

How “Manchuria” Emerged as a Toponym

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Abstracts: The term “Manchuria” or “Manshū” in Japanese, which referred to Northeastern China, was always comprehended as a place name in modern history documents. The prevailing academic opinion suggests that the origin of this geographical concept is that it first appeared in Takahashi Kageyasu’s map in 1809 as Chinese characters 满洲 (Manshū). Then, it was translated into German as “Mandschurei” in about the 1830s, demonstrating a process of knowledge transfer from east to west. However, this paper suggests that the German term “Mandschurei” had already been used as a toponym in Europe by 1783. Many German geographers and the French abbé Jean-Baptiste Grosier played essential roles. In the first decade of the 19th century, “Mandschurei,” “Manchuria,” and “Mandchurie” all emerged.

Keywords: Manshū, Mandschurei, Manchuria, Mandchurie.

In 1635, Emperor Hong Taiji decreed the use of “Manchu” 满洲, in Chinese *Manzhou*, to refer to all the “Jurchen” tribes under his rule. Since then, this community, originally a coalition of tribes descended from the peripheral Jurchen groups of the Jin and Yuan dynasties, underwent a series of significant changes. By the Qianlong era, the notion of a common Manchu lineage was established, transforming “Manchu” from a cultural-military community into a pre-modern nation. Thus, “Manchu” became an ethnic term. However, from the latter half of the 19th

century to the first half of the 20th century, the term “Manchuria” (French “Mandchourie,” German “Mandschurei,” Russian “Маньчжурия,” Japanese “Manshū” 满洲) was frequently used as a toponym referring to the northeastern part of China. It often appeared in the archival documents of Western powers, in contexts such as “Manchukuo,” which meant “Etymology of Manchuria,” and “South Manchuria Railway Company.” However, this usage was not accepted by the Chinese. For instance, Joseph Fletcher from Harvard University pointed out: “‘Manchuria’ is a European rather than a Chinese or a Manchu term.”¹⁾ So how the term “Manchuria” (Japanese “Manshū” 满洲) came out, and why is it a European term?

Regarding this issue, Yano Jin’ichi, in his 1941 book *Manshū kindai shi* 满洲近代史, examined the work *Description Géographique, Historique, Chronologique, Politique et Physique de l’Empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie Chinoise* published by the French Jesuit missionary Du Halde in 1735. Yano noted that at that time, terms such as “la Tartarie chinoise” (Chinese Tartary), “la grande Tartarie” (Great Tartary), “la Tartarie occidentale” (Western Tartary), and “la Tartarie orientale” (Eastern Tartary) were used, with “la

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1) John K. Fairbank, *Cambridge History of China, Volume 10, Late Ch’ing, 1800-1911, Part I*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1978. p. 42.

Tartarie orientale” also referred to as “terres des Mantcheoux” (the lands of the Manchus). By 1830, the term “Mandshurey” appeared in the German Johann Heinrich Plath’s book *Geschichte des Östlichen Asiens*. Subsequently, in the 1840s, the use of “Manchuria” by the French as “Mandchurie” began to spread in Europe, simultaneously with the English term “Manchuria” and the German term “Mandshurei.” Yano believed that the Japanese use of “Manshū” as a toponym resulted from the translation of British works that followed.²⁾

Nakami Tateo used old maps to investigate the origins of using “Manshū” 満洲 as a toponym. In 1794, a Rangaku (Dutch studies) scholar, Katsuragawa Hoshū, published the book *Hokusa Bunryaku* 北槎聞略 based on the observations of Japanese people who had drifted to Russia. This book included a map with a Russian title *Азия*, titled *Ashia Zenzu* 亜細亜全図 (Complete Map of Asia), featured the names “Mōko” and “Manshū” in Chinese characters 蒙古 and 満州, so Nakami deduced that “Manshū” was marked as “МАНЬЧЖУ” on the original Russian map, indicating its use as an ethnic term. In 1809, the astronomer Takahashi Kageyasu created *Nihon henkai ryakuzu* 日本辺界略図 (Sketch Map of Japan’s Borders) using 満洲 instead of 満州, both pronounced as “Manshū” in Japanese and “Manzhou” in Chinese, as a place name. However, there is little difference between 洲 and 州, for the former one can be referred

to as a continent, such as 亚洲 (Asia), and the latter one is referred to as a city, such as 苏州 (Suzhou). Nakami considered this a result of the Japanese utilizing European maps and Chinese knowledge. Moreover, he pointed out that it was evidence that Japan had already started using “Manshū” as a geographical name at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, earlier than Europe using “Manchuria.”³⁾ Nakami further believed that after the German Japanologist Philipp von Siebold returned to Europe, he translated the toponym “Manshū” into German as “Mandschurei” in his 1832 publication *Nippon, Archiv zur Beschreibung von Japan und seinen Nebenländern*. Then, this term subsequently became popular throughout Europe.⁴⁾

Funakoshi Akio has also examined the *Ashia zenzu*. He believed that it, like another map in *Hokusa Bunryaku* called *Chikyū zenzu* 地球全図 (Complete Map of the Earth), was based on maps drawn by Russians, which in turn were dependent on maps created by Europeans, ultimately tracing back to maps drawn by Jesuit missionaries. Even *Huangyu quanlantu* 皇輿全覽圖 was spread to Japan this way. Based on this, Mark C. Elliott thought that the Kangxi cartographic project enormously impacted European awareness and, in this way, contributed significantly to the creation of the idea of Manchuria. He also pointed out that “Manshū” on these maps was a place name and not a tribal name because tribal names

2) YANO Jin'ichi. *Manshū kindaiishi* (The modern history of Manchuria). Tokyo: Koubundou.1941. p. 4-7.

