he finally deposed of them, he had his sons and other relatives to contend with. The positions accorded in the ceremony did not reflect the existing structure of society because society did not yet have a structure. The hierarchy, the division of political resources, and sociopolitical and military stations were still being determined through conflict and negotiation, and would continue to be for at least another decade and a half, and in many ways through the rest of the seventeenth century. Under the functionalist theory of ritual one would expect power to be first determined
and then the ritual grafted on top. But that is not what happened. Power continued to be negotiated and contested as the ceremony was being worked out. Thus, the functionalist approach cannot explain why the ceremony happened at that point in time, nor can it explain why the ceremony happened at all. The theory would hold that ritual was to promote harmony and to remind actors of their commitment to each other and role in the existing social structure. However, in the case under investigation here, there was no harmony yet to uphold, nor was there any society to be committed to. The order was still under formation and actors still aligning themselves on different sides and over different visions.

The meaning-making approach can account for social and cultural change by analyzing the ceremonial acts and the symbols employed throughout, and by investigating the context of social and political relations. This approach would look at everything involved in the ceremony including the clothing, the palaces, the incense, the utterances, the staging of the actors, and even the color of the chairs to compile a thesis of the world vision being constructed by the organizers to perpetuate a certain reality. In this theory, there is a coherent meaning that can be deduced through a careful investigation of all aspects, and from which the meaning of the event can be seen to correspond to the social and political reality of the actors. This approach assumes a coherent system of symbols and meanings that take form in the minds of actors and that shape social activity.

The analysis throughout the chapters below draws on the tools this approach provides to analyze culture and society as two separate but interrelated systems. Whereas functionalism was static, this approach can account for change. Where it comes up short, however, is in its ability to explain the formation of these cultural and social systems. In the case of the early Manchu New Year’s Day ceremony, the system of meanings continued to evolve before it was formalized and
could correspond with the political reality. Likewise, political relations were coming into being in the formation of a state and thus constantly under contestation. In short, there was no coherent meaning or system, and the symbols were an amalgamation of different Manchu and Chinese traditions as well as contemporary inventions or compromises. The random assortment of symbols and practices had no determinate nature, nor were they initially formalized. Thus, the meaning of the ruler sitting at the head of the ceremony and in the middle of his brothers was concurrently being constructed as the struggles for power were taking place, and it did not correspond in sign or system to the hats worn or gods worshipped. The ritual here did not yet constitute power; rather, the ritual was being consciously constructed in a way so that it could constitute power.

The immediacy of the political struggles, the changing sociopolitical and ritual order, and the indeterminacy of the cultural signs were key developments in the early Manchu state. The subjunctive theory of ritual helps to further account for these phenomena by recognizing the importance of the acts in a particular context and looking at the work those acts did to help create a particular order. The ceremony is neither a reflection of the existing sociopolitical order, because such an order does not yet exist, nor does it comprise a system of symbolic relations and coherent meaning because the symbols and meanings are still being created. The ceremony then must be understood as part of the process of determining interpersonal and political relations among actors struggling to command the form and operations of the new state. The ceremony did work to show actors their place in the emerging order, and to give them precedence, practices, and instruction on how to relate to each other in this order. Because the institution and the cultural forms were not yet set, the ceremony continued to evolve in tandem and in direct relation to the political relations.
Here Geertz’s insight on the relation between culture and social structure illuminates, but does so from the perspective of an attempt by Qing actors to bring the two together to actively create meaning and a world view rather than the perspective of their being wrench apart in twentieth-century Indonesia in the failure of ritual and dissolution of traditional society. In this way, the case of the formation of Qing state and culture shows the ad hoc and contested process of meaning making. Not only are the two processes intertwined—the ritual developing as the political order formed, and the political order being shaped and defined by the ritual—but also that the coherence of either the culture or social structure was not clear until codification in 1690. As the chapters that follow show, the Qing actively and at times quite consciously constructed the system of meaning. The next chapter begins this exposition with a detailed exploration of the New Year’s Day ceremony.
PART 2: TRANSFORMATIONS OF LI
Chapter 2: The New Year’s Day Ceremony of 1632

An unprecedented event occurred on the first day of the first lunar month of 1632 (Tc6.1.1). Unlike years past, the khan, Hong Taiji took his place in the center seat in the middle of the ritual hall, while his two brothers were placed on either side of him. Previously, Manchu strongman Nurhaci held the ceremony with little pomp or positioning, and the Ming, although inundating their ceremony with intricacy and splendor, did not place such emphasis on the seating of the emperor, and certainly did not involve any of his siblings or relatives. This development in the young Manchu organization was all the more significant in that it directly contradicted Nurhaci’s instructions to his sons and nephew to all sit together and rule jointly. Nurhaci emphasized that the three brothers and cousin were to have equal status and equal input in the governing process. He specifically emphasized that they were to sit at equal heights and positions when gathering. But now Hong Taiji sat elevated at the center. He symbolically assumed the role of sovereign, concentrating attention, meaning, and activity on his person. He had changed the ceremony in his ongoing, and eventually successful, attempt to alter the division of political resources.

This change of seating was further heightened by a change in the ceremonial procession. That year, the ritual organization of relatives, officials, and embassies began in an unusually disciplined and orchestrated fashion. Unlike years past, when seniority was given primacy and respect and recognition was offered to the joint rulers in varying degrees based on social status, military rank now held precedence and a specific Manchu form of a kowtow consisting of three

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1 The seating arrangement of the kin prior to this date is unclear. As discussed below, however, new emphasis was placed on Hong Taiji sitting in the center and being physically elevated above the others.
genuflections and nine prostrations was required of all participants.\(^2\) Most significant was the parading of the Eight Banners by their leaders, where, for the first time, they were organized in a sequence based on the ranking of the banner unit.

This chapter explores the 1632 New Year’s Day ceremony in detail, arguing that changes in the ceremony were integral to the evolving political and social struggles among contemporary actors. The manipulation of symbolic action and interpersonal relations took place amidst a struggle for power of position and control of how political resources would be divided. The ceremony not only gave primacy to one man in his contest for political control and power, but also helped organized an emerging sociopolitical body into discrete relationships and offered instruction to political actors in how to act towards the proclaimed sovereign and relate to each other. The result was a transformation in this form of li, which came to be codified as the ceremonial practice of the dynasty and to help structure sociopolitical relations in the Qing.

MANCHU POLITICS AND THE NEW YEAR’S DAY CEREMONY OF 1632

The significance of the 1632 New Year’s Day ceremony cannot be understated. Not only did it establish a precedent for the New Year’s Day ceremony for the next two and a half centuries, but it also began to define a system of symbolic meanings that would come to be attached to an emerging sociopolitical order. The basic structure and activity of the ceremony—the seating of the sovereign in the middle, his role at the head of the ritual, the parading of imperial relatives, the organization of officials, and the positioning of foreign dignitaries—were codified in the Qing legal code some sixty years later as the essential components of the New Year’s Day ceremony.

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\(^2\) For more on the kowtow see Ke Li (Macabe Keliher) and Ruu-shuan Chi, “Xunfu tianxia: Qingchao zhengquan yu sanguijiukoutouli kaiduan yanjiu” (presented at the Chung-yang University Conference for Chinese History, Chung-yang University, 2012).
ceremony that would be implemented and practiced throughout the Qing. These aspects were built into a system of symbolic meanings as expressed in the *Huidian*, which helped shape the political relations still under construction in the early years, in addition to reproducing them in later years. Given the importance of the ceremony of this year, and the significance that it would come to have, it is worth quoting the text in full as it was recorded in the Manchu court records.

On the first day of the month, the khan led all the beile to kowtow to heaven and to the ancestor spirits. [Afterwards], sitting in the yamen, the senior beile [Daišan] sat on the right side of the khan, and Manggūltai on his left. The two beile sat facing sideways on beds placed sideways.

After being seated, all the beile and taiji kowtowed. After kowtowing, the taiji entered the yamen en masse and sat on the two sides. Next were the beile of Cahar and Kalka, who came from a foreign state to pay respects. Third, Si Uli efu, who came from the Chinese state to pay respects, led all the Chinese officials in kowtowing. Next, the plain yellow banner general Yangguri Efū [a rank given to a son in law] led his banner officials in kowtowing. Next, the bordered yellow general Darhan efu led his banner officials in kowtowing. Next, the plain red banner general Hošotu efu led his banner officials in kowtowing. Next, the plain white banner general Kakduri led his banner officials in kowtowing. Next, the bordered red general Yecen led his banner officials in kowtowing. Next, the bordered white vice general Ilden led his banner officials in kowtowing. Next, the plain blue banner, but because the commander was sick, all the banner officials kowtowed [without being led]. Next, the general Unege led all the Mongol high officials in kowtowing. Next the new officials that were brought over with the surrender at Dalinghe kowtowed. Next, the leader of the Aru state Dalai Cūhur led all his friends in kowtowing. Next, the officials of the three teachings, Confucian scholars, Daoist priests, and Buddhist monks, kowtowed. Next, the Korean envoy, General Cheong Ik kowtowed and placed on the table the gifts for the spring rite that he was sent with and offered a letter to the khan. After all the people had kowtowed, the khan went to the home of the senior beile and kowtowed in the brother rite.

Up until now, for these past five years the khan has sat on the throne with the three beile together all facing south, and there received the kowtows of the people. From this year it is corrected. The khan distinguishably sits alone facing south. The eight banners have been each leading their banner officials in kowtowing. When kowtowing, they have not been following the order of the central and wing battalions, but rather first kowtowing according to the age of the brother [i.e. ritual propriety has been following the
age of the beile leading the banner and not the strength of the banner]. From this year it is corrected. Kowtowing follows the banner ranking.

For the banquet, each banner received ten tables and five geese. All those with the rank of general got twenty tables and twenty geese. Altogether there were one hundred tables and one hundred bottles of wine. They cooked the meat of wild animals and banqueted.³

One of the most remarkable things about this passage is that it gives such a complete description of the New Year’s day ceremony. Prior to this document, the most extensive recording of a New Year’s day ritual is but a few short passages of sparse detail. For all intents and purposes, prior to this time, the Manchus deemed the rites they practiced on the first day of the first year insignificant, or routine, at best. But something happened in 1632 worthy of recording, something that changed not just the nature of the ritual, but also the struggles among actors for political and military power.

³ MWYD 8.50-51; MR 5.619-621. (The original file of the MWYD can be found in the National Palace Museum under file number 111000002.) han geren beise be gaifi, abka, wecekudu hengkilefyamun de teh, han i ici ergi de amba beile, hashī ergi de manggūltai beile jwe beile i tere besergen be hetu sindafti betu forome teh, teme wajiha manggi, ujude geren beise, tajisa hengkilehe, hengkileme wajiha manggi, ton de dosika tajisa be yamun i dolo juwe ashan de tebuhe, beise i ili enu gurun ci baime jihe cahar, kalka i beise hengkilehe, ilaci de, nikan gurun ci baime jihe si uli efu, germen hafasa be gaifi hengkilehe, terei sirame gulu suwayan i dzung ding guwan yanggūru efu, ini gūsai ambasa be gaifi hengkilehe, terei sirame kubuhe suwayan i dzung ding guwan darhan efu, ini gūsai ambasa be gaifi hengkilehe, terei sirame gulu fulgiyan i dzung ding guwan hošottu efu, ini gūsai ambasa be gaifi hengkilehe, terei sirame gulu šanggiyan i dzung ding guwan kakduri, ini gūsai ambasa be gaifi hengkilehe, terei sirame kubuhe fulgiyan i dzung ding guwan yecen, ini gūsai ambasa be gaifi hengkilehe, terei sirame kubuhe šanggiyan i fujiyang ilde, ini gūsai ambasa be gaifi hengkilehe, terei sirame kubuhe lamun i gūsai fıyanggū age, ini gūsai ambasa be gaifi hengkilehe, terei sirame gulu lamun i gūsai ejen nimeme ofi, gūsai germen ambasa hengkilehe, terei sirame dzung ding guwan unege, mongo i germen ambasa be gaifi hengkilehe, terei sirame dalșingo ci dahabufi gaijha ike hafasa hengkilehe, terei sirame aru i gurun i ejen dalai cufir ini gucuse be gaifi hengkilehe, terei sirame šusai, doose, hūwašan, ilan tacibûk jurgun i hafasa hengkilehe, terei sirame solho gurun i niyengniyeri doroi seng li benjihe elcin dzung ding guwan hergen i jeng i gaijha jaka be dere de tukiyefi bihe jafafti, han de hengkilehe, eiten gurun hengkileme wajiha manggi, han, ahūn i doroi amba beile i boode genefi hengkilehe, han, soorin de tehe ci ebsi sunja aniya otolo, gurun i hengkilere be, han, ilan beile, gemu emu adali julesi forome adame tefi alime gaimbihe, bonio aniya ci dasafi, han be temgetuleme emhun julesi forome tebuhe. jakūn gūsai beise, meni meni gūsai ambasa be gaifi hengkilembihe, tere hengkilere de, fere gala be bodorakū, se i ahūn i bodome neneme hengkilembihe, tere aniya ci dasafi fere ci bodome hengkilehe, tere sarin de emu gūsai juwanta dere, sunjata nionginitionya, germen dzung ding guwan i hergengge niyalma de orin dere, orin nionginitionya, uheri tanggū dere, tanggū malu arki, gurgu i yali bujufi sarilaha.
The description itself offers an interpretation of the importance of developments here. In the third paragraph above, the editors stepped out of the descriptive narrative of the event in order to explain to the reader the differences of this ceremony. This change in tone and content points to a recognition of the entirety of the significance of what was taking place that year. Previously, the editors wrote, Hong Taiji along with his brothers and cousin all sat together to receive the New Year’s congratulations. This ceremony, however, changed all that. Hong Taiji now took center position and sat alone facing south, the cardinal position. Furthermore, the author of the text continued, the procession of the banners would no longer be organized according to the seniority of the banner owner, but rather grouped according to ranking based on banner merit. This would not only allow Hong Taiji the lead role in the ceremony, despite being the youngest sibling, but also give primacy to his banners.

This event and the recording of it were part of the process of political struggle among the Manchu elite. The New Year’s Day ceremony was a contestation for the division of political resources in the construction of a central hierarchical organization with a sovereign at the top commanding full authority over men and materials through the capacity of issuing binding rules backed up by force. As expressed in the language of the New Year’s Day ceremony, a single sovereign was made manifest. He placed himself symbolically at the center in order to represent the state in form and function. He sat in a location and at a level that focused attention upon his person, leaving no mistake in the identification in roles of superiority and inferiority and positions of authority. This was a first articulation of the emerging political order, how it would be organized, and who would run it. A single sovereign took the center throne, sharing neither position nor place with any subject, for no subject could occupy the same position nor play the same role as the sovereign. The imperial relatives, the military, the officialdom, and foreign
dignitaries came to submit to the sovereign in stratified intervals according to their rank and political position. To have primacy over another group was to be honored with unprecedented privilege—a privilege constructed and controlled by a particular vision of the state put forth by Hong Taiji and his staff. These relationships were enacted in the ceremony, and in doing so gave form to how individuals and groups would interact in the everyday political realm and how political resources were distributed. It was a turn away from the ambiguous joint rule and diffused power that had defined the socio-political order and ceremonies in the past. Both a statement and an act were being played out in the 1632 ceremony, and the editors of the record of the event meant to capture it in full.

The politics of the day even received mention, for they formed the backstory to the event. In the opening statement, editors pointed out that the two brothers, Daišan and Manggūltai, were consigned to inferior positions to the right and left of Hong Taiji. The previous year these brothers had sat at the same level in equal position with Hong Taiji, just as they had done since the three of them came to co-rule along with their cousin, Amin, five years prior. But Hong Taiji had conspired to depose them and elevate himself in a position of authority, to move towards the creation of a position of sovereign, and to concentrate political resources to his person. He had already eliminated Amin by accusing him of crimes and imprisoning him, and he had here outmaneuvered his two brothers for primacy of position.

What is of particular significance is the forum in which these politics played out, i.e. the New Year’s Day ceremony. This ritual event served as one type of expression of the sovereign and his authority—and a particularly powerful one at that. It helped define the relationships among the political actors, and to indicate to each other who had command of political resources and the roles that each of them should play relative to each other. As discussed below, Hong Taiji
made a point of using this event in the process of building the position of sovereign and placing himself in that role. It became one of the key aspects of li that needed to be transformed by the Manchus in their internal struggles and quests for power.

NEW YEAR’S DAY CEREMONY BEFORE 1632

Sources on New Year’s Day ceremonial activity predating the detailed descriptions of the 1632 ceremony are scattered and inconclusive. (This is in contrast to the records after 1632, which never fail to give a full account of the event.) Most of these records are from Manchu sources, like the Manwen yuandang and their Qianlong revisions. Chinese-language sources do not begin talking about New Year’s Day ritual practices until the beginning of Hong Taiji’s reign, and even then only in brief (Shilu editors most likely felt it better to leave out the more shamanistic-like events.)

Existing Manchu and Chinese language records offer few descriptions of any New Year’s Day ceremony before the formation of a Manchu administrative structure. On New Year’s Day of the first year that Nurhaci became khan (1616), a ceremony took place to elevate him as khan but not to bring in the new year. For the next year, Manchu documents only tell of Nurhaci taking his wife and sons out 100 li to greet a Mongol beile coming to visit. For the next four years there are no entries for the first day of the first month.

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4 This is not an entirely surprising omission considering that the Shilu was edited in the Kangxi period, when imperial ideology emphasized the adoption of Chinese cultural practices by the Manchus. See Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999).

5 MR 1.67

6 MR 1.76
The first record of a formal New Year’s Day ceremony is from 1622, the seventh year of Nurhaci’s reign, retroactively named Tianming. The record reads as follows:

The khan led the Eight Banner beise and high officials out of the city to kowtow at the shrine in the tangse. Afterwards, they returned and sat in the yamen.

The eight banner beise led all the high officials in kowtowing to congratulate the khan on the passing of the year. Next, the Mongol Enggeder Efu, Manggol Efu, and Gurbusi Taiji [the rank of a Mongol noble] led all the Mongols in kowtowing. Next, Fusi Efu, and Si Uli Efu led all the Chinese officials in kowtowing. Next, two lamas from the Tibet and four Korean officials kowtowed.

After each were finished kowtowing in turn, a hundred tables were prepared and cows and sheep were killed. All the beise and high officials, the Chinese, the Korean officials, and the Mongol beise gathered for various Chinese performances and a grand banquet.⁷

The next record of a New Year’s ceremony—also in the MWYD—is two years later in the ninth year of Tianming (1624).⁸

At 5 a.m. on the morning of the new year, the khan kowtowed in the tangse. Afterwards, he returned and kowtowed to the ancestors. At 7 a.m. he exited the octagonal pavilion.

After sitting, the senior beile [Daišan] was the first to kowtow. Then Enggeder Efu led all the Mongol beile in kowtowing. Third was Amin beile. Fourth, Manggültai beile. Fifth, Duici beile. Sixth, Ajige age. Seventh, Dodo age. Eighth, Abatai age and Dudu age. Ninth, Yoto age and Xoto age. Tenth, Fusi efu and Si Uli efu led Korean officials and Chinese officials in kowtowing. Eleventh, Unege baksi led all the eight banner Mongols in kowtowing.

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⁷ MWYD 2.336; MR 2.465. All punctuation follows the MWYD.

⁸ This ceremony is outlined by Crossley, although it is unclear where some of the details of her description came from as they do not correspond to the texts for which I had access. Crossley, A Translucent Mirror, 178.
After the kowtowing had finished, they drank tea and the khan entered. At 9 a.m. they went out to the banquet. At 1 p.m. they dispersed from the octagonal pavilion.\(^9\)

A slightly different variation of this ceremony took place three years later during Hong Taiji’s first year as khan (1627). The *Manwen yuandang* reads as follows:

On the first day of the first month of the first year of the Wise Khan [i.e. Tiancong], all the beile, high officials, and civil and military officials assembled at the main yamen after the fifth watch. Each of the banners lined up in order. At dawn, the Wise Khan led all the beile and high officials to the tangse, where they performed the three genuflections and nine prostrations to Heaven. Thereupon they returned.

When the khan came out of the yamen, the beile and high officials lined up by rank and prepared to each kneel three times and each prostrate nine times. When kowtowing, two people stood on either side of the khan. One person called out, “all beile and all high officials kowtow and congratulate on the passing of the year.” After saying this, the other called out to kneel and prostrate.

Originally, the doro [way or rites] of the Manchus for New Year’s Day was to put on all kinds of performances and dances, and to have a great banquet. This year, because of mourning for Taizu, there were no joyful performances, and no banquet. The khan only received the kowtows of everyone.\(^10\)

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\(^9\) MWYD 4.177-179; MR 2.881.

\(^10\) MWYD 6.3. See also MR 4.1-2. There are discrepancies between the MWYD and MR, the significance of which I discuss below. This year’s ceremony is also recorded and discussed in CZBSL 2.1a and SL p. 31-1.
For the next four years, until 1632, Manchu-language records make no mention of another New Year’s Day ceremony.\(^{11}\) For most years, no record exists for the first day of the new year. This is the case for the three years from 1628 to 1630. Court compilers found nothing of significance to have happened on that day—no major event or development to report or record. Instead, entries begin on the following day, or even as late as the twelfth, as in the case of 1629, when affairs of the state arose or military operations commenced. When some other event deemed important enough to note did occur on New Year’s Day it was recorded. In 1631, for example, foreign tribal leaders visited, exchanged gifts, and banqueted. Nothing more is said and details are sparse.

This lack should not be taken to mean that no ceremony was held to celebrate the New Year. Enough circumstantial evidence exists to know that festivities were held annually. The passage quoted above from 1627, for example, tells of a customary Manchu rite on New Year’s day to put on performances and dances and to give a large banquet. The reference in this passage to a usual practice—“the Manchu way”—gives every indication that such activities took place each year and were only suspended in 1627 due to mourning the recent death of the late khan. Further evidence on the regular celebration of New Year’s ceremony is found in a suggestion by a vice president of the Board of Li in 1631. This official first acknowledged an annual New Year’s rite, but then complained that it was not orderly, and argued for a more formal organization and discipline during the ceremony.\(^{12}\)

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\(^{11}\) See MWYD 6.162-179, 229, Tc2; MR 4.115, Tc2; MWYD 6.299, Tc3; MR 4.213, Tc3; MWYD 6.445-6, 7.2-4, Tc4; MR 4.279, Tc4; MWYD 7.309, Tc5; MR 5.461, Tc5.

\(^{12}\) CZBSL 8.29b, Tc5.12.28; SL p. 188; Manchu SL 10.54b. He went on to propose a correct order. More on this below.
Other clues about the practice and nature of the New Year’s Day ceremony in the early Tiancong period can be found in Chinese-language records. The draft copy of the *Qing Taizong Shilu* compiled and edited in the early Shunzhi era has a short entry for the first day of 1628 (Tiancong 2), which tells of the khan leading the beile to the “miao” (temple), and then the beile and officials lining up to kowtow.\(^\text{13}\) Similarly, the revised Qianlong-era *Shilu* has a short entry on the first day of 1629 (Tiancong 3), where it relates that the emperor led the beile to the tangzi, or shamanistic shrine, to worship heaven, and then back to the palace, where the beile and officials performed the kowtow rites.\(^\text{14}\) Both of these sources have slightly more extensive entries on New Year’s Day rites for 1630. The draft *Shilu* says the following.\(^\text{15}\)

The emperor led all the beile and high officials to visit the temple and perform the rites. After a short while they returned to the palace to pray to the ancestors. Upon entering court, the two senior beile sat on the east and west sides, and all the beile and officials separated into two lines and sat below the emperor.

The Mongol Tu-she-tu efu from the Kuo-er-qin state, and Zhi-nong efu from the Qi-han tribe each lead their officials in the first procession. The banner beile each led their banner officials in the next procession. En-ge-de-li efu led the Mongols Cha-han-er, Kua-er-kua, and all the Mongols in the third procession. General Shi-wu-li efu and Tong Yangxing led the Chinese officials in the fourth procession. General Wu-nei-ge led the eight banner Mongol officials in the fifth procession. The Mongol tribe A-lu was sixth.

When each had done the court ceremony in turn, the senior beile retired first. The emperor led Manggūltai beile and all the beile to bow to the senior beile [i.e. Daišan]. The senior beile did not receive their bows and also bowed. Afterwards, he offered tea and wine.

Manggūltai beile retired. The emperor led all the beile to his residence and bowed. Manggūltai beile also did not receive their bows, but bowed to them. The beile’s wife also bowed in front of the emperor. The emperor also returned the bow.

\(^{13}\) CZBSL 3.1a, Tc2.1.1.

\(^{14}\) SL p. 67-1, Tc3.1.1.

\(^{15}\) There are slight variations in these two different editions of the *Shilu*. I here quote the draft edition, which is nearest to the event in question and should be the least corrupted account among the two.
Shortly after, they also went to bow to the older sister, Ha-da Ge-ge. Ge-ge also did the same bow.

Thereupon, the emperor led the beile into court where he ordered the performance of various plays and a great banquet for the officials.\textsuperscript{16}

It is unclear where the editors got their materials. Although they may have later been lost, there are no extant contemporary Manchu records. Given the brevity of the early entries compared with what was recorded in the later years, editors very well might have projected an assumption of what happened in order to fill in the space for a date without material, or they may have relied on the recollection of participants. Either way, it is important to note the existence of the ritual every year even in spite of the lack of an extensive record.

\textbf{A COMPARISON OF THE PRE-1632 NEW YEAR’S DAY CEREMONIES AND THE 1632 CEREMONY}

At first glance, the 1632 ceremony and those that preceded it look quite similar. The khan led the beile to sacrifice at the tangse; they returned to the palace; the khan sat; the beile and other constituents came through and kowtowed in turn; they had a banquet. These activities are precisely what the Manchus had done on New Year’s Day since the earliest recordings, and quite likely even before. As discussed above, however, fundamental changes took place in the seating

\textsuperscript{16} CZBSL 6.1a-2a. 上率眾貝勒大臣。諗廟行禮。既而還宮。拜祖先。臨朝。面大貝勒東西側坐。眾貝勒諸臣。兩班侍坐。

蒙古喇兒沁國。吐舍兔額夫。敖漢部。智滿額夫。各率所屬官為首班。八固山貝勒。各率本固山官為次班。恩格得里額夫。率蒙古懷漢兒。賁兒賏。眾貝勒為三班。總官兵十屋額額夫修養性。率漢官生為四班。總官兵九內革。率八固山蒙古官。為五班。蒙古阿韓部為六班。

各依次序朝賀畢。大貝勒先還。上率莽古兒泰貝勒。暨眾貝勒。往拜大貝勒。大貝勒不受。同拜。畢。獻以茶酒。莽古兒泰貝勒還。上又率眾貝勒。往拜於其府。莽古兒泰貝勒亦不受。相與同拜。貝勒之福金。又拜於上前。上亦還拜。

既而又往拜長姐哈達格格家。格格亦同拜。

於是上率眾貝勒臨朝。另陳諸雜戲。大宴群臣。
and positioning of actors, which set the standard for the New Year’s Day ceremony as it would be recorded and practiced throughout the Qing.

Ceremonial differences

When speaking of the importance of 1632 and its deviation from the past it is useful to begin with the emphasis that contemporaries placed upon it, and their articulations of the differences. Take for starters the commentary in the text of the 1632 ceremonial description quoted above, and which most explicitly communicates the changes. It is quoted again here with emphasis on key terms and the Manchu in brackets. The first part about the khan reads as follows:

Up until now, for the past five years, the khan and the three beile all one and the same (gemu emu adali) sat together (adame) facing south to receive kowtows from the people. From this year it is corrected (dasafi). The khan distinguishably (temgetuleme) sits alone (emhun) facing south.\(^{17}\)

Here, the compilers of the Manwen yuandang drew a contrast with what Hong Taiji had been doing for the past five years. Previously, he had been sitting on the throne alongside the three other senior beile—his brothers Daišan and Manggūltai, and cousin Amin. They sat together at the same level, facing the same direction, and very likely on the same mat. For the duration of the ceremony they together presided over audiences come through to pay their respects. In this way the equality among the four senior beile that Nurhaci had envisioned and counseled the four on was upheld.\(^{18}\) In 1632, editors explicitly called attention to what they termed a “correction” in the ceremony. Even a simulacra of the previous show of equality is contravened as Hong Taiji is

\(^{17}\) MWYD 8.51. See also MR 5.620-621.

set apart from the other beile. He is elevated above them to a position of superiority. He alone faces south, the cardinal direction for an emperor presiding over court. In the narrative of the ceremony, the two beile sat on either side of the khan, each one on his own couch facing inward. (Amin, the third beile, had been imprisoned the previous year for killing Chinese commoners fleeing engagement.)

Other attempts at framing this event were similarly made by other editors. A draft document of the 1632 ceremony has recently been included in the *Manwen yuandang* by twenty-first century compilers at the National Palace Museum, Taipei. The composition of this document most certainly dates to after the standardization of the Manchu language in 1632, as indicated by the presence of the consistent use of dots and circles, and the standardized verb ending “fi” instead of “bi,” as in “hengkilefi” (the 1632 document writes “hengkilebi”). The content of the text shows editors struggling with how to frame the development in communication to readers. In discussion of the ceremony, an editor first wrote the following,

On the right side of the khan was the senior beile, and on the left side was Manggūltai beile. The two beile were placed on couches to the side. They sat facing sideways.

It is a rather repetitive explanation of the seating, emphasizing the same point about the seating arrangement three times. But either the original editor or a later one was dissatisfied with the articulation and crossed it off in thick black ink, so that the original text is decipherable now only on the original document. In the margins, the following was substituted:

On each side of the khan was placed a couch, where the two brothers were made to sit, the senior beile [i.e. Daišan] and Manggūltai beile.
The rest of the text goes on to give an abbreviated account of the ceremony, enumerating the order of the kowtow processions and those come to court to pay their respects. The point here is that a lot of thought and careful editing went into the articulation of the seating and how it differed from previous arrangements.

The second part of the commentary quoted at the beginning of the chapter discussed the order by which the eight banners would present themselves in audience. Accordingly, up until 1632 they had presented themselves based on seniority, a practice that would now give way to an order based on rank. The passage is as follows:

The Eight Banner beile have each been leading their banner officials in kowtowing. When kowtowing, they have not been following the order of the central and wing battalions, but rather first kowtowing according to the age of the brother. From this year it is corrected (dasafi). Kowtowing follows the banner ranking.

The passage here very explicitly contrasts what was happening before with the change that took place in 1632. It says that the order of the banners in ceremony was based on the age of the beile who owned the banner. In practice, a rough variation of this is clearly on display in the 1624 ceremony (Tm 9), which was quoted above. Unlike other records prior to 1632, the description for the 1624 ceremony lays out the order of the banner beile come to pay respects to Nurhaci:

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19 MWYD # 111000039. This document is also reprinted in MWYD 8.339-41, although the photographic reproduction makes the crossed out sections illegible. This document is not contained in MR. The Manchu for the first quote: Han i ici ergide amba beile hashan ergide manggultai beile. juwe beiletete beseregen be hetu sindafi hetu forome tehe. The second quote: Han juwe ashan de hetu emte besergen sindafi juwe ahvn amba beile manggultai beile be tebuhe.

20 MWYD 8.51. See also MR 5.621.
1. Daišan, the oldest living son and senior beile
2. Enggeder, a son in law
3. Amin, the second son of Surhaci—the younger brother of Nurhaci—and adopted by Nurhaci when Surhaci died
4. Manggūltai, the second oldest living son
5. Duici\textsuperscript{21}
6. Ajige, the twelfth son
7. Dodo, the fifteenth son
8. Abatai, seventh son of Nurhaci but not a beile and not given a banner, and Dudu, oldest son of Nurhaci’s oldest son
9. Yoto and Xoto, sons of Daišan

Listing out just those who were banners owners yields the following order:

1. Daišan (red banners)
2. Amin (bordered blue)
3. Manggūltai (plain blue)
4. Dudu

Assuming the absence of Hong Taiji, who is not mentioned in the text, then the extracted order corresponds exactly to the seniority of the beile in charge of the banners.\textsuperscript{22}

In the 1632 ceremony, the order of presentation now rested not on seniority, as it had in years past, but rather according to the positions of the eight banners in battue formation. This order placed the two yellow banners at the head of the attack, with red and white banners on the right and left shoulders respectively, and the blue banners at the point. Logistically, this meant that the yellow banners occupied the north, the reds west, the whites east, and blues south.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{21} It is unclear who this individual is, or if it refers to the “fourth beile.”

\textsuperscript{22} MWYD 4.177-179; MR 2.881

ceremony, this order was translated into the ritual staging. The 1632 text records the banners coming through in the following order:

1. Bordered yellow
2. Plain yellow
3. Plain red
4. Plain white
5. Bordered red
6. Bordered white
7. Bordered blue
8. Plain blue

This order gave primacy to Hong Taiji’s yellow banners and the red and white banners of his supporters. Manggūltai and Amin, who led the plain and bordered blue banners, respectively, came last in the procession.²⁴

*Editorial interventions emphasizing the difference*

These ceremonial changes—or “corrections” as editors called them—were key. In the same way that the contemporary record keepers felt the need to pause from the narrative of the ceremony to make a special comment in the text on the changes, subsequent editors also went out of their way to point out these changes, and to go back and rewrite the original texts. In three separate cases the historical record was added or manipulated to reflect the 1632 change, and in one case, an original record was emended with marginalia and alterations. The latter records all spring from the original recording of the event and interpretation.

Consider first the text of the 1627 (Tc 1) New Year’s Day ceremony. The length of the *Manwen yuandang* document on the ceremony was cited in the previous section; what needs to be called to attention here is the last paragraph commenting on the common annual practice of performances, dances, and a banquet being suspended that year in observation of Taizu’s death. To re-quote the key passage:

Originally, the rites of the Manchus for New Year’s Day were to put on all kinds of performances and dances, and to have a great banquet.

In-between the lines of the original document a subsequent editor has gone back and added notes to the text. To the right of the vertical script, between the two words “doro” and “aniya” a small addition sign is inscribed to indicate exactly where the addition of text ought to be added. The quickly scribbled text is bunched up to try to take advantage of the limited space available between the original lines of text to cram in three lines where there was only room for one. The brush is finer, the ink is lighter, and the script of a different hand. The effect of the addition is to create a sentence that reads as follows:

Originally, the rites of the Manchus, when kowtowing, the three beile brothers, the senior beile, Amin beile, and Manggūltai beile, would be seated on the two sides of the respected khan. In every case they also sat together with the khan. They did not sit beneath him. On the eve before and the day of the new year, put on all kinds of performances and dances and have a great banquet.\(^{25}\)

\(^{25}\)MWYD #111000001. Although this document is reproduced in the recently published slides of the MWYD, and the passage in question even enlarged, the text is still too small and too unclear to read from any photograph, thus necessitating reference to the original. MWYD 6.3.

The Manchu for the first quote: daci manju i doro aniya inenggi eiten hacin i efin efime maksime amba sarin sarilambihe

The second: daci manju i doro [+hengkilere de amba beile amin beile Manggūltai beile be ilan beile be ahvn seme kunduleme han I juwe ashan de tebuhe yaya bade inu han I adame tebure dabala fejile teburakv bihe fe yamji] aniya inenggi eiten hacin i efin efime maksime amba sarin sarilambihe.

The addition sign is part of the text and the brackets here indicate the extent of the marginalia.
The added lines themselves indicates that they came at a later date. The first thing to notice is that the sentence does not quite work. The insertion of a passage on the positions and activities of the beile in their seating arrangements has created a strange amalgamation of texts. The original text was meant to read that the Manchu rite for New Year’s day consisted of holding festivities and banquets. But the added text makes it disjointed, where it starts off saying something about the original Manchu rites, it then detours into a description of the seating, and then goes back to speaking about what the original Manchu rites were. Presumably the intent of the addition is to inform the reader that the original rite was for the four senior beile to sit together at the same level. But, if this is the case, then why must this be pointed out unless the addition came from the hand of an editor who wrote after the 1632 ceremony where the khan sat alone without the company of his brothers? Another clue on the dating of the edits is the term “respected khan” (kunduleme han), a phrase that was not used until 1636. Furthermore, the thinner brush or stylus and the penmanship are found throughout this batch of documents indicating that these textual additions most likely came from an editor preparing the text for re-copying, possibly from the history office, established in 1636, or for the first draft of the Taizong Shilu, completed in 1649. The lack of standardization of the dots and circles make it unlikely that these comments were composed much later than that, and almost certainly not in the Qianlong period, when the official style of Manchu language was already formalized.

Regardless of the exact date of the editorial addition, its content got repeated in three historical works of the Qing period: the first draft of the Taizong Shilu from the Shunzhi era, the final edition of the Taizong Shilu dating to the mid-Kangxi era, and the Manwen laodang, compiled in the Qianlong era. The first draft of the Shilu, completed in 1649, gives a short
The emperor ordered the senior beile, Amin beile, and Manggūltai beile to sit on the right and left. When holding court, the three beile all sat together alongside the emperor. This was an expression of brotherly respect, and [the emperor] never ordered them to sit in a subservient position. Original Manchu rites are to have a banquet along with music, singing, and dances. 

Similarly, the final edition of the Shilu, completed in 1682, breaks from the narrative description of the ceremony to comment that Hong Taiji took his place amongst his brothers and not in an elevated position as Kangxi-era readers might expect. The wording of the comment is almost exactly the same as the passage from the draft edition just quoted above.

Lastly, the Manwen laodang reproduced the entire addition, almost word for word. Composed in the Qianlong era, the Manwen laodang was copied from the Manwen yuandang in standardized Manchu script with dots and circles. This undertaking was meant to preserve the original Manchu records in a cleanly edited form accessible to eighteenth-century Manchu speakers. For the passage under question, compilers copied what they found, which included

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26 CZBSL 2.1a-b. 上命大貝勒. 問敏貝勒. 萌古兒泰貝勒. 於左右坐. 凡朝會宴集. 三位貝勒. 皆同上排坐. 以示敬兄之意. 從來不令侍坐. 初滿洲國禮除夕與正旦會宴. 音樂歌舞.

27 SL p. 31-1. The likeness of passages between the CZBSL and the SL is not unprecedented, as the CZBSL was a draft from which editors of the SL worked from in their compilation. It should be noted, however, that despite the similarity of passages on this date, many other places in the texts deviate widely from each other.

the added text. The result is a staggered text that reads a bit awkwardly. Which in itself is a bit odd, because it is copied out as if it were a single uninterrupted, unedited passage.  

How to understand the relation between the defaced document and these three historiographical texts? In the case of the two *Shilu*, it is hard to speak of a direct influence of the quoted document. The language and order of the wording does not lead to any immediate conclusions. Having said that, the similarity of content does lend itself to corroboration. The case of the *Manwen laodang* is likely a re-copying of the edited text directly into a new text to almost look like a seamless unaltered text. Almost, except for that syntactical problem.

From the evidence that presented here, it is clear that the post-1632 editors of pre-1632 texts on the New Year’s ceremony found the need to insert lines of commentary to point out the differences in the ceremony. They felt that if the document was left unaltered to read as it did, or if they wrote their texts with the emperor and the beile taking their seats without any explanation, readers would assume that the practice of 1632 was natural without anything of particular significance: the emperor alone in the middle, elevated, and facing south. In each case, editors paused their narrative to inform readers that the emperor and beile previously all sat together at the same level. This speaks not only to the real and perceived shift in ceremony protocol in 1632, but also to its significance in subsequent years, which is the focus of the next section.

THE FORMALIZATION OF THE NEW YEAR’S DAY CEREMONY

The practices of the 1632 New Year’s Day ceremony served as the basis for Qing New Year’s Day activities for the next 250 years. In doing so, they both gave ritual propriety to the emperor

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29 MR 4.1-2. It is also for this reason that I conclude that it was not added by QL era editors. If they had made a note to themselves on the original document for inclusion in the final, they would have made the final read smoothly. As is, it is more likely that they just copied what they found and powered through the grammatical awkwardness.
and helped elevate him in position, status, and power, and was also part of the process of centralizing military control by giving the state the authority to organize ranks and grant places in ceremonial procession. While the previous sections described pre-1632 ritual practices on New Year’s day and the break that occurred with the 1632 ceremony, what follows is a discussion of the formalization of this ceremony.

The basic outline of the rite can be broken down into four main parts: the khan leading a visit to the tangse at dawn, the khan sitting, the procession of audiences to the court offering kowtows to the khan, and a banquet. This structure began to form during Nurhaci’s reign and was used by Hong Taiji when he became khan, and was incorporated into the changes of the 1632 ceremony and all those that came afterwards. Although aspects of the ritual would vary over the years, with different imperial relatives or officials attending services at the tangse, the order of the processions, or the even the involvement of the emperor, this basic structure did not vary. Take, for example, the first Huidian, or administrative statues, produced by the Qing in 1690. This text of the dynasty’s regulations and administrative procedures as told through the six boards contains the clearest articulation of the ceremony in its rawest form as it should be conducted.

Tiancong 6. New Year’s Day. The emperor led all the beile to pray to heaven and worship the deities.

Afterwards, he ascended the throne at the Dugong palace. All the beile performed the rite of three genuflections and nine prostrations. The beile of the Deliberative Council entered the palace and sat on the left and right. Next, the foreign Mongol beile performed the rite. Next, the Manchu, Mongol, and Chinese officials each led their banner officials in performing the rite. Next, the Korean emissaries did the rite.

Afterwards, the emperor returned to the palace. All the officials retired. The next day was the banquet rite.\(^{30}\)

\(^{30}\) KXHD 715.1916-1917.
The ceremony itself is here referenced back to 1632, and then laid out in its simplest form with the most basic elements in place. The emperor is shown leading the beile out to the tangse, he takes the throne, the constituents do their kowtows, and a banquet is held.

By the time the Huidian was issued in the mid-Kangxi period, this New Year’s Day ceremony had been practiced for over half a century. The tenets of the ritual and its development could be extracted from over fifty different occurrences, which had been meticulously recorded almost every year since 1632. Whereas record keeping of the ceremony before 1632 was almost ad-hoc (or scattered at best), the establishment of the Board of Li in 1631 and its charge of planning and operating the New Year’s Day ceremony meant not only would it be standardized, but also that records would be made and records would be kept. We thus have detailed descriptions of each New Year’s Day ritual event for almost every year after 1632, each of which contains the four structural components.

This is not to say that this form of li remained static, practiced each year in the same rigid form. In fact, the entire ceremony was quite flexible in form and length; but it always occurred within the structure of the four-part framework. In 1633 (Tc 7), for example, the emperor and the beile decided to cease the usual practice of taking off their hats when kowtowing in the tangse. That year, and thereafter, they would keep their hats on and perform the rite as usual.\(^{31}\) Another variation took place the next year, when Hong Taiji invited two recently defected Ming generals

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\(^{31}\) NGSY p. 1; CZBSL 11.1.
to join the beile procession in kowtowing, a practice that seems to have been a one-time honor, as subsequent years found the generals on the battlefield and unable to attend the New Year’s Day ceremony—something that was not seen as a violation of the rite. In 1638 (Cd 3), officials were sent to the ancestral hall to light incense, and the next year officials knelt as the emperor’s cart and procession passed on its way to the tangse. Most drastically, in 1643 (Cd 8), Hong Taiji was not feeling well and called off the celebratory nature of the ceremony, which involved the cessation of all music and festivities. He was still obliged, however, to send officials to the tangse to sacrifice, sit on the throne, have officials enter, and to order a banquet for attendees, even though he did not attend.

A more general evolution of the ritual over the years can be seen in the increase in the number of constituents coming to court to pay respects, which led to an elaboration of the ceremony. In 1634 (Tc 8), for example, five local tribes came to court and received a position in the procession just ahead of the banners. The following year, the number of local tribes in the ritual procession increased to seven.

These variations in the ritual practice led to the need to re-affirm the details of the ceremony, not the least so as to clarify which imperial relatives and officials would be doing what at which times. The opportunity for doing so came in the first year of Chongde (1636), precisely at the same time that the establishment of the Qing dynasty was announced. In the fifth

32 NGSY p. 1; CZBSL 13.1.
33 JMZD p. 9; CZBSL 18.2b.
34 NGSY p. 142; CZBSL 27.1a.
35 CZBSL 30.1.
36 NGSY 1.503.
37 CZBSL 13.1.
38 CZBSL 18.1a.
month of 1636, just one month after the change of the reign name and the dynastic title from Jin to Qing, Hong Taiji issued an edict clarifying the standard practice in grand ceremony. For the New Year’s Day ceremony this edict affirmed the ritual protocol of worshiping at the tangse, sitting in the throne, and receiving the procession of kowtows, and emphasized the order in which attendees ought to present themselves and to perform the three genuflections and nine prostrations.  

Still, this proclamation of the format of the New Year’s Day ceremony in 1636 did not mummify the ritual any more than the stabilization of the structure did in 1632. In fact, in much the same way, it provided a marker for continuing developments and evolutions in the Qing state and its polity. In 1645, for example, the second year of the Qing occupation of Beijing, the court regulated that all imperial relatives below the rank of wang, or prince, had to wear their court costumes for seven days before and after the ceremony. Nine years later, this requirement was reduced to three days before and after, but the consequence for not adhering became criminalized. More significantly, however, the ceremony became vastly more complex. For one thing, the number of people attending increased exponentially from the small circle of beile and officials in the early Tiancong period, to hundreds of stratified relatives, officials, and foreign dignitaries. All of these attendees had to gather somewhere and proceed through certain gates to arrive at the hall and then to wait their turn for procession. Thus, revisions in both the Shunzhi and Kangxi periods outlined where the attendees should be staged, when they should enter and through which doors. Ritual music was also to be played throughout the ceremony, and

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39 MWYD 10.185-188, Cd1.5.14; MR 6.1050-52. See also KXHD 715.1917

40 KXHD 715.1931.
instructions given on when it should play, when it should stop, and when it should resume, and to be done so in accordance with the movement of the participants.\(^{41}\)

Despite the growing size and complexity of the ceremony, the basic four-part structure remained intact: the visit to the tangse at dawn, the seating of the sovereign, the procession for kowtows, and the banquet.\(^{42}\) This structure was reconfirmed both in the 1636 edict on the ritual protocol, and annually in the detailed record keeping of the ceremony. Moreover, Board of Li personnel began to make more and more of an appearance in records on the New Year’s Day ceremony in order to ensure that the ceremony adhered to its structure and participants conducted themselves according to protocol. This will be further discussed in the conclusion of this chapter; here it is important to note the Board of Li as an organization to maintain the integrity of the ceremony as it grew in the number of actors involved and the complexity of activity.

WHY THE NEW YEAR’S DAY CEREMONY WAS CHANGED IN 1632

Why was the New Year’s Day ceremony changed in 1632? The explanation of the ceremony, its history, and its development as laid out in the above sections illustrate the change and formation of the Manchus’ New Year’s Day rites, but it does not explain why the thing changed in the first place. Indeed, before anything can be said about the ceremony and its role in the Manchu state, the impetus of the actors of the day for transforming it must be determined. The rationale for why it changed must be understood: why did actors want it changed and what did they think it meant? This section and the next will take up these questions.

\(^{41}\) KXHD 715.1920-30.

\(^{42}\) For further affirmation of this structure in the late Kangxi period see Cha Zhenxing, Renhaiji (Beijing, 1989 [1713]), 121.
An account of the decision to revise the ceremony is captured in the 1649 draft of the *Taizong Shilu*; this text offers a window into both the impetus and the process of the change. The account is a conversation initiated by a memorial from a Board of Li vice president, and which took place among Hong Taiji and a number of beile. This conversation occurred on the twenty-eighth day of the twelve month of 1631 (Tc 5), just days before the New Year and the expected ceremony. Given the insight that this document provides into the motivation for the change and the process by which it occurred, it is worth quoting in full.

The emperor spoke to the eight banner beile and officials about the New Year’s day celebration, and told them that Board of Li vice president Li Bolong memorialized saying, “When conducting state rites, officials are not lining up according to rank but rather by the quality of furs they possess. Those possessing furs of higher value line up first, and those with furs of lesser value after [i.e. the ritual order is arbitrary]. This is my honest opinion: this year for the New Year’s day ceremony the banner beile should [first] line up and do their rites. Next, will be the foreign Mongol beile who surrendered. Next, the civil and military officials of the banners should line up according to their banner order. Because Manggūltai committed an offense he should have his beile rank revoked [and no longer be allowed to sit with the emperor and other beile for the ceremony].”

[The emperor said,] “Since coming to the throne, whenever performing state rites I have always sat together with [Manggūltai]. If foreigners hear of this, they will not know that the fault is his and think that I am a disrespectful younger brother. Since he is older than me, how about allowing him [continue to] sit with me?”

[The emperor] ordered Dahai baksi, Kūrcan baksi, Lungsī, Sonin, and the senior beile [Daišan], these beile, to discuss. Half did not agree with the emperor’s suggestion, but then reluctantly agreed. Daišan agreed with the emperor and said, “[Manggūltai’s] mistake is not enough for the emperor to mind. According to the principle of li, it is permissible to allow him to sit with us.”

He continued, saying, “We all agreed to support [Hong Taiji] as the khan, while at the same time sitting together with him as khan. But I fear that people will gossip and say that although we venerate him as khan, we also act like three Buddhas. How can such an arrangement [of equal seating] not lead to gossip? Since this is Manggūltai’s personal transgression, the deities will hear and will condemn and shorten his life. If we can measure our ability and act according to principle, then luck will follow and Heaven will bless us with long life. How is this not wonderful?
“From this day forth, the emperor will sit in the middle facing south. Myself and Manggūltai will sit below on the left and right. The foreign Mongol beile will sit beneath us. Since he is the khan, how can we not give him primacy?”

Thereupon he reported to the beile and they all said, “good.” The matter was settled and the emperor agreed.⁴³

This event is rich in detail and complicated in politics. The circumstances behind it began with the establishment of the Board of Li just five months earlier, giving position and place to Chinese officials familiar with ritual practices and the operations of an imperial bureaucracy. Now charged with overseeing the ceremony, rationalizing and standardizing it, officials in the Board of Li raised concerns over the format, and memorialized the sovereign on the order of the procession and the seating of the emperor. This corresponded directly with Hong Taiji’s efforts to centralize policy-making power into an office that he would embody, and to limit the political autonomy of the banners. It also corresponded with the political infighting among the relatives and forced a discussion among them over political resources.

⁴³CZBSL 8.29b-31a. This event was also recorded in the Kangxi era Shilu, but with an adjustment of language that gives a more Confucian gloss to the entire operation. For example, Daišan’s monologue is laden with talk of propriety and observing human feelings. SL 2.149a-b.

I have chosen to quote from the Shunzhi era edition because it is not seeped in the politics and conservative Confucian trend of the Kangxi era—although it does have its own ideological program—and is closer in time and language to the original event.

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This account also sheds light on the role of the Board of Li. Given the jurisdiction of this board in matters of ritual and ceremonial activity, such a role should come as no surprise. Indeed, the Board had been established in the seventh month of 1631 along with five other boards in the formal creation of an administrative apparatus. The task of these boards was to execute the administrative duties of a centralized body in realms of personnel, finance, rites, military, judiciary, and public works. This also meant that arbitrary or non-formalized practices in these administrative areas needed to become formalized. For the Board of Li, this necessitated the standardization of ceremony—that is, setting ritual practices in forms that were organized not so much in rigid and repetitive acts, but rather that adhered to certain principles. Although these principles could vary according to the rite, they generally framed a certain structural integrity of the social and political polity by putting individuals and groups into hierarchical and subservient relationships with each other. This meant two things: first, moving the ambiguous position of the ruler into a position to become emperor at the head of an imperial polity; and two, structuring that imperial polity in a non-arbitrary way that emphasized state-issued rank and honor, and gave the emperor control over the distribution of political resources. In the case of the New Year’s Day ceremony, this was symbolically emphasized by the position of where the emperor sat—or more precisely, where others sat vis-a-vis the emperor—and the order in which other political actors accessed the emperor.

The main problem Board of Li officials had with the ceremony—and by extension, the organization of the Manchu polity—was its arbitrariness. Vice President Li Bolong metaphorically made this point by criticizing how the order by which officials were given primacy in ceremonial presentation was through the value of their furs. This order could also be organized around seniority, as discussed above. In either case, political actors were not organized
according to a standard. The existing priority of wealth or seniority left centralized control at the mercy of the imperial relatives. By codifying the ceremony in a way that gave primacy to a particular hierarchy, the ruler and his supporters aimed to turn relatives into political constituents beholden to centralized control. Other groups would also be absorbed and brought under a centralized control as they came to rely on the magnanimity of the ruler to grant them their status.\footnote{For a discussion of the attempt to balance the imperial relatives and the bureaucracy see Liping Wang and Julia Adams, “Interlocking Patrimonialisms and State Formation in Qing China and Early Modern Europe,” \textit{The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science} 636, no. 1 (July 1, 2011): 164–81.}

The physical position of the emperor in the ceremony symbolically expressed this political control and authority. The case of Manggūltai brought up by the Board of Li in this event speaks to this issue. As one of the four senior beile appointed by Nurhaci to jointly lead the nascent Jin state, Manggūltai had huge military and political resources and was in theory on equal political footing with Hong Taiji. He had tried to exercise this earlier in the year by stalling in moving his troops in the sack of Dalinghe. He drew his weapon against Hong Taiji in anger over Hong Taiji’s criticism for such laxity. This unilateral action in both policy and personal affront threatened the central command that Hong Taiji and his staff were attempting to build. Imagining a structure that would enable a central body to wield administrative power, rather than, say, negotiate checks and balances, joint rule—not to mention political violence—was impractical. The Board of Li recognized this and said that Manggūltai had to go. He could not sit at the focal point of a ceremony that venerated the political ruler and vested him with political capital. To do so threatened the cohesion and operations of government.\footnote{The case of the fourth senior beile, Amin, also speaks to this point. In 1629 he pillaged a Chinese city that had peacefully surrendered, and massacred the Chinese population. Such action flagrantly violated the orders of Hong Taiji, and brought down the khan’s rebuke and eventual imprisonment of Amin. MR 4.411.} That Hong Taiji allowed Manggūltai to remain in a prominent position in the ceremony was most likely a
strategic move to keep him close and not alienate him and his supporters, which could have led to civil war.

The ceremony and the politics here came into being simultaneously. As Hong Taiji and his brothers struggled for political power, the ceremony was also constructed. In Geertzian terms, the sociopolitical and culture systems were still being formed and becoming integrated as they did so. Hong Taiji was working to construct an imperial system of centralized control at the expense of other political actors. He maneuvered to shift the political structure from one of joint rule with independent authority over human and financial resources to one of hierarchical state command of men and money, whereby a single sovereign at the apex would be the final arbitrator of politics and policy. In the course of doing so he sought to restrict the political and military authority of other leaders, and to redistribute political resources to supporters. This changing sociopolitical structure was attended by changing cultural symbols. Simultaneous to the shifts in power was the seating of the sovereign at the center of the ceremony and the demotion of the other joint leaders, both symbolically and politically. The ceremony symbolically placed Hong Taiji as a charismatic and politically adept leader at the center of a structured polity. It made manifest hierarchical relationships that elevated some and made others subservient. It structured the means by which people could interact in this instance, on this one day, and by doing so created political capital, dispersing it in qualified amounts so that when that day had ended, even though the relationships were still tenuous and power still being negotiated, the active construction of the ritual ceremony enabled some actors to make manifest symbolically the restructuring of relations in a way that would benefit them at the expense of others.46

46 Hong Taiji’s ambition seems to have been such that a centralized organization had command over human and material resources, and he took all the steps to put the pieces in place to realize that. Among other administrative organs, he set up the six boards, a chancellery, a censorate, and initiated civil service exams. Once in operation, these organizations worked to maximize their position and power in the formal order of the state. Concretely, for
The emerging sociopolitical and cultural systems were being integrated by the Board of Li. As members of a bureaucratic organ, who worked to further centralize authority and limit the military and political capacity of some actors, Board of Li personnel actively engaged in the naked struggles for power, as seen with Li Bolong. At the same time, the jurisdiction of the Board of Li was culture. The job of the board was to develop the symbols and symbolic activity through which political actors would interpret their world and guide their actions. In this way, the discussion over the ceremony served as a site for the shaping of the idea of the Manchu state. What would the state look like? Who would lead it? How would political resources be divided? The ceremony as articulated by the Board of Li was one such way to conceive of answers to these questions. To put it another way, the ceremony provided a common symbolic language to diverse actors with different interests and different spoken languages. The ceremony organized actors in a specific way and give meaning to the emerging political order.

Once the debate on the ceremony was settled, the Board of Li drafted an edict that was issued on the same day—the twenty-eight day of the twelfth month. This edict promulgated the revised order of procession for the New Year’s day ceremony.

On New Year’s day, the banner beile will do the rites together. Next, the Cahar and Kalka beile do the rites together. Next, the Manchu, Chinese, and Mongol banner officials, and the Chinese officials each lead their banners in the rites. When doing the rites, first the banner commanders, then the regional vice commanders, next the assistant regional
commanders, brigade commanders, and imperial guard commanders, then the guards. They line up in order and perform the rite. The beile give all the officials leather clothes to borrow. Also, follow the order of rank in the presentation of gifts.\textsuperscript{47}

Practice of the ceremony in its revised form was to begin on the first day of the lunar New Year of 1632. And this is precisely what happened.

MING FORMS AND MANCHU TRADITIONS

The emerging symbolic expressions facilitated the organization of politics to the benefit of some over others, and did so by pointing towards an imperial system. But where did this form come from? This section looks at the influence of the Ming New Year’s Day ceremony, and explores the Manchu practices in the revised form. It will become clear that the amalgamation of the two forms that developed was a result of the attempt to use Ming frameworks to facilitate the centralization of authority, while at the same time navigate internal Manchu politics and foreign affairs. The Manchus remade the ritual in an entirely novel fashion, which differentiated Qing statecraft from that of the Ming.

Chinese officials and an institutional framework

The documentary evidence indicates that the idea of the revised New Year’s Day ceremony came from Ming practice via Chinese officials. The document on the event quoted above shows that Board of Li vice president Li Bolong brought the matter to Hong Taiji’s attention and gave concrete suggestions on the changes necessary for a proper New Year’s ceremony. Given how

\textsuperscript{47} CZBSL 8.31a. 降照日。元旦八固山貝勒。一同行禮。次錫漢兒騰兒騰貝勒一同行禮。次八固山大臣滿漢蒙古漢官各照固山行禮。行禮時。先總兵固山額真。次副將。次參將。遊擊。擺牙喇纛額真犧。[1]次備員。排列成行。行禮。貝勒給眾官皮衣。雖係暫借。亦照職依次給之。Note the character xia 蝦 is considered uncouth and was used by the Koreans in distaste when writing about the Manchus. It is probably for this reason that Kangxi-era editors took offense and excised it from their edition of the \textit{Shilu}. 

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quickly the order was issued, it is most likely Li and his Chinese associates were involved in the drafting of the edict. Apart from this, however, we know very little about Li Bolong or his counterparts. Li’s name and bureaucratic position both point to him being Han Chinese. He burst onto the scene in this memorial, and appears again a week and a half later in a rather damning memorial criticizing Chinese bannerman and Hong Taiji confidant Ning Wanwo for gambling and drinking. But after this he disappears from the historical record. Likewise, information on Li’s affiliates or counterparts in other boards is scarce, making it hard to say much about the professional backgrounds or positions of many of the administrative officials in the Ming central government. It is doubtful that any of these early Tiancong-era vice presidents had served in the Ming central government, for the Manchus had yet to reach Beijing, nor to solicit high officials or force their surrender. Rather, at best, these Chinese officials were probably local officials in northern areas that had recently been conquered by Manchu forces, or more likely, local literati.

Despite the lack of biographical information, Chinese advisors and officials are ever present in the Hong Taiji government. In fact, they are quite prominent throughout the Hong Taiji period. The expansion of territory and the need to build up an administrative structure to govern both land and population led Hong Taiji to begin to recruit Chinese officials en masse for the job. Most of them were drawn from the surrendered populations from military victories in 1627, 1629, and 1630 in the north, although a few did come over on their own accord. Examinations to test and place Chinese scholars were conducted first in 1629, and the

48 TCZY 1.5a, Tc6.1.8.

subsequently in 1634 and 1638. Successful candidates were given positions and made vice presidents in the six boards when they were established in 1631.

The initial role of these Chinese officials was to advise and assist in the administration of the state.\textsuperscript{50} The imperial relatives were still at the core of decision-making, and when the six boards were established in the seventh month of 1631, Hong Taiji appointed his supporters at the head of each board to serve as president. Six imperial relatives, who were Hong Taiji supporters, were given administrative authority and political jurisdiction over an area of government.\textsuperscript{51} To help them in running affairs, however, Chinese vice presidents were installed who could presumably bring some knowledge of the structure and function of this governmental system—knowledge the relatives lacked. Hong Taiji more fully articulated the role of the Chinese vice presidents during the first three-year review of the boards’ performance, telling them that their job was not to instruct either him or the relatives in affairs of the state, but rather to encourage the bureaucratic activity of the relatives, to keep them in line, and to report back to him on their shortcomings:

The beise [i.e. the imperial relatives] are born not knowing military affairs. Is this not the way? Is it not all of your job to instruct?…You vice presidents placed in the boards, if after speaking out once of the evil of the beile of the boards, then why do you remain silent when you are not heard? If you are not heard after two and three times speaking I want you to memorialize me! But why just memorialize me [right away] without correcting the wrong doings and cover-ups of the boards you are charged to and without speaking one word to obtain the hearts of the beile?!\textsuperscript{52}

\textsuperscript{50} See Tsai, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan;”Wakeman, \textit{The Great Enterprise}. Also see Guy, \textit{Qing Governors}.

\textsuperscript{51} The date of establishment of the six boards was Tc5.7.8. For an analysis of the document announcing the establishment of the six boards see Li Guangtao and Li Xuezhi, eds. \textit{Ming-Qing dang’an cunzhen xuanji} Vol. 2. (Taipei Shi: Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo, 1973), 18-23.

\textsuperscript{52} NGSY p. 167-168, Tc7.10.10.
Hong Taiji’s tone here reflects his frustration with the poor performance of three of the boards—Rites, Punishments, and Works—and the lack of responsibility of the vice presidents. Although the relatives are in charge, he told them, the burden of administrative efficiency is theirs.\textsuperscript{53}

Li Bolong and his proposal should be seen in this capacity, as administrative advisor and political facilitator. The articulation of a sovereign’s role and organization of political society provided both a vision and an institution for Hong Taiji to employ. It allowed him to usurp the power of the relatives and limit their independence and policy-making authority, while at the same time embracing them in the emerging structures of power. And it gave Hong Taiji primacy in this move rather than the Chinese bureaucrats, who might run off with the state, making the

\textsuperscript{53} My reading of this event on 1633.10.10 is based on the NGSY document. NGSY p. 166-169. This event is also recorded in the CZBSL 12.36b, the Manchu SL, the SL p. 213-1, and in the Kx and QL compilation of Tiancong era edicts 2.5a. The former reference is distinct from the latter set of documents in tone and content. As pointed out, Hong Taiji is extremely critical of his Chinese officials, chastising them for their laxity, shortsightedness, and most importantly, for their righteous attitude on government policy. In the NGSY documents, Hong Taiji makes it very clear that he is ruler and alone wields the power to shape the institutions of state. He does not aim to build a Chinese style government, but rather to shape his state in a bureaucratic mold influenced by the Ming model, with himself at the center and the beile subjugated in bureaucratic roles.

Conversely, the post 1644 documents portray the Chinese advisers in a positive light who have an important position in the government administration. Hong Taiji’s tone to them is more conciliatory—“If this is because you are not yet familiar with the work and make mistakes,” the edict records Hong Taiji saying to them about the shortcomings in the boards, “then this can be forgiven”—and his rebukes reserved for the beile—“Now I hear that the beile all work out of home,” the Shilu records Hong Taiji as saying to them. “If this is the case, then why did I set up the yamen offices? This is all ridiculous self-aggrandizement and decreases the efficiency of of government. Why do you not set strait affairs like this?”
sovereign but a pawn in their game, as happened at times during the Ming. The Manchu formation and its cultural practices, however, emerged with infusions of Ming practices.

*The Great Ming Huidian and an imaginative framework*

The clearest indication of how the Manchu state began to be imagined came from Chinese bannerman, Assistant Regional Commander Ning Wanwo in a 1633 (Tc 7) memorial to Hong Taji. “In name, the six boards originally adhered to those of the Ming. The state established these boards to handle matters of concern. Because Manchu officials did not know [how to run them], Chinese served as the vice presidents, and they consulted the *Huidian.*” The “*Huidian*” he referred to was the *Da Ming Huidian,* or the administrative statutes of the Ming dynasty. The Qing most likely drew upon the fourth edition and most recent edition of the Ming statutes, which was issued by the Wanli government in 1587. This definitive administrative code, or statues, outlined the workings of the six boards and the operations of the state. It served as the basis of knowledge about the state structure and the duties and responsibilities of each board in the Ming government, and would similarly serve the Manchu state in the same capacity until the issuing of the Kangxi *Huidian* in 1690. As discussed in depth in chapter five, this document guided the Qing in their organizational structure and administrative practice, and it served as the basic reference for administrators and their administrative activity.

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54 For an unglamorous portrait of the Ming emperor as incompetent in the face of bureaucratic maneuvering see Ray Huang, *1587, a Year of No Significance: The Ming Dynasty in Decline* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981).

55 In this way, the Manchus attempted something much different than Zhu Yuanzhang. Where the latter was concerned with attracting officials to his cause and employing them in the service of his young state, the Manchus were concerned with their internal struggle for power. Each ruler used their officials differently, and ritual did a different kind of work in each case.

56 TCZY 2.35a, Tc7.8.9.

57 For an example of the continued use of the Ming huidian into the Kangxi-era, and the rational for a new huidian see Kx9.5.bingzi. SL, p. 446-1.
Given both the institutional context of Chinese officials’ role in governance, and the reliance on the *Da Ming Huidian* for running the government, it is not a stretch to conclude that the understanding of the practice of state ritual was also sourced here. When Li Bolong and his associates memorialized the emperor and drafted the edict, they most likely drew on the *Huidian* to inform their understanding of how the New Year’s ceremony should work. For example, take Li’s complaint about the presentation of officials before the emperor as too random. Recall that he said it lacked an organizational sequence according to official hierarchy or rank, and he made a detailed proposal about the order it should follow. This idea of hierarchical order according to rank and position is reflected throughout the Ming *Huidian*. As taken up in chapter five, the Ming New Year’s Day ceremony was a highly formalized event with every actor accounted for by rank and sociopolitical position. Staging was key, and the movement of specific actors and specific times highly scripted. While the role of the emperor was minimal in the Ming practice, the emperor would still take the throne and preside over the ceremony. Li Bolong and his Chinese colleagues made these kinds of suggestions. It is not that Hong Taiji’s New Year’s Day ritual had to mirror the Ming in form, but it did capture the symbolism of a sovereign projecting power over a hierarchically organized polity. It is in this way that the Ming practice served as a point of reference.

*Manchu traditions*

Although the Ming practice of placing certain people of certain rank in certain positions was reflected in the Manchu New Year’s Day ceremony, the Qing practice differed greatly from the Ming. For the early Manchus, the Ming served as a referent for ceremonial form and political function—a framework from which to work with in the organization of a large agrarian
bureaucracy. Thus, rather than adopting the full package of Ming practice, Qing officials took parts of the structure and amalgamated them with Manchu traditions to create a kind of hybrid.

The most immediate and important tradition seen here was worship at the tangse. Recall that Manchus’ pre and post 1632 New Year’s ceremony began at dawn with the sovereign leading nobles and high officials out to the tangse to worship Heaven and ancestors. This practice first appears in the historical record as early as the sixteenth century, and scholars have speculated that it goes back much earlier. What is of significance for the argument here is the emphasis that eighteenth and nineteenth century Qing writers placed on the practice, and their accentuation of the fact that it was a unique Manchu custom. Hanlin scholar Zha Zhenxing’s recordings of mid-Kangxi history and affairs of the court, *Renhaiji*, published in 1708, has two sections on the role of the tangse in the New Year’s Day ceremony. Similarly, the 1722 *Yongxianlu* gives a detailed description of the tangse and what happens there on New Year’s Day. A number of Manchu ritual texts from the Qianlong and Jiaqing periods make a further point not only of the importance of the tangse in the New Year’s Day ceremony, but also of its Manchu origins. The Qianlong era *Qinding Manzhou jishen jitian dianli* (Imperially commissioned Manchu code of rituals and sacrifices) details the tangse and the extent of the

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59 Cha Zhenxing, *Renhaiji*, p. 8, 121

New Year’s Day practice,\textsuperscript{61} as does the \textit{Manzhou sili ji} (Compendium of four Manchu rites).\textsuperscript{62} The former stating, “Since ancient times, the Manchu state has revered Heaven…thus, when creating a base in Shenjing, we respectfully built the tangzi in order to sacrifice to heaven.”\textsuperscript{63} Similarly, an early nineteenth century Manchu nobleman devoted significant space to a discussion of the function of the tangse and the ritual practice that takes place there in his \textit{Xiaoting zalu} (Miscellaneous notes from the whistling pavilion).\textsuperscript{64}

The other enduring Manchu practice was the primacy given to foreign guests.\textsuperscript{65} In the two detailed accounts of New Year’s Day ceremonies in the Tianming era, cited above, Mongol representatives are prevalent participants in the ceremony, and Koreans are noted to have been present.\textsuperscript{66} In the 1631 ceremony, three foreign states and tribes and their rulers are named leading their officials to audience, and the sixth wave in the procession was reserved for another Mongol tribe.\textsuperscript{67} In 1632, nobles from Cahar and Kalka states received primacy in the ceremony, sitting behind the imperial relatives; and Mongol officials came in right after the banners, followed by other foreign tribes.\textsuperscript{68} Furthermore, a miscellaneous note on that year’s ceremony, misplaced from the documents on the event itself, makes a point of recording the presence of Mongol

\textsuperscript{61} Qi\textsuperscript{n}ding manzhou jishen jitian dianli (1747), 1.25.
\textsuperscript{62} Suo Ningan, \textit{Manzhou sili ji} (1795), 1a–b, 36a–b.
\textsuperscript{63} Qi\textsuperscript{n}ding manzhou jishen jitian dianli, 1.12.
\textsuperscript{64} Zhao, \textit{Xiaoting zalu}, 8.7b-8b
\textsuperscript{65} For a brief discussion of the importance Nurhaci placed on receiving foreign guests for New Year’s see You Shujun, “Cong hanguo dao diguo,” 81–110.
\textsuperscript{66} MWYD 2.336, Tz7.1.1; MR 2.465; MWYD 4.177-79, Tm9.1.1; MR 2.881.
\textsuperscript{67} CSBSL 6.1a.
\textsuperscript{68} MWYD 8.50-51, Tc6.1.1.
nobles who had recently surrendered. Every year thereafter has an overwhelming presence of foreign states and outside constituents. Take for example, the 1633 ceremony, which saw a long list of tribes coming to court to pay respects. Or the next year, when four foreign states were allowed to line up before the banners. Even in 1642 (Cd 7), the year the ceremony was abbreviated due to the death of an imperial concubine, the Koreans were there with textiles, as were other states, each of which received gifts along with a full banquet.

This presence of foreign states stands in contrast to the Ming ceremony, where foreigners are barely seen. The precedent set at the beginning of the Ming dynasty is completely absent of outside audience. Not until a major revision of the ceremony a century and a half later in 1537 (JJ16) did foreign dignitaries have a role in the ceremony, although even then it was minor compared to the Qing. In preparations the day before, the deputy of guest affairs in the Ming Board of Li was to set up tables for foreign dignitaries to place their tribute gifts. On the second sounding of the drum the tribute gifts were then arranged properly, and when the emperor ascended the throne on the third drum, a Board of Li official presented the gifts to the emperor on behalf of the foreign dignitaries. When the ceremony was all over, a yellow tent was erected from which the emperor surveyed the gifted horses. That is all. No prominence of place or stop in the procession, just a space for their gifts to be displayed.

