

## The Lifanyuan Study to the Manchu and Inner Asian Studies: A Concise Source and Topic Guide<sup>1</sup>

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*The Lifanyuan study is a vital part of Qing history (1636-1911) of imperial China. It currently faces the challenge of advancing beyond existing scholarship. This Concise Source and Topic Guide aims to provide scholars in Qing studies with essential research sources and innovative ideas to further the investigations of this important governing institution. Established by the ruling Manchu, the Lifanyuan is unique in the institutional history of dynastic China, with responsibilities primarily focused on the Qing empire-building in Inner Asia. This guide specifically seeks to clarify the relationship between the Lifanyuan study, Manchu study, and Inner Asian study—areas that have not been systematically examined together but should be so to promote collaborative growth among the three fields. By highlighting the Lifanyuan study alongside these closely related areas, the suggested research topics, drawn from historical archives and documentary materials, will assist scholars in Qing, Manchu, and Inner Asian studies in exploring new research opportunities, with the Lifanyuan study leading the way.*

### Introduction

Since the 1980s, the publication of archives and historical records in the administrative languages of the Qing Empire (1636-1911), which were Manchu, Chinese, and Mongolian<sup>2</sup>, has provided a wealth of research resources for studying the Lifanyuan and its role in Manchu statecraft and Qing Inner Asia, collectively referred to as “three studies” in this article. The newly available research materials have transformed the research environment from the pre-1980s situation, in which a lack of primary sources significantly hindered Lifanyuan research. Now, the archival documentation of the Lifanyuan’s operational routines in Inner Asia supports extensive investigations into various Lifanyuan topics. However, these resources have not been effectively utilized to advance Lifanyuan scholarship to the level it deserves, and the close connections among the three studies, each with its own boundaries, focuses, and perspectives, have not received adequate attention. Thus, a concise guide has been developed to encourage a shift in scholarship. This

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1. The author sincerely thanks to the Center for Chinese Studies and the Asian Library of the University of Michigan in 2023 and the Center for East Asian Studies and the East Asian Library of the University of Chicago in 2024 for the library research grants, which have assisted this research.

2. For a reference reading of the Qing administrative languages, see Chia Ning, “Language Translations and the Treaty of Nerchinsk: Linguistic Aspects of the Seventeenth-century Qing-Russian Diplomacy.” *Journal of the European Association for Chinese Studies* 6.2 (2025):121-65

guide aims to enhance researchers' understanding of the relationships among different types of source materials related to Lifanyuan. The guide includes a list of previously overlooked research topics, highlighting what can be explored further in the study of the Lifanyuan and its connection with Manchu and Inner Asian studies. By providing a comprehensive overview of both research sources and Lifanyuan subjects, this guide will lay a strong foundation for scholarly advancement.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the reprinting of primary sources in Chinese, along with the accessible archives in Manchu and other Inner Asian languages, opened new avenues for research on the Lifanyuan. Publications from this period primarily focused on explaining the structure of the Lifanyuan and detailing its functions across various regions of Qing Inner Asia. Simultaneously, the new research on the unique characteristics of the Manchu-ruled Qing dynasty and the deeper exploration of Qing Inner Asian frontiers suggested a stronger connection among the three studies, each reinforcing the other two. Even though research on the Lifanyuan at this stage was still heavily reliant on official Chinese-language sources, the intention to use Manchu and other Inner Asian-language sources was evident. The first quarter of the 21st century has seen significant scholarly advancements in this direction. With more archival and documentary resources available through digitized photocopies, original or edited reprints, and database-generated reproductions of primary materials, scholarship has evolved to incorporate both micro and macro analyses, along with improved resource utilization and research methodologies. The Lifanyuan study has expanded to include more case examinations of the Manchu administration in Inner Asia, and in tribute and Russian affairs.<sup>3</sup>

Current scholarship across the three studies indicates that without understanding the Lifanyuan, Manchu architecture within the multi-national Qing Empire would lose the operational ground to stand on, and the Manchu study would miss a crucial aspect needed to comprehend the changes that took place in Inner Asia. These changes include various systems, such as the banner-league for the Mongols, the Dalai-amban structure in Tibet, the *beg* system in the Muslim Southern Xinjiang,<sup>4</sup> and the *Butha* organization for the Solon hunting population in Northern Heilongjiang. Conversely, without the Manchu study and Inner Asian study in the Lifanyuan study, it is difficult to explain the existence of the Lifanyuan as part of the Qing court and its accomplishments in facilitating the building of the Great Qing Empire.

Current Lifanyuan source availability and the existing Lifanyuan scholarship indicate that there are numerous topics related to Lifanyuan studies, as well as Manchu and Inner Asian studies, that remain unexplored. To enable the potential of these three areas to significantly contribute to Qing historiography, the concise

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3. For a reference reading of the publications of the Lifanyuan from 1980s to 2016, see Dittmar Schorkowitz and Chia Ning, eds., *Managing Frontiers in Qing China: The Lifanyuan and Libu Revisited* (Brill, 2017), Introduction, 1-42, here 15-21 and other chapters.

4. The term "Xinjiang" did not come to use in 1884; it is used here to mean the territory under that name.

source and topic guide in this article will act as a "reference room" for scholars interested in investigating sources, analyzing topics, and fostering innovative discoveries. This guide will assist researchers in utilizing various primary sources, understanding their interconnections, and recognizing the wide range of research topics that the available sources can support. Ultimately, the guide will provide a researcher with an overarching perspective on the three areas of study before diving into specific topics.

### Boundaries and Connections of the Three Studies

The Lifanyuan study focuses on its institutional responsibilities within Inner Asian governance. This governance was characterized by a distinct Manchu ruling style, which differed from both the dynastic traditions of previous Chinese dynasties and the practices of earlier non-Chinese dynasties. Three key features of the Lifanyuan administration underscore the Manchu approach to ruling the diverse Qing Empire. The first was the establishment of the Lifanyuan as an Inner Asia-centered court institution, consisting exclusively of staff from Manchu and Mongolian backgrounds.<sup>5</sup> The second was to maintain the Manchu language in official correspondence between the court and Inner Asian authorities by utilizing Mongolian as a means to translate between Manchu and various Inner Asian native languages.<sup>6</sup> The third was to oversee the administration of specific social organizations within Inner Asian societies by creating official routines between the Manchu court and various Inner Asian regions. This management transformed the leadership structure of Inner Asia into part of the Qing officialdom, while still retaining elements of each Inner Asian people's native social organization, political, and cultural traditions.<sup>7</sup>

The Manchu study encompasses all aspects of the Manchu people and society before, during, and after the Qing dynasty, including their language, history, beliefs, social organizations, government, folklore, art, and more. Among the key aspects of Manchu history is the Lifanyuan, a unique institution established by the ruling Manchu of the Qing dynasty. The extensive administrative network of the Lifanyuan maintained Inner Asian societies in their innate distinctiveness even amid the change to a significant extent and positioned them inside the Qing Empire alongside China proper. The Lifanyuan's role in managing the unprecedented bilateral relationship with the Russian empire further underscores it within the Manchu

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5. Chia Ning, "Lifanyuan and Libu in Early Qing Empire Building," in Schorkowitz and Chia, *Managing Frontiers in Qing China*, 43-69, here 51.

6. Chia Ning, "Language Translations and the Treaty of Nerchinsk: Linguistic Aspects of the Seventeenth-century Qing-Russian Diplomacy," in *Journal of the European Association for Chinese Studies* 6.2 (2025):5-49.

7. Chia Ning, "Lifanyuan and the Management of Population Diversity in Early Qing (1636-1795)." Max-Planck-Institut für ethnologische Forschung, Working Paper 139, June 2012, at [http://www.eth.mpg.de/cms/de/publications/working\\_papers/wp0139.html](http://www.eth.mpg.de/cms/de/publications/working_papers/wp0139.html).

governing system. No previous dynasty had the same relationship with any external policy that included a treaty following a modern diplomatic convention.<sup>8</sup>

The Inner Asian study within the Qing empire focuses on the diverse non-Chinese regions located outside the Great Wall. The populations were distinct from one another, having varied histories, and under their own authorities, even under the Manchu rule. The area studies about them have been named as Mongolian studies, Tibetan studies, Qinghai studies, Jun Gar<sup>9</sup> studies, Uyghur studies, Solon studies, Uranghai studies, and more. While the overall administration of the Lifanyuan can connect these regions into a cohesive history of Qing Inner Asia, the Lifanyuan is considered a part of the various area studies.

The three studies share a significant amount of research resources, even though the source focus within Inner Asia varies from area to area. Drawing on these sources, the comprehensive list of topics related to the Lifan Yuan highlights the Lifanyuan's daily operations, which are deeply rooted in Manchu rule, actively involved in the governance of Inner Asia, and significantly address issues in areas with mixed populations.

In the following three sections, the first section will focus on the significance of the Lifanyuan within the context of Manchu studies. The second section will analyze various types of source materials, illustrating how they link the Lifanyuan to Inner Asia from different perspectives. The third section will outline topics related to the Lifanyuan that require further research for advancement. Emphasizing these connections highlights the potential for simultaneous progress in all three studies.

## The Manchu Identity of the Lifanyuan and Its Governance in Inner Asia

*Turlergi golo be dasara Jurgan*, the Manchu name of the Lifanyuan 理藩院, was established in 1638. In both languages, the name meant "the ministry which manages the outer [non-Chinese] regions." The brief predecessor of the Lifanyuan, which existed from 1632 or 1634 to 1638, was *Monggo yamun* or *Monggo jurgan* in Manchu and *Menggu yamen* 蒙古衙門 in Chinese<sup>10</sup>. This type of governing institution at court

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8. Chia Ning, "Lifanyuan and Libu in the Qing tribute system," in Schorkowitz and Chia, *Managing Frontiers in Qing China*, 145-183, here under the subtitle "Russia vis-à-vis the European Countries – European versus Asian Tributaries," 163-168.

9. The Manchu "jun gar" is used in this writing for Zunghar, Dzungar, or the Chinese zhunga'er 準噶爾.

10. The PRC Mongolian scholar Jakhadai Chimeddorji pointed out that the founding of *Menggu yamen* should have been between 1632 and 1634. See his article "'Menggu yamen' yu qi shouren chengzheng ashdarhan" "蒙古衙門" 與其首任承政阿什達爾汗 [The Mongol Yamen and its first director with the title of *chengzheng* Ashdarhan], in *Neimenggu daxue xuebao* 39.4 (2007):29-33, here 30-31. For the comprehensive summary of PRC scholars' discussion about the starting year of this Manchu-created office (with different time suggestions), see Cheng Chongde 成崇德 and Naranchogt 那仁朝格圖, *Qing ruguanqian dui menggu shizheng*

was new in China's dynastic history. It operated the official working routines between the Manchu court and the Qing Inner Asian regions – Mongolia, Tibet, Qinghai/Kokonor, the Jun Gar Northern Xinjiang, the Uyghur Southern Xinjiang, the Kobdo/Khovd and Urangkai/Uriangkhai Western Mongolia, and the Solon Northern Heilongjiang/Amur region. In 1906, Lifanyuan was renamed Lifanbu 理藩部 and was dissolved following the 1911 Revolution.

Without the crucial role of the Lifanyuan in the early Qing empire-building, the Qing court would not have been able to establish Manchu rule in Inner Asia and expand the regional Manchu power in Manchuria into the Great Qing Empire, comprising two distinct sections: China Proper and Inner Asia. Such a contribution grants the Lifanyuan a special place in the Manchu study. Along with the Qing court's direct administration in Inner Asia during the Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong periods, helped shape not only the Great Qing Empire but also the China known to the world today. The Lifanyuan stands out as a pivotal institution in the Manchu experience.