3) NAKAMI Tateo. *Chiiki gainen no seiji sei* (The policization of regional concepts). In *Ajia kara kangaeru 1 kousaku suru Ajia*, Tokyo: The University of Tokyo Press.1993. p. 273-295.

4) NAKAMI Tateo. *Manmō mondai no rekishi kouzu* (The Historical Framework of Manchuria-Mongolia Problem), Tokyo: The University of Tokyo Press.2013. p. 8-9.

were most often written in “katakana.” By the 1830s, roughly a generation after the appearance of Katsuragawa’s maps, various Indo-European forms of “Manshū” had emerged. Even though Elliott recognized that some of these maps were soon circulating in Europe because of Philipp von Siebold, there was still a very early use in an 1830 history of China, for instance, “Mandschurey” in Johann Heinrich Plath’s *Geschichte des Ostlichen Asiens*, suggesting that it may already had been in use before 1830. By the end of the decade, “Manchuria” (Mandshuria/Mantchooria) was appearing in United States atlases and had entered common usage in English and other European languages.⁵⁾

Although Yano, Nakami, and Elliott had different conclusions regarding the origin or dissemination path of the toponym “Manchuria” or “Manshū,” they all agreed that this geographical concept was formed in Japan around the 1800s and began to be commonly used in Europe or Japan after 1830. Since 1800 and 1830 were key points, if we divide the formation of the “Manchuria” geographical concept into three periods based on these two, namely, the first period before 1800, the second period from around 1800 to the 1830s, and the third period after the 1830s, then it is evident that during the first period, there are many documents and maps that merit further examination and investigation.

“Les Pays des Mantcheoux” appeared in “Tartary”

Before the emergence of the place name “Manchuria,” in atlases of Asia drawn by Europeans, one could often see a non-existent entity: “Tartary” (or “Tartaria.”) “Tatar” originally referred to a group within the Mongols by the Chinese, and perhaps the name was carried into Europe during the westward expansion of the Mongol Empire. After the decline of the Mongol Empire, “Tatar” became a generic term in Europe for the nomadic peoples of the northern Asian steppes. Subsequently, “Tartary” referred to the region stretching from Siberia to northeastern China, once ruled by nomadic tribes. In 1570, in *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, “Tartary” (Tartaria/Tartarie) began to appear as a separate geographical region in European atlases.⁶⁾

Over time, “Tartary” became more differentiated, and European documents or maps, especially French maps, occasionally featured various geographical descriptions such as “Tartarie Chinoise” (Chinese Tartary), “Tartarie Orientale” (Eastern Tartary), “Tartarie Independante” (Independent Tartary), and even “Tartarie Russe” (Russian Tartary). Additionally, during the 17th and 18th centuries, Jesuit missionaries served as a bridge for cultural exchange between Europe and China, enhancing Europeans’ understanding of China. During this period, various publications related to China also emerged continuously,

5) Elliott, Mark C. *The Limits of Tartary: Manchuria in Imperial and National Geographies*. In *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 59, no. 3 (2000); p. 603-646. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2658945>.

6) SONG Nianshen. *Ditu diguozhuyi: kongjian, zhimin yu diqiuguizhi* (Cartographic Imperialism: Space, Colonization, and the Governance of the Earth). In *Shehui kexue pinglun*, Issue 1, 2022.

among which the most influential was Jean-Baptiste Du Halde's *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, politique, et physique de l'empire de la Chine* (hereafter referred to as *Description*) published in 1735. This book deepened European understanding of "Eastern Tartary" and "Chinese Tartary."

Description consisted of four volumes, with the first and fourth volumes containing several maps drawn initially by the missionary Jean-Baptiste Bourguignon d'Anville (1697-1782). D'Anville's sources included maps made in China by missionaries such as Joachim Bouvet (1656-1730), Joseph-François-Marie-Anne de Moyriac de Mailla (1669-1748), and Jean-Baptiste Régis (1663-1738). These maps were parts of the *Huangyu quanlantu*, which were created following a comprehensive survey of China conducted from 1708 to 1717 by the Jesuit missionaries residing in China at the request of Emperor Kangxi. The cartographic materials obtained from this survey were later brought to Paris by the missionaries and published by Du Halde. Moreover, Joseph de Moyriac de Mailla also authored a series of books titled *Histoire générale de la Chine*, published between 1777 and 1785.

In *Description*, areas beyond the Great Wall were called "Tartarie Orientale" or "le pays des Mantcheoux" (the land of the Manchus), "ancien pays des Mantcheoux" (ancient land of the Manchus) or "les terres des Mantcheoux" (the lands of the Manchus). For instance, the

missionaries wrote that on May 5, 1709, they "partirent de Peking pour aller au-delà de la grande muraille, commencer la Géographie de la Tartarie orientale: c'est proprement le pays des Mantcheoux qui gouvernent aujourd'hui la Chine." ("left Beijing to go beyond the Great Wall to begin the geography of Eastern Tartary: this is appropriately the land of the Manchus who govern China today.")⁷⁾ The missionaries also intended to avoid the issue of names; they thought it necessary to use the names used in the country itself, "Ainsi les terres des Mantcheoux ont les noms Mantchoux; celles des Mongous, les noms Mongous." (Thus, the lands of the Manchus are labeled as the names Manchu; those of the Mongols, the names Mongol.)⁸⁾

Even the fourth volume used "Des terres des Mantcheoux" as the title of its first chapter, and another use, such as "les terres des Mantcheoux ancien & nouveau" (old/new lands of the Manchus), was also mentioned, this "pays/terres des Mantcheoux" term was used throughout *Description's* volume 1 and volume 4.