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69 MWYD 8.295, Tc6.1.1.
70 NGSY p. 1, Tc7.1.1.
71 NGSY p. 1, Tc8.1.1.
72 CZBSL 38.1a, Cd7.1.1.
73 See DMHD, p. 803.1-804.2.
74 DMHD, p. 804.2-807.1.
Given the importance that foreign relations had in the rise of the Manchu polity and the stability of the early Qing state, it is not surprising to see foreign states and their dignitaries given a prominent place in the New Year’s day ceremony. Both Nurhaci and Hong Taiji put the formation of alliances with surrounding Jurchen and Mongol tribes at the center of early state building efforts. To a large extent, Nurhaci’s success in the construction of a Manchu polity was a result of the alliances he formed with the disparate tribes in the north, coupled with military exploits. Hong Taiji continued this effort by signing treaties and forming marriage alliances, which expanded territory under control and stabilized the surrounding region, allowing the Jin to focus military efforts elsewhere. These alliances and their importance is no more evident than in the concerns expressed over how foreign observers would view changes in the Manchu ceremony. Recall Hong Taiji’s fear that changing the seating arrangements would cause other states to think of him morally blasphemous against his brother. “If foreigners hear of this,” he said, “they will not know that the fault is his and think that I am a disrespectful younger brother.” Clearly both the patronage and the opinions of foreign states were key to the dominance of the Manchus in the north. These states were both courted and rewarded with a high profile in the Qing symbolic order.

Other aspects of the Manchu New Year’s tradition persisted, of course. The position of the banners, for instance, or the presence of the Manchu imperial relatives, who would always have a place in the Qing ceremony. But to focus on these routine practices would be to overlook the structure of ceremonial and political order, and miss exactly what changed and what remained the same. The Manchus did not adopt the Ming ceremony, but rather let certain aspects

76 CZBSL, 8.29b-31a, Tc5.12.28.
of it inform their own traditions. In this way, it must be understood that existing traditions helped organize political and social relations, and it required a powerful force to undermine or abrogate such an order. Even in the face of such a force, the practice or institution would not just disappear or be completely abandoned in favor of another; there would always be a remainder.\textsuperscript{77} Indeed, the Manchus would not embrace the Ming practice simply because it might hold promise for the making of a state. Rather, they would work with what was available and piece together a system that responded to the needs of the day.

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION I: THE NEW YEAR’S DAY CEREMONY AND THE QING STATE

This chapter has given a glimpse of the political struggles in the formation of the Manchu state and the symbolic forum within which they were given meaning. The revision of the New Year’s Day ceremony in 1632 to elevate a single individual to the position of sovereign, and to organize political actors in a stratified hierarchy, took place against the backdrop of the process of rearranging relations among a group of people involved in the shaping of an emergent political order. These developments were part of a long process of the formation of the Manchu state and the internal struggles for power. Three key political institutions would continue to develop over decades, as would the culturally symbolic forms within which they would be given meaning: the institutionalization of the emperor, stratification of political society, and centralization of the military.\textsuperscript{78}


\textsuperscript{78} In Weberian terms, placing Hong Taiji in the center seat and focusing the lines of power towards his representative person was part of the process of the transition from charismatic ruler to a patrimonial bureaucracy.
A New Year’s Day ritual itself was not unprecedented. As outlined above, the Manchus had a long tradition of celebratory rites on the first day of the new year. What changed ritually in tandem with political change was the form of the ceremony. Whereas previously, the Manchu ruler did not take a privileged place of position in the ceremony, in the 1632 ceremony and thereafter, the ruler would sit as a sovereign—in the middle and elevated above all. He would occupy the unambiguous position of superiority projecting the symbolic control of political resources. Similarly, the primacy of political constituents became sequentialized and a hierarchy established. In years past, the order of the procession in the ceremony was rather arbitrary and could be determined by seniority or the richness of clothes. The 1632 change pegged the order to political position, and granted those of rank and political standing greater privilege. Included in this procession, which offered opportunity for prestige by participation, was the inclusion of both the military and foreign states.

These changes in the ritual occurred as the political landscape was also being altered. Foremost, Hong Taiji had outmaneuvered his brothers. The other kin had started out as political equals to Hong Taiji in both position and decision making powers, but ended up as subordinates. The elevation of Hong Taiji to the center of the authority gave him control over policy and personnel. The lines of power now pointed towards him, and they did so not only because he stood as a charismatic leader who had won the following of others through his military strength and political entrepreneurship, but also by beginning to create a system of symbolic meanings that made sense of the new social changes, as well as showed actors their place in the emerging order.

Other political ramifications of the ceremony were felt in the military, the aristocracy, and international relations. The autonomy of the banners began to get reeled in by organizing them not according to the seniority of their owner, but by their arrangement in battle formation. Hong Taiji’s banners came first, followed by all others in order. What this meant was that final authority began to point up to the top of the political hierarchy, not to the banner leadership. Likewise, the imperial relatives were given sequential positions in the procession, stripping them of autonomy and relegating them to a role. Their status now became a privilege bestowed upon them by the ruler. Their prestige was now bound within a constructed hierarchy over which they had no control, and by which they now became subjects. The honor of foreign states and tribes to partake in the ceremony created a hierarchy of international relations, ranking some over others through the order in which they were received in court. This ceremony served as a powerful tool for the Manchus to manipulate these relations, and to establish themselves not only as the arbitrator, but also the pinnacle of the hierarchy.

The form of li that emerged worked in concert with the political developments. The New Year’s Day ceremony put individuals and groups into certain kinds of relationships and regulated certain kinds of interactions that held under very specific and controlled circumstances. An individual would sit at the center and all would relate to him as a sovereign who had various powers and control of resources. Others would stratify themselves as if they belonged to specific stations and embodied certain roles. While still others would subject themselves to mastery as if they were political inferiors craving the graces of their superiors. Such relationships once played out in ceremony, came to have symbolic meaning in the formation of political relations.

79 On the formation of the system of ritual in early Qing foreign relations see You, “Cong hanguo dao diguo.”
This subjunctive made the links between ritual, institution, and political power very real. Take for instance the 1634 (TC 8) ceremony. After Hong Taiji sat and Daišan took his place to his right, two Ming generals, who had recently left the Ming and given their loyalty to the Manchus, were brought before the khan. Hong Taiji told them they would be given the honor to line up alongside the high-ranking imperial relatives and to kowtow with them. The generals demurred, saying that they were unable to accept such an honor. “How do we dare accept the rank of beile?” they said. But the khan’s word was spoken and the relatives led them out, making them go first in the kowtow.  

From the khan’s offer of rank and primacy in the ceremony, it is clear that the rite and position in the rite carried a distinction. But more so, the actors took this very seriously. The generals found the honor of rank and position in the ceremony too great and refused. It matters little if they deferred out of politeness or if they really were overwhelmed by the honor, for it still communicates the fact of the prestige and political importance. Whether the actors were sincere in their offers or protests, misses the point, for what is overwhelmingly clear is that the ritual and the articulations about the ritual worked together with the naked struggle for power and the shaping of social and political relations.

PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION II: THE BOARD OF LI IN THE MAKING OF THE QING STATE

At the heart of the New Year’s Day ceremony and its political implications stood Li and the Board of Li. It is impossible to discuss this event and its role in the formation of the Qing state without reference to this concept of organization and the board responsible for its implementation. Board personnel were involved in instigating the revision of the ceremony of

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80 NGSY, p. 1-2, Tc8.
1632. Just months after the Board of Li was formed, the Chinese vice president, Li Bolong memorialized Hong Taiji on the need to stratify the participants and sequentialize the procession. He gave a very concrete suggestion on how the order of the ceremony should proceed. This was discussed by the political council, and it resulted in the elevation symbolically of Hong Taiji to a distinct position of sovereign and the realignment of political and military arrangements in the ceremony. The final edict to implement this change has Board of Li fingerprints all over it.

These reforms in the ceremony were inspired by a vision of sociopolitical and administrative order that were expressed in terms of li. Li gave the political changes a symbolic meaning. The Board of Li was based on a Ming institution, its administrative activities were informed by the Ming statutes, and its operatives, such as Li Bolong, were former Ming subjects who took their ideas from Ming practices. The Manchus here faced a situation that demanded the construction of an efficient ruling apparatus to govern territory and populations, and the need to given coherent meaning to these changes in light of a shifting sociopolitical relations. The most immediate model available was the Ming, and it was from the Ming that Hong Taiji and his staff drew in order to mold an amalgamated system that would also meet the needs of the latter’s demand both in terms of institutions and culture.

At the same time, Hong Taiji was embroiled in a political fight. He was attempting to create a monopoly of political resources by eliminating or subjugating the other three co-rulers. It was a struggle that took place in areas of war and politics, and over strategy and policy. Hong Taiji not only attempted to reformulate the entire socio-political order by defining how political actors would relate to each other, but also how that order was represented. The New Year’s Day ceremony allowed him to symbolically place himself in a position of superiority and relegate his
challengers to inferior positions. This was one move in the construction of a single stratified hierarchy with himself as sovereign at top.

The New Year’s Day ceremony as articulated by the Board of Li provided one language to address these challenges. Embedded in the ritual were ideas about how the state should be organized, who had control over the military, the role of the bureaucracy, and how political resources should be distributed. Spoken indirectly in a type of micro-discourse, Board of Li officials had a particular vision of the state that was enacted in the ceremony; actors of certain positions and ranks had to be put into certain relations at certain times in the ritual so that their extra-ritual activity could also work to create a political order. To imagine the ceremony in a way with the emperor alone in the center facing south and all constituents organized hierarchically was ritual propriety; but it was also political order and the structure of the state. It gave guidance to interpersonal relations in a world that was uncertain and a society in flux.

The Board of Li was more than just the state’s cortex, however; it also had a very practical role in guiding ceremony. It was the Board of Li, after all, that possessed the knowledge of who was supposed to stand where and do what in the ceremony, and that kept records of the sequences of the processions and order of the foreign states. It was the Board of Li that could manage the ceremony and its increasing complexity. Beginning in 1635 (Tc 9), the Board of Li began to get frequent mention in records of the ceremony event. That year, Manchu-language documents record a Board of Li vice president “standing on the right side calling out the ranks of officials as they kowtowed. He then led the officials and called for them to kowtow to the khan. When making pronouncements not one word was spoken in error.”\textsuperscript{81} As of 1638, documents begin to record the Board of Li getting sent out to the Manchu shrine to light incense before the

\textsuperscript{81} JMZD, p. 3, Tc9.
worshiping contingent arrive. That year, Board of Li officials also acted as directors of the ceremony, telling the imperial relatives, banner officials, and administrative staff when to line up, when to advance, and when to kowtow.\(^82\) By the early Kangxi era, the role of Board of Li officials was so great that the ritual could not take place without them. In discussing the 1669 (Kx 8) ceremony, for example, the Kangxi Huidian records board officials setting up tables in the palace prior to the ceremony, carrying plaques to identify groups in the procession, leading those groups through gates and into the palace, lining them up properly before the emperor, and then instructing them on the correct timing for entering, bowing, and withdrawing. Furthermore, board officials are also discussed here walking the emperor through the ceremony in doing things like calling out for him to ascend, bow, and sit.\(^83\)

From the examples just given, it is clear that that Board of Li had a growing role in conducting the ceremony. This is largely a result of the increasing complexity of the ceremony. In the early Tiancong years, the ceremony was confined to a select number of imperial relatives, officials, and foreign dignitaries, and involved little more than entering the palace and kowtowing before the emperor. By the Kangxi era, however, the exponentially greater number of people involved meant that the complexity of the organization of the ceremony increased, as did the possibility of error from those who were unfamiliar with ritual protocol. Take for example the ceremony to congratulate the emperor on the establishment of the Qing dynasty in 1636. The unexpected crowd of nobles and officials could not all fit in the palace as usual and the officials of the Board of Li had to improvise on the spot to bring them through different gates at different

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\(^82\) NGSY, p. 142, Cd3. On the role of the Board of Rites in lighting incense in subsequent years see CZBSL 32.1a, Cd5; CZBSL 35.1a, Cd6; NGSY 1.503, Cd8; CZBSL 40.1a.

\(^83\) KXHD 715.1926-1930
stages. In the Kangxi-era ceremony, this had been accounted for and the staging of the groups and their entry was written into the ceremonial script. Such complexity only exacerbated the need for a contingent of officials to lead others in the proper ritual act. This was one of the very practical roles the Board of Li would play in the ceremonies—ceremonies that would continue to arrange political relations and shape the institutional order of the state.

As a final note, it must be emphasized that a single political struggle and the 1632 New Year’s day ceremony was not all there was to Qing state-making. The emperor was not institutionalized simply because he sat in a certain seat on the first day of the first month of the new year. The military did not give complete allegiance to a figure of the sovereign simply because they were organized in the procession. Imperial relatives and officials did not just sacrifice their interests after being given a new ceremonial role. The ceremony was a key part of the process, but it was a long, drawn-out process that cycled through many emperors and officials. As the subsequent chapters will show, there were ongoing struggles and further practices that contributed to the making of the Qing state and its symbolic order.

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84 MR 6.1084, Cd1.5.29; SL p. 377-1.
85 KXHD 715.1926-1930
In the process of centralization and formation of a new political order, the relatives of the ruler posed the most immediate obstacle.\(^1\) Not only did they contest for power, but they also rejected the imperial vision of a hierarchically organized state. Hong Taiji’s brothers and nephew first contested for the title and position of khan; then, when it became apparent that Hong Taiji would win this struggle, they sought to further assert their autonomy and remove their human and material resources from the control of the emerging state. They presented an alternative vision of political organization based on the tribal politics of the Inner Asian practices, where military leaders maintained autonomous military and political control of their armies and jurisdictions and formed alliances to cooperate in conquest when mutual interests would be served. Even when these initial threats were nullified, the imperial relatives continued to challenge policy and disrupt the authority of the ruler throughout the 1630s and 40s.\(^2\)

Hong Taiji as ruler had a few options available to him in dealing with his relatives. He could draw on the examples of Song and Ming dynasties, and bar his relatives from all political activity. This option might follow the Song in confining all relatives to a palace in the capital and trotting them out only for state ceremony. Or it might follow the Ming in exiling all relatives to estates in the provinces and imposing strict regulations on their associations, engagements, and movement. Alternatively, he could turn to the the example of the Yuan dynasty, and set up appanages in the provinces for his relatives to rule as semi-autonomous governors. All of these

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\(^1\) For a general discussion of the problem of imperial relatives in the premodern empires see Appendix 1.

options were attached to and necessitated a particular form of aspects li, which helped organize actors and shaped politics. These aspects included things like the role of the relatives in ceremony and how they would relate to other political actors.

This chapter shows that Hong Taiji and his supporters made their own options and developed a novel solution: employing the imperial relatives in service of the state. In doing so they changed the practices of li and facilitated the construction of a unique Qing political order.

The story begins with Hong Taiji’s ascension to the throne in 1627, and his successful bid to propel himself above his kin following the death of Nurhaci. Confronting problems first with the senior relatives and then with the junior relatives, Hong Taiji engineered a solution to remove his relatives as a threat to imperial authority and to enlist them in service of the state. This solution involved placing them into ranking categories and giving them titles, and then to integrate them into the political order through rites and rituals. Codes for sumptuary, greeting rites, and ceremonial activity were attached to titles and gave the ranking everyday meaning in practice. Furthermore, these rites for the imperial relatives were intertwined with the professional bureaucracy so that an integrated political order was created—the imperial relatives were removed from the struggles for imperial power and their threats to the authority of the throne were nullified. The institutionalization of this system culminated with the establishment of a bureaucratic organization in 1652 to oversee the imperial relatives, the Court of the Imperial Clan.

THE PROBLEM OF RELATIVES

As Hong Taiji consolidated his position he confronted the expectation of privilege and position of his relatives. He had gotten himself elected khan in 1627, and almost immediately began to
encounter the resistance of his brothers in his attempts to wield power and dictate policy. He resisted their attempts to assert independence and he punished their insubordinations. In the end, he either eliminated or subjugated them to his command. Hong Taiji was able to accomplish as much due to the support of his sons, other brothers, their sons. But once his position as sovereign was undisputed and central governing apparatus further institutionalized, these supporters became instigators of micro-struggles amongst themselves and with the sovereign over positions, policy, and national vision. Throughout, the question for Hong Taiji as ruler was never more acute: what should he do with his relatives and sons?

*The senior beile*

The immediate problem for Hong Taiji upon assuming leadership was his two brothers and his cousin, known as the senior beile. Unless they could be brought under control, Hong Taiji’s authority would constantly run up against limitations, and his ability to wield political resources constrained. Hu Gongming, a Chinese official employed in the Bordered Red banner, warned Hong Taiji of the dangers of the beile and the need to concentrate power into himself as the sovereign. “The emperor does not tolerate the beile and the beile do not tolerate the emperor,” he memorialized to Hong Taiji. “No matter the affair, you will always encounter opposition. Although you are khan in name, the reality is that you are no different than the leader of the Yellow Banners!” This last statement insinuating that he had no more authority or control than any of the other banner leaders even if he held the title of khan. The consequences of this situation were a contest over the future of the state and the control of territory. As Hu Gongming

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3 There is almost no information on this official’s background or activity. The extent of what can be ascertained is that he surrendered around 1629, was a scholar, and had strong opinions about centralizing authority around a single sovereign. Tsai Sung-yin, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan,” 117; MQNAF, “Ma Guozhu;” *Qingshi gao*, p. 9517.
put it, “It is like ten sheep and nine shepherds—the troops are strong, can enter the pass, and take the central plains [i.e. China], but I see that within a few years there will be chaos and division. One cannot rule.”

By 1635, Hong Taiji was able to call himself emperor. He had removed or subjugated all legitimate contenders for power, namely his cousin and two elder brothers, with whom he was initially expected to share decision-making authority. It was a ten-year long struggle against them. The conflicts began in discussions over Hong Taiji’s assumption of the khanship. His elder cousin, Amin, who was the second highest ranking beile in terms of seniority, agreed to elect Hong Taiji as khan if he, Amin, could take his banner and go live on the “outer frontier”—a proposal that Hong Taiji immediately rejected on grounds that the emerging state would fall apart. The tension did not end there. In 1627, on campaign to Korea, Amin pillaged towns against explicit orders to leave them untouched. A few years later, he again disobeyed orders and slaughtered Chinese villagers in Yongping. Sixteen crimes were leveled against him, landing him in confinement, under which he died in 1640. His Bordered Blue banner was given to his younger brother and Hong Taiji supporter, Jirgalang. Hong Taiji’s elder brother, Manggültai, fared only slightly better. As discussed in the previous chapter, Manggültai was at the receiving

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4 TCZY, 35b. 貝勒不容於皇上，皇上亦不容於貝勒，事事掣肘，雖有一汗之虛名，實無異整黃旗一貝勒也。如此三分四陸，如此十羊九牧，縱借此強兵，進了山海，得了中原，臣謂不數年間，必將錯亂不一，而不能料理也。

5 Accounts of Hong Taiji’s struggles with his brothers can be found in Gertraude Roth Li, “The Rise of the Early Manchu State: A Portrait Drawn from Manchu Sources to 1636” (PhD Dissertation, Harvard University, 1975), 119-125.


7 Donghualu, 3.14. This event is not in the Manchu records, and the authenticity of the entire episode is further shrouded in doubt over the fact that it is recorded in the Donghualu as Hong Taiji’s reflection of the time. Even if the conversation never happened, it still illustrates the tension between Hong Taiji and his relatives, and the context of their struggles.
end of what he thought unjust and improper critique over the movement of troops, and drew his sword against Hong Taiji, which led to a demotion in rank and a heavy fine. Two years later he died in battle, and shortly thereafter was accused of harboring designs against Hong Taiji, which led to his posthumous demotion and the confiscation of his banner from his descendants. The last senior relative under discussion, Daišan, was the eldest brother and eldest surviving son of Nurhaci. He was the least capable and of a weaker personality and charisma than his brothers. From very early on he sided with Hong Taiji and continued to support him throughout, taking a passive position in the face of conflict, and always opting for the line of least resistance in negotiation and argument.

The struggle amongst the beile was both a struggle for a single position of power, as well as a conflict about the vision of the Manchu state. Amin’s killing of Chinese, for example, seems to have been carried out not in a direct act of insubordination of Hong Taiji, but rather of the common practices of raid and pillage that the Manchus had partaken in for so long. Similarly, his demands for Mongol wives and his partaking in marriage alliances without approval indicate independent action as a military leader. These actions were undertaken in order to aggrandize himself and his men, which was not unreasonable under conceptions of traditional practice. He similarly behaved like his own khan, welcoming troops from military expedition as if he were ruler. Amin’s actions show one still adhering to the practices of the wielding independent military force and obtaining of booty. This stood in opposition to Hong Taiji’s idea of an agrarian-bureaucratic state with a single sovereign ruling over subjects, where conquest involved

8 MR 5.539-543. It is a misconception that Manggūltai was stripped completely of rank and position for this incident as stated by Roth Li, “The Rise of the Early Manchu State” and Wang Sizhi, Qingshi lunqiao (Chengdu: Bashu shushe, 1987), 89. For a short discussion of this misconception and a correction see Yao Nianci, Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei (Liaoning: Liaoning minzu chubanshe, 2008), 121.

9 MR 4.410.
the subduing of rival forces and the occupation of land. For Hong Taiji as the self-styled leader of an aspiring agrarian-bureaucratic state, villages that surrendered should be preserved and integrated, not burned and pillaged; the inhabitants should be made subjects not slaughtered. This contrast of vision among kin played out in their personal relations, for the other senior beile saw themselves as equals of Hong Taiji, not his subordinates, and they refused to take orders from him or see him as a sovereign.

*The junior beile*

The sons of the beile and the younger sons of Nurhaci helped Hong Taiji overcome these challenges to centralization and rule.10 Often referred to as the junior beile (xiao beile 小貝勒),11 these men appear throughout the documentary evidence in the late Tianming and early Tiancong period. They become more prominent in the materials from the 1630s, and then emerge in the documents as the next generation of leaders of the Qing, struggling for power amongst themselves. Often understood to be those supporters on the joint council, it is tough to obtain a complete list of exactly who they all were, but various appearances in mentions of the joint council give an indication of this group.12 For example, at the ceremony for the ascension of Hong Taiji, in addition to the presence of the three senior beile, Amin, Daišan, and Manggūltai, the following other relatives were also in attendance: Abatai, Degelei, Jirgalang, Ajige, Dorgon,

10 See especially Yao, *Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei*, ch. 3.

11 This term appears sporadically in the Tiancong-era Chinese-language sources to contrast those beile empowered by Hong Taiji and the four senior beile anointed by Nurhaci, i.e. Daišan, Manggūltai, Amin, and Hong Taiji. See TZGSL, 140.2; TZWSL, 50.1, 54.2, 66.1, 265.2. The Chinese scholarship uses this term more broadly to refer to the group of sons of the beile and younger sons of Nurhaci who supported Hong Taiji against the senior beile. For example see Du Jiaqi, *Baqi yu Qingchao zhengzhi*; Yao Niansi, *Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei*.

12 The Qianlong-era *Shilu* records the xiao beile as constituting ten individuals, which contemporary scholars have tended to follow. See Du Jiaqi, *Baqi yu Qingchao zhengzhi*, 129-130. Yao Nianci, rejects this narrow definition of xiao beile, however, on the grounds that other actors fit the definition. Yao, *Qingchu zhengzhishi*; conversation with Yao Nianci, Beijing, June 2013.
Dodo, Dudu, Yoto, Šoto, Sahaliyen, and Hooge. Similarly, a number of these same people received banners after the death of Nurhaci and were granted high ranks by Hong Taiji when the system of ranks and titles was set up in the early Chongde period. Others, such as Dahai, Kürcan, and Sonin were council members responsible for demoting Manggūltai and Daišan, and elevating Hong Taiji in the New Year’s Day ceremony.

The majority of these people were the younger sons and the grandsons of Nurhaci. Abatai, for example, was Nurhaci’s seventh son. Degelei was his tenth, and had the same birth mother as Manggūltai, giving them an affinity of full brotherhood and clan interest. Ajige, Dorgon, and Dodo were Nurhaci’s twelfth, fourteenth, and fifteenth sons, respectively, and all shared the same mother. Jirgalang was the sixth son of Nurhaci’s younger brother, Surhaci. Dudu was the son of Cuyen, Nurhaci’s eldest son, while Yoto, Šoto, and Sahaliyen were the sons of Daišan, Nurhaci’s second son. Haoge was Hong Taiji’s eldest son, and an accomplished general in his own right.

The junior beile decided very early on to throw their lot behind Hong Taiji. As early as the 1620s, they saw that the other senior beile had no capacity and thus very little hope of succeeding Nurhaci as khan or of taking a position of authority. Amin was the son of Nurhaci’s brother, Surhaci, and thus not in line for succession. Both Daišan and Manggūltai had compromised themselves through acts against other family members and had been publicly reprimanded by Nurhaci. This left only Hong Taiji as the logical successor, and the only one capable of granting positions and protecting interests. Even the brothers of the senior beile Amin

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13 TZGSL, Tm11.9.xinwei. See also Yao, Qingchu zhengzhishi, 125.
14 See chapter four.
15 Biographies of these men can be found in ECCP. For a list of the family relations see Appendix 2.
and Manggūltai supported Hong Taiji, and Daišan’s two sons Yoto and Šoto invested considerable effort in convincing their father to support the election of Hong Taiji as khan.¹⁶

These junior beile saw it in their interest to have a strong central authority. They looked to the khan to protect their interests and to guarantee them their positions in the face of the whims, abuses, and demands of the senior beile and banner owners.¹⁷ The authority of the khan could serve as the arbitrator and legal directive of custom and inheritance in these situations of non-codified practices. Take the case of banner inheritance, for example. With the re-distribution of banners after the death of Nurhaci, Degelei and Jirgalang (the younger brothers of Manggūltai and Amin, respectively) were not given banners. They saw themselves in line to receive command, and in order to guarantee as much, became two of Hong Taiji’s most ardent supporters early on with the view that he could ensure their position. This paid off. When Amin was removed from command and imprisoned, Jirgalang received his Bordered Blue Banner. Similarly, after Manggūltai death, Degelei was given his Plain Blue Banner. The sons of Daišan also supported Hong Taiji with the prospect of securing a benefactor for their interests, especially in taking control of the Red Banners when their father died, which they did. Two of the sons, Yoto and Sahaliyen, also became board presidents. The junior beile also received protection from Hong Taiji against the interests of the more senior beile and banner owners. When Amin attacked Yongping in 1630, for example, he wanted to leave his brother Jirgalang with the onerous and thankless task of holding the city. Hong Taiji stepped in on behalf of Jirgalang and told Amin that there was no need to issue such a demand and that Jirgalang need not hold the city.¹⁸

¹⁶ Yao, Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei, 112.
¹⁷ Yao, Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei, 193.
¹⁸ Yao, Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei, 193
Hong Taiji further gave the junior beile positions on decision-making committees and the central government. One of the first acts of Hong Taiji as khan was to expand the joint council from a small number of select beile to one that would include both the banner leaders (ejen) and the supporters of Hong Taiji. This elevated both the position and influence of the junior beile, as they now had a voice in military operations and the running of state affairs. They transformed from “support officials” to actors with the ability to wield a small bit of influence in directing state affairs.\(^\text{19}\) Hong Taiji also gave the junior beile key positions in the bureaucracy. The presidencies of the six boards, for example, were handed out to his supporters. Dorgon was made president of the Board of Personnel, Degelei Finance, Sahaliyen Rites, Jirgalang Punishments, Yoto War, and Abatai Works.\(^\text{20}\) In this way, Hong Taiji relied on this group of trusted relatives to advise and to help run the state.

The junior beile figured prominently in Hong Taiji’s struggle with the senior beile and other efforts of centralization. Their inclusion on the joint council, for example, provided significant aid to Hong Taiji’s political aims, for everyone on the council had equal say in any given matter at hand, with seniority or rank not holding sway over a majority opinion on an issue. The junior beile could be relied upon to push an agenda at the expense of the senior beile, curtailing independent power and censoring challengers altogether.\(^\text{21}\) The accusations and imprisonment of Amin, the demotion of Manggūltai, and the punishments issued to Daišan speak to this point. In all three cases, the junior beile made the difference in the council sessions that agreed to censor these senior beile.\(^\text{22}\) Similarly, they were instrumental in pushing a new

\(^{19}\) Yao, *Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei*, 178, 182.

\(^{20}\) TZWSL, 124.1-2, Tc5.7.8.

\(^{21}\) Yao, *Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei*, 178-182.

\(^{22}\) Yao, *Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei*, 119.
regulation for the ability of banner subordinates to bring accusations against the banner owner and leave the banner. Although it certainly was not in the interest of all the junior beile, especially those banner owners, enough of them helped Hong Taiji pass and implement the regulation. This reduced the power of the banner owners and, ironically, led to his devaluation of the joint council.\textsuperscript{23} In the end, this support gave Hong Taiji control over the banners and the state.\textsuperscript{24}

\textit{Struggles with the junior beile}

After successfully suppressing direct opposition to his authority and squashing legitimate challenges to his position, Hong Taiji soon found himself facing a different sort of challenge: the struggle of enacting policy and running the state. Hong Taiji’s employment of the junior beile was calculated in the gaining of support for his bid as sovereign, and necessitated pandering to their interests. Once he had secured power, however, those positions granted and interests exercised could not be revoked. This left Hong Taiji with a dilemma: these people were not servants to the sovereign but ambitious men in their own right—men who would pursue their own agendas.

Even close collaborators of Hong Taiji exercised their own agency at the expense of the larger goals of the government. A case of corruption and personal patronage involving Dorgon in 1638 speaks to this point. In 1637, an administrative official in the Board of Punishments, Chen Qi, was convicted of corruption and removed from his post. This accusation, trial, and conviction followed standardized procedures put in place for the oversight of the administrative personnel

\textsuperscript{23} Yao, \textit{Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei}, 142-146.

\textsuperscript{24} Yao, \textit{Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei}, 124.
and the prevention of personal interests taking precedence to bureaucratic goals, and the process was approved by Hong Taiji. Some months later, however, Hong Taiji left the capital to go on campaign; the next day Chen Qi was reinstated at the Board of Punishments and his accuser was removed. “I am without crime and yet removed from office!” Board of Punishments administrative official Bi Cheng wrote of the affair. “It is the corrupt rascal Chen Qi who is being employed instead. If at first they knew Chen Qi was good then they should not have removed him; and if they knew that I was bad then they should not have employed me” This complaint sent the Censorate into action. The department presidents and vice presidents went out to investigate, going first to the Board of Punishments, only to encounter “those who said they did not know, and those who said that Chen was reliable and good.” They thus went to the Board of Personnel to present the case and argued that Chen Qi should not be employed as he has been convicted of corruption on three accounts and is prohibited from again taking office. Censorate president Zu Kefa met with the Board of Personnel president and told him he needed to bring this matter to the attention of the beile of the Board of Personnel and quickly dismiss Chen. The next morning, Zu and his vice president Wu Jingdao ran into the said beile outside morning audience, and the said beile proceeded to give them a dressing down, “reprimanding us for speaking absurdities.”

This beile was Dorgon, Hong Taiji’s younger brother and ardent supporter. As one of the most capable military leaders, he was a powerful banner owner and in charge of the Board of Personnel—positions he exercised to great advantage and often in ways that placed himself above administrative process and regulation. The continued development of the case further

25 On the institutions and goals of the early Qing bureaucracy see Tsai Tsung-yin, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan.”

26 This case is found in FHA, Chongde sannian hanwen dang’an, 21-22; TZWSL, 543.2-544.1.

27 See Tsai Tsung-yin, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan,” 210-211.
saw Dorgon flouting administrative law and regulatory practice in the assertion of his own authority in placing his people and running his corner of the state.

The case continued with Zu and his co-president Zhang Cunren again memorializing Hong Taiji on the matter and requesting that he once again intervene and remove Chen from office. At stake, they argued, was not just this convicted official corrupting government affairs, but the imperial authority of the emperor. “The imperial edict cannot be changed,” he proclaimed. “Imperial authority cannot be transferred.” Although Chen had been convicted and removed from office, he “still remained in the yamen, complacent and smug,” and seemingly under Dorgon’s protection. Exasperated with the situation and Dorgon’s blatant disregard for the administrative chain of command, the Censorate presidents now incriminated Dorgon and the Board of Punishment personnel in the obstruction of procedure and of exercising personal authority to protect a convicted official. “We do not know by what method Chen Qi has been able to obtain the support of the high officials in the Board of Punishments, nor what ground the officials of the Board of Punishments have for the prince [i.e. Dorgon] to make use of them. [But] whatever the prince sees and hears, they mutually divert it and repeal the imperial orders. Our duties as remonstrating officials are greatly hindered.”28 Despite the legal process and the official posts and job descriptions of administrative censors—and even an order handed down by the emperor!—administrative chains of command had severe limitations when a junior beile like Dorgon chose to exercise his independent will and authority. If imperial orders, and even the emperor’s authority could be flouted by the imperial relatives, then further measures had to be taken to discipline them indeed.29

28 FHA, *Chongde sannian hanwen dang’an*, 25.

29 This case is also discussed in NGSY, p. 330-334.
ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS

These problems with the junior beile—and the imperial relatives in general—were not unforeseen. From the time that Hong Taiji began to build a central administrative apparatus and assemble a professional bureaucracy he received warnings about the power of the beile. His Chinese advisors showered him with general discussions on the need to further centralize the state and build institutions that would focus power towards the throne and give the sovereign control of people and political resources. In a lengthy memorial in the fall of 1632, for example, Hu Gongming explained that the beile currently have too much control over human resources, and that they train people to serve them and to work in their service rather than in service of the state. “If he [a beile] has good horses he will give them good grass and feed and won’t extend it to the emperor’s horses; rather, he will offer bad grass and bad feed!” Hu wrote, adding, “They certainly do not have the emperor’s interest in mind. How can they be requested to raise the emperor’s horses?” Continuing, he emphasized, “It is hard to ask the beile to train and bring up officials if the officials are not working for their interests. But at the same time, it is impossible to accuse them of not bringing up officials to serve the interests of the state.” Seven months later he continued the same theme, emphasizing that the beile could not be trusted and had to be watched closely. “The life of the officials is in the hands of the beile! Although we don’t get much clothing or food, we cannot ask for anything more from the beile.” Shufang scholar Ma Guozhu echoed Hu’s premonitions, memorializing in 1633 that the banner owners should not have the capacity to train new people, nor be able to promote or identify talent for

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30 For a full discussion of the push by the Chinese advisors to centralize see Tsai Tsung-yin, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan,” 193, 331, 336.

31 TCZY, 1.36a-b.

32 TCZY, 1.36b.

33 TCZY, 2.17b.
office. “They should listen to the khan’s judgment of talent or stupidity in order to decide,” he wrote.\textsuperscript{34}

Institutions were set up in order to limit the influence of the beile. The regulation enabling a subordinate to level a complaint against his banner owner and then leave the banner, for example, was an early step in this direction. Enacted in 1631, this regulation weakened the authority of the banner owners and gave Hong Taiji greater control over personnel.\textsuperscript{35} Similarly, Hong Taiji, at the behest of his Chinese advisors centralized finances and distributions, so that rather than each banner take a portion of booty or have access its own spoils, the central government would give equal amounts to each banner and put the rest in the treasury. Should a banner wish to hold a banquet or grant monetary awards to their people, it was determined, they would now have to make requests to the proper board.\textsuperscript{36} The establishment of the Censorate was also meant to serve as an independent check on the beile. Although some form of remonstrating officials were employed as early as 1623,\textsuperscript{37} it was not until 1635 that the opposition of the beile was overcome and a Censorate bureau was finally established with the duties of remonstration, reporting events to the emperor, and checking on the beile.\textsuperscript{38} This was followed by a reform of the six boards in 1638 that increased the number of bureaucratic position and gave the staff authority to memorialize directly to the emperor. Whereas officials previously had to go through the beile with their reports, they would now have direct access to the emperor in imperial

\textsuperscript{34} TCZY, 2.2a.

\textsuperscript{35} Yao, \textit{Qingchu zhengzhishi}, 142-157.

\textsuperscript{36} For the initial suggestion on this matter see TCZY, 1.9b.

\textsuperscript{37} Tsai, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan,” 194-200.

\textsuperscript{38} Tsai, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan,” 205-209.
Such a reform worked to limit the control of the beile over policy and personnel, and gave Hong Taiji greater command over these resources through more direct access to officials.  

Hong Taiji even appealed to a professional class of officials to keep watch over the beile. Two years after the establishment of the six boards (1633), Hong Taiji assembled the Manchu and Chinese vice presidents of the boards and explained that their role was “not to intervene in board affairs, but to sit behind each beile and enlighten them in the event of their error.” Continuing, Hong Taiji said that he had heard that “all of the beile stay at home conducting affairs. If that is the case then whey did we set up the yamens! They are all very arrogant and slow in attending to business.” It was the job of these vice presidents to keep an eye on the beile and prod them in the proper conduct of affairs. Here, Hong Taiji worked to use his professional bureaucracy to serve as a check on the beile, only later would he have enough authority to be able to reprimand and censor the beile. In 1636, for example, he told Board of Rites officials that they were in charge of reporting on the beile in the event of dereliction of duty, and to investigate when the beile pursued pleasures in wine, exploitation of others, violation of women, and transgression of proper rites. In short, Hong Taiji looked to his officials to reign in the abuses of the beile.  

The problem was that these institutions only did part of the work in containing the imperial relatives. These men still had autonomous power basis in their banners, and independent
financial means through land and slaves. The links they had to Hong Taiji and his organization where only through the allegiance they paid, the positions they held, and councils they sat on, none of which made them part of the state or invested them with a sense of common purpose. There was always opposition to centralization and control; always the exercising of their own interests and agenda. Their idea of the state contrasted with that of Hong Taiji and his staff. For the relatives, the nascent state still meant a confederation of tribes under the distinct and autonomous leadership of the different banners, acting in concert to obtain grazing land for their horses, enslave agricultural producers, and secure individual resources through raid and pillage, which they used to reward their followers. For Hong Taiji and his staff, a central organization meant the capacity to monopolize political resources and make permanent their positions.\textsuperscript{43} It also meant the ability to focus material and human resources in the enterprise of territorial expansion.\textsuperscript{44} Much like the early Ming and other failed attempts to integrate imperial relatives, to the extent that the relatives had undifferentiated positions and status, and were able to operate as political actors outside of a defined political order, they would not invest in a centralized state or find common interest in an organization.

RANKS AND THE MAKING OF THE MANCHU ARISTOCRACY

On the eve of the ceremonial announcement of the establishment of the Qing dynasty and the ritual proceedings to inaugurate the changing of the name of the state, Hong Taiji ordered the Board of Li to organize members of the imperial family in a stratified aristocracy (zongshi 宗社).

\textsuperscript{43} Weber spoke of this as the routinization of charisma. Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1121-1135.

\textsuperscript{44} Although statist ambitions are evident, the conquest of Ming controlled China was never a given or clearly stated goal for either Nurhaci or Hong Taiji. Right up to the eve of the conquest of Beijing in 1644, many in the Hong Taiji government argued to limit territorial conquest and occupation to the north and to assume the role of a northern dynasty. See Tsai, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan,” especially 305-311.
“The members of the imperial family are not stratified (wusuo fenbie 無所分別),” he cried, “people are not able to distinguish one from the other.” Although the use of red belts had previously been employed among the imperial relatives to “express the difference among superiors and inferiors, elders and juniors,” this system was still too ambiguous and did not differentiate in lineage or status. Hong Taiji thus bifurcated the imperial family, distinguishing between those who descended from Nurhaci and those who descended from the Six Ancestors.

“Those in the line of Taizu branch are all called ‘a-ge,’” he ordered. “The sons and grandsons of the six ancestors are all called ‘jueluo.’ When they are referred to they will be called so-and-so a-ge and so-and-so jueluo. Use this as an ordering principle.”

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The ordering principle of who was considered part of the imperial family was adjusted slightly the following year. Originally Hong Taiji defined the imperial family as only those who descended from Nurhaci, which by definition excluded Nurhaci’s brothers and their sons. Jirgalang, for example, who was descended from Nurhaci’s brother, was excluded in this system. The next year, however, the definition was expanded to include all the descendants of Nurhaci’s father, Taksi, which brought people like Jirgalang into the imperial family to form the official aristocracy. 46 This was done both to include the sons of Nurhaci’s brothers and employ them in service of the state—which will be discussed more below—and also to expand the narrative arc of the formation of the dynasty to include the accomplishments of people like his brother Surhaci. 47 This later development also helped ward off claims of legitimate challenges from

45 These quotes are from the CZBSL 16.8a-b. The TZWSL differs slightly: TZWSL, 289.1. This passage is also cited in full and discussed in Guo and Zhang, Qing ruguan qian, 446-447.

46 For brief overviews of this see Elliott, The Manchu Way, 78-81; Rawski, The Last Emperors, 74-75.

47 See Guo and Zhang, Qing ruguan qian, 447.
competing lines. The immediate effect of all this for the sovereign was to place these junior beile in an organizational system that would begin to define their capacity, function, and authority.48

More to the point, that same year (1636), Hong Taiji handed out ranks to the imperial family members. The system of stratification of the imperial family members was still being formed, and the hierarchy among them evolving as the need arose. At first, only three ranks were articulated,49 and only a few of the relatives were included. The prince of the blood of first degree designation was given to six of the relatives: Daišan, Jirgalang, Dorgon, Dodo, Hooge, and Yoto.50 Below the title of prince of the first degree was that of prince of the second degree, which was given to Ajige. Below that was the rank of third degree, which was handed out to Dudu and Abatai.51 Thus, initially, there were only nine ranking members of the aristocracy.52

The bestowed ranks, however, placed them within a hierarchy and organized the levels of authority. “When our country did not know of rites and regulations,” Hong Taiji said, “there was no distinction among superiors and inferiors, nor honored and humble, even in spoken and written orders. If we apply the regulations and rites, then all will be stratified so that when a superior gives an order, the inferior responds. Today I set distinctions among superiors and

48 See Yao, Qingchu zhengzhi, 194.

49 Although only these three ranks were set at the time, the title of gushan beizi begins to show up around the same time. See TZWSL, 384.2-386.1. Other titles that later formed, such as the zhenguo gong do not begin to appear until later, however. See TZWSL, 574.2.

50 These six were all banner owners (Hong Taiji being the owner of the other two banners), and the originally entitled individuals who were referred to as “ru bafen,” or inside the banner division. All other aristocrats or ranking officials were said to be “weiru bafen,” or not inside. Yao, Qingchu zhengzhishi, 194.

51 MR 6.1014-1016; CZBSL 12.66a-67a; TZWSL, p. 372.2-373.1, Tc10.4.23.

52 Yang and Zhou detail the establishment of a deeper set of ranks on this date and more people being entitled. For example, they say that that nine ranks were established and Sahaliyen was one of the relatives receiving a title. It appears they have followed later sources, particularly Qingchao wenxian tongkao. The MR and both of the Shilu editions say it was three ranks and neither mention Sahaliyen, most likely because he had just died. Yang and Zhou, Qingdai baqi wanggongguizu, 38-40.
inferiors." No longer would the joint council be able to operate as the definitive decision-making body, whereby all members had an equal vote. Now the ranks had been established and greater or lesser degrees of political resources were divided among the members according to their place in the hierarchy. At the top, of course, was the sovereign, Hong Taiji.

Social differentiation was the ideal, but the terms were still too loose and the categories still too ambiguous. “This system of ranks and names that was determined and set is not being enacted in law!” Hong Taiji complained to an assembly of titled aristocrats three years later (1638). He went on to chastise the Board of Li for not investigating the guilty of transgressing and holding them responsible. Hong Taiji continued, ratcheting up the tension and accusing all of the high ranking relatives in attendance of themselves not obeying this system of ranks and titles set down and for setting a bad example for all. “You have all agreed on this law; yet it has already been three years and you do not obey!” The consequences, Hong Taiji, explained were more than just people stepping out of line; it threatened the cohesion of the political body and the health of the state: the envious would get upset when the state does well and rejoice when chaos reigns. “Previously the [Jin dynasty imperial relatives] worked harmoniously together. Why cannot we do this? Beginning today, if you do not adhere to the title you have been given and continue to transgress on the law, I am going to destroy my ritual weapons and entourage [i.e. the rites and rituals have no meaning]!” Under such strong sentiments, the relatives repented and said that they would search inside themselves and adhere to their rank and position.

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53 MR 6.1109-1113, MR Cd1.6.6. Also see CZBSL 22.83a.

54 For a discussion of how the system of ranks undermined the join council see Yao, Qingchu zhengzhishi, 194-197.

55 Hong Taiji makes this case in an edict on Cd1.6.6. See MR 6.1109-1113; CZBSL 22.82b-83a.

56 Quotes from CZBSL 28.6a-7b. See also NGSY, p. 409-412; SL, p. 550.1, Cd3.7.1.
In addition to the assurances and efforts of the individuals, institutional measures were also needed: the ranks had to be deepened and their terms clarified. A month after Hong Taiji’s outburst, the Board of Li re-issued regulations on the ranks and titles for the imperial family, along with standardized procedures for promotion and demotion. Nine ranks were created for imperial family members, and they were handed out based on merit. These nine ranks were the following (in Manchu and Chinese):^57

1. Prince of the blood of the first degree (Ma. Hošoi cinwang; Ch. Hesuo qinwang 和所親王)
2. Prince of the blood of the second degree (Ma. Doroi jyūnwang; Ch. Duoluojunwang 多羅郡王)
3. Beile (Ma. Doroi beile; Ch. Duoluobeile 多羅貝勒)
4. Beile Prince (Ma. Gūsai beise; Ch. Gushan beizi 固山貝子)
5. Defender Duke (Ma. Gurun be dalire gung; Ch. Zhenguo gong 鎮國公)
6. Bulwark Duke (Ma. Gurun be aisilara gung; Ch. Fuguo gong 輔國公)
7. Defender-general of the State (Ma. Gurun be dalire janggin; Ch. Zhenguo jiangjun 鎮國將軍)
8. Bulwark-general of the State (Ma. Gurun be aisilare janggin; Ch. Fuguo jiangjun 輔國將軍)
9. Supporter-general of the State (Ma. Gurun be tuwakiyara janggin; Ch. Fengguo jiangjun 奉國將軍)

The top four ranks were considered positions of merit that stood “beyond rank,” meaning that these were the highest honors and titles of the state. The other five ranks corresponded to the top honors of non-imperial relatives. The fifth rank Defender Duke, for example, corresponded to non-imperial relatives.

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first rank gong, while the ninth rank Supporter-general corresponded to a lieutenant colonel (jalan i janggin).\(^5^8\) Those members of the imperial family who had no accomplishments that might earn them a given rank still held the distinction of uksun (zongshi), or “member of the clan.” Promotions were codified to follow from one rank to the next, so that an accomplishment would be rewarded with a promotion to the immediate next rank. Similarly, demotions were articulated to move down to the next corresponding rank. The demotion of a ninth rank member would strip him of all titles and make him a regular clan member.\(^5^9\) Beginning at twelve years old, males were allowed to be entitled, while it was fifteen for females.\(^6^0\)

The organization of the relatives in general was further clarified at this time as well. The main line, beginning with Nurhaci’s father, was called the uksun, and members of this group were to be identified by gold belts. The title was to be applied to all members even if they did not hold rank, and used to refer to the individual alongside his name or official position. By order of the Board of Rites here, when encountering a holder of one of the nine ranks, the untitled uksun was required to dismount his horse and allow the ranking member to pass. In encountering ranking persons outside of the imperial family of first rank gong on down they need not dismount, but should divert their route to accommodate the passing noble.\(^6^1\) Similarly, the relatives of the collateral line, who were termed the descendants of the “Six Ancestors,” were to be known as gioro. These members were to be identified with a red belt, and in their first year of life all children need to be registered with the Board of Li. Like the uksun, members were to be

\(^{5^8}\) NGSY, p. 509. It is unclear if the ranks of the imperial family were also given to the corresponding military units and had similar responsibilities of command.

\(^{5^9}\) NGSY, p. 511.

\(^{6^0}\) NGSY, p. 510.

\(^{6^1}\) NGSY, p. 512.
known by their association as a gioro and identified by that name. Regulations on their greeting rites followed their rank as to whether they were required to dismount or not. A gioro without rank needed to dismount when encountering anyone of the nine ranks of the imperial family. When encountering a ranking noble of gong and below, a banner commander (ejen), or a board president, however, he need not dismount but should avoid to the side. For other, lower officials, the gioro should divert his route to accommodate the higher-ranking person.62

This means of stratification delivered greater command of political resources to the sovereign and put the state in greater control of personnel at the expense of the banner owners. Whereas ranks and honors were previously given out by the banners, thus ingratiating the receiver to the banner owner, now the ruler had control over the granting and retraction of such honors and the rewards and privileges that were associated with it. The ruler would determine how the ranks were passed on, and if it all, as well as who would be demoted and by what degree.63 Consider the cases of Sahaliyen and Yoto, for example. When Sahaliyen died he was the head of the Plain Red Banner and posthumously was titled prince of the blood of the first degree. His son, Adali, however, was given but prince of the blood of the second degree status.64 Ostensibly he had not yet proved himself adequately and Hong Taiji wanted to assert his authority. This was repeated in the case of Yoto, as well. Although Yoto was the owner of the Bordered Red Banner, and was one of the original princes of the blood of the first degree, when he died his son was only allowed to inherit the rank of prince of the blood of the third degree.

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62 NGSY, p. 512-513.
63 Yao, Qingchu zhengzhishi, 194.
64 CZBSL 22.84b, Cd1.6.11.
Similarly, Hong Taiji at some point found reason to accuse Dorgon, Dodo, and Hooge each in turn of an offense and demote them from first degree princes to second or even third degree.65

INTEGRATION INTO THE POLITICAL ORDER

In the course of imposing the hierarchical categories of organization upon the imperial relatives, the Board of Li also drew up regulations on social activity. These regulations involved three key practices of political life: clothing, greetings, and ceremony. In each of these realms, the Board of Li set forth regulations dictating the proper practices for the appropriate ranks of the imperial relative, effectively codifying socio-political status in relation to the rank and title held by any given individual. Not only did this place greater restriction on the independent activity of the imperial relatives, but it further integrated all actors into the political order by articulating their activity relative to each other and to bureaucratic officials. The imperial relatives were being fully transformed into a service nobility.

The most interesting thing about the series of statements in 1638 is the move to integrate the imperial relatives into the political order. The regulations on clothing issued by the Board of Li certainly furthered the social stratification and categorization of the relatives, to be sure, but it did not isolate them. On the contrary, the regulation speaks of them already as political actors; putting them in the same socio-political hierarchy with all other officials. Regulations on the jeweled decorations on the caps and belts are a direct expression of this. The 1638 edict on the matter speaks of the imperial relatives in the same breadth as it does the rest of the civil and military officials. The above rank positions of the imperial relatives, including the princes of the blood first and second degree, were to wear bejeweled caps and belts appropriate to their rank,

65 Yao, Qingchu zhengzhishi, 194-196.
and which no other officials shared. The cap for them was a clear marker of status, and befit only for the most honored and accomplished persons of the imperial family. Beginning with the fifth rank title of Defender Duke, however, the cap decoration of two pearls and a ruby, along with gold and jade on the belt was not exclusive to this rank of the imperial relative but also shared by the non-relative of first rank duke or above. Similarly, the Bulwark Duke, shared his headgear and belt ornamentation with the second and third rank non-imperial dukes, while the seventh rank Defender-general donned the same dress as the board presidents. This mixing of the dress of the aristocracy and bureaucracy continued on down the ranks in a way that integrated their status and privilege. They were, for all intents and purposes, part of the same political order.66

Greeting rites, in addition to those done among the imperial relatives themselves, were also regulated for interactions between aristocrat and bureaucrat. The regulation began at the very top with the emperor. It clarified what was supposed to happen when the emperor crossed paths with a member of the highest ranks of the relatives. The relative was to move himself and his entire entourage out of the path of the emperor, to dismount his horse, and then to pass to the side after the emperor departed. These greeting regulations did not stop with the emperor: they continued on down through the ranks. A third rank relative encountering a first or second rank relative was required to move his retinue off the road and let them pass. If he ran into a military general, however, the lower ranking general had to dismount and stand to the side while the relative passed. The general similarly had to yield the road to a fourth rank relative, but he did not have to dismount, just stand to the side while the relative passed. The high-ranking officials of commander and board presidents also followed the same practice when encountering a fourth ranked relative. Their immediate subordinates, the vice commander and lieutenant colonel were

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66 NGSY, 506-509, Cd3.8.5.
required to stop their horses and stand to the side while the general, commander, or board
president passed. A captain, however, who was another rank lower, had to dismount. Regulations
of this nature continued down the ranks to the very bottom position, which was that of a driver.\footnote{KXHD 716.2219-2224. The regulations for the Shunzhi and Kangxi years are on pages 2224-2227.}

In ceremony, imperial family members were organized with other actors in the political
order. This section demonstrates the integration of imperial relatives into the political system
through li and its ceremonial and ritual practices. The most immediate development to emphasize
is that the imperial relatives were included in the ceremonies at all. In contrast to the Ming,
where the imperial relatives had no role in state ceremony or ritual, as will be discussed below,
the Manchu imperial relatives took part in all of the ritual and ceremonial proceedings
throughout the year. They often stood in line at the head of the political hierarchy, and they
performed all the acts and functions as other members of the professional political classes. They
lined up, stood before the emperor, kowtowed, made offerings, and partook in the banquets. In
this respect, they were no different than the other civil and military officials that also attended the
ceremonies. Banquet practices further illustrate this point. Whereas a state like the Ming
excluded princes and imperial relatives from formal banqueting occasions,\footnote{See below.} the Qing included
them as they did all other political actors. The banquet following the New Year’s Day ceremony,
for example, took place in the Chongzhen dian with all the imperial relatives lined up with all the
officials in the hall. Each actor had a place in line according to his rank and position, from which
they would receive and drink wine, kneel, and kowtow. They would come forward in turn,
according to rank, to make offerings and return to their designated place in line, from which they
would wait while the emperor took his meal and kowtow when he departed.\footnote{KXHD, 720.3814.} The banquets for

\footnote{KXHD 716.2219-2224. The regulations for the Shunzhi and Kangxi years are on pages 2224-2227.}

\footnote{See below.}

\footnote{KXHD, 720.3814.}
the emperor’s birthday ceremony and the winter solstice ceremony were similar in practice, with clear articulations about the imperial relatives taking part in the same manner as the other officials as part of their inclusion into the political order.\textsuperscript{70}

Even more to the point were the ceremonies surrounding political operations, namely the court audience. When holding court, all the imperial relatives and officials would line up together in the halls of the Chongzhen dian. Beginning with the princes of the first degree at the top of the political order, relatives and officials would stand in line according to their rank. Throughout the proceedings, the relatives, bureaucrats, and military men would be treated as a whole, lining up together accordingly and performing the rites together in political formation. As the statutes put it, “all the princes and civil and military officials”\textsuperscript{71} would rise, sit, kowtow, and disperse as a unit. Only when standing before the emperor to report on affairs would they break ranks, but even then each person was treated as a political actor reporting to the state on affairs of his jurisdiction. The imperial relative was seen as no different.\textsuperscript{72} The tea ceremony at court audience also illustrates the distinction of rank, while simultaneously showing the integration of groups as a single body of political actors. The imperial relatives would sit on the steps of the palace hall and be served tea from the inner court. Other officials would also sit on the steps, but received a different kind of tea.\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{70} KXHD, 720.3821.

\textsuperscript{71} 諸王及文武各官

\textsuperscript{72} KXHD 716.1977-1978. With the increase in the number of officials attending court audience after the conquest of Beijing, the ceremony was adjusted slightly in 1653 (Sz9). The aristocracy was divided into the owners or descendants of the owners of the banners during the Hong Taiji years, and those who were not related to the owners (here referred to as bafen gong and weiru bafengong), whereby the former would stage at the Taihe gate and the later outside Wumen gate with all the other officials. See KXHD 716.1978-1979.

\textsuperscript{73} KXHD 720.3827.
SUCCESSION: A TEST CASE

The preceding sections have outlined a process of construction of political order in which the imperial relatives were integrated yet differentiated. The argument showed that Hong Taiji contested for power with his brothers, nephews, and sons. Furthermore, even after successfully establishing himself as sovereign, his relatives exercised their own interests and threatened his authority and thwarted his statist agenda. By the mid-point of his reign he could not eliminate all of his relatives, as he had done with his three main challengers to his position, for they were too embedded in the military and administrative apparatuses of the state. Besides, he still needed their political support to secure his position. Thus, rather than excluding or isolating his relatives he integrated them in the service of the state by categorizing them into ranks and granting them titles. In short, he made them part of the same system of the bureaucratic political order—the relatives were folded into the political order in service of the sovereign and the state. This was accomplished through the redefining of li and the practices of li to create a cohesive political continuum. These developments were part of the process of forming the political order in the 1630s and 40s—they were not the culmination of institutionalization. Each stage constituted part of the struggles and agreements worked out in the course of the settlements over who would have access to political resources and in the construction of the hierarchies. The administrative codes curtailing the relative’s activity were meant to legally revoke their authority and control over men and finances. The failure of those codes led to a categorization of the relatives into a system of status and ranks that defined their relation with the emperor and their place within the bureaucratic hierarchy. This was complemented with a set of behavioral codes in the realms of dress, greetings, and ceremonial proceedings. The positions, roles, and activities of political actors began to take form and fill out a still fragile order. What remained uncertain was whether
this order would hold: the formalization of the system was still almost a decade away, as will be
discussed in the next section, and the institutional glue that bound actors together was still
tenuous.

Even under the rule of Hong Taiji, the permanency of the political order was unclear.
Although there was a clear structure of the central hierarchical organization that held a monopoly
over binding and permanent rule-making that was backed up by force, the fact was that many of
those initially invested in it were imperial relatives who continued to see opportunity outside of
this state structure. These actors were the same ones present at the death of Nurhaci and the
struggle for power that ensued among the senior beile. They had invested in Hong Taiji in
struggle against their senior and more powerful relatives, and did so in order to guarantee their
positions and inheritance. Once this had been secured, however, the only thing to keep them
involved in the state-structure and refraining from taking their men and inheritance to other areas
was the charisma and authority of Hong Taiji. Furthermore, although the banners had been
centralized to a degree, loyalties still remained with the banner lord—i.e. the imperial relative at
the head of the banner—and it would take another generation or two for the state to have
primacy in the matter.

Thus the question remained: what would happen when the khan died—which he abruptly
did without much warning in the fall of 1643. Custom dictated one of two developments upon
the death of a khan, either the election of a new one that could command the allegiance and unity
of the body politic, or dispersion of the various military leaders in their separate directions to
pursue their own futures. Continued loyalties among banner generals to the banner lord, and the
ever present suspicion of one banner’s generals of the another banner’s lord made the latter
outcome a real possibility. Furthermore, as was common practice among the Manchus, Hong Taiji had not designated a successor. Even if he had the inclination to, he most likely had not yet fully established the authority to do so. Here stood an ambiguity of organization and precedent. While a central authoritative structure had been established and clear lines of power drawn, the relationships and practices had not solidified. How would the system of relations and institutions continue, and who would lead it? Such were the questions under discussion upon the death of Hong Taiji.

The historical record on the events and discussions following the death of Hong Taiji are unclear. The only documents that remain are those that were rewritten in retrospect after the politics of the time had played out; they are weighted in both a tone of culpability and inevitability. If a source is not attempting to show the wretched betrayals of an actor, then it presents Fulin as the natural and necessary successor to Hong Taiji.

What is clear, despite these limitations, is that collectively the materials show an alignment of interests according to the definition of politics constructed by Hong Taiji. Actors can be seen adhering to the terms of the settlement being hammered out of the past decade and a half, and doing so in a way that would preserve the general structure of the hierarchies of power and the organization of the concentration of political resources. The contest of the succession was not one over the structural arrangements of power, as it was during the Nurhaci succession, but rather a jockeying for position and interests within the emergent framework.

74 As discussed below, Yellow Banner personnel feared the lord of the White Banners, and the White Banners feared the lord of the Yellow Banners.

75 On this point see Yao, Qingchu zhengzhishi, 251.

Each man began assessing his interests and lining up his support behind a candidate who could best help realize them, and he did so in the language of Hong Taiji’s constructed categories and ranks of the imperial relatives.

A reconstruction of events goes something like this: Hong Taiji died on the ninth day of the eighth month of 1643 (Cd8.8.9). That day, eight high-ranking officials of the Yellow Banners called upon Hong Taiji’s eldest and most capable son, Hooge, and pledged their support in his bid to succeed the throne. They worked out that Hong Taiji’s ninth son, Fulin, would be the crown prince in waiting. Six of these eight made a vow amongst themselves to live and die together. Hooge then went to Jirgalang to solicit his support. Jirgalang demurred at first on the grounds that Dorgon had not approved, but then in the end consented despite this complication.

A few days later, Dorgon, wary of these developments, summoned Sonin, a high-ranking Yellow Banner lieutenant, to discuss the succession. As a representative of the Yellow Banners, which had belonged to Hong Taiji and the commanders of which saw it in their interest to have one of their own on the throne, Sonin told him flat out, “The previous emperor has sons; one of them

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78 In Chinese, these eight bannermen were 圖爾格、索尼、圖賴、錫翰、鞏阿岱、繆拜、譚泰、塔瞻.

79 In Chinese, these six were 圖賴、索尼、鞏阿岱、錫翰、譚泰、繆拜.

80 SZSL, p. 298/2, Sz5.3.yihai.
must succeed him. As for the others, I do not know. That night Yellow Banner lieutenant Tula told Sonin to ensure that a son of Hong Taiji was enthroned.\(^82\)

The next day, the fourteenth (Cd8.8.14), a council was called to attendance at the Chongzhendian to decide the outcome of succession. At least seven people were there assembled,\(^83\) and throughout the proceedings the Yellow Banners surrounded the palace with bows drawn and arrows cocked.\(^84\) By some accounts Daišan first spoke, saying that as Hong Taiji’s eldest son Hooge should rule. Knowing he did not have the support of the White Banners, Hooge demurred saying, “My blessing are sparse and my virtue thin. I am not fit to rule.” He then left the assembly. The representatives of the Yellow Banners protested, saying they would only support a son of Hong Taiji. Daišan said he was too impartial to take part in the negotiations and left, followed by Ajige. This left only Dorgon and Jirgalang who then agreed to support Fulin and divide the Yellow Banners amongst themselves until Fulin came of age.\(^85\) By other accounts, Sonin opened proceedings announcing that the next emperor had to be a Hong Taiji son, and was then ordered to leave by Dorgon. Ajige and Dodo then suggested that Dorgon should take the throne. Upon his hesitation, Dodo said that if Dorgon would not consent then he, Dodo, should be elected. Dorgon did not agree and snidely put forth Daišan as the eldest son of Nurhaci.

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\(^81\) QSG, v. 249, liezhuan 36.
\(^82\) ibid.
\(^83\) Sonin, Dorgon, Ajige, Dodo, Daišan, Jirgalang, Hooge.
\(^84\) QSG, v. 249, liezhuan 36. Imperial guardsman Guobujun 勒歩棱 later recalled three Yellow Banner units dressed in armor and with bows ready surrounded the palace. SZSL, p. 305/2, Sz5.4.guizhao.
\(^85\) This account is from the Korean envoy at the Qing court from 1637-1645. Lee Ho, *Simyang changgye*, 600. Wakeman quotes the passage in full. *Wakeman, The Great Enterprise*, 298-299.
Daišan then said that the successor should be a son of Hong Taiji, and they thus decided on Fulin, with Dorgon and Jirgalang as regents.\textsuperscript{86} Although this apparently decided the matter of succession, the next six days were fraught with tension and doubt. The swearing of allegiance to the new rulers happened almost immediately, giving actors little time to react or absorb the transpiring events.\textsuperscript{87} One of the lower ranking imperial relatives, Aiduli, said that he felt pressured by the regents into taking the oath. Coming to find the entire agreement dubious and the regents of questionable authority he ended up refusing to swear allegiance and burned his vows. He was found out and gave himself up some months later, whereupon he and his family were summarily executed and his property confiscated.\textsuperscript{88} Two other imperial relatives went one step further and planned a coup. Two days after the agreement (Cd8.8.16) Daišan’s son Soto and his son Alida plotted to put Dorgon on the throne. Before they could begin to mobilize, however, Daišan outed them, and Dorgon chose to execute them for treason.\textsuperscript{89} These executions can be seen as part of the stabilization of the settlement, but they only added to the uncertainty of events and an increasing fear of Dorgon’s power. This led the Yellow Banners to gather their men and take a vow to support Fulin.\textsuperscript{90}

Despite conflicting accounts and some questions about their reliability, two things can be ascertained: a struggle had ensued between the Yellow and White Banners over their interests, and the forum within which this struggle occurred was the political framework erected by Hong Taiji. On the conflict among banners, the narrative of the succession is fraught with internal

\textsuperscript{86} This account is from Sonin’s biography in the \textit{Qingshi gao}. QSG, v. 249, liezhuan 36.

\textsuperscript{87} SZSL, p. 29/1-30/1, Cd8.8.yihai.

\textsuperscript{88} SZSL, p. 64/2, Sz1.6.guwei.

\textsuperscript{89} SZSL, p. 32/1, Cd8.8.dingchou. Yao Nianci argues that they had no real capacity to act and would have been unable to pull off a coup. The punishment of execution was thus an overreaction. Yao, \textit{Qingchu zhengzhishi}, 256.

\textsuperscript{90} TZWSL, p. 30/2, Cd8.8.guwei.
struggle. From the very beginning, the Yellow Banners pushed for a son of Hong Taiji to take the emperorship as it would help them maintain their position and status.\(^{91}\) As banners of the emperor they enjoyed special status, but if another brother took the throne, not only would the interests of the Yellow Banners be threatened but also many of the upper ranks feared their lives would be as well.\(^{92}\) This explains the anxiety within the ranks of the Yellow Banners during discussions and their show of force outside the hall (standing at ready in full battle regalia and with bows drawn). Even when the agreement had been made and the positions determined, the Yellow Banners still feared the power of Dorgon and the White Banners, forcing them to bind together and take vows of mutual support. Conversely, the White Banners feared being torn apart and their leaders, Dorgon and Dodo, marginalized, as had happened after the death of Nurhaci and continued throughout Hong Taiji’s reign.\(^{93}\) The disputes throughout the discussion on the fourteenth reflected this tension, and the ongoing pretensions after the meeting hint at what actors thought was really at stake. In the end, Fulin of the Yellow Banners would be conferred as the emperor in waiting, and Dorgon of the White Banners would serve as regent. This arose as a compromise to appease the fears and the interests of those involved and in order to avoid civil war.\(^{94}\) What it was not, was a simple decision about who would be emperor, for the very fact that there would be an emperor was still not a certainty.

Of significance in this dispute and its resolution was that it continued to develop at a level of politics set in motion by Hong Taiji. This is the second conclusion to be drawn. The struggle,

\(^{91}\) For more on this see Yao, *Qingchu zhengzhishi*, 261.

\(^{92}\) Yao, *Qingchu zhengzhishi*, 251-252.

\(^{93}\) On the fracturing of the White Banners and their internal conflicts see Yao, *Qingchu zhengzhishi*, 256-257. For a discussion of the change of leadership of the White Banners in the Chongde era see Du Jiaji, “Qingchu liangbaiqizhu Duoergun yu Duodo huanqi wenti de kaocha,” *Qingshi Yanjiu* 3 (1998).

\(^{94}\) For a rather laudatory study of Dorgon’s role in this compromise and Qing history see Li Ge, “Guanyu Duoergun.”
negotiations, and agreement of the 1643 succession were not over the charismatic access to political resources, they were about positions and interests *within* the politics of the state. Whereas the struggle of succession following Nurhaci’s death in 1626 followed no guidelines and took place on an amorphous plane of interests and personal loyalties and favors, the Hong Taiji succession seventeen years later played out within a received context of an emperor who controlled the majority of access to political resources and a select group of men who could occupy that position. Take the oath, for example. At the 1626 succession, the oath sworn by the beile was to the co-rulers and the unity of joint rule. Contrast this to the 1643 succession, where the oath was to the emperor and the very idea of the emperor and what he represented. Even when the Yellow Banners felt threatened, they were prepared for civil war rather than cession, as Amin had attempted to do when Hong Taiji took over. Similarly, the arguments made about who could be emperor always focused around the relations previously defined. Sonin spoke of a son of the deceased emperor taking over, Daišan spoke of the eldest son of the emperor, support for Dorgon was on grounds that he was a son of Nurhaci, Dodo claimed legitimacy for himself on grounds of his lineage, and Daišan was put forward at one point as the eldest son of Nurhaci. The end agreement resulted in Fulin as the son of Hong Taiji being placed on the throne and Dorgon and Jirgalang as the kin of the founder in the position of regents.

These events of the Hong Taiji succession serve as a test case of the level of success of the formation of the political order and the integration of the imperial relatives. They show that

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95 See Yao, *Qingchu zhengzhishi*, 256.

96 There is an open question here of why Fulin was chosen as the emperor in waiting. He was the ninth son of Hong Taiji and there is no obvious reason why he was put forward over any of the other sons. Zhang Jie speculates that it was because Hong Taiji honored his mother with higher titles than those of his other sons. Zhang Jie, “Shunzhidi Fulin xuwei yuanyin xinxi,” *Gugong bowuyuan kan* 6 (2001), 50-52.
despite the still ongoing process of the construction of a political order, actors had come to accept the basic terms of the arrangement and work within the emergent system. Rather than take the opportunity to contest the reigns of power or even the entire premise of the socio-political organization, actors worked to preserve their positions within the existing framework. Unlike the succession of Nurhaci some fifteen years earlier, actors did not see dispersion as an option; they did not even consider reconstituting an arrangement of diffused access and division of political resources. Instead, the respective banners wished to appoint a representative who would ensure their interests and relative positions and power. Even the imperial relatives each threw his support behind the one who they thought would most benefit and empower him. The most telling aspect of this development, however, is the adherence to the organizational form of the imperial family laid down by Hong Taiji and the hierarchy that determined who could control more access to more political resources. All arguments for succession took place within the discourse established by Hong Taiji surrounding the imperial family and its positions: the Yellow Banners spoke of supporting a son of Hong Taiji; some other brothers suggested an imperial family member next in line; Daišan was put forth at one point because of his seniority in the imperial family; and in the end a son whose mother was ranked was elevated in Hong Taiji’s place. The terms were set and the process of institutionalization had taken hold.

THE IMPERIAL CLAN COURT AND THE BUREAUCRATIZATION OF THE IMPERIAL RELATIVES

In the late spring of 1652, the organization and stratification of the imperial relatives was formally institutionalized in the administrative organ of the Imperial Clan Court (zongrenfu 宗人府). This bureau took over from the Board of Li the record keeping and administrative duties
pertaining to the imperial relatives, and in the process of doing so formulated a set of codes and regulations on all operations concerning and surrounding the sons and kin of the emperor. This establishment of the Imperial Clan Court was the culmination of the bureaucratization of the imperial relatives, at once regulating their activities and placing restrictions on their capacities and ambitions, while at the same time fully integrating them into the political order. The most surprising thing, however, is that although this department was manufactured of a model based on the Ming bureaucracy, it bore little resemblance to the Ming department save that they both dealt with imperial relatives and went by the same Chinese name, Zongrenfu.

The articulated justification of the establishment of the Imperial Clan Court was that of bureaucracy building. In the late spring of 1652, as part of the reforms enacted by the Shunzhi emperor upon taking up the throne himself, Board of Rites president Langkio memorialized on the need for an Imperial Clan Court. Although the Board of Li was in charge of assigning relatives into main and collateral lines and for granting titles to the deserving, according to the Ming Huidian, he observed, the Ming had a separate administrative organ for this task, and one that was staffed with personnel specifically dedicated to the job. In order to efficiently govern, Langkio argued, the Qing too needed to set up such a department.

There are two versions of Langkio’s memorial, a Chinese and a Manchu. The Chinese is short and to the point. Langkio had looked up the regulations in the Ming Huidian and determined what went into the setting up of a Court of the Imperial Clan. He asked for imperial

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98 BDTB 02-01-02-2033-020, Sz9.4.22.

99 The Shilu has but one sentence on the matter: “set up the Zongrenfu” 設立宗人府衙門. SL, 504.2.
approval and that the Board of Personnel might begin to assign the necessary officials. From this
collection it would appear that the Qing were to copy the Ming, following the late dynasty’s
administrative statutes on the organization, functions, and operations of such departments. Here is
the Chinese-language part of the memorial in full:

Langkio, Board of Li President, memorializing on setting up the staff of the Zongrenfu: I
looked up the old regulations in the Huidian for when the Ming established the
Zongrenfu. In order to manage the affairs of those belonging to the imperial family, they
set up a director, left and right associate directors, and left and right assistant directors.
Now the boards and departments in charge modified the regulation to establish the
Zongrenfu. I beg you to order the Board of Personnel to assign officials according to the
cited precedent and offer the positions. I don't dare do so. Please order it.