The Qing official writings described the Lifanyuan as *benchao teshe* 本朝特設, meaning a unique establishment of this dynasty. It emphasized the institutional identity of the Lifanyuan as a sole Manchu institution. Reviewing the government settings of previous non-Chinese dynasties, to which the Manchu Qing dynasty was on the same non-Chinese line, can help clarify this Qing statement. The dual administration of the Khitan Liao (916-1125) and Jurchen Jin (1115-1234) dynasties, which managed the North (their own people) and the South (the Chinese population) separately, shows a similarity to the Manchu governance over Inner Asia under the Lifanyuan and China proper under the Six Boards from the Chinese governmental tradition. During the Mongol-ruled Yuan dynasty (1279-1368), the Zongzhiyuan 總制院 (Supreme Control Commission) (1264-1288), which later became Xuanzhengyuan 宣政院 (Commission of Buddhist and Tibetan Affairs) (1288-1368), appeared as an institutional model further similar to the Qing institutional setting. But none of these systems was comparable to the Qing Lifanyuan in terms of the geographical coverage, diverse population management, and, more importantly, the governing capacities. The Liao, Jin, and Yuan did not handle Inner Asia on the diverse level and with the same scope as the Lifanyuan did, nor were their overall institutional systems as complex as the Qing system. The Yuan court brought Tibet into the Empire and appointed the Tibetan Buddhist head to charge over the Supreme control commission and the Commission of Buddhist and Tibetan affairs. But that office was limited to “administer Tibet and to supervise government relations with

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*yu chuangjian Mengguli* 清入關前對蒙古施政與創建《蒙古律》 [Early Qing governance and creation of Mongolian code], in *Xibu menggu luntan* 4(2020):5-9, here 7, and Zhao Yuntian 趙雲田, *Qingdai lifan zhidu yanjiu* 清代理藩制度研究 [Study of the system to manage the Non-Han Chinese peoples during the Qing dynasty] (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2021), 76-82. *Monggo yamun* can appear as *Monggoi yamun* in Manchu archives.

the Buddhists,"<sup>11</sup> far from the mature level of the institutional setups of the Lifanyuan, which performed full official duties in the political, social, religious, economic, and legal arrangements in all parts of Inner Asia. Thus, the Lifanyuan's governance in Inner Asia was unprecedented in the lengthy history of East and Inner Asia, taking both the Chinese and non-Chinese dynasties into account.

Among the eight executive bodies of the Manchu court, collectively called *bayamen* 八衙門 (eight boards or ministries),<sup>12</sup> the Lifanyuan was the only one not derived from Chinese dynastic traditions. The other seven were the Six Boards (Appointment, Revenue, Rites, Military, Punishment, and Public Works) and Duchayuan 都察院 (The Censorate), which were, like they did in pre-Qing Chinese dynasties, responsible for affairs of China proper – the heartland of the Han-Chinese population south of the Great Wall. The overall role of the Lifanyuan in Qing Inner Asia reflects the Manchu effort in building, governing, and maintaining one of the most diverse empires in world history. The great characteristic of the Lifan Yuan is its institutional identity, which could not stand alone without the Manchu. The Manchu-ruled empire in the dynastic history of China was characterized by integrating diverse Inner Asia through the Lifanyuan's work.

The difficulty in studying the Lifanyuan before the 1980s arose from the view of this governing institution as an isolated office within the central government, when the research materials were limited to the Chinese documents with the court's stipulation of its functions. This led to a lack of direction in the Lifanyuan study concerning both perspective and methodology. The increasing availability of archival sources in the past four decades has provided valuable evidence of the Lifanyuan's activities across political, social, cultural, religious, economic, military, and ethnic aspects of the Qing Inner Asian societies. The essence of the Lifanyuan lies in its extensive operations, which involved a complex administrative network connecting the Manchu court to Inner Asia. This network included each Mongol banner, Tibetan Buddhist temple, Amdo/Qinghai *tusi* (aboriginal head), Uighur *beg*,<sup>13</sup> and hunting cohort of Solon and Urianghai, all contributing to the overall

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11. For the Liao dual system of government, see Denis Twitchett and Klaus-Peter Tietze, "The Liao," in *The Cambridge History of China*, Volume 6 *Alien Regimes and Border States 907-1368* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 43-143, here, 76-80. For the Jin dualism, see Herbert Franke, "The Ch'in [Jin] dynasty," in *The Cambridge History of China*, Volume 6, 215-320, here 267-8. For the Yuan *Zongzhiyuan* and *Xuanzhengyuan*, see Morris Rossabi, "The reign of Khubilai khan," in *The Cambridge History of China*, Volume 6, 414-489, here 461 (the page for the quotation) and 478, and Elizabeth Endicott-West, "The Yuan government and society," in *The Cambridge History of China*, Volume 6, 587-615, here 588 and 606-7.

12. *Qingchu neiguoshiyuan manwen dang'an yibian* 清初內國史院滿文檔案譯編 (Translated volumes of early Manchu archives from the Qing Dynasty of Guoshiyuan), Vol. 1. Translated by Number One Historical Archive (Guangming ribao chubanshe, 1986), 340.

13. Since the Manchu court designated the Lifanyuan to oversee Russian affairs and the communication language with Russia was only in Manchu, the Sino-Russian relationship fell into the Lifanyuan study. Since this writing will not discuss this part of the Lifanyuan work,

fettle of the Qing empire. In this direction, the Lifanyuan scholarship came into the publication titled *Managing Frontiers in Qing China: The Lifanyuan and Libu Revisited* (Brill, 2017), featuring international scholars' contributions. This process underscores the Lifanyuan's institutional identity, deeply attaching Manchu and Inner Asia.

The language application, which processed the Lifanyuan governing routines in the highly multilingual Inner Asia, served as another indicator of the Lifanyuan's attachment to the Manchu study. Under the Qing policies, Manchu and Chinese were the dual official languages for government correspondence in China proper at the beginning of the dynasty. The tendency moved toward the gradual decline of the use of Manchu and the domination of Chinese as the dynasty proceeded. In Inner Asia, however, Manchu was and remained the mandatory official language from the Court and the Lifanyuan to all Inner Asian locales. All Inner Asian authorities used their native languages, in return, to write or respond to the court and the Lifanyuan. Mongolian was designated as the translation language between the Manchu court and a language-specific Inner Asian authority.<sup>14</sup> According to Manchu scholar Wu Yuanfeng, the Lifanyuan's official correspondence with the Manchu emperors, other court institutions, and the Inner Asian local *yamen* before 1681 was mandatorily Manchu. After that year, Manchu-Mongolian combined

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readers can read this article as reference: Chia Ning, "Monggo Yamun and Tulergi Golo be Dasara Jurgan in Early Qing: The Lifanyuan in Manchu Archives and Russian Source Materials," in *Saksaha: A Journal of Manchu Studies* 19 (2023):73-101.

14. See Li Baowen 李保文, *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan mengguwen dang'an de shoucang he zhengli yu kanbu qingkuang* 中國第一歷史檔案館蒙古文檔案的收藏和整理與刊布情況 (The collection, arrangements, and publication of the Mongol archives at the First National Historical Archives), in *Xibu menggu luntan* 2 (2011):53-74. According to Wu Yuanfeng, from the central government to local offices, the Manchu and Mongolian officials of the Qing dynasty must use Manchu to write official correspondence, prohibiting the use of the Chinese language. See Wu Yuanfeng 吳元豐, "Manwen yu manwen guji wenxian zongshu" 滿文與滿文古籍文獻綜述 (A review of Manchu language and the Manchu-language historical literature), in *Manzu yanjiu* 1 (2008):100-128, here 102. In the sample frontier cases of the Manchu language use, see Chen Di 陳頤, *Qianxi Heilongjiang sheng dang'anguan guancang Heilongjiang jiangjun yamen manwen dang'an de wenhua jiazhi* 淺析黑龍江省檔案館館藏《黑龍江將軍衙門滿文檔案》的文化價值 [On the cultural value of the archives at the Heilongjiang General's Yamen which stored at the Heilongjiang Provincial Archive], in *Heilongjiang dang'an* 224.5 (2017):31-33, here 31; Tong Yonggong 佟永功, *Dui qingmo zhi minguo nianjian hulunbei'er defang gongwenzhong shiyong manwen qingkuang de kaocha* 對清末至民國年間呼倫貝爾地方公文中使用滿文情況的考察 [A survey of the Use of Manchu in the Local Official Documents in Hulunbeir between the end of the Qing dynasty and the Republic of China], in *Manyu yanjiu* 31.2 (2000):20-25, here 20-21; *Qingdai Alashan heshuote qi manwen dang'an xuanbian* 清代阿拉善和碩特旗滿文檔案選編 (The selected volume of Manchu archives of the Alashan Khoshut banner of the Qing dynasty) (Beijing: Guojia tushuguan chubanshe, 2016) which shows the Manchu language in official communication until 1911; and Wu Yuanfeng 吳元豐, *Qingdai xinjiang lishi manwen dang'an gaishu* 清代新疆歷史滿文檔案概述 (Summary on Xinjiang historical Manchu Archives in Qing dynasty), *Manyu yanjiu* 2 (2010):81-87, here 85.

writings emerged for Mongolian, Tibetan, and the later Uyghur affairs alike.<sup>15</sup> To the court-and-Tibetan communication, Mongolian served as the mediating language as early as Qing Taizong Hung Taiji (1626-1643)'s court before 1644.<sup>16</sup>

After 1644, *Neige Menggutang* 內閣蒙古堂 (The Mongolian Documentation Office in the Grand Secretariat) did tremendous translation work between Manchu, Mongolian (Khalkha and Clear both), Tibetan, Uighur, and also Russian.<sup>17</sup> These translations supported the overall official communication of the Qing Empire. Regularly, the Lifanyuan correspondence with the Grand Secretariat and the Grand Council was in Manchu. Occasionally, it was in Mongolian.<sup>18</sup> On the Mongol side, writings from different branches of the Mongol leadership to the Qing court through the Lifanyuan were in Mongolian up to 1636 for the Inner Mongols, 1691 for the Khalkha Mongols, 1697 for the Alashan Mongols, 1725 for the Qinghai Mongols, and 1758 for the Northwestern Mongols,<sup>19</sup> depending on each group's political relationship with the Manchu court. After these years, the Lifanyuan responded to

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15. *Qingchao qianqi Lifanyuan Man-Mengwen tiben* 清朝前期理藩院滿蒙文題本 (Early-Qing Manchu and Manchu-Mongolian regular memorials) (Huhehaote: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 2010), Preface. Wu Yuanfeng 吳元豐, "Qingdai Lifanyuan manmengwen tiben jiqi yanjiu jiazhe" 清代理藩院滿蒙文題本極其研究價值 (Manchu and Mongolian *wesimbure bithe* from *tulergi golo be dasara jurgan* in Qing Dynasty and Its Researching Value), in *Manzu yanjiu* 2 (2012):55-57, here 55. Heilong 黑龍, *Qing neige manmengwen hebi wenshi de xiangcheng liucheng, shuxie geshi ji yuwen tezheng* 清內閣滿蒙文合璧的文書形成流程、書寫格式及語文特徵 (The procedure, writing format, and the language features of the Manchu-Mongolian documents in the Mongolian Documentation Office in the Grand Secretariat), in *Minzu yanjiu* 4 (2016):88-95, here 89 gives the year of 1689 as the emergence of Manchu-Mongolian-combined writings. Please note that in the examples given later in this writing, some Manchu archival publications of Inner Asian peoples or affairs include a small number of Chinese archives. These Chinese archives were not written by the Lifanyuan but by other institutions on the subject.

16. Uyunbilig 烏雲畢力格, "Menggu yuwen zai qingdai Xizang – Yi Xizang zizhiqiu dang'anguan suocang qingdai mengguwen gongdu weili" 蒙古語文在清代西藏 – 以西藏自治區檔案館所藏清代蒙古文公牘為例 (Mongolian language in Tibet during the Qing dynasty – Taking the Mongolian documents of the Qing in the Archives of Tibetan Autonomous Region as examples), Center of Tibetan Studies of China's website [http://www.tibetology.ac.cn/2022-04/15/content\\_41940813.htm](http://www.tibetology.ac.cn/2022-04/15/content_41940813.htm), posted 2022-04-15, accessed February 26, 2026. Also see Li Baowe, *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan mengguwen dang'an de shoucang he zhengli yu kanbu qingkuang*, 55-56.

17. Hei Long, *Qing neige manmengwen hebi wenshi de xiangcheng liucheng, shuxie geshi ji yuwen tezheng*, 89.

18. Li Baowen, *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan mengguwen dang'an de shoucang he zhengli yu kanbu qingkuang*, 56.

19. Li Baowen, *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan mengguwen dang'an de shoucang he zhengli yu kanbu qingkuang*, 55 and Heilong, *Qing neige manmengwen hebi wenshi de xiangcheng liucheng, shuxie geshi ji yuwen tezheng*, 88-95, here 89.

the Mongol reports in Manchu first,<sup>20</sup> and then Manchu-Mongolian combined writings were issued to communicate with the Mongols.<sup>21</sup> The deep embrace of the Manchu language in Lifanyuan's official duty is a profound aspect of the Manchu study and a characteristic of the Lifanyuan study.

In 1669, the Kangxi emperor accepted the suggestion from Ma Qi (1652-1739), deputy director of the Board of Public Works of the time, to include Chinese for Lifanyuan's work. There are a considerable number of Lifanyuan archives in Chinese in the First Historical Archive in Beijing today.<sup>22</sup> But these Chinese-language archives were translated from the Manchu. This component of Chinese documents does not change Manchu as the required administrative language in the Qing Inner Asia. The comprehensive and overall study of the Lifanyuan administration will still rely on the Manchu archives.

