

10 Reconsidering the Boundaries

Multicultural and Multilingual Perspectives on the Care and Management of the Emperors' Horses in the Qing

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The emperors of China had a large number of horses, as well as officials to look after them. Upholding good standards of equine care was a matter of importance for the court, as it concerned a range of issues such as transport, ceremonies, communication and military expansion (see Chapter 8). The Qing dynasty was a particularly interesting period, when the state drew upon its knowledge of different cultures within its lands and state practices were connected across a number of institutional, cultural, and linguistic boundaries. The inherent fluidity of boundaries (between categories of knowledge, disciplines, geographies, etc.) has already been established in a number of fields. This chapter explores the linkages between multiple institutional, linguistic, and cultural realms to reveal overlapping spheres (of human and animal care, central and steppe practices) and a diversity of cultural perspectives, in order to provide insights into the workings of Qing state structures. It examines equine care through the seemingly static bounds of languages and institutions, understanding that these were embedded within their own cultural spheres which were also fluid and, simultaneously, constructed and self-defined.¹

The chapter has two main goals. First, it will reveal the multifaceted nature of equine care as embodied in the interconnections and overlapping spheres apparent in the fluid boundaries between institutions, and human and animal medicine, as well as practices in the centre and the steppe.² Second, it will show how linguistic and institutional studies can contribute to a multicultural understanding of equine care. This aspect draws attention to how knowledge and

¹ On the importance of the Manchu language in Qing history; on how cultural categories such as Manchu and Mongol were self-defined, constructed and changing; on the social history of Qing institutions; and on social and cultural histories of medicine within their political contexts, see Rawski (1996), (1998); Crossley (1997), (2006); Elliott (2001); Hanson (2003), (2011).

² Pastoral nomadism was one aspect of life on the steppe. On nomads more generally, and their interactions with sedentary societies and the state, see Khazanov (1984). For pastoral nomads and dynastic rule in Inner Asia, see Lattimore (1951).

practices incorporated into state structures showed different levels of attribution to a particular cultural context (e.g. Mongols). Moreover, this multilingual and institutional approach compels us to reconsider horses as singular beings. Horses were often part of a herd, and were conceptually and practically intertwined with other beings (animals and humans). So this approach demonstrates the value of considering multiple perspectives on their own terms,³ providing a nuanced and multifaceted understanding of how horses were contextualized and cared for by the state.

The Qing was a conquest dynasty. The rulers were Manchus, people from the northeast who were skilled at horsemanship and archery, and organized as tribes that had practised hunting, fishing and farming before becoming rulers of China. The Manchus' success can be partly attributed to their having learned about Chinese institutions before establishing their dynasty. However, they were not only familiar with practices within their own cultural context and that of the Han Chinese; they were also highly conversant with others, such as the Mongols, and they used this knowledge to realize their political goals. It is particularly important to appreciate the existence of a variety of actors in a conquest dynasty. The Qing embodied central elements of the Chinese dynastic tradition, while also incorporating and managing an ever-expanding landscape and population. The variety of cultural practices represented at the centre of the Qing state was, therefore, a reflection of the rulers' versatility, as well as the diversity of those they ruled.

Scholars have shown that Qing leaders utilized a range of practices to establish and consolidate their rule. One way was creating patterns of resonance with forms of authority which were recognized by different populations in the realm. This aimed to establish a universalistic form of rule that went beyond continuing the Chinese dynastic line.⁴ The Qing dynasty's ability to consolidate its rule in the seventeenth century and incorporate vast territory through the eighteenth century was by no means inevitable, and highly contingent in nature. Its success was due to a combination of diplomatic, military, institutional and cultural measures which managed the realm's changing political dynamics over several emperors' (and regents') reigns.

The Manchus' relationship with Mongols represents a significant aspect of Qing governance and culture. The dynamic between the Manchu rulers and some Mongol groups was realigned through the historical processes of state building, whereby Mongols who had been allies became subordinates.⁵ As the physical frontiers of the empire expanded, the lands became populated by people of backgrounds different from the Han Chinese. As these new people became integrated, the balance of power between groups of subjects was also reconfigured. Mechanisms of consolidating rule also had the effect of limiting

³ Elman (2005). ⁴ Crossley (1999), esp. chapter 5. ⁵ Di Cosmo (2012).

the Mongols' mobility across pastureland.⁶ One of the ways the Qing dealt with these changing dynamics was by demarcating the Mongols (from the Manchus) and reifying them.⁷ This chapter examines how the Qing handled their relations with Mongols while benefiting from their expertise, by incorporating the Mongols' knowledge and practices of equine care into state institutions and texts.

Horses were used in the Qing imperial realm for a range of purposes, such as the military, imperial tours and tribute trade. For example, imperial tours where the court travelled on horseback not only were rituals of rulership, but were similar in style to imperial hunts and military exercises.⁸ Horses played an important role in the military, where the cavalry was deployed alongside the infantry. Mounted soldiers used bows and arrows, and were skilled at manoeuvres such as flanking and encircling in close-quarter combat. Riders travelling long distance on horseback could average about 30 *li* (Chinese miles), or about 15 kilometres, a day. Handling these animals on terrain that was unsuitable for them – such as mountainous areas or swamps – was a formidable task. As well as transporting people, horses could also be used to carry supplies.⁹ Equine medicine was a matter of great importance throughout Chinese history.¹⁰ This chapter elaborates on aspects of equine care in state practice.

It is not my aim to provide a comprehensive description of institutional structures of horse management, relations between central realms and the steppe, or the ways steppe knowledge of horses was practised in various environments. Rather, I will show the value of linguistic and institutional frames (which are themselves inherently changeable) to gain further insights into the connectivities, overlapping realms and cultural understandings of the Qing.