Two years later, in 1737, d'Anville published *Nouvel atlas de la Chine, de la Tartarie Chinoise et du Thibet* (hereafter referred to as *Nouvel atlas*) in the Netherlands as a supplementary work to the aforementioned *Description*. The *Nouvel atlas* still employed the term "pays des Mantcheoux."

7) Jean-Baptiste Du Halde, *Description géographique, historique, chronologique, politique et physique de l'empire de la Chine et de la Tartarie chinoise*. Tome 1, 1735. p. xxxviii-xxxix.

8) Ibid, Tome 4, p.2.

the missionaries to use Tartarian Names to write in the Tartarian and the Chinese Names in the Chinese Characters on the map. He supposed that the Chinese characters can't express many sounds formed by the Manchu and Mongol languages.¹¹⁾

From then on, various forms of "Manctcheou" appeared in European documents and maps. For example, "Mantchevx" (1739)¹²⁾, Mantcheous (1786)¹³⁾, Mantchew Tartars (1791)¹⁴⁾, Mantcheu (1794)¹⁵⁾, Manshurs (1796)¹⁶⁾, Ancient Mantchoo Tartars (1796)¹⁷⁾, Mantchoos (1799)¹⁸⁾.

"Mandschurei/Mandchourie/Mandshuria" emerged in Tartary

Perhaps because the region known as "Eastern Tartary" had become relatively well-established, or because the term "the lands of the Manchus" was cumbersome, the use of a single word to represent the geographical concept of "the lands

of the Manchus" began to emerge within less than half a century after Du Halde published *Description*.

This paper argues that the German word "Mandschurei" had already appeared as early as 1783. In that year, the German geographer Johann Ernst Fabri (1755-1825) released a four-volume *Geographisches Magazin* (Geography Magazine) with the terms "Mandschurei" and "Mandschurey" appearing in the second volume. Johann's article commented a world map that was created by the French geographer and cartographer Louis Brison de la Tour (1743-1803) in 1782. He said that "das ganze Reich Niuche" (the entire realm of Jürshen) was "igentlich die sinesische Mandschurei"(actually the Chinese Manchuria) and "so konte onmöglich das übrige von der gedachten Mandschurey und dem östlichen Sibirien...auf die westliche Hemisphäre kommen." (so it was impossible for the remainder of the mentioned Manchuria and Eastern Siberia

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- 11) J. B. Du Halde. *The General History of China Containing a Geographical, Historical, Chronological, Political and Physical Description of Empire of China, Chinese-Tartary, Corea and Thibet Including an Exact and Particular Account of their Customs, Manners, Ceremonies, Religion, Arts and Sciences the Whole Adorn'd with Curious Maps, and Variety of Copper Plates*, Vol.4,1736, p. 86-87.
 - 12) *Carte g'enerale d'Empire de Russie et de Tartarie grande et petite en Europe et Asie*. 1739. <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.ndlpcoop/mtfxmp.wmt0001>. Accessed May 23, 2024.
 - 13) Louis Brion de la Tour. *Grande Tartarie et isles du Japon suivant les rélations les plus autentiques par Mr. Brion, Ingénieur-Géographe du Roy*, Paris, 1786. <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-741314677>. Accessed May 23, 2024.
 - 14) Carington Bowles, *Bowles's new one-sheet map of Asia, divided into its empires, kingdoms, states, and other subdivisions: laid down from observations of the most celebrated geographers*, 1791. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g7400.ct001992>. Accessed May 23, 2024.
 - 15) Aaron Arrowsmith. *Map of the world on a globular projection, Eastern hemisphere; exhibiting particularly the nautical researches of Capn. James Cook, F.R.S. with all the recent discoveries to the present time*, 1794. https://curiosity.lib.harvard.edu/expeditions-and-discoveries/catalog/38-990115403330203941_FHCL:2466173. Accessed May 23, 2024.
 - 16) J. Wilkes. *Modern Asia*, 1796. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g7400.ct001993>. Accessed May 23, 2024.
 - 17) Benjamin Baker. *A general chart, on mercator's projection, to shew the track of the Lion and Hindostan from England to the Gulph of Pekin in China, and of their return to England, with the daily statement of the Barometer and Thermometer as observed at noon; containing also the limits of the Chinese Empire, as extended by the Conquests of the present Emperor Tchien-Lung*, 1796. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1870-0709-840. Accessed May 23, 2024.
 - 18) Jean Baptiste Bourguignon d'Anville & John William. *Asia and its islands according to D'Anville*, 1799. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g7400.ct000739>. Accessed May 23, 2024.

... to be in the western hemisphere.)¹⁹⁾

Later in 1788, the German scholar Georg August von Breitenbach (1731-1817) frequently mentioned the place name “Mandschurei” in his work *Lebensgeschichte des jüngst verstorbenen Sinesischen Kaisers Kienlong* (Life Story of the Recently Deceased Chinese Emperor Qianlong), particularly in sections discussing China, he said “Du Halde aber nimmt 15 Provinzen an, dazu noch die 16te ausserhalb der Mauer gelegene Leaotong, Hinzugefügt worden, als welche im weitläufigen Verstand die ganze **Mandschurei** in sich begreift.” (Du Halde recognizes 15 provinces, and additionally, the 16th province, Liaotong, located outside the Wall, has been included, which broadly encompasses the entire Manchuria.) When mentioned Khalkha Mongols, he said “Sie erstrecken sich von den Gränzen der **Mandschurei** bis westlich an die landschaften der andern mongalischen Stämme der Eluten und der Kalmüken.” (They stretch from the borders of Manchuria to the territories of the other Mongolian tribes of the Oirats and the Kalmyks to the west.) and “Dieses Reich, welches aus einer Halbinsel besteht, hängt im Norden an die **Mandschurei** an und wird durch ein weites Gebürge und einen Wall von Paslisaden davon unterschieden.” (This kingdom, consisting of a peninsula, adjoins Manchuria to the north and is distinguished from it by a vast mountain

range and a wall of palisades.) when referred to Korea.²⁰⁾ From this, it is clear that Breitenbach’s geographical knowledge of northeastern China was still influenced by Du Halde.