Beyond the language aspect, the court in 1683 established the position of the General who guards the Heilongjiang and its surrounding regions, which was *sahaliyan ula i jergi babe tuwakiyara jiyanggiyūn* in Manchu and *Zhenshou heilongjiang denchu defang jiangjun* 镇守黑龙江等处地方将军 in Chinese.<sup>23</sup> This position appeared in the Qing documents frequently as *Heilongjiang jiangjun* or Heilongjiang General. His official duty in the Heilongjiang/Amur River region was the northernmost area of historical Manchuria. A primary part of this General's administration—managing banners of the Butha/hunting Solon and banner garrisons along the Heilongjiang River—was under the Lifanyuan supervision.<sup>24</sup> This administrative setting separated the Heilongjiang domain from other parts of Manchuria—Fengtian/Liaoning and Jilin—where the Lifanyuan did not play a role of authority. In this case, all three parts of Manchuria belong to the Manchu study, but the study of the Heilongjiang General's administration under the Lifanyuan supervision belonged

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20. Li Baowen 李保文, "Qingchao Mengguli de timing jiqi lishi zuoyong" 清朝《蒙古律》的提名及其歷史作用 (The use of "the Mongol Laws" in the Qing dynasty and its historical foundation," in *Gugong xuekan* 2006:485-527.

21. Li Baowen, *Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan mengguwen dang'an de shoucang he zhengli yu kanbu qingkuang* 56. For the process of cross-language translation to conduct the Qing official documents, see Yuxia Gao, Riccardo Moratto, and Di-kai Chao, "The Role of Translation Officials in the Qing Dynasty," in *TRAlinea: online translation journal* 2023 at [https://www.intraliinea.org/archive/article/the\\_role\\_of\\_translation\\_officials\\_in\\_the\\_qing\\_dynasty](https://www.intraliinea.org/archive/article/the_role_of_translation_officials_in_the_qing_dynasty) accessed February 26, 2026.

22. About Ma Qi, see Arthur W. Hummel, *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period* (Taipei: SMC Publishing INC, reprint 1991), Volume 1, 560. For the Chinese archives of the Lifanyuan, see Zhao Yuntian, *Qingdai lifan zhidu yanjiu*, 74-5 and 85.

23. For the Manchu and Chinese title of this position, see the official seal stamp printed on the text of the Treaty of Nerchinsk from the treaty image on page 199 in Ye Baichuan 葉百川's book *E'guo laihua shituan yanjiu 1618-1807* 俄國來華使團研究 1618-1807 (Study of the Russian delegation to China, 1618-1807) (Beijing: Shehui kexue wenxian chubanshe, 2010).

24. See Chia Ning, "The Qing Lifanyuan and the Solon People of the 17th-18th Centuries" in *Athens Journal of History* 1:4 (October 2015):253-266.

to the Lifanyuan study. The list of the Lifanyuan research topics under “Institutional Studies of the Manchu Court” and “Manchu and Heilongjiang Studies” below presents numerous aspects to understand such a unique mingling.

Furthermore, Qing Inner Asian study consists of numerous area studies, to which both the Lifanyuan and Manchu studies were an important part. Under the term Mongol, there were various groups and communities, such as Inner Mongols, Outer/Khalka Mongols, Tomed Mongols, Chahar Mongols, Qinghai Khoshud Mongols, Ordos Mongols, Alashan Mongols, the Jun Gar, Turghut, Uranghai, etc. Other distinct Inner Asian areas are Tibet, Amdo/Qinghai (the mixed-living area of Khoshud Mongol and the *fan* population with Tibetan origin), the Uighur of southern Xinjiang, and the Solon in Northern Heilongjiang. These regions together formed the geographical “Lifanyuan zone” and the “Manchu linguistic world.”<sup>25</sup>

With this knowledge of the relationship of the three *studies*, understanding the available source materials will be the key to successful research.

### The Research Materials

The recently published Manchu archives provide valuable insights into the working procedures of the Lifanyuan in Qing Inner Asia. They demonstrate the interplay of the Lifanyuan with Inner Asian local societies through administrative routines. They illustrate the interactions between the Lifanyuan and local societies through administrative routines. Researchers can use these archives to assess the Lifanyuan's achievements and failures from a local-to-central perspective based on its daily functions. These archival sources have been accompanied by continued publication of annotations and compilations of the court-level Lifanyuan or Lifanyuan-related documents in the Chinese language. These Chinese sources lean strongly towards a center-to-periphery perspective. The reprinting of non-official personal notes further enhances the information available across all three studies.

This introduction and analysis of various key Lifanyuan sources will improve the overall understanding of the Lifanyuan documentation. This understanding benefits the use of not only those currently available but also those not yet to be included or will be forthcoming, and also those in other Inner Asian languages, such as Mongolian, Tibetan, and Uyghur. By addressing how the effective use of sources correlates with successful research, this understanding will contribute to improved scholarly work.

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25. For the discussion of “Lifanyuan zone,” see Chia Ning, “Lifanyuan and Libu in the Early Qing Empire Building,” in Dittmar Schorkowitz and Chia, *Managing Frontiers in Qing China*, 43-69, here 44. For “Manchu linguistic world,” see Chia Ning, “*Monggo Yamun* and *Tulergi Golo be Dasara Jurgan* in Early Qing: The Lifanyuan in Manchu Archives and Russian Source Materials,” in *Saksaha: A Journal of Manchu Studies* 19 (2023):73-101, here 88.

## The Key Manchu Archival Sources from the Imperial Palace

The palace memorials (*zouzhe* 奏摺) and regular/or routine memorials (*tiben* 題本) in Manchu are the first kind of court-level sources for the Lifanyuan research. These archives are now stored at the First Historical Archives of China in Beijing and the National Palace Museum in Taiwan. The incompleteness of them due to historical reasons and the unavailability of them in Manchu scripts for public use should be in our knowledge, but those available to our research will, if effectively and fully used, lead to great scholarly outcomes.

As early as 1841, the Lifanyuan official had already reported that the Lifanyuan archival storage suffered impairment by water leak and document mildew. Many documents were ruined. A fire in 1850 destroyed a huge number of archives, and the continued disrepair of this storage smashed the archival collection even further. While compiling *Daqing huidian shili* 大清會典理藩院事例 (The collected statutes of the Qing dynasty in the Lifanyuan cases) during 1886-1899, the Guangxu court (1875-1908) encountered a troublesome source deficiency.<sup>26</sup>

The Lifanyuan archives stored at *Neige daku* (Grand Secretariat Storage) suffered from great damage as well. In late Qing times, besides damage from mildew, moths, and fire, to solve problem from storage space, many past memorials were burned, causing great loss of the Grand Secretariat memorials.<sup>27</sup> In 1899 Li Hongzhang witnessed and pointed out such damage. The 1921 trauma of the “eighty thousand abandoned bags” —selling the archives from the *Neige* Storage to a paper-making factory at extremely low prices—led to even worse losses, hurting the Lifanyuan collection badly.<sup>28</sup>

Even in such a situation, the chances to recover the surviving Lifanyuan records existed due to Qing documentation policies and practices. For example, according to Qing regulations, the Lifanyuan collected and stored all the Inner Asian correspondence, both originals and translations. The Mongolian Documentation Office of the Grand Secretariat was to keep a copy of each piece of correspondence that the Lifanyuan stored.<sup>29</sup> The surviving archives at the Mongolian Documentation

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26. *Daqing huidian shili* 大清會典理藩院事例 (The collected statutes of the Qing Dynasty of the Lifanyuan cases) (1818, Beijing: Center for Tibetan Studies, 1991 reprint), Preface. *Qinding Lifanbu zeli* 欽定理藩部則例 (Imperial endorsed regulations of the ministry which manages the non-Chinese) (1908, Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan suowei wenxian fuzhi zhongxin, 1992 reprint), 27.

27. Wu Yuanfeng, “Qingdai Lifanyuan manmengwen tiben jiqi yanjiu jiazhe,” 56.

28. Li Pengnian 李鵬年, “Neige daku – Qingdai zui zhongyao de dang’anqu” 內閣大庫—清代最重要的檔案庫 (Grand Secretariat Storage – The most archival storage of the Qing dynasty), in *Gugong bowuyuan yuankan* 2 (1980):53-60, here 57-8 and Wu Yuanfeng, “Qingdai Lifanyuan manmengwen tiben jiqi yanjiu jiazhe,” 56.

29. Heilong, *Qing neige manmengwen hebi wenshi de xiangcheng liucheng, shuxie geshi ji yuwen tezhen*, 90. Liu Kai 劉凱, *Qingdai baijian zhenxi mengguwen dang’an zhenegli yanjiu pingjie* 《清代百件珍稀蒙古文檔案整理研究》評介 (Comments to *Organizing and researching on the one*

Office, therefore, saved the archives that the Lifanyuan storage lost. One typical example is *Neige liucun Lifanyuan jishidang* 內閣留存理藩院記事檔 (The Grand Secretariat-stored archives on the Lifanyuan) which was included in Li Baowen 李保文's (edited) *Shiqi shiji mengguwen wenshu dang'an (1600-1650)* 十七世紀蒙古文書檔案 (1600-1650) (The seventeenth-century Mongol documentary and archival files, 1600-1650) (Huhehaote: Neimenggu shaonian ertong chubanshe, 1997). Many of them were in Manchu.<sup>30</sup>

Extraordinary efforts have rescued the regular memorials published in *Qingchao qianqi Lifanyuan Man-Mengwen tiben* 清前期理藩院滿蒙文題本 (Early-Qing Manchu and Manchu-Mongolian regular memorials) (Huhehaote: Neimenggu renmin chubanshe, 2010, twenty-four volumes) and *Qingchao houqi Lifanyuan Man-Mengwen tiben* 清後期理藩院滿蒙文題本 (Late-Qing Manchu and Manchu-Mongolian regular memorials) (Huhehaote: Neimenggu kexue jishu chubanshe, 2013, forty-two volumes).<sup>31</sup> These volumes significantly remedy the scarcity of the Lifanyuan sources and led to immediate scholarly development of the Lifanyuan study, such as Uyunbilig and Song Tong 宋瞳's 2013 article *Guanyu qingdai menggu huimeng zhidu de chuxing—yi Lifanyuan manwen tiben wei zhongxin* 關於清代蒙古會盟制度的雛形—以理藩院滿文題本為中心 (Prototype of the Mongol league system of the Qing dynasty—Centered at the Lifanyuan regular memorials)<sup>32</sup>; Song Tong 宋瞳's book *Qingchu lifanyuan yanjiu—yi Shunzhichao Lifanyuan manwen tiben wei zhongxin* 清初理藩院研究—以順治朝理藩院滿文題本為中心 (Study of the Lifanyuan at the beginning of the Qing dynasty—Centered at the Lifanyuan regular memorials of the Shunzhi court) (Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 2015); Kong Lingwei's article “Tao Min zangchuan fosi ruqing zhi xingshuai jiqi beihou de menggu yinsu—Yi Neige daku dang yu Lifanyuan manwen tiben wei hexin 洮岷藏傳佛寺入清之興衰及其背後的蒙古因素—以《內閣大庫檔》與《理藩院滿蒙文題本》為核心 (The development of Tibetan monasteries in Amdo and the Mongolian factors during the Ming and Qing dynasties: Study on Tibetan monks in the Manchu-Mongolian regular memorials of the Lifanyuan) *Zhongyang yanjiuyuan lishi yuyan yanjiusuo jikan* 86.4(2016):855-910; Chia Ning “Liangjian manwen tiben yu qingdai he zhongguo minzushi zhong de guanyin wenhua” 两件滿文題本與清代和中國民族史中的官印文化 (Two Manchu *tiben* and the official seal culture in the Qing and Chinese history), in *Xiyulishiyuyan yanjiu jikan* (History and language studies of China's

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*hundred rare Mongolian archives of the Qing dynasty*), in *Heilongjiang minzu congkan* 2 (2022):121-124 and 150, here 121.

30. *Qing neimishuyuan mengguwen dang'an huibian* 清內秘書院蒙古文檔案匯編 (The Collection of the Mongolian archives at the Palace Secretariat Academy) at the webpage of the Mongolian Studies Center, University of Inner Mongolia <https://mgxzx.imu.edu.cn/info/1061/1988.htm>, posted 2005-5-30, accessed August 19, 2023.