The chapter begins by considering horse management, showing the porosity of boundaries between human and equine medicine, as well as institutional contexts. Next, it discusses the knowledge associated with Mongols that was used in equine care. Some examples illustrate the multiple ways in which a particular cultural context (such as Mongols) could be referenced, while incorporating knowledge and practices attributed to them. For instance,

⁶ For a history of managing Mongol relations through Qing expansion, see Di Cosmo (2016). For a history of Qing expansion, with discussions of the environment, see Perdue (2005). For environmental histories of China, see Elvin (2004) and Marks (2012). For more recent studies see Bello (2016) and Schlesinger (2017).

⁷ For a discussion of the construction of Mongol identity, see Crossley (2006).

⁸ See Chang (2007); Elliott and Chia (2004). ⁹ Di Cosmo (2006), 31–9.

¹⁰ See Chapter 8 in this volume on institutions for human and veterinary health in the Song. For equine medicine more generally, see Buell, May and Ramey (2010), (2018); Buell and Ramey (2001).

practitioners called ‘Mongolian doctors’ (*Menggu yisheng* 蒙古醫生 in Chinese and *coban* in Manchu) represent the overlapping realms of human and equine medicine, and show how the association to ‘Mongols’ was clearly articulated. On the other hand, textual knowledge of equine care in an imperially commissioned multilingual dictionary or practices from the steppe that were used in the management of the emperors’ horses are examples where the expertise does not seem to have explicit reference to the particular cultural context. This study also indicates what we can learn about equine care by examining the meanings of terms within and across linguistic categories. The focus is first on the range of understandings that are depicted through Manchu vocabulary. The chapter concludes by examining terms in four languages inscribed on a painting, where each represents a different cultural register which becomes visible through the lens of a particular language within the Qing realm.

Horse Management and Shared Realms of Human and Equine Drugs

This section concentrates on horse management, which has long been part of the Chinese dynastic tradition. It begins by introducing the institutional actors who looked after the emperors’ horses in the Qing, before moving on to shared realms of human and equine drugs. The multi-institutional connections show the importance of examining links beyond what seem to be clear organizational boundaries, to consider overlapping areas of human and equine care as illustrated through medicine. This multilingual approach also reveals more detailed information than may be accessible through the lens of one single language.

This study examines the organization that managed the emperors’ horses – the Ministry of Imperial Stables, Herds and Carriages (Ch. *Shangsiyuan* 上駟院, Ma. *Dergi adun i jurgan*)¹¹ – and then reviews some of its connections with other institutions.¹² First, it is important to understand the wider context. The Ministry of Imperial Stables, Herds and Carriages was under the Imperial Household Department (Ch. *Neiwufu* 內務府, Ma. *Dorgi baita be uheri kadalara yamun*), an institution which was autonomous from the ministries, and served various

¹¹ This institution’s name has traditionally been translated as Palace Stud, which does not reflect its historical context in the Qing. The Chinese term refers to carriages, the Manchu term describes an institution that manages herds. The institution also managed horses in stables. Therefore, while there was no overarching term encompassing these different meanings in the Qing, the ‘translation’ aims to reflect the functions of the institution at that time. See Aricanli (2016) for more information on this and related matters discussed in this chapter.

¹² For a detailed description of the organization of horses and other animals, including different stables and pastures in and near the palace and in local settings in the Qing, see Li (1998).

needs of the court.¹³ The Imperial Household Department had a considerable amount of resources at its disposal, and was directly controlled by the Qing rulers. This organization provided the Qing with a structural basis from which to realize its enterprises in many areas, including the management and care of humans and horses.

The Imperial Household Department grew considerably and gained new functions during the Qing. Moreover, during the eighteenth century, it began to play an increasingly important role in medical affairs, gradually eclipsing the central managerial roles of the institution of imperial physicians, the Imperial Medical Bureau (Ch. *Taiyiyuan* 太醫院, Ma. *Oktosi be kadalara yamun*), with respect to bonesetting. The equine bonesetters, therefore, represent one aspect of the shift in the centre of medical control from the Imperial Medical Bureau and the Ministry of Rites (Ch. *Li Bu* 禮部; Ma. *Dorolon i jurgan*), towards the Imperial Household Department.¹⁴

The Ministry of Imperial Stables, Herds and Carriages was one of the largest units within the Imperial Household Department, and it changed significantly during the Qing. For example, it grew considerably from the mid-seventeenth to the late eighteenth century.¹⁵ Its name and structure also changed after it was first established, as it was called Ch. *Adun yamen* 阿敦衙門 in 1661 and became Ch. *Shangsiyuan* in 1677. In 1694 two new departments were established within the organization – the First Department (Ch. *zuo si* 左司), which managed herds in the capital and outside, and the Second Department (Ch. *you si* 右司), which oversaw matters such as food and salaries.¹⁶ The Ministry of Imperial Stables, Herds and Carriages carried out a wide range of functions, such as overseeing herds (of horses and camels) at various locations, tribute horses, rituals for imperial horses, as well as travel. Furthermore, the institution dealt with issues such as ageing animals, put the herds out to pasture seasonally and inspected them.

The overlapping realms of human and equine care are clear both from multi-institutional connections and from organizational practices around drugs and medical implements. The Ministry of Imperial Stables, Herds and Carriages – as other organizations under the Imperial Household Department – was interconnected with other structural units under the larger institution. It also worked with organizations that are usually understood to be responsible for human medicine. One of these was the Imperial Pharmacy, which we traditionally know as the institution that provided drugs for those such as the

¹³ On the Ministry of Imperial Stables, Herds and Carriages in the Imperial Household Department, see Torbert (1977), esp. chapter 2; Qi (1998), 91–2.

¹⁴ Aricanli (2016). ¹⁵ Torbert (1977), 30.