Among the numerous publications, the one most directly and profoundly related to *Description* was the thirteen-volume *Histoire Générale de la Chine* (hereafter referred to as *Histoire*), compiled by Mailla and published by Jean-Baptiste Gabriel Alexandre Grosier (1743-1823). Mailla authored the first twelve volumes, which Grosier began publishing in 1777. Grosier composed the thirteenth volume, titled *Description Générale de la Chine: Ou Tableau De L’état Actuel de Cet Empire*, which was released in 1785. These series, published over forty years after Du Halde’s *Description*, represented “the first comprehensive history translated from Chinese historical works into a European language, marking a milestone event in the annals of publishing and cultural history.”²¹⁾

The original text was in French, with the English translation published in London in 1788 and the German version following in Leipzig in 1789. The cover of the English edition stated, “containing the topography of the fifteen provinces which compose this vast empire; that of Tartary, the isles, and other tributary countries.” By examining these three different language texts, we can explore the development

19) Johann Ernst Fabri, *Geographisches Magazin*, Zweiter Band, Heft 5-8, Dessau und Leipzig, 1783. p. 143.

20) Georg August von Breitenbach, *Lebensgeschichte des jüngst verstorbenen Sinesischen Kaisers Kienlong*, Leipzig, 1788. p. 80, p. 104, p. 114. The Qianlong Emperor did not die until 1799, but the author wrote the book mistakenly believing that he had already died.

21) LI Ting. *Ouzhou diyibu zhongguotongshi: Fengbingzheng fawenban ‘zhongguo tongshi’ de chubanlicheng yu fanxiang* (The Publication and Reception of the First General Chinese History in Europe: The French Edition of Mailla’s *General History of China*). In *International Sinology*. Issue 4, 2022.

and contextual use of the term “Mandschurei.”²²⁾

In the original French version, Grosier categorized China into fifteen provinces as the first part and described the “Tartarie Chinoise” (Chinese Tartary) area as the second. This latter part was subdivided into three chapters: the first on “Tartarie Chinoise orientale” (Eastern Chinese Tartary), the second on “Tartarie Chinoise occidentale” (Western Chinese Tartary), and the third on “Autres Peuples soumis à la domination Chinoise” (Other Peoples Under Chinese Rule). When discussing “Tartarie Chinoise,” Grosier noted, “Ceux de l’occident ont retenu leur nom de Tartares Mougales ou Mougous; les autres sont connus sous le nom de Mantcheoux ou Tartares Orientaux.” (Those of the west retain their ancient name of Mougale or Mogul Tartars; the rest are known by the name of Mantchew or Eastern Tartars.²³⁾ Moreover, the territory of the “Manchu Tartars” was further divided into three main areas: Shenyang (Cheng-yang or Moug-den), Jilin (Kirin), and Qiqihar (Tçitcicar).²⁴⁾ In this case, no matter in Du Halde’s Description or Grosier’s Description Générale, “Tartarie Chinoise occidentale” was equivalent to “the land of Manchu Tartars.”

In the 1788 English translation, the table of contents indicated that the first part closely

corresponded to the French version, detailing the fifteen provinces of China. However, the second part, “Chinese Tartary,” exhibited some nuanced changes. In addition to the three chapters in the French edition, the English version introduced two additional chapters: “Language of the Mantchew Tartars” and “The Island of Taiwan, or Formosa.” In the French text, the former was merely a subsection within the first chapter on “Eastern Chinese Tartary,” while the latter was found in the third chapter on “Other Peoples Under Chinese Rule.” Their elevation to full chapters in the English translation highlighted the increased emphasis on their importance.²⁵⁾

In the subsequent 1789 German translation²⁶⁾, the second part “Tartarie Chinoise” underwent significant changes, including the representation of place name as “Mandschurei.” This change was first reflected in the major heading of the part, which changed to “Die chinesische Tatarei nebst den andern Nebenländern” (The Chinese Tartary along with the other adjacent lands), and the first chapter to “Die östliche chinesische Tatarei oder die Mandschurei” (The Eastern Chinese Tartary or Manchuria), the first time that the word “Mandschurei” emerged, which means “Eastern Chinese Tartary.” However, the word “Mandschurei” only appeared in the chapter

22) Jean-Baptiste Grosier, *A general description of China: containing the topography of the fifteen provinces which compose this vast empire*. London. 1788.

23) Jean-Baptiste Grosier, *A general description of China*, p. 123. But in the English version “occident” was translated into “east” by mistake.

24) Jean-Baptiste Grosier, *Description Générale de la Chine: Ou Tableau De L’état Actuel de Cet Empire*. Paris. 1785. p. 91-92.

25) Jean-Baptiste Grosier, *A general description of China*. Vol. I, Book II, London, 1788.