31. For the rescue process, see Wu Yuanfeng, “Qingdai Lifanyuan manmengwen tiben jiqi yanjiu jiazhe,” 56.

32. This publication was posted April 22, 2013 at the website of China's National Office for Philosophy and Social Sciences <http://www.nopss.gov.cn/BIG5/n/2013/0422/c362362-21232927.html>, accessed February 26, 2026.

western regions) 9 (2017):39-56, and “Monggo Yamun and Tulergi Golo be Dasara Jurgan in Early Qing: The Lifanyuan in Manchu Archives and Russian Source Materials,” *Saksaha: A Journal of Manchu Studies*, Issue 19, 2023, 73-101.

Another important example is that under the archival management of the Grand Council, the Manchu palace memorials had two or three copied versions stored separately, so the Manchu archives were better preserved than the Chinese archives which were not under such management.<sup>33</sup> The First Historical Archives have classified Grand Council archives in categories of *Lifanyuan (bu) dang* 理藩院(部)檔 (The archives of the Lifanyuan or Lifanbu), *Junjichu lufu zhouzhe* 軍機處錄副奏摺 (Grand Council-copied memorials), and *caizhenglei* 財政類 (financial subject), *neizhenglei* 內政類 (internal administration subject), *minzu shiwulei* 民族事務類 (subject of nationality affairs), *zongjiao shiwu lei* 宗教事務類 (subject of religious affairs) — all of which carry Lifanyuan information. The content of these archives covers political, military, legal, organizational, postal, financial, ritual, educational, etc. affairs, and the Qing administration in the banner-league, Muslim, *tusi*, lama, temple, and Tibetan affairs.<sup>34</sup> As a result, the availability of the palace memorials has been growing significantly with the following publications.

*Kangxichao Manwen zouzhe quanyi* 康熙朝滿文奏折全譯 (Complete translation of the Manchu palace memorials of the Kangxi reign) (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1996) and *Yongzhengchao Manwen zouzhe quanyi* 雍正朝滿文奏折全譯 (Complete translation of the Manchu palace memorials of the Yongzheng reign) (Hefei: Huangshan shushe, 1998) have some Lifanyuan memorials. The absence of Manchu scripts limits the source value in these translated works,<sup>35</sup> but they still offer valuable information, which the Chinese sources do not offer.

In the twenty-first century, digital technology has brought the publication with the Manchu originals with or without the Chinese translation. *Qingdai Elunchun zu manhanwen dang'an huibian* 清代鄂倫春族滿漢文檔案匯編 (The completion of the Manchu archives of the Oroqen in the Qing dynasty) (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2001) is the first example. This source selected three hundred and eleven archives from the ten million which were stored in the imperial palace and covered the period of 1683-1909. Two hundred and fifty-nine of them were in Manchu, twenty-four were Manchu-Chinese combined and twenty-eight were in Chinese. Among the other examples, *Junjichu manwen zhunga'er shizhe dang huibian* 軍機處滿文準噶爾使者檔譯編 (Grand Council's Manchu archives of the Zhungar envoys) (Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 2009, three volumes) recorded the diplomatic, religious, and trading intercourse between the Manchu court and the Jun Gar in

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33. Qu Liusheng 屈六生, *Qingdai junjichu manwen dang'an zongshu* 清代軍機處滿文檔案綜述 (Comprehension on the Manchu archives at the Grand Council of the Qing dynasty), in *Lishi dang'an* 1 (1989):124-129, here 128.

34. Zhao Yuntian, *Qingdai lifan zhidu yanjiu*, 53-54.

35. For the discussion of such a limitation, see Chia Ning, “Monggo Yamun and Tulergi Golo be Dasara Jurgan in early Qing,” 86-7.

present-day northern Xinjiang during 1734-1754, with records of the Lifanyuan's role in the relationship. *Junjichu manwen aochadang* 軍機處滿文熬茶檔 (Grand Council's Manchu archives of [Zhungar's] religious journeys [to Tibet]) (Shanghai: Guji chubanshe, 2010, two volumes) serves to research of the Jun Gar religious worship journeys from northern Xinjiang to Tibet during 1740-1748. The Lifanyuan official resident of Qinghai managed the journey events on behalf of the Qianlong court.<sup>36</sup> *Jungjichu Yongzhengchao manwen yifudang yibian* 軍機處雍正朝滿文議復檔譯編 (The Grand Council Manchu archives of the repeatedly discussed issues during the Yongzheng reign with Chinese translation) (Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 2021, thirteen volumes) presents the archives on affairs of the Northwestern and Manchurian frontiers. Since the Grand Council as a rule had the *yifu* memorials in Manchu and Chinese separately and the contents of the two language memorials did not always match each other, this publication of its Manchu section of the Yongzheng reign (1723-1735) is particularly valuable to researchers.<sup>37</sup> *Qianlong chao manwen jixindong yibian qianyan* 乾隆朝滿文寄信檔譯編 (Translated archive of transmitted imperial edicts of the Qianlong reign) (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011) is even more significant, because some of these archives had no Chinese version at all, but were only in Manchu.<sup>38</sup> This archival sourcebook has a broad coverage of the Qing frontier affairs in all Inner Asian regions with the Lifanyuan information. It also informs the Qing-Khazak and Qing-Russian relations.<sup>39</sup>

*Qingong zhencang dawo'er manhanwen dang'an huibian* 清宮珍藏達斡爾族滿漢文檔案彙編 (Collection of the Manchu and Chinese archives of the Daur people stored in the Qing palace) (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 2018, three volumes) is an example of retrieving the archives from the Grand Secretariat Storage and *Junjichu*

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36. See Chia Ning, Cong *Qingdai junjichu manwen aochadang kan Qing qianqi bianjiang guanlizhong zhi qinghai diwei* 从《清代军机处满文熬茶档》看清前期边疆管理中之青海地位 (The Manchu aocha archive and the importance of Qinghai in the Qing frontier administration), in *Qingshi yanjiu*, 3 (2020):25-41. This article is fully based on the study of this Manchu archive.

37. See the announcement of this publication in *Lishi dang'an* 1(2022):12 and the "Content introduction" of this publication at website <https://book.douban.com/subject/35640882/>, accessed February 26, 2026.

38. Wang Xiaohong, "Qianlongchao manwen jixindang yibian qianyan" 《乾隆朝滿文寄信檔譯編》前言 (Preface for the *Translated archive of transmitted imperial edicts of the Qinglong reign*), in *Qianlong chao manwen jixindong yibian* (Translated archive of transmitted imperial edicts of the Qinglong reign) (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011), Preface. Chang Jianhua 常建華, "Cong 'xinqingshi' yanjiu kan Qianlongchao manwen jixindang yibian de shiliao jiazhi" 从“新清史”研究看《乾隆朝滿文寄信檔譯編》的史料价值 (Look at the source value of *Translated archive of transmitted imperial edicts of the Qinglong reign*), in *Lishi dang'an* 1 (2011):132-137.

39. Du Jiaji 杜家驥, "Qianlongchao manwen jixindong yibian xu" 《乾隆朝滿文寄信檔譯編》序 (Foreword for the *Translated archive of transmitted imperial edicts of the Qinglong reign*), in *Qianlong chao manwen jixindong yibian* 乾隆朝滿文寄信檔譯編 (*Translated archive of transmitted imperial edicts of the Qinglong reign*) (Changsha: Yuelu shushe, 2011), Foreword.

*Fanglueguan* 軍機處方略館 (Office of Military History under the Grand Council). Before this was published, it was very difficult to study Qing Daur management. The disastrous “eight thousand bags sale” in 1921 hurt the Grand Secretariat’s archival collections the most, and the Daur sources were lost. The archives at the Grand Council were under much better protection but they did not have memorials from before the Yongzheng emperor established Junjichu in 1729. In addition, several million of the Junjichu archives under the categories of *Lufu zouzhe* 錄副奏摺, *Yifu dang* 議復檔 (Archive of discussion and restatement), *Shangyu dang* 上諭檔 (Archive of the imperial edicts), and *Jixindang* 寄信檔 (Archive of transmitted imperial edicts)<sup>40</sup> made Daur source searches impossible. Now this published-subject collection gives researchers a great opportunity to study the Qing Daur administration, the Butha hunting banner yamen in operation, and the hunting bannermen’s fur tribute and military service under the Lifanyuan.

Another subject collection that helps in Lifanyuan research is *Qingdai younghegong dang’an shiliao* 清代雍和宮檔案史料 (The historical archives of the Younghe Temple of the Qing dynasty) (Beijing: Zhongguo minzu shiying yishu chubanshe, 2002, twenty-four volumes). Drawing archives mainly from the Imperial Household Department, this collection carries three thousand one hundred archives, most in Manchu. It is a key package of primary sources for studying Tibetan Buddhist affairs in the Qing dynasty, which was an important area of Lifanyuan responsibility.

It should be noted that the 1986 publication of *Qingchu neiguoshiyuan manwen dang’an yibian* 清初內國史院滿文檔案譯編 (Translated volumes of early Manchu archives from the Qing dynasty of the Inner Court of Historiography) (Beijing: Guangming ribao chubanshe, 1986)—a highly valuable source but without Manchu scripts—offers information of the Menggu yamen’s early work with the Mongols and its transition into the Lifanyuan in 1638. According to Zhao Yuntian, the 1775 recopying of *Manwen laodang* 滿文老檔 (The old Manchu archive) under the Qianlong emperor’s instruction has the Lifanyuan records in both editions, one with and the other without dots and circles.<sup>41</sup>

In conclusion, the court-level archives inform researchers about Lifanyuan’s case-based administrative work, reflecting the interaction between the Lifanyuan from the court and local officials in their Inner Asian political, social, economic, and cultural reality. In the case of Yonghegong, this imperial Tibetan Buddhist Temple, even located inside the capital city, had close ties with the Inner Asian temples in the Tibetan Buddhist world. By using these archives, researchers’ judgment on the credibility of Lifanyuan’s work will be more reality-grounded and perspective-balanced than only using the court-compiled and re-edited source documents to make such judgments.

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40. Wang Xiaohong, “Qianlong chao manwen jixindong yibian qianyan,” Preface.

41. Zhao Yuntian, *Qingdai lifan zhidu yanjiu*, 56.

## The Key Chinese Language Sources Compiled by the Court

The institutional type of the sources (legal codes or regulations) with the Lifanyuan sections or information were mainly written in Chinese. Some of them had the Manchu and Mongolian versions, which were usually translated from the Chinese, or, if not, edited into re-compiled versions.<sup>42</sup> These government documents first include the court-compiled statutes – *huidian* 會典 (collected statutes), *huidian shili* 會典事例 (collected statutes and precedents), and *zeli* 則例 (regulations). The imperial chronicles such as *shilu* 實錄 (veritable records), event-based *fanglue* 方略 (official campaign histories), and other kinds of officially filtered sources also offer significant portion of the Lifanyuan information.

Researchers face two major challenges when using these documents: incorrect recordings in many cases and perspective-oriented interpretation, both arising in the process of court-organized compiling and court-supervised editing. The Qianlong emperor's correction of the previous *Huidian* records of the number of state seals inside the imperial palace and the description for each seal is a representative example of misrecording.<sup>43</sup> The re-creating nature of the *shilu* editing and re-editing of the Shunzhi, Kangxi, and Qianlong editions of the *Daqing taizong wenhuangdi shilu* 大清太宗文皇帝實錄 (Veritable records of Taizong Emperor Wen of the Great Qing)<sup>44</sup> represent a case of fact modification according to a ruler's will. In addition, the *fanglue* compilation was a process of selecting and editing the original archival materials. Taking *Elcin takūraha baitai danse* as an example, its direct Chinese translation should be *Qianshi shidang* 遣使事檔 (Archive on the matter of dispatching envoys) but the Qing Chinese translation injected a taste of prejudice

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42. Xu Li 徐莉, *Daqing huidian manhanwen banben xingcheng kaoshi* 《大清會典》滿漢文版本形成考釋 (The examination of the Manchu and Chinese editions of the *Collected Statutes of the Qing dynasty*), in *Minzu fany* 110.1(2019):49-54, here 51. Hei Long 黑龍 and Zhao Wenbo 趙文博, *Qinding lifanyuan zeli banben liuchuan shukao* 《欽定理藩院則》例版本流傳疏考 (The comprehensive introduction and study of the editions of the *Regulations of the Lifanyuan*), in *Zangxue yanjiu* 31.4(2020):157-160, here 158. Yang Lihong 楊立宏 and Zhu Zhengye 朱正業, *Qingshilu zuanxiu chengxu shulun* 《清實錄》纂修程序述論 (The process of compiling the *Veritable Records of the Qing Dynasty*), in *Lishi dang'an* 2 (2014):125-130, here 126-127. Yang and Zhu pointed out that the early *shilu* was written in Manchu first, but after the Kangxi reign, or starting from the Yongzheng reign, the Chinese version came first, and the Manchu and Mongol versions developed as the translation from the Chinese.