¹⁶ *Qianlong huidian zeli* (*Qinding da Qing huidian zeli* 欽定大清會典則例), 166.1a.

emperor and members of the imperial family. Another was the institution of imperial physicians, the Imperial Medical Bureau.¹⁷

Medicines used on people were also employed in the treatment of horses. For example, pepper (Ch. *hujiao* 胡椒, Ma. *halhūri*), sulphur (Ch. *liuhuang* 硫磺, Ma. *hurku*) and alum (Ch. *baifan* 白礬, Ma. *fekšun*)¹⁸ were drugs used for horses on an annual basis, where 160 *jin* 10 *liang* of each of these ingredients were included in the treatment of a skin disease (Ch. *lai* 癩, Ma. *hasan*) in horses. In 1767 it was memorialized that perilla oil (Ch. *suyou* 蘇油) should be used for this kind of equine skin ailment.¹⁹

Manchu terms for medicines could either resemble the Chinese meaning or be completely different. Sometimes words in one language can clarify descriptions that are unclear in another. Drugs for horses obtained from the Imperial Pharmacy included reed rhizome (Ch. *lugen* 蘆根), a drug with sweet and cold properties that quelled symptoms associated with Fire.²⁰ The Manchu term for reed rhizome was *ulhū i da*, meaning the root of reed. Another drug that was used for equine care and obtained from the Imperial Pharmacy was simply called *li* 藜 in Chinese. The term in Manchu, *ninggiya bula*, is more specific and shows that it was, in fact, puncture vine or *Tribulus terrestris* (Ch. *bai ji li* 白蒺藜), an acrid bitter and warm drug that extinguished (interior) pathogenic Wind and stopped tremors. *Ninggiya*, here, referred either to water caltrop, to horn chestnut (*Trapa natans*) or to the shape of an anchor or a weapon with sharp barbs, while *bula* (thorn) described its thorny quality.²¹

The organization of equine medicine – much like human medicine – was arranged in a pluralistic structure, with drugs, objects and expertise being distributed across different departments. Pepper, alum and sulphur, mentioned above, could be obtained from the Department of the Privy Purse (Ch. *Guangchusi* 廣儲司, Ma. *Ambula asarara fiyenten*), while a sieve could be found at the Department of Works (Ch. *Yingzaosi* 營造司, Ma. *Weilere arara fiyenten*). Someone needing a large basket tray, a straw or rush mat, a broom

¹⁷ Aricanli (2016).

¹⁸ *Qianlong huidian zeli* (*Qinding da Qing huidian zeli*), 166.31a; *Daicing gurun-i uheri kooli-i kooli hacin bithe*, 166.50b.

¹⁹ See *Neiwufu xianxing zeli* (*Qinding zongguan Neiwufu xianxing zeli* 欽定縱觀內務府現行則例), 944 ‘Shangsiyuan’; *Qianlong huidian zeli*, 166.31a; *Daicing gurun-i uheri kooli-i kooli hacin bithe*, 166.50b. See also *Wuti Qingwen jian*, 4424. The Manchu term *fekšulembi* meant to treat with alum. Putting pepper up a mule’s nostrils was a remedy for colic. For this as well as equine illnesses, see Meserve (1992). The term *lai/lei* 癩 for humans is generally referred to as leprosy today. What similarities and divergences existed between *lai/lei* in humans and that in horses is a matter that can be further investigated. For an in-depth study of *lai/lei* and its changing meanings, see Leung (2009), 17–59.

²⁰ Terms which are categories in Chinese medicine, such as Fire and Wind, are capitalized. Fire in Chinese medicine, for example, refers to symptoms such as fever, irritability, thirst, delirium, etc.

²¹ *Qianlong huidian zeli*, 166.31a; *Daicing gurun-i uheri kooli-i kooli hacin bithe*, 166.50b.

or sieve, a ladle, a willow bucket or a donkey for grinding medicines could head to the Overseer's Office (Ch. *Neiguanling shiwu chu* 內管領事務處). (The text clearly instructs that the donkey should be returned after use.)²² Medicines to treat a skin disease (*lai*) in stables and herds (presumably referring to those of the palace), and drugs for herds under the Court of the Imperial Stud (Ch. *Taipusi* 太僕寺, Ma. *Adun be kadalara yamun*) were provided after submitting a notice of communication.²³

Compound drugs revealing the overlapping realms between horse and human medicine included the human–equine pacifying powder (Ch. *renma ping'an san* 人馬平安散). A catalogue from the Tongren Tang 同仁堂 pharmacy, a commercial drugstore that supplied medicines to the Imperial Pharmacy, provides more information about this drug.²⁴ The Qianlong reprint of the Tongren Tang catalogue stated that this medicine could be used by both humans and horses, and that it treated sudden-onset diseases. The catalogue further explained that the usage should be adjusted according to the manifestation type (Ch. *zheng* 症),²⁵ and added that each bottle cost 2 silver *qian*, which was very expensive.²⁶ After the middle of the nineteenth century, the Tongren Tang catalogue listed a larger number of drugs²⁷ and included more detailed descriptions of individual medicines. A later edition stated that, in addition to treating sudden-onset diseases like *zhongfeng* 中風 – which was characterized by a loss of consciousness,²⁸ falling over, paralysis in half of the body, difficulty speaking etc. – the human–equine pacifying powder could also be used to treat the inability to adjust to the climatic conditions of the geography (Ch. *shuitu bufu* 水土不服).²⁹ The expanding eighteenth-century Qing world must have made this illness ever more relevant for the many people who were posted to distant locations.

Another compound drug used for the treatment of horses was *sihuang* powder (Ch. *sihuang san* 四黃散), transcribed from the Chinese as the Manchu term *sy hūwang san*. In the first year of the Qianlong Emperor's

²² *Qianlong huidian zeli*, 166.31ab; *Daicing gurun-i uheri kooli-i kooli hacin bithe*, 166.51ab.