The Manchu version tells a slightly different story, however. Four times the length of the
Chinese document, the Manchu-language memorial speaks briefly of the tasks of the Board of
Rites in assigning imperial relatives into main and collateral lines, as well as giving a bit of

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BDTB 02-01-02-2033-020, Sz9.4.22. The Chinese and Manchu are together in the same memorial. The Chinese
begins at the front and reads right to left, front to back; the Manchu begins at the back and runs in reverse moving
left to right, back to front.

禮部尚書臣朗丘等謹
題為請設宗人府員事。查得會典舊例明朝設宗人府。設宗人令，左右宗正，左右宗人掌皇族屬籍之事。今部院大小衙門職掌修明應設宗人府。伏乞
敕下吏部照例設官以供其職。臣未敢擅便謹題。請旨

Dorolon i jurgan i aliha amban gioroi Langkio sei ginguuleme wesimburengge..
Hafan i jurgan, dorgi bithei ilan yamun uhei kooli be tuwame gisuweri wesimbufi. uksun gioro be fungnere
baita be meri jurgan de afabuhabi.. be hvi diyan i da kooli be baicemwe tuwaci.. Ming gurun i tuktan de da dzung
jeng yamun araha bihebi.. Hvng u i ori juweci aniya halafi dzung in fu yamun seme gebuleme, zong in ling emke,
hasuy ici ergi dzung in emte sindafi uksun i dangse, uksun i haha jui, sargan jui, sargan de
banjiha, guweleku de banjiha, gebu buhe, fungnehe, banjiha, akv oho, jui bure, urun gaijara, amcame gebu fungnehe
ba ejemr arara.. jai uksun i dolo wesimbure baita bici ulama wesimbufi hese gaijara, uksun i dolo weile tucici
yargiyalam beidefi wesimbufi wajire erse ergi baita be alihabi.. Ming gurun i tuktan de uksun i wang be sindaha
bihebi.. Amala niyamangga ujulaha gungge ambasa be sindaha bihebi..
Musei gurun tuktan neihe ci ebsier yamun be ilibure unde bihe.. te hvwangdi beye amba dasan ba alifi yaya
amba ajige, jurgan yamun i tuxan ba getuken ilgafi teisu teisu hafan sindafi jurlgei eduringge di, wang sei kooli be
allvdamwe yabure be dahame uksun i dzung in fu yamun ilibufi, hafan i jurgan de hese wasimbufi kooli ba dahame
hafan sindafi uksun gioroi tuxan be icihiyabure.. meni cisui gamara ba waka ofi hese be baimme ginguuleme
wesimbuhe..
insight into the rationale behind setting up an Imperial Clan Court now, which was based on the
Shunzhi emperor taking over the throne himself from the regents. But more importantly, the
Manchu has a discussion of the functions of the Court, detailing specifically the operations and
oversights of the Court. Langkio enumerated the Court’s functions in what he says were drawn
from his reading of the Ming Huidian, which included entitling, recording births and marriages,
legal cases involving clan members, and inner communications. The full Manchu document is as
follows:

Board of Li president Langkio of the collateral line respectfully memorializing:
The Board of Personnel and the Three Palace Academies [which later became the
Grand Secretariat] together looked up the regulations and reported that our board is
assigned with the task of assigning and entitling the uksun and gioro. When looking up
the regulation in the Huidian, the Ming state in the beginning had made a “Da Zung
Jeng” department. In the the twenty-second year of Hongwu it was changed to be called
“Zung In Fu” [Ch. Zongrenfu; En. Court of the Imperial Clan] with one director, left and
right associate directors, and left and right assistant directors. The clan records recorded
all births of sons and daughters by the wife and concubines, the given names,
enfeoffments, births and deaths, offspring, marriages, and posthumous enfeoffments.
Also, when the inner clan has an affair to memorialize, [the Zongrenfu] passes it on to the
throne and receives the edict. When an edict was received, or if it came out that an inner
clan member had committed a crime, they examined and verified the case, submitted it to
the throne, and brought it to conclusion. These kinds of things were taken care of. At the
beginning of the Ming state they set up honors for the imperial relatives. They had set up
meritorious officials to be in charge of those later related by blood.

Our state, from the beginning up to now, has not yet set up this department. Now
the emperor himself has accepted rule and distinguished the various boards and
departments big and small; he has put official one by one into posts. Please establish the
“Zung In Fu yamun” of the imperial clan following the imitation of the code of the
ancient and divine kings, and send down orders to the Board of Personnel to set up
officials following the code. This will enable the management of the uksun and gioro
positions. This is not the thing that we will handle on our own. Respectfully
memorializing, we seek your edict.
In his discussion of the functions of the Zongrenfu, Langkio accented certain activities. The Chinese memorial emphasized the organizational and administrative aspects, and outlined the necessary personnel to staff such a bureau. The Manchu memorial also included this point, which, in fact, came directly out of the Ming *Huidian* and was repeated in the first Qing *Huidian*. Although the Chinese memorial is brief and stops at the naming of the positions of the bureau, the Manchu memorial continues, restating parts of the contents of the Ming Huidian section on the zongrenfu, including a short bit about its history and its record keeping functions. The parts in the Manchu memorial about entitlements and judgments also came straight out of the Ming Huidian.\(^{101}\)

The tasked faced by these Qing state-makers was how to set up such a bureau that would contain the imperial relatives by institutionalizing their position and activity, but at the same time maintain the traditions and practices that were already in effect. Their answer to the first part of this problem was to copy the Ming administrative structure. To create a division staffed by personnel whose sole responsibility was to regulate the activities of the imperial relatives. This division was to be tasked with certain responsibilities and the upholding various regulations meant to reproduce a social group in a way that was beneficial to the state and the socio-political order that it aimed to maintain. In the case of the Ming this entailed the bureau of the Imperial Clan Court complete with a small staff under a local chain of command.\(^{102}\) Early on—approximately until the Yongle reign—the Ming Zongrenfu was responsible for identifying those imperial relatives of talent and employing them in the service of the state.\(^{103}\) When this came to an end the main function of the Zongrenfu was to keep records of the imperial relatives and their

\(^{101}\) DMHD, 1.57.


\(^{103}\) DMHD, 1.59 (2a-b).
life events, regulating the range of names given to the sons, and approving the characters of the name chosen.\textsuperscript{104} With the removal of the princes to estates in the provinces, the Zongrenfu also became responsible for regulating the administrative personnel of the estates, the building of new structures, and the movement of the princes out of their estates.\textsuperscript{105}

Langkio did not mention a number of key functions of the Ming Zongrenfu. Foremost, he left out completely the naming of descendants, which occupies nine of the sixteen and a half pages of the Zongrenfu section of the Ming Huidian. In the Ming version, the different princely titles are listed each followed by twenty characters ordered according to their element of fire, earth, gold, water, and wood. These characters were required to be part of a descendant’s name.\textsuperscript{106} Nor did he give any hint of the activity on the estates, which takes up two pages of text in the Ming Huidian. In short, Qing officials ignored two-thirds of the Ming discussion of the Zongrenfu, and choose instead to focus on other aspects. The reason for this is not hard to fathom: the Manchus had no such tradition of choosing certain characters for names of their offspring; furthermore, Manchu imperial relatives were not sent out to estates. The Qing needed a zongrenfu that bore the same administrative structure as that of the Ming—that is, a bureau responsible of governing the imperial relatives—but that organized their activities in ways consistent with Manchu practices and which were beneficial to the emperor and the state. The imperial relatives were integrated and put to work in service of the government, and the Zongrenfu was to organize them in a way that facilitated these goals. In this way, the Qing Zongrenfu would be a department that regulated all aspects of the lives of imperial relatives. But it would also do something more, it would mobilize them in service of the state.

\textsuperscript{104} DMHD, 1.57-59
\textsuperscript{105} DMHD, 1.60 (1a-2a).
\textsuperscript{106} DMHD, 1.57 (1b).
Where the Ming were concerned with regulating names and the names descendants, the key activity of the Qing Zongrenfu was the regulation of titles and their inheritance. Rather than page after page of characters for names, the Qing Huidian section on the Zongrenfu has a similarly long discussion of the setting of ranks and how those ranks were to be inherited by the aristocrat’s offspring. The inheritance rules of each title are here codified, along with the ranks assigned to daughters and subsequent offspring. The Qing Zongrenfu was to keep track of all the imperial relatives and their titles, then oversee the inheritance of these titles. It was to make sure that all registered males would receive their title at age twenty, and all registered females at fifteen. The standards for promotion and demotion were similarly clarified, as were the practices for promoting or demoting daughters attached to their father’s rank (they were to follow the promotion or demotion of their father). The oversight of these regulations on titles were administrative duties formerly assigned to the Board of Rites, but now made the responsibility of the dedicated bureau for the affairs of the imperial family.

The Qing Zongrenfu had other administrative responsibilities, as well. It was charged with the recording of births, deaths, and marriages of members of the imperial family, and cooperating with the Board of Rites every ten years in compiling these names in an official genealogy of the imperial family. It also set for guidelines for sacrificing at the ancestral graves, and granted permissions for travel outside of the capital environs for visits to springs and

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107 The discussion of ranks begins on page 2 and carries on to page 9. KXHD 711.2-9.

108 KXHD, 711.18.

109 KXHD 711.10, 21. The section in the Huidian on the compilation of the imperial genealogy is only two and a half lines. Weighed next to the twenty-three pages of regulations this was clearly not the most important function of the Zongrenfu. For a case of collaboration with the Board of Rites on a registration issue see BDTB 02-01-02-2130-026, Sz11.1.24.
In 1658, the Zongrenfu set up regulations on the frequency for the practice of archery and horsemanship. All of the imperial relatives over ten years old were required to assemble with their banner once every five days to practice archery, and once every ten days to practice riding and shooting. Every year, those of age were also to meet three times every spring and three times every fall in full battle regalia to practice shooting.¹¹¹

One of the most important duties of the Qing Zongrenfu was facilitating the imperial relatives in service of the emperor and state.¹¹² Foremost was the articulation of the regulation on imperial relatives attending court audience. Initially, those ranking members of prince of the first and second degree were to attend court everyday; but this requirement was changed in 1657 to three times a month in order to correspond with the rest of the political actors—thus making the inclusion of the imperial relatives an act extending the political classes. The court audience was the opportunity for officials and ranked personnel to interact with the emperor and report on affairs. Although the ceremony was overseen by the Board of Li, the Zongrenfu had to be at hand to make sure all of its constituents were in attendance.¹¹³ The Zongrenfu also identified and assessed imperial relatives to serve in bureaucratic office. The bureau evaluated accomplishments and placed them in bureaucratic or military offices in need of capable people. Given the importance of this operation, and its impact on the running of government, it is worth quoting the statute in full.

¹¹⁰ For cases of applications for leave from the capital see BDTB 02-01-02-2132-007, Sz11.3.20; BDTB 02-01-02-2134-002, Sz12.8.12.

¹¹¹ KXHD 711.14.

¹¹² This activity of preparing a service nobility goes to the heart of the differences with the Ming, and will be discussed at length below.

¹¹³ KXHD 711.9.
Promulgated in the ninth year of Shunzhi (1652). In choosing people for the hunt and campaign, and in order to fill the yamens that are short of people, examine and evaluate the military accomplishments of the main line of the imperial relatives, and investigate their merits and accomplishments in their present bureaucratic positions. [Those deemed capable will be] ordered to serve in a position.

Similarly, examine and evaluate the military accomplishments of officials of the collateral line of imperial relatives, investigate their merits and accomplishments in their present positions, and gather them together to check up on their activities. All of these affairs are charged to the Zongrenfu. As for choosing officials of the collateral line for a hunt or to go on campaign, for putting people in positions, and for filling openings in the banners and within the bureaucracy, order the Zongrenfu to discuss with the Board of Personnel.\(^\text{114}\)

Over the next thirty-five years the court vacillated on allowing members of the collateral line to serve in bureaucratic office or not. Initially, as quoted above, they were placed into the government yamens short of people. This was a quick ticket into service for one of these members, allowing some to rise based on his merits. The next year (1653), it was decreed that relatives of the collateral line would not be allowed to serve in a yamen. Eight years later, however, the decree was overturned and they were allowed once again to serve in civilian office. It went back and forth like this until the eve of the publication of the first Qing Huidian, with a decision in 1688 to restrict members of the collateral from holding office unless a member’s rank was equivalent to an office vacancy, in which case he would be permitted to fill it.\(^\text{115}\)

From this passage, the Zongrenfu is seen as a conduit for placing capable relatives into office. It would find those members who had accomplishments and then match them with a department short on personnel. Such an operation was key in employing the imperial relatives in service of the state, as well as identifying capable individuals for office and military campaign.

\(^{\text{114}}\) KXHD 711.21-22.

\(^{\text{115}}\) KXHD 711.22-23.
The impact this had on the running of the government will be taken up in more detail in the next section.

THE MING EXCLUSION OF IMPERIAL RELATIVES

The preceding discussion outlined the Qing choice to categorize the imperial relatives, placing them into ranks and stations, and to employ them in service of the state. Various cultural, political, and historical circumstances led to this means of dealing with imperial relatives, which is to say that the form of inclusion that emerged was by no means predetermined nor natural. Furthermore, this system of organization of one group of people in service of the state had implications for statecraft and the operations of government. In order to fully understand the implications of this strategy and to grasp its significance, and to highlight the transformation of li by the Qing, it will be helpful to make a contrast with the Ming, who had a different practice with much different results.

The Ming excluded imperial relatives from all political life. Forbidden to take office or have any role in government or military operations, the sons and brothers of the emperor were exiled to the provinces. On their estates, the princes were subjected to a host of regulations governing their activity, which effectively removed them from social and political life. They could not hold military command or government office. They could not participate in politics or assert themselves in local affairs, not to mention national affairs. They were barred from pursuing the professions of scholar, peasant, artisan, or merchant, but rather placed by birth in the station of imperial relative who could have no pursuit outside of cultural life. Furthermore, they could not enter court, establish relationships of any kind with officials or scholars, nor were they allowed to meet and fraternize with other princes. Some of these restrictions loosened in the
late sixteenth century, but by that time the trends had already taken form and the role of the imperial relatives cast.\textsuperscript{116} For all intents and purposes, the Ming princes were stuck on their estates in the provinces, allowed to travel only by permission of the Zongrenfu, granted permission to enter the capital only when no other princes were in attendance, and never permitted to meet their siblings and nephews.

This system exclusion of the imperial relatives developed out of the particular political circumstances of the early Ming. The Ming founder, Zhu Yuanzhang, initially employed his sons in the military and political operations of the state, relying on them to provide defense on the borders, suppress internal rebellions, and to administer the provinces. Apart from installing the eldest son as heir apparent, however, he did not set up a clear system of ranks or even systematic honors that could be used to differentiate. With the death of the founder, the eldest son of the deceased eldest son—i.e. the founder’s grandson—ascended the throne. This set off an internal revolt among the founder’s sons, with the more politically and militarily capable second son arising to seize the throne. Once established as emperor, he did not make the same mistake as his father, and set about banning all kin and sons from military operations, from possessing private guards and troops, and from taking part in political life.\textsuperscript{117} This set the terms by which the imperial relatives of the Ming would henceforth operate and be disengaged from politics.

Such a situation explains the limited operations of the Ming Zongrenfu. In contrast to the Qing Zongrenfu, which was charged with the integration of actors into the political order, the Ming Zongrenfu’s core duties were registering imperial family members, regulating proper names for offspring, and overseeing estate administration. The Zongrenfu assigned each princely


\textsuperscript{117} See Wang, \textit{The Ming Prince and Daoism}, 4-10.
estate ten unique characters to use in any combination for their offspring. The chosen names of the newborn sons, then, were to be registered with the Zongrenfu.¹¹⁸ The handling of the estates and all the logistics entailed in supporting them also figured as key activities of the Ming Zongrenfu,¹¹⁹ whereas in the Qing these duties were given over to the Interior Household Department. The supply of grain, for example, was coordinated by the bureau through the Board of Finance. Similarly, the Zongrenfu granted permissions to travel off the estate and assigned the entourage allowed when doing so. The Zongrenfu even regulated the construction of any buildings on the estates, requiring the prince to apply first to the Board of Works who would then forward it to the Zongrenfu for approval.¹²⁰

State ceremonies similarly reflected the isolation of the imperial relatives. Instead of being included in the rituals of the Grand Ceremonies and court banquets, the relatives were absent, nowhere to be seen. The Ming New Year’s Day ceremony, for instance, included “all the civil and military officials” and their place in line along with their ritual activities in the ceremony.¹²¹ The only imperial male relatives who had a role here were the crown prince and his eldest son, who partook in a separate ceremony apart from all the other officials, and which involved paying respects to the emperor through a series of genuflections and prostrations.¹²² Later in the day, the crown prince would take his seat in the palace and all officials would come through to pay their respects to him with four bows and choreographed prostrations.¹²³ These

¹¹⁸ DMHD 1.57-59.
¹¹⁹ On the size and composition of the Zongrenfu in the principalities see Wang, The Ming Prince and Daoism, 14.
¹²⁰ DMHD 1.60.
¹²¹ DMHD 2.803-804.
¹²² DMHD 2.812-813.
¹²³ DMHD 2.813-814.
practices were repeated for the winter solstice. Court audience also excluded the imperial relatives, as would be expected from a class that had no political or military role and was not allowed to congregate or travel. At the Ming court audience held biweekly, the civil and military officials would enter the palace and line up according to rank, each coming forth in order to report their affairs.\textsuperscript{124} While the Ming Huidian spares no detail in discussion of the organization of ranks and where officials of certain ranks are to stand at certain times, mention of the princes is (not surprisingly) absent.\textsuperscript{125} Although the crown prince gets a mention as an actor who must come to audience on the said day, he does so after all the officials have left the court.\textsuperscript{126} Clearly, even this prince was separated from the political order.

One of the long-term consequences of excluding imperial relatives was a severe drain on the treasury and other fiscal problems. Cloistered imperial families grew exponentially, increasing the amount of required resources. The state provided full support to all the imperial relatives and their offspring, and had to do so for a way of life befit of royalty. Towards the end of the Ming, for example, after two hundred some odd years of imperial births of the sons of sons, by some estimates the imperial family numbered over 200,000 members, and required 143 percent of annual land tax revenues for support.\textsuperscript{127} Furthermore, as a group they constituted the largest landowners in the Ming, but their revenues went untaxed.\textsuperscript{128} This huge expense contributed to

\textsuperscript{124} DMHD 2.817-819.
\textsuperscript{125} DMHD 2.820a. For a discussion of the specific ritual activities of the officials in the ceremony see DMHD 2.823-824.
\textsuperscript{126} DMHD 2.836.
\textsuperscript{127} See Rawski, \textit{The Last Emperors}, 94.
\textsuperscript{128} Wang, \textit{The Ming Princes and Daoism}, 15.
the Ming state’s inability to function efficiently and address crises in the countryside. \(^{129}\)

Similarly, the princes in the provinces would make financial demands on the local governments, often causing great financial stress on local administrators. Such demands became impossible to handle and had profound impact on the operations of the state and its abilities to mobilize financial and human resources in times of need.

Compare these expenses to the Qing. Total expenditure on stipends for the imperial relatives in the early Qianlong period was only 1 percent of the silver in the Board of Revenue treasury. Some estimates indicate that this may have risen to 1.25 percent of tax revenues in the mid-nineteenth century, but this is still significantly less than even the most conservative estimates of Ming expenditures. \(^{130}\) Of course, a good deal of Qing finances went to supporting the eight banners and the conquest military caste—as much as 20 to 25 percent of state revenues. \(^{131}\)

Another consequence was the lack of a group of advisors that shared the interests of the ruler. \(^{132}\) In a bureaucratic monarchy, the ruler not only needed council apart from his professional class of administrators, but also people who could move between circles in the communication and execution of orders. \(^{133}\) A link in the chain of command between emperor and bureaucrat

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\(^{130}\) Rawski, *The Last Emperors*, 94.

\(^{131}\) Elliott, *The Manchu Way*, 311. This figure would be comparable to Ming expenditures on its relatives. But to make a more accurate comparison, one would then have to include at least some of the expenses of the Ming military.


needed to be established so that information flowed unobstructed and policy could be formulated effectively and executed efficiently. When officials began to pursue their own interests, creating hindrances and oppositions, they needed to be whipped back in line. A strong and tireless ruler could do this, but even so would face obstacles and confront the limitations of his power and capacity to rule.\textsuperscript{134} The Ming certainly suffered this problem, which led to an over-reliance by the emperors on the palace eunuchs in service of links between the inner and outer courts. These eunuchs came to comprise a class in and of themselves, serving their own interests politically and financially at the expense of the state. They became the arbitrators of politics, controlling what information flowed and what policies could be suggested and would be implemented. The lack of consistency and arbitrary communications led to the formation of political factions in the interest of political protection by the actors, all of which led to a breakdown of political order and the inability for government to function and respond to the everyday demands of state operations and mounting social crisis.\textsuperscript{135}

CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the dilemma the imperial relatives posed for the early Manchu ruler. It showed that changes in social relations required changes in culture; and that changes in culture—i.e., li—were intertwined with changes in politics, both facilitating and resulting from the emergence of new social relations. The immediate politics of the conquest and the organization of the Manchus left the ruler with little room to maneuver. His sons and kin occupied a role in the military and administrative affairs of the state, and he had to contend with their power. In


\textsuperscript{135} See Huang, \textit{1587: A Year of No Significance}. 
order to subjugate them to his command and ensure their compliance in the goals of the state, they were organized into ranks and positions, and integrated into the political order. They were grafted onto the professional bureaucracy, working at one with the other political and administrative actors in service of the state and its organizational goals. Such shifts necessitated the construction of new practices and social relations, rescripting how actors would interact, dress, and see themselves.

Practices of sumptuary, greetings, ceremony, and ranks embodied in li were key here, precisely because they were so successful in their work. The clothing regulations, greetings rites, and ceremonial activity socialized actors in particular ways that gave structure to their interactions and dealings with each other. The practices of li showed them their place in this newly forming world, and the place of others. It showed them how to relate to each other: clothing was a key identifier of one’s place in the hierarchy, signaling rank, position, and how he ought to be treated by other actors; greeting rites offered instruction on what to do when two political actors crossed paths, protecting each of them from conflict over prerogatives of primacy and offering an acknowledgement of the social system of stratification and rank; and the ceremonies organized actors in a way to continually reinforce the sociopolitical order, with each official occupying a particular place in line and performing certain acts of subjugation at certain times. The political order was here performed; the ritual work brought the socio-political order into being, and by including the imperial relatives in these practices they were effectively made part of this order.

The resulting social and political organization of the Qing dynasty was a unique arrangement of personnel not seen before in the history of the imperial Chinese state. The Tang dynasty allowed its relatives to enter service through recommendation and examination, but had
no organized system of employment or integration of the imperial relatives as a group. The Song and Ming dynasties closeted off their relatives, barring them from any role in political or military life. The Yuan set the sons up in the provinces, but they acted more like semi-autonomous governors rather than political actors—in fact, the lack of a clear political order and chain of command created undue problems for the ruler, and was a factor in the demise of the dynasty. The Qing, as shown above, employed the imperial relatives in the running of the central government. They kept them in the capital and integrated them into the political order through a formal system of ranks and positions, which were regularly performed through rites and rituals.

This solution resolved three problems at once. Foremost, it enabled the ruler to deal with his sons and kin in a way that removed any immediate threat to his position. By categorizing them according to their contributions to the state they were given a place of position, but one that was always removed and inferior to the sovereign. The position, rank, and thus power of any relative came by the grace of the emperor as an embodiment of the state. Second, this arrangement enabled the continued support of the imperial relatives in the ongoing conquest of territory, and in the administration of the state. By giving them position they had a formal role in military and political operations, and would continue to act as trusted operatives for the sovereign and the dynasty. Third, it secured political arrangements and offered a guarantee of stability in the still emerging order for the political actors. The assignment of ranks and positions to imperial relatives alongside those in the professional bureaucracy solidified their places of power and invested actors in the preservation of a particular order.
Chapter 4: The Ritual of Surrender and the Expansion of the Qing Polity

A puzzle: why did Hong Taiji integrate Chinese into the socio-military order, and why did he do so when he did? Consider the events. When the Chinese military strongmen and former Ming generals in Liaodong, Kong Youde and Geng Zhongming, surrendered to the Manchus in 1633, they were accepted with unprecedented honor. They were treated to lavish ceremony and banquet, heaped with rich gifts, and given titles and a primary position in the ritual lineup. Hong Taiji even personally received them with an Inner Asian ritual greeting reserved for the meeting of relatives or close comrades. Furthermore, these generals were allowed to keep their troops and their military command separate from the banners, making them answerable only to Hong Taiji.

This level of pomp and honor was unusual, and quite unheard of for Chinese surrenders. Up to this point the Manchus had only employed such ceremony in the incorporation of other nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples, namely Mongols and other Jurchen tribes, but even then it was nowhere near the extent seen here, nor were any groups allowed to operate independent of the banners. Even more peculiar was the fact that prior to this time, most Chinese that came under Manchu control were killed, enslaved, or organized into work-like units and made to drag heavy cannons into the field. They were not treated to banquets, nor were they given titles or honors, and certainly not given autonomous space outside the Manchu socio-military order. But beginning with the surrender of Kong and Geng, a marked shift occurred, whereby Chinese generals and their troops were treated with honor and given a position within the Manchu socio-military order. The treatment of these two generals became the new standard. Why did this practice begin here and become implemented in the acceptance of the surrender of other Chinese generals? And why do it at this point in time?
This chapter shows that as the Manchu military conquest began to quicken in the 1620s, conflict arose over the future of operations. On the one side were the disaggregated voices of the senior imperial relatives, who envisioned an independence that would enable them to continue military operations in order raid and pillage territory for booty and slaves, much as they had been doing, as the previous chapter outlined. On the other side was Hong Taiji and his supporters, who had begun to craft a new vision of the Manchu state as one that would occupy and administer territory and subject populations. These two visions had begun to come into direct conflict in the late 1620s as the Manchus began to conquer more territory and absorb more Chinese military units, and to employ more settled-agrarian Chinese in the production of grain. Agriculture producers could be left in place and overseen by the administrative apparatus. Folding the combatants into the banners, however, would only empower the banner owners at the expense of Hong Taiji. One solution was to keep the Chinese combatants separate from the banner structure and place them under the direct control of Hong Taiji as khan. The problem was that to give them paramilitary status risked too much independence and the possibility that they would split off into separate armies. They still had to be brought into the organization of the state. The documentary record shows the use of li to define the position of the surrendered in the existing order and to structure their interpersonal relations and activity within it, while at the same time re-creating that order so that the interactions and roles of existing political actors and the military aristocracy were adjusted to accommodate these outsiders and their positions in the polity. The use of the practices of li for the acceptance of surrender was a first step not only in the making of outsiders insiders, but also in transforming the social order itself.

Many of the practices and organizing principles were also employed by Nurhaci in the incorporation of the Jurchen and Mongol tribes. Some were not. It becomes apparent that the
form of li as seen through the practices and social organization mobilized by Hong Taiji was neither Chinese nor Ming, but derived out of Inner Asian traditions and innovated upon for the situation at hand. The practices emerged alongside attempts to reconstitute the sociopolitical order and enabled the absorption of outside military forces into the Manchu polity by revising the structure and adjusting the definition and practice of that order. In the course of these developments, practices that came to be called li were adjusted in new ways to account for the cultural traditions. Thus, both the practices and the social order were being innovated upon and changed; and both were articulated under the single conception of li.

But before getting to all this, a bit of background on the socio-military order and the politics that engaged the actors of the time.

THE MANCHU SOCIO-MILITARY ORDER

Prior to the 1630s, surrendered and captured Ming subjects were often killed, enslaved, or made to serve the Manchu banner forces in some servile capacity.  

1 There were anomalies, of course, with ethnic Chinese agents in the Liaodong area working under Nurhaci in the early years,  

2 and, before Nurhaci’s westward expansion began, some Chinese military personnel received welcome.  

3 But by and large, non-tribal individuals and groups were treated harshly—any Chinese not killed in a raid or the sacking of a city were either turned into serfs under the

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2 See Pamela Kyle Crossley, *A Translucent Mirror: History and Identity in Qing Imperial Ideology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 95-96. There was also an attempt by Nurhaci to conscript Chinese males for military service in the early 1620’s, but was quickly ended after a Chinese revolt in 1625. See Guo and Zhang, *Qing ruguanqian*, 299-301; Gertraude Roth Li, “The Rise of the Early Manchu State: A Portrait Drawn from Manchu Sources to 1636” (PhD Dissertation, Harvard University, 1975), 67-96.

ownership of banner personnel, or placed into indentured servitude supporting Manchu military troops and their families. Even the high profile generals who surrendered prior to Kong and Geng, and were given official positions, such as Li Yongfang, Tong Yangxing, and Shi Tingzhu, were not entirely trusted, and their troops were disbanded. Similarly, the early surrenders of Chinese literati, such as Fan Wencheng, found that they did not have any real position or influence until their tenure under Hong Taiji. It was not until 1631 with the establishment of the six boards administration structure, and the creation of the Chinese-martial (Hanjun), who were used to drag heavy cannon into the field, that Han Chinese began to become incorporated into the Manchu state.

Such treatment is not surprising given the socio-military organization of banners that made up the early Manchu state. Having formed, by some accounts, as early as the late sixteenth century, the banner organization was more than just a military formation; it embraced entire family and tribal units to encompass all aspects of life. The banners had formed and expanded based on the incorporation of entire tribes or villages. Led by the tribal or village head, a group of people would be mobilized as a whole in service of the banner. Thus, the group would be made into a company (niru) that was part of a regiment (jalan) that combined to form the banner.

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4 Zheng Tianting, *Qingshi tanwei*.

5 For a good discussion of ethnicity in the banners see Mark C. Elliott, “Ethnicity in the Qing Eight Banners,” in *Empire at the Margins: Culture, Ethnicity, and Frontier in Early Modern China*, ed. Pamela Kyle Crossley and Donald S. Sutton (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 27-57.


7 On this point see especially Elliott, “Ethnicity in the Qing Eight Banners,” 30; Liu, *Manzu cong buluo dao guojia de fazhan*. 
The company would consist of a hundred to three hundred fighting men (later this was standardized at three hundred) but would also include the families of these men who would accompany them in support on campaign. The structure drew on the native tribal organization to incorporate new members, and in this way, the banners consisted of all members of society: free and unfree, soldiers and farmers, wives and slaves, children and old folks, the healthy and sick. The banner unit would certainly mobilize soldiers and do military drills, but it would also distribute pay and grain, and allocate housing, as well as enforce restrictions and pass judgment on crimes and social transgressions. The banner unit would be in charge of registering births, marriages, and deaths, as well as arranging burials. In short, there were no outsiders, for incorporated groups would come under control and work in service of the banner organization.

The Manchu tribes were quickly absorbed into the banner system in the early seventeenth century, as were various Mongol groups. Nurhaci began to gain regional influence in the late 1580s as more and more groups came under his control. In the mid 1590s he had a decisive battle with the largest federation of tribes, the Hūlun, as well as the alliances of the Haiši federation and Mongols. In 1599 he defeated the Hada groups, and in 1611 subjugated the Hūrha and Warka confederations. Given that the nomadic and semi-nomadic tribe and village was the original social unit that came to form the banners, and the basis upon which its expansion depended, such peoples were easily accommodated. With the victories over these groups their acceptance of defeat and the authority of Nurhaci, they could be placed under the command of a banner and be trusted to partake in the effort of military conquest under their same commander. In fact, there was little immediate change for the majority of these peoples after subjugation or

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8 Liu, *Manzu cong buluo dao guojia de fazhan*, 146-151.

9 See Liu, *Manzu cong buluo dao guojia de fazhan*, esp. ch. 2.
surrender beyond their professed allegiance to Nurhaci. Their motivation was a share in booty obtained through conquest.

Mongols were readily incorporated into this system, but Chinese were not.\textsuperscript{10} Mongols shared similar cultural practices as the Manchu tribes, such as riding and shooting, and had similar units of social organization, namely nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes under a headman. As Nurhaci put it on more than one occasion, “The language of our two countries, Mongol and Jurchen, is different, but the clothes we wear and the ways that we live are all the same.”\textsuperscript{11} To accept surrender of Manchu tribes and to incorporate them into the banner system involved a process of assigning the group a unit, or of forming a company out of it. When the numbers of Mongol units reached a critical mass, the Eight Banner Mongols were formed in one motion in 1635, consisting of eighty-two companies.\textsuperscript{12} The Chinese, however, could not be dealt with in the same way, as their unit of social organization diverged too greatly. They were either freebooters pursuing trade, and thus independent and unattached,\textsuperscript{13} or settled-agrarian peasants with an immediate or extended family but not part of a tribal structure. They could not be readily incorporated into a banner system that relied upon affiliation with a unit based on personal loyalties to an immediate superior and with hierarchical allegiances from the rank and file soldier up through the ranks to the khan because they lacked any such affiliation. To whom should they pay allegiance and why? Wherein lay their loyalties? And even more so, how to organize them at all? Even if they could be rounded up and placed within a unit based on their village or city

\textsuperscript{10} Early attempts to integrate Chinese led to protests by Manchus and a series of revolts in the 1620s. See Roth Li, “The Rise of the Early Manchu State,” 67-97.

\textsuperscript{11} MR 1.160, Tm4.6; MR 1.192, Tm4.10; MR 1.211, Tm5.1.17.

\textsuperscript{12} On the Eight Banner Mongols see Guo and Zhang, \textit{Qing ruguan qian}, 263-299; Elliott, \textit{The Manchu Way}, 72-78.

\textsuperscript{13} Wakeman referred to them as “transfrontiersmen.” Wakeman, \textit{The Great Enterprise}, 37-49.
affiliation, who was going to do that? Nurhaci and his staff, not to mention the beile, had other things on their mind, namely the mobilization of the banners for further conquest. The easiest thing to do with the surrendered and subjugated Chinese, therefore, was to assign them a social status based on existing categories of slave or servant, and to attach them in servitude to existing banner units. Even after the process of their incorporation into the socio-military order began in the 1630s, as argued below, the formation of a Chinese banner system was a long time in coming, taking place over more than a decade.

To put this in perspective, the early Manchu strategy up into around the 1620s was one of raid and pillage, not of subjugating settled populations and annexing territory. The strategy of conquering and holding territory came later, in a gradual policy shift that I will outline in the next section. Here it is important to highlight the meaning of the khan as a keeper and distributer of slaves and goods, rather than a ruler of men. It was a position at the head of a confederation of tribes or clans, and was held with the corporate acquiescence and cooperation of the leaders of those tribes. Such a role meant the regular expression of power through conquest, and the ability to deliver capital in the form of booty and slaves. The khan thus had to continue to wage war, to expand areas under his control in order to be able to give his constituencies more goods and people. In the words of one modern-day historian, “He had no choice but to conquer, and to plan new conquests to feed the mouths he had acquired in his last.”

The strategy was to destroy cities and enemy bases, and to grab booty and take captives. This loot was then removed from the raided territory and taken back to Manchu controlled areas. A few examples from the Shilu will illustrate. In 1616, Nurhaci captured Fushun, but rather than

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15 Crossley, The Manchus, 54. See also Crossley, A Translucent Mirror, 138-167.
occupy and govern the city he left four thousand troops there to destroy the place while he led the rest of his army back eastward and divided up three-hundred thousand captives amongst them as a reward to use as slaves. Four years later, Nurhaci sent out armies to destroy Ming bases and military camps in the region, and in 1625, he ordered three beile to lead six thousand troops to attack Shunkou. “Conquer it, obliterate the Ming troops, and destroy the city then return,” he ordered. Hong Taiji followed a similar policy early in his reign. In 1628, banner forces attacked Jinzhou and Songshan, where they took out three major bridges, destroyed thirteen military stations, killed thirty guards, and brought back eight hundred prisoners and animals. Even as late as 1631, operations at Dalinghe were no different: Manchu forces destroyed the city, and surrendering Ming troops and generals were dispersed among the banners.

The Chinese at the receiving end of these missions of raid and destruction found themselves in a bad spot. Most often, those captured in raids were divided among the banner units to serve as household slaves or farmhands, as was the case in the 1616 sacking of Fushun. Even high profile surrenders, such as Ming commander Li Yongfang, or gentry Fan Wencheng, could not be incorporated into the socio-military order and had little place in Nurhaci’s state. Although they avoided enslavement, they were marginalized and continued to find themselves subjected to the authority of the banners. In the case of the former, he got gifts and honors, but no command and no real social position. In the case of the latter, he had no voice or position

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16 SL, p. 71.1, Tm1.4.4.
17 MZSL, p. 279.2, Tm4.8.19.
18 MZSL, p. 376.1, Tm10.1.14.
19 SL, p. 50.1, Tc2.5.23.
20 CZBSL 8.18b, Tc5.11.9.
until Hong Taiji employed him in the Literature Hall (wenguan), and even then it was as but a translator and record keeper.\textsuperscript{21}

CHINESE SUBJECTS AND THE CHANGING SOCIAL POLITY

There is a marked contrast in the treatment of Chinese pre-1633 and that of Kong and Geng. In the case of the former, as outlined above, people were subjugated and enslaved. The latter, however, kept their troops, were given independent command, had the ability to promote and demote, were granted titles, and took a place alongside the banner beile. In effect, they were given a place within the social order.

This change of attitude and action is seen reflected in a policy shift due to the occupation of territory and increasing number of Chinese subjects under Manchu control. Beginning around 1615, Nurhaci and his men faced economic difficulties that left them with food shortages and dwindling supplies. This situation was compounded a few years later when the Ming closed the Liaodong border markets. Rather than continue to raid and pillage, the response was to push west and south into Chinese-settled agrarian, Ming-controlled territory in search of more arable land and agricultural producers and their products. The decision to do so was a shift in policy from raid and pillage for booty and slaves, towards one of occupation and exploitation. As Nurhaci told his beile in 1615 when pressed with the suggestion to attack the Mongols, “We do not even have enough food to feed ourselves. If we conquer, how will we feed them?” He continued to argue that already too many captives and animals were under Manchu protection than they had the resources to accommodate. “During this time, let us first take care of our people, shore up our

\textsuperscript{21} For biographies and position of these people see MQNAF. On the function of the Literature Hall in the early Hong Taiji years see Silas H. L Wu, \textit{Communication and Imperial Control in China: Evolution of the Palace Memorial System, 1693-1735}, 51 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1970), 14.
territory, make borders, till fields, and fill the granaries.” 22 A few years after this conversation, however, Nurhaci and his forces began their march on Liaodong, sacking Fushun and Qinghe in 1618, and taking prisoners and provisions. In 1621, they took the major towns on the peninsula and occupied the entire territory, except for the very tip. 23

With territory came population. The conquest of Liaodong in 1621 left the conquerors with over a million Chinese peasants to administer. Similarly, Hong Taiji’s siege of Jinzhou in 1627 ended with the surrender of two thousand Ming guards, which he sent off to Shanhai pass, telling them to find their own arrangements back with the Ming. Hong Taiji sent the commoners marooned from that conquest to Jinzhou, but they were rejected there, which forced Hong Taiji to send them back to the Ming via Shanhai pass as well. 24 Then, the capture of Dalinghe in 1631 put the Manchus in control of a large population of commoners and peasants, as well as a number of Ming military leaders who willingly submitted. 25

Economic pressure and military success can speak to the phenomenon of the expansion of the Manchu operation, but it does not explain the organization of individuals under their expanding jurisdiction. What these actors aimed to achieve and why the policy of inclusion began to take the form that it did lies at the heart of the inquiry here. Indeed, to assume a necessary progression from Jurchen tribes to agrarian-bureaucratic state that would by definition expand, hold territory, and include Chinese subjects only rationalizes a phenomenon that needs to be explained. The alternative to accepting the surrender of Chinese generals was to do what

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22 MR 1.46-48, WL43.6.

23 Gertraude Roth Li, “State Building before 1644,” 40-42.

24 SL, p. 46.1, Tc1.5.11.

25 This narrative is recounted in detail in Wakeman, The Great Enterprise.
they had been doing for so long: raiding and pillaging while maintaining a mobile organization sourced on booty, trade, and slaves. And yet they did not.

The answer is part social and part political.

The social composition

Socially, the Jin polity was changing as a result of military success, as discussed above. Initially, Nurhaci’s incorporation of other tribes and peoples expanded his operation and the territory under his control. This led to the formation of a socio-military system that would enable the permanent mobilization of society. As the number of incorporated groups grew, the organizational structure deepened through the expansion of ranks and units, but the constancy of the original banner system of immediate allegiance to tribal head, banner commanders, leaders, and owners remained in tack. As long as the incorporated shared a similar culture of violence and reward, as well as in the practice of social life, then the system could, theoretically, continue to uphold this type of social expansion indefinitely along these organizational lines.26 Doing so would mean the greater mobilization of men, the control of territory, populations, and economic resources, including trading markets, but most importantly, the solidification of power over groups in a region, who had long been in conflict among themselves. Nurhaci was achieving, by all intents and purposes, a regional hegemony.27

It is doubtful that Nurhaci had intentions to conquer the Ming and set up a Chinese-style dynasty.28 Economic pressures and the Ming closing of border markets forced him into open

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26 Or at least until the passing of the khan. See Fletcher, “Turco-Mongolian Tradition in the Ottoman Empire.”
hostilities with the Ming, however, and his seven grievances in 1618 seemed to indicate that he had intentions to attack the Ming and extend the areas under his control. The immediate expansion was the conquering and occupation of Ming controlled areas of the Liaodong peninsula. A tightening economy and the need to continue to supply his followers with food and booty forced the incursion and eventual administration of settled agrarian Chinese. The governing of arable land and agrarian producers brought with it new challenges, however, not only for the governing apparatus, but also for the composition of the polity. Most immediately was the administration of more territory and more people of settled agrarian culture and practice, who differed from nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes that upheld personal loyalties and a socio-military form of life. Thus, where sedentary subjects were at one time enslaved or killed, the Manchus now began to leave them on their land and attempt to extract resources from them. When sacking Fushun in 1618, for example, Nurhaci issued promises to the Chinese population that they would not be harmed and would be allowed to continue their ways of life untouched.

A more complete transition of attitude and policy is seen in Hong Taiji. When he became khan in 1627, he distanced himself from atrocities committed against Chinese and blamed his father for such acts, indicating that he would rule more humanely over subject populations.29 What exactly he would do, however, was not entirely clear, and he took some time to develop a strategy. His actions and words indicate a shift in consciousness from the accepting of surrenders but not knowing what to do with them, to the desire and encouragement of newly surrendered populations, and finally to having an institutionalized system in place in order to deal with

29 Guo and Zhang, Qing ruguanqian, 302-311.
them—the Eight Banner Hanjun.30 As mentioned above, in his initial conquests in 1626, Hong Taiji was unclear on how to handle surrendered populations, and sent them away to other areas or back to the Ming. A few years later, he had to warn his military not to kill those who surrendered:

Do not kill those who refuse to fight. Those who surrender, although they may have chickens and pigs, do not invade and harass them. In taking prisoners, do not separate them from their fathers, sons, and wives. Do not sexually harass the women. Do not take people’s clothes, destroy their homes, or steal their utensils and ironware.”31

When attacking Yongping in 1630, Hong Taiji similarly ordered the beile leading the charge to allow people to surrender and not to harass them. He put Chinese official Fan Wencheng in charge and issued an order to give non-military affiliated commoners grain and let them live outside the city. He told the beile in charge, Amin, specifically not to harm the people or their fields. “Those who have surrendered,” Hong Taiji said, “are a model to see for those Chinese who have not surrendered. I fear losing this model.”32

Eventually Hong Taiji and his staff would push a policy of inclusion. This policy set the basis for composition of the Qing state and how it would operate amongst, within, and through different cultural groups and their practices. It is hard to tell how premeditated all this was—how much this system came about by design and how much it was a situation of circumstance.

Although food shortages in the 1620s and 30s actively forced the need to expand the basis of

30 This can be seen in statements over the course of a sixteen-year period from the first year of his khanship in 1627 to the formation of the Eight Banners Hanjun in 1642. For some examples see SL, p. 46-1, Tc1.5.11; SL, 93-1, Tc4.2.22; JMZD, p. 156, Tc9.5.27; BQTZ, v. 1, Cd5.7.
31 SL, p. 75.2, Tc3.10.20. 擒戰者、不得不誅。若歸降者、雖雞豚勿得侵犯。俘獲之人。勿離散其父子夫婦。勿淫人婦女。勿掠人衣服。勿拆廬舍祠宇。勿毀 器皿。
operation in order to secure food for Qing forces, it is not the case that there was only one path open to Manchu rulers. Nomadic and semi-nomadic peoples had encountered such conditions before and they made different decisions. Indeed, Hong Taiji’s brothers at various points suggested splintering off and taking command of their own raid and pillage operations across the northeast. But Hong Taiji argued for the occupation and rule of sedentary populations, and ultimately for their full incorporation into the Qing polity.

The politics

With this shifting social composition came a struggle over politics. What would society look like? How would political resources be divided? Who would be included and who be excluded? The lack of detailed records on such debates or struggle obscure the intensity of the conflict, but enough peripheral evidence remains to give a sense of the different positions and to understand the terms of the settlement in who won and who lost. The previous chapters discussed the rise of Hong Taiji and how ceremony and ritual helped constitute a politics that empowered Hong Taiji over his brothers. This chapter argues that Hong Taiji and his supporters used ritual and the expansion of the social base of the early Manchu state in order to solidify political position and further marginalize the threat of the imperial relatives. Not only did this mean the diminishment of the independence and power of the beile over administration and policy, but it also began to reorganize the socio-military organization of the banners. If control could be redirected to Hong Taiji and the state, and human and financial resources directed away from the banners, then not

33 This argument of economic pressures is developed by Roth Li, and taken up by Wakemen to a degree as well. Their analysis leans heavily towards a conclusion about the necessity of the choices made and the institutions created. Roth Li, “The Rise of the Early Manchu State;” Wakeman, The Great Enterprise.

34 There is another study to be done about Hong Taiji’s vision and whether it was cohesive or just piecemeal, made up as he went along in order to secure positions and power for himself and his staff.
only would the influence of the beile be curbed, but the state would also become more centralized, and command over human and financial resources further institutionalized.

One way of doing this was to begin to disrupt the power base of the beile—the banners themselves. By granting Chinese generals charge of their own armies and independence outside the socio-military structure of the banners, the influence of the banner owners over politics diminished, as did their resources, for the men and goods that would have been distributed amongst the banners were now made independent. Not only did this deprive the beile of command of more resources, but it also began to construct a parallel military structure that was directly under the command of the khan, Hong Taiji. Hong Taiji even went so far as to grant these generals princely titles and to seat Kong and Geng at the same level as the beile during imperial ceremony.\(^{35}\) Relying on the ritual as a space to assert authority and organize political relations, Hong Taiji used these newly surrendered generals in his political struggles against the beile, granting them power and autonomy at the expense of his political rivals.

**Ritual as the social order**

It is one thing to marginalize political competitors, but it is quite another to enact a new practice of social order. The expansion of the structure of Manchu society beyond the banners necessitated a means to incorporate others. Outsiders needed to be given a place within the social order, and the social order had to come to terms with new cultural groups. Different means were employed to do so, including violence, honors, and economic incentives.\(^{36}\) What I argue here is

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\(^{35}\) Kong and Geng were given rank of beile; and in ceremony given positions alongside the eight banner beile. NGSY, p. 1, Tc8.1.1.

\(^{36}\) There are a substantial number of studies on the surrender of Ming subjects to the Manchus in the pre-conquest period. These studies argue that economic incentives and promise of position held sway. For some examples see Chen-main Wang, *The Life and Career of Hung Ch’eng-ch’ou*; Yeh Kao-shu, *Xianqing Mingjiang yanjiu (1618-1683)* (Taipei: Shifandaxue, 1993.)
that in each of these aspects ritual was also mobilized as the mechanism through which violence could be deployed, by which honors would be granted, and rewards and gifts given. The subjugation of former enemies and their incorporation into the socio-political order took place through ritual. The rituals showed the surrendered how they would fit into the order, offering instruction on how to relate to others and the where the lines of power were drawn. Similarly, the rituals told the existing political actors how to view and treat these outsiders; it showed what role the newcomers would play in the existing order and how they would be incorporated.

The rituals both incorporated outsiders and changed insiders. As discussed above, the banners served as the basic social unit for all members of the Jin polity. Prior to the surrenders of the 1630s, all outsiders were brought in through the banners, either assigned as a military unit, or made slaves of bannermen households. This practice continued with Chinese subjects right up to the formation of the Chinese banners in 1637. Even the Chinese units created in 1631 were placed under the jurisdiction of the Manchu banners. Thus, if the surrender of Ming generals and their troops and families were going to be accepted in a way that would keep them from increasing the power and resources of the banner owners, then they had to be incorporated by some other means into the polity—they had to assume social roles and be given places that made them liable to the political hierarchy. In short, they had to be made part of the socio-political order. Because the banner owners were not going to do it in the early 1630s, the rituals had to.

The following sections lay out the rituals and show how they were employed for political struggles, and how they worked to expand the social polity. They show how the polity expanded from the Manchu socio-military units that employed all captives and surrendered populations by means of slavery or redeployment—and done in the reproduction of its own practice and form—to a system that could accommodate other groups and practices. Necessary for the expansion of
the system from a semi-nomadic socio-military organization to the incorporation of settled-agrarian Chinese peoples was an adjustment of the system and a revision of its operation. Different cultural forms had to be accommodated, but done so in a way that could maintain the constancy of the political body. It was a question of what part could be given up in order to preserve the core. In other words, how to centralize the military and expand the base of subjects while still maintaining the banner structure?

Ritual was one way of achieving this. The rituals incorporated new subjects into the social order, while at the same time expanding the organizational types of society and how it functioned. At issue here is not the transformation of the individual and the affects that the ritual had on individual minds, rather, it is to understand how a certain conception of political order was performed through the ritual. The new actors were given a social station. The existing actors played their roles and learned new ones in relation to the recruits. The ritual then was just as much a clarification of the state and the position of actors as it was a mechanism to incorporate the surrendered. The sovereign leading the ceremony, the bowing to heaven, the banquets, the ranks, and so on and so forth all constructed the political order and the relations of power. The positioning of the new actors and their donning of their new court clothes immediately communicated to others where they stood and how to relate to them. The ritual here was the practice of the social order. A closer look at the ritual activity shows the work that ritual did.

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37 There are no materials to explore such psychology anyway, as the surrendered generals under investigation here did not leave any personal reflections on the matter.
THE LI OF SURRENDER

The practice

When Chinese strongmen Kong Youde and Geng Zhongming surrendered in 1633, Hong Taiji treated them with lavish gifts and great ceremony. The two military leaders had served the Ming in Liaodong, but with the death of their superior, Mao Wenlong, they became dissatisfied with the turn of events in the northeast and gone rogue to wreak havoc on the Liaodong peninsula. Shorty thereafter, they arranged to surrender to the Manchus. Hong Taiji ordered the beile to each give them a first-class horse complete with saddle and bridle, as well as four mid-class horses that could be ridden by a warrior in full battle regalia. On the day they turned over all their weapons and troops, Hong Taiji sent the generals more than two thousand horses to divide among their men, and later, during audience, he lavished them with robes, furs, belts, hats, bows and arrows, and more horses. The two generals and their troops were treated to

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38 NGSY 1.14-20; CZBSL 11.39b-41a. See also SL, p.192.1-2.

39 For more on Kong and Geng see ECBZ. For a good discussion of Kong Youde’s rebellion against the Ming see Christopher S. Agnew, “Migrants and Mutineers: The Rebellion of Kong Youde and Seventeenth-Century Northeast Asia,” Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient 52, no. 3 (2009): 505–541. On the disruption in Liaodong see Hong Taiji’s statement to the beile on Tc7.6.3, where he says that Kong and Geng seized Dengzhou city thus creating great disorder. NGSY, p. 75.


41 NGSY 1.14, Tc7.5.6.

42 NGSY 1.17, Tc7.5.22; CZB 11.35a; SL, p. 191.2.

43 NGSY, 1.19-20, Tc7.6.3; CZB 11.41a; SL, p. 192.1.
banquet after banquet, nourishing their hungry men and their families with rich meats and wine. But this was all just precursory to the main ritual events.

On the third day of the sixth month of 1633 (Tc7.6.3)—almost two weeks after the initial surrender—Hong Taiji as khan led all the imperial relatives out of the capital to the mouth of the Hun river to greet the surrendering generals. There on the coast, the Manchus erected a large yellow tent flanked by five green tents on each side. When the camp was set, the khan stood at the head of all the beile and their banners, and he led all, including Kong and Geng and their men, in performing the Manchu rite of three genuflections and nine prostrations to give thanks to Heaven. Hong Taiji and the beile then retired to the main tent and prepared to receive Kong and Geng. When they were ready, Kong and Geng lined their men in order of rank. The two generals advanced in front and knelt and bowed in the proper rite for greeting the Ming emperor.

At this point Hong Taiji did something a little unusual. He requested that Kong and Geng come to the foot of his throne so that they might perform the embracing rite (Ch. baojian li; Ma. tebeliyere doro). They first kowtowed once more and then embraced the khan. Then they

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44 For example, two days after imperial audience (which was followed by a banquet), Hong Taiji gave them another banquet and pressured the senior beile and hesuo beile to provide banquets as well for a total of three banquets that day. NGSY 1.20, Tc7.6.5; CZB 11.41b.

45 Kong’s memorial to Hong Taiji a few days after surrender acknowledged the receipt of grain but informed him that it was not enough. NGSY 1.65, Tc7.5.24; CZBSL 11.37a-b.


47 On the Manchu rite of three genuflections and nine prostrations see Ke Li and Chi Ruu-shuan, “Xunfu tianxia: Qingchao zhenquan yu sanguiju kaiqian yanjiu.”

48 Documents do not describe what exactly they did here, only say that they knelt as they would in the rite for audience with the Ming emperor. See NGSY 1.19.
performed the same rite with the beile, embracing the senior beile and the other beile in turn. When this rite was complete, all performed the three genuflections and nine prostrations to Khan Hong Taiji. Kong and Geng then sat beneath the khan’s throne and presented their gifts of gold and silver cast objects, clothing, and textiles. The ritual came to a close with the holding of a banquet and the khan pouring wine from his own hand and holding it to the lips of the surrendered.\(^49\) As the banquet ended, they were given more gifts.

Performed for the first time here, the ritual followed a specific structure that set a standard and was repeated for the acceptance of the surrender of Ming generals in this early period. The ritual was comprised of a number of basic parts, which included the sending of emissaries to greet and accept the formal surrender, the khan traveling out of the capital to meet the surrendered, an imperial audience, the giving of gifts, and banqueting. As seen in Hong Taiji’s acts during the imperial audience with Kong and Geng, these aspects of the ritual had cultural components of particular importance, including the khan leading kowtows to Heaven, the use of Chinese and Manchu practices to interact with the sovereign, and acceptance by the beile. Before discussing these components in greater detail, the following first outlines the surrender of two other Ming generals, Shang Kexi and Shen Zhixiang in 1634 (Tc8) and 1638 (Cd3), respectively, thereby increasing the repertoire of cases under observation.

**Shang Kexi.** With the fate of Ming control in the northeast becoming increasingly dire in the face of Manchu strength in the 1630s, other Ming generals also began to envision their future with the Qing instead of the Ming. Shang Kexi was one such general. He had served with Kong and Geng under Mao Wenlong and led Ming forces on Liaodong, being charged with the holding of Pi

\(^{49}\) Manchu customs dictated that the host pour and offer wine to the guest. If the guest was younger, he would kneel and receive the wine. See Xiao Yishan, *Qingdai Tongshi*, 71.
island. Within four and a half months of the surrender ceremony for Kong and Geng, Shang also began to express his intent to join Hong Taiji and the Latter Jin. In the second month of the following year (1634), the Board of Li president was dispatched with a welcoming party to greet the general.

On the tenth day of the fourth month of 1634 (Tc8.4.10), the khan led the beile and his officials 10 li out of the capital to meet the arriving Shang Kexi. A camp was set up in a similar manner to that of the Kong and Geng ceremony, with a large yellow tent in the middle flanked by green tents on either side. The khan then led his officials, along with Shang and his subordinates in bowing to Heaven in the Manchu three genuflections and nine prostrations. The khan then took his place on a throne in the yellow tent. Shang did five kowtows from afar, and then two kowtows when he approached. An embracing rite ensued, whereby Shang hugged the knees of the emperor before doing one kowtow and retreating. The rite was then extended for Shang to perform one kowtow to the senior beile, and then to also embrace them in meeting. When he had finished, his subordinate officials did five kowtows from afar, and his troops one kowtow. Shang presented the khan with gifts of textiles, of which a quarter were accepted, and then sat on the left of the khan, while his officials and troops reposed in the blue tents on the left side. For the ritual banquet, ox and sheep were slaughtered and wine presented. After the banquet, the emperor gave rich rewards to Shang for his submission, including court clothing, belts, hats, bows and arrows, furs, saddles, and horses and other animals. Shang led his officials

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51 He sent two emissaries to Mukden in the tenth month of 1633, see NGSY, p. 174, Tc7.10.24.

52 NGSY, p. 59-60, Tc8.2.5. See also NGSY, p. 78-9, Tc8.2.16.
in three kowtows before retiring. Over the next five days, the junior beile also hosted banquets for Shang.\(^{53}\)

**Shen Zhixiang.** Records detailing the submission of Shen Zhixiang in 1638 are fairly complete, and fully outline the process of the surrender of a Ming general. Much like the documents on the surrender of Kong and Geng, and Shang, they show the process of the reporting, welcoming, banqueting, and imperial audience that occurred over the course of many months. But in addition to these details, the extant records on Shen also emphasize the operations of officials attempting to bring this former enemy into the fold of the Qing state. They help answer the question of the background of the employment of the surrender ritual and the implementation of li.

The story of Shen Zhixiang’s fate begins with the Qing invasion of Korea in 1637. En route to the Korean capital, Manchu troops defeated Ming forces on the coast, and in the process killed Shen’s uncle, general Shen Shikui. At the time Shen Zhixiang was vice general under Shikui, and after the defeat and death of Shikui, Shen quickly moved his troops off the coast to Shicheng island and requested that the Ming appoint him general and give him Shikui’s seals. Upon being denied the request by Beijing, Shen appointed himself general, apparently setting himself up as a kind of warlord in the style of Kong Youde. The Ming sent troops to attack him.\(^{54}\) At this point Hong Taiji sent Board of Rites vice president Cai Yongnian to deliver a letter requesting he submit.\(^{55}\) That was in the beginning of the ninth month of 1637; it was not until the end of the second month of the following year (Cd3.2.26)—almost six months later—that Shen sent two

\(^{53}\) NGSy, p. 117-119, Tc8.4.10. See also CZB 14.12b-13b. The beile hosting banquets were Yoto, Abatai, Mandahai, and Sahaliyan. NGSy 1.76.

\(^{54}\) For bibliographical information on Shen see ECBZ, v. 5. NPM cat#030179; QSG, p. 9416-9417; Wakeman, *The Great Enterprise*, 210.

\(^{55}\) CZBSL, 26.39b-40b, Cd2.9.6; SL, p. 501.1-2. NGSy materials are missing for the last ten months of 1637.
emissaries expressing his desire to submit. The emissaries were given a banquet in the capital,\textsuperscript{56} and Hong Taiji immediately sent Board of Li vice president Hasitan to welcome the former Ming general with gifts of food and a collection of fine horses.\textsuperscript{57} In the fourth month, Enggedei of the Board of Li reported to Hong Taiji the details of the surrender and the number and rank of people and animals being brought over by Shen.\textsuperscript{58}

In the following months, the Board of Li prepared the submission rites. On the second day of the fourth month, Board of Li vice president Zhu Shiqi was sent to welcome Shen with a banquet, consisting of various cakes, wine, and forty sheep.\textsuperscript{59} When Shen arrived at Anshan on the twentieth, Board of Li officials were again sent to prepare another banquet. The emperor wrote expressing his intentions to travel forth to meet him, but due to a measles epidemic could not travel.\textsuperscript{60} The greeting ceremony was thus pushed back to the seventh month, at which time Shen traveled to the capital. Board of Li official Harsungga was sent to Fushun to meet Shen and travel with him, while Board of Li president Mandargan and vice president Hicungge greeted the party 5 li outside of the city, where they hosted a banquet and brought them in.\textsuperscript{61} On the eleventh day of the seventh month, Shen had his imperial audience with emperor Hong Taiji.\textsuperscript{62}

Much like those for Kong and Geng, records on Shen’s imperial audience rite are rich. The same components are all there, if in a slightly different order. All the nobles and officials lined up in sequence of rank on each side of the Chongzheng hall. Shen entered and placed his gifts of

\textsuperscript{56} NGSY, p. 258, Cd3.2.26; SL, p. 533.1.
\textsuperscript{57} NGSY, p. 258-260, Cd3.2.27.
\textsuperscript{58} NGSY, p. 300-303, Cd3.4.1.
\textsuperscript{59} NGSY, p. 283, Cd3.4.2; CZBSL 27.36b.
\textsuperscript{60} NGSY, p. 295, Cd3.4.20; CZBSL 27.44a-b.
\textsuperscript{61} NGSY, p. 424, Cd3.7.9; CZBSL 10b.
\textsuperscript{62} NGSY, p. 425-7, Cd3.7.11; CZBSL 28.10b-11a.
silk and textiles on a table and lined up his people outside the Daqing gate. The khan then came out and sat on the throne in the Chongzhen hall. Shen led in his men to kowtow in the greeting rite. He then presented his gifts to the emperor, who refused and returned them all. The emperor then gave Shen rewards of clothing and furs, bow and arrows, and horses and other animals. Shen put on the ritual clothing and kowtowed again to the khan. The emperor exited and the Board of Li prepared a banquet for Shen and his men.63 Over the next few weeks, Shen was treated to numerous welcoming banquets.64

The ritual structure

There were other surrenders, of course, along with the accompanying rituals to carry them out. One of the other high profile surrenders, for example, was the Manchu encirclement of Songshan in 1642, which brought about the surrenders of Zu Dashou and Hong Chengchou, among others.65 The rites that helped incorporate the defeated generals followed an abbreviated version of the basic format that was explicated in detail of the three surrenders outline above—Kong Youde and Geng Zhongming, Shang Kexi, and Shen Zhixiang. These three examples are of the richest and provide sufficient material across a long enough time frame to give a sense of the structure of the ritual and how it was employed during this formative state-making period.

From the li of surrender practiced during the Hong Taiji era, four basic structural parts can be identified: welcoming the surrendered, an imperial audience, the exchange of gifts, and

63 NGSY, p. 425-7, Cd3.7.11; CZBSL 28.10b-11a.
64 See SL p. 558.1, Cd3.7.16; SL p. 558.2, Cd3.7.22.
65 The ritual acts for these surrenders can be found in SL 2.799/2a, 2.842/2, 2.837/2b-838/1a. For more on these surrenders see Wakeman, The Great Enterprise, 221; Wang, The Life and career of Hung Ch'eng-ch'ou, ch. 4.
extensive banqueting. The process of the ritual usually played out in a particular order of a welcoming party sent out and which often included an initial banquet, the holding of the imperial audience, the surrendered offering gifts, the emperor hosting a banquet, the emperor giving gifts, and more banquets hosted by imperial relatives. This order could vary, however, as in the case of Shen Zhixiang who received gifts before the banquet rather than after, as was often the practice. Below I further discuss the components of this structure and how they worked to both reflect and create a social order. I draw on the examples detailed above as well as on other cases of surrender when necessary.

Welcoming the surrendered. The process of bringing the enemy over to the Qing side began with a welcoming party sent out by the khan from the capital to greet the surrendering general and his troops. This welcoming party consisted of high-level officials with a knowledge about the ritual protocol. Board of Li officials were named to handle the surrender of Shen Zhixiang, as well as in the case of the surrender of Xia Chengde in 1642. The welcoming almost always had a banquet, as can be seen from the examples, but could also include a separate event of gift giving, as seen in the surrenders of Kong Youde and Shen Zhixiang.

This welcoming part of the ritual was more than just a formality: it had both practical and sociopolitical aspects. Practically, it was a show of force by the Manchu military, both safeguarding Qing personnel from a trap and deterring any hesitation of the surrendering...
generals about the initial decision to surrender. When Kong and Geng submitted, for example, Hong Taiji sent three beile at the head of a large military force to the coast as a welcoming party. Lying in wait for them were Ming troops backed by Korean units, who were prepared to attack Kong, Geng, and the Manchus come to accept their surrender. So intimidated by the size of the Qing force, however, the enemy backed down without a fight.\textsuperscript{68} Shen Zhixiang, by contrast, although not flanked by enemy forces waiting to counterattack, had continually expressed doubt about his position, and mentioned numerous times his desire to return to the Ming.\textsuperscript{69} The party and troops sent to welcome Shen Zhixiang thus stuck around waiting for the khan’s orders after giving gifts and banqueting.\textsuperscript{70} The ritual thus provided the pretext for a form of sanctioned violence. The welcoming party was a military force sent under the guise of ritual protocol of welcoming. It was non-hostile in practice, but could wield force if necessary.\textsuperscript{71}

Sociopolitically, the beile and high-ranking officials at the head of the welcoming party helped project the hierarchy of the Qing state. Not only was the political order formed in practice of the ranks of various officials and their subordinates, but also the assertion of the order of hierarchical ranks in the initial rituals ensured that the incoming outsiders began to know their place in the political order. This was most forcefully expressed in the banquet, which was a staple event in the welcoming ceremony. As a highly formalized event that put actors in specific relations with one another based on their political position, the banquet began to help actors

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{68} NGSY, p. 56-7, Tc7.5.22; CZBSL 11.35a.
\item \textsuperscript{69} For example see Hong Taiji’s letter to Shen on Cd2.9.6. CZBSL, 26.39b-40b; SL, p. 501/1b-2a.
\item \textsuperscript{70} NGSY, p. 259-260, Cd3.2.27.
\end{itemize}
identify themselves and their positions vis-à-vis others. Tables and seating were organized by rank in statement of position and authority, and which also determined the quality and quantity of food and drink.\(^{72}\)

*Imperial audience.* Meeting with the emperor was at the core of the surrender ritual, for it at once established the relationship of power and authority between sovereign and his new subject, while at the same time began to lay down the bonds of loyalty of the newcomer to the state as represented in the sovereign. There were four components to this part of the ritual: arrival, entering, meeting, and exiting.

This part of the ritual began with the surrendered coming to imperial audience. This first took the form of the emperor traveling a certain distance to the site of surrender, as in the cases of Kong and Shang. However, these two cases are the only ones on record in which the emperor left the capital to greet the surrendered and hold the ceremony at a distant location. As previously mentioned, Hong Taiji expressed his intent to travel to meet Shen but was obstructed by a measles epidemic in the area. Instead, he brought Shen to the capital some months later for their imperial audience, a practice that became most common. In the former case, the emperor led the beile and his officials out of the city in a procession complete with parasols and ritual instruments to a location of 10 li.\(^{73}\) In the cases of the latter, a welcoming party was sent out to meet the surrendering general and escort him into the city. A Board of Rites president or vice president would always be a member of the welcoming party, and most often at the head of it.

They would arrange to meet the surrendered at a point of a certain distance from the city—for

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Shen it was 5 li, for Xia Chengde it was 15 li—and at that point a banquet would be set up and held before bringing them into the capital.

When the emperor was established in camp or the general had arrived, the emperor would then appear on the scene. When the emperor traveled outside of the capital, he led the imperial relatives, officials, troops, and the surrendered in performing prostrations to Heaven. Here the emperor acted as a sovereign at the head of an order of ranked officials and military troops. At this moment, in front of all, he undertook practices required of the sovereign as head of the state. He stood at the top of the political order, and the newly surrendered generals took their place in that political order allowing themselves to be led in an act of reverence while simultaneously subjugating themselves to the command of the ritual and the authority of their new sovereign.

When the emperor held audience for the surrendered in the capital, it is likely that he also led a performance of the three genuflections and nine prostrations to Heaven, even if accounts are lacking on the matter. What can be said is that the hierarchy of beile and officials lined up in the wings of the hall, along with the placing of the surrendered in a sequence, and the entrance of the emperor to take his place on the throne, had the effect of situating actors within a political order. The emergent imperial order was being projected through a ritual that was simultaneously coming into being.

The third component of the imperial audience was the face-to-face meeting of the sovereign and the surrendered general. Some form of kowtow was always involved, whereby the general approached the emperor and performed prostrations. The idea was to express a proper form of respect and servitude to the sovereign. The Ming form of kowtow was deemed appropriate for Kong and Geng, and explicitly stated as such. For Shang, he did five kowtows from afar and then two when he was near. Editors of records of subsequent surrender rituals did not make this point
very clear, noting merely that the surrendering generals kowtowed. Nonetheless, such acts of one party kneeling and prostrating while the other party stood in acceptance clearly established the relationship of subordination to authority. In both the Kong and Shang surrenders Hong Taiji used an embracing rite, which was a Manchu practice used among kin and close allies upon greeting after long absences. This embracing rite was employed to build a patrimonial relationship between Hong Taiji and these former Ming generals, and to welcome them into the fold of the emerging sociopolitical order. But it did more than just that. It also signaled to Manchu political actors that these Chinese surrenders were being accepted into the Manchu polity. Hong Taiji insisted on using it, much to the dismay of the beile, who thought the use of the Manchu custom to greet the Chinese was unacceptable, and far beyond the respect that these turncoats deserved.

As the imperial audience came to a close, the honored generals would perform more kowtows to the emperor and wait for him to exit, or wait for the next stage of the ritual to commence. This last act of the imperial audience would take the form of the Manchu style of three genuflections and nine prostrations performed to the emperor by the generals at the head of their troops. This rite was the same one that the emperor led everyone in performance to Heaven, and symbolically it was now repeated with the sovereign standing in the spot of Heaven as

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74 For a discussion of the flexibility of Qing audience rituals see Hevia, Cherishing Men from Afar.

75 For a discussion of the kowtow as an act of submission see Ke Li and Chi, “Xunfu tianxi.” See also Zito, Of Body and Brush, 191.

76 See MZSL, p. 281.2, Tm5.8.19. 滿洲俗凡 別久相見必 互抱以示親 愛


78 The discussion on the use of the embracing rite between Hong Taiji and the beile occurred right after the entering stage of the audience rite with Kong and Geng. Hong Taiji insisted on using the rite despite beile opposition. NGSY p. 74-75, Tc7.6.3.
everyone else symbolically subjugated themselves to the sovereign. Thus, once again, political relationships were expressed in the ritual by delineating the lines of power drawn from the emperor down through the ranked subjects—the generals leading their subordinates and troops in kowtowing to the sovereign. The ritual here acted as a site to reinforce the political relationships that had been determined in the settlements of conflicts, both between Hong Taiji and his brothers, as well as between the Manchus and their enemies.

*Gifts.* The third part of the surrender ritual was the exchange of gifts. On some occasions Hong Taiji was inclined to send gifts to generals immediately upon their surrender, as in the cases of Kong and Shen, but this was rare. More often, the gift giving would commence with the surrendered general offering goods to the khan after the imperial audience ceremony, and be reciprocated by the khan offering them gifts of greater quantity and value in return after the banquet. In the latter situation, the generals would always accept, usually quite readily as the gifts could be quite lavish, and, as discussed in a moment, the gifts had a political function. The khan would not always receive the gifts of the surrendered generals, however. He received all of Kong and Geng’s gifts, but not those of Shang, among whose gifts he only accepted twenty of eighty silks offered and one hundred of the eight hundred bolts of cotton offered. Similarly, he refused all of the silks and textiles offered by Shen.

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80 Upon learning of the surrender of Kong and Geng, Hong Taiji told the beile that they had to offer gifts of horses, and he instructed them on how many and what kind. NGSY p. 48-9, Tc7.5.6.