43. Guo Fuxiang 郭福祥, *Mingqing dihou xiying* 明清帝後璽印 (The state seals for the emperors and empresses during the Ming and Qing dynasties) (Beijing: Guoji wenhua chubanshe, 2003), 82-3.

44. Xu Li 徐莉, "Manwen *Daqing Taizhong wenhuangdi shilu* banben jiqi jiazhi" 滿文《大清太宗文皇帝實錄》版本及其價值 (The version and its value of the Manchu Records of Emperor Taizong Wen in the Qing dynasty), in *Manyu yanjiu* 72:1 (2021):86-94, here 92. Ding Haibin 丁海斌 and Wang Aihua 王愛化, "Zaitan 'dang'an' ciyuan wenti" 再談“檔案”詞源問題 (Another examination of the origin of “archive”), in *Zhongguo dang'an* 3 (2005):31-33, here 32.

to name it *Yishidang* 夷使檔 (Archive of the barbarian [Jun gar] envoys). The comparison of this archive with *Qingshilu* and *Pingding zhunga'er fanglue* 平定準噶爾方略 (The campaign history of pacifying and settling the Zungars), shows the erasing, altering, and misinterpreting of the latter.<sup>45</sup> Once *fanglue* writing was established in the Kangxi era, compiling *fanglue* always took place before the *shilu* writing. As the second-round history editing, *shilu* usually summarized *fanglue* while missing numerous details. Thus, *fanglue* and *shilu* have the same issue of information reliability for two times.<sup>46</sup>

With the challenges from fact modification, perspective orientation, and interpretation prejudice, the Chinese language sources can still not be ignored, for several reasons. They stand for systematical organization of information, clear outlines, and time clarity.<sup>47</sup> *Shilu*, for example, was both edited history and primary source collection. It developed a high quality of structure-building, literary writing, and partially reliable history recording.<sup>48</sup> By an overall evaluation, with the problems from “historical filtering,” “the Chinese voluminous written compilation of histories from various sources in the tradition of Chinese historiography provides relatively complete accounts of people and events throughout the five thousand years of Chinese history.”<sup>49</sup> Many Qing historical documents in Chinese belong to this overall historiography. A mature researcher should be able to master the proper use of the Chinese documentary sources when utilizing the Lifanyuan parts of them. These source materials, like the Manchu archives, belong to the Manchu empire management, a part of the Manchu study.

Zhao Yuantian edited *Qingdai lifanyuan ziliao jilu* 清代理藩院資料輯錄 (Collection of the Qing Dynasty Lifanyuan Records) (Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zongxin, 1988) is one of the most important source collections of court legal codes upon the Lifanyuan, reflecting the perspective and the political design of the ruling Manchu to this special governing institution. It contains *Qianlong neifu chaoben Lifanyuan zeli* 乾隆朝內府抄本《理藩院則例》 (Handwritten edition of Regulations

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45. *Junjichu manwen zhunga'er shizhe dang huibian* 軍機處滿文準噶爾使者檔譯編 (Grand Council's Manchu archives of the Zhungar envoys) (Beijing: Zhongyang minzu daxue chubanshe, 2009, Preface by Zhao Lingzhi 趙令志, page 2 for comparison and page 5 for translation.

46. Zhou Jie 周潔, *Lun Qingdai fanglue de shixue jiazhi* 論清代方略的史學價值 (Historical value of Fanglue in Qing dynasty), in *Hubei guangbo daxue xuebao* 20.2 (2003):81-84, here, 83-4.

47. Jakhadai Chimeddorji, *17 shiji shang banye manmenghanwen dang'an zai mnggushi yanjiu zhogde yingyong: yi neimenggu daxue qingchu mnggushi yanjiu weili* 17世紀上半葉滿蒙漢文檔案在蒙古史研究中的應用：以內蒙古大學清初蒙古史研究為例 (The using of the Manchu Mongol and Chinese accounts in the first half 17th century on Mongol history studies --- Inner Mongolia University Studies on Mongol history in early Qing dynasty), in *Menggushi yanjiu* 11 (2013):21-40, here 22.

48. Li Jianhong 李建宏, *Qingshilu de shiliao jiazhi* 清實錄的使料價值 (Value of the Veritable Records of the Qing), in *Dang'anxue tongxun* 3 (1995):47-49, here 48.

49. Yuxia Gao, Riccardo Moratto, and Di-kai Chao, “The Role of Translation Officials in the Qing Dynasty.”

for the Lifanyuan in the Qianlong reign), *Kangxichao daqinghuidian zhongde Lifanyuan ziliao* 康熙朝《大清會典》中的理藩院資料 (The Lifanyuan records in the Kangxi edition of the Statutory Encyclopedias of the Qing), *Qingzhengchao daqinghuidian zhongde Lifanyuan ziliao* 雍正朝《大清會典》中的理藩院資料 (The Lifanyuan records in the Yongzheng edition of the Statutory Encyclopedias of the Qing), *Qianlongchao daqinghuidian zhongde Lifanyuan ziliao* 乾隆朝《大清會典》中的理藩院資料 (The Lifanyuan records in the Qianlong edition of the Statutory Encyclopedias of the Qing), and *Jiaqingchao daqinghuidian zhongde Lifanyuan ziliao* 嘉慶朝《大清會典》中的理藩院資料 (The Lifanyuan records in the Jiaqing edition of the Statutory Encyclopedias of the Qing). In the end, the editor contributed a commentary essay *Qingdai Lifanyuan, Lifanyuan ziliao he Lifanyuan yanjiu* 清代理藩院、理藩院資料和理藩院研究 (The Lifanyuan of the Qing dynasty, the Lifanyuan sources and the study of the Lifanyuan). Serving as a reference for the Chinese sources about the Lifanyuan, the essay introduced the Lifanyuan's history, structure, and sources of different kinds. Later, Zhao Yuntian published the annotated *Qianlong neifu chaoben Lifanyuan zeli* (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 2006) as a separate book. He also published his annotated *Qinding daqing huidian Lifanyuan shili* 欽定大清會典理藩院事例 (The imperial compiled collected statutes and precedents of Lifanyuan) (Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 2006).

*Lifanyuan gongdu zeli sanzong* 理藩院公牘則例三種 (Three Documentary Editions of the Regulations of the Lifanyuan) (Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zhongxin, 2010, five volumes) is another most important sourcebook for the study of the Lifanyuan. The first of the three parts of this source is the Handwritten edition of the Qianlong reign *Lifanyuan zeli*. Never before published, this work served to the preparation of compiling *Daqing huidian zeli* 大清會典則例 (Regulations of the Statutory Encyclopedias of Great Qing, which was later renamed *Daqing huidian shili*) and *Lifanyuan zeli* which was eventually completed in the Jiaqing reign during 1815-1818.<sup>50</sup> A similar title with that in the Zhao Yuntian-edited sourcebook, this is a different edition of handwritten *Lifanyuan zeli* of the Qianlong reign, according to the following comparison. The comparison of them shows that two editions did not have the same chapter order and arrangements.

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50. Jiang Shaya 姜沙亞, Preface in *Lifanyuan gongdu zeli sanzong* 理藩院公牘則例三種 (Three documentary editions of the *Regulations of the Lifanyuan*) (Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zhongxin, 2010), 1.

<p>Qianlong neifu chaoben <i>Lifanyuan zeli</i> 乾隆朝內府抄本《理藩院則例》 in Zhao Yuntian-edited sourcebook (refereed as 1988 reprint below)</p>	<p><i>Lifanyuan gongdu zeli sanzhang</i> 理藩院公牘則例三種 (refereed as 2010 reprint below)</p>
<p>Eight sections with each bureau's name and the section order  Luxun qinglisi shang 錄勳清吏司上  Luxun qinglisi xia 錄勳清吏司下  Binke qinglisi 賓客清吏司  Rouyuan qingli zuo (front) si shang 柔遠清吏左(前)司上  Rouyuan qingli zuo (front) si xia 柔遠清吏左(前)司下  Rouyuan qingli you (back) si 柔遠清吏右(後)司  Lixing qinglisi 理刑清吏司  Yinku 銀庫</p>	<p>Eight sections with each bureau's name and the section order  Binke qinglisi 賓客清吏司  Rouyuan qingli you (back) si 柔遠清吏右司  Rouyuan qingli zuo (front) si juanyi 柔遠清吏左司卷一  Rouyuan qingli zuo (front) si juan'er 柔遠清吏左司卷二  Lixing qinglisi 理刑清吏司  Luxun qinglisi juanyi 錄勳清吏司卷一  Luxun qinglisi juan'er 錄勳清吏司卷二  Yinku 銀庫</p>

Two editions, however, had the same four bureau names, *luxunsi* 錄勳司 (the honorable bureau which entitled and promoted Inner Mongol nobles to the banner system), *binke* 賓客司 (the reception bureau for the reception of Inner Mongols coming to the court), *rouyuansi* 柔遠司 (the Outer Mongol reception bureau for Khalkha Mongol affairs), and *lixingsi* 理刑司 (the judicial bureau for legal control over all Mongolian banners). The Shunzhi court (1643-1661) in 1661 set up these four bureaus. The Kangxi court in 1709 split *rouyuansi* into two: the Front/Left one and the Rare/Right one. The Qianlong court in 1757 changed the names for three of these bureaus, *luxunsi* into *dianshusi* 典屬司 (the Outer Mongolian bureau), *binke* into *wanghui* 王會司 (the Inner Mongolian reception bureau), and *rouyuanhou* 柔遠後司 (the rare/right wing of the Outer Mongol reception bureau) into *qijisi* 旗籍司 (the Inner Mongolian bureau).<sup>51</sup> Thus, these two different handwritten editions were all developed between 1736 (when the Qianlong reign started) and 1757. Zhao Yuntian gave the year 1756 for the edition in his sourcebook. The 2010 reprint did not mention the edition's year. Looking into details in each chapter of the same bureau, the information was identical. In addition, the 1988 reprint was retyped for publication and did not follow the Qing printing format. The 2010 reprint was a digital copy of the Qing printing, showing the Qing format such as the highlight of the emperor's title, the line arrangements, a circle as the sentence period, etc. Zhao Yuntian pointed out that the unpublished handwritten edition offered information that the printed edition of *Lifanyuan zeli* did not include. For the same subject, the

51. Ji Yun, *Lidai zhiguan biao*, Volume 1, 311.

two had different detailed coverage. Thus, the handwritten edition is very valuable for the Lifanyuan research.<sup>52</sup>

The second part of *Lifanyuan gongdu zeli sanzong* was hand-copied *Lifanyuan xiugai huijiang zeli* 理藩院修改回疆則例 (The Lifanyuan's revision of Regulation for the Muslim Territory) during the Xianfeng reign (1851-1861). This four-volume edition was also never published but served as an internal reference to the government work in the Muslim Region. The third part of this sourcebook is the *Lifanyuan gongdu* 理藩院公牘, a collection of court documents of any kind from the emperor to the officials as long as the writing was about the Lifanyuan's work. These documents were not placed into organized chapters but had eleven sections with more than three hundred entries during the Guangxu reign.

The published *Lifanyuan zeli* 理藩院則例 (Regulations of the Lifanyuan) is certainly a key primary source for the Lifanyuan study. This regulation guide collected Lifanyuan working cases. These cases served as general guidance for the Lifanyuan officials even before the publication of the first edition of *Lifanyuan zeli* (compiled during 1811-1815 and printed in three different language editions—Chinese, Manchu, and Mongolian—during 1815-1817) in the Jiaqing reign (1796-1820). This first edition listed seven hundred and thirteen cases. The Daoguang court (1821-1850) revised the *Lifanyuan zeli* twice; the 1827 edition increased the case number to one thousand, four hundred and fifty-four and the 1843 edition further revised two hundred and three case entries and added one hundred and forty-nine cases. The Guangxu edition in 1890-1891 subjoined another one hundred and thirty-seven cases.<sup>53</sup> *Qinding Lifanbu zeli* 欽定理藩部則例 (Imperial endorsed regulations of the ministry which manages the non-Chinese) (1908, Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan suowei wenxian fuzhi zhongxin, 1992 reprint) was just the continuation of the *Lifanyuan zeli*, without any change for pre-1906 details. An annotated *Qinding Lifanbu zeli*, by Zhang Rongzheng 張榮錚 and Jin Mao 金懋, was published in 1998 by Guji chubanshe in Tianjin.