²³ *Neiwufu xianxing zeli*, 944, ('Shangsiyuan').

²⁴ On the history of the Tongren Tang pharmacy see, for example, Cochran (2006).

²⁵ On the question of recognizing patterns within the intellectual history of Chinese medicine, see Scheid (2007), chapter 2, esp. its section on scholarly medicine and the politics of identity.

²⁶ *Tongren Tang yaomu* 同仁堂藥目 (1764), *shushi men*, (document pages not numbered), *renma ping'an san*.

²⁷ A comparison of earlier and later editions of the Tongren Tang pharmacy catalogue suggests an increasing diversity of products in the later Qing. For example, the number of medicines listed under the category Wind-phlegm (Ch. *feng tan* 風痰) in the 1706 catalogue, which was reprinted in 1764, more than doubled in the edition published during the second half of the Tongzhi reign.

²⁸ Another meaning for *zhongfeng* is a pernicious external Wind influence that led to feeling hot, sweating, and wanting to keep out of the wind.

²⁹ *Tongren Tang yaomu* (1869–75), *shushimen*, 14a, *renma ping'an san*.

reign, 1736, *sihuang* powder was to be obtained from the Ministry of Rites, showing that matters related to horse medicine, as with humans, involved the Ministry of Rites as well as the Imperial Pharmacy. The fact that the passage referred to the medicine as *sihuang* powder for treating horses (Ch. *zhi ma sihuang san* 治馬四黃散, Ma. *morin dasara sy hūwang san*) raises the question of whether there may have been a particular formula of *sihuang* powder used specifically for equine care.³⁰

The multi-institutional organization of equine care, as well as medicines overlapping with humans, confirms the value of considering linkages across seemingly defined boundaries. The entanglement and connectivities between the two realms can also be seen in central institutions and practices of the steppe.

Knowledge Associated with Mongols Integrated into Imperial Equine Care Practices

Mongolian methods of equine care were highly valued in the Ming and Qing dynasties, especially as they included useful practices for training military horses, such as emergency medicine, as well as looking after and training horse herds. This section discusses the Mongolian practices of equine care in central institutions that dealt with the care and management of horses, as well as those in a specific post for animal care who also treated humans. Moreover, this part also discusses how some of this knowledge was categorized in an imperially commissioned text.

Desirable qualities in horses included their ability to obey commands, the stability of their gait, and their health (including both emergency and preventative care). As a horse's refusal to follow orders could jeopardize the rider's safety, there was an understanding that only those which could be 'broken in' were reliable.³¹ There were a number of other factors to consider as well, such as problems due to horses' lack of sure-footedness,³² as well as the strength and resilience of the herd – which could be managed through proper preventative care.

The ability to maintain healthy herds over long-distance travel was vital for military campaigns. Practices that promoted their health and endurance

³⁰ *Qianlong huidian zeli*, 166.31ab; *Daicing gurun-i uheri kooli-i kooli hacin bithe*, 166.51ab.

³¹ Manchu terminology also reveals how to establish authority over horses. For example, *yalume etembi* meant overcoming a horse's resistance by riding it (breaking it in). Horses that did not follow orders were called, for example, *angga cakahūn* meaning tight/hard-mouthed and hard to control, and *uśakū* meaning hard to control and rein in. For Manchu terms more generally, see Norman (2013).

³² A horse's stability was a very important aspect of the rider's safety as well as the horse's overall performance. *Fusur seme* referred to the steadiness of a horse's gait, while *doli* denoted a horse with an unsteady pace. *Šoforo sain* meant sure-footed (of a horse) and *šoforo akū* a horse that was not sure-footed. Other desirable characteristics included *giluk*, a good horse that could travel a long distance in one day, and *ujen be etere morin*, a horse that could carry heavy loads.

included letting horses graze freely in the fields for some time before implementing a series of highly structured training exercises. A regimented programme of rest and exercise, alongside controlled food and water provision, was meant to regulate their muscle mass. These methods of conditioning reflected an important part of Mongolian culture, as well as Inner Asian nomadic civilization.³³

The fact that Mongolian methods of equine care were valued in the Qing can be seen through the 1727 decree and instructions of the Yongzheng Emperor in a Mongolian manuscript on training horses and camels. The decree states that soldiers should use the Mongol way – rather than that of the Manchus – to get horses and camels into the right condition. Moreover, officers were asked to instruct the soldiers in looking after animals over the seasons and the text explained that, if proper care was not taken, then horses might end up limping, and camels could develop sores on their feet.³⁴

The Mongols' methods of equine care varied according to the seasons. They fattened up military horses in the spring by grazing them in open fields, and did not exercise them until the autumn.³⁵ Horse management in the Qing Ministry of Imperial Stables, Herds and Carriages, in a source with dates into the mid-nineteenth century, also included letting the herds at Dalinghe 大凌河 (in today's Liaoning) graze freely on a seasonal basis. Every year from around early May to early November (Ch. *lixia* 立夏 until *lidong* 立冬), the horses were let out onto the pasture (Ch. *chu qing* 出青 lit. 'go out [onto] the green'). This process was referred to as '[letting] the animals go [free] by leaving an enclosed area' (Ch. *chujuan mufang* 出圈牧放) in the spring, and '[bringing the animals] back into an enclosed area, to feed and raise [them]' (Ch. *rujuan weiyang* 入圈餵養) in the autumn. The chief herder (Ch. *muzhang* 牧長), who accompanied the animals, received 4 *fen* of travel expenses per day, while lower-level officials received 2½ *fen*. They took drugs with them called inch-sized golden *dan* (Ch. *cunjindan* 寸金丹), which were obtained from the Imperial Pharmacy.³⁶

Mongolian veterinary methods of preventative care specified certain practices. Ruth Meserve describes Mongolian practices such as the strict timing of tethering and unsaddling a horse and giving it access to food and water after it had been ridden hard and sweated greatly. It was believed that improper implementation of this kind of equine care throughout the seasons would lead

³³ Meserve (1993), 1–3, 9–10.