26) Jean-Baptiste Grosier, *Allgemeine Beschreibung des Chinesischen Reichs nach seinem gegenwärtigen Zustande*. Frankfurt und Leipzig. 1789. In the German version, the author also mentioned in the preface that Du Halde’s book was translated into German in 1747 and 1749, but the translation was poor (schlecht), sluggish (schleppend), and incorrect (unrichtig).

name, not in the main text. In the preface, the translator explained that due to the difficulty of expressing the actual tones of Chinese words in European languages and the lack of guidance on their pronunciation, the Chinese names were mostly written as they appeared in the original French text, with only a few minor changes allowed. For example, “tsch” instead of “tch,” “u” instead of “ou,” “ü” instead of “u,” and so on. More changes would had been made if not for the fact that both the once-accepted German and French spellings were so extremely inconsistent.²⁷⁾ Following this logic, the word “Mandschurei,” formed by adding the suffix **-rei**, was also subject to changes. Since in German, words ending in “-rei” often denote a place, establishment, or activity related to the root word, this change meant that the escalation of the importance of “Mandschurei” as an independent entity.

Afterwards, the English term “Mandshuria” and the French term “Mandchourie” also started to be used. In 1802, Scottish historian and cartographer John Pinkerton (1758-1826) released the second volume of his work *Modern Geography: A Description of the Empires, Kingdoms, States, and Colonies*. In this volume, he wrote, “Upon the whole this extensive region might more properly be called Mongolia, as the greater number of tribes are Monguls; or the western part might be styled Tatar, the middle Mongolia, and the eastern Mandshuria.”²⁸⁾

The following year, an academic publication

called *The Critical Review, Or, Annals of Literature*, featured a chapter highlighting John Pinkerton’s contributions to modern geography and explained “Chinese Tartary”: “Our author would call the western part of this immense district, Tatar; the middle Mongolia, from the appellation of the greater number of the inhabitants; and the third **Mandshuria**, from its inhabitants.”²⁹⁾ From this, it was evident that Pinkerton’s research and the commentary on his work explicitly stated that the area was called **Mandschuria** due to its tribes and inhabitants.

By 1804, French geographer Edme Mentelle (1730-1816) published *Cours Complet de cosmographie, de géographie, de chronologie, et d’histoire ancienne et moderne* (Complete Course in Cosmography, Geography, Chronology, and Ancient and Modern History). In his section on the interior of Asia, referred to as “Asie Intérieure” (Inner Asia), Mentelle mentioned John Pinkerton, commending his systematic and meticulous approach to the regions of inner Asia and Manchuria. Mentelle used the term “Mogolie” to denote the area between China and India. Accordingly, Edme used “Tartarie,” “Mogolie,” and “Mandchourie” to represent each region in “Mogolie”. For example, “Ces peuples peuvent être divisés en 1.º Tartarie indépendante ou pays des Mogols occidentaux que nous nommons Tatars;. 2.º en Mogolie du Centre ... et en Mandchourie ou pays des Mongols , mantcheoux ou orientaux.” (These peoples can be divided

27) Jean-Baptiste Grosier, *Allgemeine Beschreibung des Chinesischen Reichs nach seinem gegenwärtigen Zustande*, 1789, p. X-XI.

28) John Pinkerton, *Modern Geography*, Vol. II, London, 1802. p. 116.

29) Tobias Smollett, *The Critical Review, Or, Annals of Literature*. Vol. XXXIX. 1803. p.60

into 1. Independent Tartary or the land of the Western Moguls, which we call Tatars; 2. Central Mongolia ... and Manchuria or the land of the Mongols, Manchus, or Easterners.)³⁰⁾

In the same year, Edme Mentelle's another book, *Géographie mathématique, physique et politique de toutes les parties du monde*, continued to cite Pinkerton's geographical studies, despite substituting "Mantchourie" for "Mandchourie."³¹⁾

The use of the English term "Mandshuria" was also reflected on the map. It appeared in

British geographer and cartographer John Cary's (1754-1835) creation of *A New Map of Chinese & Independent Tartary, From the Latest Authorities*. It is also the earliest instance of its use on a map in this research. However, the same year, John Cary also produced *A New Map of Asia, from the Latest Authorities*³²⁾, in which the ethnic term "Mantscheu" was used. It can be seen that during this period, the ethnic name "Mantscheu" and the place name "Mandshuria" were used interchangeably.