81 NGSY, p. 118, Tc8.4.10.
The logic behind the emperor’s acceptance or rejection of gifts is not entirely clear, but it
does point to the formation of political relationships and the exertion of imperial control in the
relationship. If the emperor held the surrenderer in high regard and wished to create a close
relation with the new general, he might accept his gifts. It was a sign that the sovereign was fully
accepting of the submitted. This was the case with Kong and Geng, whom he also made a
forceful argument to use the embracing rite, and would go on to treat them as nobles in ritual
ceremonies and grant them titles. Should he reject the gifts, however, a distance was maintained
between ruler and ruled—in many ways it communicated that the khan was not entirely pleased
and accepts no favors. Take for example, the 1642 imperial audience of surrendered general Zu
Dashou, Hong Chengchou, and their subordinates, Ming strongmen who refused for years to
submit and only did so after a long fruitless siege resulting in a great loss of troops and slow
starvation. The generals presented a rich array of gifts to the khan including jewels, silver, and
gold, furs, silks, clothing, and horses among other things, all of which Hong Taiji refused. “We
are not settled,” the generals said, “and beg that you receive what little we have given.” In the
end, Hong Taiji found that they were sincere and decided on “one or two items” while declining
the rest.\(^{82}\)

The emperor’s gifts to the surrendered, on the other hand, were always received. There are
no cases in which the surrendered party declined the gifts bestowed by the emperor. Such an act
would be hierarchical sacrilege, whereby a subordinate attempted to subvert authority by
refusing his superior. In fact, the very language used to discuss the exchange of gifts highlights
the difference. When the surrendered gave, he “offered” (Ch. xian 献; Ma. jafaha). When the
emperor gave, however, he “bestowed” (Ch. ci 赐; Ma. șangnaha). In the language of the former,

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\(^{82}\) SL 2.824/2a-b, Cd7.5.5.
the surrendered presented gifts for the emperor as a subject wishing to be brought into the imperial embrace. The offering was a wish for acceptance. In the language of the latter, the emperor out of magnanimity graced the subject. In this way, the gifts from the emperor where not something to be accepted or rejected, but rather burdened as a responsibility of the patron-client relationship, in which the ties were strengthened by the hand of the superior and further subjugated the subordinate.

The gifts themselves also carried meaning. While the acts of giving or receiving were cast into ritual practice, the objects given by the emperor were calculated to prepare the outsider to become an insider. Take for example the list of items bestowed upon Kong Youde:

- 1 brocade robe
- 1 grass summer hat with a freshwater pearl and gold Buddha on the front and flower on the back
- 1 gold belt with a handkerchief, pouch, and knife
- 1 pair of silk socks folded into silk boots
- 1 gold engraved quiver with bow and arrows
- 1 horse with engraved saddle and bridle
- 1 horse with plain saddle and engraved bridle
- 1 gray fox-fur coat
- 8 black sable-fur coats
- 8 plain sable-fur coats
- 8 lynx-fur coats
- 16 fox-fur coats
- 200 horses
- 1,000 sheep

This gift list is typical of the kind and number of goods bestowed upon those in an imperial audience after submitting. As with other gift lists, a robe and hat are at the top. These two items were the staple court dress of Qing officials—the embroidered robe and the grass hat, which,
pending rank, was often decorated with a Manchurian freshwater pearl fixed atop. The granting of this uniform to the surrendered general was a political act in that it incorporated him into the political hierarchy. For instance, after receiving his gifts, Shen Zhixiang put on the robe and donned the hat to perform the final kowtows of the ceremony. In effect, he completed the transformation of himself into a subject. The rest of the gifts were also of Manchu cultural significance—the knife, the socks and boots, the bows and arrows, horses, and all the different furs. The ownership of these items had profound meaning traditionally, where it could boost one’s status in the tribe and secure political support regionally. Furs were considered wealth and could be used as marriage dowries, bride prices, or even to cement political allies.\footnote{On the use of pearls and fur in Jurchen culture see Herbert Franke, “Chinese texts on the Jurchen: A Translation of the Jurchen Monograph in the San-ch’ao pei-meng hui-pien,” \textit{Zentralasiatische Studien} 9 (1975).} Indeed, such gifts were the things given when receiving the surrender of Manchu tribes. And while these factors came to take new meanings as the state bureaucratized, such significance were initially lost on the Chinese;\footnote{Not until the eighteenth century did Chinese begin to covet furs as luxury items and markers of status. Jonathan Schlesinger, “The Qing Invention of Nature: Environment and Identity in Northeast China and Mongolia, 1750-1850” (PhD thesis: Harvard University, 2012), ch. 1.} but it brought the generals into this world. The reception and owning of these things worked to make them insiders.

\textit{Banquets.} Banquets had a highly political function. Everything from the seating to the food both reflected and constructed the political order. In the discussion above of how the surrendered were first welcomed, the banquet helped inculcate the new generals into the Qing. In explication of this fourth part of the surrender ritual, the focus is on the timing and frequency of the banquet rather than the practices of the banquet itself.
There were at least three opportunities for banqueting: at the time of welcoming, immediately following the imperial audience, and in the subsequent days after the imperial audience. This was the basic sequence of banqueting found in all the surrender rituals, although some might include more or less banqueting in the days after the ceremony. The welcoming banquet, as mentioned above, was hosted by a Board of Li official and imperial relative on the site of surrender. These personnel were dispatched to receive the surrender and would bring all the necessary food and implements to set up a grand banquet in the field, and then host the surrendering general and his subordinates. Sometimes there would be more than one occasion for a welcome banquet, as in the case of Shen Zhixiang, in which his emissaries were given feast when they came to report Shen’s intent to surrender—the formal welcoming banquet was held when Shen came over, submitting all his men and weapons, and then another banquet was given for him three weeks later when he was posted to Anshan fort (although this last banquet was held in expectation of the imperial audience that had been canceled due to the measles epidemic).

The audience banquet was held after the ceremony of the imperial audience. If the emperor had traveled out of the capital and set up tents in the field for the audience, the banquet would be held immediately after the ceremony. If the audience was held in the capital, there would usually be a short interval between the ceremony and the banquet, whereby the emperor would exit and the Board of Li would set up the festivities. In either case, the emperor acted as the host of the banquet, sitting at the top of the hierarchy, pouring and offering wine. Upon the conclusion of this banquet, the emperor would instruct the beile to each host a separate banquet for the surrendering party, with themselves in the position of superior and placing the surrendered in

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85 This statement is a direct reflection of the documents, whereby in the former case there is no break between the ceremony and the banquet. Given the ambiguity of the language, however, it is hard to tell exactly what went on.
political submission in the hierarchy. Thus, for example, we see beile hosting banquets for Shang Kexi on the eleventh, fourteenth, and fifteenth of the fourth month of 1638.86

The general structure of the surrender ritual is here concluded. It has been deduced mainly from the three different surrenders of Ming generals Kong, Shang, and Shen across a seven-year period. I have referenced other surrenders when applicable, based on the availability of information about those surrenders. Altogether, the documentary evidence shows the importance of the ritual and the role of the Board of Li in conducting the surrender of former Ming generals, and how the ritual practices worked to make the Chinese outsiders Qing insiders, giving them a place in the social hierarchy and integrating them into the political system, while at the same time instructing insiders on how to relate to the new additions.

THE SOURCE OF THE LI OF SURRENDER

Up to this point the discussion has focused on the practice of accepting the surrender of enemy combatants—an exploration that has largely been driven by the inquiry of how to bring outsiders into the socio-military polity. But apart from the activity, the question of vision arises: where did these ritual practices come from and why did actors employ them? How did officials know what to do and why did they trust in the efficacy of these particular practices?

Ming influence?

Without direct reference by the actors to the sourcing of the practices of this form of li it is difficult to determine exactly where the ideas and actions came from and why these were

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86 NGSY, p. 119, Tc8.4.10.
employed. What can be said is that there was a conscious decision made to practice certain rituals, and that there was prevailing belief that so would produce a desired effect. There is no indication that the ritual acts were understood as representations of a natural order, and that doing them would thus harmonize actors with the universe. Rather, by picking and choosing certain acts and borrowing others, the actors constructed the nature of the activity and attempted to set the terms of the settlement of conflicts. That is to say, the actors knew very well that the rituals were constructed and that they could be employed to help in the making of a certain social order.  

The influence of the Ming form of li and associated practices is questionable. It is well known that Ming precedence was ever present in the building of the Manchu state, and the chapters above have shown that many of the rituals were also therein sourced. In all of the early state building activities, not only did Qing officials rely on the Ming Huidian in reference to administrative and legal code, but many of the people employed in the bureaucracy came over from the Ming and, in the case of the Board of Li, were influential in shaping the Manchu ritual practices. Although the Board of Li was very present in the surrender rituals, it seems doubtful that the form of this ritual was borrowed from or even inspired by the Ming.

Consider two Ming texts on surrenders. The first is the draft of the Board of Li gazetteer, Libu zhigao, which was compiled in the early seventeenth century and is structured very much...

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87 For further discussion of these ideas in theory and in another context see Michael Puett, “The Offering of Food and the Creation of Order,” Michael Puett, “Human and Divine Kingship in Early China: Comparative Reflections,” in Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and Beyond (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2008), 207–220.

88 As chapter 5 argues, the Qing continued to rely on the Ming Huidian up until the publication of the first Qing Huidian in 1690. There is no shortage of reference among Qing actors in the 1630s and 40s about their reliance on the Ming Huidian for proper administration and ritual practice. For some examples see TCZY, 2.14a, 2.35a; GSA, 5778, Sz12.7.24; GSA, 5611, Sz12.10.9; SL, p. 377-1, Kx7.11.yihai; SL, p. 511-1, Kx11.3.wushen.
like the *Huidian*. It has a section devoted to surrender in which the ritual for such a practice is outlined. The text is based on the surrender of Ming Sheng, a warlord in the south who surrendered to Ming founder Zhu Yuanzhang in 1371. It reads as follows:

The emperor went to Fengtian gate. [Ming] Sheng and his subordinates knelt outside Wu gate waiting for their guilty proclamation. The ceremonials official held up the text and announced their arrival. After the official finished reading it, the official recipient of edicts went out and called them. When they were called, Sheng and his subordinates prostrated on the ground. The ceremonials official pulled Sheng up, and his subordinates all rose. They knelt listening to the abrogation of their guilt. Sheng and his party bowed five times and yelled, “Long live the emperor” three times. The official recipient of edicts bestowed them with robes and caps; the ceremonials official led them to the center stairs, where they bowed four times. The ceremonials official transmitted the edict while they listened to the announcement and prostrated four times and called out “long live the emperor” three times before bowing again four times and exiting. The grand councilor led all officials in performing the congratulatory rite.

The differences here with the Manchu practices outlined in the preceding sections are obvious. Most immediately, the sovereign does not have much of a role. Whereas the Qing rite made a point of injecting the emperor into the ceremony, both in greeting and in leading sacrifice, the Ming emperor only appears at the opening, coming to the gate of the Forbidden City, and then has but a shadowy presence over the rest of the ceremony. As such, there is no intimate imperial audience. Furthermore, there are no banquets and no gifts. Whereas the Qing ceremony was designed to express the political order and situate the newly surrendered into that order, transitioning them from enemy to friend and making them subjects, the Ming ritual

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89 For more on this text see Naitō Torajirō, “Reibu shikō kaidai,” in *Dokushi Sōroku* (Kyōto: Kōbundō, 1929), 433–439.

appears to be a brute expression of submission, where the surrendered beg and grovel before being led away.

The second text to consider is the *Ming History, Mingshi*. The section on surrenders follows the text of the gazetteer just quoted, and does so almost word for word.\(^\text{91}\) The most revealing thing about this book, however, is that it was not written in the Ming, but rather compiled in the Qing by editors appointed by the Kangxi emperor. The text was, of course, sourced and copied from the Ming based on Ming practice, but the understanding of its place and importance was held in the minds of Qing editors and inscribed into the official history of the Ming dynasty. Actors in the early Qing knew very well what the Ming were doing, and wrote of their practices and the effects on Ming subjects. And yet Qing actors did something different instead.

*Manchu practices*

The surrender ceremonies enacted here appear have developed out of a practice used throughout the Nurhaci period for the acceptance and incorporation of Jurchen and Mongol tribes. Nurhaci’s activity in the early seventeenth century consisted of forming alliances with surrounding clans, and conquering those who refused, bringing them into a socio-military federation that came to be known as the banners. This operation consisted of marriage alliances, whereby a tribe would send a bride to Nurhaci or one of his brothers or sons, and which would serve as a link between the two. A marriage alliance would entail the reception of a bride, who would be received with ceremony and lavished with honors, and a great feasting between the two tribes in question. In the case of a military surrender, or an outright submission of a group before arms were taken up (usually by threat or as a result of the growing military reputation of Nurhaci), the submitting

\(^{91}\) *Mingshi* 明史, p. 1434.
tribe and its leaders would be received respectfully and given gifts. In the case of the former, the tribe would be folded into the socio-military system, whereby they would become slaves or servants of soldiers, as was the situation of those who were conquered, or, in the case of those who submitted willingly or under favorable conditions, the tribe would form a military unit in the banners and would be accompanied by their families in a role of support. In this way, through the incorporation of different groups and peoples into a single socio-military organization, the size and strength of Nurhaci’s control grew.

The reception of a bride or submitting group was always accompanied by a ceremony. In the case of the marriage alliance, some type of travel to receive the bride was always undertaken by the receiver or other high-ranking individuals, and banqueting always occurred. Records from as early as 1588 show Nurhaci accepting a bride from the Yehe tribal group. He led the beile out to welcome her and held a grand banquet. She was also given a title. Similarly, in 1623, a Mongol tribe sent a bride to Nurhaci’s son, Ajige. Nurhaci ordered two other sons to travel 60 li to receive her. A banquet was held. It is unclear at what point the banquet and feasting occurred—on the spot of reception or at the time of marriage back in the receiving tribe’s territory, or in both instances—but it is clear that both traveling to greet the bride and her tribe and a banquet were key aspects of this practice.

A ceremony was also instrumental in accepting surrenders. As Nurhaci and his army conquered and absorbed neighboring tribes through reputation and conquest, they folded these individual, families, and small societies into the banner system. The means for doing so was a

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92 For more on the distinction of those who submitted willingly (shou) and those who were captured (huo) see Zheng Tianting, “Qing ruguanqian Manzhouzu de shehui xingzhi.” Also see Ch’en Wen-shih, “The Creation of the Manchu Niru;” Zhou Yuanlian, “Guanyu baiqi zhidu de jige wenti,” Qingshi Luncong 3 (1982): 140–154.

93 SL, p. 36.1, WL16.9.1.

94 SL, p. 119.2, Tm8.5.17.
practice similar to that outlined above for the Chinese generals: welcoming, audience, gifts, and banquet. The details are not as full, and description of the ceremonies were certainly less lavish, but the basic structure is there outlined. There are many cases on record, and two are here drawn upon to illustrate.\textsuperscript{95} In 1618, the head of the Hūrha tribe led a hundred households to submit. Nurhaci sent two hundred people to welcome them, and when the tribe arrived, Nurhaci came forth to give them an imperial audience. The surrendered kowtowed to Nurhaci and were treated to banquets and furnished with gifts of horses, cows, embroidered robes, furs, belts, and boots, among other things.\textsuperscript{96} Similarly, a few years later, two Mongol nobles led 645 households in submission. They received an imperial audience, where the two nobles kowtowed in submission and offered their allegiance to the khan. They were then given a banquet and lavished with gifts of furs, pelts, embroidered clothes, textiles, boots, and saddles, as well as draft animals. Both were granted the military title of general (zongbing總兵) and put in charge of a military unit.\textsuperscript{97}

These marriage and surrender ceremonies of the early Jurchens contain key elements meant to incorporate outside groups into an expanding polity. The traveling forth to welcome the incoming party secured the agreement; the audience with the khan established power relations and identified superiors and inferiors; banqueting entailed certain attendance and seating arrangements, which gave indication to both insiders and outsiders their place in the polity and further told each how to act in relation to the other. The presentation of various degrees of wealth in the form of food also expressed the hierarchical relationship of one nourishing another; and the bestowal of gifts by the khan on the new subjects not only provided material incentive for their subservience, but also enabled their participation in the social order through the donning of

\textsuperscript{95} For examples of other cases see MR 1.83, Tm3.2; MR 1.100, Tm 3.4.13; MR 1.164-165, Tm 4.7.1.

\textsuperscript{96} MR 1.112-113, Tm3.10.11. Also in the MZSL, p. 220.1-221.2, Tm3.4r.12.

\textsuperscript{97} MZSL, p. 336.2-338.1, Tm6.11.18.
prized goods, such as furs, and the solidification of their authority over their own subjects with both the outward expression of favor in wearing the clothes and the increase in their ability to nourish their subjects through the gifts of grain and farm animals. In similar form, these early practices were similar to the practices employed by Hong Taiji and his staff in the acceptance of the surrender of the Chinese generals in the 1630s.

THE FORMATION OF THE EIGHT BANNER HANJUN AND THE CESSATION OF THE SURRENDER RITUAL

There were other surrenders, of course, the greatest number of which began after the Ming lost Beijing and the Qing had entered the pass.\(^98\) By that time, however, the basic structure of the Manchu state had been established and the lines of power drawn. The groups that needed to be incorporated were given a place in the polity and their positions, relations, and interactions institutionalized. The emperor no longer needed to make an argument for the spoil of his division of political resources and the hierarchical organization of the state. Li as social order had been given shape and its transformation into law had already begun. The solidification of the practices of li into the form of regulation could now be applied to the newly surrendered.

At this point, with the beginning of the formal conquest of China proper, the details of surrender ceremony become thin. Even high profile cases, such as the Kangxi-era surrender of navy admiral Shi Lang are vague.\(^99\) In fact, after Shen’s surrender in 1638, records on the use of the surrender ritual began to wane, and, after Zu Dashou and Hong Chengchou in 1642, there is very little mention of such ceremonies at all—Board of Li activity and discussion of such rituals

\(^{98}\) For a full list of surrendered officials see Yeh Kao-shu, *Xiangqiong Mingjiang yanjiu*, 29-49.

\(^{99}\) The Shilu gives no mention of any surrender ceremony for Shi Lang.
disappears. This trend is further highlighted by an absence of any mention of surrender protocol in either of the first two editions of the Qing Huidian—the Kangxi and Yongzheng editions.\textsuperscript{100} Even when the ritual practice became codified in the Qianlong-era Huidian in the mid-eighteenth century, it was much different from the practices outlined above.\textsuperscript{101} How to account for this phenomenon; why was the interest and intensity of the surrender ritual of the 1630s suddenly deflated?

There are no extant materials that can speak directly to these questions. What can be said is that as formal institutions were set up to deal with the incorporation of Chinese subjects the surrender rituals ceased. It is as if the social order, having been transformed, no longer needed culture to continue transforming. Instead it drew on other cultural forms and practices to preserve the transformed state. Instead of surrender rituals, the ceremonies and rites become the core of li, which continued to do the work of socialization.

There is an institutionalization aspect as well. The formation of the Chinese banners corresponded directly to the declining use of the surrender ritual. In 1637, two Chinese niru units were formed out of the Chinese troops under the jurisdiction of the Manchu banners. In 1639, four Chinese banners were formed. In 1642, four more Chinese banners were added, bringing the total to a complete eight.\textsuperscript{102} At this point, the Chinese coming over to the Manchu order had a point of contact and could be fully incorporated into the polity. The Chinese banners gave them a status and registration. The generals surrendering would be placed under the Chinese banners and their troops fully incorporated—although often the companies would be scattered throughout

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{100}There are sections on military rites for ordering generals off to battle, and for victory celebrations, but nothing on surrenders. KXHD 716.2165; YZHD 770.3939.
\item \textsuperscript{101}In fact, surrender rituals in the eighteenth century came to mirror those of the Ming. QLHDZL, 74.1176.
\item \textsuperscript{102}For a narrative of the formation of the eight banner Hanjun see Elliott, \textit{The Manchu Way}, 74-78; Yao Nianci, “Luelun baqi Menggu he baqi Hanjun de jianli,” \textit{Zhongyan minzu daxue xuebao} 6 (1995).
\end{itemize}
the different banners. The rituals no longer needed to perform the same function of full social incorporation and political subjugation. Nor did Hong Taiji need to go around the banner owners in order to implement his policies. It is for this reason that the onslaught of surrenders from the conquest of Songshan in 1642 did not have such an elaborate ritual, and that after this date, the surrender ritual is hardly ever mentioned. The Qing polity had been revised successfully enough to the extent to be able to integrate Chinese subjects, and the Hanjun banners gave those Chinese now being incorporated a place within the polity and a position in the rituals.

The institutionalization process did not stop there, of course. The surrender ritual in the form outlined above ceased, but it did not spell the end of the formation of the sociopolitical order with a single sovereign commanding all of the armed forces and political resources any more than the New Year’s Day ceremony of 1632 meant the full institutionalization of the emperor, or the categorization and regulation of the imperial relatives could be equated to the completion of the political order. The process of formation of the Qing state continued through the defining of political relationships and the organization of actors. The three core processes of dividing political resources, building solidarity, and centralizing the military continued to develop in an interrelated fashion and gave rise to a particular order. The emperors of the eighteenth century still struggled with the definition of the sovereign and its legitimacy, after all.103 Similarly, the place of the imperial relatives and the question of imperial succession was not formally resolved until the Yongzheng emperor.

The centralization of the military was also a drawn out affair. Beginning in the 1630s, the socio-military units of the banners began to be stripped of their autonomy and brought under the

centralized command of an administrative bureaucracy and decision-making council. This process relied on the formalization of a system of ranks, titles, and honors, which were handed out and guaranteed by the state. The creation of new forms of symbolic power were first grafted onto existing hierarchies, which were then gradually realigned to bring the relations of power under the control of a centralized bureaucratic decision making body. The result was that bureaucrat and sovereign would both guarantee status as well as control the distribution of honors and position. This eventually led to the centralized control of the existing military system by enabling the state to assign different commanders to different groups and to issue the commands. The original system of personal loyalties and independent military control were transferred to the state, and jurisdiction over banner policy and social life became bureaucratized while the original banner framework remained intact. This process was a long time in the making, and not until Yongzheng were a set of codes articulated and the entire operation formalized.104

PART 3: THE CODIFICATION AND PRACTICE OF LAW
Chapter 5: Codification and the First Qing Huidian

Having been contested, manipulated, and reforged, li was then codified. The preceding chapters argued that the immediate political context shaped the Manchu form of li, which in turn helped construct an emergent political order. Struggles among the imperial relatives for political power played out through the manipulation of symbols, hierarchies, and ceremonial activity. As settlements emerged, and the unequal division of political resources was accepted and clarified, a state-like structure arose along with the regulations of the political and administrative practices for its operation. These practices were referred to as li, and the administration and operations that they shaped and embodied were the Qing state. Chapter two discussed the process of the working out of the role of a single sovereign commanding the majority of political resources and at the head of a large administrative staff, and the manipulation of symbols and making of a symbolic order to uphold this. Within the struggles for power and over the form that power would take was also a working out of the practices of power and the form of interpersonal relations among political actors. Chapter three showed that li was further worked out to nullify the threat of the relatives of the sovereign and incorporate them into the political order. Li as an organizational method and behavioral protocol helped define the constancy of the state administrators as composed of imperial relatives alongside career officials. Chapter four then examined the expansion of the demographics of the state through the inclusion of a diverse set of political and military actors, and how a particular interpretation of li facilitated this process. As this order formed, it did so through the practices of li. At the same time, these developments molded the practices and meaning of li, so that the two evolved together.

When the conflicts subsided and settlements agreed upon, the emergent political order was codified into law. For the Qing, that point came in 1690 with the publication of the first
Qing administrative code, or *Huidian*. This chapter looks at the formation of the Qing administrative code. It investigates the codification of the Qing interpretation of li in the form of the *Huidian*, and in doing so addresses the lacuna in our understanding of li as the basis of the administrative order—an aspect that has been recognized as key (it is prominent in the sources, after all) but without a substantial study on the matter. The general question here is about the re-articulation of li into a particular code. The specific case is the construction of Manchu political society and the development of a set of statutes that organized politics in a way to contain conflicts and empower some over others.

The broader argument is that the first Qing *Huidian* expressed the interest and ideals of the Qing state. Also called the Kangxi *Huidian* because it was ordered and produced under the Kangxi emperor in the 1680s, this text was the compilation of regulations, orders, and edicts that were issued over a period of about sixty years of Qing rule, and served as the legal standard for

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1 There is a large literature in Chinese and Japanese on the Ming and Qing *Huidian*. This scholarship tends to outline the different editions, discuss the kinds of materials and number of editors, or chart the years covered in each edition. I list some of the most relevant works here. For a good overview of the different editions of the *Huidian* in the Ming and Qing see Yamane Yukio, “Meishin No Kaiten,” in *Chūgoku hōseishi: Kihon shiryō no kenkyū*, ed. Shiga Shūzō (Tokyo: Tōkyō Daigaku Shuppankai, 1993), 473–508. For a comparison of the different editions of the Ming *Huidian* see Yuan Ruqin, *Da Ming Huidian yanjiu* (Beijing: Zhongguo sheke, 2009). Two representative works on the Qing *Huidian* are Guo Songyi, “Qingchao de *Huidian* he zeli,” *Qingshi Yanjiu Tongxun*, no. 4 (1985); Lin Gan, “Qing Huidian de lici zuanxiu yu Qingchao xingzheng fazhi,” *Xinan shifan daxu xuebao*, no. 02 (2005): 109–15.

Despite these contributions, the only work done on the process of codification is Metzger, who looks at how new laws were included into the existing code. There has been no research done on the formation of the code itself. Thomas A Metzger, *The Internal Organization of Ch’ing Bureaucracy: Legal, Normative, and Communication Aspects* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1973), 167-232.

2 See discussion in chapter one.

3 There is a debate among historians about the existence of a Chongde *Huidian*. Chinese scholars argued that the Qing produced a *Huidian* in 1636, while Japanese scholars refuted the claim. The debate was sparked by Zhang Jinfan and Guo Chengkang in a 1983 article over the existence of the characters “huidian” in reference to fifty-two regulations that appeared in a copy of a Shunzhi-era *Taizong Shilu*. Shimada Masao and Kanda Nobuo each independently investigated the claims and came to a similar conclusion that there is no substantial or convincing evidence that such a *Huidian* was composed or existed. Kanda determined that all uses of “huidian” in the early Qing referred to the Ming *Huidian*. The articles of these debates are reproduced along with a rejoinder in Zhu Yong, ed., *“Chongde huidian, “ “hubu zeli” ji qita: Zhang Jinfan xiansheng jinqi yanjiulun zhu yipie* (Beijing: Falü chubanshe, 2003). For a good summary of the debate see Li Liuwen, “*DaQing Huidian yanjiu,*” (MA Thesis, Henan daxue, 2003).
bureaucratic organization and administrative activity. This chapter argues that the *Huidian* was the product of a concerted effort by Qing state-makers to develop a code that captured the organization and practices of Qing society and politics. The creation of this code occurred in connection with the formation of the sociopolitical order of the Qing state. The regulations were constructed as the state came into being, and did so to represent certain emergent interests. In this way, the law was not just another aspect of the society that complemented other integral aspects, but rather an adroit expression of the organization of the state and its priorities. Contrary to the implicit position of much of the literature in Qing law, which sees the formal rules of the Qing as separate from and preexisting the state, I argue that the processes of codification and state formation cannot be separated from each other. This view enables the second part of the argument: that the Qing *Huidian* was different from the Ming *Huidian*. Despite the similarity in name and organization of content, the Qing *Huidian* was not copied from the Ming, it was created anew with new content.

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4 This position is most prominent in those works analyzing the code itself. Such work tends to look at the *Huidian* as fully contained within itself and distinct from the structure that it is regulating. Of those works cited above especially see Lin Gan, "Qing Huidian de lici zuanxiu." For a more general discussion of this problem in the historiography see William P. Alford, "Law, Law, What Law?: Why Western Scholars of Chinese History and Society Have Not Had More to Say about Its Law," *Modern China* 23, no. 4 (October 1, 1997): 398–419.

5 For a statement of the prevailing view of the Qing *Huidian* as based on or copied from the Ming see Lu Li, "Qing Huidian bianxi," 57. Elsewhere, Yamane Yukio outlines four points of distinction of the Qing *Huidian*, which include things like having more editors and being translated into Manchu. His points do not address the content, however, and his article tends to confirm the structural similarities of the two *Huidian*. Yamane Yukio, “Meishin no kaiten.”
ON THE NATURE OF THE HUIDIAN

The text called *Huidian*—which is often referred to in English as statutes⁶—is a compilation of institutional regulations and codes for administrative procedures and activity. There is some disagreement among scholars about the legal nature of the Huidian. Although it has often been seen as a series of commandments for the Qing administration, there is clearly an aspect of punishable offenses articulated throughout, making it more than just an operations manual. Scholars such as Metzger and Guo Songyi see the Huidian as little more than an administrative manual, offering guidance to officials for conducting affairs.⁷ Lu Li, however, argues that it is both a document of administrative law and foundational or constitutional law. She argues that the Huidian was the code that regulated all state operations, laying out the rules for all administrative affairs. In this way, it was distinct from a penal code, which facilitates in assessing guilt and in punishing. At the same time, she says, it went beyond just a handbook for government activity: it was the core document to organize all political, social, and economic life—it provided the basis for social behavior and action: “On the one hand, the Qing Huidian was comprehensive in that it regulated life generally in the Qing dynasty and was not specific to one particular institution or aspect of life…At the same time, the Qing Huidian was foundational, in that it served as the basis for all institutions and areas of life in the Qing dynasty…”⁸

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⁷ Metzger, *The Internal Organization of the Ch’ing Bureaucracy*; Guo Songyi, “Qingchao de Huidian he zeli.”

⁸ Lu Li, “Lun Qing Huidian de genbenfa yu xingzhengfa de heyixing,” 28. Also see Lu Li, “Qing Huidian bianxi.”
This collection of imperial laws was organized according to the six ministries and other major government departments, helping guide bureaucrats in their everyday dealings. As Qianlong wrote in the edict commissioning the *Siku quanshu*, “The civil and military officials of our state, both of the inner and outer court, and of all positions and ranks are recorded in the *Da Qing Huidian.*” The content of the *Huidian* mirrored the administrative departments, each of which had a section devoted to its operations. Within each section, duties were outlined for the respective department, often through a chronology of ordinances, decrees, edicts, and rescripts that had been made governing an activity in the course of the dynasty. Take an example that was explored above: the entry on the New Year’s Day ceremony in the Board of Li chapter. The Kangxi edition of the Qing *Huidian* details the New Year’s Day practice as it evolved over years beginning with the first ceremony in 1632, and outlines further precedents of the ceremony in 1636, 1651, and 1669. The entry ends with a list of other minor revisions and decrees made over the course of this time. In this way, the *Huidian* charts the developments in interpretation and practice of li, and maps it onto the sociopolitical order.

The Qing were not the first rulers of China to have such a legal document. By all accounts, the Tang dynasty’s *Tang liudian* was the first text of its kind, outlining administrative procedures with clear stipulations of reward and punishment in the dealings of bureaucratic officers. The *Liudian*, like its predecessors, was based on the ancient texts, the *Zhouli* and *Shangshu*, distilling the essences of the idealized social organization based on li contained in these texts into administrative code that gave instruction on how to run a state. The Song produced a similar text called the *Huiyao*, and the Yuan incarnation was the *Yuan dianzhang*.

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9 SKQS, 辦理四庫全書歷次聖諭 QL45.9.17.
10 KXHD 715.1916.1931.
11 Lu Li, “Lun Zhongguo gudai de liyifa;” Lu Li, “Qing Huidian bianxi.”
These works were often legal descriptions, however, rather than statutes and codes, and they were organized by topic rather than administrative category.\(^{12}\) In contrast to what would follow, these precursors were concerned with the historical precedents in reference to the previous dynasties, rather than the communication of the current state’s laws.\(^{13}\) The Ming produced the first entirely contemporary legal text of all the regulations, ordinances, decrees, and edicts of the current dynasty. This was done almost immediately by the Ming founder and called the *Da Mingling*, or *The Great Ming Code*.\(^{14}\) A hundred years later this code was reorganized into administrative statutes and renamed the *Da Ming Huidian*. The Ming *Huidian* went through four editions over the course of about a hundred years, only two editions of which survive.\(^{15}\) The last edition was published in 1587 and is known as the *Wanli Huidian* in reference to the emperor under whom it was compiled. It was this *Huidian* that served as the point of reference for administrative activity in the seventeenth century, and upon which the Qing drew.\(^{16}\)

The next section of this chapter looks at how Qing officials made use of the Ming *Huidian*. It shows that not only did the Ming code serve as a convenient standard for administrative procedure, but also that it helped to selectively inform the organization of a stratified Qing society. The following section explores the shortcomings of the Ming *Huidian* as seen by contemporary actors, and outlines the incessant calls from Qing officials to compile

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\(^{13}\) Guo Songyi, “Qingchao de Huidian he zeli;” Metzger, *The Internal Organization of the Ch’ing Bureaucracy*, 217.


newly formed regulations and decrees into a Qing specific *Huidian*. This request was finally met by Kangxi in 1684, when he ordered that Qing regulations be compiled into a *Huidian* that was published in 1690. The last section compares the final product with the Ming *Huidian*, showing how the two codes differed and did so in ways that reflected the interests and organization of the respective states. In short, the Ming followed a neo-Confucian interpretation of li with a strong emphasis on ceremony and ritual according to the Confucian canon. The Qing, by contrast, reinvented li to focus on the authority of the emperor over the Manchu elite. These interpretations were each codified in turn in the respective dynasty’s *Huidian*.

**HOW QING OFFICIALS USED THE MING HUIDIAN**

The Ming *Huidian* offered a standard for Qing officials in administrative and personnel affairs. It provided a point of reference on how to organize the state, operate the administration, uphold protocol for hierarchical order, and conduct foreign affairs. It was not so much that the Ming *Huidian* was a sacred code that held all the answers for Qing administrators, but rather that it gave guidance on issues that often arose in everyday dealings. Furthermore, it was a standard on which everyone could refer. How many clerks could an office have? When could officials take leave to care for sick parents? What should officials do at the temple sacrifices? How to receive a specific tribute mission? Answers for all these questions were found in the Ming *Huidian*.

This section discusses how the Ming *Huidian* provided guidance to Qing officials in four key areas: administrative structure, administrative operations, ritual sacrifice, and foreign relations. It becomes apparent that the *Huidian* offered more than just practical advice about how to operate the bureaucracy; it was also a code through which the interest and ideals of the state were expressed.
Administrative organization

The Ming *Huidian* served as the guide and model for the structure and organization of the administration of the Qing state. It was first translated into Manchu by Dahai by order of Hong Taiji in 1629, and completed three years later on the eve of the establishment of the six boards.\(^{17}\) It is difficult to get a sense of the how widely used the *Huidian* was in the early formation of the Qing bureaucracy, as direct references to the *Huidian* are few. What can be said, however, is that the establishment of the six boards in 1631 was modeled on the Ming administrative system. The structure of the Ming system was laid out in such terms in the Ming *Huidian*. Although the form of the Qing boards diverged from the Ming ministries in key ways, such as the existence of two presidents in the Qing boards, one Manchu and one Chinese, the Ming *Huidian* served as a point of reference on the organization of personnel and operations, especially as the government began to expand throughout the Shunzhi period.

Take for example the number of administrative personnel recruited to a government office, or corvee servants (xishuyi 系書役). Qing officials found in the Ming *Huidian* the regulation of six in each office, which the Qing Board of Revenue referenced and implemented in mobilizing required service for the state.\(^{18}\) Furthermore, the *Huidian* served as the standard for any dispute or problem that arose in such arrangements, as it did with the Inner Court Proclamations Office (neiyuan zhichifang 內院制敕房) in the early Shunzhi years. In the eighth month of 1644 (Sz1.8.28), Wu Zanyuan, the office drafter in charge of affairs, found his office understaffed and officials overworked. He turned to the Ming *Huidian* on the number of personnel in each office to make the argument for more people, memorializing that he had


\(^{18}\) The numbers, service, and the Board of Revenue reference are discussed in a memorial by Inner Court Proclamations Office secretary Wu Zanyuan. GSA 185048-023, Sz1.8.28.
looked up in the *Huidian* and found that according to regulation his office was short two people. “According to what is recorded in the Ming *Huidian,*” Wu wrote, “each government office has six corvee servants.” Continuing, he pointed out that “the Board of Revenue has assigned people to each government office based on the *Huidian,* so that not more or less are allocated.” However, he went on, “only my office is short two people.” He asked that an order be sent to the appropriate board to “look at the *Huidian* and grant the additional personnel so that we can operate as a single body.” The imperial rescript confirmed the complaint and ordered to “follow the old precedent and amend [the situation] by adding [personnel].”

Here both officials and emperor turned to the Ming *Huidian* for reference on the structure of the administration, and used the statutes in the *Huidian* as the means to resolve discrepancies and disputes. This trend continued throughout the early Shunzhi period as the administration grew and positions needed clarification. In the second year of the Shunzhi reign, the Supervising Secretary of the Rites Office of Scrutiny (li ke jishizhong 禮科給事中), Liang Weiben, wrote to warn that the six offices of scrutiny over the six boards (liu ke 六科) were in disarray as a result of the “lack of clarity on the positions and duties, so that all officials are not without confusion.” He urged ordering the personnel office to “look up in the *Huidian* the specific duties and positions, and to clearly lay them out in regulation.”

Similarly, in 1654, the imperial bodyguard was found short staffed and referenced the Ming *Huidian* on how to re-organize the bureau. Officials from the Imperial Household Department and the Board of War memorialized that Ming regulations in the *Huidian* said that the imperial guard was composed of five divisions and ten departments, but that “since the founding of our dynasty we have been short.” They argued for

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19 GSA 185048-023, Sz1.8.28.

20 SL, p. 175.1, Sz2.8.gengchen.
the creation of more offices to mirror the Ming based on the *Huidian*, and outlined the ranks and positions that needed to be added. Again, in each case the *Huidian* served as the point of reference for the organization of offices and personnel.

In the creation of new offices, the Ming *Huidian* also continued to guide Qing state-makers. When setting up the Court of the Imperial Clan to deal with the Qing imperial relatives, for example, officials turned to the Ming *Huidian* for a model. Manchu Board of Li president Langkio memorialized in 1652 on the matter of setting up an organization to deal with the imperial relatives, and he cited the Ming *Huidian* on the administrative structure of such an organization. “I looked up the old regulations in the *Huidian* for when the Ming established the Zongrenfu,” he wrote in reference to the Ming *Huidian*. “In order to manage the affairs of those belonging to the imperial family, they set up a director, left and right associate directors, and left and right assistant directors.” Continuing he said, “I beg you to order the Board of Personnel to assign officials according to the cited precedent and offer the positions.” The precedent mentioned here referring to that in the Ming *Huidian*.

**Administrative practice**

In the same way that the *Huidian* served as the point of reference on how to set up an administrative structure, it was similarly drawn upon as a model for how that structure should work. Three key areas of Qing administrative activity in the seventeenth century relied on the *Huidian*, as reflected in a survey of documents from the period: general administrative procedure, such as paperwork and filling vacancies; taking leave of office to care for sick

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22 BDTB, 02-01-02-2033-020, Sz9.4.24. This event and memorial were analyzed in chapter 4.
parents; and honoring the dead. These issues emerge out of the historical record and emphasize the operations of the Qing state. Each of these three activities focused on the staffing and running the government, from how it would function from day to day to the manning of essential posts to legitimacy of the state in conferring honors.

Administrative procedure. At the highest levels of running the state, the *Huidian* was the standard for proper procedure. One of the earliest Qing records referring to the *Huidian* for use in administrative practices is from the hand of Hong Taiji. In 1640, the Qing emperor pardoned criminals in celebration of his birthday, which he cited as an imperial precedent and in accordance with the *Huidian*. Hong Taiji here said he was “imitating the *Huidian*” (fang *Huidian* 仿會典) in his role as emperor in following past precedent of opening the jails on the emperor’s birthday. The Korean king was quick to respond in gratitude to Hong Taiji for releasing Korean captives “in accordance with the *Huidian*.”

The *Huidian* also informed Qing officials on the day-to-day activity of government. One such area, for example, was how to write official documents. In 1656, the Board of Li deliberated on a memorial from the Zhejiang Provincial Military Commander complaining about the improper use of documents among officials in the provincial offices. Inferiors were writing to superiors with improper address and under the auspices of document titles reserved for equals, he said. The Board of Li consulted the *Huidian* and found that when a Provincial Military Commander communicates with the Magistrate he should use the form of an “order” (diewen 謄文), and when a Magistrate communicates with a Provincial Military Commander he should use

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23 SL, p. 709.1, Cd5.11.22wuyin.
24 SL, tk, Cd6.1.gengchen.
the form of a “report” (shenwen 中文).\textsuperscript{25} This became the form accepted by the actors and enforced by the Board of Li.\textsuperscript{26} Similarly, in 1662 there was confusion about who was supposed to use a summary (huangtie 黃貼) at the end of a memorial and when it was appropriate. The Personnel Office of Scrutiny suggested following regulations laid out in the \textit{Huidian}, whereby officials of the third rank and above did not need to use a summary if they were not reporting on corruption and the memorial “contained only a few characters.”\textsuperscript{27}

These cases illustrate regulatory attempts of administrative procedure in the early years of the Qing state, and can be seen as part of the process of making bureaucratic activity predictable and formal. Take the case of investigating open lawsuits in the capital as a further example. In 1655, Aduli, a Manchu official serving in the capital, was ordered to conduct a survey and investigation into open lawsuits in the capital. According to the \textit{Huidian}, Aduli reported, all government offices that were issued chops need to use them when receiving and passing on cases. Last year, all the offices adhered to this regulation, but as of the eighth month in the year of investigation (1655), the offices have failed to use their official seals for cases. “Officials are not adhering to the proper procedure!” Aduli said. “Please issue strict orders to respect and follow the regulation.”\textsuperscript{28} That regulation was the one found in the Ming \textit{Huidian}. Implicit in the discussion here is the value placed on the uniformity of procedure. (In fact, Aduli mentions at

\textsuperscript{25} Fairbank and Teng say that a “die” is an order from a superior to a subordinate, while a “shen” is a report from a subordinate to a superior. J. K. Fairbank and S. Y. Teng, “On The Types and Uses of Ch’ing Documents,” \textit{Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies} 5, no. 1 (January 1940): 59, 65.

\textsuperscript{26} SL, p. 821.1, Sz13.12.wuxu.

\textsuperscript{27} GSA 167265-017, Kx1.5.27. The imperial rescript said to forward the suggestion to the appropriate board for deliberation.

\textsuperscript{28} GSA 89592, Sz11.8.4.
one point the need to bring everyone in line as “one body.”) The Ming *Huidian* served as the code for the basis of uniform procedure to standardize all bureaucratic activity.

Officials also turned to it as an authority in administrative disputes over procedure. In 1653, Supervising Secretary in the Punishments Office of Scrutiny, Chen Tiaoyuan, opened impeachment proceedings against Supervising Secretary of the Personnel Office of Scrutiny, Wei Xiangshu, for failing to follow procedure as laid out in the *Huidian*. Under dispute, according to Chen, was that two officials took leave from office and that administrative procedure in the *Huidian* required those positions to be filled in their absence. This was the responsibility of Wei as the Supervising Secretary to make sure the positions were filled accordingly. A week into the absences, however, no one had been assigned to fill in for those positions. Chen accused Wei of this oversight and sought to have him impeached for dereliction of duty. He relied on the *Huidian* as the standard by which Wei needed to be held accountable. In his defense, Wei argued that he did in fact follow the procedure outlined in the *Huidian* and called for those positions to be filled. In his capacity as Supervising Secretary he said that he sent the memo to the Board of Personnel, which confirmed that the position would be filled. The fact that it was not filled lay beyond the jurisdiction of his office. Wei emphasized that he followed procedure, and he was now but the messenger, not the executor.

*Posthumous honors.* A second aspect of administrative activity that relied on the Ming *Huidian* was the occasion and procedure of granting posthumous honors, especially during the course of the civil war in the Shunzhi years. The matter of granting honors to ranked-officials who had

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29 GSA 039012, Sz10.8.23.
30 GSA 038901, Sz10.8.23.
died in service constantly arose as a request and became a topic of discussion. At issue was not whether they should be honored or not—the act of granting such honors seems to be taken as an accepted and necessary practice for the sociopolitical order—but rather what came under question were the standards of who got it and how. The Manchu president of the Board of Li, Enggedei, reported that the Shunzhi emperor “imitated the sage emperors of old” in 1653 by announcing the accomplishments of deceased officials and granting them posthumous honors, entitling them to memorial arches and stele. He said that Chinese officials looked up in the *Huidian* the regulations for granting such honors and determined that the provincial governor, regional inspector, and supervising secretaries and censors killed in battle would receive honors.31 In the fall of 1655, Enggedei issued another series of memorials requesting honors for deceased officials, arguing that their service and death in battle should be honored. “Previously, Manchu officials gave Han officials posthumous honors according to *Huidian* regulations, which were approved by the emperor [at the time],” he argued to bolster his case in one memorial.32 He also cited a case from the Ming *Huidian* of twenty-three Ming officials killed by bandits in the late Ming, who received posthumous honors, memorial arches, shrines, and state sanctioned annual sacrifice.33

The privileges attached to posthumous honors included state sponsored internment and sacrifice. To have a tomb and a stele recording achievements gave honor, status, and influence to one’s descendants. To have sponsored sacrifice with sacrificial officials from the Board of Li conducting sacrifice once or twice a year even further elevated the position of the family. Given

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31 GSA 05578, Sz12.7.24. The reference to the honoring of officials in 1653 (Sz10) is contained in the body of this memorial.

32 GSA 05889, Sz12.7.13.

33 Enggedei’s reference to the Ming *Huidian* and officials are in the memorials GSA 05568, Sz12.7.24; BDTB 02-01-02-2135-009, Sz12.10.24.
these benefits, officials and descendants lobbied heavily to receive such privileges, using the *Huidian* to make their argument for the reception of such honors. In 1656, the president of the Board of Punishments asked permission to hold an official ceremony and sacrifice for his recently deceased father. “I checked the *Huidian,*” he memorialized, “and will perform the internment sacrifice according to precedent.”34 Some years later, the Board of Personnel responded to a memorial from the Shandong governor about a similar request from Provincial Administration Commissioner Wang Xianzuo 王显祚. Wang had received imperial recognition in an honorary title for his service and wanted to transfer the title to his ancestors. This was granted.35

By 1660 a standard for granting such ceremonial privileges had been worked out based on the Ming *Huidian*. In the fourth month, the Board of Li promulgated an order about what ranks and positions would receive what kind of sacrificial service in death. Nine stipulations framed this code, each one corresponding to a set of ranks and positions. The first, for example, said that upon the death of one holding the beyond-rank title of duke, earl, or count (gong 公, hou 侯, or bo 博), “adhere to the *Huidian* in building a tomb according to his rank.” It further granted sacrificial supplies of paper money and wine, as well as sacrificial officials to make offerings. One level down from this were those in the position of banner commander, grand secretary, board president, imperial censor, or holding the Manchu high rank of viscount (Jingkini hafan), all of whom would receive internment according to the *Huidian* based on their rank. The ritual supplies and sacrificial officials would accord with the position of the deceased, however. And on down the ranks the regulation went, each of the nine stipulations weighing the

34 GSA 36535, Sz13.4.
35 SL, p. 103.1-2, Kx1.1.dinghai.
positions and ranks of officials so as to hierarchically organize social stations according to the *Huidian* and assign the appropriate kind of interment and sacrifice that would be received in death.  

*On filial piety.* Officials often found themselves in the position of needing to serve both the state and their filial obligations, and they turned to the *Huidian* when a conflict between these duties arose. According to Confucian practice, one should care for one’s sick or frail parents, which necessitated taking leave from office. In 1652, Supervising Secretary of the Military Office of Scrutiny Li Renlong asked for leave to care for his 85-year-old mother. He said that his father had died and his frail mother had no one else to care for her. “According to the *Huidian,*” he wrote, “if one’s parents are old with no one else to care for them, then he should return to care for them until they die.” The imperial rescript asked the appropriate board to look into the regulation and prepare for Li to leave office accordingly.  

Similarly, in 1657, Feng Youjing, a censor in Fujian, memorialized on his frail 75-year-old father, for whom he wished to leave office to provide care. “The *Huidian* precedent allows for one to return to care [for him] if there is no one else to do so,” he wrote.

The continued requests by officials, and obscurities in Qing practices on the matter, led to a long sixteen-page memorial in 1654 by the Shandong governor, Geng Dun, on the need for clarification. The occasion for the discussion was a request for leave by Zhang Wanxuan, a vice director in the Board of Punishments, in order to care for his 80 year old sick mother. Anyone with parents over 70 should be allowed to care for them, Geng continued quoting a *Huidian*

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36 SL, p. 1034.2-1035.1, Sz17.4.wuzi.  
37 GSA 085742, Sz9.9.  
38 GSA 085433-001, Sz10.4.
regulation that allowed an official take leave from office to attend to his parents. The catch, however, was that the *Huidian* statute was to be applied for those without brothers. Geng thus sent officials to investigate Zhang’s family situation and understand if he had other siblings who could take care of the sick mother, which would exempt him from leave. After months of investigations, Geng found that Zhang did indeed have brothers, but they were elsewhere serving in office. Given this situation, Geng concluded, “According to the *Huidian* he should be allowed to go.”

These three kinds of administrative activity—administrative procedure, death rites, and filial piety—are representative of the uses of the *Huidian* as frequently mentioned in the existing documents. They comprise some of the key operations of the bureaucracy and concerns of officials, and show the importance of an administrative code to guide these actions. For Qing officials, the Ming *Huidian* was the standard on important administrative issues: how to fill vacancies when officials go on leave? Look it up in the *Huidian*. When should a summary of a memorial be written? Check the *Huidian*. What to do when an official’s parents are sick or dying? How to honor the dead? The *Huidian* was the point of reference.

Yet these functions were more than just practical considerations in how to run a state—they reflected the core of the sociopolitical structure of rank, position, and hierarchical order. Using proper documents for officials to communicate with each other was as much about hierarchy and the political organization of superiors and inferiors as it was about the practical day-to-day procedure of communication. Similarly, posthumous honors further conferred individuals in the hierarchy, granting them new positions, rights, and privileges for their service.

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39 GSA 085442, Sz11.9.
to the state and accomplishments. The state sanctioned internment and sacrifice was accorded hierarchically based on a scale of positions and ranks, and in doing so yielded benefit to descendants, who could see their positions elevated.

Sacrifice

State sacrifice was a third area of activity for which Qing sovereigns and officials consulted the Ming *Huidian*. Parts of the state ritual system were copied from the Ming and implemented very early on in the establishment of the Qing state—mostly in the early years of the Chongde reign. As discussed in chapter six, Hong Taiji set up the suburban altars shortly after the establishment of the Qing dynasty in 1636, and ordained state sacrifices to the list of deities. The nature of these ceremonies, and the deities to which offerings were made, followed the historical precedents of previous dynasty, and, given the language and categories employed, were most likely developed out of the Ming *Huidian*. Speaking in the early Shunzhi period, former Ming official Tan Qian observed that all Qing rituals were borrowed from the Ming. Be that as it may, there is no mention of the *Huidian* in the formation of this ritual system. It is not unlikely that officials consulted the Ming *Huidian* throughout the early years in establishment and practice of sacrifices, but the documentary evidence does not show discussion of the matter until late Shunzhi.

The earliest sources we have that refer to the *Huidian* in connection with the sacrificial system of the Qing are from 1659, where they appear in discussions to systematize practices. In the seventh month of that year, the *Shilu* records that the Board of Li reported on a memorial

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40 See appendix 4 for a tabular comparison of the sacrifice section of the Ming and Qing *Huidian*.

asking to “follow the Huidian in holding triennial ancestral sacrifices in the ancestral hall.”\footnote{SL, p. 984.2, Sz16.7.bingxu.}

This was approved by the emperor, and the first practice commenced at the end of that year consisting of sacrifice to the four ancestors, Taizu, and Taizong.\footnote{KXHD 718.3064-3065.} A few years later, the Huidian was consulted on a similar issue of the biannual sacrifice to the historical emperors and kings at the Diwang temple. The ceremony was inaugurated in 1645 with the founders of the previous dynasties, including Liao Taizu, Jin Taizu, Yuan Taizu, and Ming Taizu, and then expanded in 1661 to include the second emperors of dynasties going back to the Shang. The proclamation ordered to “sacrifice at each of their tombs according to the Huidian regulation.”\footnote{SL, p. 50.2-51.1, Sz18.2.yisi. Also see KXHD 719.3241.}

Documents clearly show Qing officials drawing on the Ming Huidian to help standardize their annual sacrifices. In 1660, officials pointed out that the routine ceremonies and sacrifices differed from those of previous dynasties and recommended that the annual sacrifices to various deities be performed together rather than separately and at random. This suggestion was implemented and the imperial order on the matter decreed to “follow the Huidian in holding combined sacrifices every autumn and spring at the suburban altars.”\footnote{SL, p. 1021.1-2, Sz17.2.renyin.} Two months later, the Board of Li clarified that under “the combined ritual system as outlined in the Huidian,” there are twenty-four altars that require sacrifice once a year. The memorial went on to say that after dividing the suburbs into four quadrants, the combined sacrifice stopped, but that this year it would begin again with the deities all receiving worship together at the respected altars.\footnote{SL, p. 1034.1, Sz17.4.yiyou.}
The Ming *Huidian* also provided clarification for Qing officials on the role of actors in the ceremonies and sacrifices. The *Huidian* offered precedents to follow for the preparation and activity for combined sacrifice. The month after it was decided to combine the sacrifices, the Board of Li set out instructions to consult the *Huidian* on setting up the temples for sacrifice, telling the Board of Works to build stages at the altars, and that the master of ceremonies should follow the precedent for the sacrifice as outlined in the *Huidian*.\(^{47}\) In 1673, confusion arose over what officials should do at the altar and temple sacrifices, and clarification of which came from the *Huidian*. The Board of Li wrote that it had consulted the *Huidian* on the regulation for the role of officials during the sacrifice and that the Board of Li officers should all line up accordingly and do the rite.\(^{48}\) This reference helping to further standardize the ceremonial activity, as well as to organize political society and give hierarchical order to the ceremony.

**Foreign relations**

The Ming *Huidian* served as a guide in the early Qing in conducting affairs with rulers whom the Qing had no prior interaction. The *Huidian* here offered a reference on how to receive the ambassadors from east and southeast Asian states, the tribute that should be received, and the gifts given in return. In 1653, the Qing court reported that the Ryukyu prince had sent a tribute mission and had the intention to exchange the old Ming chops for new ones.\(^{49}\) This caused some confusion in the Qing court on what was to be expected: what gifts should the mission bear?

\(^{47}\) SL, p. 1026.2-1027.1, Sz17.3.xinyou.

\(^{48}\) SL, p. 584.2-585.11, Kx12.12.jiayin.

\(^{49}\) SL, p. 605.2, Sz10.6r.wuzi. For a brief discussion of Ryukyu relations with the Ming and Qing dynasties see Gregory Smits, *Visions of Ryukyu: Identity and Ideology in Early-Modern Thought and Politics* (Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press, 1999), 35-42.
How should they be received? And who were these people and their king, anyway?\(^{50}\) For answers, Qing officials turned to the Ming *Huidian*, which contained information about Ryukyu and the previous missions to China.\(^{51}\) By all accounts, this facilitated a successful interaction between the young Qing dynasty and the Ryukyu kingdom, resulting in the exchange of chops, the reception of tribute and giving of gifts, and a banquet hosted by the Board of Li.\(^{52}\)

The *Huidian* provided a precedent for foreign relations and the standards to which tribute states needed to be held accountable. It confirmed and helped actualize the hierarchy of international relations. Take the Annan and Siam tribute missions in early Kangxi, for example. Annan sent a mission that arrived in early 1664, but did so with tribute gifts that “were inconsistent with the *Huidian*,” according to Qing officials. Board of Li officials requested that the emperor order the Annan ambassador to “adhere to the *Huidian*,” a request that was quickly approved, even though the unsatisfactory tribute gifts were also accepted.\(^{53}\) The imperial decree to Annan to bring the proper tribute went unheeded by the offenders, however, for the next mission three years later also fell short in their gifts. The Board of Li memorialized to forgive them for this oversight, for “they have come to tribute every three years in accordance with the *Huidian*.“ In contrast to the previous disapproval, this memorial argued that the country was far and the journey presented many challenges but the king still sent missions as required. This led the memorialists to conclude that Annan “respected the imperial instruction and authority.”\(^{54}\)

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\(^{50}\) These questions are discussed in SL, p. 267.2, Sz4.6.dingchou.

\(^{51}\) BDTB 02-01-02-2182-002, Sz11.3.28.

\(^{52}\) For the record of this mission, in addition to the above sources, also see SL, p. 644.2, Sz11.3.dingyou; SL, p. 652.1, Sz11.4.dingchou; SL, p. 667.1, Sz11.6.yashen; SL, p. 667.2, Sz11.7.wuzi.

\(^{53}\) SL, p. 168.1, Kx3.1.wuyin.

\(^{54}\) SL, p. 361.1, Kx7.5.jiazi.
Annan mission was duly excused.\textsuperscript{55} A few years later, the same problem arose with a Siam tribute mission. When the mission arrived in Guangdong, the Guangdong governor reported in advance that it bore “tribute goods inconsistent with the \textit{Huidian}. They are short in comparison with the precedent.” Noting the previous case of Annan being excused, but finding no other precedent upon which to act, he asked if should accept these goods and send them on to Beijing or deal with them in Guangdong.\textsuperscript{56}

The use of the Ming \textit{Huidian} in these four areas of activity—administrative organization, administrative operations, ritual sacrifice, and foreign relations—helped define the organization of the Qing state. The \textit{Huidian} provided a standard for the organization of personnel and the proper activities officials undertook in the capacity of the social positions occupied. The \textit{Huidian} laid out the hierarchical structure of the state and how officials should operate within that structure, providing details on down to the number of corvee clerks to be had for each government department. Officials thus referenced the \textit{Huidian} as a reliable standard to clarify routine practices and make the system formal and more predictable. For ritual sacrifice and foreign affairs, the \textit{Huidian} performed a similar function for Qing officials. In short, the \textit{Huidian} offered a standard by which to organize actors hierarchically, and instructed in how to behave both individually and in relation to each other.

From this perspective, it is not surprising to find both Manchu and Han officials turning to the Ming \textit{Huidian} for instruction. Actors from both ethnic groups had an interest in furthering the rationalization of the state in a way that would create standards that would serve as a

\textsuperscript{55} See below.

\textsuperscript{56} SL, p. 511.1, Kx11.3.wushen.
reference to secure positions and rewards. Similarly, actors from both interest groups were embedded in the hierarchy, where they preferred clear regulations on the activities and benefits of the position and rank. The voice of Board of Li Manchu president Enggedei appears throughout the documentary evidence in his reference and reliance on the Ming *Huidian*, as do the voice of other Manchu actors. Similarly, Chinese officials turned to the *Huidian* to argue for clarification in the regulations and hierarchy and for standardized procedures. The real interest group championing the *Huidian* was the bureaucracy as a whole, for it helped express their interests. As the following sections show, misgivings would come from those who found the Ming *Huidian* lacking as a document to capture the differences of the Manchu state, and the emperor, whose patrimonial authority could only be limited by the rationalization of the administration.

**THE NEED FOR A QING HUIDIAN**

Despite their constant reference to the *Huidian*, Qing officials also found this Ming code to have acute shortcomings. It was old, for one—it was produced almost a hundred years prior by a different state with different issues and concerns. Society and politics had changed since then, and the Qing state was different from the Ming in both structure and organization—it had officials from multiple ethnic groups; it had a military system organized around permanent mobilization; it had different relations with different states. These were all issues that the Ming *Huidian* could not speak to, and which demanded revisions in a code of statutes. Most immediate, however, was the need to coordinate the Qing system of ranks, titles, and positions with a code that gave expression to the interests and ideals of Qing elites. This is seen across four fields of documentary evidence: general calls for a new *Huidian* with new codes reflective of the
Qing dynasty; the structure of the administration; the operations of the administration; and in foreign relations.

A new order and calls for a Qing Huidian

Calls for compiling a new *Huidian* began very early. In the mid-Tiancong years, just after the establishment of the six boards in 1631, a debate erupted over whether the Ming *Huidian* should be revised or not. On one side were those former Ming subjects advising Hong Taiji and his associates in setting up an administrative apparatus, who argued that a document like the *Huidian* consisted of “the laws and promulgations that only the sages can set.” For them, the regulations needed to be strictly adhered to and could not be changed. The structure of the state and its operations, they argued, depended on a comprehensive code and practice without deviation. The six boards followed the *Huidian*, after all, and the Chinese officials brought in to help manage and advise them took the *Huidian* as the standard of practice. To undermine the *Huidian* with changes and re-articulations of the code would compromise the administrative integrity and operations.

Rejecting the authority of the *Huidian*, others argued generally that regulations needed to change as the sociopolitical order changed, and specifically that Ming regulations were outdated for the Manchu project. These officials saw the need to revise the regulations and form an entirely new code suitable for the emerging Manchu state—to make a “Jin *Huidian*,” as Chinese

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57 The officials calling for these revisions and compilation were both Manchu and Chinese. As a group they originated from the northeast and had a worldview closer to the practices of the semi-nomadic peoples and frontier life of the region rather than the Ming controlled south. They included Ning Wanwo, Fan Wencheng, and Wei Xiangshu. For a discussion of their background see Wakeman, *The Great Enterprise*, 37-49.

58 This position was outlined by Ning Wanwo in a memorial that went on to attack such a position (TCZY 2.35a-b). It is also put forth in subsequent memorials by officials discussing the value of the Ming *Huidian*, as addressed above.
advisor and Hong Taiji confidant Ning Wanwo put it in reference to the name and codes of the Manchu state at the time, the Jin. Ning continued to press the point in a long memorial to Hong Taiji, arguing against doctrinalists, who held the Ming Huidian to be the definitive document upon which the Manchu state and society should be based. “The six boards in name and design followed the southerners [i.e. the Ming],” Ning wrote. “Because Manchu officials did not originally know the operations of these boards, we have Chinese officials manage them with reference to the Huidian.” He went on to point out that in actuality, Qing use of the Huidian was sporadic. “Some parts we use and it works; some parts do not work. Some parts are added to and some parts subtracted from.” In characterizing this selected use of the Ming Huidian, Ning called it “referencing the Chinese and considering the Jin [i.e. Manchu]” (canHan zhuoJin 參漢酌金). 59

The full formation of the Manchu state, Ning held, would rely on statutes drawn from both Chinese and Manchu institutions, which would come into being as the practices arose. “Everyday Manchu officials go before the khan and make reports. These practices and affairs become routine, and gradually they will become the system of China,” he said, arguing that this gives all the reason to put them down in a Huidian specific to the dynasty. “Someday we will have the southern territory; we must act without confusion” and have clear regulations for the administration and operation of the state.

The problem with the Ming Huidian, according to Ning, was that it was outdated and some of it inapplicable to the contemporary situation. “Although the Da Ming Huidian is a good book, our dynasty today should not follow it in its entirety. They [i.e. the Ming] ruled for two to three hundred years with borders spanning thousands of li, and with immeasurable finances,” all

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59 This was a phrase that appears sporadically throughout documents from the early Hong Taiji period. Officials used it in discussion about the formation of the early Qing state and political practices. See Tsai Sung-yin, “Huang Taiji shiqi de Hanguan,” esp. ch. 4.
of which stood in stark contrast to the young Manchu state controlling a very small territory in
the northeast and facing famine in the 1630s. For officials like Ning, regulations and practices
should be revised to reflect the situation and practices of the Qing situation. But even more so,
Ning argued, “Given that from Hongwu to today, the Huidian was added to, subtracted from, and
changed countless times, how is that now we do not even consider changing one character of this
Huidian?!” Not revising the Huidian to correspond to the changing world was absurd to Ning
and his allies. “Each dynasty of rulers must have a system for that dynasty.”

The fact that it would take another sixty years before Ning’s case for a Qing Huidian was acted
upon does not mean that calls for a new Huidian ceased. In fact, quite the opposite: they
intensified: throughout the Shunzhi and Kangxi reigns, officials continued to petition for the
production of a Qing Huidian. There are at least nine extant petitions for a new Huidian,
beginning with Ning’s in 1633. In 1648, Wei Xiangshu, then serving in the Board of Works,
wrote a long memorial arguing for the need for a new Qing specific Huidian. The next one
came in 1657 from a Board of War official, followed by two petitions at the middle and end of
1658 by censors from Henan and Fujian, respectively. In 1668, Wang Xi called for a
compilation of all the new regulations, and to put them together in a new Qing Huidian, in

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60 The Ning Wanwo memorial can be found in TCZY 2.35a-b.
61 GSA 006603-001, Sz5.11.
62 SL, p. 833.1.
63 SL, p. 916.2, 939.2.
64 QSG, p. 9694 liezhuang Wang Xi. 王熙.
1670, the Jiangnan circuit, frustrated with the lack of a Qing text memorialized with the suggestion.  

Throughout these petitions, officials argued the case that the sociopolitical organization of the Qing was different from the Ming, and that the regulations surrounding this organization needed to be expressed by Qing jurists in Qing—not Ming—code. “Reference and consider what is appropriate for the time,” wrote a Henan censor in 1658 in discussion of the Huidian. “Make corrections and put it together as a book, then print it and circulate it.” The Board of Li and the Censorate seconded this memorial, recommending that the suggestion be followed. At issue was both the idea that each dynasty should have its own set of codes, as Ning had articulated, and the fact that the Qing was constantly forming new regulations, which officials argued ought to be collected into a compilation and circulated.

These positions are well summed up in a 1648 memorial from Board of Works Supervising Secretary Wei Xiangshu. He argued at length for the need to compile a new Huidian as part of the formalization of the state and establishment of the dynasty. Doing so, he claimed, would “clarify the administration and the system of government.” Wei went on to lay out his argument for revising the Ming Huidian into one of the Qing’s own making.

The emperors and kings of old created a system and established laws. Each dynasty has changes and has made additions and subtractions [to these laws]. Our state was established five years ago, and now the rites and music are complete, the laws and regulations are renewed, the temples are glorious, and the dynasty will last for ten thousand years. If there is still something that needs fixing and which we find lacking, it is certainly the Huidian…Today all the government offices imitate it and use it in their practice. When a situation is pertinent, they reference it; when a situation differs they

65 SL, p. 446.1.

66 SL, p. 916.2, Sz15.5.yichou.
depart from it and consider something else. How can it be extensive enough? If we continue to use it when the situations are not appropriate, and do so without changing it, then it will not work for future generations.

The argument here was that the *Huidian* was an evolving document that contained the regulations and codes of a dynasty, and which would be revised by subsequent generations. As the sociopolitical order formed, so did the regulations to govern it. Having come into being, then, Wei said, it need to be standardized and set in code for officials to follow and the state to develop upon. He pointed out that new situations arise, for which the code needs to take account for, and only in this way can it continue to be pertinent for governance and social order. “In the process of establishing our dynasty, laws have not yet been standardized, and thus they cannot be shown to others or given permanency,” he wrote. The way to do so, of course, was “to order each government office to assess the previous generations, to consider the deliberations of Manchus and Chinese, and to compile these and send them on to the inner court. Then edit this and put it together as a book.” This book would be the *Huidian*.67

Forceful though Wei’s entreaty might have been, it did not spur any action in the compilation of a Qing book of statutes. What it did do, however, was highlight the need for new laws and regulations, which were further produced, although without any cohesive organization. Beginning in the late Shunzhi period, the documentary evidence shows officials discussing at length the growing amount of new code, which they argued should be collected into a Qing *Huidian*.68 In 1657, the first use of the name *Da Qing Huidian* appeared in a memorial from the

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67 GSA 006603, Sz5.11.

68 In addition to the cases discussed here also see SL, p. 916.2, Sz15.5.yichou; SL, p. 939.2, Sz15.11.dingyou; SL, p. 446.1, Kx9.5.binzi.
Supervising Secretary in the Military Office of Scrutiny, Jin Handing, who pointed out that new regulations and administrative precedents were constantly arising but still being implemented under the name of the old Ming Huidian. “There are new statutes and codes, but they still come out under the old name,” he wrote referring to the Ming Huidian. “These are not regulations that were set by one king to rule over others. Today we need to consider a new name: the Da Qing Huidian.”

The new regulations and precedents referred to were those issued and developed as new situations arose. Officials at this time began to recognize that when the Ming statutes failed to provide any direction, new codes were needed. These codes were issued according to the issue at hand, and sent to the appropriate department where they were held on file for implementation and enforcement. The issue for these officials calling for a Qing Huidian, then, was that the regulations be collected, compiled, edited, and put together in a single repository that would be called the Da Qing Huidian. To not do so—to not have all the statutes collected in a single publication that would circulate among all officials—invited confusion and inefficiency. A memorial from Board of Works president Wang Xi summed this up.

The Shunzhi emperor is industrious and devoted in his governing; the administrative affairs of all officials is detailed in code. In recent years, however, because admonishment has led to revisions, and each department has proposed changes in administration, reforms have been many and precedents have mounted. This has led to officials arbitrarily enacting one thing and not another.

Please order each department and all officials to look up all the precedents in effect. Any laws that have changed and have problems, change them back to what they

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69 Jin Handing 金漢鼎 hailed from Zhejiang and received his jinshi degree in 1649 (Sz6). His first posting was as magistrate in a county in Shaanxi. MQNAF, “金漢鼎”

70 SL, p. 833.1, Sz14.1.wuchen.

were before. Of those that are new, demand a detailed explanation of the reason. The rule will then be standardized.\textsuperscript{72}

\textit{Administrative organization}

One of the main shortcomings of the Ming \textit{Huidian} was that it was based on the Ming administrative structure, which was neither reflective of nor fully instructive for Qing governance. Most immediately, the Ming \textit{Huidian} offered no rules for the multiethnic composition of the Qing state. Unlike the ethnically homogenous Han Chinese Ming government, the Qing also employed Manchus, Mongols, and Hanjun in addition to Han Chinese, as well as other status groups such as household servants. These latter groups were awarded special treatment and consideration, and thus new rules were needed to account for their activity and privileges.

The Board of Personnel put this in concrete perspective around 1652, when it pointed out the fact that the Ming \textit{Huidian} was insufficient for staffing the government. “The \textit{Huidian} does not account for the Manchu system of officials,” the Board wrote, emphasizing that “each department has a certain number of Manchu, Mongol, and assistants of positions of high and low ranks.”\textsuperscript{73} These positions although already filled, still needed clear outline in the code, and a request was sent up to the inner court, where Grand Secretary Fan Wencheng worked on finding the proper translation of names for administrative positions. In a memorial on the translation office names, Fan listed eight Manchu positions and the corresponding Chinese, which, he said, “can be used in a revision of the \textit{Huidian}, as well as in memorials.”\textsuperscript{74}

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\textsuperscript{72} QSG, p. 9694, liezuan Wang Xi 王熙.
\textsuperscript{73} This issue is discussed at the beginning of a memorial by Fan Wencheng in 1652. See GSA 006609, Sz9.7.20.
\textsuperscript{74} GSA 006609, Sz9.7.20.
\end{flushright}
Qing officials here faced a very practical problem in their administration: they had more posts than people. In the early years, not only were they scrambling to fill positions, but also to find a consistent vocabulary to describe them, which accounts for why so many posts, titles, and positions in the early Qing bore Manchu transliterations.\(^{75}\) In addition to the posts of the non-Han Chinese officials, former Ming official Tan Qian also pointed out in 1656 that the *Huidian* lacked descriptions of a number of positions in the Hanlin Academy. Furthermore, he said, “The *Da Ming Huidian* does not record the duties of the inner court officials.”\(^ {76}\) All around, it seemed, the Ming *Huidian* came up short for the organization of the Qing administration.

**Administrative practice**

In the same way that the Ming *Huidian* fell short in accounting for the administrative organization of the Qing state, it also failed in many areas for use in the operations of the Qing state. The *Huidian* did not contain adequate regulations in those areas of the Qing administration that mirrored the areas of operation laid out in *Huidian*, as discussed in the previous section on the uses of the Ming *Huidian*. For each area of administrative activity that the *Huidian* was consulted upon, it was also found lacking and unable to account for the issue at hand. In administrative practice, the *Huidian* came up short in dealing with officials and in managing corruption.\(^ {77}\) In posthumous honors, the standard were found askew for the Qing system of ranks and positions. And the precedents in filial piety were found to either be dated and impractical, or completely lacking in application to Manchu practices.

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\(^{75}\) On this development see Elliott, *The Manchu Way*.