³⁴ Meserve (1993), 6–8. Meserve also shows that Mongolian practices of equine care needed to be reconciled with Manchu methods.

³⁵ Meserve (1993), 9–11, 13. There were differing ideas about when horses should be let out onto pasture, as well as how long they should spend in the fields.

³⁶ *Neiwufu xianxing zeli*, 939, 956–7 ('Shangsiyuan'). The term *dan* is transliterated rather than translated, as it could refer to a drug (often with mineral components) in either pill or powder form, which could be applied externally or ingested.

to a particular set of symptoms and behaviours, such as nose ailments, the horse lowering its head, and becoming ill. Training methods included observing the body of a horse that had just been exercised. If it was firm with good colour, there was no need to restrain the horse. On the other hand, if the body was weak and the colour was off, then the horse needed to be tethered.³⁷

A number of terms relating to these horse training practices are found in the section on shepherding and rearing animals (Ch. *muyang* 牧養) in the *Yuzhi Wuti Qingwen jian* 御製五體清文鑑 (The Imperially Commissioned Five-Language Mirror of Manchu), from here referred to as *Wuti Qingwen jian*.³⁸ Beginning with the Manchu term *adun* ‘herd’ (Ch. *muqun* 牧群) it is followed by terms having to do with letting animals out onto pasture.³⁹ This section also includes entries to do with fattening animals and making them lose weight. Another term, *diaohan* 弔汗, concerns making animals sweat. The Chinese phrase *shi diaohan* 使弔汗 literally means ‘to attempt or to force [a horse or animal] to sweat’. The corresponding Manchu terms are *soyombi* and *soyo*.⁴⁰ (This is the Manchu form of the Mongolian term *soi*, which was used to describe Mongolian training methods.)⁴¹ In Manchu, *soyombi* referred to tying up livestock and allowing them to dry off after sweating from running, and also meant to train a riding horse. The Chinese language definition in the *Wuti Qingwen jian* therefore only notes a connection with one aspect of the process of training (sweating), and does not reflect the wider understanding of the term around training a horse that is seen in both Mongolian and Manchu. As is true with any large project, this example also shows that the imperial enterprise of the *Wuti Qingwen jian*, which brought together the languages (as well as understandings) of diverse people in the realm, had its own limitations.⁴²

There are several ways in which the Mongolian text on horse management and the sections of the *Wuti Qingwen jian* show even greater conceptual similarities. The text on Mongolian horse training described illnesses and behaviours that could arise if these methods were not correctly implemented. The *Wuti Qingwen jian* also includes a section on horse injuries and ailments, the first term of which is *manggiyan*, which refers to a nose ailment (in horses

³⁷ Meserve (1993), 13.

³⁸ The *Wuti Qingwen jian* is representative of the apex of this series of multilingual dictionaries produced throughout the Qing. See *Wuti Qingwen jian*, appendix on historical information. For a historical study of the Manchu language and dictionaries in the Qing, see Söderblom Saarela (2015).

³⁹ *Wuti Qingwen jian*, 4409. ⁴⁰ *Wuti Qingwen jian*, 4417.

⁴¹ Another meaning of *soyombi* is to draw in or shirk. For the Mongolian form of the word *soi* and related words regarding conditioning a horse by tying it up, letting it cool down, etc. see Meserve (1993), 10–11.

⁴² For more on its limitations, see Meserve (1992), 341.

and cattle).⁴³ According to Mongolian manuscripts on veterinary medicine, nose ailments resulted from the improper care of horses (and camels) over the four seasons.⁴⁴

Were the Mongolian preventative practices representative of the entirety of methods associated with Mongols in equine healthcare? In fact, expert bonesetters who could treat both horses and humans also had a connection to 'Mongols'. Horses could easily trip and fall, spraining their ankles or breaking their legs. Practitioners adept at solving such problems were referred to as 'Mongolian doctors' (*Menggu yisheng* 蒙古醫) in Chinese and *coban* in Manchu. These 'Mongolian doctors' were also renowned for their effectiveness in treating humans: they were skilled at setting bones and using animal parts to heal severe injuries to the head. They used manual manipulation to jolt bones back into place, using rope and wooden boards as well as their hands. Their methods also included throwing ice-cold water onto a patient. Their regimens comprised a combination of exercise, rest and a controlled diet. The patients of these specialist bonesetters included the emperor and officials, as well as Jesuits. The post of Mongolian doctor/*coban* was officially established in the Ministry of Stables, Herds and Carriages in the late seventeenth to early eighteenth century. The position was defined as one for soldiers from the banners who had an understanding of bonesetting practices.⁴⁵ According to the normative organization there were twenty posts for speciality bonesetters and, by the middle of the eighteenth century, they not only had hierarchical differentiation among themselves, but were at the top of the hierarchy of medical practitioners caring for animals at the institution. Further study of individual cases will show how their backgrounds related to their banner status, and the extent to which the qualifier 'Mongolian' referred to their practices. However, as Mongols did not represent a single group and the state had differing means of dealing with them, the establishment of a recognized post for these specialist bonesetters depicts one aspect of managing Mongols through reification.

While the name 'Mongolian doctor' suggests a connection between one particular group and institutional posts, the *Wuti Qingwen jian* provides an example where the steppe knowledge of equine care was categorized in terms related to shepherding and rearing animals, without a particular allusion to a cultural frame.

⁴³ *Wuti Qingwen jian*, 4420. See Meserve (1992), 340–1.

⁴⁴ For more on the list of equine diseases including nose ailments in the *Wuti Qingwen jian*, see Meserve (1992), esp. 349.