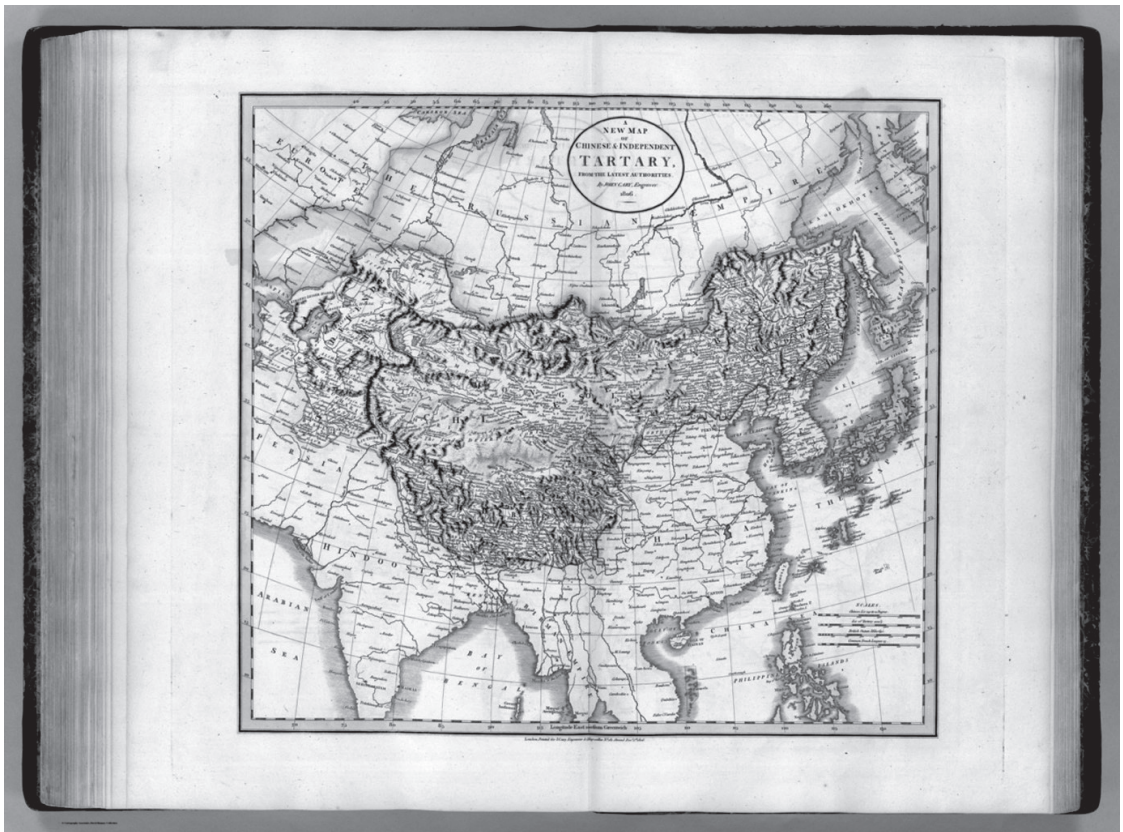


Figure 2 : *A new map of Chinese & independent Tartary, from the latest authorities*. By John Cary, engraver, 1806. London.

30) Edme Mentelle, *Cours Complet de cosmographie, de géographie, de chronologie, et d'histoire ancienne et moderne*, Douzième Volume, Paris, 1804, p. 334.

31) Edeme Mentelle & Malte Brun, *Géographie mathématique, physique et politique de toutes les parties du monde*, Tome Troisième, Paris, 1804, p. 151.

32) <https://www.davidrumsey.com/maps569.html>, Accessed May 23, 2024.

From the spelling of “Mandschurei/ Mandschourie/Mandshuria” in three languages, it can be observed that the German form Mandschurei might be the earliest version to appear. Edme Mentelle used “Mandschourie” and “Mantchourie” in 1804, and two years later, in 1806, John Pinkerton’s *Modern Geography* was translated into French. In this translation, the word “Mantchourie,” which conformed more closely to the original French “Mantcheu,” was used instead of “Mandschourie.”³³⁾ Thus, geographical knowledge about northeastern China was spread by French missionaries to countries like Germany and Britain. This led to the formation of the geographical concept known as “Mandschurei” in Germany, which then spread to Britain and even returned to France. By the late 18th to early 19th century, European geographers and historians had reached a consensus to consider this particular region of northeastern China as a distinctively independent area and gave it a corresponding name.

“Manshū” in Japanese

Chen Bo from Sichuan University once mentioned that in the book *Tōdo rekidai shūgun enkaku chizu* 唐土歷代州郡沿革地圖 (Historical Maps of Provinces and Districts in Tang’s Land) written by Nagakubo Sekisui in 1789, the thirteenth map titled *Ajia ko tōyō zu* (Map of

Little Eastern Asia) already marked the area beyond the Tumen River in the Northeast as “Manshū” (Chinese characters 滿洲) and “Daishin honkoku” (Chinese characters 大清本国, The Proper land of the Great Qing).³⁴⁾ However, upon examining the original map, it was labeled as 滿州 rather than 滿洲 and appeared twice. This indicated that it should be understood as an ethnic name, as a place name cannot be marked twice on the same map. Between Katsuraga’s *Hokusa Bunryaku* 北槎聞略 in 1794 and Takagashi’s *Nihon Henkai Ryakuzu* 日本辺界略図 (Outline Map of Japan’s Borders) in 1809, there was also the 1803 publication *Teisei zōyaku sairān igen* 訂正増訳采覧異言 by Yamamura Saisuke, which included two maps, *Ajiashū yochi zenzu* (Complete Map of Asia) and *Ajiashū tōhō nihon shina dattan shokoku zu* (Map of Eastern Asia, Japan, China, and Tartary). These maps already featured the notation “Manshū” 滿洲.³⁵⁾

When describing “Great Tartary”, he said this region was divided into three major parts: the eastern part was called Chinese Tartary, which belonged to the Emperor of China; in this area, the most notable tribes were “Manseusu” 滿洲 and “Mogorren” 蒙古.³⁶⁾ Since the book *Teisei zōyaku sairān igen* was a “new correction” (訂正) and “additional translation” (増訳) of *Sairān igen* 采覧異言. Thus, the *katakana* pronounce “Manseusu” マンセウス and “Mogorren” モゴッレン should be considered translations from

33) John Pinkerton, *Abrégé de la Géographie moderne*, seconde édition. Paris, 1806. p. 390, p.433, p. 541.

34) CHEN Bo, *Riben mingzhi shidai de zhonguobenbu gainian* (The Concept of China Proper during Meiji Period in Japan), in *Xueshu Yuekan*, Issue 7, 2016.

35) YAMAMURA Saisuke. *Teisei zōyaku sairān igen*. Head Volume. 1802. <https://www.digital.archives.go.jp/img/4454422>. Accessed May 23, 2024.

36) *Ibid*, Vol. 10. p. 40.