\(^{76}\) Tan Qian, *Beihai lu*, p. 312. 大明會典不載內臣職掌

\(^{77}\) There is also a case in 1654 of the need to include regulations on military pay and equipment for the banner system. The Board of Personnel requested the court revise the *Huidian* regulation with the banners in mind. GSA 121826, Sz11.2.3.
Administrative procedure. One of the main issues officials of the early Qing grappled with in running the state was standardized procedure for dealing with personnel problems. This ranged from appointments to corruption, many of the immediate situations for which the *Huidian* failed to address. In 1654, Fan Wencheng as director of the Hanlin Academy confronted a discrepancy in promotions and hirings, which was a reflection of the Ming *Huidian*. The Hanlin Academy as a department was in charge of promoting and hiring its own, while the Board of Personnel did it for all other officials. “We do not have a standardized system,” he memorialized and hinted at discontinuing the current practice, which was stipulated in the *Huidian*. Fan called for standardizing all promotions and assigning procedures under the Board of Personnel.\(^7^8\) Even with a single department in command of assignments, the *Huidian* continued to be at odds with the Qing administration. In 1660, the Board of War attempted to follow the *Huidian* in replacing imperial guards, but found that doing so would offend the Manchu system of ranks. If it filled the position according to Ming precedent, then the guard would be a lower rank than what the Manchu system of ranks demanded. The Shunzhi emperor replied, “The imperial procession guard all serve in the inner court and have a heavy responsibility. For Manchu officials they must have a rank of duke, earl, or count [i.e. above first rank].” With the *Huidian* under question, the matter was left unresolved in the interim and sent to a council for discussion.\(^7^9\)

Another issue that led to calls for a new *Huidian* were cases of corruption and administrative transgressions as a result of the lack of clear standards and administrative precedent. “Since the time of Yao and Shun, the means of organizing and managing the bureaucracy has not changed. Although the law has been transmitted, the Way relies on people

\(^7^8\) GSA 163987, Sz11.3.1.

\(^7^9\) SL, 1046.1, Sz17.5.gengchen.
doing it. If the regulations are correct then officials are upright. In taking the throne the most important act of the emperor is to set clearly the regulations,” memorialized Shanxi censor Shao Shibiao in 1652. Although new regulations had continued to be issued under Hong Taiji and the Shunzhi regents, the *Huidian* led to confusion. Shao demanded clarification in the issuing of new laws and procedures. “In consideration of what is recorded in the *Huidian*, and in consideration of the needs of the dynasty,” he wrote, “I have four proposals.” These proposals were to prosecute and prohibit certain behaviors among officials, including the punishment of officials who tolerate parties with adverse interests; the prosecution of corruption among those who bribe their superiors; the prohibition of the arbitrary replacement of inferiors by their superiors and the implementation of standards for appointments; and the prohibition of slander among officials. The enactment of these matters would help discipline the bureaucracy, according to Shao, and the issuing of regulation in place of the *Huidian* would help standardize administrative procedure.  

Almost a decade and a half later, however, the lack of clarity in administrative procedure continued to haunt the bureaucracy. In 1666, Palace Academy for the Advancement of Literature official Xiong Yifu memorialized on the corruption and exploitation occurring in the provinces by officials as a result of the lack of clear laws. He requested that the emperor investigate all the governors-general and governors, and to promote those with merit and excise those found to be corrupt. Then “reference the old regulations and consider what is suitable for the age and order

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80 GSA 088932, Sz9.9.
the compilation of a *Huidian*.”  

He emphasized again, “I beg that the council discuss a system and put together a *Huidian*. Superiors will follow the way and inferiors will adhere to the law.”

*Posthumous honors.* Posthumous honors were another shortcoming. Although the Ming *Huidian* provided a standard practice for granting posthumous honors and the funerals and sacrifices that were associated with those honors, it contained a number of important discrepancies, which Qing officials quickly pointed out. Tombstones, for one. The *Huidian* gave regulation on the size of the tombstone for the various ranks and positions, but it said nothing about the text that went on the tombstone. An official of the three inner courts memorialized that Ming examples included tombstones that had an official’s name and position, while others had the full text of his honors and patent, while still others had nothing written at all. More importantly, however, was the appropriate internment and ceremony for the various ranks. The problem with trying to follow the Ming *Huidian* to the letter was that the ranks and titles of the Ming did not correspond to those of the Qing. Or worse, they were not standardized to begin with. As an official from the Board of War put it in a memorial, “The funerary honors to be given to those who have died in battle as recorded in the *Huidian* are not uniform.” The memorialist continued to enumerate the default practice of the Qing, which included differentiated amounts of money for internment according to the position of the deceased military officer. An assistant brigade commander received 100 liang, for example, while a company commander got 80, a squad leader 60, and conscripts 30. “This has been the practice, but there is no uniform regulation. The situations are all different for dealing with the military dead. There should be deliberation on the most

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81 SL, p. 307.2-310.2, Kx6.6.jiawu.

82 QSG p. 9891, liezhuan 49, Xiong Yifu 熊赐履

appropriate differentiation for the funerary ceremony.” At issue for the Board of War here was to clarify the practices of internment for the different ranks and to set that down in law.\textsuperscript{84}

Positive regulations in 1660, drawn up and issued by the Board of Li, took steps in addressing this issue. Although not directed specifically towards the military dead, the regulations addressed the internment and ceremony for the hierarchy of ranks and positions. The nine stipulations laid out in the Board of Li promulgation used the \textit{Huidian} as a point of reference but often explicitly departed from it. The first regulation dealing with above-rank officials, for example, said to allow them a tomb according to the \textit{Huidian}, but gave differentiated amounts of money, sacrificial wine, and officials to offer sacrifice according to their rank. Furthermore, exceptions were built into the code, indicating that those with a particular honor or inherited rank could petition the emperor for further services. Some of the stipulations were based on the \textit{Huidian} in a similar manner, detailing that such and such ranks would receive tombs and ceremony according to the \textit{Huidian}. But others completely bypassed the \textit{Huidian}. For example, stipulations for those ranks and positions of lieutenant colonel, regiment colonel, senior bodyguard of rank adaha hafan, bureau directors and vice directors, and banner captains of rank batalabure hafan were manufactured anew, for they were all banner positions. If such an official died in battle he would receive a tomb and sacrifice.\textsuperscript{85}

\textit{Filial piety.} In the Shunzhi and Kangxi reigns, Board officials were inundated with requests to honor ancestors in ways that were not always in accord with the \textit{Huidian}. In some cases, the Boards insisted on following the \textit{Huidian}, as shown in the previous section, but in others they

\textsuperscript{84} GSA 163883, Sz9.12.11.

\textsuperscript{85} SL, p. 1034.2-1035.1, Sz17.4.wuzi.
opted to write new precedent. In 1654, for example, a Jiangxi circuit attendant requested that his birth mother also receive his existing rank and honors, even though she was a second wife. The Board of Personnel checked the *Huidian* and found that if the first wife of the father is still alive then any secondary wives cannot be honored. Based on the *Huidian*, the Board recommended not to grant the request. The Shunzhi emperor intervened, however, responding, “Although this is following the administrative system, the *Huidian* was edited the early Wanli years of the previous Ming and there were many codes that were not provided. Today in our dynasty’s ritual system, sons express their feelings and we should have precedents. Go and consider again.”

The regulation on the matter was subsequently changed and the Ming precedent scrapped.

Some years later, a similar situation arose in which Wang Xianza, a provincial administration commissioner under the Shanxi governor, requested that his honorary title be extended to his grandparents. The Board of Personnel checked the *Huidian* on extending honors to find that it was allowed only for capital officials. “But provincial and capital officials should be treated together as a single body,” the Board of Personnel wrote in deliberation, concluding, “Wang Xianza should be able to extend.” This judgement led to the changing of the precedent so that the same rights and privileges were given to all officials regardless of posting.

Further changes to mourning rites were also necessary, especially as it pertained to non-Han officials. Given that the Ming *Huidian* contained no code on how officials of the banners were supposed to mourn, a standard had to be created. In 1661, the Board of Personnel was

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86 SL, p. 636.2, Sz11.2.guiyou. The outcome of this case is unclear, and the regulations in the Kangxi *Huidian* remain obscure. On the one hand, the regulation follows the Ming, stating that if the first wife is alive then the birth mother cannot be bestowed with the title. But then it says that both the first wife and the birth mother can receive titles, while a stepmother cannot. KXHD 712.540. This was clarified in the Yongzhen *Huidian*, where the regulation was changed to echo Shunzhi’s sentiments quoted here to allow all mothers to receive the title. GXHDZL 2.834.

87 KXHD 712.535-548.

88 SL, p. 103.1-2, Kx1.1.dinghai.
ordered to look up the mourning regulation from the Taizu and Taizong eras, only to find that neither the Board of Personnel nor the Board of Li possessed any records of any such regulation. The only thing Board officials could dig up was a case from the third month of 1653, when the Guangdong censor took three years morning according to the *Huidian*, and a case from the sixth month of the same year when it was deemed inconvenient for Manchu, Mongol, and Hanjun officials to take leave from their posts for mourning. This informal practice had become the precedent over the past eight years. Given this situation, and under order to establish a standard, the Boards deliberated and determined that capital officials should continue to follow the existing practice of mourning for a month, no matter if Manchu, Mongol, or Hanjun. When this period was complete, they should return to their duties but continue to observe mourning rites when at home for three years. Those in the garrisons or for officials sent out to provincial posts, in case of a parent’s death they would follow the existing practice. If the parent was in the capital then the official would be allowed to return and given a half a year for mourning. This practice became the official regulation and was codified.  

The rejection of the Ming *Huidian* and formation of new rules of administrative operations was more than just a response to an evolving situations on the ground: it also helped shape the sociopolitical order. In the same way that the Ming *Huidian* was drawn upon to help form the hierarchical order, it was found lacking when the Qing and Ming systems of ranks and positions did not match, or when regulations contradicted and confused leading to malfeasance. In areas of administrative procedure, granting posthumous honors and rights, and official observance of mourning Qing officials found the Ming regulations insufficient to deal with their cases and

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89 SL, p. 87.1-2, Sz18.9.gengyin. For further discussion of mourning periods and the difference standards for Manchu and Han see Elliott, *The Manchu Way*, 206-207.
subsequently changed the regulations, which would become the new code when the Qing *Huidian* was issued in 1690. At the core of the changes was the need to account for the Manchu system of administration that would accommodate different ethnic groups, the banner system, and new positions. Practices needed to be standardized and regulations created.

*Foreign relations*

In foreign relations the Ming *Huidian* also came up short. By the early Kangxi reign, the Qing had firmly established itself in the region, attracting missions from states for which the *Huidian* contained no precedent. In 1663, for example, the Shaanxi governor-general reported that the monk Dang-ha-er (當哈爾佛僧) was coming to pay tribute. The Board of Li searched the *Huidian* for a precedent but found none. “But he is sincere and we should prepare to allow him tribute,” the board confirmed.90 A few years later, in 1668, the Board of War reported that other unnamed foreigners appeared on the coast wishing to offer tribute gifts and trade at the borders. Lacking any precedent, the case was sent to the Board of Li, which checked the *Huidian* but found no system of tribute or trade for the new comers, and thus referred to the Dutch trade in 1663 and the Siam trade in 1664. Because trading relations with both of these states ended in 1666, the Board recommended not to receive tribute from the foreigners in question, nor allow them to conduct trade.92 This decision was not made based on the Ming *Huidian*, however, for the Ming *Huidian* lacked any precedent and thus could provide no guidance for the Qing in this situation. Rather, the discussion of this matter shows that the Qing Board of Li referred to the

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90 It is unclear who he was or where he was coming from.

91 SL, p. 161.1-2, Kx2.10.jiazi.

92 SL, p. 354.1, Kx7.3.dingmao.
more recent cases of Qing dealings with foreign states. They had begun to form their own precedent and now built upon it.

New precedent was also created in existing foreign relations at the expense of the Ming Huidian. Late in 1668, for example, the Board of Li reported that Siam paid tribute to the Qing court but presented gifts that were not in accordance with the Huidian. The exchange and nature of relations between the Qing and Siam was supposed to follow the precedents laid out in the Ming Huidian, and the Board of Li requested that the Siam mission make up their shortcomings in the next tribute mission. Recognizing that “Siam is small and their goods and products come from other countries,” the Kangxi emperor said that it is “hard for them to adhere to the Huidian,” and excused them for the lack, changing the regulation so that in the future they would not need to offer such tribute. A similar development happened in 1673 with the tribute of Turfan, a state to the northeast of Shaanxi, in what is the eastern most part of present day Xinjiang. The ruler of the state asked if he should give tribute according to the old precedent in the Ming Huidian or if a new one had been set. The Board of Li pointed out that in 1656 they brought 324 horses as a tribute gift, which was then ordered to be reduced to 4 horses from the West and 10 Mongol horses for future tribute, while other items in the tribute were to continue to follow the Huidian, which included random items like camels, daggers, grapes, and saddles. This time, however, the emperor recognized that Turfan was “far and tribute hard,” and said that

93 ibid.
94 SL, p. 377.2, Kx7.11.yihai.
96 For a list of the original tribute items see KXHD 720.3718.
they only needed to bring horses and jade, but not the other things. This became the standard practice as was recorded in the Qing Huidian when it was finally compiled some twenty years later.

The shortcomings of the Ming Huidian resulted in the formation of new regulations, which officials continued to call to compile into a new Qing Huidian. In the Qing state, new regulations were needed in order to account of the positions of non-Han Chinese officials and for new positions in the administration. Similarly, the operations of this administration required new regulations in areas of procedure, posthumous honors, and filial piety that were in accord with contemporary practices among all ethnic groups of the Qing state. In foreign relations, the Qing also found the need to revise the Ming code to account for changing circumstances and to open new relations. Each of these areas reflected the interests of the Qing state in aligning code with the hierarchical organization of the sociopolitical order. Sometimes new code was required, at other times standardization of practices and unification of current code was needed. Throughout, however, there was an interplay among the formation of law and the development of the structure of the state. The hierarchy and its practices were linked with the regulations. The regulations and code expressed the nature of the political order.

Curiously, there are no discussions in the documentary evidence about the need for new code for ritual sacrifices and li. One might conclude that the Qing found no fault in the Ming ritual system and thus left it untouched. This was the position of former Ming official Tan Qian, who lived in Beijing in the Shunzhi period. But this is not the case. As Tan Qian himself argued

98 KXHD 720.3716-3718.
early in the Shunzhi reign, “it is a mistake to draw completely from the *Huidian*.” The fact is, the Qing also revised the codes for li in order to conform to their sociopolitical order, as discussed below.

**THE KANGXI HUIDIAN AND THE PROBLEM OF ORDER**

In 1684, Kangxi ordered the compilation of a Qing *Huidian*. There is little indication of why it was decided that the time had finally come for a new *Huidian*. No documents or records remain that discuss the logic behind the timing. Historians can but speculate on the reasoning for the date of the order. As discussed in the previous section, officials had petitioned three different emperors over the past fifty years for such a *Huidian* and received only more codes in return, but not a formalized compiled text. One possible explanation is that the end of hostilities ushered in new administrative mechanisms. The date of the edict does coincide with the end of military operations. In 1681, the three feudatories revolt was put down, and two years later the last of the anti-Qing aggressors holding out on Taiwan had finally surrendered. This left the Manchus in 1683 as the undisputed rulers of China, a position that would be further legitimized with a collection of statutes and laws. Furthermore, now that offices and personnel were not engaged in

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99 Tan Qian, *Beiyouji*, 412-413.

100 Emperors Hong Taiji, Shunzhi, and now Kangxi had resisted the complete codification of regulations despite calls from advisors and administrators. I have not seen any direct evidence on why this is the case. One postulation is that the compilation and publication of such codes would limit the patrimonial authority of the emperor and thus restrict his capacity to act and command political resources. The greater rationalization of the state drew tighter bounds around the authority of the ruler. Thus, it was always a challenge for the rulers of the agrarian bureaucracies to find a balance of the delegation of authority to political actors while still preserving their own capacity to rule without constraint. See Unger, *False Necessity*, 88-89, 298; Weber, *Economy and Society*, 1111-1148.

Future research could explore the growing complexities of the Kangxi reign and the need for formalization. It could look at the authority and capacity to act of the Shunzhi and early Kangxi emperors and make comparisons with the situation in the 1680s. The stabilization of politics after the Kangxi regency might also be a factor.

101 Expanded record keeping operations began about a decade earlier with the initiation of the court diaries (Qijuchu 起居注) in 1670 and the publication of the Zhongshu zhengkao 欽定中樞政考 in 1672.
wartime operations, the large number of officials necessary for collection and compilation could be spared.\textsuperscript{102}

Kangxi hints at these things in the front matter of the Qing \textit{Huidian}. In the edict ordering the compilation of the first \textit{Da Qing Huidian} Kangxi repeated many of the arguments made over the past fifty years on the need for a \textit{Huidian}: each dynasty needs to have its own laws and regulations, old precedents have been deemed unusable and new practices have been established, and officials are confused over the abundance of regulations scattered throughout the departments. Where he spends the most time, however, is in discussion of the growth of new regulations since the founding of the Qing, and the need to collect them in a single compilation of statutes, which will enable clarity of regulation and standardization of administration.

Taizu laid the basis for the great enterprise, establishing the scope and the scale. Taizong pacified with great effort and created standards to enable flourishing. Shizu united all and brought it to lasting completion. The administrative system has been set that is not without preparation for today in consideration of the past. [These accomplishments] are refined and with endless admiration. Since taking the throne I have followed their lead and respected their precedents. At times there have been additions and subtractions, which were only necessary because it was appropriate for the situation and done with the hope that it might achieve perfection. [Doing so] enabled officials to rely on what they know and not commit error. But the problem is that the many regulations are scattered throughout the various departments. It is hard for officials to consult and for people to know what to do.

For this reason, the emperor argued, a \textit{Huidian} was necessary and he ordered all departments to assign people to begin to collect their departments’ regulations and compile a \textit{Huidian}.\textsuperscript{103}

\textsuperscript{102} The list of personnel involved in the compilation of the Kangxi \textit{Huidian} numbers over seventy, and the memorials calling for the compilation of a Qing \textit{Huidian} often outlined a process that included assigning officials in each department to collect regulations. For a list of officials see Li Liuwen, “Da Qing Huidian yanjiu” (Henan University, 2003), 12-13.

\textsuperscript{103} This edict is reproduced at the beginning of the KXHD (711.1-2) and in the \textit{Shilu} (SL, p. 195.2-196.1, Kx23.5.4).
From start to finish, the entire process of compilation and editing took six years. Over seventy editors were listed in the front of the *Huidian*, but many more were involved in the process. Each board, internal office, and government department devoted personnel to collecting the regulations and orders issued over the past sixty years, sifting through them, and organizing them in a coherent way that would give meaning to coherent set of statutes to follow for administrative procedure. The preface of the Qianlong edition of the Qing *Huidian* explained the process as follows:

In the capital, all the departments large and small must send a senior official to choose a capable bureau official to sift through all the records. They work in cooperation with officials in the department to organize and date the particular item for inclusion in the *Huidian*. This is then sent out.\(^\text{104}\)

The documents drawn upon were mainly the internal documents and papers of each department, but also included official state records, memorials, and other published books and manuals.\(^\text{105}\) The aim here was to be comprehensive and complete in the collection of all the precedents and statutes of the Qing over the past sixty years, and then to record the most relevant and instrumental in the text. In this way, the Qing *Huidian* was a carefully constructed document that drew upon its own precedents and practices with a conscious design in the organization of the Qing state. Despite the consistent structure and contrary to what the historiography has said, the Qing *Huidian* was not copied from the Ming.

\(^{104}\) QLHDZL, preface.

The Kangxi emperor’s preface to the *Huidian* adroitly expressed the interests and ideals of the Qing state and the role of the *Huidian* in representing them. This preface can be divided into three different discussions. The first is on the importance of regulations in the organization and management of a state. The second is on the nature of those regulations and the work they do. The third takes up the need to adapt the general organizing principles to the particular sociopolitical situation and reformulate the code.\textsuperscript{106}

Whereas the Ming emperors in their prefaces made efforts to link their *Huidian* with the concept of universal order followed by arguments for its codification,\textsuperscript{107} Kangxi emphasized the need for order through positive regulation, which was translated into code. “Since ancient times,” he began in opening, “in order to manage affairs and govern, there is not one emperor who did not establish regulations.” It was through regulations, he argued, that order could be achieved and administrative action formalized. “If you set up a central track, then everything will become easy and all can follow it. If you set up laws, then people can act accordingly.” Such regulations then needed to be put into law that would set the standard for all operations and social and political activity. “The way to manage the state,” he said, “is to set up the statutes. This is the only way.” This is what the kings of old did, he said, and it is what the founders of each dynasty did, ensuring regularity and prosperity. For Kangxi here, law was the proven means to govern properly and efficiently. It was necessary for the sovereign to create it and to use it to rule by.

In the second discussion, Kangxi emphasized the nature of these regulations and how they worked. He began by pointing to the *Shangshu* and *Zhouli* as examples of code, and went on to emphasize the creation of the system of nine ranks by Yao and Shun, and the six official

\textsuperscript{106} This division is my own reading into the preface of the KXHD. The text can be found in the opening pages of the Kangxi *Huidian*. KXHD 711.1-8.

\textsuperscript{107} There are prefaces for each of the four *Huidian* produced in the Ming. Although only two of the Ming *Huidian* are extant, all four prefaces are reproduced in the Wanli-era *Huidian*. See WLHD, p. 1-8.
positions set up in the Zhou through which administrative tasks and duties were assigned, whereby “responsibilities and activities were clear, and all was in order.” These aspects of administrative organization and discipline lay at the heart of the law, according to Kangxi, for these things were transmitted in administrative regulations and code that had been drawn up by subsequent dynasties and which formed the basis of the Ming Huidian. The foundation of government, it was here argued, was a hierarchical order with a clear organization of officials who were assigned specific areas of responsibility and duties that were performed according to formal standards. Although this was articulated in the Kangxi preface as arising out of the tradition of regulation and codification, the fact is that the Qing Huidian comprised the specific ideals of the Qing state, as this dissertation discusses.

The code was not divine law, however. It was not inherited from the sages and imitated by contemporaries. Rather, as Kangxi pointed out in the preface, the code was created by men and it developed over time. The entire preface has a historical perspective, which was adopted as a means of legitimization of the Qing. Beginning with the opening lines about kings in ancient times establishing regulations, and on down to a narrative of the transmission of the regulations of social and political order, which changed along the way, the preface casts the Qing as the legitimate inheritors of imperial rule. He noted that the Zhouli served as the inspiration for the Tang Liudian and the Song Huiyao, but was transformed by these two documents to fit the needs of the respective dynasties. Similarly, he recognized that the Ming continued to reference these works as it made the Huidian. “Although one generation after another has made codes, they are not completely the same. The details have to change in order to modify according to the situation.” The Qing had a history, he said, which guided the creation of new regulations and order that would be set forth as law. Kangxi outlined the roles of Nurhaci, who “suppressed
unrest and brought order to the land through the making of new laws and regulations;” Hong Taiji, who “built off of this foundation, putting all affairs in order;” and Shunzhi, who “brought harmony.” The formation of the regulations and formalized practices of the Qing that have emerged over the years, Kangxi argued, were pulled together so that “all are recorded consistently and well organized.” With the completion of the Qing *Huidian*, Kangxi boasted the codes to be “more detailed than any previous dynasty.” More so, they were not copied or compiled from history, but “each has been made carefully and recorded dutifully without aims of just decoration or means of extravagance.”

This discussion in the Qing *Huidian* preface gave expression to ideals of the state that the code would represent. They outlined the understanding of the importance of a code in organizing sociopolitical order, that the nature of this order lay in a system of hierarchical ranks and positions, and that these would be manufactured anew by each dynasty to fit its social and historical circumstances. The Qing *Huidian* did this. It was a compilation of Qing practices and regulations that came into being in tandem with the sociopolitical order. And, as the next section shows, it departed from the Ming.

**THE KANGXI *HUIDIAN* VS. THE WANLI *HUIDIAN***

The Kangxi *Da Qing Huidian* is based on the *Da Ming Huidian* edition that was commissioned and published in the Wanli reign (1572-1620). From its name, to the organization of its content, the Kangxi *Huidian* took the Ming *Huidian* as its inspiration and used the code as a template. Kangxi made this explicit in his preface when he traced the genealogy of the *Huidian* from the *Zhouli* to the *Tang Liudian* and *Song Huiyao*. He said the Ming compiled their codes and called it
the *Huidian*, which his dynasty would also do, along with adopting the same name.\(^{108}\) The Qing similarly followed the Ming in organizing it according to the six boards and administrative departments, as well as in titling the sections and subsections according to the activities of the department in question with similar titles as those of the Ming. Indeed, a superficial glance would easily allow one to mistake the Qing *Huidian* for a copy of the Ming *Huidian* with only the name of the dynasty changed.\(^{109}\)

The following tables map out the contents of the Ming Wanli *Huidian* and Qing Kangxi *Huidian* side by side. The first table (5.1) shows the basic structure of the two *Huidian*. Both of them were organized around the regulations pertaining to the operations of the six boards. Each *Huidian* opens with one volume (juan) on the Court of the Imperial Clan and then continue with discussions of the regulations of each board. The only significant structural difference between the two is that the Qing edition has a volume for the Grand Secretariat, whereas the Ming has no code for this office because it had no such office.

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<th>Ming</th>
<th>Qing</th>
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**Table 5.1**

\(^{108}\) The Manchu language edition of this Huidian also used the name Huidian, transliterating it into Manchu.

\(^{109}\) Such a mistake is not uncommon. Consider the representative statement by van der Sprenkel: “The codes of the Ch’ing dynasty were closely modeled on those of their immediate predecessors, the Ming, which themselves reproduced features of earlier dynasties—especially the Sung—for which the T’ang codes were the basic model.” Sybille van der Sprenkel, *Legal Institutions in Manchu China: A Sociological Analysis* (London: Athlone Press, 1962), 56. More recently and with greater emphasis, Zhang Jinfan makes this case in his magnum opus on Chinese law, *The Tradition and Modern Transition of Chinese Law*, especially see pp. 283-285. Contrary to these positions, I show that the Qing effectively kept the structure of the legal document but changed the content.
The categorization of the duties of the boards are also similar. For each board, numerous volumes were devoted to the organizational structure of the board, as well as to the activities and operations of the various departments and officials under its command. For example, the Board of Li had four departments, each of which was in charge of different aspects of the functions of the Board of Li. Table 5.2 shows how the Huidian was divided under the Board of Li section.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>儀制司</td>
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<tr>
<td>祭祀清吏司</td>
<td>祠祭司</td>
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<tr>
<td>主客清吏司</td>
<td>主客司</td>
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<tr>
<td>精膳清吏司</td>
<td>精膳司</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2

For each of these departments, the Huidian further outlined duties and operations. Thus, the activities of the Ceremonies Department (Yizhi si 儀制司) of the Board of Li were divided into categories and stipulated in code. Table 5.3 shows how this was organized in each of the Huidian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ming</th>
<th>Qing</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Juan #</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>朝賀</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>朝儀</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>冊立</td>
<td>46-48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>皇子誕生儀, 皇子命名儀, 皇女誕生, 皇</td>
<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>女命名</td>
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<td>上尊號</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>耕籍, 視學</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>經筵, 東宮出閣講學儀, 諸王讀書</td>
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From these three tables, the contents of the Ming and Qing *Huidan* looking strikingly similar. At each of these three layers, the Qing *Huidan* appears to take the structure of the Ming *Huidan* as its model for organizing its administrative code and rules of the operation of the bureaucracy. At the first layer—the general structure of the book—both the Ming and Qing took the six boards as the basis of the administration and the production and implementation of code. The only difference at this layer is the Qing insertion of a volume for the Grand Secretariat. At the second layer—the categorization of the duties, activities, and responsibilities of the six boards—both of the texts divide code according to the various departments under each board. In the same way that the Qing followed the Ming bureaucratic organization of the six boards, the structure of the Qing administrative departments also mirrored the Ming departments. Thus, there was no
difference between the two *Huidian* at the second layer. The first substantively observable difference is at the third layer, that of the content of the duties and activities of the departments. Foremost, there are almost ten times as many volumes in the Ming Wanli *Huidian* as there are in the Kangxi edition. Furthermore, in some places, a different arrangement gave primacy to some activities over others, and some of the volume titles differed. But these differences are cosmetic at best—they are the kind of differences seen across different editions of the *Huidian* of the same dynasty. 110 The Wanli *Huidian*, for example, cut some of the sections on the court ceremony from the earlier Zhengde edition and added others. 111 Likewise, the Yongzheng edition has twice as many volumes for the ceremonies department as does the Kangxi edition. Despite these differences between the Ming and Qing editions at the third layer, they end up being minor, and the corresponding *Huidian* appear more similar than distinct.

There is a fourth layer, however, which is the foundational layer of the *Huidian*. This layer is the content itself. Although the structures are similar, what lies beneath and fills them in diverge in a way to reflect the different interpretations of li by each dynasty and the corresponding sociopolitical organizations. Indeed, digging into the content confirms the differences alluded to by Kangxi in the preface and advocated for by memorialists over the years. Qing codes express an administrative and political organization unique to the Qing, and representative of the political realities of the seventeenth-century Manchu state. A close comparison of the two texts on the position of the emperor, the nature of the hierarchy, and the role of the bureaucratic actors draws out the distinction in the codes and the respective states. This is clearly seen in those areas of jurisdiction of the Board of Li and the practice of li. To

110 For a comparison of the different Ming *Huidian* and their differences see Yuan Ruiqin, “Da Ming Huidian” yanjiu.

111 See WLHD, p. 817-839 and ZDHD, p. 487-506.
explore this in detail, it will be helpful to look more closely at a subject visited in chapter 2, the New Year’s Day ceremony. Rather than focus on the Qing politics behind the transformation of the ritual, however, the sections below compare and contrast the Ming and Qing New Year’s Day ceremonies, thereby highlighting the acute differences in the nature of the codes and the organization of the respective political orders.

**The New Year’s Day ceremony**

Both the Ming and Qing *Huidian* gave primacy of place to the New Year’s Day ceremony. This ceremony is among the first ceremonies of the first section of the Board of Li chapter, which is the largest chapter in the *Huidian*. As the main ceremony of the three grand ceremonies, the New Year’s Day ceremony was one of the most important activities of the state, bringing together emperor and officials in observance and sacrifice on the first day of the first lunar month of every year. In order to highlight the differences, the following summarizes the Ming and Qing ceremonies as detailed in the respective *Huidian* accompanied by individual analysis of the components of the ceremony. This is followed by some reflections on the differences and the meaning.

*The Ming* Huidian. The Ming *Huidian* account of the Ming New Year’s Day ceremony opens with ceremonial preparations. On the last day of the outgoing year, officials from the Seals Office set up the imperial throne in the Fengtian Palace. They placed the seals table to the east of the throne and the incense table to the south of the crimson stairs. The Court of State Ceremonial (Honglusi 鴻臚寺) set up two placard tables outside the eastern door of the hall, and to the left

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112 The following summary is from the accounts in DMHD 2.803-807.
and right of the Crimson Stairs Board of Li officials set up eight tables for tribute gifts from foreign states. The court astronomer set up a drum to keep time in the Wen tower, and the music department arranged instruments facing north in the eastern and western halls of the Fengtian Palace.

On the day of the New Year, officials from the imperial bodyguard stood holding the ritual instruments of parasols, banners, and weapons on the crimson stairs and to the east and west of the courtyard. They set up fans to the east and west of the hall and lined up carts facing north along the route. The soldiers of the imperial insignia guard lined up in full armor outside the Wumen gate, the Fengtian gate, and in the east and west of the Crimson Courtyard. The standard-bearer guard set up a gold drum outside the Wumen gate and lined up with banners outside the Fengtian gate. Warhorses were brought in and lined up, along with trained elephants and rhinoceroses.

Three distinct beats of the drum signaled three different stages of action. On the first beat, officials in their court dress and foreign embassies grouped themselves according to rank outside the Wumen gate. On the second beat, they bowed and entered through the side gates to the right and left of the main gate, and stood in sequence in the courtyard facing north. The drum then beat a third time, signaling for outer court officials to wait, and for inner court officials to kneel and report that all was prepared. The emperor then entered and sat elevated in his cap and gown. The music stopped.

At this point, all officials in full ceremonial regalia and dress were lined up in formation by rank inside the palace. The emperor was seated at the head of the arrangement, and ceremonial officials announced that the formal rites were ready to begin. The emperor was driven around the hall in a palanquin in front of all the officials, who were instructed to bow five
times and then return to stand in their formation. Music played and the emperor made his way to
the throne set up at the Fengtian Palace. Once seated, the emperor held audience with officials
and foreign guests coming through in turn to pay their respects and offer congratulations. These
proceedings were accompanied by music and organized prostration. Ceremonial officials then
called for the music to end and for officials to bow four times, to rise, and stand in formation.

Announcements of the imperial regulations followed. A proclamation carrier knelt before
the emperor and memorialized the regulations of the state. Having received confirmation, he rose
and exited through the east gate on the east side taking the eastern stairs, then stood facing west.
He called out that he had the regulations, and announcers called for all officials to kneel. The
proclamation carrier then announced the regulations. When finished, all officials prostrated and
the grand ceremony music played. The officials rose and stood at attention, and the music
stopped. Dances then commenced, after which officials were ordered to clasp their hands; when
promoted they called out “wansui.” Prompted again they called out “wansui.” On the third
prompting they called out “wan-wansui.” The music played, officials performed four bows, and
the music stopped.

This sequence completed the ceremonial activity. The Court of State Ceremonial chief
minister knelt before the emperor and reported that the ritual was finished. Music played in the
tune of peace and the emperor descended from the throne and into the palanquin to take his exit.
The music stopped and all the officials then exited in formation.\textsuperscript{113}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{113} In 1537, the emperor changed clothes and then viewed horses that were given in tribute. DMHD 2.804.}
Analysis. This summary of the Ming New Year’s Day ceremony is distilled from layers upon layers of description and detail laid out across fifteen pages in the Wanli Huidian. For analytical purposes, the ceremony can be broken down into eight essential parts:

1. Preparation and set up the day before
2. Arrangement of personnel and ritual implements on the day of
3. Three drum calls to bring officials to the gate, usher them into the courtyard, and signal the entrance of the emperor
4. The parading of the emperor and bowing of officials
5. Imperial audience
6. Announcement of state regulations
7. Celebratory dance and calling out “long live the emperor”
8. The withdraw of the emperor and officials

Each of these parts involved extensive ceremonial preparation and procedure, all of which was explicated in the utmost detail. Take for example the description of the arrangement and event on the beating of the first two drums (corresponding to the third point in the list):

On the first sound of the drum, all officials gather outside the Wu gate garbed in their court dress. On the second drum, the groups of officials and all other officials, the placard attendees, and the four foreign embassies are lead through the left and right side gates into the courtyard to stand in sequence. One official from the Directorate of Astronomy stands under the Wen building at dawn facing west. Six generals from the imperial guard stand in the south of the hall facing north. Four generals stand at the four corners of the stairs and face each other east and west. Four generals of the excess guard split up as they are called to areas of the palace stairs and stand in the left and right passageways of the courtyard facing north. Twenty-four honored imperial bodyguards are to the south of the stairs and six to the north, all face each other east and west.

Arrange the tribute gifts. One deputy Court of State Ceremony goes to the tribute gift table. Sixteen Court of State Ceremony ushers are organized in groups in the left and right passages of the stairs. Twelve outside heralds of the Court of State Ceremony officials stand on the stairs and in the east and west of the courtyard. Twelve imperial censors stand in the east and west of the courtyard. Outside the center gate of the hall, six
attendants of the imperial guard battalion, four deputies from Court of Imperial Entertainments, two ushers, and four relay heralds of the imperial guard battalion stand facing each other east and west. Two officials lead the placard audiences and two organizers stand to the left and right of the placard table. Three service guards stand facing each other east and west inside the hall. One imperial guardsman stands to the right of the curtain facing east. Two personnel from the battalion stand under the curtain facing each other left and right. After rolling up the curtain they hasten out the hall gate. Each stand in their appropriate place and wait.\textsuperscript{114}

What is clear from this passage—and the other ritual activities, which are discussed in similar detail throughout the rest of the ceremonial statute—is the attention to the position of people and their placing in the ceremony. Officials, personnel, and visitors are organized into appropriate groups and led in a highly organized fashion into the courtyard where they continue to stand in their proper ranks. The \textit{Huidian} details the lineup of supporting officials in the ceremony and who should be placed where. In fact, the action in the text is concentrated on the arrangement and not the movement—the only movement taking place in the passage above is the entrance of the processions, the leading of the placard audiences, and the rolling up of the curtain. (This in contrast to the early Qing ceremony, which as will be seen, was very focused on the movement of actors and gave less emphasis to their arrangement and position.)

\textsuperscript{114} DMHD 2.805. 豆初劏。百官具朝服齊班于午門外。墨次劏。引班官引百官并進表人員、及四夷人等、次第由左右掖門入、詣丹墀序立。欽天監雞唱官司晨一員于文樓下、西向。錦衣衛將軍六員于殿內之南、北向。將軍四員于丹陛四隅、東西相向。其餘侍衛將軍、各分立于殿陛等處如儀鳴鞭四 于于丹墀中道左右北向。金吾等衛護衛官二 十四員于丹陛之南、六員于丹墀之北、俱東西相向。陳設方物、鴻臚寺司賓署丞一員、從方物案、鴻臚寺序班十六員于丹陛中道左右。外賛鴻臚寺鳴贊等官十二員于丹陛、及丹墀東西。糾儀御史十二員于丹墀之東西。殿前侍班錦衣衛千戶六員、光祿寺署官四員、序班二員、傳呼鳴鞭錦衣衛百戶四員、俱于殿中門外、東西相向。導表六科都給事中二員、序班二員于表案左右。掌領侍衛官三員于殿內東西相向。錦衣衛正直指揮一員于欄右、東向。百戶二員于欄下、左右相向。捲簾畢、即趨出殿門外各自 豫立以俟。
In the Qing Huidian. The Qing Huidian account of the Qing New Year’s Day ceremony begins with the emperor.\textsuperscript{115} As outlined in chapter 2, at dawn the emperor would lead the imperial relatives and senior officials to the Manchu shamanic shrine outside of the palace, where they would offer sacrifice and kowtow to Heaven. The emperor and officials would then return to the palace, and the imperial relatives from the mainline would perform the Manchu rite of three genuflections and nine prostrations in front of the ancestor placards. All ranking Manchu personnel from the imperial relatives to the imperial bodyguard would then accompany the emperor to visit the empress dowager in her quarters and perform rites in respect to her. They then returned to the palace, where the staging began.

In preparation for the ritual, ritual instruments were erected and officials were put into place radiating outwards according to rank. The front of the Taihedian was decorated with parasols, fans, and ritual weapons. The smaller imperial carriage for use in the inner court was placed outside of the Taihedian, and the larger carriage for inner court use was placed outside the Wumen gate. Tame elephants were placed to the south of the carriage, and horses set up to the right and left of the stairs facing each other. The music office set up its instruments under the eastern and western eaves of the Taihedian,\textsuperscript{116} and the Board of Li placed a yellow table under the eastern eaves. All ranked imperial relatives gathered at the Taihemen gate in their court dress, while all titled Manchu officials who did not descend from the original banner owners (weiru bafen 未入八分) gathered outside the Wumen gate in their court dress. All other officials followed Board of Li officials through the eastern Chang’anmen gate to the eastern Tiananmen

\textsuperscript{115} This summary of the Qing New Year’s Day ceremony is based on precedents from the Chongde, Shunzhi, and Kangxi reigns. See KXHD 715.1917-1931.

\textsuperscript{116} On the li of music in the Qing and the role of music in Qing rituals see Qiu Yuanyuan, Qingqianqi Gongting Liyue Yanjiu (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2012).
gate and lined up outside the Wumen gate. They then entered the eastern Wumen gate to proceed to the front of the Taihedian. The Court of State Ceremonial led the imperial relatives to the crimson stairs at the Taihedian to take their places, and then led the other officials from the east and west. They lined up in ranks in the wings. The Koreans, Mongols, and other foreign missions were then led through the western gate and placed in formation.

With all officials lined up and in formation, the court astronomer then announced the time from the Qianqingmen gate, and the Court of State Ceremonial invited the emperor to emerge. The emperor appeared in his ritual clothes and proceeded to the Zhonghedian. As he did so, the Senior Assistant Chamberlain of the Imperial Bodyguard and other imperial guardsmen, along with officials from the Board of Li, Court of Colonial Affairs, and Censorate performed the three genuflections and nine prostrations from their places in line. As the emperor left the Zhonghedian to travel to the Taihedian music played. When he entered the Taihedian and ascended the throne, the music stopped. The court herald called for order and all the ranking imperial relatives and titled nobility led the other officials in bowing in place. There was a call to enter and kneel, and all knelt. There was a call to make announcements from the congratulatory text, and officials took the texts and presented them to the throne. Music played. There was a call to kneel and kowtow, and the ranking imperial relatives performed the three genuflections and nine prostrations. Next, the banner generals led their banner officials in lining up according to banner ranking. They bowed in place and performed their kowtows. They were followed by the Koreans, Mongols, and other foreign missions in kowtowing to the emperor. When the rites were performed, music played. As the rite ended, the music ceased, and the supplicants returned to their place in formation.
In the Chongde and Shunzhi era practices of the ceremony, the emperor held a banquet for the ranked imperial relatives. After the banquet, the emperor returned to the palace and then the relatives and officials dispersed. This practice appears to have been discontinued in the Kangxi era. In the Kangxi revision of the code, the ceremony ended after the kowtowing. At that point, music played and the emperor returned to the palace as the officials bowed and kowtowed. The music stopped and the officials exited in formation according to their ranks.

Analysis. For the Qing ceremony, the Qing Huidian marks the positions of power. At the center was the emperor, while the imperial relatives, Manchu officials, and other groups were always in subservient positions. Not only were these groups placed in inferior positions, but they were specifically mentioned in relation to the emperor and constantly demarcated as a status that performed acts in recognition of imperial authority. From the first act of being led by the emperor to worship, to the last act of sending him off, these groups were forced to follow and bow. Here the ritual was very much about asserting the authority of the emperor over other interest groups within society.

In this analysis, there are four parts to the Qing New Year’s Day ceremony:

1. The emperor leading the imperial relatives and high officials to sacrifice or pay reverence at the Manchu shrine, to the imperial ancestors, and to the empress dowager
2. The staging of officials in respect to the imperial relatives
3. The seating of the emperor on the throne and his reception of subservience
4. Closure (either with banquet or the emperor’s withdraw)

All of these parts were fairly straightforward and the Huidian wasted few words to get to the heart of the matter: the position and authority of the emperor. Consider the passage on the seating of the emperor and the supplication offered (point three in the list):
An inner court official invites the emperor to ascend the hall. The emperor in his ritual regalia proceeds to the hall. Music plays and the emperor ascends to the throne. The music stops. The ceremonial assistant organizes officials into their groups and calls for them to enter and prostrate. The princes, beile, beizi, and dukes bow in their places and prostrate. The ceremonial assistant calls for announcements and an inner court official respectfully presents the announcements to a reader who kneels and reads them under the eastern eaves of the hall. The Ceremonial Assistant calls to kowtow. Music plays and the imperial relatives perform the three genuflections and nine prostrations. The music stops. Next, the banner commanders of the eight banners in order of the banner rankings lead their officials into ritual position and perform the three genuflections and nine prostrations. Next the Korean prince leads his ministers in presenting a memorial. Next, the foreign princes and beile each lead their officials to present memorials. These are all received by an inner court official and offered to a reader who kneels and announces them. Each party then does the three genuflections and nine prostrations. While they are doing the rite music plays. When they finish the rite, the music stops and each returns to their original position.

Like much of the ceremony, the emperor is front and center. He is the main actor and through it all part of the activity. Even when others are acting, he is the focus of attention, either on the throne or the recipient of announcements and memorials. The other actors line up on the emperor and they prostrate before him. Furthermore, the actors are always stratified into ranks and positions. This is not surprising in itself, for such is the nature of li, and it is prominent in the Ming ceremony as well. But what is significant is that the stratification is based on the imperial relatives and high Manchu officials, not the administrative bureaucracy. The specific titles, ranks, and positions are always the princes, the beile, and the other beyond-rank titles. They are the elite Manchu institutions of the imperial bodyguards. When the bureaucracy is mentioned at all, it is done so only generally as the “hundred officials” (bai guan).

117 KXHD 715.1918-1919.
Comparison

There are two key areas of difference reflected in these two codes on the New Year’s Day ceremony: the role of the emperor and the organization of the hierarchy. In the Ming ceremony, the emperor does not appear until very late in the description. The first half of the code is devoted to the details of preparation and the positioning and activity of the other actors. Not until all this is in place does the emperor make his appearance, and even then it is only as a secondary actor—almost as a prop in an elaborate ceremony put on for the sake of propriety. The preparations are made, which allow the emperor to appear and sit. Even the reception of imperial audience appears as a minor point in a much larger ritual. The only act required of the emperor in this description is to grant confirmation of the state regulations, which comes as more as a formality rather than a conscious deliberation done with agency. The emperor is swept along in the proceedings, appearing as just another necessary component in a complex ceremony.

Contrast this to the Qing code, where the entire ceremony is about the emperor. The description of the ceremony opens with the emperor leading others in sacrifice; he is at the head of the ritual and the focus of all action. The emperor here is the master of the ceremony. More so, he is first depicted as a charismatic leader, informally at the head of a group that follows him in three different activities: sacrificing at the Manchu shrine, praying to the ancestors, and paying respects to the empress dowager. In these opening the acts the emperor was cast as a patrimonial figure to whom others gave their personal loyalty. Although later in the ceremony this role of charismatic leader is switched for one of a sovereign over a formal hierarchy, the focus of attention remains the same. Even the preparation stage is as much about preparing for the entrance of the emperor as it is about the preparation for the ceremony and the organization of the actors. The ritual instruments and actors are put in place for the moment when the court
astronomer announced that the time was right for the emperor to emerge. When the emperor did re-emerge on the scene it was always as the focus of the ceremony, with actors constantly offering subservience to him. At each step his position was one of authority over others. Unlike the Ming emperor, the Qing sovereign was not a figurehead or prop in a larger ceremony. Rather, in the Qing ceremony, the emperor was the ceremony.

To further illustrate this contrast, take the role of the court astronomer. In the Ming ceremony he controlled the time of the drum to mark distinct ritual events. The first two beats of the drum signaled to officials to organize themselves and to enter. Even the third beat was not a signal directly to the emperor, but rather for the court officials to report that the emperor could now enter. In the Qing ceremony, by contrast, the court astronomer kept time for the emperor. His role is to mark the proper time and to make the announcement, after which the emperor emerged. In the case of the Ming, the astronomer is part of a ceremony organized around the bureaucracy in which the sovereign appears as another actor within, whereas in the Qing he is in service of a sovereign.

The second point of difference between these two texts is the nature and composition of the hierarchy. Put simply, the contrast was one of the professional bureaucracy in the Ming versus the imperial relatives in the Qing. The ceremony and the code of the Ming were concerned with the organization, operation, and formalization of the bureaucratic officials. The Ming ceremony emphasized the positions of the officials. This is clarified in a late Ming ritual manuscript, *Ni lizhi*, or draft ritual gazetteer, which mirrors the Ming *Huidian*.¹¹⁸ Marginalia at the beginning of the text comments on the New Year’s Day ceremony and stretches across the

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¹¹⁸ *Ni lizhi 播禮志* (c1642). This work is an anonymous manuscript on Ming ritual practices that largely follows the *Huidian* in structure and general content. It can be found in the rare books reading room of the National Central Library, Taipei.
top for the next seven pages, discussing the sequential order of officials participating in the ritual.

Civil officials of the first and second rank stand in the pathway and bow east. Each changes position to again face north and go to the west. Military officials of the first and second rank stand in the pathway and bow west. Each changes position to again face north and go to the east. Civil officials of rank three and above stand to the west of the stair passageway and bow. Each changes position to again face north and go east. Civil and military officials separate into eighteen ranks [and line up to kowtow]. The first group is officials of rank 1a. The second group, officials of rank 1b. The third group, rank 2a. The fourth group, rank 2b. The fifth group, 3a...[and so on and so forth up to 9b.]\(^{119}\)

Such evidence gives a good indication of the practice of the ceremony, and the importance the Ming placed on these kinds of political relations. Of greatest concern to the Ming, it seems, was the organization of its hierarchy along the lines of the bureaucratic positions.

This is not to say that the Qing were unconcerned with the organization of its professional bureaucracy—as chapter 7 will show, the regulation and codification of administration positions and activities was a large part of Qing state-making activity—rather, what the Qing *Huidian* reflects in the section on the New Year’s Day ceremony is an overt concern with another group: the imperial relatives. The actors performing the rituals throughout the Qing ceremony were mainly the imperial relatives. The princes, beile, and dukes were the high titles of the brothers, sons, and nephews of the emperor. These were the people who could disrupt the authority of the emperor and even challenge him for the throne. These were the men who had struggled for power and continued to enhance their positions over each other and even in relation to the sovereign. For this reason, the code outlined regulations that placed them in

\(^{119}\) *Ni lizh.* p. 1-2 of 大朝. 文官一品二品拜位于內道上之東. 每等異位重行北面西上. 武官一品二品拜位于內道上之西. 每等異位重行北面東上. 文官三品以上拜位於丹墀內道位重行北面東上. 分文武官為十八位. 第一班正一品. 第二班從一品. 第三班正二品. 第四班從二品. 第五班正三品…
subservient positions to the emperor. The Ming had no such problem with this group of people, for very early on all the imperial relatives were exiled from political, military, and ceremonial life. They were nowhere to be found in Ming rituals.

Such contrast reflects the fundamental differences among the two Huidian: the Ming with emphasis on the propriety and grandeur of the ceremony and the organization of the administrative officials, and the Qing focusing on the authority of the emperor over the Manchu elite. These interests can be seen throughout the statutes in each respective Huidian. Board of Personnel statutes, for example, show the Qing concerned foremost with the ranks of the imperial relatives and Manchu elite. Similarly, Board of War statutes take up the banner positions and the inheritance of titles. These differences emerged through the formation of the structure of the sociopolitical order and were put down in code in the Huidian to reflect the interests and ideals of that order. The Ming were concerned with organizing officials and assigning duties according to an envisioned role in accordance with a certain conception of society and order, whereas the Qing were focused on the relative power among the sovereign, imperial relatives, and the banners. These developments both embodied and recreated li in different ways for the Ming and the Qing, respectively.

CONCLUSION

The fact of difference between the Ming and Qing Huidian should come as no surprise: each state was built under different contexts and out of particular historical circumstances; each state drew upon separate traditions in the establishment of its legal practices; and, most immediate to

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the statutes at hand, each state was composed of different groups with different organizational needs. During state-making efforts, these factors led to the production of a unique set of Ming statutes and codes, and they similarly led to a unique set of Qing statutes and codes in the mid-seventeenth century. There were many similarities among these two legal documents, to be sure, but neither was entirely a copy or reproduction of another code. As this chapter has shown, Qing actors were very aware of the similarities and differences of the Ming and Qing practices and regulations, and they found the gap acute enough to demand and then produce a separate set of laws appropriate for the Qing state.

The Qing code reflected the political organization of the early state and its internal tensions. As the Manchus conquered more territory in the early seventeenth century, their leader Nurhaci began to form an administrative apparatus. His charisma commanded the loyalty and support of the other military leaders and personnel, forming a political order. When he died, however, that order threatened to collapse as each military leader sought to increase his own influence and resources at the expense of a unified sociopolitical organization. Working against local sociopolitical practices, Hong Taiji and his supporters rallied to build a hierarchical organizational structure with a sovereign at the head of a professional administrative and military staff. They fought for an order that would empower Hong Taiji and his descendants by giving a single ruler command of human and material resources, while other military leaders and strongmen would surrender their autonomy and access to political and financial prospects. The settlement that emerged in the mid-seventeenth century did establish the ruler as emperor, but it also conceded positions to the imperial relatives and the military. The laws that arose to define and regulate this settlement placed the sovereign in a superior position—and did so quite openly, as seen in the New Year’s Day ceremony—while also organizing the relatives and the banners in
a way that conferred them status and gave them privilege in the hierarchy. Whereas the Ming code put the bureaucracy front and center, the Qing focused on the emperor, the imperial relatives, and the military. The Qing *Huidian* captured this social structure and aimed to contain it in law. This was the Qing codification of li.

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121 As noted in the introduction, the Ming state was born out of much different circumstances and drew on a different culture and tradition. For the Ming, the political organization of a Chinese state was assumed from the very beginning, with the position of the ruler as emperor at the head of a professional bureaucracy and military agreed upon as the appropriate structure for society and politics. Zhu Yuanzhang organized his movement and built his state based on such notions of the politics, and thus did not have to struggle over the structure of the state. Rather, the conflict in the Ming was over the organization of the bureaucracy and its adherence to Confucian propriety. See Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation*; Huang, 1587.
Chapter 6: The Institution of the Emperor

This chapter and the next look at li as a system of politics and administrative order. Beginning with the Huidian as the complete articulation of this system, and exploring the activities of li, these two chapters examine both the code and the practice of the political actors of the early Qing, from the emperor to imperial relatives and administrative officials. They show how the social and cultural systems of the Qing were aligned to form a cohesive order.

This chapter takes up the li of the emperor and how a collection of ritual and ceremonial activity required of the emperor shaped the extent of the political power of the position and facilitated Qing political order. It argues that the Qing system of li for the emperor drew on three interrelated kinds of practices: those that represented the emperor as sovereign, those that helped him delegate tasks and authority to other political actors, and those that legitimized his position. The following chapter, chapter 7, explores the organization and practices of the administrative apparatus as it was put together in the system of li. The chapter demonstrates that ranks and clothing assigned to certain ranks, the size of an official’s entourage, and a stratified system of regulations for greeting rites defined the relations of administrative personnel and facilitated the operations of government. Together these two chapters show the Qing system of li at the level of the state.

This system can be understood from the language and activity of the actors of the day. The chapters are based on a study of sources of disparate practices that reflect cohesive action. Methodologically, the research approach of the chapters began with an empirical investigation of both the Board of Li section of the Huidian and the expressions and practices of li in contemporary documents. Every mention of li in the Huidian and among available materials from 1631 to 1690 was identified. The raw information was then categorized into different types.
of activity, and then finally abstracted to the level of li as administrative order. The results give a picture of the meaning of li as the Qing system of governance.

This chapter is divided into three parts, reflecting the categories of the li of the emperor. The first part explores how the emperor was represented in the ritual activities of grand ceremony, court ceremony, and crisis rituals. The argument is that the elaborate performances of the grand ceremonies carved out a unique role and a significant space for the sovereign, and in doing so it placed him in distinct relationships with other political actors. The grand ceremony was the key practice of li for the emperor, which put him front and center in the state, and for which we have a large amount of data. Court ceremonies routinized presentation of the emperor to his staff and effectively naturalized the position of the ruler by controlling access and dialogue. Furthermore, the performance of certain rites in times of natural disasters created the illusion of a naturalized social order with the emperor at the top of the hierarchy.

The second part of the chapter examines the delegation of authority and decision-making capacity to other political actors. Key in this process of distributing power to others was the ability of the sovereign to maintain control of political resources. This section shows that the codification of li helped solidify a structure of power that secured the position of emperor and is command of political resources vis-a-vis the imperial relatives and administrative officials. The third part of the chapter discusses the li of the imperial genealogy, which included the construction of tombs and the sacrifice to imperial ancestors. The implicit question this form of li answered was who got to be emperor and why. The rites of tomb sacrifice and worship of the ancestors at the temples and altars created an imperial lineage that effectively legitimized a select group of people to hold the position.
LI AND THE QING EMPEROR

Practices of li pertaining specifically to the emperor account for a large part of the system of li in the early Qing. These practices worked to actively engage the emperor and frame his interactions with other political actors. In annual ceremonies, the emperor was front and center, whereby all ritual activity moved around or through him. In sacrifices, he is seen taking incense, kneeling, and making offerings, while other political actors supplemented or served as an accessory. Even the crises rites during times of natural disaster were more about the sovereign at the head of a central hierarchical organization controlling a bounded territory than they were about supplication in the face of an uncontrollable environment. It is abundantly clear that early Qing state-makers were very concerned with the role of the emperor and articulated it as part of the system of li.

The symbolic activity focused on the emperor worked to construct a sovereign who commanded the division of political resources, and did so out of an ambiguous arrangement of politics during the early Hong Taiji years. Once the position was formed, the processes of institutionalization continued in consolidation of power and solidification of the chain of command and political power. As chapter 2 illustrated, the New Year’s Day ceremony of 1632 was one of the cultural spaces in the struggle for the control of politics in the early Qing, and that in doing so it helped form a particular political order by placing actors into certain relationships with each other. The forms of li created in the 1632 ceremony guided other annual ceremonies, which further pushed the process of institutionalization of the sovereign and the political order he embodied. Nothing changed overnight, to be sure, the 1632 ceremony did not usher in a new age of politics for the Manchus, but it did make up part of an ongoing process of state formation, whereby li continued to emerge and help shape the political settlements.
This form of li and the process of settling political conflicts were unique to the Qing. As discussed in previous chapters, Ming politics and the role of the sovereign was created out of completely different circumstances. Founded under the undisputed leadership of Zhu Yuanzhang, and born proclaiming opposition to the Mongols and a return to Chinese tradition, the Ming consciously moved to create a sociopolitical order of Confucian principles that would attract Chinese scholars into the service of the state. The political arrangements and administrative apparatuses were thus built not out of a struggle of opposing groups over power and institutional visions, as they were with the Manchus, but rather on the adherence to a certain idea of tradition, which would be represented in institutions that came to embody that idea. Li reflected this difference. The Ming New Year’s Day ceremony, for example, emphasized the arrangements of props and the staging of the political actors, whereby the emperor had a minimal role in the ceremony. This is representative of Ming ritual activity: the emperor was off stage and uninvolved. Even in the crisis rituals, where the Qing emperor was at the center of the performance activity, as shown below, the Ming emperor was diminished and Heaven took center stage. Ritual in the Ming did the work of stitching together a fractured world, to be sure, but the order woven was of a different thread used in the construction of a different pattern.

REPRESENTATION

Contemporary actors made a direct connection between governance (i.e. the social system) and the emperor’s practice of particular form of li (i.e., the cultural system). Recall how Board of Li Vice Director Li Bolong argued for the need to standardize the New Year’s Day ritual so as to give absolute expression to the emperor as sovereign and head of state. Similarly, in 1634 (Tc8), the Chinese Plain White Bannerman and Imperial Guardsman Liu Xuecheng memorialized Hong
Taiji on the need to set up suburban altars and hold regular sacrifice. Doing so, he argued, would make Hong Taiji a true sovereign and establish benevolent rule over the land. As he put it,

Our state set up a tangse [Manchu shrine for the worship of Heaven and other deities] outside the gates to worship Heaven and earth, and every month on the first and fifteenth, the khan goes himself to prostrate and bow. Is this not piously worshipping heaven and earth? This is still common practice, and groping about doing such rites of the prince is not such a great veneration.

As the son of Heaven and earth, the khan needs to set up altars of Heaven and earth like the Han dynasty. When sending off troops to conquer, to pay annual respect to Heaven, and in times of drought and flood, the khan should go to the altars and pray, and he should order a ritual master to abstain and recite liturgy. Every year on the day of the winter solstice go to the Altar of Heaven and sacrifice one ox. On the day of the summer solstice go to the Grain Altar and sacrifice a pig and sheep. Also, take the founding ancestral spirit tablets and place them in the altar for worship. Have a ritual master recite the rite. The khan should play the nine tunes. This is really the Way of the prince venerating Heaven and earth!

Liu went on to call for the establishment of a transmission office before ending his memorial with a grand summation of the accomplishment in governance that this would bring about. “Only if my emperor can do these two things [i.e., set up altars and establish a transmission office], will he have obtained the trust of heaven and the heart of the people, which will enable him to successfully govern the affairs of all under Heaven.”

Towards the end of this memorial Liu switched the term of designation for Hong Taiji. At first he used “khan” (han) consistently throughout to refer to the sovereign, but then suddenly, as

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我汗即為天地宗子. 需要象漢朝立天地壇. 凡行兵出征天年早潦汗當步行到壇禡祀. 命道士設齋念經. 每年冬至日郊天用牛一隻祭. 夏至日社地用豬羊祭. 再把始祖神位入壇配享. 道宮唱禮. 我汗當九升九奏. 這便是天子敬天地的道理.

The Chinese for the second quote: 皇上信能行些兩宗. 得了天心民心方成得治天下的大事.
he concluded, began to use “emperor” (huang shang). After the recommendations were made and the proposal set, the memorial emphasized the results of the adoption of these proposals, and thus cast it in a new language—the language of governance and sovereignty. That the khan will become an emperor was subtly argued. That the state will be established and an omnipotent government come to reign supreme over the people and territory was explicitly stated. Liu here implied a direct relation between li and governance—a relation that made the practices of li and the sites where they would occur necessary for the administration of the state.

Hong Taiji’s immediate response to Liu’s memorial was one of hesitation, even uncertainty. “As for building the suburban altars and establishing the ancestral hall, I still do not know the will of Heaven. How do I dare act with haste,” Hong Taiji said referring to the lack of a sure path to victory over the Ming, and the still ambiguous territorial extent of Manchu rule. “With the assistance of Heaven, we can overcome and succeed in the Great Enterprise. At that time we will have followed the will of Heaven and can respectfully discuss grand ceremony. It will not be too late.” From this statement, it appears that Hong Taiji preferred not to add this cultural form of altars and sacrifice into the arsenal of the Manchu state, at least not immediately.

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2 Tsai Sung-yin makes the case that Chinese advisors did not begin to use “huangdi” or “huang shang” as terms of address until the Chongde years. My own investigations of contemporary materials confirm this finding and indicate advisors used the term “han” to refer to Hong Taiji. See Tsai Sung-yin, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan,” 252–272.

3 This vision and line of reasoning is even more explicit in the Shilu reproduction of the memorial, where editors adjusted Liu’s words to emphasize the completion of the state project. Take the last line of the memorial as an example. “If the emperor can do these two things with sincerity, obeying the will of heaven and following the hearts of the people, then the great enterprise will be complete and stretch without bounds.” 皇上誠能行此二者, 以承天意以順民心, 則大業立成, 而曆數錫固於無疆矣. SL, p. 284-1.

4 On debates in the late Hong Taiji period over the extent of territorial rule see Tsai Sung-yin, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan,” chap. 5.

5 SL, p. 284-1. 至於建郊社, 立宗廟, 未知天意何在, 何敢遽行, 果蒙天佑, 克成大業, 彼時順承天心, 恭議大典, 未晚也.
Hong Taiji’s response can be read in a number of different ways. It can be seen as one of humility and lack of presumption about the conquering of China—although given the ambitious nature of Hong Taiji it is unlikely that he discounted anything. It is also possible to read it as a misgiving about cultural practices, where the emperor-to-be still grappled with the adoption of foreign practices and how they ought to work or why. In this reading, the system of li is consciously being debated as it is coming into being, with each component weighed in relation to the emergent social system. This leads to a third reading as an expression of the struggle over the form of the state and the representation of the sovereign. This memorial and response came in 1634, a year and a half before the announcement of the establishment of the Qing as a dynasty. At this time, in the eighth year of Tiancong, the Manchu state was still immature and Hong Taiji still leading battles and relying on his charisma as a military leader and political strategist to control policy and preside over politics. The political settlements had begun to take form, to be sure, but exactly what the political order would look like and the form of the state that would emerge were still unclear. But as the settlements over political power were hammered out, the forms and practices of li were also being worked through. As it happened, two years later, just after the announcement of the establishment of the Qing as a dynasty, the suburban altars were built and the sacrifices and ceremonies began.6

This was announced to much fanfare. Hong Taiji issued a formal proclamation on the fourteenth day of the fifth month of the first year of the Qing dynasty (Cd1.5.14), which canonized the form of li. The edict set the procedures and formalized the rites for the New Year’s Day ceremony, the imperial birthday ceremony, and court audience. Since the New Year’s Day

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6 This is not to imply that the change of dynastic name from Jin to Qing completed the state building project and confirmed the settlement of political power among actors. Rather, the announcement and the implementation of this form of li were intimately connected in the process of institutionalizing the forms of government, positions, and power.
ceremony was detailed in chapter two, and the edict under question here restates the practices
already discussed, only the sections in the edict for the imperial birthday ceremony and court
audience are cited.

As for the li (doro) of the emperor’s birthday, before sunrise, after all the princes of the
blood of the first, second, third degree and below, and those of the rank banner captain
and above assemble in order at the North Star Yamen, the khan emerges and sits on the
throne. The princes of the blood of first, second, and third degree line up in order,
beginning with Manchu, then Mongol, then Chinese, and kowtow with three
genuflections and nine prostrations. When they offer the khan congratulations they also
kowtow. The princes of the blood of the first, second, third, and forth degree, and below,
and the rank banner captain and above, gather. The imperial guard also enters as in the
New Year’s Day ceremony.

Each month on the fifth, fifteenth, and twenty-fifth, at sunrise, the princes of the
blood of the first, second, and third degree and below, and those of the rank of banner
captain and above gather at the Chongzheng dian. After lining up in order, the khan
emerges and sits in the throne. He listens to all the various affairs that have been dealt
with and the crimes that have been judged.  

Although this edict did not dwell on the details of the ceremony, it did emphasize
hierarchy. There is particular attention to the ranks and the activities of the ranks throughout the
ritual. It is of particular note that these ranks were specific to the imperial relatives and upper
ehelon of the banners. These groups stratified the political order and came to be organized of it

7 The original edict is in the Grand Secretariat Archive, GSA 163606, Cd1.5.14. A draft copy can been seen at GSA
167435. It is also in the MWYD, 10.185-188 and MR 6.1050-60. enduringge han i banjiha inenggi hengkilere doro,
šun tucire onggolo, šošo cin wang, doroi giyūn wang, doroi beile se ci fusihūn, nirui janggin ci weshun, abkai
hadaha usiha i yamun de isaifai dafa han manggi, enduringge han tucifi soorin de tembi, šošo cin wang, doroi giyūn
wang, doroi beile se ci aname genu jergi bodome faidafi, neneme manju, sirame monggo, ilaci de nikan
hengkilembi, ilan jergi niyakūrafi uyun jergi hengkilembi, enduringge han de ursi bihede, inu ere songkoi
hengkilembi, šošo cin wang, doroi giyūn wang, doroi beile se, gūsai beise se ci fusihūn, nirui janggin ci weshun
isambi, hiyasa išu aniayai inenggi banjiha songkoi meni meni jergi de dosimbi,
yaya biyai ice sunja, tofohon, orin sunja de, šošo cin wang, doroi giyūn wang, doroi beile se ci fusihūn,
nirui janggin ci weshun, šun tucire onggolo weshihun dasan i yamun de isaif, banjiha jergi bodome faidame wajiha
manggi, enduringge han tucifi soorin de tefi, yaya ichiyaha baita, beidehe weile be donjimbi
through the practices of the grand ceremony, all of which were results of the transformation of li to fit the immediate political and social context.

The rest of this section outlines the components of li as imperial representation. The Board of Li helped envision and guide the activities of the sovereign by routinizing his position in a way that created a suitable representation of the state. The sovereign was given a certain role to play, activities to perform, and placed in a governing position that was symbolized by li. This occurred through the forms proposed by Liu: grand ceremony and suburban sacrifice. But it also was made manifest in court ceremony by ensuring the necessary relations between sovereign and subject; and in crisis rituals, which cast the emperor as a moral ruler who did certain things to assuage the unpredictable world and make it a little more manageable—or at least give the illusion of such. In this way, not did Hong Taiji come to know how to be an emperor of a bureaucratic state and not just a khan commanding a loose socio-military organization of semi-nomadic peoples, but also, his charisma was made permanent and the positions of his staff and offspring within and at the head of a social system secured.

*Grand ceremony*

Grand ceremony (dajie 大節 or dadian 大典) was the term the Qing used to refer the practice of three annual rituals: the New Year’s Day ceremony, the winter solstice ritual, and the emperor’s birthday. These three ceremonies were not grouped together as such in the Ming, and the Qing articulation of these three ceremonies together as grand ceremony was part of the Qing transformation of li to make up the system of Qing li. The New Year’s Day ritual in its Qing incarnation began in 1632, as discussed in chapter two. The other two rituals were first practiced in 1636, the year of the announcement of the founding of the Qing dynasty and in the midst of
intensifying state building efforts. Apart from Liu’s remarks about the need for altars, and the edict establishing the formal procedures for the ceremonies on New Year’s Day, the emperor’s birthday, and court audience, the *Huidian* offers a clear summation of the importance and vision of grand ceremony. In the Board of Li section they are set apart from other ritual practices, and they are given primacy of place at the very beginning of the statutes. These ceremonies were deemed the “three grand ceremonies” (san dajie 三大節), which, “after respectful deliberation of the previous system, Qing emperors revised the ceremonial rite.”

A further Qing innovation is seen in that after the detailing of each of the ceremonies and the reforms that were implemented up until the time of the printing of the first Qing *Huidian* in 1690, there are lengthy sections for the roles of other members of the imperial family.

The three ceremonies were all similar to each other by design. Consider the explanatory passages in the *Huidian* for the Winter Solstice and Emperor’s birthday ceremonies. On the Winter Solstice:

> Every year on the Winter Solstice set up the ritual fans, parasols, the great carriage, and the music instruments. All officials should come to court to offer congratulatory praise. Everything else is the same as the New Year’s Day ceremony [except] do not hold a banquet.

Similarly, for the emperor’s birthday:

> On the day before, send officials to sacrifice at the imperial tombs and the ancestral temple (taimiao). On the said day, set up ritual fans, parasols, and other ritual instruments

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8 KXHD, 715.1915. ګ lineNumber。 This stress on deliberations and revisions should be contrasted to the Ming, who emphasized that their ritual practices were borrowed straight from antiquity. See WLHD, 2.803.

9 KXHD 715.1934

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along with the great carriage and musical instruments in the Chongzheng dian. All the various relatives, beile, beise, and high ranking officials enter and offer their ritual gifts. The Koreans, foreign states, and the thirteen banner owners all enter and offer their ritual gifts. All line up before the Daqing Gate and enter to offer their congratulatory praise. It is the same as New Year’s Day, [including] the banquet.¹⁰

As these passages put in so many words, the New Year’s Day ceremony, as the first to form and receive adjustments and revisions, served as the model for the other two.

This mimicking of form is not surprising, for the three ceremonies shared a similar objective: to represent the sovereign and the state. As illustrated in the New Year’s Day ceremony, this form of li put the emperor front and center, and brought all subjects into an immediate relation of subjugation to him. The ceremony helped define the emperor as one who occupied a certain position and commanded political resources. At the same time, the ceremony symbolized in practice an entire political hierarchy with the emperor at the top and various ranks and groups assigned certain positions. The grand ceremonies of the Qing thus developed in tandem with the evolution a particular political order, and symbolically represent the position of the emperor at the head of it.

These practices differed from the Ming in form and function. The specific political and cultural background of the Manchus led to the need for a particular revision, manipulation, and invention of li in the capacity of internal struggles for power and the division of political resources. The New Year’s Day ceremony was reformulated out of Manchu traditions and Ming forms in service of one group. The entire ceremony took on a completely different form than it had done with any Chinese dynasty or Jurchen khan, and it did so with a new system of symbolic meanings. Whereas this was not an issue with someone like Zhu Yuanzhang in the formation of

¹⁰ KXHD 715.1937.
Emperor

the Ming, for the Ming New Year’s Day ceremony involved a shrunken role for the emperor and an overemphasis on the staging and positions of the political actors. The emperor did not need to be represented in the Ming in the same way that he did in the Qing, as the grand ceremonies were meant to attract and organize Confucian scholars in the service of the Ming state rather than institutionalize a set of internal political arrangements. This situation was further reflected in the ceremonies for the winter solstice and the emperor’s birthday, as discussed below.

*Winter Solstice rite.* To further illustrate how this worked it is useful to look at the first winter solstice ceremony. The Qing held the ceremony for the first time in the winter of 1636. It formed part of the retinue of ceremonies that were ushered in with the announcement of the name change from Jin to Qing and representing the founding of the Qing dynasty. The newly formed winter solstice ceremony along with the emperor’s birthday ceremony and the formal codification of the New Year’s Day ceremony formed for the first time the trio of the grand ceremonies.

The opening of the ritual illustrates the formality of the acts, how they were orchestrated, and the intimate involvement of different actors performing different roles. The details of the beginning of the ceremony here further show the process by which the emperor’s relationships with the other political actors were stabilized, and how the role as sovereign was becoming formalized. The ritual, as recorded in contemporary Manchu records, began as follows:

On the day of the Winter Solstice, the khan led out the princes of the blood of the first, second, third, and fourth degree, and all the civil and military officials. For three days they abstained. They killed a black ox, and when going to worship Heaven, the khan advanced through the Zhongde gate aceut at 5 a.m.