⁴⁵ See *Qingshi gao*, 502.13880–1. For the famous *coban* Yisang'a of the Jueluo clan, see Hanson (2011), 156. Official sources referred to this position in a number of ways: *Menggu yisheng*, *Menggu yishi*, *yishi Menggu*, etc. See Aricanli (2016). In this chapter these are all referred to as *Menggu yisheng*.

The list of terms in the dictionary section on shepherding and rearing animals and the seasonal approach to letting horse herds onto the fields are two examples where the association of knowledge with a particular cultural context (such as the steppe, or banner affiliation) was no longer of primary importance.

Equine Terms

Terminology provides another vantage point from which to consider equine care. It is important to note that the Manchu language itself was also fluid,⁴⁶ and that the vocabulary relating to horses in Manchu shows similarities to that in Mongolian. However, this chapter does not intend to consider which terms were found in more than one language, or what these may have meant at different times. The main purpose here is to show that cultural understandings can be exposed through a particular language (such as Manchu), as well as a multilingual perspective.

The vocabulary relating to horses concerns practical matters such as the names of illnesses, and issues of a more conceptual nature such as groupings of animals, as well as a wealth of knowledge about animals' colouring and markings. However, words did not carry equal weight in different languages, as the *Wuti Qingwen jian* seemed to suggest. In fact, many words were distinct from one another in Manchu and had no direct counterpart in Chinese. This problem was overcome in the *Wuti Qingwen jian* by writing descriptive phrases for the Chinese definitions. There were also certain entries where the editors stated that the same Chinese word (or phrase) could be used. One such example is *cangka* – meaning a white horse with red eyes, nose and lips – and *cara*, which can refer to a horse with red about its eyes, nose and lips. Both are described by the same phrase in Chinese.⁴⁷

The Manchu terms pertaining to horses provide further information about equine illnesses. The *Wuti Qingwen jian* section on horse injuries and ailments lists illnesses such as *banilji* (a wart on a horse's leg), *doholon yoo* (a sore on a horse's hoof), *hadala yoo* (a sore on a horse's mouth caused by a bridle) and *ukuhe yoo* (small pustules on a horse's body).⁴⁸ If we look more generally, beyond the five-language dictionary, at Manchu terminology related to horse illnesses, these include *kabari* (a growth on a horse or donkey's nose), *funiyaha* (a parasitic worm that lived in the hair on the backs of horses and cattle) and *delihün madambi* (to swell, referring to a horse's belly).⁴⁹ A number of terms describe equine ailments relating to legs and feet. For example, *doyoljombi* (to sprain a horse's or a mule's hind leg), *niyahašambi* (to limp, of a horse or cow

⁴⁶ Crossley and Rawski (1993), 82–3. ⁴⁷ *Wuti Qingwen jian*, 4347.

⁴⁸ For *Ma. yoo*, as an example of a term with Altaic correspondence in the *Wuti Qingwen jian*, see Meserve (1992), 340–2.

⁴⁹ Note that *delihün* technically means spleen.

with damaged hooves) and *sabtari wasika* (where a swelling of the area above the hoof makes a horse lame). An animal's physicality and the need to restrain it during medical procedures is suggested by *corboho tura*, a post or stump which animals were tied to while given medicine. The Manchu vocabulary on equine ailments therefore reveals a preoccupation with many practical problems such as sores, growths, worms, swellings, and sprains.

Horses had a shared world not only with humans, but also with a number of other animals. Evidence relating to animals' categorization can be found in a number of contexts. The administrative organization of horses at the Ministry of Imperial Stables, Herds and Carriages often grouped horses together with camels, and referred to them by one term, camel-horse (*matuo* 馬駝).⁵⁰ The vocabulary also points to references for horses with regard to other animals. Examples of a focus on horses and cows/oxen include *cikešembi* (to be slightly lame, of horses and cows/oxen) or *keleng kalang umesi sula* (limp, tired out, of horses and cows/oxen). More heterogeneous groups were, for instance, *ajirgan* (a male horse, donkey, camel or dog) and *bancan duha* (the rectum of horses, donkeys and mules).

The Manchu language points to new, or more detailed, ways of categorizing horses, or describing aspects of their physicality. For example, Manchu distinguished between a single horse and horses in groups.⁵¹ There were also several different ways to refer to colts of varying ages.⁵² Furthermore, specific terminology describing horses' bodies included *ilan jaifan* (the three bones that join together in a horse's croup) and *aidahan sika* (the short bristles on a horse's tail).

The increased level of detail in describing horses is also evidenced by the variety of terms for their colouring. Multicoloured horses included *kaltara* (a brown horse with white around its mouth and eyes), *boro seberi* (a black horse with white left hooves), *cabdara* (a brown horse with a white mane and tail), *urlu morin* (a black horse with white patches), etc. Terms for a grey horse were, for example, *comko morin* (dapple-grey horse), *boro fulan* (grey horse), *kara fulan* (iron-grey horse), *tolbotu* (a grey horse with circular markings on its side), *suiha fulan* (a light-grey horse), *temurtu kara* (an iron-coloured horse) and *sarla* (a grey-coloured horse). There was a similarly wide range of words for horses of other colours.

Horses could also be described by their markings, such as *kalja* (a white spot on a horse's nose),⁵³ *kalja seberi morin* (a horse with white feet and a white spot

⁵⁰ See, for example, *Neiwufu xianxing zeli*, 895, 969 ('Shangsiyuan').

⁵¹ Examples include *kaidu* (a lone or single horse), *adun* (herd) and *šohan i morin* (a team of four horses).

⁵² Terms for horses of different ages included *artu* (a three-year-old horse) and *sucutu* (a two-year-old horse).

