The Complex Structure of Ethnic Conflict in the Frontier: Through the Debates around the ‘Jindandao Incident’ in 1891

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Abstract: Toward the end of the Qing dynasty, Inner Mongolia became the main destination for bankrupt Chinese peasants from interior China. With the increase in numbers of Chinese immigrants, conflicts between Mongols and Chinese intensified as Chinese struggled for more benefits and Mongols tried to maintain their traditional social order. In 1891 a Chinese secret society called Jindandao massacred tens of thousands of Mongols in the mixed Mongol-Chinese regions of eastern Inner Mongolia. The survivors fled to the pastoral areas south of the Hingan mountains, propelling the agriculturalisation of these regions and the refiguration of the local societies. In China, this massacre has been appraised as an ‘anti-imperialist, anti-feudal peasant uprising’, disguising the nature of ethnic conflict between Mongols and Chinese. In the 1990s, however, Mongol victims of the Jindandao Incident began to demand re-evaluation of the incident, thereby setting off a heated debate around the issue. Up to now, most studies of the Jindandao Incident have relied on memorials prepared by Chinese county and prefectural magistrates, ignoring the memorials presented by Mongol victims. Based on new data published in the 1980s and fieldwork in recent years, this study intends to re-examine the incident and to discuss historical circumstances and the consequences of this massacre for social change in Inner Mongolia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Key words: 1891; Jindandao Incident; Structure of Ethnic Conflict

The Taiping Rebellion and the Boxer Uprising that occurred after the Opium War are often cited as the symbol for the decline and collapse of the Qing dynasty that ruled China for over 260 years. Chinese researchers have tended to put these anti-Qing rebellions in such modernist frames as ‘people against the Qing rule’, ‘people against world powers’, or ‘anti-imperialism and anti-feudalism’. These studies are strongly ideological, privileging the Chinese as ‘the people’ against the Qing dynasty. However, the collapse of the Qing dynasty as a conquest dynasty cannot be fully explained in such a simplistic manner.

After about 130 years of prosperity, covering the reigns of Kangxi, Yongzheng, Qianlong from 1661 to 1795, the Qing dynasty began to face several large-scale social upheavals such as the White Lotus Uprising in the Jiaqing era (1796~1820). Most researchers argue that these demonstrations of social unrest were caused by the rapid changes in society from the end of the Ming dynasty to the beginning of the Qing dynasty, including the huge migrations caused by repeated natural disasters, shortage of cultivated agricultural land, and the population explosion. The introduction of new world crops, such as potato and corn at the end of the Ming era made the northern arid region cultivatable. Thanks to progress in technologies for treating contagious diseases such as smallpox, and the extensive use of fertilisers and irrigation techniques, the population exploded (Eastman 1988: 6-7). The population increased from 140 million in 1741 to 310 million in 1794 in areas under direct governance of the Qing dynasty, that is, the population
doubled within 50 years, with an increase of 3.2 million people every year. By 1840 the population had reached over 410 million (Durand 1977; Guo Songyi 1990: 13). People in overcrowded Hubei and Hunan provinces flowed out not only southward to Yunnan, Guizhou, Guangxi, Fujian, Taiwan, and overseas to Southeast Asia, they also moved northward to the meeting point of Sichuan, Shanxi and Hubei provinces and people in Shandong province began to migrate to north China, and beyond the Great Wall in Manchuria and Mongolia where cultivation was officially prohibited.