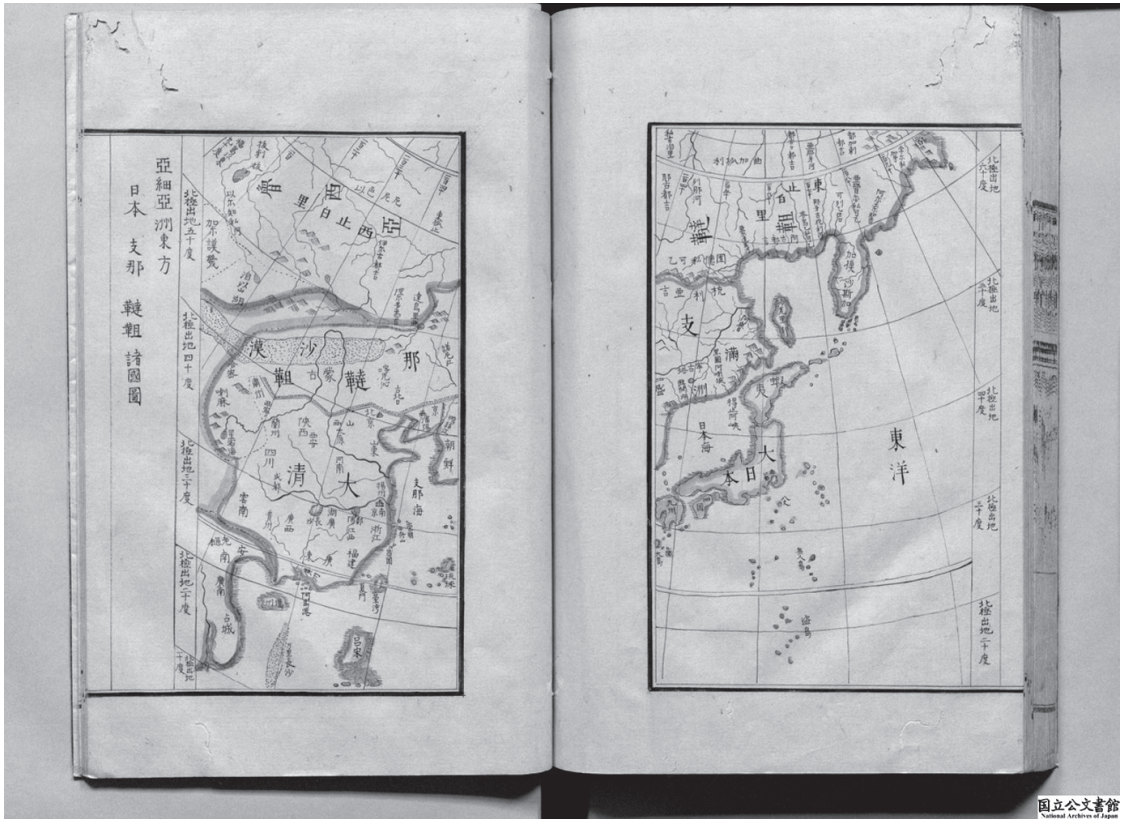


Figure 3 : *Ajiashū tōhō nihon shina dattan shokoku zu*, from *Teisei zōyaku sairan igen*. Volume 10.

Western languages and treated as ethnic names.

In 1804, Takahashi Kageyasu assumed his father's role as an Astronomical Official under the Japanese shogunate. By 1807, he was commissioned by the shogunate to update the *Mankoku Zenzu* 万国全圖 (Complete Map of All Countries). The next year, he was assigned the task of translating the Manchu dictionary written by the Qing emperor, indicating his knowledge of the Manchu language. In June 1809, Takahashi completed the *Shinsen sōkai zenzu* 新鑄総界全圖 (Newly Revised Complete Map of All Countries). In his introduction to this map, he mentioned, "I have also drafted a preliminary map of our nation's borders. As there are many areas in the

region of the northern barbarians require further investigation, I have labeled them as uncertain pending additional research."

In his later work *Hokui hōshō* 北夷考証 (Study of the Northern Barbarians), Takahashi detailed the process and reference materials used in creating the *Shinsen sōkai zenzu*. For instance, during the map's revision, he referred to maps made by Dutch publisher Pieter de Hondt (1696-1764) and maps produced by the British geographer Aaron Arrowsmith (1750-1823) in 1780. In *Hokui hōshō*, Takahashi used "Manshūchi" (滿洲地, Manchu Place) as evidence that "Manshū" (滿洲) became a place name.