⁵³ The term also refers to a white stripe or bare strip on the head of an animal, or a bald head.

on the forehead), *kiluk* (black-spotted horse) and others. A number of words delineated the shapes of these marks: for example, *eguletu alha* (a horse with cloud-like markings), *odontu kailun* (a horse with spots resembling stars) and *tohtoko* (a horse spotted like a panther). Other words focused on their stripes, their hoof colours or the hair on their body.⁵⁴

These examples suggest that viewing horses through the lens of the Manchu language not only provides information about conceptual groupings, but also reveals the kind of visual attention they paid in distinguishing between horses' physical characteristics. The Manchu vocabulary provides various terms to describe horses' colouring, patches and markings on the body, and suggests a focus on details such as hoof colours and the hair on various parts of the body. The existence of such detail with respect to equine knowledge in Manchu may be an indication that understandings of horses probably varied across linguistic and cultural landscapes.

A Multilingual Understanding

Examining terms across a spectrum of languages suggests that words in different languages of the Qing were not always translations of an 'original' term, but rather culturally contextualized descriptions, thus demonstrating the value of the multilingual and multicultural approach. The *Wuti Qingwen jian* was not the only imperially commissioned work in the eighteenth century that depicted horses as part of a pluralistic realm. Horses were also part of the world of aesthetic appreciation, as we can see in the tribute horses in what are now famous works of art. The paintings of four Afghan horses by the Italian Jesuit Giuseppe Castiglione reveal what we can learn from a multilingual approach. While comparing the meanings of Manchu and Chinese translations is a productive line of inquiry, additional elements are revealed by examining one language in depth, or by looking at meanings across languages. Castiglione's paintings provide an opportunity to consider the 'translations' of a horse's name in different languages. The aim here is not to provide an analysis of translation theory and methods. The term 'translation' is perhaps inadequate here, as it assumes a certain hierarchy and directionality of knowledge, alongside the existence of one language as a starting point for translation. However, in this example, the horses are given names in four languages (Chinese, Manchu, Uighur and Mongolian) – each situated within a particular cultural context – which, together, encompass a spectrum of meanings. Even though it is important to recognize that the selection and

⁵⁴ *Seberi*, for example, was a horse or mule with white hooves, and *sobori* a horse or cow with one hoof of a different colour from the other three. Terms regarding hair included *forontu kara* (a black horse with curly hair on its belly), *cakilgatu kuluk* (a fine horse with whorls of hair on both hind legs), etc.

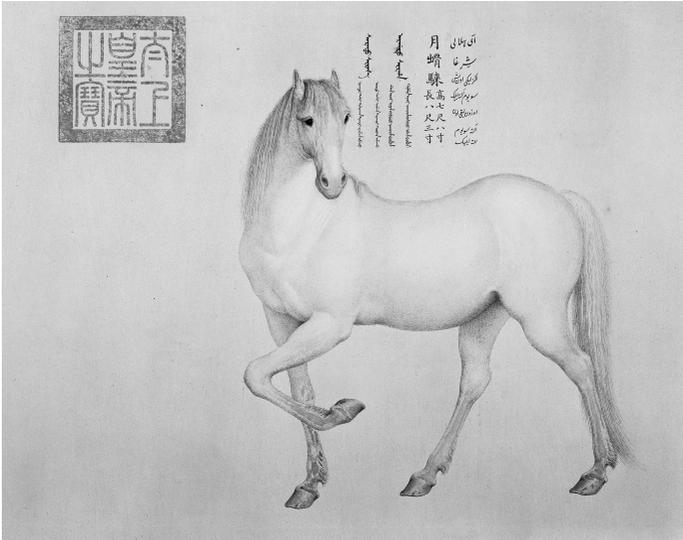


Figure 10.1 One of the ‘Four Steeds of Aiwuhan [Afghan]’ by Giuseppe Castiglione, 1762. (The Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taipei).

representation of languages was informed by political considerations, there is still much to be gained by examining the cultural understandings revealed by the terms.

At the top of the painting of the white horse (Figure 10.1), there is a caption in these four languages. Although, at first glance, they may seem to be simply definitions of terms, in fact, when taken together, they reflect a dynamic resonance across a gamut of meanings. The most familiar term is the Chinese *Yuekulai* 月窟駱.⁵⁵ *Yueku* was used in classical Chinese texts to refer to the resting place of the moon or moonlight. *Lai* refers to a horse which is seven *chi* 尺 in height.⁵⁶ However, there are also Manchu, Uighur and Mongolian captions. The Manchu is written *argatu sirha* (pronounced *shirha*) where *argatu* meant male roe or roebuck and *sirha* is a variant of *sirga*, meaning reddish brown-bay horse and roe deer. This rather circular definition, which appears to signify deer, probably refers to the light colour of roe deer. Other examples of *sirga* include *hasrun sirga*, which meant a white horse with red spots around its nose and eyes, and *jahaltu sirga*, a horse with silver stripes on its neck. *Sirga* therefore seems to suggest a light-coloured horse. The following examples in

⁵⁵ 月窟 is also written as 月窟.

⁵⁶ This would be more than 8 feet (2.5 metres) tall, where one *chi* is equivalent to about 14 inches, or 35.8 centimetres.

the other two languages help elucidate what may seem like arbitrarily different names for the horse in Chinese and Manchu. The Uighur name was *ay hilāli shīrgā*, where *ay hilāli* meant crescent moon and *shīrgā* was defined as a horse which was a creamy-white, *yinhe* horse (*yinhe ma* 銀合馬).⁵⁷ The Mongolian term is written *saratu sirkh-a*, pronounced *shīrkh-a*, also seen as *sirgh-a*, where *sara* was moon, *saratu* meant like the moon, and *sirkh-a/sirgh-a* denoted a light bay colour.⁵⁸

There is a reference to the moon in the Chinese, Uighur and Mongolian, and colour comes up in Manchu, Uighur and Mongolian as well as Chinese, if the moon is taken as a reference to the colour. Therefore, when examining these terms in all four languages, what appear to be divergent meanings in Chinese and Manchu can be understood within a spectrum of explanations around a light colour and that of the moon. Moreover, these languages may have culturally specific contexts for their references, even when describing a similar colour. This example suggests the value of recognizing ways of expressing a similar idea which are embedded in different cultural frames.