Two published editions of *Qinding Lifanyuan zeli* 欽定理藩院則例 (The imperial endorsed regulations of the Lifanyuan), easy for present researchers to check out from the libraries, are the 1891 (Beijing: Lifanyuan, 1891) and the 2004 (Beijing: Fuchi shuyuan, 2004) editions. The two annotated editions of *Qinding Lifanyuan zeli* easily available are those annotated by Yang Xuandi 楊選第 and Jin Feng 金峰 (Hohhot: Neimenggu wenhua chubanshe, 1998) and by Hei Long 黑龍, Bao Heping 包和平, and Bao Siqin 包思勤 (Shenyang: Liaoning minzu chubanshe, 2019 reprint),

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52. Zhao Yuntian 趙雲田, *Qingdai Lifanyuan, Lifanyuan ziliao he Lifanyuan yanjiu* 清代理藩院、理藩院資料和理藩院研究 (The Lifanyuan of the Qing dynasty, the Lifanyuan sources and the study of the Lifanyuan), in Zhao Yuntian 趙雲田, edited, *Qingdai lifanyuan ziliao jilu* 清代理藩院資料輯錄 (Collection of the Qing Dynasty Lifanyuan Records) (Beijing: Quanguo tushuguan wenxian suowei fuzhi zongxin, 1988), 10-14.

53. *Qinding Lifanbu zeli*, 5-27. Also see Hei and Zhao, *Qinding lifanyuan zeli banben liuchuan shukao*, 2-3.

which is based on the 1843 Daoguang edition. Two annotated Mongolian editions of *Qinding Lifanyuan zeli* are available for researchers, by Nirilatu 尼日拉圖 and Jin Feng 金峰 (Hohhot: Neimenggu wenhua chubanshe, 1989) and by Bao Yin hao 包銀海 (Beijing: Minzu chubanshe, 2006).

Over the past three decades, there have been consistent studies of and discussions about the origins and compiling processes of *Lifanyuan zeli*, with disagreements and debates. Hei Long and Zhao Wenbo's article *Qinding Lifanyuan zeli banben liuchuan shukao* (The comprehensive introduction and study of the editions of *The Regulation of the Lifanyuan*) in *Zangxue yanjiu* 31.4(2020):157-160 presents the latest and the most complete to date summary for these studies. Hei Long's article *Qinding Lifanyuan zeli yanjiu shuping* 《欽定理藩院則例》研究述評 (Comments on the studies of the Regulation of the Lifanyuan) in *Heilongjiang minzu congkan* 1(2020):103-108 can serve as the reference to all of these studies and discussions.

All kinds of Qing historical writings carry records of the Lifanyuan.<sup>54</sup> Among the twelve reigns' *Shilu*, eleven contain numerous records about the Lifanyuan; only Taizu or Nurhaci's did not. In the same chronicle writing style, Wang Xianqian 王先謙's *Donghualu* 東華錄 (The records of Donghua) and *Donghua xulu* 續東華錄 (The continued records of Donghua) are also important sources for the Lifanyuan study. Among the political literatures, these have a rich Lifanyuan information: Liu Jinzao edited *Qingchao xuwenxian tongkao* 清朝續文獻通考 (Continued edition of comprehensive examination of literatures of the Qing), Liu Yong edited *Qingchao tongdian* 清朝通典 (Comprehensive statutes of the Qing) and *Qingchao tongzhi* 清朝通志 (Comprehensive records of the Qing), and Duan Fang et al. edited *Daqing Guangxu xinfanling* 大清光緒新法令 (The new decrees of the Guangxu emperor of the Qing).

Among the *fanglue* and *jishibenmo* (Historical events in their entirety) types of records these were important for the Lifanyuan study. Wenda 溫達 *Qinzheng pingding shuomo fanglue* 親征平定朔漠方略 (A history of pacifying campaigns over the vast desert under the command of the emperor) (1708, Beijing: Zhongguo zangxue chubanshe, 1994 reprint), Fuheng 傅恆 *Qinzheng pingding zhunga'er fanglue* 親征平定準噶爾方略 (A history of the war against Jun Gar under the command of the emperor) (1770, Shanghai: Wenhui chubanshe, 1996 reprint), Agui 阿桂 *Pingding liang Jinchuan fanglue* 平定兩金川方略 (A history of the war against the two native kingdoms of Jinchuan), Agui et al. *Huangqing kaiguo fanglue* 皇清開國方略 (History of the founding of the Qing), *Pingding luocha fanglue* 平定羅剎方略 (A history of the war against the Russians), Zhang Mu 張牧 *Menggu youmuji* 蒙古遊牧記 (Records of Mongolian herding lands), Qi Yunshi *Huangchao fanbu yaolue* 皇朝藩部要略 (Essential information regarding the imperial dependencies on the frontier), He Qiutao 何秋濤 *Shuofang beicheng* 朔方備乘 (Detailed records of the North), and Wei Yuan 魏源 *Shengwuji* 聖武紀 (A record of the military achievements of the Qing emperors).

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54. The following lists of the official chronical, political literature, event-based writing, Gazetteer, biographical, and personal note sources are summarized from Zhao Yuantian, *Qingdai Lifanyuan, Lifanyuan ziliao he Lifanyuan yanjiu*, 8-9 and *Qingdai lifan zhidu yanjiu*, 53-68.

Among the gazetteer type of historical writing, the following should be in the research list for the Lifanyuan study. *Daqing yitongzhi* 大清一統志 (Comprehensive gazetteer of unification of the Great Qing), *Weizang tongzhi* 衛藏通志 (Gazetteer of the Wei and Zang), *Wuliyasutai zhilue* 烏里雅蘇台志略 (A brief account of Uriyasutai), *Xiningfu xinzhì* (Gazetteer of Xining Prefecture), *Suiyuan qizhi* 綏遠旗志 (The banner gazetteer of Suiyuan), *Chengde fuzhi* 承德府志 (Gazetteer of Chengde Prefecture), *Menggu zhi* 蒙古志 (Gazetteer of the Mongols), *Xinjiang shilue* 新疆識略 (A brief account of Xinjiang), *Xichui zongtong shilue* 西陲總統事略 (Records for all affairs of the western frontier), *Qinding rixia jiuwen kao* 欽定日下舊聞考 (Imperially-endorsed investigations about hearsay of old matters from under the sun). The list for Qing biographical writings will help the Lifanyuan research, such as *Qinding waifan menggu huibu wanggong biao zhuan* 欽定外藩蒙古回部王公表傳 (Imperially-endorsed genealogical tables and biographies of the princes and dukes of the Outer Mongols and the Muslim leaders), *Qingshi liezhuan* 清史略傳 (A collection of biographies of figures in Qing history), *Manhan mingchen zhuan* 滿漢名臣傳 (Biographies of famous Manchu and Chinese statesmen), *Guochao qixianle leizheng chubian* 國朝耆獻類徵初編 (A collection of biographies of persons from the Qing period), *Guochao xianzheng shilue* 國朝先政事略 (Records of the outstanding predecessors of our [Qing] dynasty), and the *liezhuan* (biographical) chapters in *Qingshigao* 清史稿 (Drafted Qing history).

Many personal notes are sources for Lifanyuan research. They are *Wanli xingchengji* 萬里行程記 (Record of the journey of ten thousand li), *Fengshi Ke'erqin xingji* 奉使科爾沁行記 (The envoy's journey to Korchin). Some personal writings also help the Lifanyuan research, such as *Xiaoting zalu* 嘯亭雜錄 (Miscellaneous records of Xiaoting), *Zhanbao zaiji* 詹曝雜記 (Miscellaneous jottings of Zhenbao), *Zhuyeting zaji* 竹葉亭雜記 (Miscellaneous jottings of Zhuyeting), *Chayu kehua* 茶餘客話 (Tea guests' remarks), *Guiji leigao* 癸己類稿 (The thirtieth year's draft), *Tingyu congtan* (Whilst listening to the Rain or Miscellanea at Tingyu Hall), *Yangjizhai conglu* 養吉齋從錄 (Records of the Yangji House), etc.

In sum, the court's legal codes help reconstruct the Lifanyuan's work at the central government. They represent the Manchu vision and the court design of this governing institution in overall empire management and offer guiding principles to the Lifanyuan in the Inner Asian administration. However, they had a limited grasp of the Lifanyuan's pragmatic operation. The *Lifanyuan zeli* provided the cases of the Lifanyuan operation but they were court-selected cases for policy considerations. With very brief descriptions or narratives, they offered only the court-side information. Even having a high representation of Lifanyuan's pragmatic work, they did not cover, or sufficiently cover, the integrated local happenings along the Lifanyuan official routines and could not shroud all of Lifanyuan's tasks in Inner Asia. *Daqing huidian Lifanyuan shili* (The Lifanyuan cases in the Collected Statutes of the Great Qing) (Beijing: Center for Tibetan Studies, 1991) helps overcome this shortage by offering more details of the Lifanyuan's work. However, it still stood with a court voice and interpretation. The *fanglue* sources were compiled strictly under the Grand Council's supervision, representing the court's perspective on critical Inner Asian

military events with selected archival information (mainly from the Manchu archives). The state-sponsored gazetteer sources give systematic outlines of time, location, administrative setting, local information of various kinds, etc.; they were officially filtered with the voice of the court and included very limited working processes of the Lifanyuan and other governing institutions. Through the same official filtering, the bibliographical sources listed above recorded important people, individuals, or groups, in their relations to the Manchu court. The well-organized narratives thus very much followed the official line. Personal writings keyed in individual voices and opinions to a certain degree, but they were far from enough into the Inner Asian reality and looked at happenings from the direct interplay between the Lifanyuan and the local Inner Asians.

If they rely only on these Chinese-language sources, researchers will likely ask what new can be done after the existing studies have laid out Lifanyuan's structure, described its responsibilities, and outlined its routine duties based on the court design. A researcher will also easily feel the severe source shortage to the question of what happened on the Inner Asian side. The archives from Inner Asian areas will remedy the defect and give an answer to these questions. A large part of the Lifanyuan information exists, again, in the Inner Asian area archives. These locally based archives carry the Lifanyuan's operation details. Once the Lifanyuan research engages with Inner Asian local studies sufficiently and widens the examination broadly enough into the Lifanyuan's interplay with Inner Asian groups, more research opportunities will open to developing the Lifanyuan study.

### **The Sample Inner Asian Archives<sup>55</sup>**

The Manchu archives between the Lifanyuan and an Inner Asian local yamen reflect the lower, but more critical, segments of the Lifanyuan's work. They were directly involved in Inner Asian societies, recorded the Lifanyuan's concrete management, and noted historical events with reasons, processes, communications, interactions, and resolution methods (whether effective or ineffective). They significantly supplement the court-level sources and testify to or confirm the court documents with event records from the Inner Asian accounts and interpretation. They open a sight to comprehend the seventeenth through the eighteenth century East and Inner Asian world. In this world, the Manchu court, when striving to incorporate all the Inner Asian areas under its rule, was one among the simultaneous centers. Each center could be once powerful, either religiously or militarily. Lifanyuan's role as an active player in Qing Inner Asia implemented the court administration step by step through its interplay with the Inner Asian societies. The local archives are the critical research sources to reveal this interplay and keep a

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55. The following sample list introduces some representative archival publications with the Manchu originals. The researchers who look for complete lists in their specific Inner Asian areas will need to do further investigation for both the past and the latest publications.

necessary balance between the center-to-periphery position of the court and the periphery-to-center standpoint of each Inner Asian region. The recent digitized archival reprints are a significant resource.

*Heilongjiang jiangjyn ya men Dawo'er zu manwen dang'an xuanbian* (Kangxi and Yongzheng chao) 黑龙江将军衙门达斡尔族满文档案选编 (康熙、雍正朝) (Selected Manchu archives of the Daur people at the Heilongjiang General's yamen during the Kangxi and Yongzhen reigns). (Shenyang: Liaoning minzu chubanshe, 2021, eight volumes) and *Heilongjiang jiangjyn ya men Dawo'er zu manwen dang'an xuanbian* (Qianlong chao) 黑龙江将军衙门达斡尔族满文档案选编 (乾隆朝) (Selected Manchu archives of the Daur people at the Heilongjiang General's yamen during the Qianlong reign). (Shenyang: Liaoning minzu chubanshe, 2019, twelve volumes) provide the official correspondence with three layers of the Qing official system. The first was the Heilongjiang General's working correspondence with the Lifanyuan and the other Boards of the central government. The second was the Heilongjiang General's official communication with the Mukden General (Fengtian or Shengjing General) and the Ningutau or Jilin General in Manchuria. The third was the Heilongjiang General's official conversation with the hunting and garrison banners under his authority, as firsthand information of how the Lifanyuan supervised the Solon fur tribute, banner organization, official appointments, garrison management, post station duties, military services, hunting and agricultural activities, disaster relief, etc.