After arriving at the Altar of Heaven, Secretarial Court Grand Secretary Fan Wencheng and Board of Rites president Mandarhan took the khan to the east of the altar and situated him facing west. After the master of ceremonies said to line up, all lined up.
Emperor

After calling to enter, they entered. After calling to light the incense, the khan ascended the stairs to the east. After kneeling before the throne of Heaven, Secretarial Court Secretary Jamba offered the incense box and presented it respectively to Secretarial Court Grand Secretary Fan Wenceng. Fan Wenceng received it and presented it kneeling to the khan. The khan received it and lit the incense. After lighting, the khan gave the incense box to Mandarhan, who received it kneeling and gave it to Hūkio of the Court of Vast Learning.

Thereupon, the khan descended the stairs to the west and stood facing the central throne. The master of ceremonies said to kowtow, and [the khan] did the three genuflections and nine prostrations. Thereupon, the khan went to the eastern steps. The khan himself offered the ox and various things that were prepared for sacrifice. After he finished, he descended down the western stairs, and in the same way stood facing the throne in the center. Afterwards, the master of ceremonies said to kneel; the khan knelt.

Prince Gūnggadai, who stood on the left side, presented a silk covered box to Fan Wencheng. Fan Wencheng received it and, kneeling, passed it to the khan. The khan received it and offered it upwards with both hands facing the throne of Heaven. He gave it to Board of Li president Mandarhan, who accepted it kneeling. He gave it to the [other] Board of Li president Jin Yuhe 金玉和, who accepted it and offered it with both hands to the throne of Heaven.

Thereupon, Board of War president Cergei, who stood on the left side, brought a cup of wine to Fan Wencheng. Fan Wencheng received it and offered it kneeling to the khan. The khan accepted it and offered it upwards toward Heaven. He gave it to Mandarahan, and Mandarahan accepted it kneeling and gave it to the president of the Censorate, Asidarhan Nakcu, who had been standing on the right. Asidarhan Nakcu received it and offered with both hands up to Heaven. The Court of Vast Learning president, Hife, who had continued to stand on the left, brought a cup of wine to Fan Wencheng. Fan Wencheng accepted it and presented it kneeling to the khan. The emperor presented it with two hands to Heaven and gave it to Mandarhan. Mandarhan accepted it kneeling and gave it to Board of Personnel president, Inggūldai, who was standing on the right. Inggūldai offered it with both hands to Heaven. The Inner Court of Historiography president Lošo, who continued standing on the right, gave the cup of wine to Fan Wencheng. Fan Wencheng accepted it and offered it kneeling to the khan. The khan offered it up to Heaven and gave it to Mandarhan. Mandarhan took it kneeling and gave it to the Board of Punishments president, Langkio, who accepted it and offered it up to Heaven.

After the respectful rite, the Board of Li vice president, Kicungge knelt in front of the throne of heaven and read the sacrificial text.11

11 MR 7.1462-1465, Cd1.11.25. tuweri ten i inenggi seme, enduringge han, hošoi cin wang sa, doro giyūn wang sa, doro beile se, gūsai beise se, bithe coohai geren hafasa be gaifī, ilan inenggi beyebe bolgomifi, sahalīya ihan wame, abka weceme genere de, enduringge han, gūlmahūn erinde tondo erdemu de wesibuhe duka be tucifi,
There are two categories of activity to highlight here: representation and institutionalization. The first refers to the symbolic activity that represented the emperor as the sovereign throughout the ceremony. Foremost, the passage shows the emperor leading imperial relatives and officials in worship, indicating that he stood at the head of the social and political structure and was given the primacy of action and leadership in ceremony. This is further emphasized in his advance through a certain gate at a certain time, both of which were given significance as an imperial practice and reserved for the emperor alone, while other officials had

abka wecere tan de isinaha manggi, narhūn bithei yamun i aliha bithei da fan wen ceng, dorolon i jurgan i aliha amban mandarhan, enduringge han be jorime gamafi, tan i dergi ashan de wasihiūn forome ilibuha, hūlara hafan faida sehe manggi, geren gemu faiadha, ibe sehe manggi ibehe, hiyan dabu sehe manggi, enduringge han, tan i dergi ashan i tafukū be tafame genefi, abka i soorin i juleri niyakūraha manggi, narhūn bithei yamun i bithei da jamba, hiyan tebuhe hose be tukiyeme jafafi, narhūn bithei yamun i aliha bithei da fan wen ceng de dorolome alibuha, fan wen ceng alime gaifi, enduringge han de niyakūrafi alibuha, enduringge han alime gaifi dabuha, dabume wajija manggi, enduringge han hiyan tebuhe hose be mandarhan de alibumbe bure de, niyakūrafi alime gaifi, kooli selgiyere yamun i bithei da hūkio de buhe,

tereci enduringge han wargi ashan i tafukū be ebufi, tob dulimbade soorin i baru forome ilīha, hūlara hafan niyakūra, hengkile seme hūlaha manggi, ilan jergi niyakūrafi uyun jergi hengkilehe, tereci enduringge han dergi tafukū be genefi, ihan i yali dagilaha hacingga jaka be han i beye tuwame dobofi, wajija manggi, wargi tafukū be ebufi, ineke tob dulimbade soorin i baru forome ilīha manggi, hūlara hafan niyakūra seme hūlaha manggi, enduringge han niyakūraha,

sujte tebuhe hose be hūshū ergi ashan de ilīha gūnggadai age, weshiūn tukiyeme jafafi, bithei da fan wen ceng de alibumbe buhe, fan wen ceng alime gaifi, niyakūrafi enduringge han de alibumbe buhe, han alime gaifi, abka i soorin i baru weshiūn gingnefi, ici ergi ashan de ilīha dorolon i jurgan i aliha amban mandarhan de buhe, mandarhan niyakūrafi alime gaifi, dorolon i jurgan i aliha amban gir i ho de buhe, gir i ho alime gaifi weshiūn tukiyeme jafafi, abka i soorin de doroho,

tereci hashū ergi ashan de ilīha coohai jurgan i aliha amban cergei, nure i hūntahan be bithei da fan wen ceng de benehe, fan wen ceng alime gaifi, niyakūrafi enduringge han de alibumbe buhe, han alime gaifi, weshiūn tukiyeme jafafi, abka i soorin de doroho, terei sirame hashū ergi ashan de ilīha buhe, han dergi hufi ko kooli selgiyere yamun i aliha bithei da hūf, nure i hūntahan be bithei da fan wen ceng de benehe, fan wen ceng alime gaifi, niyakūrafi enduringge han de alibumbe buhe, han nure i hūntahan be weshiūn tukiyeme jafafi, abka i soorin i baru gingnefi, mandarhan de alibumbe buhe, mandarhan niyakūrafi alime gaifi ieri ergi ashan de ilīha boigon i jurgan i aliha amban inggūldai de buhe, inggūldai alime gaifi weshiūn tukiyume jafafi, abka i soorin de doroho, terei sirame hashū ergi ashan de ilīha gunun i suduri yamun i bithei da lošo, nure i hūntahan be fan wen ceng de benehe, fan wen ceng alime gaifi, niyakūrafi enduringge han de alibumbe buhe, han nure i hūntahan be abka i soorin i baru gingnefi, mandarhan de buhe, mandarhan niyakūrafi gaifi, beidere jurgan i aliha amban langkio de buhe, langkio alime gaifi weshiūn tukiyeme jafafi, abka i soorin de doroho,

tuttu ginggaulem dorolome dorohe wajixa manggi, wecere bihe be dorolon i jurgan i mujilen baheke kicungge, abka i soorin i juleri niyakūrafi hūlaha,
to enter through other gates. Furthermore, throughout the ceremony, the emperor was made the center of activity. He was instructed on when and where to ascend or descend the altar. He was given objects with which to worship—incense, silk box, or wine—and act upon it—lighting the incense and offering up the box and wine. The other actors in the ritual had certain roles, to be sure, but supporting roles to perform acts such as receive the incense box, or to position the emperor or put him in a superior relation to other social and political actors. In this way, the emperor was represented both as the primary actor of the state, and placed in a superior relationship to his staff.

Such activity and its codification had reverberating effects. The first preliminary conclusion of the New Year’s Day ceremony chapter pointed out how actors internalized their place in the ritual. It pointed out that when two Ming generals were offered a place alongside the imperial relatives in the 1634 New Year’s Day ceremony they declined out of fear of disrupting the political hierarchy and overstepping their rank. “How do we dare accept the rank of beile?” they said. The generals dare not partake in the ceremony in a role that cast them as something more than they ought to be. Other similar examples are found throughout the historical record, which are taken up in greater detail in the next chapter on political society.

The second category of activity is related to the first, and this is the institutionalization of the position. By standardizing the acts of the sovereign, the position took on a permanency. The li here was part of the process of reaffirming the institution of the emperor by giving a highly scripted role to the sovereign. He was told what to do and received directed as an actor in the ceremony. In fact, all actors were told to line up, to enter, and to bow. And they all did so in turn.

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12 NGSY 3.291 and KXHD 716.2014-2019 name the gates.

13 This in contrast to Ming records, where the emperor’s role is not emphasized. See chapter 5.

The emperor received ritual objects from others, presented them to Heaven, and then passed them on to others. The emperor was directed to ascend the stairs, to descend the stairs, to stand in a specific place. He was told to kowtow, and instructed to kneel. The lack of agency was so intense that in some ceremonies the person of the emperor did not even need to be present himself but could simply send a surrogate, as discussed below. This form of li, molded for the Winter Solstice, became one of the key activities of the emperor in the Qing.

*Imperial birthday rite.* Every year on the day of the emperor’s birthday a similar ceremony was held. In Chinese it was called *wanshoujie* 萬壽節, or the celebration of long life. As noted above, the ceremony mirrored the New Year’s Day ceremony, and it contained all the essential elements to represent the emperor. The ceremony was an expression of the life of the individual recast as the sovereign. It at once served as an opportunity for the emperor to enact himself as emperor by performing certain practices reserved for the position of emperor, and for others to interact with him as the sovereign who held power and controlled politics. This meant everything from visiting and banqueting with the immediate imperial family, to provincial officials setting up incense tables in their yamen and kowtowing.\(^\text{16}\)

The preparation discussions for the imperial birthday rite of 1654 (Sz11) are instructive of how the position of the emperor was understood and his role to be cast. That year, the ceremony was to fall on the thirtieth day of the first month (Sz11.1.30). A week before, Board of Rites president Langkio wrote to inform the emperor of the date of the ceremony and what would take

\(^{15}\) Note that the actors leading the ceremony were personnel from the Board of Li, for it was the Board of Li that held the knowledge of the ritual, and thus possessed the means to institutionalize the cultural symbols of the emperor and the political order in this way.

\(^{16}\) The section of the Kangxi-era *Huidian* that covers the Wanshoujie rite is 715.1937-1942. On officials performing the rite in their yamen see KXHD, 715.1942. For a case of performing the rite in the provinces see BDTB, 02-01-02-2131-018, Sz11.2.27.
place. On the said morning, Langkio communicated that Board of Li officials would come and take the emperor to his mother’s residence, where he would perform the proper rites in front of her as the empress dowager in a display of filial piety. She would ascend a throne before which the emperor would do the rite. After the rite, the emperor would return to his palace and wait for the banquet preparations to be completed. When all was ready, Langkio wrote, he would take the emperor to the Zhonghe dian, where officials from the Board of Li, the three inner offices (neisan yuan), and the censorate would first offer congratulatory rites. Board officials would then move the emperor to the Taihe dian, where he would ascend the throne and sit while all the other officials would come through in their group rank and perform the proper rite in front of the emperor. After all had offered their respects, they would banquet. To this proposal, the emperor replied in an affirmative with a single character/word in the red rescript: “yes” (Ch. shi; Ma. inu).17

The ritual and its acts did not begin nor end on the said day, however. Officials were required to wear formal court dress beginning on the twenty-seventh day, and could dispense with the costume as their daily attire only on the third day of the second month, the day after the spring sacrifice. Such a regulation ensured that practitioners were instilled not only with a sense of the pending ceremony and its lingering effects, but also to know intimately their role in it. For seven days, officials would wear their uniforms that identified their hierarchical rank and bureaucratic role; for seven days they would put on and take off this uniform with the heavy consciousness of one who has learned his place in the world and subjected to a system that perpetuates it. This was made all the more serious by Langkio, who also memorialized on this matter, informing the throne that those who failed to garb themselves in their ritual costume for

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17 BDTB 02-01-02-2130-023, Sz11.1.23.
the period would be punished accordingly. In this way, the emperor’s birthday was an opportunity for the construction of political order and representation of hierarchies.

Conflict over the date of the ceremony provides a further illustration of this point. On the twenty-third, Langkio again memorialized the throne with a problem. The ritual and the accompanying banquet were scheduled to take place on the thirtieth. That year, however, the spring sacrifice fell on the second day of the second month and called for fasting to begin on the thirtieth. According to ritual precedent, the emperor and his officials could not attend a lavish banquet on the very day that they were expected to begin fasting in preparation for sacrificial rites at the sun altar (ri tan 日壇) three days later. A possible solution, Langkio proposed, would be to hold the ceremony on the twenty-ninth. The Board of Li president pointed out that this was not without precedent: on those years when the first month was a day short, the imperial birthday rite would be held on the twenty-ninth. Making such an adjustment this year, he went on, even though it was a long month with thirty days, would allow adherence to the ritual calendar without offending the lunar calendar. This suggestion was accepted. Such an adjustment indicates that the day itself as a celebration of the emperor’s birth was not as important as the representation of the emperor in the hierarchy and the expression of the political relationships—in short, the ritual and its system of meanings.

18 BDTB 02-01-02-2130-024, See Sz11.1.23.
20 BDTB, 02-01-02-2200-009, Sz11.1.23. The rescript simply says to inform the Board of Li which officials should be sent to make offerings.
The ceremony for the imperial birthday that year was performed much along the lines laid out in Langkio’s memorials. On the morning of the twenty-ninth, the emperor was prepared with the imperial ritual instruments, and all the nobles and officials lined up in their court costumes outside the gates of the Forbidden City. Ritual music played and the nobles and officials entered the city through a succession of gates. When the Board of Li had set up the ritual instruments for the empress dowager, the emperor was brought in and performed the stipulated rites. Afterward, he exited and the Board went to work setting up for the banquet. The emperor was taken to the Zhonghe dian and then to the Taihe dian where the ceremonies were performed and the banquet hosted.

This was all quite straightforward, and similar in form to what would occur in the rites of the other grand ceremonies. There was one act of the emperor’s birthday, however, that was not contained in the other two grand ceremonies, and that was the pardoning of criminals. The specifics of this practice in late imperial China have been taken up elsewhere and need not be discussed here. What deserves emphasis is that this was a common part of the yearly celebration of the emperor’s birthday and was incorporated into the practices of li as an integral part of the ceremony. It was routinized as an annual act to grant reprieve to those having been

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21 There is some confusion in the accounts of wanshoujie that year on which day the ceremony actually took place. The Neiguoshiyuan materials say that the rite was done on the twenty-ninth (tumen sei eldeke ineggi doroi orin uyun de doroloh doro), but the entry comes under the date of the thirtieth. Sz11.1.30: NGSY, reel 3, p. 52; NGSY, 3.291. Similarly, the Shilu says that officials were sent to make offerings on the twenty-ninth, but the ceremony and banquet took place on the thirtieth. SL, 3.633/2a-b. The evidence points to the conclusion that all activities took place on the twenty-ninth, however. The Neiguoshiyuan entries do say that the rite was performed on the twenty-ninth, and the entry on spring rite on the second day of the second month says that officials had begun to abstain on the thirtieth, indicating that they did not have a banquet that day. Sz11.2.2: NGSY, reel 3, p. 62. Furthermore, it would be unprecedented to split up the worship across two days, as the Shilu entry indicates, and to do so in a way in which the banquet was not even moved to account for the ritual calendar. Given that Langkio’s memorial about changing the date was not included in either of these later compilations of events, it may be that editors did not know the full extent of developments and were confused about the dates.

22 The ceremony is detailed in NGSY, reel 3, p. 52-61, Sz11.2.2; NGSY, 3.291-293.

Emperor

accused of a crime. From the annual occurrence to the types of crimes that would be pardoned, the operation was less one of the decision and action of individual benevolence, and more one of standard ritual practice.

Consider the occasion in 1640 (Cd 5). In an edict to one part of the bureaucracy and then transmitted to the Board of Li, Hong Taiji laid out the motivation for pardoning, and then detailed those ten crimes that would not be pardoned. This format was standardized and became part of li.

The twenty-fifth day of the tenth month is my birthday. I think that all the imperial relatives and below, and the ten thousand people rejoice because of my benevolence. I wish it to not only reach the nobles and good people, but also to extend to all criminals. Except for the ten kinds of crimes, every crime will be exonerated. The ten crimes not to be pardoned:

1. Crime of expressing a desire to attack the emperor.
2. Crime of burning down and destroying the ancestral temple, imperial graves, or government offices.
4. Crime of deception through the ghostly arts of using poison to kill people.
5. Crime of stealing those things used to sacrifice to heaven or used by the khan.
6. Crime of beating one’s grandparents and parents.
7. Crime of selling one’s brothers.
8. Crime of implicating others in a crime, or the woman who accuses her husband.
9. Crime of adultery with a woman from within one’s own clan.
10. Crime of killing people and clearly robbing them of property.

These ten crimes are not to be pardoned. It is not a crime under law if things recognized as taken or abandoned are given to the lord. Mutual repayment among two people will not be a crime. In addition to this, all crimes of assault and robbery are pardoned. People cannot again bring up accusations of crimes that have been pardoned. Also absolve crimes without confession that have been brought before the law and the sentences set, and exempt crimes that have been handled but the sentence not yet determined. The day
after the amnesty and henceforth, all crimes of assault and robbery are still to be dealt with by law.  

This early edict on the pardoning in conjunction with the emperor’s birthday ceremony is the earliest such document available. It shows the formation of the ritual system and the sociopolitical acts that were forming in tandem. Together these cultural and social systems came to form the Qing order and were laid down in code in the *Huidian*.

**Court ceremony**

The court ceremony was one of the most important activities in the routinization of a political order, for it regularly put an emperor at the head of an administrative staff and confirmed the nature and limit of the political relationships. Through the elaborate procedure of gaining and granting access to the sovereign, this ceremony placed the political actors in particular social

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24 GSA, 107569, Cd5.10.25. I have drawn on corresponding passages in the CZBSL to help fill in the illegible sections. See CZBSL, 34.11a. I have here added the list of numbers attached to the enumerated crimes for the sake of clarity. juwan biya orin sunja de. mini eldeke inenggi. bi gvnici geren wang se ci fusihvn. dorgi tulergi tumen irgen de isitala urgunjeme gvnirakvngge akv. tutu ofi bi mini hese hvturi. geren wang se ci fusihvn sain irgen i tailen isinara anggala. citen weilengge niyalma ci aname gene isinakini seme. juwan hacin i weile ci tulgiyen. yaya weile be gemu waliyaha. guweburaku juwan weile.

1. dergi be neciki sehe weile.
2. mafari miyoo [corrupted], han i boo yamun be efulere [illegible] sindara weile
3. ukadara ubašara weile
4. niyalma bucere okto. bušukuleme eiterere weile
5. abka jecere jaka. han i bye de baitalahja jaka be hvilha weile
6. mafa mama ama eme be [illegible] weile.
7. ahvn deo be uncaha weile
8. eigen be gercilehe hehe [corrupted] amasi tuhebure weile
9. uksun i dorgi hehe de latuha weilei
10. niyalma waha. hokilañ bi niyalmai [corrupted] be iletuleme durike weile

er juwan weile be guweburaku. ukaka waliyabuha jaka be takaci [illegible] beye be ejen de bu. fafun i weile akū. juwe niyalmai ishun de toodara gaijara weile be ere i gaisu bu. tereci tulgiyen. yaya gidaha hūlha weile be gemu guwebuhe. guwebuhe weile be gercileci fafun i niyalma ume gisurere. nenehe weile be fafun de gisureme wajifi tuhebume toktofji gaijara eden weile oci kemuni gaisu. gisureme jabducibe tuhebume toktoro unde weile oci waliyaha. ere se bithe wasimbuha inenggici amasi hūlha weile be kemuni fafun ilgamambi.

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relationships and guided interpersonal interaction. The ceremony represented the emperor as a venerated symbol to which state administrators gave deference in authority and decision. Furthermore, it raised the emperor above politics by creating a distance between ruling sovereign and administrating subject. It removed the emperor from everyday administrative affairs and policy debates, and granted him a level of control over political resources by giving him an elevated stature as the arbitrator of policy. The point is not that it increased his personal power (although it may have done that as well), but rather that it constructed a space to remove the emperor from debate about the nature of political order by confining conflict over the form of the state and discussions about the nature of the social world and its making to the level of routine politics.

The ceremony was held three times per month: on the fifth, fifteenth, and twenty-fifth. It included all capital officials, both civil and military, as well as the imperial relatives. The general form of the ceremony was as follows. On the appointed day, the complete array of ritual instruments, fans, parasols, and chariots were assembled. All the imperial relatives and officials gathered in their court costumes and arrange themselves in the wings of the chosen imperial hall. Board of Li personnel ushered in the emperor and invited him to climb the steps to the hall. Dressed in his court costume, the emperor ascended the throne at the playing of the appropriate ritual music. When the emperor took his seat, the music would stop and the relatives and officials would line up in rank, which they maintained throughout the audience session and when retreating from audience and in offering gratitude for being received. The hierarchically organized audience performed one prostration. Then, officials from each ministry and
department would come forward and report what he had to report to the emperor. After the reporting, the emperor returned to the palace, music played, and the audience dispersed.  

This court ceremony was not the only official interaction between the sovereign and his administrators, to be sure. The court ceremony under discussion was the regular court audience ceremony (changchao yi 常朝儀), which was held three times a month with much pomp and ceremony, as outlined in the previous paragraph. In addition to the thrice-monthly meetings, the emperor held court every morning at dawn, where he received memorials and handled the administrative affairs of the state. These court sessions, or the hearing of administrative affairs (tingzheng 聽政), were only attended by officials from the six boards and administrative yamens, and not by the entire contingent of capital officials and imperial relatives. Furthermore, they were less formal affairs, and might take place wherever the emperor chose, rather than in one of the palaces. These daily informal meetings did not begin as a regular routine until the early Shunzhi period, and it was not until 1671 (Kx10) that official court clothing was required for these meetings.  

The difference between the court meetings was a matter of degree and imperial protocol. Where the daily court audience was a less formal affair between the sovereign and his staff over affairs of the state, the thrice-monthly ceremony was a means to affirm political relationships and regularize the means of official interaction. The ceremony served as the form for officials and nobles to express their gratitude to the emperor for any gifts or promotions given, as well as to report on administrative affairs. But more so, the highly scripted rituals of engagement and proffering of the officials, elevated the emperor to a level that required veneration rather than

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25 These procedures are discussed generally in KXHD 716.1977. The announcement of the regulation took place on Cd1.5.14, and can be found in MWYD 10.187; MR, 6.1053.

26 KXHD 716.2006-2011.
confrontation; it affirmed the hierarchy of rank and access to resources through the subjugation of inferiors to superiors. Indeed, the entire operation of the meeting represented the emperor in a superior position and defined the position and power of all underneath.

Qing origins of the ceremony. In order to understand the significance of the court ceremony it is instructive to return to Hong Taiji and the focus of this section—that the emperor was represented and performed. As Hong Taiji and his staff established control and set up administrative apparatuses they faced a question of how the sovereign would interact with his administrators: How would the political relationship between the ruler and his staff be shaped? How could the interaction be standardized so that the ruler could neutralize any threat to his power? How could the positions be affirmed and set so that the political order would be preserved without interruption? How would the emperor receive advice, listen to suggestions, and issue orders; and do so while maintaining superiority of position and command of political power? Indeed, how to be emperor and interact with other political actors?

A survey of memorials over the last four years of the Tiancong era—from 1632-1635—show the means by which these questions were raised and how they were being discussed.27 During this time Chinese advisors brought to the attention of their ruler and his staff the problems of personnel, organization, and the clarification of administrative roles. On the issue of administrative personnel, an overriding concern was how to obtain, use, and secure the loyalty of people for the running of the state. The six boards had just been established in 1631, but neither a set of operational regulations nor a system of oversight had been installed to oversee bureaucratic operations. This presented a problem of internal administrative coherence, which was expressed

27 Especially see TCZY, p. 1.1a, 1.9b, 1.25b.
with not a little anxiety among advisors. As Chinese advisor Hu Gongming put it in 1632, “While it is necessary to use good people, these people must be cultivated. Today the emperor says he is cultivating people, but he does not yet have the key to cultivating people.”

The problem, as they saw it, was filling out the administrative staff of the state, and regulating these officials both institutionally and coercively. Trusted officials like Ning Wanwo wrote with suggestions of using the tradition of the civil examination to find good bureaucrats, which, in his eyes, was the only means to obtaining officials devoted to service and learning. Similarly, others suggested employing more Chinese officials, and articulated various standards for the promotion of good people. Even with good officials, however, there remained the question of oversight. “There is no one to oversee operations,” memorialized Ma Guangyuan in 1632. “It is like a cart without reins, or a ship without a rudder. There is nothing to control it. If things begin to go awry or there is difficulty, the emperor will not be able to know.” Ma would write the next day proposing the establishment of the six offices of scrutiny (liuke) to maintain censorial surveillance over the six boards. Further suggestions ranged from employing speaking officials to reporting on bureaucratic activity.

At the root of these proposals was a concern with establishing and regulating proper political relationships. In their memorials on personnel they emphasized the need to abrogate those

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28 TCZY, Hu Gongming, 1.35b.
29 TCZY, 33b, Ning Wanwo, Tc7.7.22.
30 TCZY, 36a, Chen Tinglin, Tc7.9.5.
31 TCZY, Wen Wengui, Tc7.7.22.
32 TCZY, 1.43b, Ma Guangyuan, Tc6.11.28.
33 TCZY, 1.46a. This proposed part of the bureaucracy was based on the Ming structure and would be responsible for monitoring the flow of documents between the emperor and the boards. See Hucker, A Dictionary of Official Titles, n. 3793
34 TCZY, 2.1b, Ma Guozhu, Tc7.1.19.
relationships that did not instill complete political authority in the sovereign by circumventing or cutting out the imperial relatives, or anyone else who might manipulate political resources in a manner adverse to the particular vision of the state building project. The calls to cultivate new talent, to use the civil examinations, and promote good people all suggested the imperial control of political resources and concentration of power into a political hierarchy at the top of which stood the emperor. Take for example Li Qifeng’s call for ordering the administration properly through the conduct and relationships of officials. “Each ruler has a system for his time. My khan can set up his own system, as long as it distinguishes superiors from inferiors and ranks and classes.”

When this political order was challenged and internal political relationships and personal favors began to overtake the administrative work and hierarchy, cliques could form and the operations of the state become compromised, as both Fan Wencheng and Ning Wanwo pointed out had begun to happen in late Tiancong, just before the initial employment of the formal court ceremony.

There is little evidence that makes a direct connection between these personnel issues and the establishment of the formal court ceremony. No record exists of actors articulating the solution to governance and the relationship between ruler and official in the language of the court ceremony. Existing records do converge, however, and show the mounting urgency on the part of Han Chinese officials in service of the khan for the need to regulate political relationships and set standards for promotion, reward, and interaction. In the last year of the Tiancong reign, for example, advisors complained about the dispersion of political resources in adverse ways, and issued proposals to formalize procedures. Bao Chengxian memorialized on the need to

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35 TCZY, 1.29a, Li Qifeng, Tc6.9. 一代之君各有代制度。我汗另立一番，惟分尊卑等級便是。
36 TCZY, 3.22a, Fan Wencheng, Tc9.2.16; TCZY, 3.23a, Ning Wanwo, Tc9.2.16.
employ rites in order to establish proper political relationships and set forth guidelines for rewards and the honoring of accomplishments. “Since ancient times up until today, there have been rules. If you honor accomplishments randomly, then honors and ranks will not be respected. The honors and ranks will be saturated, and the worthy will retreat and the petty rise. The khan is of the same position as Shizong and Yuanshi of the Jin Dynasty. You cannot discard the rules of a hundred generations and set an example of awarding without accomplishment.”  

Evidence of the influence of these debates is inscribed in the very contents of the edict announcing the inauguration of the court ceremony. The establishment of a thrice monthly court audience to regulate the interaction between emperor and officials was initially directed at the imperial relatives and banner officials, much as the Chinese advisors had called for in their memorials. Issued on the fourteenth day of the fifth month of the first year of 1636 (Cd1.5.14), the edict stated the following:

Every month on the fifth, fifteenth, and twenty-fifth, the princes of the blood of the first, second, and third degrees on down to the banner captains and above will gather before dawn at the Chongzheng dian. After having lined up according to rank, the khan will come out and sit on the throne. He will hear the affairs that have been handled and crimes that have been judged.  

The imperial relatives and banner officials are clearly singled out here, echoing the concerns of the memorialists cited above to keep them in line and build an efficient bureaucracy with a chain of command from the emperor on down. From the stated edict it is unclear if other officials were

37 TCZY, 3.15a, Bao Chengxian, Te9.1.24.

38 MWYD 10.187; MR 6.1053, Cd1.5.14. yaya biyai ice sunja, tofohon, orin sunja de, hošoi cin wang, doroi giyūn wang, doroi beile se ci fusihūn, nirui janggin ci weshihun, ſun tucire onggolo weshihun dasan i yamun de isafi, banjib đahe jergi bodome faiyame wajja manggi, enduringge han tucifí soorin de tefí, yaya icihiyaha bai, beidehe weile be donjimbi.
Emperor

included in the promulgation, which would have regulated the interaction at this point in time. It is possible they were implied as those who were reporting on the affairs of the state over which the khan would preside and hear. Given that there is no discussion of this event in either the *Shilu*, it is hard to corroborate. The Kangxi-era *Huidian* does mention the event, saying that when the ceremony was set, “all the civil and military officials wore their court clothes and lined up according to rank in the two wings of the palace.” The entry further states that in reporting, “officials from each ministry and office come forward and report their affairs.”

*The ceremony.* The court ceremony was one answer to the question on how to make manifest and control political relationships. The court ceremony facilitated the construction and maintenance of a certain political order in which the emperor stood at the head of a highly stratified bureaucracy and controlled both the enactment of and access to power. To show concretely how this worked it is necessary to look at the practice of the rite itself, where the organization, stratification, and disciplining of politics becomes clear.

As discussed above, in the rite, each of the actors had to assume a specific role reflective of his political station. Officials were organized into their corresponding ranks and forced to assume a role that put them not only a specific relationship with the sovereign but also with their superiors and inferiors in the hierarchy. Their interpersonal relations were herein defined. Similarly, in the ritual, the emperor was elevated to a place that literally stood above political society and metaphorically surveyed all its actions. The ceremony was first recorded as being practiced in 1636.

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39 KXHD, 716.1978.
On the said day, set up the ritual instruments and great carriage. The princes of the blood of the first, second, third, and fourth degrees, and all the civil and military officials dress in their court costumes and line up in front of the palace on the right and left sides according to rank. The Inner Court official calls for the emperor to ascend the throne. The emperor exits his residence in his court costume. Music plays. When the emperor sits on the throne the music stops. The emperor allows all the relatives and officials to sit. Remaining in their ranks, all do one kowtow and sit. Officials from each board and office come out of their ranks and report their affairs. When the reporting is finished the emperor returns. Music play. Those of prince [wang] and below, and all civil and military officials retreat.40

The passage here emphasizes the ranks of the imperial relatives and bureaucracy. To further understand the profundity of the hierarchy and its shaping of the political structure it is useful turn to the amendment of the regulation of the court ceremony in 1676 (Kx16), where the order of the groups and their position in the ceremony were fully articulated. The entry in the Huidian on this date consists of long lists of official ranks and titles organized according to who could sit where in the ceremony. For example, the first line of officials in the ceremony—those who were of the highest rank and had primacy of place and position—were listed as follows: “Duke, marquis, etc. and all officials of the first grade sit at the front.” The entry goes on to list who sat in the second row, and on down the line. There were nine places of arrangement, which corresponded to the nine grades of official ranks.41 The regulation did not stop there, however. After listing all the corresponding personnel and officials, and assigning them to their appropriate spot, the regulation then launched into another long classification of officials who were not included in the first list. For example, the Chinese board presidents and the vice presidents of the Censorate got to sit with the first group, while the board vice presidents,

40 KXHD 716.1978.
Emperor

scholars (xue shi), and vice censorate were in the second group. In this way, all political roles were accounted for and placed in their assigned positions, which reaffirmed the hierarchy of political relations.

In addition to the strict performances of the officials here, the emperor was also assigned a role and given lines to act out. Or, in the language of this chapter, he was represented as emperor. From the above passage the emperor is seen ascending the throne, wearing his court costume, and returning to his quarters. Throughout the performance he was further accompanied by ten officials and two guards, who would accompany him, flank him as he ascended the stairs to the throne, and stand on either side and behind the throne for the duration of the audience.

Apart from the regular court audience there were other occasions for formal court ceremony that affirmed the political order. In 1636, for instance, imperial relatives crowded into the imperial palace to offer thanks to the khan. With more people pushing in than the hall could accommodate, Hong Taiji first called to have people enter in turns by rank rather than all crowding in. Not many months later, Board of Li officials had a special imperial audience to present the completed Shilu for Taizu’s reign. In this instance, they divided themselves ethnically and took turns to present in the respective order of Manchu, Mongol, and then Chinese languages. Similarly, in the fall of 1638, there was a special audience for the presentation of the ritual calendar. What all of these cases confirm is the use of li in order to represent the emperor.

44 MR 6.1084, Cd1.5.29; SL, p. 377-1.
45 MR 7.1442, 1445, 1447, 1448-50, Cd1.11.15.
at the head of the bureaucratic state, and that the regular practices reproduced a certain political order that preserved the hierarchy of relationships and allowed some individuals more control over political resources than others.

Transgression. Officials were required to attend and perform the tri-monthly court audience, regardless of whether they had business to report or not. The passage quoted above from the Huidian on the event points out that those officials reporting affairs approached the throne to deliver their reports. That is, officials not conducting business that morning still gathered and partook in the ceremony. Attendance was mandatory, not because of the need for all officers to be present for the transaction of state affairs, but rather to engage in the enactment of the political order—to learn and reaffirm the stratified roles. In fact, to not attend was a serious offense and deserving of punishment.

The case of Wu Mingxuan illustrates just such a transgression of attendance. On the fifth day of the fourth month of 1654 (Sz11.4.5), the Autumn Official of the Directorate of Astronomy, Wu Mingxuan failed to attend court ceremony. In an investigation of all attendees for the ceremony, the Court of State Ceremonial noted a discrepancy and informed Board of Li president Hu Shi’an, who memorialized on the problem and pointed out that the mid-rank official Wu Mingxuan did not notify anyone of his lack of attendance, nor did he provide any excuse. The case was to be sent to the Board of Personnel to investigate and issue punishment.47

Within a month, the Board of Personnel had deliberated on the matter and concluded that Wu

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(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). In their estimation, the ritual calendar was a means to control space and time. My evidence shows the ritual calendar could also serve as a political tool to both represent the sovereign and to routinize socio-political order.

47 BDTB 02-01-02-1982-021, Sz11.4.14. The imperial rescript can also be found at Manhan piaoqian chu, GSA 294426-100.
was in the wrong. President Liu Zhengzong memorialized that Wu would be docked three months’ pay.\(^{48}\)

Ceremonial absences were not uncommon, but they did have to be applied for and approved. A survey of Shunzhi and Kangxi-era routine memorials in the Grand Secretariat archives show both the frequent application by officials for absence from the ceremony for various reasons of sickness, traveling, or business, and the constant reporting of officials who failed to attend. By 1672 (Kx12), cases had become common enough that the Board of Li sought to regulate the absences and put the punishments into code. Officials failing to attend without prior notification along with the submission of a sufficient reason would get docked one month’s pay. For those officials who excused themselves for sickness but then later discovered to not be at home recuperating would be charged one year’s pay.\(^{49}\)

*Crisis Rituals*

While populations could be controlled and violence enacted or subsumed, what to do in the face of natural disasters? How could the state both account for the destructive forces of nature and give the illusion of the ability to control them? Indeed, how could the state justify itself as the purveyor of order in a naturalized society when an agrarian population relied so heavily on forces beyond the immediate grasp of what any ruler could hope to directly influence: the weather?

\(^{48}\) BDTB 02-01-02-1983-023, Sz11.5.3.

\(^{49}\) KXHD 716.1985.
One answer was through ritual. The undertaking of various crisis rituals during natural disaster events such as droughts, floods, earthquakes, and fires cast the emperor as both the symbolization and embodiment of the state. The ritual further naturalized existing political relations through the construction of the illusion of response. The activity of the sovereign in praying for rain, for example, fulfilled the role of the position of emperor in the time of drought. A standard ritual activity was instituted in the face of natural disasters that would give the sovereign and his state a vehicle by which to both preserve and justify the existing socio-political order. The ritual served as an expression of the protection provided by the state, and the emperor’s activity in the ritual signified his role as sovereign and keeper of that order. It is true that the man still might deliberate on famine relief policy, mobilize people and resources, or even tour stricken areas, but it was also just as important—indeed, perhaps more important—to perform the ritual acts prescribed for the emperor during times of crisis.

The Board of Li was at the focus of making sure the sovereign was performed in the proper way. To put it another way, the Board of Li, much like the other boards, was called on to deal

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with crises. How should the emperor act when forces beyond his control threatened social and political stability? The Board of Li had the answer: he should undertake acts of li to make an argument about the nature and order of the cosmos, the emperor, and society. The ritual not only provided an act or performance of the emperor and defined the role of the sovereign in such times of crisis, it also created a perception of the sovereign and state as intimately connected with an already conceptualized cosmos in a way that naturalized both. If disaster struck, it was a result of the sins of the sovereign, and he would atone for them through the proper performance as the sovereign. In this capacity, the Board of Li was charged with aligning the role of the sovereign with nature, and making sure that the ruler performed the emperor at all times, and especially during times of crisis.

The ritual. What exactly did it mean to perform the emperor in times of natural disaster? Indeed, what was the prescribed ritual that could naturalize the position of the emperor and his relation to the cosmos? To answer these questions, Qing administrators turned to the Ming for guidance. Chapters two and five outlined in different ways how Ming practice served as the basis of consideration for constructing the New Year’s Day ceremony. It discussed how the Qing consulted the Ming ritual statutes right up until the publication of the set of Qing statutes in 1690, and used them as a point of departure in remaking ritual content to suit the social conditions. It is thus no surprise to find Board of Li ritual specialists turning to the Ming precedent in the suburban sacrifices. In the first year of the Shunzhi reign (1644), Board of Li director of sacrifices Liu Chang reported that sacrifices should adhere to the Ming statutes. The following year, the Board of Li memorialized in the first month and again in the tenth month to

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52 GSA 185043-062, Sz1.7.29. He also made a similar report for the sacrifice to Confucius, see GSA 185043-063.
inform the throne on the need to follow Ming precedent in conducting suburban sacrifice. This was all the more important for the emperor when sacrificing in person.\textsuperscript{53}

The crisis ritual as the Qing first practiced it is detailed in the first issue of the Board of Li statutes in the Qing. This is how it read:

The day before [the scheduled day of the ritual], the emperor leads all imperial relatives and lower ranks to worship together with all the civil and military officials. They abstain for three days unaccompanied, and without any sendoff or welcoming rite at the altar. All officials are ordered to dress in light, plain clothes. Slaughter is prohibited. The government offices should not hear any legal cases for the period.

At dawn, the emperor dresses in plain clothes and goes to the altar. There are no fans or parasols. The streets are not cleared and no music is played. There is no ritual coordination, and sacrificial jade is not used. There are no libations, nor any sacrificial meat. Officials prepare the text, and the director of sacrifices prepares the altar at the Round Mound, including wine, incense, and silk, together with the dried meat.

The emperor enters through the left Zhaoshou gate, while the imperial relatives follow and officials line up in the wings. The Master of Ceremonies presides. The escort calls to ascend the throne, and the emperor bows to the position of the throne. The Master of Ceremonies welcomes the sovereign deity. The escort calls to ascend the altar, and the emperor offers incense before the position of Shangdi. The escort calls to kneel and the emperor kneels. He calls for incense and the incense official kneels to the emperor’s left and holds out the incense box. The emperor holds the stick of incense and places it in the urn. He does this again with three pieces of incense. The escort again calls him to position, and the emperor again takes the position. The escort calls to kneel, kowtow, and rise. The transmitter calls for all officials to kneel, kowtow, and rise. The emperor does three genuflections and nine prostrations and rises. The nobles and officials all follow him in this ritual.\textsuperscript{54}

At this point the participants had done about a third of the required ritual steps. The emperor and officials had all arrived at the altar; the Board of Li had prepared all the sacrificial objects and put everyone in position. The deities were called upon and welcomed to the altar. The

\textsuperscript{53} SL, p. 119-2, Sz2.1.7; SL, p. 184-2, Sz2.10.21.

\textsuperscript{54} KXHD 718.2917-18
Emperor had ascended to the position of the throne and done the necessary sacrifices and bows in front of it as the sovereign—he performed the act of the sacrifice that only the sovereign can perform. This continued throughout the rest of the ritual event: the emperor presented three offerings of silk, wine, and urn, each in turn drawn out and in the same formalistic fashion as quoted above for the offering of incense. With each offering, a liturgy was also read by the emperor, which explained the nature of the crisis and asked for rain.

When all three offerings were complete and kowtows had been performed, the emperor was instructed to stand in the proper position in front of the throne. Only then could the Master of Ceremonies send off the deity. The emperor again would do the three genuflections and nine prostrations followed by the imperial relatives and officials. The silk was then presented at different positions around the altar, and the emperor would burn half of the roll. The escort would call out that the rite was finished, and the emperor took the imperial carriage back to the palace. Later that day, officials would be sent to offer sacrifice at the Earth Altar, the Grain Altar, and the Shenzhi Altar.

*Imperial virtue.* The performance of the sovereign did not begin nor end with the ritual, however. A crisis served as an opportunity to cast the emperor as a moral figure; it enabled an expression of the sovereign as one possessed of specific qualities and characteristics. In articulation of the phenomenon and cause of natural disasters, a language of morality was associated to governance (this in contrast to, say, a rousing speech of different sentiments or the mobilization of his own emotions and ideas). In a formalized language the emperor would berate himself in the abstract for his failings, or cry out that his poor leadership was at the root of the said disaster. Take for

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55 The full description of the ritual is found in KXHD, 718.2917-2923.
example the Shunzhi emperor’s edict on excessive rains and flooding in the capital region in 1653 (Sz10):

In consideration of the deluge and seriousness of the seasonal rains, the relationship between Heaven and humans is fundamentally not well. Morning and night I reverently hope to receive good weather. But still, we get excessive rain for over a month. This is sufficient to give one considerable worry. The accumulating water has inundated the city, destroying houses and creating grain spikes so that commoners struggle to survive. Women wail and the pressure of death mounts. I think anxiously about this, for the cause of it all is my lack of virtue. I will examine my conscience and seek to cultivate myself with complete devotion and respectful dread of the will of Heaven.56

Three years later, the emperor outdid himself, and laid out the standard for the enactment of the position in a long edict to the Board of Li.

Recently there is thunder in winter and snow in the spring, meteorite showers are reported everywhere, and bandits have arisen. All this is caused by my moral failings. I believe that heaven has set up a ruler for the sake of all under Heaven, and that the ruler rules on behalf of heaven. He needs to allow the people to prosper, and to rule by the highest principle. Only then can one look upwards and be answerable to Heaven.

For successive years there have been floods and droughts. People suffer hardship. My first fault is that I have failed Heaven in not living up to the responsibility of the ruler. My second fault is that I have failed my ancestors, for there is unrest and frequent disaster. My ancestors created all under Heaven and passed it on to their descendants. The ruler must think of the hard work that the ancestors invested, and must expand upon their project and bring harmony to all within the four seas. Only then can their accomplishments be consolidated. The world that I rule now is a result of efforts and work of Taizu and Taizong. My third fault is that I have failed the people as a ruler. I have now ruled for six years, and although I have tried to put things right, I still have not yet achieved it, as we still hear reports of disasters…57

56 NGSY 3.263, Sz10.6r.17. Also found in SL, p. 604-2. 考之洪範、作肅為時 雨之徵。天人感應、理本不爽。朕朝夕乾惕、冀迓時和。乃茲者 霧雨匝月、歲事堪憂。都城内外、積水成渠。房舍顚礙、薪桂米 珠。小民艱於居食。婦子嗷嗷、甚者顚壓致死。深可軫念。揆厥由來、皆朕不德所致。朕當一意修省、祗懼天戒。

57 SL, 3.771-2/772/1, Sz13.3.27. 乃近者冬雷春雪。隕石雨土。所在見告。變匪虛生。皆朕不德所致。朕思天為天下而立君。為君者代天敷治。必使民物咸若。治臻上理。然後可以仰答眷命。
Such statements are not hard to come by (I have here but chosen a few). Similarly, the
documentary record shows that the Kangxi emperor continued such pronouncements on failed
imperial virtue as the cause of natural disaster. In fact, these kinds of statements only intensified
in frequency and standardized form under the Kangxi emperor to the extent that there is edict
after Kangxi-edict in which the emperor associated his poor virtue and governance with the
wrath of nature, and which is always accompanied by the need to make amends by engaging in
li. In this way, crisis rituals were an instrumental part of the system of li.

Praying for clear skies and the ritual beginnings. The first Qing-era imperial response to a
natural disaster came in the summer of 1653. Torrential rains had inundated the land for days on
end causing flooding and devastation to field and village. In the sixth month (Sz10.6r.17),
concerned that the crisis was getting out of hand, the Board of Li memorialized the emperor on
the situation and instructed him to go to the suburban altars to pray for clear skies. The emperor
responded immediately, telling the Board of Li to make the necessary arrangements. “The
continued rain causes suffering amongst the people,” the emperor wrote to the Board, “I will

58 For some examples see Kx10.3.19: GSA 278678-026; Kx17.6.10: GSA 278678-042; Kx18.9.13: GSA 278678-
046; Kx18.12.5: GSA 278678-047; Kx19.4.11: GSA 278678-048. Other scholars have taken this type of language as
a sign of an expression and enactment of individual charisma, e.g., Rawski, The Last Emperors, 220. I follow
Snyder-Reinke in seeing the rainmaking ritual as synonymous with good governance. Snyder-Reinke, Dry Spells,
esp. 182-191.
personally go and examine my conscious and cultivate myself...make immediate arrangements, this is not a mere formality!"\(^{59}\)

Three years later, the Board of Li was called upon to provide a solution to a similar crisis of excessive rain and flooding. In an edict, the emperor bemoaned the suffering of the people and expressed his need to make sincere prayers for clear skies. He ordered the board to look up the proper precedent and prepare the ritual.\(^{60}\) Similarly, when the following summer was dry and without rain, the emperor turned to the board for instructions on how to address the crisis, the response of which was to order a rainmaking ritual.\(^{61}\) Two months later, when it worked too well and rain flooded the countryside, the emperor sought to “examine my offenses” and asked the Board of Li to pick the proper date and prepare the ritual.\(^{62}\)

**Rainmaking.** These ritual activities on praying for clear skies and good weather are the earliest acts on natural disaster in the system of li for the Qing emperor. Despite this action for clear skies, more often than not insufficient rain created crisis and caused government anxiety. The first of the Qing rainmaking rituals were performed in 1657 (Sz14), initiating what would become one of the most important activities of the Qing emperor in the system of li. The spring and early summer that year were dry, and the emperor reminded the Board of Li at the start of the fourth month of the year to go to the suburban altars and pray if there were a drought. “If there is no response, then I will personally go to the Altar of Heaven and reverently pray. The

\(^{59}\) SL, p. 605-1, Sz10.6r.17. 天雨連綿，民生可念朕當躬先修省。大小臣工，各宜盡職，補過，以圖感格天心。祈晴事宜，著即虔恪舉行。毋事虛文

\(^{60}\) NGSY 3.349, Sz13.5r.11. Also see SL, p. 783-1.


\(^{62}\) SL, p. 864.1-2, Sz14.7.7.
board should select a time and memorialize on the ritual precedent,” he said. Ten days later, rain had still not fallen and the emperor wrote to the Board of Li telling them he was “fearful and will myself go to pray.” He said that he himself would take up the “burden of responsibility for bringing rain,” and in accordance with precedent, “I will send an official to sacrifice and pray to the gods. The board should pick an appropriate date.” Two days later Board of Li president Si Guotai responded to the emperor telling him that they were on the case and would look up the proper ritual procedure and pick an appropriate date to carry out the rite. A few days later, the rite was conducted.

All things considered, the ritual was a success. Over the following three days excessive rain fell and drenched the land. According to precedent, officials were sent to the Altar of Heaven, the Earth Altar, and the Grain Altar to give thanks with the rites of gratitude. A Board of Li official was sent to the Shenzhi altar.

Three years later, another crippling drought had overtaken the land, and the emperor wrote to the Board of Li on the need for rainmaking activities. “There must be a reason for this crisis,” the emperor wrote on the ninth day of the sixth month (Sz17.6.9), “and I blame myself.” He went on to say that he had prayed for rain with devote sincerity, but these prayers had gone unanswered. He then told the board that he would go through with the full rainmaking ritual. “On the thirteenth I will prepare to abstain and then walk to the southern suburban altar. At midnight I

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64 SL, p. 856-1, Sz14.4.22.
65 GSA 144654-001, Sz14.4.24.
66 KXHD, 718.2923.
67 From the evidence at hand, it appears that the lack of rain would reach a crisis point after three years of drought, and only then necessitate rainmaking activities. This is alluded to in a memorial on Sz14.4.22, a Shilu entry on Sz17.6.15, and an edict on Kx10.3.19, all of which cite the lack of rain over the past three years as the reason for beginning rainmaking activities. See SL, p. 856-1, 1055-2; GSA 278678-026.
will offer sacrifice at the Round Mound. I will plead and pray for timely rain to quickly fall and rescue those affected by the disaster. If there is still no rain, then again I will personally go and pray until Heaven responds. The board should prepare the necessary sacrifices." On the fifteenth, after abstaining for three days and offering animal sacrifices, the Board of Li led the emperor in the rainmaking ritual, similar to the one outlined above. That day, records report, rain fell and drenched the land.

The next year, in the third month, the Board of Li again intervened in a prolonged drought and prayed for rain at the Altar of Heaven. In 1664 (Kx3.6.21), the board was ordered to relieve the drought in the capital by conducting rainmaking activities. Again, in 1665 (Kx4.3.5), 1669 (Kx8.7.8), 1670 (Kx9.3.22, 4.21), and 1671 (Kx10.3.19) board officials sacrificed at the Altar of Heaven in prayers for rain. In the fourth lunar month of 1671 (Kx10.4), with rain still having failed to fall after board interventions, the Kangxi emperor undertook the ritual himself for the first time. These series of activities began a systematic regularity of frequent rainmaking activities by the Board of Li and the emperor. This pattern of rainmaking activities would go on throughout the Kangxi and Yongzheng periods, with the Board of Li performing sacrifice at times when rain failed to fall, and the emperor joining when the crisis grew acute and his personal intervention was required. This became so much a part of the imperial activity that by

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68 SL, p. 1051.1-2, Sz17.6.9. 諏禮部，今夏亢陽日久，農事堪憂，朕念致災有由繫自刻責，殺為民天，非雨不遂，竭誠祈禱，積有日時。乃喆誠未達，雨澤尚稽。晝夜焦心，不遑啟處，茲卜於月之十三日，預行齋戒，黎明步至南郊。是夜子刻，祭告圜丘，懇祈甘霖速降。以拯災黎，若仍不雨，則再行躬禱，務回天意。祭告儀物、爾部即速行備辦。

69 The Huidian notes that the same ritual was used. KXHD 718.2923.

70 SL, p. 1055.2, Sz17.6.15; KXHD, 718.2923.

71 SL, 55-1, Sz18.3.19.

72 See SL, p. 186.2, 412.1, 439.1, 443.1, 477.1; GSA 278678-026.

73 GSA 278678-027, Kx10.4.7.
the time of the Qianlong emperor, in 1742, rainmaking ritual was elevated to the level of grand sacrifice and conducted annually along with other seasonal rituals.⁷⁴

_Disasters_. The crisis ritual was not only employed in times of flood or famine. The system of li also had practices for general disasters. Crisis of fire, of earthquakes, or even cosmological phenomenon necessitated state activity and the emperor as the highest order of the state to act. The most pertinent cases in the archives illustrate the imperial response to general disaster from the particularly bad year of 1679 (Kx18).⁷⁵ In the ninth month, a devastating earthquake struck, requiring imperial action. The Kangxi emperor said he would go himself to pray at the Altar of Heaven, and the Board of Li was to pick the appropriate date.⁷⁶ The next day, the Board of Li president sent officials to the suburban altars to pray, and he set about choosing an appropriate date for the emperor to go himself.⁷⁷ Not quite three months later, the Palace of Great Peace (Taihe dian) was destroyed by fire. “I take this as a dire warning,” the Kangxi emperor wrote to the Board of Li. “Pick a date and time to perform the ritual.”⁷⁸

All of these cases are from the late Shunzhi and Kangxi periods. They are the earliest extant cases of the emperor performing crisis rituals. From the archival record, it appears that crisis ritual activity did not begin until this time. The _Huidian_ also cites 1657 (Sz14) as the year of the

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⁷⁴ The other four grand sacrifices were those that took place at the Round Mound, the Square Pool, and in the ancestral hall, and praying for grain. See QLHD 36.1a-b.

⁷⁵ In addition to the disasters discussed below, the summer of 1679 was particularly dry and necessitated numerous rainmaking activities. See GSA 278678-044, Kx18.3.26; GSA 278678-045, Kx18.4.10.

⁷⁶ GSA 278678-046, Kx18.9.3; SL, p. 1072-2.

⁷⁷ GSA 155911-001, Kx18.9.14.

⁷⁸ GSA 278678-047, Kx18.12.5. Also found in SL, p. 1099-2. The entire edict reads, 上諭禮部本月初三日太和殿災變出非常朕心深切警揚茲欲詔誡天下爾部即擇期具儀以聞
first case of the full imperial performance of a crisis ritual. Which leads to the question, why so late? The other key rituals highlighted in this section of representation were implemented at the very beginning of the Manchu state in order to facilitate the institutionalization of the emperor. Crisis ritual, and particularly rainmaking ritual, did not begin to become part of the imperial repertoire until twenty years later—one could even argue that it was not until Qianlong that the rite—and thus this representation—was fully systematized. So, how to make sense of the appearance of what would become one of the most important ritual activities of the emperor?

There are two convincing answers to this question, one conceptual and the other practical. Conceptually, there was a long process of forming the system of li. It was not fully articulated until the publication of the Huidian in 1690, after all. While the basic structures of a state organization need to be imagined before they can be implemented, to expect state-makers to foresee all the necessary pieces to those structures of social and political order beforehand is to stretch the expectations of history and the bounds of human activity. The details of both the imaginative and institutional contexts through which these orders arise are fragmented and disjointed; they are cobbled together in a piecemeal fashion and joined with the frailest of glues. The arrangements are haphazard and connections loose.\(^{79}\) It is a testament of the tenacity and innovation of the rulers and their staff that this fragile order stuck together so firmly and resisted tendencies to blow apart. Rituals conducted in the face of natural and cosmological disasters did work to make sense of the emerging socio-political order. That is, the crisis rituals were found to be expedient in the same way that grand ceremony and court audience were expedient for the representation of the sovereign and his performance as the emperor of China. At a certain point

\(^{79}\) For more on this idea of social order see Unger, *False Necessity*, 80–81.
in the ongoing formation of the social and political orders the emperor were cast in another way in the performance of the position.

This conceptual discussion leads to the practical matters of the day. Not until the Shunzhi period did military operations in the north begin to subside as they shifted southwards; and while builders of the young agrarian-bureaucratic state could control and destroy populations with force, they could not command the weather. The need to address such natural crisis thus became more immediate. This is not to say that agriculture and seasonal weather was not important before this time, but rather that the types of crises the state dealt with were military crises, and ritual efforts needed to be directed there, as was discussed in chapter four. When the immediacy of those crises shifted away from the capital and then ceased altogether in the mid-Kangxi era, the importance of the agricultural crises took on an ever-larger role.  

A third, more speculative, response to the question of timing touches on a peripheral theme of the dissertation—the nomadic encounter with the agrarian-bureaucratic state. Disaster rituals, complete with the formalistic performance and moral atonement, are a cultural form of an agrarian empire. The way in which they articulate, frame, and represent the sovereign is directly connected with a centralized hierarchical order governing a large agrarian territory and the role of the emperor within it. Furthermore, the ruler taking moral responsibility for a natural crisis and then performing a formulaic rite in an effort to atone for his sins is a practice found throughout the Chinese dynasties. Unlike the New Year’s Day ceremony or court audience, the Manchu ruler never had to undertake such an act—he never had to utter the phrases linking his personal virtue to the poor weather, nor denigrate himself in a ritual that required extraneous and

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80 It should also be noted that the Qing faced competition. In 1647, a heterodox cult in Shanxi challenged Qing authority and legitimacy. The cult’s leader arose and attracted followers based on his rainmaking capabilities. GSA 289520-001, Sz4.4.3. There is one other earlier case I have found of rainmaking activities by Qing subjects and local elders from 1653 (Sz10), but the emperor had no involvement whatsoever. See GSA 005581-001, Sz10.5.9.
extreme acts. It was, in all regards, quite foreign. From this perspective, it is not surprising that Hong Taiji would have demurred at instituting the ritual, as would have Dorgon. Not until Fulin took the throne in 1651 (Sz8), at the age of thirteen, would it have been possible to begin to propose seriously the performance of the ritual. Which is exactly what happened.81

IMPERIAL DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

The formalized practices of ritual activities conducted under the impetus and instruction of the Board of Li fit together to make up a system of social and political meaning. Grand ceremonies, court audience, and crisis rituals all worked to represent the power and position of the sovereign in practice; even shock incidents became acts of politics, as the employment of crisis rituals meant performing certain acts in an expression of imperial sovereignty by an individual at the head of a central, hierarchical organization ruling over an agrarian territory. This individual, while invested with the power of the state, could not rule without the help of others, however. His ability to command political and military bodies was reliant on his capacity to delegate tasks of rule and administration to other actors. The collection of taxes, the conquest and occupation of an area, the application of rules, all involved not only a chain of command but also the capacity of the ruler to delegate his authority to others. Political resources had to be divided, but done so in a way that preserved the hierarchy of distribution and control.

The Qing system of li facilitated this political process. First, practices of li for the emperor, the imperial relatives, and the administrative staff were established in relation to others and used define the authority of the emperor within a certain context. This worked within the law, whereby binding rules were established for social stratification and ritual activity, which

81 This is not to say that the Qing had become Chinese or that Sinicization was upon the Manchus, only that another practice had been added to system of symbolic meanings.
Emperor

helped solidify the political order. Then, li was used as a symbolic act of delegating authority to others by standardizing a procedure for a surrogate to perform the ritual and ceremony activity of the emperor. In ceremonies where the emperor was required to be present and active, he could send someone else in his stead.

*Establishing the standard of imperial authority*

The process of creating a political order of binding rules applicable to all actors began early in the formation of the Manchu state. Li was a key aspect of the legal formation, and it involved concerted efforts by both the Board of Li and Hong Taiji. In the beginning of the second month of 1632, the Board of Li, less than a year after its establishment, began to lay out the boundaries by which the activities of the political actors would be contained. It did this first by issuing regulations on the extent and content of the procession of the ruler and the imperial relatives when on tour, including the punishments for transgression.

When surrounding villages and marching on the road [implement the following] in accordance with the regulation for carrying flags, umbrellas, horns, trumpets, drums, and pipes: the khan has three pairs of flags, two umbrellas, and six guards. The senior beile have two pairs of flags, one umbrella, and four guards. All other beile have one pair of flags, one umbrella, and two guards each.

When assembling in the presence of the khan, neither flags, umbrellas, nor guards are allowed. When exiting the city gate, each personally take up your flags and umbrellas. If there is error in this, the Board of Rites will investigate, and the khan will order the taking of a sheep. If it is not received, then we will take the sheep. When meeting the khan at a certain place, other flags, umbrellas, and guards are not allowed. When the khan goes out on the march, only the senior beile take umbrellas.82

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82 MWYD 8.99, Tc6.02.04; MR 5.686.kiru sara laba bileri tungken ficakū neneme bilaha songko cooha de gaifi yabu, gašan i šurđeme giyai de yabure de, han de kiru ilan juru, sara juwe, niyalma jailabure niyalma ninggun, amb beile de kiru juwe juru, sara emke, niyalma jailabure niyalma duin, geren beise de kiru emte juru, sara emte, niyalma jailabure niyalma juwete.

han i jakade isambihe, kiru sara naka, niyalma jailabure niyalma ume nakara, meni meni cisui hecen i duka tucime yabuci, kiru sara gaifi yabu, ere be ufaraci, dorolon i jurgan i beile dacilafi, han ci aname emu mudan
The Board of Li had drawn up a regulation on the types of ritual instruments and number of bodyguards the emperor and other imperial relatives could personally carry when out in military march or on a siege, which was implemented by the ruler. The act was at once a means to distinguish the sovereign from the others, but in doing so it also placed him in a certain position vis-à-vis other subjects. This position was not arbitrary, nor did it come with any personal or veto power outside of the position within the political hierarchy.

Consider what happened next. Two days after the issuing of this regulation (Tc6.2.6), Hong Taji went out on an inspection patrol and failed to form a procession and bring his ritual instruments. In short, he did not follow the regulation. When informed of this transgression by the Board of Li he did not leverage his imperial position and give himself as emperor primacy over the rite. Rather, he accepted the punishment himself. As recounted in the Manchu records,

That day, the khan said, “when going on an inspection tour of [my] sons’ areas, I did not take flags or umbrellas.” Board of Li vice president Kicungge said the fine will be a sheep [for the transgression]. Dahai and Kürcan [two advisors] heard of this and sent Hoto, an imperial guard, to report to the khan. They told him that the khan said, “Today, I am going to my sons’ area again,” and that because the day before he did not have flags and umbrellas the board will take a sheep…

After hearing from Hoto, the khan, sent Sonin and Hoto to the Board of Li with a sheep and explained, “Going out yesterday was a situation not in which the flags and umbrellas were forgotten, but rather left behind because of familiarity with the destination, and it was for this reason that I did not report to the Board of Li. The fault is mine. But if I resist the law then why have the law? Take this sheep.”

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83 MR 5.688-689, Tc6.2.6.

tere inenggi, han, juse i jakade giyaribuha bade genere de sara kiru gamahakū seme, dorolon i jurgan i mujilen bahabukū kicungge honin gaimbi seme gisurere be, dahai baksi, kürcan baksi donjifi, han de hoto hiya be takürame han, enenggi geli juse i jakade genembi sere, sikse kiru sara gamahakū seme jurgan i niyalma honin gaimbi sembi, be donjiha be dahame, mujilen bahabuki seme
Hong Taiji as ruler was careful to subject himself to the set standard. From this incident it is seen that he observed li as law, and accepted the consequences for his own transgression of li. This was fit into the political order, and further aimed to hold the imperial relatives accountable as well.

Hong Taiji still left space for the intervention of the sovereign, however. Upon recognizing the regulation and paying the fine to the board, Hong Taiji demanded that the rule be changed to account for traveling to the area under question (ereci amasi targara bade yangse nakaki). He reasoned that it was a well known area firmly under Manchu control and occupied by his sons. According to his logic, this abrogated any need for the ritual formality of the flags and umbrellas of the official entourage.

Regulations did not stop there, however. In 1636, Hong Taiji sent specific instructions to the Censorate telling them to monitor the position of the emperor for transgressions against the office. “Remonstrate if you see that I am not frugal and waste resources, if hard working officials are put to death, if I seek pleasure or engage in hunting and do not conduct state affairs, if I seek wine and women and do not attend to business, if good officials are demoted and bad officials promoted, or if crimes are held up and good deeds unmentioned.”

84 He spoke in relation to himself as emperor, but it also had larger implications for the establishment of a bureaucratic operation and for the preservation of a permanent political system. The arbitrary—or even

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84 MR 6.1049, Cd1.5.14. malhüşame baItalarakû ulin be mamgiyara, gungge amban be wara wasibure, efn sebjen aba de dosifî doro dasarakû, nure boco de dosifî bai taichihiyarakû, tondo amban dalibure, jalingga amban tukiye bure, weile bisire be wesibure, gungge bisire be wasibure, ere gese babe saci tafula.
autocratic—powers of the charismatic leader at the head of a personal staff were given articulation as standards and codes based on li.

A telling Kangxi-era edict illustrates the level of success of this institutionalization process. Some sixty years after Hong Taiji’s initiative, his grandson, now enthroned as the Kangxi emperor, found himself frustratingly confined by the ritual procedure. In 1689 (Kx28), the capital and surrounding countryside were enmeshed in a three-year drought. The central government had already suspended tax remittance and offered aid, and the time for prayers and ritual performance had arrived. The form that it would take, however, was too standard, too routinized for the emperor. “Every year we use a set form,” he complained. “But if we are to offer prayers on behalf of the people it is better that we speak our emotions directly and write them out as they are.” That year a new liturgy was drawn up to recite for the prayer, but the ritual remained unchanged and the emperor performed it in the same manner.

Symbolic delegation of authority

The symbolic act of delegating authority to another was established in the Qing system of li. The practice involved the emperor absenting from a ritual and sending a surrogate in his place. In such cases, the person of the emperor could be completely removed from the activity while the position and the hierarchical organization still remained even without the man. Another person would stand in for the emperor, doing the ritual activity on behalf of the emperor. This practice later became so common that the Board of Li routinized it by offering the emperor a choice to perform himself or send someone else, and by outlining the procedure for a surrogate. Rawski looked at this practice in the mid to late Qing, and argued that the emperor carefully and

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85 YZHD 771.5137. 每年皆用定式。既為民祈求，宜直抒情事，另行標寫。
Emperor proactively employed it in order to put favored people in a favored position.\textsuperscript{86} I contribute to this work by taking up the origins of the practice as it fit into the system of li.

It was common to send others to offer sacrifice for the lesser rituals. The historical record is littered with references to officials being sent to give sacrifice at tomb sweeping day or the lantern festival. Delegating sacrifice at the ancestral temple was also a regular affair. As discussed in chapter two, the New Year’s Day ceremony practice was to send someone off to the ancestral temple in the beginning of the ceremony while the emperor went to the tangse. Similarly, annual rites at the ancestral temple were often delegated to others. In the first month of 1655 (Sz12), for example, Board of Li president Langkio memorialized the Shunzhi emperor to inform him that he would have to go sacrifice at the ancestral temple in a week’s time. “Will you go yourself to perform the rite, or should we send an official surrogate?” he asked.\textsuperscript{87} Later that year, Board of Li president Enggedei wrote to the emperor telling him he would have to again sacrifice at the ancestral temple, and asked for a response on the same matter of going himself or sending someone.\textsuperscript{88} To both these memorials, the Shunzhi emperor demurred about going himself and wrote out specific instructions on which officials to send in his stead.

Although less frequent than in the lesser rituals, imperial absence from grand ceremonies also occurred. As early as the winter of 1641 (Cd6), the historical record shows that the practice of the imperial absence from grand ceremony began. In that year, Hong Taiji sent Board of Li president Mandarhan to take his place in the winter solstice ceremony.\textsuperscript{89} This practice continued for the next couple years and on into the Shunzhi period. In 1655, when the emperor again

\textsuperscript{86} Rawski, \textit{The Last Emperors}, 215-220.

\textsuperscript{87} GSA 005625-001, Sz12.1.3.

\textsuperscript{88} GSA 005605-001, Sz12.12.18.

\textsuperscript{89} SL, p. 790.2, Cd6.11.17.
absented from the winter solstice ceremony and sent someone else, he gave the following instructions to the Board of Li: “Since coming to the throne I have been sincere and respectful in the suburban sacrifice ceremonies. When sending a representative in my place, he must also abstain according to the rite.” This indicates that despite the absence of the man in the role of emperor, the position would still be performed, and done so with the same ritual propriety. The system of li here helped organize social stations in a way that would enable the delegation of authority and facilitate the operation of government.

The standard practice for sending a surrogate was not formalized, but the regular practice can be conjured from the materials at hand. The general outline is that the Board of Li would memorialize to inform the throne of an upcoming sacrifice or rite. The memorialist would often inquire if the emperor planned to perform the rite himself or send a representative. If he was to go himself, the emperor would respond with, “I will go myself and do the rite.” If the emperor was to send someone else he would often name an individual. Sometimes the Board of Li would submit a list of appropriate candidates. An exchange at the end of the seventh month of 1644 (Sz1) over the state sacrifice to Confucius is a good example. On the twenty-ninth, Liu Chang from the Court of Imperial Sacrifices memorialized that they were to follow the Ming precedent for the sacrifice to Confucius, which required sending an official to do the rite. The date for the sacrifice was less than five days away, however, and the emperor still had not responded to suggestions about his presence. “Without the emperor’s response, we don’t dare move forward,” Liu wrote. “…should we prepare? Should we send an official?”

90 SL, p. 747.1, Sz12.11.25.

91 “Mini beye genefi doroloki” in Manchu, and “朕親詣行禮” in Chinese. For an example see GSA 164067-001, Kx5.8.8.

92 GSA 185043-063, Sz1.7.29. A copy can also be found in GSA 005638-001.
responded that the Board of Li should conduct the rite in the temple of Confucius according to precedent. When Liu replied on the same day, saying that he had looked up the precedent and they should send both a Grand Secretary and an official from the imperial academy, the emperor said to send scholar Yang Fangxing of the Secretarial Court.⁹⁴

From this exchange, it is clear that certain guidelines for sending surrogates were followed. In accordance with the procedure outlined above, the Board of Li also upheld a precedent of what kind of official could be substituted to perform a certain ritual activity.⁹⁵ Different kinds of sacrifices to different deities and in different halls or temples called for different surrogates. This is most clearly articulated in Board of Li president Langkio’s memorial informing the throne on the sacrifice for the first day of spring in 1655 (Sz12): “The emperor can go himself and perform the rite,” he wrote, “or he can send an official surrogate. [If the latter,] send one official to the rear of the palace. Send an official to each of the wings to split the offering. On the same day, send one official to sacrifice to the deity.”⁹⁶ A similar memorial for the end of the year sacrifices shows that the officials to be sent as surrogates were not arbitrary, nor were they necessarily the choice of the emperor. At the end of the lunar year of 1655, Board of Li president Enggendi wrote to inform the throne of the date for the end of the year sacrifice, and that if surrogates were sent, then they needed to be allotted accordingly. He then produced a

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⁹³ Technically it was not the Shunzhi emperor who responded, as he was but five years old and had not yet taken the throne himself to run government affairs. Furthermore, given that the language of correspondence was all in Chinese without any corresponding Manchu, it probably was not the regent Dorgon either, but more likely the Grand Secretaries.

⁹⁴ GSA 005648, Sz1.7.30.

⁹⁵ One might take this analysis one step further and deduce the structural logic behind the substitutions. I have not done that here, as my concern is to illustrate the process in explanation of the system of li.

⁹⁶ GSA 005625, Sz12.1.3.
list of the different positions and two possible choices for each position. In both of these cases, the emperor duly replied with the names of the officials to send to the appropriate place. They were drawn from the supplied list.

LEGITIMIZATION

Alongside the representation and delegation of the authority of the emperor, there still remained the question of who got to be emperor in the first place. The rule of Nurhaci and Hong Taiji was enacted and continued to be justified through military superiority and political mastery—their charisma propelled them to a position of leadership and surrounded them with a staff. In order to institutionalize the position of the sovereign, however, a set of justifications was required that enabled only one man and his descendants to occupy the throne. A precept was needed that would establish clearly why some and not others could rule.

The most common solution to this problem was the construction of an imperial family genealogy that would legitimize rule through bloodline. Under such a set up, the emperor had a legitimate right to the throne and control over political resources because he was a part of a long line of kings. This gave him both the charismatic mystique of the royal blood, and the metaphysical blessing of an ancestral line. In the case of the Manchus, this worked by confirming an inside group that could rise to the throne and exclude others. In making the cut, Hong Taiji included the immediate descendants of Nurhaci as part of the imperial family, and gave noble status to those who descended from parallel ancestral lines. This effectively enabled Hong Taiji’s brothers and sons to claim the throne but not others.

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97 GSA 005605, Sz12.12.18.
This section explores the construction and reproduction of the legitimization of the person of the emperor through worship at the imperial tombs, ancestral temples, and the suburban altars. It asks, what were the institutional arrangements that both enacted and perpetuated this system of justification of the specific person in the position of the sovereign. Sacrifice at the tombs at regular intervals maintained a connection with ancestors as founders. The constant reminder at various times throughout the year both secured and institutionalized the position of emperor as one of right, not privilege. Similarly, worshiping the ancestors at the ancestral temple and the suburban altars around the capital made a connection between the imperial family and the state. Sacrifice to the ancestors at set times throughout the year involved the ancestors intimately in the metaphoric well being of the state, and the literal activity of the sovereign, his staff, and the imperial relatives.