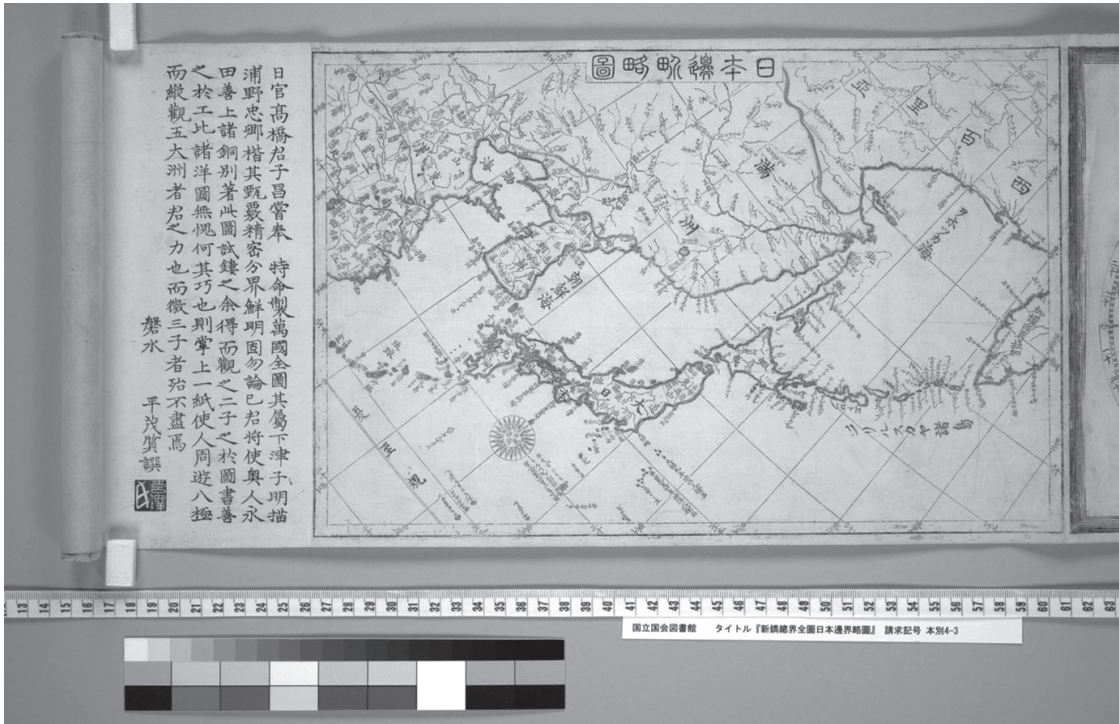


Figure 4 : TAKAHASHI Kageyasu. *Nihon henkai ryakuzu*. 1809.

Conclusion

In 1789, to establish the concept of common ancestry among the Manchu people, Emperor Qianlong finally completed the *Manzhoū yuanliu kao* 满洲源流考 (Study of the Origins of the Manchus), setting “Manzhoū” 满洲 as its official ethnic name. While Qianlong was still enhancing their ethnic identity, Europeans on the other side of the earth were already using “Mandshurei” to refer to “the place of Manchu people.” Years later, Japan, which also used Chinese characters, equated the meaning of “Manshū” 满洲 with “Mandshurei.” However, historical ethnic groups were constantly moving, whereas geographical regions were fixed and static. Within the ideological framework of the Hua-Yi distinction,

the distinction between the Manchu and Han ethnicities signified the differences in the regions they hail. Thus, the “Mandshurei,” which belonged to the Manchu people, can be regarded as “the land outside Chinese civilization.” If the Manchu people had left Manchuria, then Manchuria would have become unclaimed land and provided a basis for Japan’s subsequent occupation of “Manchuria.” At the end of the 18th century, Japan was in the late Tokugawa Shogunate period. The flourishing of “Rangaku” (Dutch studies) broadened the horizons of the Japanese people. Among intellectuals, the advocacy of the “Theory of Dominating the World” emerged. Figures like Honda Toshiaki, Satō Nobuhiro, and Yoshida Shōin were prominent representatives of this movement. For example, in 1823, Sato, in his *Kondō hisaku* 混同秘策,

said, "Among all the nations in today's world, the land easiest for the Imperial to conquer is Manchuria in China." In 1858, Yoshida presented that Japan should "Seize Manchuria to the north and take control of Taiwan and the Philippines to the south." Later, Shiratori Kurakichi explicitly proposed that Manchuria was in a "liminal state" and attempted to argue that China's Northeast was "terra nullius" (land belonging to no one). However, China cannot accept the usage of "Manchuria" or "Manshū." The railway stipulated in the 1896 Sino-Russian Secret Agreement was first named "Manchuria Railway," which was declined by Li Hongzhang; he insisted that the railway must be named "Great Qing Eastern Provinces Railway." If the name was settled as "Manchuria Railway" then the Qing Government would cancel the rights to the necessary land. Following the Russo-Japanese War, Japan and Russia divided Manchuria into northern and southern regions. Subsequently, Japan later set up the "South Manchuria Railway Company," commonly known as "Mantetsu." There were critics of the name "Manchuria," arguing that it was given by foreigners who intended to indicate that it is not inherently Chinese territory and implies a refusal to recognize it as a regular administrative region of China, treating it similarly to places like Mongolia and Tibet.³⁷⁾

The content summarized above -- covering records from European and Japanese documents about "Mandschurei" (Mandschourie/Mandshuria) or "Manshū" from the late 18th century to the

early 19th century, especially the latter, which involves German, French, and English literature, maps, and other documents -- demonstrates that Europe identified and named Northeast China as a separate region earlier than Japan. The rise of European capitalism defines the historical context, each entering an era of colonial expansion. They named unexplored areas based on their existing perceptions to extend their control. In contrast, the Japanese were constrained by contemporary printing technology, geographical and transportation limitations, and the local openness level. These factors delayed their access to Europe's most recent publications, which was crucial in understanding the origins of this geographical concept of "Manchuria" or "Manshū." Is "Manshū" translated from European languages, or "created" and subsequently defined its geographical concept by Japanese integrating knowledge from both Eastern and Western traditions? Moreover, as mentioned before, in the second period and the third period after 1800, how did Japanese intellectuals promote the concept of "Manshū" and later categorize it as "land outside civilization" and "terra nullius"? Both questions still require further research. Additionally, Russia played a significant role in modern interactions in Northeast Asia. However, this paper has yet to explore relevant Russian literature, indicating a need for further research and development in this area.

37) *Manzhou ji Nanmanzhou Beimanzhou mingcheng zhi youlai* (The Origins of the Names Manchuria, South Manchuria, and North Manchuria), in *Xuanchuan Banyuekan*, Issue 19. 1931.