*Qingdai Alashan heshuote qi manwen dang'an xuanbian* 清代阿拉善和硕特旗满文档案选编 (Selected Manchu archives of the Alashan Khoshut banner of the Qing dynasty) (Beijing: Guojia tushuguan chubanshe, 2016, ten volumes) provides the Manchu records of the Lifanyuan's routine work with the Khoshut banner from 1720 to 1911. It helps examine how this particular Mongol banner connected to the Manchu court through the direct Lifanyuan supervision (which differed from other Mongol banners in the League) and how the Lifanyuan processed its administration over these Mongols in the daily details. *Tumete zuoqi dang'anguan cang tumete lishi dang'an* 土默特左旗档案馆藏土默特历史档案 (Historical archives of the Tümed which are restored in the Archives of the Tümed left-wing banner) (Guilin: Guangxi shifandaxue chubanshe, 2018, fifteen volumes) covers the Tümed banner affairs between 1718 and 1753 and relates how the Lifanyuan connected this banner to the central government and to other parts of Inner Asia as well.

*Qingdai Xinjiang manwen dang'an huibian* 清代新疆满文档案汇编 (Collection of Manchu archives of Qing Xinjiang) (Xining: Guangxi shifan daxue, 2012, 283 volumes) helps investigate the Lifanyuan in the Xinjiang events with strong cooperation with other Qing central institutions and local officials. This work was translated into Chinese and published separately as *Qingdai Xinjiang manwen dang'an hanyi huibian* 清代新疆满文档案汉译汇编 (The translated version of collection of Manchu archives of the Qing Xinjiang) (Beijing: Guji wenxian chubanshe, 2012, ten volumes).

*Qingdai zhongha guanxi dang'an huibian* 清代中哈关系档案汇编 (The completion of the Manchu archives in China-Kazakh relations) (Beijing: Zhongguo dang'an chubanshe, 2006) is an important archival source for the Qing management of

Central Asia with the Lifanyuan information. It collects 526 archives, most of them in Manchu.

For the overall information of the Manchu archives in Inner Asian studies, *Qingdia bianjiang manwen dang'an mulu* 清代邊疆滿文檔案目錄 (Table of contents of the Manchu archives of the Qing frontier regions) (Xining: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 1999, twelve volumes) presents a reference for publications up to the turn of the twenty-first century. Zhao Yanchang 趙彥昌 and Su Yayun 蘇亞雲, *Ershiyi shiji yilai manwen dang'an zhengli yu yanjiu shuping* 21世紀以來滿文檔案整理與研究述評 (Works on Manchu archives and the study of them in the twenty-first century), *Manzu yanjiu* 128.3 (2017): 55-73 updated the information up to 2017. Researchers should keep an eye out for the publications of the Manchu Inner Asian archives since then and the forthcoming announcement for new volumes.

The area-based and people-participated archival sources have a deep engagement of the diverse nationality groups spreading in vast Qing Inner Asia. They unfold the Lifanyuan's practical work in local societies rather than picturing the Lifanyuan in the capital city passing official paperwork up or down. They notify researchers about the engagement process between the Inner Asian peoples and the Lifanyuan. Where court documents only give a quick mention of a people, the archival sources bring in a big story about that engagement. The hunting Solon people in the Heilongjiang region were an example. The Lifanyuan records in *huidian* and *zeli* have very limited information about them, but when research goes to *Heilongjiang jiangjun yamen dang'an* 黑龍江將軍衙門檔案 (Archives of the Heilongjiang General's *yamen*) and other Heilongjiang local records, life stories came into the scholarship about them and the Lifanyuan's work with them.<sup>56</sup>

The knowledge of the overall Lifanyuan documentation and the relationship of different lines of research sources enhances researchers' capability to develop projects over a broad range of research topics. The topic researchers will have a higher level of comprehension of the three studies around the chosen topic.

### Research Topics in Ten Areas of the Lifanyuan Study

The unexplored and less-explored research topics of the Lifanyuan, as listed below, center on the Inner Asian peoples and their societies, with a focus on the Lifanyuan's role within the Manchu court. The list crystallizes the deep interlacement

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56. With such research methods and source use, the author has developed the following articles "The Solon Sable Tribute, Hunters of Inner Asia and Dynastic Elites at the Imperial Center" in *Inner Asia* 20. 1 (2018):26-63; "The Qing Lifanyuan and the Solon People of the 17th-18th Centuries;" and "Xining banshi dachen yu yongzheng shiqi Qinghai duominzu quyu guanli zhidu zhi xing cheng" 西宁办事大臣与雍乾时期青海多民族区域管理制度之形成 [The Grand Minister Resident of Xining and the Qing Administration in the Highly Diverse Qinghai], *Qinghsi yanjiu*, 3 (August 2012):57-70.

of the Lifanyuan study with the Manchu study and the broad interweaving of the Lifanyuan study with the Qing Inner Asian area studies. At the same time, it broadens the Lifanyuan study to the Qing-Russian treaty relationship and the Lifanyuan study in its contribution to world history.

This extensive list serves as a sample topic choice and, as stated above, provides a bird's-eye view of Lifanyuan's work from the central government to the Inner Asian communities. It is by no means a complete list. Researchers can, and are encouraged to, add their own topics beyond the listed topics in their research.

Tremendous changes in these topic areas underwent consistent change through the course of Qing history. Two stages, the early Qing (1636-1795) and the late Qing (1795-1911), serve as a general dividing line when discussing the differences resulting from changes on the same topic. The varied emphasis on the same topic can generate different subjects at different stages. The information from this list shows how broad and deep the Lifanyuan administration had touched the Inner Asian society, and also impacted China proper, which the previous Lifanyuan studies have not pictured.

### **Institutional Studies of the Manchu Court**

The changes that the Lifanyuan brought to the Qing Six Boards, which differed from the Ming Six Boards

The Lifanyuan officials and the Qing bureaucracy: The personnel exchange between the Lifanyuan and Six Boards and other offices

The short-lived merging of the Lifanyuan and the Board of Rites during 1658-1661: Why could not the Board of Rites take over the Lifanyuan's duties?

Explore and explain the reasons and purposes for the portion of the Lifanyuan archives in the Chinese language

Working relationship between the Lifanyuan and the *Neige Menggutang* 內閣蒙古堂 (The Mongolian Documentation Office in the Grand Secretariat)

Explore the *Lifanyuan jishidang* 理藩院記事檔 (The archives which recorded the Lifanyuan Affairs) in the *Qing neige menggutang dang* 清內閣蒙古堂檔 (The archives of the Mongolian Documentation Office in the Grand Secretariat)

The Lifanyuan and the *Xian An Gong Guanxue* 咸安宮官學 (The court-run language schools in the Xian'an Hall inside the Imperial Palace) in Mongolian, Tibetan, Tod Mongolian/Clear Script, etc.

The Lifanyuan and the frontier *Dachen* 大臣 (Grand Ministers) and *Jiangjun* 將軍 (Generals) alongside the Mongol Banner-league system, the *fan tusi* system, and the Muslim *beg* system: A Qing institutional setting with subjoined court-frontier connections

The change of the Lifanyuan work due to the establishment of the frontier Grand Ministers and Generals

Why did the *tusi* 土司 heads (indigenous chieftains) under the Lifanyuan appear in the Qing court rituals but not the *tusi* heads under the other Boards?

The special work of the twelve Lifanyuan officials out of the six Lifanyuan Bureaus: *Shenmu lishi siyuan* 神木理事司員 (the judicial administrator in Shenmu), *Ningxia lishi*

*siyuan* 寧夏理事司員 (the judicial administrator in Ningxia), *Rehelishi siyuan* 熱河都統衙門理事司員 (the judicial administrator in Rehe), *Bagoulishi siyuan* 八溝理事司員 (the judicial administrator in Bagou), *Tazigou lishi siyuan* 塔子溝理事司員 (the judicial administrator in Tazigou), *Wulan hada lishi siyuan* 烏蘭哈達理事司員 (the judicial administrator in Wulanhada), *Sanzuota lishi siyuan* 三座塔理事司員 (the judicial administrator in Sanzuota), *Zhangjiakou guanzhan yuanwailang* 張家口管站員外郎 (post-station supervisor of Zhangjiakou), *Shahukou guanzhan yuanwailang* 殺虎口管站員外郎 (post-station supervisor of Shahukou), *Xifengkou guanzhan yuanwailang* 喜峰口管站員外郎 (post-station supervisor of Xifengkou), *Gubeikou guanzhan yuanwailang* 古北口管站員外郎 (post-station supervisor of Gubeikou), *Dushikou guanzhan yuanwailang* 獨石口管站員外郎 (post-station administrator in Dushikou)

The cooperative management of the imperial horse pastures: The Lifanyuan, *Taipusi* 太僕寺 (Court of the Imperial Stud), *Shangsiyuan* 上駟院 (Palace Stud), the Ili General's *Tuomachu* 駝馬處 (Office of Camel and Horse affairs), and other horse pastures

The Lifanyuan contribution to the compilation of the Veritable records of the Great Qing, the Comprehensive Gazetteer of Unification of the Great Qing, the imperially endorsed genealogical tables and biographies of the princes and dukes of the Outer Mongols and the Muslim leaders, various *fanglue* volumes, and some other important historical works

The Lifanyuan and the Qing official seal or *guanyin* 官印 system in the Inner Asian administration

## Manchu and Heilongjiang Studies<sup>57</sup>

### Topics for Manchu Studies

The Manchu version of the *Lifanyuan zeli* (There have been studies of the Mongolian and Chinese versions of the *Lifanyuan zeli* but not of the Manchu version)

Manchu language in the Qing administration of the Lifanyuan zone: Central government sectors and the Inner Asian areas

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57. As Heilongjiang was part of Qing Manchuria, the hunting and garrison banners of the Solon people (with some other minority groups) under the Heilongjiang General's supervision, since 1863, became a separated administrative region from Jilin General-supervised area, and Liaoning under the Fengtian General and centered in Mukden, or Shengjing, of the Manchu first Capital before 1644 and then accompanying Capital after 1644. As Manchuria's Eight Banner population was under the command of the court-appointed *Dutong* 都統 (Commander-in-chief), the hunting and garrison banners along the Amur River were headed by a court-appointed *Zongguan* 總管 (Supervisor-in-chief) under the command of Heilongjiang General, who worked closely with the Lifanyuan, while the Lifanyuan, generally speaking, had no responsibility to work with the Jilin and Fengtian Generals. Thus, Heilongjiang needs special attention in the Lifanyuan study and Manchu study. For the hunting and garrison banners under the Heilongjiang General, see Chia Ning, "The Qing Lifanyuan and the Solon People of the 17th-18th Centuries."

Governing the nationality groups in the Lifanyuan zone and the Eight Banner zone in Manchuria: Differentiation, connection, and interaction between the Generals of Heilongjiang, Jilin, and Fengtian/Shengjing

The Lifanyuan and the Mongol bannermen in the Eight Banner garrisons

The “New Manchu” or *Xinmanzhou* 新满洲 in Manchuria—Dividing the ethnic peoples (Solon, Xibo, etc.) under the Lifanyuan or under the Eight Banners

The comparison between standard Eight Banners and the Lifanyuan “banners” under the Heilongjiang General - the Butha/hunting banners and the *Zhufang baqi* 驻防八旗 (the garrison banners) along the Amur River

The Lifanyuan and the military service of the Manchurian nationality groups all over the Qing empire

The Lifanyuan-managed fur tribute in Heilongjiang and the Neiwufu (Imperial Household Department)-managed fur tribute in Jilin

**Topics for Heilongjiang studies**

The Lifanyuan’s role to the hunting/indigenous populations, their social organizations, official appointments, fur tribute, tribute-related rewards and marriage, military services, etc.

The hunting/indigenous groups between the Qing and the Russian empires

The Heilongjiang hunting banners and garrison banners in comparison and their ritual duties at the imperial court under the Lifanyuan’s management

The Qing communication with the Russians through the Heilongjiang General to the Lifanyuan

## Mongol Studies

The Mongols served as the Lifanyuan staff for not only the Mongolian affairs but also the Tibetan and Muslim affairs

The Lifanyuan officials with duties in Mongolian Leagues and Banners

The Lifanyuan and the Mongol nobles and their Tibetan Buddhist leaders

The Lifanyuan responsibilities for Tibetan Buddhist temples in the Mongol societies

The Lifanyuan and Qing policies in different sectors of the Mongols: Inner, Outer/Khalka, Qinghai, Alashan, Zunghar, Urianghai, Torghut, etc.