The legitimacy of the occupant of the throne was constructed. The Manchu ruling elite was faced with a problem of focusing political resources to an individual at the top of the emerging agrarian-bureaucratic state, and the Board of Li oversaw the practice that would resolve the matter. The immediate solution was to link certain institutional forms of ancestral worship with the sovereign’s right to rule. The determination of ancestors and the construction of large tombs to house their remains, coupled with formalized worship practices, ensured the exclusion of other noble family lines from being able to claim a natural right to political resources. The construction of an ancestral temple and the placing of the ancestral spirit tablets within, where sacrifice would regularly occur, naturalized the connection between the sovereign and the polity.
Tomb sacrifice

The regular offering of sacrifice at ancestral tombs was a key ritual act to confer legitimacy upon the individual holding the imperial throne. The identification and constant acknowledgement of former rulers lent a necessity to the specific individual occupying it as a successor. The sacrifice kept the political imagination alive with the authority and accomplishments of the state founders, and at the same time affirmed that the only legitimate transmission of control of political resources of the resulting and concurrent state could go to their offspring. Furthermore, the grandeur of the tombs and the conduct of ritual activity there impressed the legitimacy of the occupying ruler upon political subjects. It was not everyone’s father and grandfather who was entitled to such a display and who could command the material resources of the state in death, after all. Indeed, only those of the emperor received such ceremony, which, in a self-fulfilling logic, made the emperor the emperor. The emperor was performed and legitimated through that performance. In this way, tomb worship not only constructed the bloodline, but also continued to remind subjects of royal privilege through constant practice.

The routinization of the practice of worship at the ancestral tombs corresponded with the announcement of the founding of the Qing dynasty. On the first day of the six lunar month of 1636 (Cd1.6.1), Hong Taiji issued an edict laying out regulations on the sacrifice to imperial ancestors. It contained five stipulations that dictated the following:

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1. On New Year’s Eve an official was to be sent to Nurhaci’s tomb to sacrifice an ox and a sheep.
2. In the seventh month, an official was to be sent to Nurhaci’s tomb to light incense.
3. In the spring festival, the khan was to go to the tomb and sacrifice an ox and sheep.
4. On the khan’s birthday an official was to be sent to the tomb to offer wine and fruit and burn incense.
5. On the day of Nurhaci’s death an official was to be sent to the tomb to sacrifice wine and fruit, and to offer incense.\textsuperscript{101}

These were just the seasonal sacrifices. In addition, every first and fifteenth of the month, one ox was to be sacrificed, while wine and fruit were offered and incense lit.\textsuperscript{102}

Nurhaci’s was not the only ancestral tomb to be worshiped. Nurhaci himself had in fact built tombs for his ancestors, both immediate and distant. The founding ancestor of Aisin Gioro, Möngke Temür (posthumous name, Zhaozu), was entombed in Xingjing, along with his great grandson, Fuman (posthumous name, Xingzu). Fuman’s fourth son, Giocangga (posthumous name, Jingzu), was entombed in Dongjing along with his fourth son, Taksi (posthumous name, Xianzu), who was Nurhaci’s father.\textsuperscript{103} While these tombs were constructed quite early—some as early as 1598—the rituals practiced at these sites were not formalized until the Chongde reign. The lack of extant documents make it hard to pinpoint the process by which this happened, but the Kangxi edition of the \textit{Huidian} gives a clear indication of what was going on at which tombs when. Take for example the regular sacrifice conducted at the ancestral tombs.

\textsuperscript{101} MR 6.1095-96, Cd1.6.1.  
\textsuperscript{102} KXHD 718.3185.  
At the Xingjing tomb, on the first day of the new year, butcher one ox. On Tomb Sweeping day, butcher one ox. Send a tomb-care-taking official to practice the rite and offer sacrifice.

At the Dongjing tomb, on the first day of the new year, butcher two oxen. On Tomb Sweeping day, butcher two oxen. Send a noble of the imperial house to practice the rite and offer sacrifice.104

These practices would be expanded and further regulated in the Shunzhi and Kangxi periods, when the early ancestral tombs were given titles and honors, and expansions made and protective measures instituted. The entire process worked to further the entrenchment of the imperial bloodline and the justification of the individual who held the highest office.105

Sacrificing or paying respects at ancestors’ graves was not a new practice, to be sure. The fact that Nurhaci had tombs constructed to his ancestors indicates that some type of worship occurred. Furthermore, Manchu records speak of Nurhaci visiting his father’s grave in 1626 and making offerings.106 Similarly, Hong Taiji offered sacrifice at his father’s grave in 1631. In that year, Tiancong-era documents recount, “According to Jin state precedent, when celebrating the New Year, they would sacrifice to the ancestors on the twenty-ninth day of the twelfth lunar month.”107 Such revelation indicates that some type of recurring worship at ancestral graves did occur before the proclamations of 1636.

Practices were not routinized in the formal ritual logic of the state and institution of the emperor until the first year of the Chongde reign. It was only in 1636, with the issuing of the regulations of ceremony that the ritual activity became part of the practice to institute the

104 KXHD 718.3184-85.
105 For example see KXHD 718.3149-53, 3157, 3185-57.
106 MR 3.965, Tm10.3.3.
107 MR 5.690, Tc6.2.9. Aisin gurun i kooli, aniya arara de, jorgon biyai orin uyun de nenehe mafari de waliyambihe.
emperor and construct legitimacy around claims to the throne. Prior to 1636, for example, the common Manchu noun of *eifu*, or grave, is used to describe the burial place of Nurhaci and other ancestors—the same noun used for any grave. In 1636, however, the noun changes to *hvturingga munggan*, or prosperous tomb. Given that this corresponds directly to the Chinese *fuling*, the adoption of this institutional form to confer the bloodline and thus legitimacy is propounded as it is elevated out of regular practice, where all and any might do for their parents, and given as a distinction as a rite to the imperial family done only for the emperor. Furthermore, the management of the rituals was removed from the private realm of the families involved and put under the jurisdiction of the Board of Li, where it was folded into the regular practice and supervision of the bureaucracy.

There was a convergence of events around 1635-36 that helped in this process of systematizing li. In 1635, Hong Taiji defined the lineage of the imperial family as those descending directly from Nurhaci, kicking other branches out to noble status. The next year he relaxed this decision, incorporating all the descendants of Nurhaci’s father into the imperial lineage. Then, in 1636, the title of emperor was given to the ruler, and that of prince to the other descendants.\(^{108}\) This was also the year that worship at the ancestral temple (*taimiao*) was formalized, which is taken up below.

*The ritual act.* Before turning to the practice of the ancestral temple, it will be useful to look at an example of sacrifice at the tombs. Such an example is important to convey the full activity of the ritual and how it worked impart the necessity of the office to the individual occupying it, and places this legitimization aspect into the system of li. To merely state that the ritual act of

worshiping the ancestors legitimizes the occupants of the throne does not quite do justice to the phenomenon. It is the integration of the acts of the highly routinized and controlled activity of all actors and spectators that more fully enables such a thesis to make sense.

The most complete record available of a sacrifice to the ancestral tombs is in the 1638 Neiguoshiyuan materials. These contemporary records from the Manchu history office provide a blow-by-blow account of the year-end rituals to the ancestors, and they capture the complexity of the positioning of the individual in the role of emperor. Of particular note in the telling of this ritual is that the foregrounding of activity takes place in the capital away from the imperial tomb itself. Not until the time of the Kangxi emperor would the imperial presence make the trip to the tombs and give sacrifice in person.\textsuperscript{109} The Shunzhi emperor attempted to go a few times but failed in his endeavor, first as a result of the ongoing civil war and then at the urging of arguments from his staff against the journey.\textsuperscript{110} Although a visit to the tombs would further the connection between the person of the emperor and his imperial ancestors, ritual activity in the palace on the assigned day could also achieve this affect.

The rite began at the imperial tombs with the lighting of incense and the hanging of gold and silver paper bars. An ox and a sheep were killed, the sacrificial tables set, and wine prepared.\textsuperscript{111} The director of rituals, Abai Agu, escorted officials to the palace, where they entered through the main Daqing Gate and stood waiting in the eastern hall for the khan to emerge and begin the ceremony. The rite then proceeded as follows,

\textsuperscript{109} KXHD 718.3157.

\textsuperscript{110} For an analysis of the Shunzhi emperor’s attempts to visit the ancestral tombs see Chen Tzu-hui, “Qing shizu li hanzhengce” (National Taiwan University, 2004), 27.

\textsuperscript{111} NGSY, p. 732, Cd3.12.29.
At the mao hour (5 a.m.), the khan came out of the Chongzhen dian. Abai Agu, who stood to his west, ascended the eastern stairs and knelt in the center of the platform. When Grand Secretary Garin presented the sacrificial liturgy, the khan bowed and received it. He then bowed toward Abai Agu. Kneeling, Abai Agu took it and exited on the central path to the gate.

After arriving at the Fuling tomb, he took the main path from the gate and placed the liturgy on the west side of the throne. Advancing down the main path, officials presented four tables of prepared food, which they offered in front of the spirit throne. They ascended the western stairs and stood in order.

The two sacrificial officials, Hife and Kūrcan, gave instructions to ascend the eastern stairs, and after bowing in the front center of the spirit throne, called for the official who presents the incense box to present the box to the official on the east side. The official received it and gave it to the sacrificial official, who received it. He offered up sacrificial wine, and gave the incense box to the ritual specialist on the western side. The sacrificial official stood and lit the incense. The box was then given to an official who received it on the west. The ritual specialist instructed to descend the western stairs and stand in the middle. The Master of Ceremonies called for the greeting rite of one genuflection and three prostrations. He called to stand. Board of Rites officials offered meat on plates. When leaving on the main path, the ritual specialist gave instructions to ascend the eastern stairs to offer the meat. After the offering the official instructed to descend the western stairs and stand in the center. The Master of Ceremonies called to kneel. When offering six cups of wine, first Burgi, then Arhai, and third Derdehei, one by one it offered it forth and gave it to the sacrificial official, who presented it and gave it to the sacrificial official on the west side. The sacrificial official on the west offered it to a wine-sacrifice official. First Sitingju, then Bagana, and third Bayan, one by one they ascended the center path and made offerings. After offering, the liturgy was read.\[112\]

\[112\] NGSY, p. 732-34, Cd3.12.29. enduringge han gūlmahūn erin de weshun dasan i yamun de tucifi. wargi ashan de iliha. abai agv dergi ashan i tafakū be wesifi. terkin i dulimba de niyakūrāha. suduri yamun i aliha bithei da garin. wecere bithe be alibure de. enduringge han beye mehume alime gaifi. abai agu de beye mehume alibuhu. abai agu niyakūrame alime gaifi. dulimbai jugūn be tucike.

hūturingga munggan de isinaha manggi, wecere bithe be dulimbai jugūn be gamafī soorin i juleri wargi ashan de sindaha. genehe hafasa budai dere dasaha duin dere be tukiyefi dulimbai jugūn be weimbusi soorin i uleri dobofi. wargi ashan i tafakū be wasifi juwe ashan de faidame iliha.

cercem amban be jorire juwe hafan hife kūrcan jorime dergi ashan i tafakū be wesifi. soorin i juleri wecere amban. dulimba de jorire hafan juwe ashan de sasa niyakr̲a ha mana. hiyan i hose be alibure hafan hiyan i hose be jafafī. dergi ashan i jorire hafan de alibuhu. jorire hafan alime gaifi. wecere amban de buhe. wecere amban alime gaifi weshun jingnefei. hiyan i hose be wargi ashan i jorire hafan de bufei. wecere amban ilifi hiyan dabuha. hose be wargi ashan i alime gajara hafan de buhe. jorire hafan jorime wargi ashan i tafakū be wasifi. tob dulimbaide iliha. hūlā hafan I hūlā be tuwame acara doroi emu jergi niyakūrāfei. ilan jergi hengkilefe. hūlā hafan i ili sere be tuwame ilifi. dorolon jurgan i hafan sa. alikūlaha yali be dobonome dulimbai jugūn be genere de. wecere amban be jorire hafan jorime dergi ashan I tafukū be wesifi. yali be tuwame dobohi. dobome wajīha manggi wargi ashan I tafukū be wasifi. jorire hafan jorime tob dulimbaide iliha. hūlā hafan i hūlā be tuwame niyakūrāfei. ninggu hūntahan i nure be jorire hafan de alibure de, uju de burgi, jaide arhai, ilacide derdehei, emken emken i alibume buhe. jorire hafan emken emken i wecere amban de bufei. wecere amban weshun jinngnefei. wargi ashan i jorire hafan de buhe. wargi ashan i jorire hafan nure dobonoro hafan de alibuhu. uju de sitingju, jaide bagana, ilacide bayan
The liturgy text read by a Board of Li official on behalf of the emperor at the site of the tomb was a standard text, the phrases and words of which had been formalized and rendered full of ritual significance. It is a similar text that can be found year after year. In 1638 it read, “Your filial son kneels and memorializes in front of the spirit throne of father Taizu and mother Taihou. The old year has passed and the new year has arrived. Having prepared the sacrifice for the seasonal rite, I send officials to respectfully sacrifice on my behalf.” After this reading, more kowtowing and wine offering took place. Three sticks of incense were lit and the ceremony concluded.

A few key acts in this ceremony ensured the potency of the rite and effectiveness in its task. Foremost, the emperor was present at the beginning and the end, providing a direct connection of his person as emperor to his ancestors as authorities, and thus linking him to the position of emperor. At the start of the rite he entered the stage taking a central position and providing the liturgy to be read at the ceremony. Then, at the end, this liturgy was read; the emperor’s voice filling the stage once again. Throughout the ceremony at least a dozen officials were present, probably more. Their activity in the rite linked them to the fate of the individual as the successor of rulers. The individual is articulated as a descendent of a line of imperial personages, whose legitimacy is manifest through the rite. He is thus granted that same legitimacy through the actions both of the ancestors and the ritual participants.

*The ancestral temple (taimiao)*

emken emken i dulimbai jugūn be wesifi doboho. dobome wajiha manggi, wecere bithe be hūlaha. hūlaha bithei gisun.

Whereas sacrifice and worship at imperial tombs began quite early under Nurhaci, the use of a specialized temple to do as much did not start until the 1630s. Broadly speaking, the ancestral temple was a space that held spirit tablets of the ancestors to be worshiped by the emperor on specified days and for particular occasions of state importance, such as imperial marriages or success in war. Unlike the tomb sacrifice that took place at the site of the tomb and remained more subdued, worship at the ancestral temple occurred at the temple right outside the southeast gates of the imperial city. It was very much a state event that was meant to integrate the individual of the sovereign into the polity, both by placing him on top of the social and political hierarchy, and by validating him and his offspring as the bearers of the role, which was naturalized by dint of birth into this imperial family.

Establishment. The circumstances of the establishment of the ancestral temple and ancestral worship are somewhat obscure. The Kangxi-era Huidian says that rituals began to be practiced in the temple in the first year of the Chongde reign (the fifth through twelfth lunar months of 1636). It gives no indication if a temple previously existed or if it was constructed that year for the said purpose, however.\(^{114}\) Similarly, the 1736 Mukden Gazetteer records only that worship began with “the state’s beginning” (國初 guochu).\(^{115}\) Later sources give the exact date of the construction of the temple in 1636. The Qianlong-era edited Shilu, for example, records in multiple places the “construction” (yìngjian) and “establishment” (jian miao) of the ancestral temple in the fourth lunar month of 1636—which is technically still the Tiancong era.\(^{116}\) The

\(^{114}\) KXHD 718.3028.

\(^{115}\) Shengjing tongzhi 盛京通志, p. 300-301.

\(^{116}\) SL, p. 363-1, 364-1.
Guangxu-era *Huidian* seems to have picked up this narrative and recorded that “in the first year of the Chongde reign, Hong Taiji built the ancestral temple in Mukden.”\(^{117}\)

The problem with these records is that they are not corroborated by contemporary accounts. They appear to be educated guesses by later editors. Or, more accurately, these accounts seem to be editors’ assumptions about the practices and forms of *li* undertaken by their early predecessors. The first problem is the existence of earlier Manchu references to both a temple of the ancestors (mafari miyoo) and the ancestral temple (tai miyoo) in Manchu sources,\(^{118}\) indicating that such a temple already existed before later records say it was built.

The earlier recordings are as follows. On the fourth day of the third month of 1636, the Secretarial Court was ordered to be in charge of liturgies for the temple of ancestors (mafari miyoo).\(^{119}\) A month later, at least eight days before the supposed establishment of the ancestral temple according to the *Shilu*, imperial relatives leading their commanders on a hunt first took them to offer sacrifice at the temple (tai miyoo).\(^{120}\) From just these two references, it appears that the ancestral temple already existed and did not need to be built. It is thus not surprising to find that Manchu records make no mention of the establishment or construction of the temple on the eleventh day of the fourth month of 1636, or of setting up the spirit tablets on the twelfth. In fact, the pomp and ceremony of the eleventh and twelfth that is elaborated in the *Shilu* is but a few lines in the *Manwen yuandang*, which recounts that on the eleventh, the khan led the imperial

\(^{117}\) GXHD 5.747-1.

\(^{118}\) These two names usually refer to the same temple. In the sources, *Mafari miyoo* is used earlier; with *tai miyoo* being introduced shortly afterwards chronologically. The former term is used in the MWYD/MR, both before and after the introduction of the latter term, but often to refer to the same temple. I account for the dual usage of these nouns by the lack of standardization of language and names in the early period of Manchu record keeping.

\(^{119}\) MWYD 10.75; MR 6.956, Tc10.3.4.

\(^{120}\) MWYD 10.110; MR 6.986, Tc10.04.03.
relatives to sacrifice at the ancestral temple,\textsuperscript{121} and on the twelfth he did so again.\textsuperscript{122} Similarly, the Shunzhi-era draft copy of the Taizong \textit{Shilu}, although does devote many pages to the ceremonies for the dynastic name change, makes no mention of the establishment of the ancestral temple, but rather reserves its discussion of ancestral worship to the placing of the spirit tablets.\textsuperscript{123} The only mention of the temple is in reference to the placing of two ancestors’ spirit tablets on the twelfth after their receipt of honors.\textsuperscript{124}

There are a few conclusions to be drawn from this discussion. The most obvious is that the temple was built prior to 1636, despite what later editors assert. It is unclear, however, when exactly it was established, as the earliest references are those cited above. But more to the point, the form of ancestor worship as a vehicle to validate the rule of a certain line of monarchs and their successors began somewhat earlier than the founding of the Qing dynasty in 1636. To put this another way, the employment of the ancestral temple in state ritual and imperial ceremony was integral to the making of a Qing system of li, where the ancestral temple and its specific ritual practices of worshipping the imperial ancestors coincided with the goals of the early Manchu state-makers in constructing the political order.

\textit{Formalization.} What is clear from the Manchu records and the accurate Chinese sources is that the ritual activities at the ancestral temple became formalized around 1636. The \textit{Huidian}, as quoted above, discussed the setting of the rites in that year, and the early draft copy of the \textit{Shilu} discussed the setting up of the spirit tablets and formalization of the sacrifice on the twelfth day.

\begin{itemize}
\item[121] MWYD 10.118; MR 6.993, Tc10.4.11.
\item[122] MWYD 10.119; MR 6.994, Tc10.4.12.
\item[123] CZBSL 22.43a-44a, Tc10.4.12.
\item[124] CZBSL 22.50a, Tc10.4.11.
\end{itemize}
of the fourth month.\textsuperscript{125} Although the Manchu records are more cryptic on formalization in the fourth month of that year, a steady stream of new regulations began appearing in the following month. On the tenth day of the fifth month, for example, the khan received some cherries; he sent his senior officials along with the Board of Li to offer them at the ancestral temple. This led to the proclamation of a formal practice of first offering any gifted food to the ancestors and consuming it only after the offering.\textsuperscript{126} A month later, a similar version of this regulation was restated, which emphasized the need to offer any new foods or fruits to the ancestors. That day (Cd1.6.16), Hong Taiji sent his Board of Li officials to offer plums and cucumbers.\textsuperscript{127}

The more formal regulations on sacrifice at the ancestral temple, according to the extant Manchu records, were issued in the sixth and seventh months of 1636. These regulations were issued together and interspersed with those regulations on imperial tomb worship, as discussed in the previous sub-section. The edict on the first day of the sixth month laid out four stipulations:\textsuperscript{128}

1. On New Year’s Eve, the khan was to go to the ancestral temple (tai miyoo) and light incense.
2. In the seventh month, the khan was to go to the temple and sacrifice an ox and a sheep.
3. For the spring festival, officials were sent to the temple to light incense.
4. On his birthday the khan was to light incense at the temple.\textsuperscript{129}

\textsuperscript{125} See especially CZBSL 22.43a.

\textsuperscript{126} MWYD 10.179; MR 6.1044-45, Cd1.5.10.

\textsuperscript{127} MWYD 10.279; MR 6.1136-37, Cd1.6.16. Further examples of the practice of these regulations can be found in Cd3: NG SY, p. 292, 350, 370, 378, 386, 387, 391.

\textsuperscript{128} These four stipulations were promulgated together and interspersed with the five for the tombs. I have separated them here for analytical purposes. The fifth regulation of this edict was for practices on the day of Nurhaci’s death. Although this edict does not give instructions for activity at the ancestral temple, activity did take place at the temple on Cd3.8.11, see NG SY, p. 527. Furthermore, the Huidian lists this day as one of the days for sacrifice. See KXHD 718.3028.

\textsuperscript{129} MWYD 10.239-240; MR 6.1095-96, Cd1.6.1.
The regulations were promulgated in another edict less than a month later, stipulating the practice of the ritual, which included the standard activities of abstaining for three days, lining up and standing in certain positions and facing particular directions, lighting incense, offering wine and foods, and kowtowing. It is of particular note that, despite this being the sacrifice of the emperor to his ancestors, others were involved—the imperial relatives abstained with the emperor, while officials remained in attendance.\(^{130}\) The attendance and roles of all imperial relatives and officials made certain that the position and legitimacy of the emperor, both in place in the hierarchy (he stood in the center for the ceremony) and in lineage, was continually being acted out, as were their own positions.\(^{131}\)

*Ancestor worship at the altars*

Hong Taiji died in 1643, and his six-year-old son was made emperor in waiting. In this transition, the need for and practice of legitimacy was intensified. When the Shunzhi emperor took over from his regents in 1651, his personal leading of the sacrifices and the installation of his ancestors in many of the state sacrifices worked to assert his individual legitimacy and further consolidate the young institution of the emperor.\(^{132}\) Throughout the Shunzhi and Kangxi periods, worship of the imperial ancestors was practiced at the suburban altars. Furthermore, spirit

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\(^{131}\) For more on the psychological aspects of ritual in the processes of institutionalization see Gazi Islam and Macabe Keliher, “The Ritual Construction of History: Institution Building and the Board of Rites in Late Imperial China” (presented at the European Group for Organizational Studies Colloquium, Helsinki, 2012).

\(^{132}\) For more on the Shunzhi emperor’s use of ritual to consolidate politics see Chen-main Wang, “The Significance of State Sacrifice in Early Qing: An Examination of the Shunzhi Period” (presented at the 2012 guoji gongzuofang yantaohui, Zhongyang daxue, 2012).
plaques and sacrificial activities were extended throughout the city in honor of Nurhaci, Hong Taiji, and then Fulin.

The extension of ancestral worship to the suburban altars began with the heaven and earth sacrifices. In 1648 (Sz5), sacrifice to Nurhaci was incorporated into the winter solstice ceremony at the Altar of Heaven. Three years later, worship to the four ancestral tombs was included at the Earth Altar, most notably for the summer solstice ceremony. In 1657 (Sz14), new regulations were issued to now also include Hong Taiji in the Heaven sacrifices, and to include both Nurhaci and Hong Taiji spirit tablets in the Earth Altar. When Fulin died, his tablets were placed at the altars. In 1667, edicts were issued ordering the inclusion of Nurhaci, Hong Taiji, and Fulin in the winter and summer solstice ceremonies, effectively linking the personal legitimacy of the emperor to the state through these first-order state sacrifices.

Idea and indeterminacy

The system of li of legitimacy of the ruler need not take this institutional form of worship in tombs, temples, and altars, necessarily. Indeed, it has been played out in different forms in different societies and cultures. Thus, the question: why did it take the form that it did? What was the institutional vision that linked the concept to the practice?

The most immediate reference for Qing rulers and officials was the Ming precedent. As shown in the chapter on the New Year’s Day ceremony, Board of Li and other officials referred to Ming practices as part of the operation of the system of government and representation of the

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133 KXHD 717.2689.
134 KXHD 718.2771.
135 KXHD 717.2692, 718.2773.
136 KXHD 717.2696-97, 718.2775-2803.
state. But there was also a broader vision in the Qing system of li. It was a vision that associated with sacrifice to the imperial ancestors. The maintenance of the position of the sovereign in relation to his staff and aristocracy was contingent upon the construction of an imperial genealogy and regular worship at the ancestral tombs. That is, the position of the emperor could be reproduced through the seasonal rituals done for the imperial ancestors. This would establish a legitimate line of rulership and successfully naturalize the holding of the position by a particular individual and his immediate family. Take for example the opening lines of a memorial by ritual official Liu Chang in 1644. “The one appointed by heaven has returned,” he wrote in reference to the death of Hong Taiji. “There is an imperial vapor floating without rest. It is of utmost importance to make his tomb and offer sacrifice.”

Liu went on to lay out the responsibilities of the different officials and departments of the Board of Li in sacrifice preparation and tomb upkeep. He closed his argument by emphasizing the practice of sacrifice to the ancestors as part of the necessary imperial activities.

The sovereign has the fortune of generations [i.e. he has received the throne in good stead from his ancestors]. How can you not repay to the extreme at the land of origin [i.e. the tombs in Mukden]. You cannot be frugal in offering your respects to the spirits of the ancestors in Heaven, or in sacrificing to Taizu and the other tombs. This is the first act of the sovereign in expressing his benevolence and filiality, and it is also our responsibility to emphasize [these rituals].

137 GSA 087634, Sz1.6.21.

138 GSA 087634, Sz1.6.21.
Even this vision was not indivisible, however. A debate initiated within the Board of Li involving the throne in the first year of the Shunzhi reign showed the indeterminacy of the institutional form of the ritual activity in fulfilling this function of legitimacy. The debate took shape around the question of exactly who were the ancestors to be worshiped and how far back in the ancestor line should one go for sacrifice. Liu touched off the matter in the sixth month of the first year of Shunzhi in writing about the Jin tombs in a way that raised the issue of sacrifice to them as part of the imperial lineage. He said his department in the Board of Li was out looking for the Jin tombs but failed to find six of them. He then went on to talk about the need to locate these for sacrifice.\textsuperscript{139} The implication of such sacrifice would make Qing rulers direct descendants of the Jin, and the imperial position justified by way of all the Jin emperors.\textsuperscript{140} The throne (that is, the Shunzhi regents), however, said to look into the previous practices of worshiping past emperors.\textsuperscript{141}

Over the next month, the throne and other officials, including the Board of Li vice president and president, went back and forth on the matter. At issue was if they should restore the Jin tombs defaced by the Ming, and if so, in what manner and under what auspices. If they were to do so and to treat the Jin tombs as imperial tombs complete with ceremony, then this would effectively make the Jin as the ancestral precursors to the Qing. Otherwise, the Jin would remain but a previous dynasty (lidai diwang). Both the Board of Li president Langkio and vice president Li Mingrui wrote long summary memorials on the issue but failed to provide

\textsuperscript{139} GSA 087634, S1.6.21.

\textsuperscript{140} This is a particularly interesting development, since Hong Taiji had rejected any connection with the Jin. See Mark C Elliott, “Whose Empire Shall It Be? Manchu Figurations of Historical Process in the Early Seventeenth Century,” in \textit{Time, Temporality, and Imperial Transition: East Asia from Ming to Qing}, ed. Lynn A Struve (Honolulu: Association for Asian Studies and University of Hawai’i Press, 2005), 31–72.

\textsuperscript{141} GSA 185043-018 (p. 3), S1.7.7.
much normative direction on the matter. At the end of the day, their advice drew on Ming precedent, to which the throne replied, “This all refers to examples of worshiping one’s own ancestors and does not fit our situation.” Further investigation into the matter was called for.142

The matter was not settled until thirteen and a half years later, when the Shunzhi emperor drew a clear distinction between the Qing and Jin, relegating the latter to a distant and separate bloodline. “As far as I am concerned,” the Shunzhi emperor said, “Heaven’s blessing upon our dynasty has nothing to do with the Jin.”143

The Qing were still trying to position themselves historically and to determine the institutions that would legitimize their rule. There was no clear and necessary set form around which worship would have to adhere to in order to achieve the intended result. How would particular worship take shape in order to grant the individual sovereign the right himself to rule? Such questions were resolved through the molding of the system of li.

CONCLUSION

The practices of li of the emperor began to become systematized around the early Kangxi period. Not only did li begin to undergo accelerated additions, changes, and adjustments in how it was practiced, but actors also talked about li as formalized practice. Consider the Kangxi emperor’s edict to the Board of Li in 1662.144 In view of the complexity and expense in the practice of grand ceremony, the edict says it is no longer necessary to call on all officials to attend.

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142 GSA 185043-018, Sz1.7.7; GSA 185043-047, Sz1.7.20.

143 SL, p. 827-1, Sz14.1.15. 朕思天祚本朝，於金何與. On developments in the later Shunzhi era see Chen Sihui 陳慈慧, “Qing Shizu lihan zhengce” 清世祖理漢政策 (1651-1661), 121–22.

144 The Kangxi emperor, Xuanye, did not actually begin to oversee administrative matters until 1667. Thus, this edict would have been issued in his name by the regents.
Now I think that having officials come and go is in error, as it puts undue strain on the administration and the relay posts. From now on, except for New Year’s and the emperor’s birthday ceremonies, which should adhere to the standard audience practice, officials in outside yamens should stop coming to audience for the winter solstice. Instead, they should adhere to the standard practice of li in their respective yamen. Those in the capital will celebrate and practice li according to the standard.  

This document can be read in a number of different ways. At face value, it can be read as a practicality. Rather than straining the field administration by bringing all officials to the capital for ceremony, it makes more sense for them to stay at home and devote effort to their administrative duties. More sinisterly, it can be read as a reflection of the attitude of the regents, who were most likely writing this edict. It is well known that the Kangxi regents attempted to limit the influence of Chinese officials and advisors, as well as to scale back the Chinese practices. Attempting to downgrade the state ceremonies and telling provincial officials, most of whom were Chinese at this point, to stay at home, certainly would fit such developments. Yet another reading is to see this proclamation as but part of the process of refining state practice, where Qing rulers were still consolidating power and working out the means of social and political control. In all of these readings, however, the edict speaks of coming to terms with li and the formation of a system through which it would hold together with cohesive meaning.

The institution of the emperor was put together in the system of li through acts that represented, delegated, and legitimized the sovereign. Regular performance in grand ceremony,

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145 GSA 278678-005, Kx2.2.3, 今思官員往返有誤職掌且騷遷煩苦以後在外各衙門官除元旦節表文照舊著進外冬至節進賀表文著停止惟照舊於各衙門行禮其在京賀表文典禮仍照舊行


court ceremony, and crisis rituals made up the core of the system of li for the emperor. These acts put him into specific political and social relationships with other political and social actors and with the state, thus casting him as emperor and helping shape the political order. This representation went hand in hand with a capacity to delegate authority to others. This involved first defining the power of the sovereign in terms of others through a clarification of legal authority, and was then put in practice by means of the emperor absenting himself from state ceremony and sending surrogates in his stead. Lastly, the institutions of the emperor meant the formalization of the ability to serve as emperor by legitimizing those who stood as emperor through tomb and ancestral spirit worship. The construction of tombs and annual worship at these mausoleums, as well as regularized rites and sacrifices to the imperial ancestors offered at the ancestral temple and the suburban altars, ensured that the line of men who served and could serve as emperor was naturalized and legitimized. Through these ritual acts, the position of emperor took form and gained coherence. These three things gave meaning not only to what it meant to be emperor, but also in institutionalizing that position in a political order and routinizing the political operations surrounding the throne.

This chapter has surveyed a large number of archival and published sources in analysis of the system of li for the emperor. It has shown the categories of rituals at work, and has detailed the activity and practices. The next chapter will look at the system of li that structured the political order.
Chapter 7: Sociopolitical Stratification and the Administrative Order

The Qing system of li produced a set of symbolic signifiers that gave meaning to the political order and guided political actors. Decisions were made about the nature of politics, and regulations were put into place that molded the symbolic meaning of that order. This order was built upon the articulation of ranks and political positions, and it was manifest through practices that shaped the meaning of those regulations and thus the organization of power and distribution of political resources. At the top of the hierarchy sat the emperor, to be sure, whose authority and legitimacy to that authority was both formed and symbolized by ceremony and clothing, as shown the previous chapter. Extending beneath the emperor were a series of ranks of imperial relatives and officials, whose power was always relative vis-à-vis each other, as expressed through the clothing, ceremonies, and rites that shaped their interactions. The regulations on these practices formed part of the system of li.

The historical record from this period is rich with material showing concern over, and regulation of, stratification. Extant memorials from the Tiancong era show officials going to great lengths to make the case to the emperor of the need to set up a system of ranks and positions, and of the need to make them outwardly manifest, most notably through clothing. Manchu and Chinese documents similarly record the discussion and creation of such a system, while the Huidian devoted entire sections to discussions of the bureaucratic and aristocratic positions and their privileges. Furthermore, archival materials highlight inner-bureaucratic conflict over how ranks and positions were practiced throughout the course of the Qing, and especially in the eighteenth century. It was not uncommon for officials to take umbrage over improper performance of certain rites attached to certain positions.
Given the attention to this matter by contemporary actors, it is not surprising to find modern-day historians taking it up as a topic of research. Scholars have long been aware of early attempts to construct a stratified aristocratic and bureaucratic order, and have focused on understanding the nature of the order from the documentary record.\footnote{For some examples see Guo and Zhang, \textit{Qing ruguangqian guojia faluzhidu shi}; Lei Bingyan, \textit{Qingdai baqi shijue shizhi yanjiu} (Changsha: Zhongnan daxue, 2011); Rawski, \textit{The Last Emperors}, ch. 2; Yang and Zhou, \textit{Qingdai baqi wanggong guizu}.} Building on this scholarship, this chapter takes up the overlooked aspects of the formation of the system and the logic behind it, as seen in the direct expression of contemporary state-makers and the operations. Whereas previous scholarship has focused on the classifications within and the organization of the early order, this chapter explores the regulations for interaction, especially among and between the military, imperial relatives, and bureaucracy, and demonstrates how the names, ranks, and positions fit together in a cohesive social system. The chapter demonstrates that people were not only divided hierarchically and wore different clothing to represent it, but also discusses why they agreed to such a set up and how they continued to reproduce it.

The ritual activity found in Qing sources in the institutionalization of the state can also be seen in other dynasties from the Han to the Ming. Things like sumptuary law and regulations of social interaction based on status and rank structured the sociopolitical orders. The context behind the employment of these rites, however, differed in each case in history. The politics and culture determined what form these practices would take and how they would be used and for what immediate means. It followed that the rituals varied accordingly, and that while the political structures of the empires might look similar in form, the routines and politics differed in practice.
There were four key components to the cultural practice of the Qing political order: clothing to reflect the level of rank of political actors; the size of one’s entourage; rites for greeting each other; and organization in ceremony. This chapter opens with a short discussion of the idea of political order as articulated by the builders of the early Qing state. Officials and emperors envisioned their political world as one in which individuals were placed within a strict order of ranks and political positions. Each of these positions, from the emperor on down, carried with it certain political privileges, which limited both movement and opposition. The most efficient way to realize this order, actors argued, was through dress, whereby each actor donned hats and belts appropriate to his station. This enabled immediate recognition within the hierarchy and made the actor absolutely aware of the station he occupied and the limitations of his authority in relation to others. The chapter then argues that rank, stratification, and clothing regulations could only express the design of the sociopolitical order, and that the hierarchy needed to be enacted on a day-to-day basis. This was achieved by articulating how actors would relate to each other in their encounters. Greeting rites did this work by telling people what to do when they ran into another—who should be deferential or where the superior should sit. Similarly, the size and type of entourage in travel, and one’s place in line in ceremony further helped to enact the political order and define the power or lack of power of a position.

The first part of this chapter looks at the formation of this political order in the Qing context and the rules put in place in order to enact it. Having done that, it then asks how it was maintained and reproduced. Once brought into being, the system continued to work through a combination of enforcement and internalization. Transgressions against the rite or the order were punished, often quite severely. Actors intuitively understood their own role in the order, and often took it upon themselves to uphold the rules and practices, lashing out at their superiors or
infe\textsubscript{r}iors if they wore the wrong dress or performed the rite improperly. In this way, the stratified sociopolitical system relied on the cultural system for its operation.

STRATIFICATION AND THE IDEA OF ORDER

\textit{The idea of social and political order}

Contemporary Qing actors conceived of the organization of society and politics in a stratified hierarchy. Early officials in their memorials, and later emperors in their proclamations and edicts, articulated again and again the need to clearly distinguish among classes and ranks. They held that by determining superiors and inferiors, and then expressing and emphasizing these differences clearly, the position of the sovereign and his ability to rule would be upheld, and society would operate harmoniously. At issue here was the need to preserve the arrangements of power evolving under Hong Taiji, where those on the top were placed in a system that would maintain their command of political and financial resources, and those on the bottom knew their place in the world and were deferential to those above them and possessed of a willingness to obey.

From very early in the state building project, Hong Taiji’s staff began to call for the need of a systematic way to mark rank and order in society. Almost immediately after the core of the administrative apparatus was set up—the six boards established in 1631—numerous officials memorialized the throne in quick succession in late 1632 (Tc6), expounding on the need for clear organization. They advocated for a political and social order based on a form of strict stratification in hierarchical ranks. Dividing individuals into their respective social stations, they held, would yield an efficient means of control and enable the propagation of an order that
favored those holding power. As literatus Wang Wenkui\textsuperscript{2} memorialized in the eighth month of 1632,

Since old times, states needed to strictly stratify superiors and inferiors, nobles and commoners. Not only is this aesthetically pleasing in form, but more so, it is the central method to rule...even in the homes of the commoners, masters and servants must be stratified. How could the differentiation of a high and mighty state fall into such chaos?...[If the emperor makes distinctions through clothing] everyone and the future generations will know that the sage has an extraordinary reason for the rule; the common people will also know that even if they have great prosperity but they are not of the same level as officials.\textsuperscript{3}

The problem, as political actors saw it, was that the distribution of power was not clear. Political relations may have been loosely set, with the khan at the center, banner owners in senior positions, and a host of officials and subordinates beneath them, but such arrangements were not immediately reflected in the political order, nor were they formalized. Failing to clarify the nature of these relations could push the fragile socio-political order towards unrest and disruption—chaos, as Wang Wenkui put it. Take for example the insubordinations of Amin and Manggûltai discussed in the second chapter. Recall that Amin disobeyed orders and slaughtered retreating Chinese, and Manggûltai drew his knife against Hong Taiji in a heated argument over military strategy. It is not that they saw themselves as superior to Hong Taiji—for he was khan, after all—but rather that in the still informal stage of rule they considered themselves equals,

\textsuperscript{2} Wang Wenkui 王文奎, was born Shen Wenkui 沈文奎, but adopted the surname Wang because he was raised by a family of that surname. He came from Zhejiang and seems to have obtained a degree under the Ming. Traveling north in the 1620s he found himself in an area under siege by Hooge and surrendered in 1628 (Tc3). He was put to work in the scribes’ office and attached to the bordered white banner. He went on to serve in numerous posts in the central government throughout the Hong Taiji and Shunzhi reigns. QSG, v. 239, p. 9507-9512.

\textsuperscript{3} TCZY 1.20a-21a, Wang Wenkui, Tc6.8. 自古有國家者必嚴上下尊卑之別，非但以美觀聽，實驭世大機權也...庶民之家主僕之分不容紊，豈有巍然一國而混亂至此...使天下後世知聖哲所為超凡尋常，使愚民亦知富有百萬而終不得與職官並.
entitled to an autonomy of action and decision that many understood as the arrangement laid out by Nurhaci. For Hong Taiji and his supporters, however, a strict hierarchy needed to be established in which the chain of command was clearly delineated.⁴

The professed idea of sociopolitical order was one in which every individual was confined to his or her social station, and each recognizing and adhering to their place in the world. Only in this way, they held, could the state prosper and society be organized. As the Kangxi emperor wrote in an edict, “The most important thing for the sovereign in his rule is to maintain public morals and to distinguish among classes.”⁵ In his reflections on the current social order in his 1632 memorial, Wang Wenkui spelled out what failing to stratify meant.

I see the officials and people of my state are without any stratification—the covetous and the rich are in fact scoundrels wearing the upperclass ornamentation and clothing of princes and nobles, while the astute but poor are in fact high officials dressed in the disheveled rags of servants. If people only hope to acquire personal wealth they will offend heaven and transgress principles; there is nothing they will not do. Thus, what good is it striving night and day to fulfill official responsibility; [what good is it] to admire nobility?⁶

A month later, a Board of Li official made the same point in a memorial to Hong Taiji, arguing that officials looked like servants, and commoners appeared like officials, which was disrupting the ideal state of the world.

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⁴ One type of expression of this can be found in Hong Taiji’s early proclamation about stratification among the beile. See MR 5.687, Tc6.2.4.

⁵ GSA 278678-030, Kangxi, Kx11.8.11. 帝王致治，首在維持風化，辨別 等威。

⁶ TCZY 1.20b, Wang Wenkui, Tc6.8. 竜見我國官民毫無分別。貧而富者既服隸，而冠裳之飾上等王侯。而貧者即高官，而服飾之混下同僕從。人但願私家以致富足矣，喪天害理，願不可為，又何須夙夜得以羨尊貴哉。
In the state of things today, caps and gowns are all mixed up, so that it is hard to tell noble from debased people. The musicians and entertainers [i.e. lowest classes] wear better clothes and hats than the common people and nobility. In this way people respect money and not class, and they thus lose respect for the khan. The self interested and petty men lift their brows and exhale freely, while the heroes and great men bury their heads and scrunch up their shoulders. Like this, it is not clear when the khan will complete the great enterprise...We cannot have this mixing of uppers and lowers, nobles and the debase.\textsuperscript{7}

What it meant for Hong Taiji and his supporters to codify positions into a hierarchy was the ability to construct a politics in their favor. The settlement of the struggle for power had already begun to form with Hong Taiji winning the command of political resources and his staff gaining positions that gave them access to power and political resources. Hong Taiji was elected khan in 1627, and by 1632 had subjugated his main rivals with the help of loyal but self-interested supporters. As the structure of the administrative apparatus began to form and new political positions developed, politics became more complex and the number of involved actors grew in both numbers and function. The relations among them required clarification. As one advisor to Hong Taiji put it to him, “Although you are khan in name, the reality is that you are no different than the leader of the Yellow Banners!”\textsuperscript{8}

The question for political actors was how to preserve the settlements of power that had come to transpire in the late 1620s and 30s. How to continue to empower those who were on top and could command the majority of political resources in name and function? How to not only preserve the positions that Hong Taiji had carved out for himself and his supporters, but also to be able to wield them in an effective way, so that the titles were not empty but had real power

\textsuperscript{7} TCZY 1.31a, Wang Shun, Tc6.9.24. 今我國冠服混淆，貴賤難分，甚有樂戶之穿戴更強於良貴，所以人重富不重貴，而汗大體失矣。利徒鄙夫揚眉吐氣，英雄豪傑埋頭縮頸，但不知汗之大事何日得有次第也…但不便尊卑貴賤混淆足矣。

\textsuperscript{8} TCZY, 1.35b. 雖有一汗之虛名，實無異整黃旗一貝勒也
associated with them? Political relationships needed to be structured in a way that clarified the chain of command and defined how access to resources were controlled. This involved structuring interpersonal relations in a particular sociopolitical order that restricted some and empowered others. The form that this took was li as organization and practice, whereby ritual activity both shaped the emergent relations and served as a site by which politics would continue to play out.

Clothing and the practice of order

Clothing was key in these discussions. Individuals would be distinguished in their social stations according to the clothes they wore. Both memorialist and emperor had seized upon the idea that appearance was necessary in order to obtain the ideal of the stratified world with strict hierarchical divisions among men and women. In fact, appearance was expressed as everything—it was seen as the means to organize political relations in a way in which the lines of power were understood and accepted; it would grease the wheels of the bureaucracy; it would give officials the authority to carry out their business; and it would put commoners in place. Wang Wenkui made the direct association when he said, “Today we have already established the six boards, the extent of which we can already see. I beg the emperor to resolutely and single handedly make the distinction in caps and gowns.”

The regulating of clothing was seen as part of the process of organizing politics. Not only was it a design to further stratify society, as these memorialists argued, but it also served as another means to channel political strife. Conflicts among political actors in the early years were about power, as discussed in the previous chapters. The questions of what the social organization

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9 TCZY 1.20b, Wang Wenkui, Tc6.8. 今六部已立, 規模次第可觀, 伏乞皇上毅然獨斷辨制衣冠.
would look like and who would have access to material and immaterial resources were still very persistent questions right up until the eve of the conquest. Hong Taiji’s attempt at clothing regulation was one of the earliest impositions of rules on the emerging settlements of power. As laid out below, he first seized upon clothing as a means of categorizing other imperial relatives who might threaten his position, and gradually expanded the system to encompass all political actors in attempt to make them part of a cohesive order.

No words were spared in making the case for the urgency and importance of implementing clothing regulations. As Wang Shun, the Board of Li official, put it, “This matter the khan may think is not urgent, but I adamantly hold that we cannot take our time.”10 In each address to the khan on this matter, each memorialist emphasized the importance of clothing. Even in the midst of discussing other affairs, they would come back to the problem of stratification and mark the need for setting clothing guidelines and regulations as the highest priority. Scholar Li Qifeng, for example, in a long memorial of 1632 discussed at great length military affairs and the staffing of the bureaucracy before coming to the punch line on clothing. Only by implementing a strict dress code, he claimed, could the political and social order be settled.11

Censor Zhu Langheng made this argument by distinguishing rule by force and rule by morality, or wende 文德. Writing in 1644, the first year of the occupation of Beijing and the beginning of rule over China proper, Zhu said that administration of the country could not rely solely on the power of the military and the expansiveness of the bureaucracy. In addition, people would have to agree to obey—they would need to be instructed and cultivated. “In considering

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10 TCZY 1.31b, Wang Shun, Tc6.9.24. 此事汗以為不必急行，臣決不可緩行也。
11 TCZY 1.27a-29b, Li Qifeng, Tc6.9. Also see Wang Wenkui cited above, who explicitly says the matter of clothing is the most important.
the rule of all under heaven by past emperors, we use force to put down rebellion and wende to help rule,” he memorialized. “What is force? Things such as armor, bows, and arrows. What is wende? Things like robes, caps, rites, and music.” He went on to make the argument that wende was not something imposed through an administrative staff. “If you want to rule the people, it is not wende to use the administration to serve as an example for the masses.” Rather, he said, what will achieve this end is clothing. “The tool of officials is gowns, caps, rites, and music.” To ignore this and fail to implement such a system, he said, would throw social and political order to the wind. “To not use caps and gowns to govern the people, not only will this fail to straighten out the common people, but also, when holding court ceremony, how will they line up in the proper order?” Concluding, he called for the creation and implementation of clothing regulations. “I beg you to order the Board of Li to create clothing distinctions for the different ranks so that superiors and inferiors are divided in ceremony.”

Such memorializing was urgent, to be sure, but the arguments were more impassioned than reasoned. Indeed, how exactly would the dress of social and political actors create the desired stratified order? As hinted in some of the memorialists’ remarks above, it was meant to distinguish who was who—who would give orders and who would take orders. The donning of certain dress for certain ranks and positions was meant to make the chain of command immediately apparent, and to highlight superiors while de-emphasizing inferiors. Such stratification then, the logic went, should implant moral thoughts, and lead to actions. The idea was that as one went up in rank he got to wear better and more audacious clothing, which not only looked good and was desirable, but also set the wearer apart from others. At the highest ranks, positions of such stature were fewer, and the scarcity of such a rank designated by the

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12 GSA 185043-040, Zhu Langheng, Sz1.7.17.
clothing would command respect and awe. The Kangxi emperor made this clear in an edict setting the clothing regulations when he said, “Kings of old used compassion to rule heaven, and there was not one who did not use the rites.” Those rites, he went on to say were expressed and reproduced in proper clothing.¹³

The implementation of such a system of dress was seen as a given, from which all order and moral visions would flow. The world would be set right so long as emperor, relatives, officials, and commoners each clothed in distinct robes and caps according to their rank and status. “I say that stratification is not in illustriousness,” Wang Wenkui wrote, “but rather in proper caps, in gowns, or in belts.”¹⁴ So evident did this appear to advocates that they could not conceive that anyone would disagree. Wang again: “The difference in the system of a thousandth of millimeter can result in the division of a thousand miles. If the superiors practice it, who would dare transgress?”¹⁵ Emperors did believe it so and set about enacting and re-enacting clothing regulations throughout the course of the Qing, each time trying to get right this formula of proper clothing for the prosperous rule of social and political order. From Hong Taiji onwards, the Qing emperors and their staff would invest in clothing as the first principle of stratification. The thinking of the matter was duly framed by Li Qifeng in a 1632 memorial to Hong Taiji, where he stated that by setting up a system of stratification all subjects would fall into line and political order would be solidified. “Each ruler has a system for his time. My khan can set up his own system, as long as it distinguishes superiors from inferiors and [acknowledges] ranks and classes.”¹⁶

¹⁵ TCZY 1.20b, Wang Wenkui, Tc6.8. 制度毫釐之分有千里之別也. 上行之, 夫孰敢犯之.
¹⁶ TCZY 1.29a, Li Qifeng, Tc6.9. 一代之君各有一代制度. 我汗另立一番. 惟分別尊卑等級便是.
THE REGULATIONS

From the records at hand, Hong Taiji seems to have been aware of the need to categorize actors and proposed a solution. In the second month of 1632 (Tc6), over a half a year before the memorials on stratification and clothing began to flow in, he told the Board of Li to crack down on the ostentatiousness of the imperial relatives and officials. They “must all stop dyeing their sable skins, making fur coats, hemming a wide trim on their clothes, tacking on the chrysanthemum knobs, and making their hats,” he said. The problem was not that they had fur coats or chrysanthemum knobs on their caps, but rather that in undertaking the task themselves they followed no standard, got carried away, and thus failed to have any uniformity in appearance. In creating a hierarchy and establishing a chain of command, Hong Taiji and his staff were at once needing to preserve their own positions in the ongoing struggle for political power, and at the same time to build solidarity among political actors in task and purpose. As discussed above, this began with uniform appearance. “Do not ask to wear fine clothes and felt-lined hats,” were Hong Taiji’s final words of this order to the Board of Li.¹⁷

By the end of the year, the first positive regulations on dress were issued. They covered the Manchu and Mongol elite and their wives, as well as the bannermen and commoners of all ethnicities. These regulations standardized the appearance of different classes of people, and in doing so effectively stratified the socio-political order in a way that was inline with the vision of a hierarchical state as articulated by the state builders cited above. The Shilu quotes Hong Taiji opening the edict for this regulation with the following: “The clothing and crowns of my state needs to be set. I want to use colors to distinguish classes. The situation now is that there is no system; people are not stratified. The caps and gowns of the state are not uniform, and each takes

¹⁷ MR 5.687, Tc6.2.4.
his own according to his own desires.” It is doubtful that Hong Taiji said this, as the earlier sources discussing the event make no mention of such a prologue. It is more likely that the Kangxi-era editors of this edition of the Shilu felt that such an explanation was necessary and themselves added it. Still, the point was made, that this idea of order as extreme stratification and its enactment through dress had taken hold and was now being repeated throughout the sources. In fact, one might argue that the notion had become so common place—so natural—that later editors took it for granted, for it had become the predominant way to perceive the world.

The following sections explore this first regulation in detail, along with the subsequent revisions and expansions that occurred at frequent intervals. In order to clarify how these regulations worked, they are placed into two separate discussions, that of imperial relatives and that of officials and commoners, or non-relatives. This division is not entirely artificial—although the proclamations and statutes always laid regulations for all groups together, they did so with an awareness of the distinctions among the different ranks in an hierarchical manner, always beginning with the highest relative and progressing down to the lowest official and commoner. Furthermore, by making this distinction in the analysis, the mechanisms of the changes can be highlighted in each regulation.

_Regulating the clothing of the imperial relatives_

The first positive regulation on clothing was issued for the imperial relatives on the second day of the twelfth month of 1632 (Tc6.12.2), and set for enactment two and half weeks later on the

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18 SL, p. 193.2, Tc7.6.9.
19 See MR 5.868, Tc6.12.2; CZBSL 10.32a-33b, Tc6.12.2.
20 They somehow also got the date wrong, putting the event in the sixth month of the following year—more than seven months later!
The regulation is quite detailed in many regards, dictating when certain groups can wear what and for what occasions, but also very unspecific in others. Targeted at the khan and the eight banner beile, the code stipulated that actors are required to always wear their court costumes when in the city, and are not allowed to wear gowns except when leaving the capital areas. In winter they must wear a fox pelt hat to court and a marten fur hat when at leisure. At spring court they must wear a Mongol marten fur hat with a chrysanthemum, and during leisure in the summer wear a grass hat. Satin boots should not be worn everyday, and yellow fabric and five claw dragon prints were prohibited unless received as a gift from the khan. Despite all this, there is no mention here of fur color or hat ornamentation, which Hong Taiji had been concerned with six months earlier.

The most surprising thing about this regulation, however, was that it applied to only a small number of elites. Right up front, Hong Taiji said the edict was meant only for “myself on down to the eight banner beile.” The eight banner beile were those other men who stood at the head of one of the banners and were the direct descendants of Nurhaci. That was only about a dozen men—a dozen men who were the most powerful individuals in the region and were all intimately related by birth. It included Hong Taiji himself, as made clear in his opening statement just quoted. It also included the two other older brothers, the senior beile Daishaan and Manggultai, who were supposedly ruling jointly with Hong Taiji. It also included the younger brothers Ajige and Dorgon, who headed the bordered white banner; Dodo, who headed the plain white; Hooge and Abatai, who owned the bordered yellow; Yoto and Šoto, who had the bordered red; Jirgalan, who had the bordered blue; and probably Degelei and Sahaliyan, each of whom sat...

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21 MR 5.868, Tc6.12.2; CZBSL 10.32a-33b, Tc6.12.2. As mentioned above, the Shilu inexplicably puts this date at Tc7.6.9.

22 MR 5.868-70, Tc6.12.2; CZBSL 10.32a-33b, Tc6.12.2.
at the head of one of the six boards and also served as banner commanders in their fathers’ banner.  

This attempt to formalize the dress of such a small number of elite individuals raises a number of questions. Foremost, why was it necessary at all? Could not the brothers sit down and decide that they should coordinate their dress for the sake of the presentation of authority? In fact, they probably did have a council meeting and debate the matter. But then why formalize it? And given that Hong Taiji had already shown his hand in asserting his authority over his relatives, and was clearly moving to centralize power, why did anyone agree to this in the first place? It is not like Hong Taiji could thus speak and make it happen; his word was not law yet. This was 1632; Hong Taiji had only begun the formalization of his role as head of state with the New Year’s Day ceremony that year; command over political resources was still being settled, the lines of power still being drawn. Indeed, the imperial relatives still had their autonomy, in which they were masters over their own banner and still had a voice in the direction of affairs.

As discussed in chapter 3, the move to formalize a dress code for the imperial relatives was part of the strategy to create a political order in which they had a place—in which their role was cast and their sociopolitical station set. It is hard to say whether they embraced this or not, as there are no documents expressing the opinion or response from their part. What can be said is that others beside just Hong Taiji found this to their advantage. The younger relatives were in a struggle for power and position with their seniors. The sons and younger brothers of the senior relatives put their support behind Hong Taiji as a patron and guarantor of political resources—especially people like Sahaliyan, who did not own a banner and would be able to receive one from their father. By investing in Hong Taiji they would have a powerful protector who could

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23 For a list of the senior leaders and beile see appendix B.
ensure they received what was due to them. In this way, the formalization of dress was not just agreeing with Hong Taiji, but served their interest in order to secure their position. They welcomed the stratification because it helped solidify their still uncertain position—it shored up the still fluid political order, giving form to the tenuous relationships, and structuring power. Through the designation of their dress these junior belie could at once find a stability of their position, and more so, gain an equal footing to challenge their seniors.\textsuperscript{24}

This means of stratification, once set in motion, could not be curbed. The first regulations of 1632 were perhaps innocuous, putting down on paper what many of the relatives were doing already. But as the state and bureaucracy grew and more people had to be accounted for, the regulations gradually became more expansive and more rigid. The main additions to the dress code were initiated as Hong Taiji’s position as sovereign grew secure and he changed the name of the reign and state in 1636. He expressed his frustration with the situation that year when he noticed the imperial relatives and officials getting out of line. “If imperial relatives, banner leaders, or officials are dissolute in state business, corrupt, and pursuing sensual pleasures,” he said, “If they seek fun and games and take the wealth of the people; if they steal women, come to court disrespectfully, offend the dress code, or pretend to be sick, then the Board of Li must investigate.”\textsuperscript{25} A series of regulations on dress went into effect over the next couple of years as the first step to help the state keep its administrators in order.

In 1636, the Board of Li imposed more extensive dress codes on the relatives, which laid out in detailed fashion according to rank the ornamentation on hats and belts that they could

\textsuperscript{24} For a good discussion of the junior belie and Hong Taiji’s political support see Yao Niansi, \textit{Qingchu zhengzhishi tanwei}, esp. ch. 4.1.

\textsuperscript{25} TZWSL, p. 376-1, Cd1.5.14.
wear. The imperial relatives, for example, occupying the highest positions in the political hierarchy were to wear the most elaborate hats, consisting of three layers of decoration with a ruby on top, eight inlaid pearls in the middle, a golden flower with three embedded pearls on the rear broach, and four inlaid pearls on the front broach. Similarly, they had the most ostentatious belts, boasting a gold inlay border and four jade pieces with four inlaid pearls. The decorations decreased in type and number of jewels as the social position decreased. So, to make the extreme contrast, the lowest ranking imperial relative, the Supporter-general of the State, wore only a crystal on the top of his cap and an iron piece in his belt. Not only were the regulations for caps and belts laid out for all the different ranks in between, but also included the wives, concubines, and imperial women. This all lent itself to an organized hierarchy of sociopolitical positions and easy identification among the various strata.

Two years later (1638), another set of orders was issued further regulating the hierarchy. Eight groups of relatives and officialdom were set in hierarchal order from the prince of the blood of the firth degree and first rank duke all the way down to the third rank guards of the relatives. Each of these classes were required to wear only certain hat and belt with the proper kind and amount of stones. The seventh group (the second to lowest class here outlined), for example, included third rank imperial guardsmen, third rank guardsmen for first and second degree princes, and second rank guardsmen for a third degree prince, among others; these ranks were to wear a belt with engraved iron and gold inlay and closed with round clasps. They had no

26 See KXHD 716.2308-2344; MWYD 10.299-304, Cd1.7.1; MR 6.1153-1157, Cd1.7.1. Interestingly, the Manchu documents only record the regulation for the women. It could be that the other sections were lost or omitted.

27 KXHD 716.2308.

28 KXHD 716.2313.

29 See esp. MWYD 10.299-304, Cd1.7.1; MR 6.1153-1157, Cd1.7.1.

30 NGSY, p. 506-509, Cd3.8.5.
hat prescribed.\footnote{NGSY, p. 509, Cd3.8.5.} Although the top nobles were not immediately constrained by these regulations in their dress any further than what had already been set, their entire staff now came under dress code, and thus their position was affected. In these codes, the various guards of the nobles and their entourage were now under the regulation of the central state.

Regulating the clothing of the military and civilian bureaucracy

The regulations of officials and commoners under the Qing followed a similar timeline as that of the imperial relatives (although the majority of codes were issued in 1632 and 1638), but are more pervasive in scope. Indeed, the weight of complaints articulated so forcefully by Hong Taiji and his staff, as discussed above, seem directed at this class of people. Take the 1632 proclamation, for example, the bulk of which was aimed at “Manchu, Chinese [Nikan], and Mongol” officials in banner positions.\footnote{MR 5.870, Tc6.12.2.} All banner ranks from the banner commanders to captains, as well as affluent individuals, were required to wear a leather-collared gown in winter and summer, the regulation read. They were not allowed to wear their casual gown. When the commanders went out on patrol, however, they were to wear their casual gowns. The less affluent officials and individuals should wear gowns that do not open at the neck, and class would be distinguished by those that have a leather collar and those that do not. As for hats, in the winter, wear a hat with nob or tassel, and in summer, a grass hat. A number of articles were off limits to this non-noble class, unless it had been a gift of the khan. This included red fox-pelt hats (although yellow fox-pelt hats were allowed), yellow or gold robes, and five claw dragon prints. Those below the rank of bodyguard were prohibited from wearing satin: this was done out
of consideration of the less affluent, Hong Taiji reasoned, as the price of cloth was cheaper. Hats or collars not prescribed were similarly banned, and military belts and shoulder pads could not be worn at home, only when going out.33

The 1638 regulations articulated the ranks more clearly, laying out the kinds of hats and belts that certain officials of certain positions should be wearing. This was done in strict hierarchy so that the status was reflected by what the associated position could wear. High banner officials and board presidents, for example, were grouped together in the third category, and should all wear hats with a ruby on top and belts with four inlaid rubies. By contrast, their immediate subordinates, which included officials of the inner court, vice presidents, chancellery officials, and lower banner officials, wore a sapphire on their hat and a gold belt without any other decorations. These decreasing increments went on down to lower officials, who, like their noble counterparts on the lower end of the rank spectrum, wore but a belt with iron pieces.34

The significance of caps should not be underestimated. As seen in the clothing codes in the 1630s, the emphasis on caps and belts was disproportional to that on clothing. The regulation made references to certain robes, and colors and patterns of the clothing, but by and large the concern of Hong Taiji and his Board of Li was with the ornamentation on the caps and belts. There were a few reasons for this. Foremost, clothing among individuals during this time varied only slightly. Cloth was traded for or raided and cut in a fashion that ensured efficient mobility for riding and shooting. Variation in color and style was limited. Hats and belts, however, were ostentatious, with jewels and inlays piled on, as shown through the regulations. There was a more important reason for the focus on caps, however. In the process of constructing the


34 NGSY, p. 507-509, Cd3.8.5.
hierarchy it was the easiest way to immediately identify the position and rank of an interlocutor. Take for example the case of General Zhang Xian 張誠 and his troops. Having surrendered his city just outside Beijing when the Manchus entered Beijing, he was made a general and put in command of all troops and cavalry in the county just outside Beijing.\(^{35}\) He reported having obeyed orders in having everyone’s head shaved, and adorning himself and his underlings with “hat ornamentation according to the Manchu clothing regulations in stratification of ranks *so as to differentiate.*”\(^{36}\)

In the early years of the Shunzhi reign, further hat and belt regulations in service of stratification of the military and civilian bureaucracy continued at a feverish pace. In 1645, the Board of Li drew up a code for the bureaucratic ranks, drawing up the hats for first through ninth grades, as well as for the degree licensees. Appended to this was a section of prohibitions for those without office. They could not use green cloth; were allowed coarse silk for celebrations but were not to use multicolored cloth; and boots and shoes had to be black, while red, or yellow, with multicolors strictly prohibited.\(^{37}\) Two years later (Sz4), the Board of Li put into effect a set of regulations for military ranked officials, including banner commanders and lieutenants. This issue also included codes for the wives of officials.\(^{38}\)

Most of the regulations cited above only discussed hat and belt ornamentation. Except for the very first order issued in 1632, most of these dress codes were about hats and belts, offering little

\(^{35}\) See SL, p. 84.1, Sz1.9.2.

\(^{36}\) GSA 153290, Zhang Xian, Sz2.6.22. My emphasis.

\(^{37}\) GSA 038683, Libu, Sz2.6r.6.

\(^{38}\) SL, p. 288.2-289.1, Sz4.12.23.
instruction on the robes to wear. Beginning in the mid-Shunzhi reign, however, the first regulations for clothing came out.\textsuperscript{39} New codes began to be regularly created in 1647 for the military ranks, and then became more articulated throughout the 1650s. By that time, the precedent of stratification had already been set. Clothing regulations came out every few years in the Shunzhi and Kangxi reigns in adjustment or expansion of codes to dictate who could wear what kind of cap, belt, and robe, and they continued to do so to perfect the stratification of the socio-political order.\textsuperscript{40} Here clothing became one medium through which politics was conducted. The idea of a stratified state had already been launched, and the means had already been connected to clothing. It was this trend that became the foundation for the construction of the hierarchy and the capacity to control political resources. The following sections explore just how this worked.

ENACTING THE POLITICAL ORDER: GREETINGS, ENTOURAGE, AND CEREMONY

The discussion so far has focused on the need and vision of a stratified sociopolitical order and how it was realized through a code of dress grafted onto hierarchy. The first section showed how the outfitting of each individual according to his political or social station aimed to identify and articulate the structure of politics and state authority. This order still needed to be enacted, however; it needed to be put into everyday practice so as to both preserve existing relations and to continue to reproduce them. To have a stratified hierarchy and to clothe the individuals that composed it accordingly reflected the ideal by forcing a certain organization upon a group or groups, but it did not instruct actors how they ought to relate to each other. It identified superiors

\textsuperscript{39} KXHD 716.2308-2344. Also see \textit{Qingding fusemao yu yongli} (1652).

\textsuperscript{40} See KXHD 716.2331-2344.
and inferiors, but did not give them ways and means to act. This was left to a further set of rites that instructed imperial relatives and officials how to socialize after having recognized each other. These rites informed actors how to greet each other, how to move about in the society, to remember their place in line, and of the relative power—or lack of power—associated with their rank.

*Greeting Rites*

When one political subject encountered another, how ought they to behave? When two parties and their attendants came upon each other in passing which one should yield the road and in what manner? Who had precedent, the official or the noble? The regulations that came to dictate the answers to these questions gave real meaning to the stratified order in day to day activities, organizing actors into their positions and social stations in everyday life and making it an element of performance even more than just a dress to be worn.\(^4^1\) This formalized the hierarchical order, clarifying who was deferential to whom and in what way. The amorphous title of an above-rank duke, for example, took on a concrete meaning in the code that stipulated how a holder of this position, when encountering a third rank beile on the road, was to receive the deference of that beile—the beile was required to stop his horse and stand to the side allowing the gong to pass.

The first regulations for greeting rites were set in 1636, in the first months of the Chongde reign. In this code, the Board of Li laid out how political actors of different ranks were supposed to interact with other actors of varying ranks. The regulation began at the very top with the khan. It clarified what was supposed to happen when the khan crossed paths with first,

second, and third ranked princes—that is, an imperial relative of the highest ranks of the aristocracy. The imperial relative was to move himself and his entire entourage out of the path of the khan, to dismount his horse, and then to pass to the side after the khan.\textsuperscript{42}

This seems straightforward enough and befitting for the actions between sovereign and subject—except that it had to be written down and regulated at all. There are no other ranks listed here, which could mean that none of the other ranks had to be instructed in how to act towards their emperor. Or perhaps it was that they knew their place. The imperial relatives were always in struggle with Hong Taiji, as discussed in chapter 3, precisely because they thought that they too should be possessed of more authority and have control of more political resources. This greeting ritual for the sovereign, then, demanded by Hong Taiji and drawn up and enacted by the Board of Li, made sure that positions were continually practiced and reproduced on a daily basis, and in doing so, those positions and the political resources associated with them were preserved. As the oft-repeated phrase went, “superiors and inferiors are clarified.”

Pause for a moment and look at who exactly this regulation was aimed at. Who were the princes under question here? These positions belonged to individuals formerly known collectively as beile. They were the sons of Nurhaci and their sons. The first ranked princes were Hong Taiji’s brothers, an included Daišan, Dorgon, Dodo, Jirgalang, Hooge, and Yoto. The junwang were their sons, Ajige, Adali, and Duoni. The beile included Luoluohui, Abatai, and Dudu, the son Nurhaci’s eldest son, Cuyen.\textsuperscript{43} This was already a select group, including not much more than a dozen people, and already immensely privileged and powerful in the emerging Qing state. The designation of them into differentiated ranks and associating those ranks with

\textsuperscript{42} MR 6.1124-1125, Cd1.6.11.

\textsuperscript{43} For complete lists of the Manchu personnel see Yang and Zhou Yuanlian, \textit{Qingdai baqi wanggong guizu xingshuai shi}, 39-40, 149-155.
various differential acts to each other and especially the khan helped ensure that their political positions would be curtailed and inferior to that of the khan. This was necessary in the struggles over policy and power, as will be discussed in the following chapter, but it was also necessary for the type of political order under construction. Within a few decades, these ranks of nobles would swell exponentially and continue to do so throughout the course of the Qing. Their role had to be defined.

These greeting regulations did not stop with the Khan and his relation to the high aristocracy: it continued on down through the ranks. A third degree prince encountering a first or second degree prince, i.e. one of the relatives outranking him, was required to move his retinue off the road and let them pass. If he ran into an banner commander, however, the lower ranking commander had to dismount and stand to the side while the third degree prince passed. The commander similarly had to yield the road to a fifth degree prince, but he did not have to dismount, just stand to the side while the prince passed. The high-ranking banner great generals and board presidents also followed the same practice when encountering a prince of the blood of the fifth degree. Their immediate subordinates, the banner vice-commander and lieutenant colonel were required to stop their horses and stand to the side while the banner commander, banner great general, or board president passed. A banner captain, however, who was another rank lower, had to dismount. Regulations of this nature continued down the ranks to the very bottom position, which was a driver.⁴⁴

The highest positions of the imperial relatives—princes of the first, second, and third degree—were created in 1636 out of the general rank of beile. This entire process of ranking and associating behavior to those ranks was unfolding at once. The designation of new titles and

⁴⁴MR 6.1124-1127, Cd1.6.11.
ranks demanded the designation of actions that would be associated with those positions. Indeed, throughout this early period of state-building the historical record shows the creation of new positions or ranks, and immediately alongside that is the articulation of activity to be associated with that rank. Take for example the creation of the imperial family lines in 1638 (Cd3). In the same act of the enunciation of the main and collateral lines of the imperial relative, Hong Taiji and his Board of Li also decreed how they would interact with others. A subject of the mainline (m. uksun, c. zongzhi) was required to dismount if he encountered anyone of noble status from a first degree prince on down to tenth degree imperial relative. If he encountered an official of beyond-rank duke or below he need not dismount but only take a different path. A subject of the collateral line (m. gioro, c. jueluo), however, was required to dismount when crossing paths with an aristocrat, and to move to the side of the road of a duke, commander, or board president.45

When the field administration (i.e. officials stationed in the provinces) was expanded in the early Shunzhi period, greeting protocol for the entire hierarchy of officials was also codified. Regulations laid out how an official of such and such rank was supposed to call on another official of such and such rank. This covered protocol such as how to enter the yamen, when to get out of the palanquin, where to sit, and when to exchange letters or documents. Take for example the highest-ranking military field administrator, the provincial military commander (tidu). When calling on the governor-general (zongdu 總督) of a province, he was to do the following: enter through the center gate and proceed to the ceremonial gate, where he should dismount; the governor-general then was to come out to greet the provincial military commander, stepping down from his palanquin before the main office and sit; the governor-

45 NGSY, p. 513-514, Cd3.8.5.
general was to sit in the principle seat and the provincial military commander in the side seat. If the provincial military commander had a hereditary rank of the first degree (jingkini hafan), then the governor-general was to sit to the left and the provincial military commander to the right. At this point they were to exchange documents or letters, the governor-general using the format in reply to an inferior (zhafu 觴付), and the provincial military commander that of an exchange of communications between equals (zicheng 咄呈).\textsuperscript{46}

The rite is simple, but the balance of power is not. In fact, it is inverted—the higher ranking official is placed in a position of deference. The provincial military commander carried a rank of 1b, and the governor-general that of 2b. Yet it was the governor-general who sat in the primary seat and who used a form of reply to an inferior, not for an equal or superior, as did the commander. This gave primacy to the governor-general, who had greater administrative responsibility over both civilian and military duties, but perhaps less power. The governor-general was the highest civilian office in the provinces and oversaw all field operations. In addition, he had command of the military units in the provinces, the Green Standard. The provincial military commander, by contrast, supervised the provincial troops and would mobilize them at the command of the governors-general. In this chain of command, the governor-general held the advantage; he possessed greater political resources, even if his military power was less. The greeting rite reflected this.