Conclusion

Historical sources present the past through seemingly bounded and static categories of institutions and languages, but this chapter has explained how these were themselves situated within particular cultural frames. While these defining lines were probably fluid, there is still much to be gained from considering the cultural understandings reflected through these lenses. This chapter has discussed the multifaceted nature of equine management through the connectivities and shared worlds that existed across institutional, cultural, linguistic and conceptual boundaries. These include the pluralistic nature of institutional organizations, the overlapping realms of horses and humans (as well as other animals), and the way that central imperial institutions were intertwined with practices from the steppe. Furthermore, this study also reveals the value that language offers in providing a window onto cultural conceptions embedded in imperially commissioned works.

The main institution analysed in this chapter has been the Qing Ministry of Imperial Stables, Herds and Carriages. This research has shown that it was highly interconnected with other organizations, and that its medicine and supplies for horses included those which could be obtained from the Imperial Pharmacy, the Department of the Privy Purse and the Ministry of Rites. Implements for medical use could be found at the Department of Works,

⁵⁷ *Yinhe ma* is found in a famous Ming dynasty tale of folklore and mythology by Xu Zhonglin 許仲琳 (Ming) entitled *Fengshen yanyi* 封神演義 (Investiture of the Gods).

⁵⁸ *Sirgh-a* is a light bay, according to Lessing (1973), 716.

while other supplies, such as a donkey to grind up medicine, could be borrowed from the Overseer's Office. Institutional connections, as well as shared practitioners and medicines, reflect the overlapping realms of horses and humans. Perhaps even more importantly, the Imperial Pharmacy provided medicine not only for the palace horses, but also for the animals who were let out onto the fields on a seasonal basis. Later on, in the nineteenth century, the hierarchies had shifted to such an extent that the chief Mongolian doctors at the institution of the emperors' horses were superimposed on the (human) department of bonesetting at the Imperial Medical Bureau.⁵⁹

The meanings of terms in different languages provides a further insight into the varied cultural contexts within the Qing. Moreover, focusing on Manchu vocabulary associated with horses indicates illnesses and conceptual groupings, as well as a rich set of terms to describe horses' colouring and markings. Different perspectives can be observed through the topographies of one language and similarities (and tensions) between terms in multiple languages. Examples from Manchu and institutional organizations suggest that imagining a horse on its own would not be very representative of the worlds that the animal inhabited, which were conceptually and practically shared with fellow horses or other beings (human and/or animal).

The incorporated knowledge and practices are not always clearly linked to a particular cultural context in the sources. While the title 'Mongolian doctor' included an obvious reference to the 'Mongols', the imperially commissioned *Wuti Qingwen jian* placed terms relating to Mongolian practices in the category of shepherding and rearing. That is not to say that erasing elements of cultural attribution was the aim of this multilingual resource. This may rather be a reflection of the differing historical context of the late eighteenth century when the dictionary was compiled, from that of Manchu–Mongol relations and the consolidation of the Qing state when the post was established about a century earlier. At the time it was produced, the practical usefulness of the knowledge included may have overridden any need for reification. The multilingual dictionary also harnessed the knowledge within multiple linguistic frames in another manner: by signifying a united realm through the mutual resonance of terms in multiple languages.

The practices associated with Mongols from the steppe which were incorporated into imperial institutions (such as methods of herd management and preventative equine care) do not seem to have a direct reference to a particular cultural category. Utilizing Mongolian methods of equine care in central organizations suggests a conceptual and practical frame that straddled multiple realms. Moreover, it was taking place when Mongol groups' range of mobility

⁵⁹ For more detail, see Aricanli (2016), chapter 4.

and access to pastureland were also becoming more limited. The temporal frame, and the nature of the particular source (on internal regulations and practical matters of organization) may have taken precedence over articulating the cultural context.

An organization for equine management that combined caring for animals in confined spaces as well as free grazing in pastures was part of the mechanism to condition horses for greater endurance. The series of steps that a horse would have been subjected to during its training also sheds light on the value placed on these methods. The process by which a horse was transformed from one that was wild to one that was broken in and could be ridden necessitated ensuring that it would obey orders. However, maintaining the spirit of a horse also has inherent value with respect to what it can accomplish. The practice of setting horses free, as herds, for an extended period of time (which could be as long as six months of the year), would require the horses to largely fend for themselves to find suitable food and water. During that time, horses would also need to navigate the intricacies of living within a social group: the herd. Perhaps, a corollary effect of letting horse herds graze freely was the creation of a temporally framed structure where animals that had been trained to be good subjects would also have some time and space to exercise their sense of being free horses among other horses. If so, such a form of organization would have provided a temporally delineated balance between two worlds. This balance would have been a way to harness the strength and endurance of horses that served the state.

This institutional and linguistic approach effectively reflects the multifaceted nature of equine care through linkages across a number of boundaries: those between institutions, human and animal medicine, and practices of equine care in central organizations and the steppe. The examples discussed in this chapter also suggest the existence of multiple registers, through which knowledge and practices of equine care were attributed to Mongols. Moreover, horses in the Qing not only were situated within a number of cultural frames, but also shared conceptual and practical spaces with other horses and human/animal beings. This leads one to consider whether these examples represent aspects of the larger plans of the state, or if they are rather reflections of a variety of actors' practical solutions in light of specific contextual factors at particular junctures in time.