The work and effect of the Chahar supervisors in the Lifanyuan positions (starting in the first year of the Yongzheng reign)

The working relationship between the court-appointed military generals in Mongolia and the Lifanyuan, and their relationship with the banner heads and league leaders

The Grand Minister of Resident to Xining: Responsibilities for the league meeting, noble/official salaries, and border trading affairs of the Khalkha Mongols

The Lifanyuan and the “Nine white Tribute” of the Khalkha Mongols to the Manchu court

The Lifanyuan management in the Mongol-and-Chinese border markets in Guihau (Hohhot)

The Lifanyuan management in the Mongol-Russian border markets in Kulun (Ulan Bator) and Khiakkta

The Lifanyuan’s role in the imperial intermarriage with the Mongol nobles and the court ties with the Mongol sons-in-law

The hereditary Mongol nobles without official ranks and duties in the Lifanyuan records:

This *xiansan* 閒散 noble group in the Qing dynasty

The Lifanyuan sources and the study of the Mongol Banner-League system with the model of the Eight Banners

The Lifanyuan sources and the study of Manchu nobility about the Qing reshaping the Mongol nobility

The Lifanyuan and the court-assigned contact agent with Russia: Transitions from the Heilongjiang General of the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the Mongol Tüsheet khan of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and then from Tüsheet khan to the Grand Minister Resident of Kulun in 1762

The pre-1644 *Menggu lü* 蒙古律 (Regulations for the Mongols) and the post-1644 *Lifanyuan zeli* (Regulations of the Lifanyuan)

The Mongolian Lifanyuan *lüshu* 理藩院律书 (The legal regulations to the Mongols written in Mongolian language) and *Menggu lüli* 蒙古律例 (The legal regulations to the Mongols) written in Manchu, Mongolian, and Chinese by the court

## Tibetan Studies

The Lifanyuan's role in the court-Dalai Lama relations

The Lifanyuan's role in the court-Panchen Lama relations

The Lifanyuan's working relationship with the Qing ambans in Tibet or Zhizang dachen 駐藏大臣 (Grand Minister Resident to Tibet)

The Lifanyuan and the Tibetan Buddhist temples in Tibet

The Lifanyuan's role between the Tibetan Buddhist leaders in the capital temples and the Tibetan/Qinghai/Gansu temples

The Lifanyuan's role in dividing the *fan* population into the Tibetan and Qinghai sectors

The Lifanyuan's role in managing the Zunghar issues in Tibet (political, religious, and warfare)

## Qinghai Studies

The Lifanyuan's work in Xining—the court-Tibet hub, the court-Hami/Turfan axis, and the court-Jun Gar pivot

The Lifanyuan and the Amdo/*fan* population

The Lifanyuan and the Qinghai Khoshuts

The Lifanyuan and the Qinghai *tusi*

Why the Mongol banner-league system could not work for the *fan* population and the Lifanyuan's role in the policy and administrative adjustments

*Xining Qinghai fanyi chengli* 西宁青海番夷成例 (The legal regulations for the *fan* population in Xining and Qinghai): The unpractical law code to govern the *fan* population in the Lifanyuan experience

The Lifanyuan and the Board of Rites in Tibetan Buddhist temple affairs of the Xining region—Reassigned responsibility division and cooperation

Reassigned responsibilities between the Lifanyuan and the Board of Rites in Tibetan Buddhist temple affairs in the Shaanxi-Gansu regions next to Qinghai

## The Jun Gar and Xinjiang Studies

- The Lifanyuan and the court-Jun Gar communication, negotiation, and military actions
- The Lifanyuan officials in Xinjiang: their life and work
- The Lifanyuan and the Muslim banners in Hami and Turfan
- The Lifanyuan *Laiyuansi* 徠遠司 (Eastern Turkistan Bureau) and the Qing administration in the Hui territory (southern Xinjiang)
- The Lifanyuan and the Grand Ministers and Generals Resident of Xinjiang
- The Lifanyuan's role under change in the banner administration: The case of *Manying* 滿營 (the Manchu garrison), Solon ying 索倫營 (the Solun garrison), Siboying 錫伯營 (the Siboying garrison), Chahar ying 察哈爾營 (the Chahar garrison), Eluts/Eluuths/Oirds ying 厄魯特營 (the Eluts garrison) under the Ili General
- Huijiang zeli* 回疆則例 (Regulations of the Muslim territory) and *Lifanyuan zeli* 理藩院則例 (Regulations of the Lifanyuan)

## Study of Qing Central Asia

- The Lifanyuan and the Qing-Kazakh relationship through the Jun Gar and in the post-Jun Gar time
- The Lifanyuan and the Bulut/Bûrd/Burud (the modern Kyrgyz/Kirghiz)
- The Central Asian entities between the Qing and the Russian Empire: Lifanyuan's role
- The Central Asian nobles at the court rituals under the Lifanyuan arrangements

## The Sino-Russian Relations

### Topics on the Qing side

- The communication between the Lifanyuan and the Russian Senate with the Grand Secretariat and *Menggufang* in the back and Grand Council in decision-making
- The Mongol mediation in the Sino-Russian relations and communication under the Lifanyuan management
- The Lifanyuan and the Sino-Russian treaties (Nerchinsk 1689 and Kyakhta 1727-8)
- The Lifanyuan and the Qing delegations to Russia
- Why the treaty negotiation relied on Jesuits' translation in Latin but not on the Russian bannermen already living in Beijing: the Lifanyuan and the matter
- The Lifanyuan and the Russian language school in Beijing, *Eluosi wenguan* 俄羅斯文館 and the Russian studies *Eluosixue* 俄羅斯學
- The Lifanyuan and the Russian Zuoling 佐領 (company) in the Qing capital city (There were also Korean Zouling, Uighur Zouling, *fanzi*/Tibetan Zouling, and Annan/ Vietnam Zouling)
- The Lifanyuan's work to the Russian students in Beijing: Their education in Manchu and Chinese and the rise of Chinese studies in Russia
- The Lifanyuan and the Russian Orthodox Church in Beijing
- The Lifanyuan records on the Sino-Russian trade in Beijing and the Qing border markets
- The Russian privileges from the Manchu court: Why not given to the other European nations during the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century?

## Topics on the Russian side

Evaluating the Russian records and the Lifanyuan in, but not limited to, these sources:

1. Bantysh-Kamenskii, Nikolaï Nikolaevich (Бантыш-Каменский, Николай Николаевич). *Diplomaticheskoe Sobranie Del' Mezhdu Rossiiskim i Kitaiskim Gasydarstvami s' 1619 po 1792-й God* Дипломатическое Собрание Дель Между Российским и Китайским Государствами съ 1619 по 1792-й Годъ (Diplomatic affairs meeting between the Russian and Chinese states from 1619 to 1792). Казань: Типография Императорскаго Университета, 1882.
2. *Russian-Chinese Relations, 1689-1916* (Русско-китайские отношения. 1689-1916. Официальные документы. Издательство: Издательство восточной литературы.) Место издания: М. Год издания: 1958.
3. *Treaties Between Russia and China, 1689-1881*. (Die Verträge zwischen Russland und China, 1689-1881: Faks. d. 1889 in Sankt Petersburg erschienenen Sammlung mit d. Vertragstexten in russ., lat. u. franz. sowie chines., mandschur. u. mongol. Sprache / hrsg. u. eingel. von Michael Weiers...) Bonn: wehling, 1979.
4. There are more titles and volumes of the treaties

## The Russian translation of *Lifanyuan zeli*

Biographies or autobiographies of the Russian students who studied in Beijing: the Lifanyuan's work with them

Discover the Russian archives: correspondence between the Lifanyuan and the Russian authorities, which are not yet in the published sourcebooks

The Russian records of the Orthodox Church in Beijing and the Lifanyuan

## Lifanyuan's Work and the Han-Chinese in Border Regions

Lifanyuan's special officials, *Lishisiyuan* 理事司员, in managing the Han population in the Inner Asian border regions

The Lifanyuan and the Board of Punishment in managing legal cases in the Han and non-Han mixed-living border areas (Chengde and some border places in Inner Mongolia and Qinghai-Gansu)

The Lifanyuan management of the Han traders/merchants' activities in the Mongolian markets and the Qing-Russian border markets by issuing trading certificates, supervising market activities, and dealing with trading problems, etc.

The Lifanyuan-associated border Generals and Grand Ministers with administrative authority over the local Han communities (The Heilongjiang General, the Grand Minister Resident to Xining, the Ili General, etc.)

## Lifanyuan Study in World History

Comparative study of the governing institutions over the diverse populations. (A study of the Qing Lifanyuan and the Russian empire has been developed; a comparison with other empires needs development.)

The early Sino-Russian treaties in the modern international treaties

The Qing encounter of the world during the 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century: Managing the European countries separately from the Lifanyuan's management of the Russian Empire

Different trading patterns with the European countries in the Lifanyuan zone and the Libu zone

This topic list tells us that a complete picture of the Lifanyuan and a comprehensive understanding of this governing institution at the Manchu court will be found in its daily operations on various levels of the Qing empire, through all its administrative routines in Inner Asia, over its responsibilities within and outside the Qing borderlands, and regarding its contemporary counterparts in world history. The depth and breadth of new research on these topics, along with potential areas yet to be explored, will escalate the Lifanyuan scholarship to a remarkable new stage. Otherwise, we will continue to have very limited knowledge about the Lifanyuan.

### Conclusion: The Outcome of Using this Source and Topic Guide

This source and topic guide demonstrates where the Lifanyuan study could and should have developed if the available sources had been fully researched. A great degree of "visualizing" the Manchu and Inner Asian studies in the guide demonstrates the nature of the Lifanyuan study, encouraging efficient and effective cooperation of these three *studies* at a higher level of comprehension. Such encouragement, again, does not erase each study's boundary, focus, and perspective. Each promotes the other, rectifies the other (when necessary), and enriches the other.

The source list in the guide offers different lines of primary sources to engage researchers in historical records with different sets of facts, standpoints, and perspectives when investigating and analyzing. The officially compiled Chinese language sources and Manchu archival sources shift the focus of the Lifanyuan between the central government's directives and practical management in daily Inner Asia. Sources can lead to new inquiries into important themes, such as how the Lifanyuan administration involved, helped, or problematized an Inner Asian group in the center-periphery or periphery-center's interplay and interaction.

The guide not only encourages researchers to explore numerous under-researched topics given in the list but also inspires them to initiate new avenues of inquiry. For instance, the Lifanyuan has traditionally been seen as solely responsible for Inner Asian affairs, with little involvement in managing the Han Chinese

population. However, judicial administrators holding titles such as *Lishi xiyuan* 理事司員 and *Yuanwailang* 員外郎 within the Lifanyuan officialdom were tasked with resolving conflicts between Mongols and Han Chinese in areas where both groups cohabited. Discovering these Lifanyuan officials in their management cases will add a new subject matter to the overall Lifanyuan study. Another subject matter worth exploring is that the Chinese traders, traveling from the heartland of China proper deep into the Ulga/Ulaanbaatar or other frontier markets, operated their trading activities under the Lifanyuan supervision. The Lifanyuan's role in overseeing trade between Han traders and Mongols, and Russians in many cases, has remained largely unexamined in current scholarship. Furthermore, to inspire researchers to be productive, creative, and innovative, the guide introduces some topics with high complexity. In the section "Manchu and Heilongjiang Studies," for instance, the topic of the "New Manchu" (Xinmanzhou 新滿洲) in Manchuria will address the division of the same ethnic groups, such as the Solon as well as the Xibo, either under the Lifanyuan administration or within the Eight Banners, which fell outside the Lifanyuan's jurisdiction. Currently, there has been no systematic investigation of this special issue regarding the institutional and ethnic boundaries of some of the Qing Inner Asian population.

An overview of the research sources and topics in the guide will help researchers "depict" Inner Asia in the Manchu empire-building, highlighting the Lifanyuan influence. It is also helpful for creative researchers identify subjects that extend beyond the traditional scope of Lifanyuan studies. One such subject is "The Lifanyuan in World History," which is currently an emerging but challenging area in Lifanyuan scholarship. The development of it will bring a fruitful contribution to the three studies in Qing history and the broader field of world history.

Along with the Manchu archives, the Qing Mongolian and Tibetan archives in relation to the Lifanyuan have also flourished in recent decades. The more accessible archives and sources in Uyghur, Tod/Clear Mongolian, Kazak, and potentially other languages will assist in further advancing the Lifanyuan study by scholars with language capabilities. This direction of cooperation is an important note to attach to the source and topic guide.

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