These greeting rites were set in 1656 (Sz12). The following year, the Shunzhi emperor complained about this inverse power relationship and the lack of honor given to the military officials. “We have ranks and positions, and so know who is higher and lower,” the emperor wrote to the Board of Li. “If the rank corresponds to your position, then it cannot be...

\textsuperscript{46} KXHD 716.2272-2273.
transgressed. But it was observed in ceremony and greeting rites that all officials stood together equally with governors-general and regional vice commanders. Even seventh rank officials offended the rite!" This mattered to the Shunzhi emperor because "military officials carried us to battle and won the state. If we take lightly their position and role, when we need them they will not come. How could the civil and military officials be of equal importance?" 47 Despite the emperor’s discomfort, nothing was changed. In fact, it became understood as the proper order of things, internalized by those at the top as the appropriate enactment of a relationship to reflect the control of political and military resources. Kangxi put this most forcefully in chastising his general at Xi’an for allowing the platoon commander (zhufang fangyu 驻防防禦) to ride his horse into the yamen. “This is a great offense against legitimate order,” Kangxi bellowed. “What would you think if the magistrate acted as if he was an equal to your regional vice commander and vice commander in chief?!" 48

This kind of inverse of power relation was enacted on down through the hierarchy of the field administrators. When the provincial military commander called on the governor of the province they behaved like equals, even though the governor was even lower in rank than the governor-general. When meeting a lowly magistrate, who sat at the bottom of the provincial administration, it was the magistrate was to come through the side gate, be seated in the office by

47 SL, p. 761.1, Sz13.3.16. 己未。論禮部、朝廷用人、文武兩途。本無異視。設有品級、所以辨尊卑。昭 等威也。如係職任相關。尤難凌越。前見會議文武各官相見 儀節內。一應有司、俱與總兵官副將平行。甚至 有官階七品、亦與之抗禮。朕思督撫總兵官與巡按、俱奉特命差遣。任寄 原重。自難以品級論。其餘州縣 等官。俱與一品二品武官抗 禮。殊屬未協。武臣無便執。宜令封疆。體統若輕。臨事必多 碼贓。豈文武 並重之意。爾部再會同兵二部、詳議妥具 奏

48 SL, p. 107.2-108.1, Kx22.4.5. 論西安將軍希福、陝 西地方、甚為緊要。因爾效力行問、練習軍務、特簡此 任。爾到西安、須嚴束兵丁、加意操演。不得騷擾百姓。督撫布按、俱封疆重臣、地方 大吏。乃有駐防防 禦等官、公然騏馬入伊衙門、平行抗禮者、大失體統。倘知縣等官、與爾 將軍副都統平行、爾等之意若何。近見浙江 福建將軍、副都統、督撫、彼此不睦、題請坐見 禮儀。豈不負朕視文武一體之意乎。又漢中 地方、必簡選精兵、發往戍守。不得以強壯兵 丁、留置本標、止以疲弱者發往。爾其識之
the commander, and exchange communications as to that of a superior.\(^{49}\) This may appear to be more along the lines of what was expected for superiors and inferiors, but in fact there is very little deference involved here. Consider the case of the regional vice commander (fujiang 副將) calling on his civilian counterparts. With a rank of 2b, the vice commander was still required to prostrate to the governor-general—a man holding the same rank as him!—sit to the side and drink tea, bow three times and leave. If he possessed no hereditary rank then he could not have tea.\(^{50}\)

*Instruments and attendants of an entourage*

When imperial relatives and officials moved about in the capital and provinces they were afforded an entourage of attendants and ritual instruments. These outfits provided protection and service to the official, and at the same time afforded pomp and show in an expression of rank and social position. An ostentatious entourage could accomplish this in the same way that clothing could. What better way to make oneself known when passing on the road than having a retinue of people surrounding you and waving banners and flags? But more so, the stratification of the socio-political order necessitated a differentiation of movement among the ranks. The emperor could not be out-shown in personnel and glamor by the beile, nor could the relative by the official. It was for this reason that an entourage came under regulation very early on.

The first regulatory move was in the second month of 1632, almost immediately after the defining New Year’s Day ceremony that put Hong Taiji at the center. The newly created Board of Li was employed to decree the implementation of a regulation on who could have what size of

\(^{49}\) KXHD 716.2273.

\(^{50}\) KXHD 716.2274-2275. For the regulations of the imperial relatives see 716.2219-2227.
entourage. The khan, it was determined, would have three flags, two umbrellas, and six guards in
his entourage. The senior beile—that is, Hong Taiji’s two brothers, Daišan and Manggultai—
were allowed two flags, one umbrella, and four guards. The other beile got one flag, one
umbrella, and two guards. Furthermore, the decree went on to give precedence to the khan,
calling for the dismissal of an entourage or parts of an entourage when in the presence of the
khan. Even the senior beile were limited in what they could wield when meeting or
accompanying Hong Taiji.

When gathering together around the khan, flags and umbrellas cannot be employed, and
not one guard will be used. When exiting the city gate, each will then take up their flags
and umbrellas. If there is error in this, the Board of Rites will investigate…When meeting
the khan, other flags, umbrellas, and guards are not allowed. When accompanying the
khan on a march, only the senior beile can use umbrellas.51

This type of hierarchical order gave primacy to those on top and remained stable in the
face of changes and expansion. As the bureaucracy grew and the relatives became further
stratified, however, the type and level of instrument did change. The organization of people in a
system of relations continued to evolve and further develop the state and its social operations.
With the change of the dynastic name and expansion of the nobility in 1636, a set of regulations
went out quantifying anew the entourage of the first, second, and third degree princes.52 Shortly
after, other ranks of nobility were regulated. The entourage of an above-rank gong, for example,
had one gold and yellow umbrella, two ritual spears with leopard tails, and six flags. They were

51 MWYD 8.99, Tc6.02.04; MR 5.686, Tc6.02.04. han i jakade isambihehe, kiru sara naka, niyalma jailabure
niyalma ume nakara, meni meni cisui hecen i duka tucime yabuci, kiru sara gaifi yabu, ere be ufaraci, dorolon i
jurgan i belle dacilafi, han ci aname emu mudan de emu honin gaisu, dere banime gajarakoci, tere honin be sinde
gainbi, han i emgi acaha bade, guwa i kiru sara, niyalma jailabukü gemu naka, han i emgi tucifi yabure de, amba
beile i teile sara jafakini

52 MR 6.1027, Cd1.5.1.
forbidden to take this entourage into the city, however, and could use it solely for tours and marches.\(^{53}\) In accordance with the hierarchy of nobility and bureaucracy, the entourage and instruments shrank with each decreasing rank, so that at the bottom, a third rank imperial guard and commandant were allowed only one attendant.\(^{54}\) Similarly, in the early Shunzhi period, the entourage paraphernalia for the nine grades of bureaucratic officials was created, and which was significantly less than for the relatives and the hereditary ranks. A first-class official was allowed four gold circles on his ritual fan. That was it, a ritual fan with four gold circles—no entourage, no attendants, no guards. A second rank official was allowed three gold circles, and on down to the eighth and ninth ranks, who were required to use white ritual fans.\(^{55}\)

*Ceremony and one’s place in line*

Grand ceremony and thrice-monthly court ceremony provided an occasion for the performance of the stratified order. Recall the New Year’s Day ceremony, as discussed in the second chapter, and how the 1632 ritual was used to ordain Hong Taiji at the top of the political and military order. In addition to placing Hong Taiji the top of the hierarchy, that same ceremony also enacted a stratification of the entire political order from the khan down to the banner units and civil officials. By organizing individuals according to their rank and social station, and giving them instructions on how to act throughout the ritual, such ceremonies ensured both the preservation and reproduction of hierarchical rank within the stratified order—the emperor on top, placed in the center and flanked by his brothers, but clearly superior and in command; the relatives in lines before them, kowtowing on command; the banner leaders bringing their banner commanders and

\(^{53}\) KXHD 716.2289.  
\(^{54}\) KXHD 716.2290.  
\(^{55}\) KXHD 716.2291.
officials through in organized fashion. Everything was put into a framework meant to structure the order of command and rank, and to impress upon the actors both the reality and the naturalness of their social positions.

There were numerous ritual occasions for such an ordering to occur, but the main annual episodes were the three grand ceremonies—New Year’s Day, the emperor’s birthday, and the winter solstice—plus the thrice monthly court ceremony, as discussed in chapter 6. In each of these ceremonies, the nobility and bureaucracy were organized according to rank, and each rank was given specific performances in relation to the emperor and each other. These enactments of the hierarchy take front and center in the regulations and discussions of the ceremonies, so much so that in the same way that it formed the system of li for the emperor, as discussed in the previous chapter, it is not an exaggeration to see the ceremony as the symbolic organization of the socio-political order.

The regulations of the ceremonies laid out in 1636 speak to this. It is worth re-examining this edict from the perspective of stratification, and in doing so highlight the steps that emphasize the sociopolitical order. For the New Year’s Day ceremony, some nine steps were here regulated, of which five articulated the hierarchy. From the very start of the ceremony, the edict decreed, “the first, second, and third degree princes on down to the troops are to line up in the main hall.” The khan was then to emerge and “lead the princes of the blood and chief ministers to the tangse to kowtow in the three genuflections and nine prostrations to Heaven.” Upon returning to the palace, “the imperial relatives and officials line up.” The khan was to come out and sit on the throne, and “the imperial relatives and beyond-rank officials perform three genuflections and nine prostrations to him.” The banner commanders next led their banners through to kowtow. All the while, the Censorate was to keep watch, making sure that everyone lined up correctly.
according to their rank and their position. The ceremonies for the emperor’s birthday and the court audience bore similar emphasis on the placing of ranks and the insurance of the political order by ceremonial decree.

There are a number of different cases outlining the actual event of the ceremony, showing that it did proceed as prescribed. The New Year’s Day ceremony of 1638, for example, tells of the princes of the blood and military and civil officials gathering at the main hall and being led out to make offerings at the tangse. They returned and lined up according to rank and kowtowed in turn to the emperor, while the Board of Li called out instructions to them on how to proceed. Other grand ceremonies went off in a similar fashion.

The frequent occurrences of these rituals served as constant reminder of one’s place in the political order. Three times a year the relative or official would partake in a grand ceremony, finding his place in line, with superiors and inferiors above or below him. Three times a year, the actor would fully engage the symbolic act of his social station as a subject in the sociopolitical order and kowtow to the emperor. The production would remind him of how to act and how to think. It would define his social and political being and make the hierarchy manifest. Then, three times a month on a smaller scale he would also take his ranks and face the emperor. Lining up before dawn among his political peers to wait in the heat and the cold to present his affairs to the emperor, or if there were none, then to be present as an object of the stratified order.

56 MWYD 10.185-186, Cd1.5.14; MR 6.1050-52, Cd1.5.14.
58 NGSY, p. 142-164, Cd3.1.1.
59 For example see GSA 005632 for wanshoujie on Sz12.9.14, and GSA 089712 for the winter solstice on Sz12.10.4.
ENFORCEMENT AND INTERNALIZATION

The preservation of the structure of the stratified order relied on more than code and regulated reproduction—it's successful operation involved more than just the articulation of the law and decrees on how individuals ought to enact it. People had to obey, either by force or by will. Indeed, individual consciousness had to grapple with the phenomenon of the self in the hierarchy.\textsuperscript{60} It did so here in the Qing in two ways, through transgression and internalization. In the case of the former, relatives or officials might transgress the rite, offending what was demanded of their socio-political station. This could occur by failing to wear the proper clothing, stepping out of place in a ceremony, or outright violating a rite. When such offenses occurred, the state would step in and punish, ensuring through the use of bureaucratic enforcement that the proper order was maintained. The other side of active enforcement was the internalization of the rite as a symbol of the political order that organized the world. Any violation of the rite and thus the existing order, they held, was a serious transgression against the natural order of things, so much so that they would lash out against offenders. This was less a watchful eye for the state, and more the enactment of a world view. Both the enforcement of transgressions and internalizations helped preserve and reproduce the political order.

\textit{Transgression and enforcement}

Transgressions against the political order were not uncommon. Actors were wont, either by design or ignorance, to wear the wrong clothing, to fail to perform their proper role and not take the ceremonies seriously, or to go out with the wrong entourage and wield the wrong ritual.

instruments. When such transgressions occurred, the state came down hard and punished the perpetrators. Below are some examples.

As the key identifier of one’s rank and identity, proper dress stood at the center of the Qing court’s attempt to keep actors in line. Hong Taiji often complained of improper dress and was known to fine bannermen for not wearing their court clothing to political audience. In 1653, the Shunzhi emperor ordered the Board of Li to properly punish those not adhering to the dress code. The next year, Board of Li presidents issued a series of orders warning officials to wear their proper dress to court, and threatening punishment for those who did not. Similarly, the Kangxi emperor became particularly frustrated over the clothing habits of his subject, complaining year after year that class distinctions were under threat from “civil and military officials, as well as commoners wearing extravagant clothes without any regard. The rich rush to dress more gaudy than the next, and the poor try to follow. They steal and cultivate bad habits.”

In just two years time the emperor would complain again that the clothing regulations that had been adjusted and implemented during his reign were being thwarted. “I set the clothing regulation for simplicity,” Kangxi wrote, “but I did not think that when officials went to implement that they would be over-zealous and pick on minute things and harass the people. In this way the market stopped and goods were obstructed, creating a great inconvenience for

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61 NGSY, p. 698, Cd3.13.5.
62 SL, p. 575.1, Sz10.2.29.
63 BDTB 02-01-02-2130-016, Hu Shian, Sz10.2.29; BDTB 02-01-02-2130-024, Langkio, Sz11.1.23.
64 GSA 278678-030, Kangxi Kx11.8.11.
people.” Some years later the Board of Li president also memorialized about the extravagance of clothing and the need to resurrect former regulations in order to reel in the ostentatiousness.

Ritual ceremonies could also become a site for disruption, as nobles and officials might step out of line and not perform the rites as their ranks decreed, or even fail to show up. The latter problem was more common in the Shunzhi period, especially for the thrice-monthly court audience ceremonies. It was argued above that these audiences were one means of reproducing the political order and making sure agents knew their rank and the limitations of it, especially in relation to the emperor. It was also a means to discipline the bureaucracy by way of keeping them close and in check, but also by continually practicing the hierarchical stratification of the political order. The power of the state had to be brought to bear when the practice was flaunted. The cases of Gao Fengxiang and Wu Mingxuan show the extent of the crime that the court and the Board of Li saw in absenting oneself from court audience. When he failed to appear at a court ceremony, Wu Mingxuan got fined three months pay. Kangxi later regularized punishments for such transgressions.

The former problem of improper ritual performance in ceremony was less common, most likely because Board of Li officials were always on hand to tell actors what to do and make sure they were doing it right. There were issues, however. Hong Taiji warned his relatives in the middle of his reign on the need to follow the proper ceremonial practices, Yongzheng

66 GSA 120775, Libu, Kx19.10.9.
67 BDTB 02-01-02-1976-003, Tong Fengcai, Sz5.8.27; BDTB 02-01-02-1982-021, Hu Shian, Sz11.4.14. For other similar cases see GSA 185043-066, Zhang Mingjun, Sz11.1.73.
68 BDTB 02-01-0201982-023, Liu Zhengzong, Sz11.5.3.
70 SL, p. 550.1, Cd3.7.1.
complained about it the most. In the second year of his reign (1724) he had become particularly irritated by the lack of propriety in grand ceremony and court audience.

I have performed the rites in the court and grand ceremonies for a number of years now. Recently I see that the ceremonies are more lax than before...if I am not strict now then in the future it will gradually become worse without end. Now, in the court halls and the grand ceremonies, nobles and officials are stratified and there is a system of principles. Those who neglect it cannot not [i.e. must] be brought before the law. Since I have ascended the throne I have sent out edicts and recently issued a serious warning. And still Li Jianxun and Luo Zhi make a mess of court when doing the rituals.

Of particular concern here were two officials. Li and Luo, who had been undermining the ceremony and causing disorder. He wanted them punished, and sent their case to the Board of Punishments. Yongzheng became so enraged at the transgressions at one point that he had begun to consider making an example of them by sentencing them to death.71

Greeting rites were also a site for offense, especially by those in the provinces. The Kangxi-era event mentioned in the previous section is a good illustration of this and what the emperor thought about it. The case was that military officials had not adhered to the proper greeting rite when calling upon local magistrates, and that they had even ridden their horses right into yamens. Kangxi had called it an “offense against the legitimate order.” It was not just an isolated instance, but seemed to occur more systematically in the southern provinces as well. “I see that the rites of reception practiced between the Zhejiang-Fujian garrison general and garrison lieutenant general, and governor-general and governor are not well,” Kangxi said in the

71 SL, p. 305.1-2, Yz2.4.15.; SL, p. 319.2-320.1, Yz2.5.4. 趙於朝會大典。行禮有年。見近來禮儀，比前甚屬廢弛。大非尊君敬上之道。我皇考覧仁。如天覆載。殊予包容。故稽察之大臣官員，遂皆視為尋常。並不約束糾參。漸致玩忽。朕今若不整肅嚴禁。將來流弊，無所底止。夫朝堂之上。大典攸關。君臣之分。大義所係。玩忽之人。不得不以法治之。朕御極以來。屢有諭旨。近又申飭嚴禁。乃李建勳、羅植、於行 禮之日。紊越朝章。顯違朕旨。
same correspondence to his garrison general in reference to interactions among military and civilian officials. “Does this not betray my intention to make a single unity of military and civilian officials?”\textsuperscript{72}

\textit{Internalization and naturalization}

Despite these cases of transgression and enforcement it would be a mistake to understand stratification and its codification as something imposed from the top and enacted through force. While those with the most to gain shaped the process, actors at all levels of the hierarchy partook in the implementation and enforcement of the practice of the stratified order. Individuals saw their place as defined by this order and fought to make sure that it was guaranteed. They found themselves in direct competition with others, fighting for the same rights or to preserve their advantage. In this way, actors naturalized this socio-political order and internalized its means of reproduction and regulation. The prescribed rites, whether greetings or one’s place in line, had become the means by which actors struggled against each other.

The case of G’o zu ji in 1636 speaks to this. G’o was a unit captain of the bordered red banner. One day he and his entourage were riding on the road and encountered another entourage. The record is somewhat unclear, but the other entourage appears to have belonged to Ts’oo Xi Jiyoo of the plain white banner, who is of unnamed rank here. At the head of Ts’oo’s entourage, however, was a guard charged with the management of the attendants and ritual instruments. When the two entourages came upon each other the guard did not move aside nor yield the road. Outraged at what he deemed to be an infraction of rank, G’o lashed out and slapped the guard in the face. For this act, G’o was punished by the Board of Li—although it is

\textsuperscript{72} SL, p. 107.2-108.1, Kx22.4.5.
unclear if he received punishment for not adhering to the proper greeting formalities or for enacting his own justice.\textsuperscript{73} In either case, the point here is that actors internalized rank and took grave offense if they felt their rank was not being respected.

This internalization is made even more explicit in a mid Qianlong-era case.\textsuperscript{74} In 1762 (QL27), the newly appointed Xi’an garrison general, Sungcun, was received by local Shaanxi officials and took offense to their ritual impropriety. On his way through Shaanxi, Sungcun was first met by the Tongshang circuit (潼商道), Tu Yongzhong, who did not receive him properly. Then, upon arriving at the provincial capital, the local underlings only clasped their hands together but did not kowtow as required. Even more insulting, Sungcun complained, was the time when local officials came to greet him at his yamen: they rode their horses through the main gate up to the ritual gate instead of dismounting outside the main gate, as detailed in the greeting rite code. In defense of his subordinates, Governor Zhong Yin went to great pains to explain in a series of palace memorials that the customs in Shaanxi were different, and that the rites practiced by the local officials were done with the utmost respect and sincerity towards Sungcun. “This does not make sense!” Qianlong scribbled in red on Zhong’s memorial.\textsuperscript{75} No matter the customary practice, Qianlong replied in another communication, “each of these people are head of local officials and they did not follow the rites. It is clear that their subordinate officials do follow ceremonial propriety.” The emperor and grand council then engaged in no small quest to determine the identity of the local officials who committed the ritual offenses.\textsuperscript{76}

\textsuperscript{73} MR 6.1144, Cd1.6.24.

\textsuperscript{74} This case was assembled from the following documents: ZZ 04-01-01-0252-002, Zhong Yin, QL27.4.30; ZZ 04-01-01-0252-002, Zhong Yin, QL27.5.24; MLZ 03-0179-1942-028, Grand Council, QL27.5r.99; SL, p. 369.1-2, QL27.4.12, p. 392.2-393.1, QL27.5.13, p. 394.2-395.1, QL27.5.17.

\textsuperscript{75} ZZ 04-01-01-0252-002, Zhong Yin, QL27.4.30.

\textsuperscript{76} SL, p. 394.2-395.1, QL27.5.17.
Actors could also muster up a righteous indignation toward clothing, as the case of Zhou Qiwu shows. In early the Shunzhi period, the Hanyang magistrate, Zhou Qiwu, got into an argument with Zhou Wenfeng, an underling of a Guizhou official. Wenfeng claimed that Qiwu’s clothing was too extravagant and against regulation, and proceeded to “arrogantly” rip off Qiwu’s collar. Despite the insubordination of the servant, the investigator of the case came to find that “many of the southern officials wore clothes of different styles,” which was unacceptable and fell outside of the “regulations for civil and military clothing, stipulating each rank and style.” Continuing, the investigator decried Qiwu for “not respecting the system that the state has set. He wears a different style hat and collar, and himself declares it of a different type.” The investigator recommended punishment for Qiwu.77

One’s position in a ceremony was also taken most seriously, for it represented status and reflected honor. A Yongzheng-era case of two provincial officials fighting about their ceremonial place in line adroitly expresses the importance. In 1730, the Xian garrison lieutenant general felt he ought to have primacy of position in a ceremony over the governor, and he made his voice heard, publicly disputing with the governor during the ceremony. The instance was brought to the attention of the Yongzheng emperor, who decried the matter as “a great insult to the legitimate order!” Continuing, he reminded the accused parties that “we are all engaged in the same business of governing, and we should work together. We all need to respect the rites and act as an example for officials and people. Under the circumstances, pay respects to relations and the rites, especially during public events. If you end up fighting amongst yourselves, it will be transmitted near and far, making us a joke and bringing great shame.” The emperor then

77 GSA 016612, Lu Xiaojin, Sz3.3.28.
emphasized the order of ritual position with the governor having primacy over the lieutenant general. “It is always like this,” he said, “and the order must be adhered to.”

What is clear from both the tone and the number of documents on these matters is that such rites of greeting, clothing, and ceremony were very important and officials took them quite seriously. These prescribed practices defined the political and interpersonal relationships among actors, determining the layers of authority and structuring the political order. The settlement from the Hong Taiji years and the ongoing process of institutionalizing it here took a particular form in how the different actors of different ranks were to interact, and to do so in a way that formalized their political relationships. The smooth operations of the state both militarily and administratively relied on such practices, and the actors knew it. Affronts to this order they took personally and mobilized a language that not only betrayed their own indignation and insult as a threat to their positions, but also the stability and functionality of the entire political operation.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has argued that four categories of activity made up the system of li for Qing political actors and worked to integrate the social and cultural systems. Clothing signaled the stratification among ranks and positions, while regulations pertaining to entourages, greetings, and ceremonial organization gave meaning to the hierarchy in everyday interactions among political actors. The second part of the chapter went on to look at how these rites organized political life and constructed a unified political order in which actors became invested in their positions within the order. This system of stratification assumed the prior existence of individuals

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78 SL, Yz8.7.26.
who were already divided into rank according to birth and office. The social stations were already set and were thus only being further clarified by placing certain symbols upon them in order to differentiate among them, giving some more power than others; making some superiors and others inferiors. This was the function of the clothing, and which was further reproduced by regulating how individuals should greet each other according to rank and where they would sit in formal gatherings. Early Manchu state-making efforts saw the imposition of a certain order on the conquest elite, the military, and the small bureaucracy. The title of the khan was invested with full political authority in the position, and the brothers and sons were made into their own class—the Manchu aristocracy. The relative relation of officials amongst the civil and military bureaucracy, as well as the nobility, were further clarified through the prescription of certain practices and behaviors. As this chapter has shown, they did all this by means of dressing certain groups in certain ways and making them relate to each other according to their sociopolitical position. These rites formed the cultural system for the political order.

There was something else going on as well. As Hong Taiji and his staff laid down practices for different positions and created a stratified political order, they also manufactured the positions. It needs to be emphasized that the stratification process under investigation here underwent two simultaneous processes. On the one hand, it clarified existing power relations, such as the khan in relation to the beile; at the same time, it created new positions: the various ranks of the imperial relatives, for example. These two processes are hard to separate, and can be more easily discerned by looking at the creation of new ranks and new positions. In 1636, as mentioned above, Hong Taiji issued a statement placing the descendants of Nurhaci and his brothers into two different groups, the mainline and the collateral line. Each line had different practices associated with it. This happened at all levels of the political order from the imperial
relatives to the bureaucracy. So, while existing relations were being given new meanings, at the same time, new positions and their relations were simultaneously being created. In this way, through the granting of honors and categorizing groups, the state carved out new classes with new privileges. In order to accommodate and incorporate these people into the hierarchical order, there was a continual expansion of code in clothing and rites, as seen in the constant revisions throughout the Shunzhi and Kangxi reigns. The operation of this fell upon the Board of Li, and was integrated into the system of li.
Conclusion: Li and the Qing Multiethnic Empire

The Qing dynasty was an awesome accomplishment in world history.¹ Disparate groups of semi-nomadic peoples living in Northeastern Eurasia organized themselves, combined with settled agrarian Chinese, and formed one of the largest land-based empires in history. Where other Eurasian conquest dynasties had failed to establish stable and integrated sociopolitical order that would lead to lasting rule, the Manchus built a successful multiethnic empire in China and Inner Asia that set the terms for modern China. They integrated diverse ethnic and interest groups into political, social, and administrative structures in the formation of a state. In doing so they were able to conquer and rule over the most territory ever from a Beijing metropole, expanding deep into Inner Asia and absorbing different peoples and cultures. Unlike other conquest dynasties, authority and control were highly centralized in the Qing, and a stable sociopolitical order lasted for almost two and a half centuries. This dissertation has argued that such a prosperous multiethnic empire was made possible by the employment and transformation of the practices of li.

To put this in comparative perspective, consider the Liao, Xi Xia, Jin, and Yuan. These conquest dynasties all suffered shortcomings in their attempts to build multiethnic empires.² Although successful in military conquest, they proved less adept in governing diverse populations and preventing their states to be torn asunder from the inside. Four key areas of statecraft limited the capacities of these states: the problem of the imperial relatives, the nature of


² Much of the discussion here on the conquest dynasties is drawn from the chapters of Herbert Franke and Denis Twitchett, eds., The Cambridge History of China: Alien Regimes and Border States, 907-1368, vol. 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).
authority, lack of centralization, and fragmented legal systems. Foremost, none of the others non-Chinese conquerors could adequately solve the problem of imperial relatives. Whereas the Manchus successfully integrated the relations into the political order and put them in service of the state, effectively mitigating their threat to the ruler and the social order, the conquest dynasties were constantly rocked by internal strife, intrigue, and fratricide. This problem was compounded by the nature of authority of these states based on personal followings and charismatic leadership. Even as ruling dynasties, imperial power for these regimes was never institutionalized, and the khan as emperor maintained his own personal retinue, bodyguards, and a large household with personal servants. The Qing regulated and codified these practices in the Board of Li section of the code, and eventually formalized this structure in the Imperial Household Department, which effectively institutionalized what had long been an informal norm in the Inner Asian traditions.

The lack of centralization and the fragmented legal system were consequences of each other. The failure of the dynasties to establish a centralized authority limited the capacity for the metropole to dictate policy and extend control over the provinces. The Liao had no clear jurisdictions or offices, and they relied on dual administrations to govern the Khitans and Chinese, respectively. The Jin copied this structure and appointed chieftains to govern areas but gave them great personal power. Emperor Hai-ling tried to rein in the provincial power and centralize authority, but he encountered great resistance, and the best he could achieve was a mobile field administration that would locate to where it was needed. Even with the establishment of a bureaucratic system modeled on the Song, Jurchens held all the positions of executive power. The Yuan continued to have an imperial relative problem with the relatives set up in the provinces as appanages. This made the Yuan less like a centralized state and more like a
conglomeration of regions under strong regional governments, which eventually led to administrative breakdown and civil war.

The legal system of these regimes was often an amalgamation of traditional norms applied for the conquerors and other Inner Asian or ethnic groups, and the Tang or Song codes applied for the Han populations. Whereas the Qing integrated their ethnic and interest groups, and constructed anew the rules and regulations to oversee them in a single order, the Chinese dynasties applied laws that lacked ethnic distinctions, while the conquest dynasties had fragmented codification and applications. The Liao used the Tang code for Chinese and tribal customs for the Khitans. The Jin initially tried to codify tribal law, but then adopted something similar to the Tang code through a new compilation in the early thirteenth century. The Yuan had no formal code, but rather used individual regulations. The lack of a clear set of formal rules for governing was both a reflection and a symptom of the lack of political cohesion and fragmented rule.

The Manchus employed li in addressing these issues that had plagued their predecessors. In the realms of the relatives, imperial authority, centralization, and law the Manchus constructed systems for the social and cultural orders, and developed new, inclusive forms of social and political life for an expansive multiethnic empire. New actors were integrated and given positions and responsibility, facilitating a Qing order that would operate cohesively among different ethnic groups, languages, and norms. Manchu, Mongol, Hanjun, and Chinese, as well as the imperial relatives worked alongside one another in administrative operation and military conquest. They had places in the same bureaucracy, practiced the same rituals, and were subject to the same laws. Simultaneously, there was a transformation of culture, not just to ensure that individuals would be embedded in proper social stations and maintain the chains of command,
but also in order to restructure all of political life. Culture in the form of li guided action and behavior and gave symbolic meaning to the new order. It defined the new state and situated the new reality of how some could have more access to more political resources; it invested political actors with common goals and facilitated their dealings with one another.

The Qing organized politics and ran an ethnically diverse administration. There was a dual presidency of Manchu and Chinese presidents in each of the six administrative boards, for example. There was also rule over non-Chinese populations, conquest of previously untouchable territory, and innovations in ruling institutions. The legal code could not just be copied from the Ming, as seen in Chapter 5, for new rules and regulations had to be drawn up to run this new kind of state. Furthermore, new organizational standards had to be created, and a system instituted for its operation. New methods of recruitment needed to be devised, different languages employed and standardized, and behavioral codes rethought for the different classes and groups. As discussed in Chapter 7, diverse actors had to be organized as a cohesive group and invested with a sense of common purpose with common goals. Similarly, the imperial relatives as a discrete group were employed in the service of the state and played key roles in administrative and military operations, as shown in Chapter 3.

Even more fundamental was the relation between culture and political practice. The Manchus did not simply adopt Chinese practices and culture, nor did they maintain traditional norms; rather they created anew cultural institutions, symbols, and activities to shape politics. On the surface, Qing rulers seemed to partake in all the same activities and perform the same rituals as the previous Chinese dynasties. Events like New Year’s Day ceremonies, court audiences, and ancestral sacrifice filled the calendar, while greeting formalities and dress styles based on rank

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3 For a good exploration of changes in the Qing field administration see Guy, *Qing Governors*. 
occupied actors. But the content of these practices and the organization of actors expressed something quite different from that of the Ming, or any other previous dynasty. For example, the Qing New Year’s Day ceremony, as seen in Chapter 2, opened with a visit to the Manchu shamanic shrine and had a dominant role for the emperor before a hierarchically ranked constituency performing the Manchu rite of three genuflections and nine prostrations. Similarly, a new system of ranking reflected a different sociopolitical order, and the imperial relatives as key political and military actors were grafted on top of the professional bureaucracy. A new system of cultural symbols and meanings was constructed. This system was the foundation of the Qing multiethnic empire.

How did these developments emerge? Did Qing state-makers first have a vision of a multiethnic empire and then construct one? Or did the entire operation evolve organically and spontaneously? This dissertation has found the evidence most compelling for the latter case. That is, the formation of the Qing state and the development of Qing political culture did not happen irrespective of each other. As the state apparatus and governing institutions formed, they did so alongside and in conjunction with the construction of the rituals, symbols, and intersubjective practices that defined and gave meaning to the emergent order. In short, the sociopolitical and cultural systems of the Qing developed simultaneously, each mutually relying upon and shaping the other. Contests for power took place both in open contestation and in ritual space. The settlements that emerged were both a construction and result of politics and culture. They arose from the political and military fights and the imposition of ceremonial and symbolic practices. Hong Taiji was able to seize power and establish a state in his image not only because he was a political and military mastermind, but also because he successfully manipulated symbolic forms.
At the same time, the settlements of these struggles came to frame the sociopolitical order and shape the cultural forms.

The fractured world of the mid-seventeenth century was stitched back together through the fabric of redefined social arrangements and power relations, and done so with the thread of a new set of cultural symbols and practices that made sense of the new order. Struggles among the Manchu elite in the 1620s, 30s, and 40s involved conflict over access and control to political resources, as well as contestations over visions of the arrangements of power and the structure of social and political orders. In the course of these struggles, cultural signifiers and symbols were constructed that both facilitated the emerging settlement and made sense of it. The sovereign would sit at the center of the ceremony, for example, while other political actors would line up according to rank and perform acts of subjugation. This seemingly simple symbolic act of positioning and bowing during the course of an infrequent but periodic event neither constructed nor legitimized power by itself, but rather was an integral component in the process of developing the institutions and ideas that would allow some to set the terms over what other could and could not do. In the quest to take control over policy, command of armies, and judicial decisions, the emperor also needed to lead grand ceremonies, hold court audiences, offer sacrifice, and eulogize his ancestors, as discussed in Chapter 6. The latter practices were as much a part of the formation of the Qing state as the former. What it meant to be at the head of a hierarchical sociopolitical order with defined ranks and positions often meant acting like one who was at the head of it. What it meant to be a political actor of such-and-such rank, position, or relation also meant acting as one would and should act when holding that position. These meanings were worked out over the course of the mid seventeenth century and then formalized in the *Huidian* in 1690.
The proper behaviors, symbols, and positions were cobbled together from Manchu and Chinese practices, and changed, adjusted, or amalgamated according to the immediate needs of the situation. As relations of power were contested and settlements arose, practices were developed that could actuate the intersubjective relation and define the actors partaking in it. These practices came to make up the culture that was attached to the new order, and were then put together as a system of symbolic meanings. In the case of the Qing this can be seen in the *Huidian*. The culture was not the Ming or Chinese culture, nor was it Jurchen or Inner Asian. To put it in the language of the first chapter, the *li* of the Qing was not the *li* of the Ming. If the term and concept of *li* as political and administrative order remained the same, the organizational and behavioral practices that made up and defined that order did not. Both the individual acts and the cultural system of the Qing were reformulated at the time, corresponding to the emergent sociopolitical system. Nothing was pre-existent, nothing was timeless; everything was under construction, and it drew upon the resources at hand to remake and reimagine the world.4

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4 The use of the Manchu embracing rite to incorporate Chinese generals, as discussed in Chapter 4, illustrates this process.

5 The pages of this dissertation have been concerned with nature of the practices of *li*, and the choices made to determine why Qing political organization came to look one way and not another. They have not explored how or why it worked. To my mind, an inquiry about how and why *li* should work in this way implicates what it means to be human, both individually and socially. We need others but at the same time are radically ambivalent of others. We must rely on others for our material and social needs—to secure the required resources for our survival and to develop the connections for our social beings. Doing so, however, endangers us. Each connection and every relationship creates the possibility of belittlement, alienation, or subjugation. While certain aspects of existence find us in a position in which we seek to maximize our gains, part of who we are as human beings includes the search for solidarity with others. We desire to be accepted by one another and to become, through this acceptance, better able to pursue a greater life. In this way, we have both instrumental and non-instrumental dealings with each other. We rely on others in pursuit of our own goals and prosperity, but at the same time also seek to bond with others in ways that confirm who we are as individuals. (This discussion of human nature is based on Roberto Mangabeira Unger, *Passion: An Essay on Personality* (New York: Free Press, 1984).

One way of thinking about culture is as the forms and practices that are constructed to help navigate this tension. Culture is the fabric of meaning that people weave in order to make sense of their world and relationships, and through which they interpret their experiences and guide their actions. Such meanings and practices are necessary because it is never sufficient to impose order, rule, and domination over another. Domination and control must always take a particular form, and the imposed order supplemented with legitimate meanings so that it appears necessary and natural. Culture thus both constructs and mediates social orders and forms of domination. Hong Taiji could not push his brothers and nephew aside any more than he could just announce himself khan. He could not simply demand the allegiance of all political and military actors through force of will and military might. He had to
The new Qing structure formed in the seventeenth century was the foundation of much of what would come after. The greater material and symbolic division of political resources of the sovereign enabled a strong patrimonial bureaucracy and increased the capacity of the late seventeenth and eighteenth emperors to act; the integration of the imperial relatives allowed for innovations in statecraft and central government institutions; and the centralization of the banners gave the Qing a strong military capacity that served it well in conquest and expansion.

The sociopolitical and cultural forms that emerged in the seventeenth century continued to develop into the eighteenth century and became part of the prosperity of the Qing state and the growth of Qing society. Take the case of the imperial relatives as illustrative of this influence: the role of the relatives as agents in the Qing state formed a tri-part political structure between the

cultivate the interests of others and give form and meaning to a new kind of political organization. To monopolize political and material resources he had to construct a system of meanings that made sense for the actors who would rule and be ruled. This cultural system did more than just legitimize power and position, however, it actively co-created the systems of rule. The ceremonies and rituals gave voice to the emergent hierarchical social system and taught actors their place within it. The clothing and greeting rites helped actors identify each other and conceptually organize the imposed social stations. More so, such a system helped invest actors with a sense of solidarity. Not only did it clarify social relations, thereby mitigating the previously discussed threat, but it also helped build connections. In other words, culture both satisfies the need for others, while also addressing the ambivalence. (For a general discussion of culture see Clifford Geertz, “Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture,” in The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays (London: FontanaPress, 1993), 3–32. For a brief overview of the various aspects of understanding culture in the scholarship see Arthur Asa Berger, Political Culture and Public Opinion (New Brunswick, USA: Transaction Publishers, 1989), 2-3. On power and domination, see Weber’s discussion in Economy and Society, p. 53-54, 212-214, 953-954. For a more recent exploration of these issue in context of organizational theory see Gary G. Hamilton and Nicole Woolsey Biggart, “Why People Obey: Theoretical Observations on Power and Obedience in Complex Organizations,” Sociological Perspectives 28, no. 1 (January 1985): 3–28.)

The practices of ritual and rites are one manifestation of the cultural form. Throughout, this dissertation has been concerned with what those practices were, the decisions to implement certain ones and not others, and the nature and reasons for changes undertaken. The preceding pages and chapters did not attempt to get at how the rituals worked, either collectively or individually—even with complete information about the rituals and actors, such questions are difficult answer empirically, as those working on contemporary societies testify. To try to understand how and why a ceremony like the New Year’s Day ceremony helped integrate political actors and construct the Qing state based on limited information of four hundred years ago involves a different inquiry than the one undertaken here. (I have attempted this elsewhere, however. See Islam and Keliher, “The Ritual Construction of History.”) What can be said is that the Qing cultural system and its forms and practices developed as part of the activities of human socialization. At the most general level, they helped people deal with the tension of their individuality in a social world. At a more particular level, the practices employed constructed and justified a form of social relations that would give some more access to more human and material resources, and to set the terms over what others could and could not do. These practices, and hence the sociopolitical order that it helped form, were then codified as the Qing order.
emperor and the bureaucratic officials.\textsuperscript{6} Over the course of the Qing dynasty, political resources, appointment of personnel, and delegation of tasks would be shared among these groups, with struggles ensuing for greater control, power, or a particular agenda within the confines of the Qing state.\textsuperscript{7} As part of this structure, the imperial relatives were instrumental in governing. In 1723, for example, Hong Taiji’s great grandson, emperor Yongzheng, appointed three princes of the blood to the heads of the administrative boards. His younger half brother, Prince Yi, was placed in charge of a secret military commission that later became the central administrative organ of the Qing—the Grand Council.\textsuperscript{8} In the early nineteenth century, a son of the Daoguang emperor negotiated the Opium War settlement with the British, and when the Qing began to fall in the early twentieth century, the generals protecting the capital were all imperial relatives.\textsuperscript{9}

Successful in some areas, these changes were still not enough. Social structures did not change in ways that would enable flexibility to develop in new directions or give different actors different opportunities and greater freedom. To speak in broad strokes, those on the top would continue to collude with those in the middle against those at the bottom, which ensured a very

\textsuperscript{6} On the use of the imperial relatives as a balance to the bureaucracy see Liping Wang and Julia Adams, “Interlocking Patrimonialisms and State Formation in Qing China and Early Modern Europe,” \textit{The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science} 636, no. 1 (July 1, 2011): 164–81. Also see Crossley’s excellent outline of the imperial relatives as part of the Qing conquest elite. Crossley, “The Conquest Elite of the Ch’ing Empire.”


\textsuperscript{8} Bartlett remarked, “Prince Yi served Yongzheng in many ways that an ordinary official who was not a close relative could not have done.” She cites his handling of problems of intrigue and treachery in the court, and his role in providing policy suggestions. Beatrice S. Bartlett, \textit{Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council in Mid-Ch’ing China, 1723–1820} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 69-70.

limited range of possibilities of new forms of social, political, or economic life. In the end, despite the institutional innovations, another set of major structural reforms were necessary to facilitate the unlocking of greater productive powers and organizational capacities of humanity. When it finally came, it did so in the form of total revolution, once in 1911 and again in 1949. Along with revolutionary changes in state and society, in each upheaval culture was also transformed. New practices and new systems of li were constructed to give new meaning to new societies.

For a detailed analysis of the structure of the agrarian empires see Unger, Plasticity into Power; Unger, False Necessity, 88-92. Also see Eisenstadt, Political Systems of Empires. 

For an exploration of li as political culture in contemporary China see Macabe Keliher and Hsinchao Wu, “How to Discipline 90 Million People: Can China's president reform the world's largest one-party state by reforming its officials?” The Atlantic, April 7, 2015.
Appendix 1: The Dilemma of Imperial Relatives in the Agrarian Empires

Rulers of the agrarian empires throughout history faced the issue of what to do with their imperial relatives. It was most acute at the founding of the dynasty, when the terms of settlement were not yet set and the positions of power not yet institutionalized. During these times, the ruler had to make a decision about where to use the relatives in help ruling, or to isolate them. The problem might also arise in the midst of a mature dynasty especially if a system for the imperial relatives had not been formalized and a succession crisis set off challenges for the throne. This could lead to internal struggles, a breakdown in political order, or even civil war.

To get a sense of this problem, consider the position of the ruler of a new dynasty. He often came to power through military conquest and political maneuver, relying on trusted personnel, many of whom were his sons and brothers. Having seized power, those who aided the founder needed to be rewarded with position, honors, and material rewards. Furthermore, relatives expected to play a role in the new state by dint of their relations. The ruler’s sons, for example, possessed a sense of inheritance and made demands for political and financial resources. They also demanded consideration in succession negotiations. In addition to the relatives themselves, the ruler’s staff strove to make permanent political and social arrangements so as to preserve their favored positions. They saw the continuation of the dynasty as a means to solidify their power. This created further pressure to institute a system of succession that preserved the structures of power and those who occupied the highest positions. Should the ruler

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1 The arguments here were first developed in a presentation entitled “What should the ruler do with his sons?: The dilemma of imperial relatives in the agrarian empires,” delivered at the Workshop in History, Culture, and Society at Harvard University, December 6, 2013.

2 By which I mean no more than a large territory ruled by a central hierarchical organization.
fail to navigate these demands he could face dissent in the form of a revolt from his relatives or his staff, a fracturing of interested parties into factions, or a breakdown of government operations.

This was a near universal dilemma for the agrarian empires. The following comparative investigation of how rulers handled it makes three interrelated arguments. First, the rulers had a limited number of options available to them in how to deal with their relatives. Second, the option employed by any given ruler had consequences for the politics of the state and the life of the empire. Third, the method of dealing with relatives was less a choice, but rather largely contingent upon the cultural background, the historical circumstances, and the immediate political situation faced.

THE UNIVERSAL PROBLEM AND THE GENERAL SOLUTIONS

In order to conquer and rule, the ruler needed to rely on people with shared interests and investment in the idea of empire under a dynasty and the political privileges that it afforded to certain groups. In short, the ruler needed administrators and military leaders that shared in the vision of the state and who could be trusted. Kin were a logical group to fulfill this role, not merely because of a culture and practices that ingratiate relatives to each other and bound them in solidarity, but also because of the sense of desert of position and privilege as a direct consequence of one’s blood relations with the one in power. Kinship offered a guarantee of status based on privilege rather than merit. Kin could thus be trusted in the enterprise at hand and employed in the conquest and operations of the state. Similarly, preservation of the dynasty necessitated some kind of succession scheme that could provide stability for continuous rule.
This was important not just to the ruler, but also for his staff, who sought the preservation of their positions. 

For these same reasons, the imperial kin posed a threat. They too saw themselves as privileged to power and capable of grasping the spoils of conquest; they would vie for the throne. Although they could oppose policy and disrupt politics, it was rare that this group threatened the ruler with usurpation. More often was the threat of a struggle for succession of the throne following the death of the ruler. This was a threat that was ever present, and it could become a burdensome weight on the ruler. Recall Louis the Pious, who assembled the ecclesiastical magnates and met with his advisors shortly after his coronation to discuss the matter of succession. He produced the *Ordinatio Imperii* detailing how succession should work, laying out clear guidelines. The first Yuan dynasty emperor, Kublai Khan, similarly attempted to establish a guideline for succession. The immediate impact of this problem on the ruler and his ability to rule was how it affected his staff and those employed in the administrative and military organizations. Lack of clarity on the future of the regime, whether it be who would succeed the ruler or its continued existence, led to instability. Political actors facing this situation grew uncertain of their future, and not knowing whom to support they would be left to judge the political winds, leading to factionalism and dysfunction.

The rulers of the agrarian empires had three options available to them as they navigated these issues.

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1. The first option was to treat the empire as personal property and divide it amongst the sons. The conterminous empire would be dissolved upon the death of the ruler. Each son would become the ruler of his own territorial kingdom.

2. The second option was to employ the sons and kin in the running of the empire. The relatives would become key political and military actors in the new empire and form the basis of the political order. This could take two different forms: the relatives would be given apanages and allowed to administer the provinces and provide military support; or they would be kept in the capital and employed in the central administration.

3. The third option was less common among the empires. It was to provide for the material means of all imperial relatives but exclude them from political and military affairs, except for the heir apparent, who was to be prepared to succeed the ruler. This amounted to a type of banishment and alienation from society. It could take the form of locking the relatives in a palace in the capital, or sending them out to estates in the provinces and imposing regulations to restrict their movement and association.

POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

Each option had its own set of unique political consequences. Division of the empire among the sons led to civil war; employment of relatives could either accentuate internal political struggles or reify political hierarchies; whereas isolating relatives created problems of finances and personnel.
**Division**

In the case of the first option of the division of empire, examples include the Franks and Kievan Rus’.

The peoples and groups comprising the states of this first option had a strong culture of kinship organization, coupled with an inheritance practice of the division of landed property. In the established empires that arose, these practices were carried over into the treatment of the kingdom, whereby the ruler designated areas that his sons would first administer and then inherit as their own kingdoms upon his death. In this way, the conterminous territory that was united under the control of a single ruler was scattered among his sons. The life of the empire lasted only as long as the life of the ruler.

It was no coincidence that these empires existed early in the history of states, and were only loosely administered, lacking highly centralized bureaucracies. In each of these cases, the ideas of dynastic empire had not developed as an ideology, and there was no understanding of a conterminous state that existed apart from the ruler.\(^4\) The unification of territory was seen as the effort and accomplishment of the founder; the territory was understood as his personal property, which would then be divided among his surviving sons for them to rule over as their own.\(^5\)

The problem with such an arrangement was that it led to struggle among the descendants for more territory or to re-unify the kingdom and achieve similar status as the founder.\(^6\) Or, if there was peace among the sons, within a few generations the kingdoms would grow too small to

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\(^6\) This latter problem was particularly acute with the Carolingians after the death of Charlemagne. See Eric Joseph Goldberg, *Struggle for Empire: Kingship and Conflict under Louis the German, 817-876* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2006), esp. chapter 3.
continue parceling out land and lead to the mounting of conquest by the sons to aggrandize at the expense of neighboring kingdoms.\(^7\)

Take the Frankish monarchies, for example. Custom dictated that upon the death of the king his kingdom would be divided among his sons and the territorial constancy of the empire dissolved. This had roots in the lack of idea of an autonomous conterminous empire that existed apart from the king. The king was sovereign and all land was associated with his person. When he died, his kingdom went to his sons, as would happen with private landed property. In his *History of the Franks*, the sixth century bishop, Gregory of Tours, enumerated the consequences of this in his discussion of the rivalries and tragedies of the sons of Clovis and Lothar I.\(^8\) The Carolingians after Louis the Pious befell the same fate—Louis himself only avoiding it by outliving his brothers. He then tried to implement a regulation of primogeniture with the *Ordinatio Imperii* of 817, but it failed to become institutionalized and the ninth century continued to be plagued by fratricide and revolts among the princes.\(^9\)


Employment

The second option of the ruler was to employ his sons and kin in the running of the state. This could take one of two forms: sending the relatives out of the capital to work in the provinces, or keeping them close, confined in the capital and employed in the operations of the central government. Examples of the first kind include the Yuan, the early Ming, Capetians, and Muscovy. Examples of the second kind include the Qing and Tsarist and Imperial Russia.

There is no general characteristic of the kind of empire that came to employ its relatives in office in one of these forms. Rather, the circumstances behind an empire utilizing this option varied and included the following three circumstances. First, there was the recognition by the ruler of the need for capable and talented people, as was the case in the early Ming and Qing empires. Competent and trustworthy people were need to staff the government and to lead campaigns; the imperial relatives were a source of personnel who could be relied upon to perform these functions. A second circumstance was the need to give the sons their due inheritance without resorting to the division and dissolution of the state, as in the first option. In the cases of the Yuan dynasty and Capetian monarchies, the rulers gave their sons apanages to administer, but maintained a loose centralization over the realm. The third kind of empire that employed this option was one that was in the process of centralizing. In the course of doing so it attempted to limit the autonomy of the princes in the provinces. Tsarist Russia under Ivan IV and Byzantine under Alexios both pursued this strategy to solidify empire and curtail the independence of their brothers and relatives.

As an illustration of the implementation of these forms, the example of the Yuan shows the use of sons as provincial administrators, and the example of the Qing shows the staffing of central administrative and political offices.
The Yuan dynasty was established by Kublai Khan to rule over the settled agrarian territories in 1271. Kublai Khan was a grandson of the famous Mongol conquerer, Chinggis Khan. He inherited his position and assisted in the conquest of parts of the Mongol empire before its slow demise; but he also became a ruler in his own right, going on to conquer and establish the Yuan dynasty. This circumstance of imperial precedence prior to the establishment of the Yuan forced upon Kublai an already existing policy of involving imperial relatives in the military administration of the provinces. Neither Kublai nor his successors could effectively dismantle it, although they did try.

The background to the Yuan dynasty was the Mongol empire, founded by Chinggis Khan. Following Mongol rules of inheritance of family wealth, the khan divided the kingdom among his sons, giving them land and making them military leaders. After the conquest of the Jin in 1234, Chinggis’ successor, Ogodei began to hand out apanages to relatives. These were hereditary, and the holders of these territories had the power to appoint an administrator, but the local bureaucracies were to be appointed by the imperial court to collect revenues. This resulted in an imperial formation of a loosely centralized rule, whereby the provincial administrations had a high degree of autonomy, controlling juridical procedures and appointments.

Kublai Khan attempted to centralize this system when he seized power and establish his Yuan dynasty. He tried to strip the local governments of their power of juridical proceedings and

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11 On apanages see Elizabeth Endicott-West, Mongolian Rule in China: Local Administration in the Yuan Dynasty (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University, 1989), 91
to deny them of their right to appoint a local administrator. Both of these attempts failed due to strong opposition.\textsuperscript{12} Kublai also moved to establish primogeniture to ensure an orderly succession, but his eldest son died prematurely leaving that son’s eldest son and Kublai’s other sons to struggle for the throne when the khan passed. This led to a tradition of counter claims of legitimacy to the throne, whereby some could cite the precedent of Kublai Khan, while others would call for the Mongol tradition of an election of the council.\textsuperscript{13}

Consequences of this arrangement of the imperial relatives were twofold. Foremost, the territorial provinces of the imperial relatives turned them into entrenched magnates. They not only resisted attempts at centralization and fought to maintain their relative autonomy, but they also cultivated local interests pertinent to their circumstance that could contradict those of the central government. Second, succession constantly remained a problem for the Yuan (as it did the earlier Mongol empire). Princes with land, revenue, and military power challenged for the throne, often embroiling the empire in civil strife and even regicide.\textsuperscript{14}

\textit{Qing.} The historical circumstances of the Qing differed from the Yuan, as did the politics, all of which led to a different arrangement of how relatives were employed. Unlike the Mongols, the Manchus in the seventeenth century did not have a vast empire, nor clear ambitions to administer territory. Although the incentives for conquer and booty always existed, the impetus and vision of a Manchu conquest remained ambiguous right up to the eve of taking Beijing in 1644 and


\textsuperscript{13} Hsiao, “Mid-Yuan Politics,” 491-493.

\textsuperscript{14} Hsiao, “Mid-Yuan Politics.”
establishing legitimate rule over the China heartland in the subsequent decades.\textsuperscript{15} The consequence of this early situation was the formation of a strong central administrative apparatus but no provincial administration. That is, there was never the need to set up a territorial administration because there was never a large amount of territory to govern, nor much of an empire to divide among sons. Rather, Nurhaci left his sons with independent military units, called banners, which were assigned territory to use for grazing, camping, and hunting. Property and inheritance here was understood not as land but as military position and command of troops.

When Nurhaci died his seventh son, Hong Taiji rose to replace him. Having asserted himself as the victor of a drawn out political struggle with his brothers for the rulership, Hong Taiji began to expand the central administrative apparatus. He placed trusted relatives in position of administrative power to aide in the running of the state and military conquest. In order to harness the talents of these people and to guard against their threat to his potion he then created a set of ranks and positions to which all of the imperial relatives would be assigned. This effectively turned his sons and kin into a service nobility in the capital. Further restrictions were placed on their movements and military capacities. Imperial relatives would serve the state in political and military capacity by becoming part of the administrative hierarchy.

\textit{Isolation}

The third option for dealing with imperial relatives was to isolate them from political and military life. This option was less widely used than the other two, but its consequences were just as profound. Examples include the Song, Ming, and Ottoman empires.

\textsuperscript{15} On the ambiguity of Manchu aims in conquest see Tsai, “Hong Taiji shiqi de hanguan,” esp. chapter 5.
Rather than employ their sons and kin in government, the rulers of these empires opted to bar them from political life but provide for their material means. The princes would be kept in the capital in a palace, as in the case of the Song dynasty and the Ottoman, or they would each be given an estate out in the provinces, as in the Ming. In both forms, restrictions would be placed on the activity and movement of the relatives, limiting their association with others and especially their ability to raise and command troops. The sons would certainly be kept on hand and given a genealogical definition of an imperial relative.\textsuperscript{16} This was a matter of succession and deemed necessary in order to reproduce the dynasty.\textsuperscript{17} Although meant to solve the succession problem, it never completely averted political crisis, as the ruler could die without a son, which would require the ascension of a son from a collateral line, and could thus lead to court factions. Or the ruler might favor one son over another and wish to install the favored as heir rather than the eldest, creating opposition among the imperial family and bureaucrats, all of which could lead to political stasis.\textsuperscript{18}

One of the long-term consequences of this option was a severe drain on the treasury. Cloistered imperial families grew exponentially, and all the members and offspring needed to be fully supported in a life befit of royalty at the expense of the state. Towards the end of the Ming, for example, after two hundred some odd years of imperial births of the sons of sons, the imperial family required 15 percent of all state revenues for support, and as a group they constituted the largest landowners in the Ming, but as imperial relatives their revenues went

\textsuperscript{16} Contrast this to the Japanese case of giving out sons for adoption by other influential families.


\textsuperscript{18} Both of these situations occurred in the Ming. The former with the emperor Jiajing and the latter with the emperor Wanli. See Huang, \textit{1587}.
untaxed.\textsuperscript{19} This huge expense contributed to the Ming state’s inability to function efficiently and address crisis in the countryside.\textsuperscript{20} Similarly, the princes in the provinces would make financial demands on the local governments, often causing great financial stress on local administrators.

Another consequence was the lack of a group of advisors that shared the interests of the ruler.\textsuperscript{21} In a bureaucratic monarchy, the ruler not only required council apart from his professional class of administrators, but also needed people who could move between circles in the communication and execution of orders.\textsuperscript{22} A link in the chain of command between emperor and bureaucrat needed to be established so that information flowed unobstructed and policy could be formulated effectively and executed efficiently. When the bureaucracy began to pursue their own interests, creating hindrances and oppositions, they needed to be whipped back in line. A strong and tireless ruler could do this, but even so faced obstacles and met the limitations of his rule.\textsuperscript{23} The Ming suffered this problem, which led to an over reliance by the emperors on the palace eunuchs in service of links between the inner and outer courts. They came to comprise a class in and of themselves, however, serving their own interests politically and financially at the expense of the state. They became the arbitrators of politics, controlling what information flowed and what policies were suggested and implemented. The lack of consistency and arbitrary communications led to the formation of political factions in the interest of political protection by

\textsuperscript{19} Wang, \textit{The Ming Princes and Daoism}, 15.

\textsuperscript{20} Chan, \textit{The Glory and Fall of the Ming}, ch. 9-10; Huang, “Fiscal Administration during the Ming Dynasty;” Hucker, “Ming Government,” 24-25.

\textsuperscript{21} On the divergent interests of the ruler and his administration see Eisenstadt, \textit{The Political System of Empires}.

\textsuperscript{22} For an argument of this problem in the Ming see Huang, “Ni Yuan-lu’s Realism;” Huang, “The Lung-ch'ing and Wan-li reigns,” 529-530.

\textsuperscript{23} Huang, “The Lung-ch'ing and Wan-li reigns,” 557; Kuhn, \textit{Soulstealers}. 

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the actors, all of which led to a breakdown of political order and the inability for government to function and respond to the everyday demands of state operations and crisis.\textsuperscript{24}

To further illustrate this problem, contrast this political predicament of the Ming with that the Qing. By integrating imperial relatives into government, the Qing rulers had political operatives inside the running of the state who they could rely on.\textsuperscript{25} These people shared a similar interest with the ruler in the life of the dynasty and preservation of the political position and power of the imperial family. In essence, they could be trusted to represent the ruler’s interest over the bureaucracy. The princes of the Qing came to link the inner and outer courts by serving in high administrative office, such as the presidents of the six boards, and at the same time have access to the ruler.\textsuperscript{26} Here was another channel of communication open to exchange information quickly and react in a timely manner in the formation and execution of policy. These princes were also trusted to lead troops into the field and charged with the operations and even planning of offensive campaigns. Such employment increased the efficiency of the Qing state, enabling response to crisis and the expansion of territory.\textsuperscript{27}

CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE OPTIONS

Throughout this discussion of the political consequences of each option, I have highlighted the background to implementation of the particular option, and discussed in brief the rationale for

\textsuperscript{24} Esp. see Huang,\textit{ 1587}.

\textsuperscript{25} Bartlett shows the importance of the imperial princes in assisting the emperor in statecraft in the eighteenth century. Beatrice S. Bartlett, \textit{Monarchs and Ministers: The Grand Council in Mid-Ch’ing China, 1723-1820} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).

\textsuperscript{26} On the employment of imperial relatives in the provincial bureaucracy see R. Kent Guy, \textit{Qing Governors and Their Provinces: The Evolution of Territorial Administration in China, 1644-1796} (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010).

implementation. Herein lies the third argument: the ruler did not have these options laid out before him with the freedom to chose one over another. Rather, the cultural, historical, and political circumstances shaped the system that came to be employed. In short, the ruler had to work with what he had. There were various forces in operation determining why one option was employed and not another.

Those rulers that employed the first option came out of a culture that lacked a conception of continued dynastic rule over a conterminous territory, but did possess a strong tradition of divided property and inheritance among sons. The new ruler now presiding over a large territory had little room to remake a policy about how to handle his new empire without threatening the legitimacy of his rule and his capacity to administer. Even someone like Louis the Pious, who was quite conscious of this situation and attempted to change the practice both politically and ideologically—and even went so far as to lay down a new code in a text devoted to the matter—failed to be able to effect a revolution in cultural understanding and practice. Similarly, Kublai Khan’s attempts to limit the consequences of the practice of the division of the Mongol empire among the relatives and to rein in their autonomy met with constant opposition and ultimately frustration. Even the second Ming emperor, Yongle, could not immediately curtail the political and military power of his brothers, the processes only being completed by his son.

In the case of the second option, rulers found themselves in a position of needing trusted personnel to help in the military and administrative affairs of the new state. Relatives filled this role and were naturally drawn upon to lead in military offenses and staff the political offices. The form of the emergent empire determined if these relatives would be employed as administrators in the provinces or become a part of the political elite in the capital. Take the contrast between the Yuan and the Qing, for example. The Mongol empire operated on a principle of conquering
vast territories and leaving behind administrators. Chinggis Khan put his sons in offices in the provinces both to help govern these conquered territories, as well as to guarantee them their inheritance according to Mongol custom of division of the father’s property. Kublai Khan continued this practice when he moved south into China proper, setting up relatives in the provinces to govern and provide military support. Thus, the policy of apanages emerged out of the prior basis of empire building by the Mongols. The Qing, by contrast, had no such empire before the formation of their centralized state and bureaucracy. Even as they began to conquer and hold territory, there was no consensus among military leaders of setting up an administrative apparatus, and thus no need to set up territorial administrators like the Mongols. When Hong Taiji did begin to form a centralized bureaucracy, it was at a time when the state was still confined to a small region in the north, and the emergent state quickly took the form of a centralized and hierarchical political structure. The relatives would be kept close rather than administering the provinces.

In their initial conquests and state building efforts, nearly all of the rulers of emergent agrarian-bureaucratic empires found themselves in this position of needing to make use of their relatives. Only after the passing of the founder did circumstances conspire to force his successors to implement a third option of excluding all relatives from military and political life. The Song, for example, was established with cooperation among brothers, but there was suspicion over the first succession of power, as well as controversy over the institution of primogeniture.28 The creation of an office to look after the imperial relatives and the substitution of their political and military power for honorary titles gradually removed all the relatives from positions of power. The case of the Ming was similar, if not more dramatic, with civil war among the employed sons

determining the succession, and the winner of that battle then banning all imperial relatives from political and military life.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

This concludes the argument of how the rulers of agrarian empires dealt with their relatives. To summarize the three arguments made above: a survey of the agrarian empires in world history shows that rulers had but three options available to them, that each of these options had distinct political consequences, and that the use of one option over another depended on cultural, historical, and political circumstances.

There are three preliminary conclusions to be drawn from this discussion.

1. The first option of imperial division among sons was the least best option for the stability and longevity of the empire. Employed by weak, decentralized regimes, this option led to a breakdown of political order after the death of the founder and often resulted in prolonged civil war and the fragmentation of territory.

2. The success of the second option of employing relatives in statecraft relied upon the use of a standardized set of ranks and titles and the codification of how they were to be given and used. The clarification of the position of individuals, the level of the privilege, and how this related to their operation in the political order mitigated the disruptive tension among actors. When two potential rivals for position were given different ranks and different political assignments, the immediate struggle took primacy and diminished the possibility of factional strife, whereby the ambiguity of the political order forced actors to align themselves accordingly.
3. The third option of isolating imperial relatives from political and military life was a circumstance that emerged from the second option. When a ruler chose to remove all of his sons and kin from government involvement, it was a result of the breakdown of their active engagement in politics and military. In order to ensure the relatives would not continue to pose a threat, they were barred from political life.

This discussion is oriented not towards an explanation of particular societies in particular places at particular times, but rather towards an understanding of the organization of social activity. It is the beginning of an attempt to get at how societies fit together, and how, despite their loosely connected institutions and beliefs, remain so recalcitrant to change.29

Such consideration lends itself to a fourth conclusion. A more general conclusion about the broader meaning of this dilemma faced by the agrarian empires over how to deal with the imperial relatives. The conclusion goes something like this: these empires constantly grappled with a problem of internal sociopolitical order that often made them inherently unstable. They were just as prone to upheaval as were those organizations based on individual rule lacking in permanency of administration or legitimacy. In Weberian terms: traditional authority was no more stable than charismatic authority.

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29 See Roberto Unger, *False Necessity*. 
Appendix 2: Sons and Grandsons of Nurchaci and Surhaci Mentioned in the Text

NURHACI’S SONS
1. CUYEN (1580-1615)
   • Oldest son
   • Brother of Daixan.
   • DUDU (1597-1642) oldest son
     o 1626 made beile in old system of ranks
     o 1636 made beile in new systems of ranks

2. DAIXAN (1583-1648)
   • 1626 appointed co-ruler
   • Supported Hong Taiji’s bid for the throne
   • YOTO (d. 1638) oldest son
     o 1626 made beile for campaign against Mongols
     o Support Jirgalang peace over Amin’s war in Korea
     o 1631 President of the Board of War
     o 1636 made qinwang but then accused of hiding the designs of Manggultai and Soto
   • XOTO second son
     o 1643 executed for conspiring to make Dorgon emperor
   • SAHALIYEN (d. 1636.5) third son
     o 1626 made beile for campaign against Mongols
     o 1631 President of the Board of Rites

5. MANGGULTAI 1587-1633
   • Brother of Degelei
   • 1626 appointed co-ruler
   • 1631 reprimanded for drawing sword against Hong Taiji and demoted for the New Year’s Day ceremony

7. ABATAI (1589-1646)
   • Seems to be a HTJ supporter based on following:
     o Not given beile title until Hong Taiji ascension in 1626
     o 1631 President of the Board of Works
     o 1638 complain about lack of title and refuse to attend banquet for Mongol chief.
       Other’s demand he be punished but Hong Taiji give him a light fine

8. HONG TAIJI (ABAHAI) (1592-1643)
   • HOOGGE (1609-1648) eldest son
- 1626 made a beile
- 1636 given rank of qinwang
- 1631 President of the Board of Revenue

  • **FULIN** (1638-1661) ninth son
    - 1644 become Shunzhi emperor
    - 1650 take over rule from regents

10. **DEGELEI** (1596-1635)
    - Brother of Manggultai

12. **AJIGE** (1605-1651)
    - Brother of Dorgon and Dodo
    - 1626 made beile after campaign against mongols the previous year
    - Given several niru in white banners but not given own banner
    - 1636 made junwang
    - 1644 made jiangjun
    - 1650 attempted to make self regent after Dorgon’s death but arrested by Jirgalang

14. **DORGON** (1612-1650)
    - 1626 made Hoxoi beile

15. **DODO** (1614-1649)
    - 1636 made qinwang

**SURHACI’S SONS**

2. **AMIN** (d1640)
    - 1626 appointed co-ruler

6. **JIRGALANG** (1599-1655)
    - Sixth son of Surhaci but raised by Nurhaci
    - 1625 made beile from campaign to Mongolia led by Abatai
    - 1627 serve under Amin in Korea and conclude peace agreement with the Korean king
    - 1630 receives Amin’s bordered blue banner
    - 1631 President of the Board of Punishments
    - 1636 made qinwang
    - 1643 Co-regent with Dorgon
    - 1647 removed by Dorgon on charge of usurping imperial privilege and demoted in rank
Appendix 3: Banner Owners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Early Nurhaci</th>
<th>Nurhaci</th>
<th>1627</th>
<th>Tiancong</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plain Yellow</td>
<td>Nh</td>
<td>Nurhaci</td>
<td>Hong Taiji</td>
<td>Hong Taiji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordered Yellow</td>
<td></td>
<td>Nurhaci</td>
<td>Hong Taiji</td>
<td>Hong Taiji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain White</td>
<td>Cuyen</td>
<td>Hong Taiji</td>
<td>Dodo</td>
<td>Dodo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordered White</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dudu</td>
<td>Dorgon</td>
<td>Dorgon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Daixan</td>
<td>Daixan</td>
<td>Daixan</td>
<td>Daixan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordered Red</td>
<td></td>
<td>Daixan</td>
<td>Yoto</td>
<td>Yoto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain Blue</td>
<td>Surhaci</td>
<td>Manggultai</td>
<td>Manggultai</td>
<td>Degelei/Hooge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bordered Blue</td>
<td>Amin</td>
<td>Amin</td>
<td>Jirgalang</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Appendix 4: The Aisin Gioro line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Given name</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Temple name</th>
<th>Posthumous name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Möngke Temür 猛哥帖木儿</td>
<td>1370-1433</td>
<td>Zhaozu 肇祖</td>
<td>Yuan Huangdi 原皇帝</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuman 福满</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Xingzu 興祖</td>
<td>Zhi Huangdi 直皇帝</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giocangga 覺昌安</td>
<td>?-1583</td>
<td>Jingzu 景祖</td>
<td>Yi Huangdi 翼皇帝</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taksi 塔克世</td>
<td>?-1583</td>
<td>Xianzu 顯祖</td>
<td>Xuang Huangdi 宣皇帝</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurhaci 努爾哈赤</td>
<td>1559-1626</td>
<td>Taizu 太祖</td>
<td>Gao Huangdi 高皇帝</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Taiji 皇太極</td>
<td>1592-1643</td>
<td>Taizong 太宗</td>
<td>Wen Huangdi 文皇帝</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulin 福臨</td>
<td>1638-1661</td>
<td>Shizu 世祖</td>
<td>Zhang Huangdi 章皇帝</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiowan Ye 玄燁</td>
<td>1654-1722</td>
<td>Shengzu 聖祖</td>
<td>Ren Huangdi 仁皇帝</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Reign Abbreviations**

**MING**
JJ: Jiajing 1521-1567  
Cz: Chongzhen 1627-1644

**QING**
Tm: Tianming 1618-1626  
Tc: Tiancong 1627-1636  
Cd: Chongde 1636-1643  
Sz: Shunzhi 1644-1661  
Kx: Kangxi 1662-1722  
Yz: Yongzheng 1722-1735  
QL: Qianlong 1735-1796
References

References cited in the notes are followed by volume and page number. This is followed by a date, where the two letters are the initials of the reign name followed by the year, month, and day of the lunar calendar separated by a period. Thus, MR 6.1049, Cd1.5.14 refers to the Manbun Rōtō, volume 6, page 1049, the entry of which was made on the 14th day of the 5th month in the 1st year of the Chongde reign.

ARCHIVAL SOURCES

BDTB: Beida yijiao tiben 北大移交題本. First Historical Archives, Beijing.


FHA: First Historical Archives, Beijing

GSA: Grand Secretariat Archives (Neige dang’an 內閣檔案). Academia Sinica, Taipei.


MLZ: Manwen lufu zouzhe 滿文錄副奏摺. First Historical Archives, Beijing.


TZSX: Da Qing Taizong wenhuangdi shengxun 大清太宗文皇帝聖訓. Catalogue no. 101000001-4, and 7-12, National Palace Museum, Taipei.

ZZ: Zouzhe 奏摺. First Historical Archives, Beijing.
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BQTZ: *Baqi Tongzhi* 八旗通志. 1739.


DMHD: *Da Ming Huidian* 大明會典. 1587. Also see WLHD.

GXHD: *Guangxu Huidian* 光緒會典. 1899.

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JMZD: *Jiu Manzhou dang* 舊滿洲檔.

KXHD: *Kangxi Huidian* 康熙會典. 1690.

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MZSL: *Manzhou shilu* 滿洲實錄.


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QLHDZL: Qianlong Huidian zeli 乾隆會典則例. 1764.


Shengjing tongzhi 盛京通志

SKQS: Siku quanshu 四庫全書.


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TZGSL: Taizu gaohuangdi shilu 大清太祖高皇帝實錄.

TZWSL: Taizong wenhuangdi shilu 大清太宗文皇帝實錄.

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