Large numbers of Chinese migrants who flowed out to frontier areas would no doubt upset the balance of social relationships in their host regions. In other words, as the migrants outnumbered the indigenous peoples, they came into conflict with the latter for political leadership. The above-mentioned White Lotus Uprising was an inevitable result of the destruction of population balance as the population boomed in the first 150 years of the Qing dynasty (Masaru Yamada 1995). The conflict centered around the fact that the areas the migrants came to settle in were inhabited by non-Chinese peoples who had different cultures and were indirectly administered by the Qing dynasty. As a result of Chinese migration, these areas experienced conflict in both administrative structures and cultures between migrants and natives. Riots by Chinese Muslims (Huihui) in Yunnan (Ando Junichiro 2002) and Gansu (Takashi Kuriowa 2002) and the Jindandao insurgence in the 17th year of the Guangxu reign all point to the oppositional structures between migrant Chinese and local non-Chinese native societies. We should not fail to notice that these uprisings carried out by the Chinese migrants were expressions of Chinese nationalism aiming to overthrow the Qing dynasty, which was ruled by the Manchu, a non-Chinese people. As we know, the Manchu people, hailing from Manchuria, established the Qing dynasty and, after conquering China, settled in Beijing as the Qing capital. But by the end of the Qing dynasty, the Manchu had lost their ethnic particularities and the Qing dynasty had also lost its characteristics as a ‘conquest dynasty’. In contrast to the Manchu, the Mongols, who were the junior partner of Manchu in conquering and ruling China, survived as a substantial ethnic group with their own cultural, political and territorial institutions. It was thus inevitable that the Chinese nationalist struggle targeted Mongols as they attempted to overthrow the Qing, and this was facilitated by the fact that large numbers of Chinese had already migrated to Mongolia. The Jindandao insurgence was a typical example of the serious antagonism between Chinese and Mongols under such circumstances.

The so-called ‘Jindandao Incident’ [1] was an insurgence conducted by a Chinese secret society consisting of farmers that occurred around the old Josutu League [2] area and the Jo.udu League in southeastern Inner Mongolia in October 1891. The insurgence lasted for about two months and tens of thousands of Mongols of this area were slaughtered and many Buddhist temples and Catholic churches were burned, devastating the Mongol society of this area.

Chinese scholars, as noted above, always treat the Jindandao insurgence as a peasant uprising against imperialism and feudalism. [3] The same ideological framing can also be seen in the evaluation of Chinese Muslim rebellion in the nineteenth century, insisting that the Mongols, Chinese and Muslims were together fighting against the Qing dynasty, even though the Mongols were actually fighting along with the Qing army to quash the uprising (cf. Yang Haiying 2002). This ideological framework has influenced even non-Chinese historians. One example is Kimihiko Sato’s (1984) study. Sato evaluated the Jindandao insurgence as part of the people’s movements, along with the Taiping rebellion and the Boxer’s movement and overlooked the ethnic dimension of the conflict. On the other hand, Mongolian historians writing in China, whilst acknowledging the blow dealt to foreign imperialists, the Qing dynasty and the Mongolian feudal nobles, insisted that
indiscriminate slaughter of the Mongolian common people was not ethnically motivated but due to the ‘superstition’ of the Chinese insurgents (Hao Weimin 1992, Wang Yuhai 1999). Studies since the 1990s, even as they describe this insurgence as an uprising, try as much as possible to reduce the ethnic nature of the conflict between Mongols and Chinese (Baildogchi, Jinhai, Saihang 2002).

In the 1990s, however, several events centring on the ‘Jindandao Incident’ took place in China.

1. The 'Notes on Reading History' Column of the Liaoning Daily on November 22, 1984 published an article entitled ‘Jindandao uprising’ (by Wenxian, Zhengshi) and repeated the official evaluation in China. However, this article provoked strong dissent from the Mongols of the Fuxin Mongolian Autonomous County and the Chaoyang area.

2. On December 1, 1991 the Liaoning Political Consultative Conference Newspaper (Liaoning Zhengxie Bao) published an article entitled ‘Fenghuo Chaoyang — An Outline of the Chaoyang Jindandao Uprising’, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the insurgence. The characterisation of the event as an Incident poisoned local ethnic relations, by trying to glorify it as a kind of revolution or an uprising, thereby justifying the slaughter of the Mongol common people. It provoked a strong opposition from the Mongols of the Fuxin Mongolian Autonomous County. As a result of this protest, the ethnic affairs commissioner of Liaoning province despatched an investigation team to Fuxin and carried out an actual condition survey, and decided that in order to placate the Mongols any further publication on the Incident must first be approved by the Ethnic Affairs Commission of Liaoning Province. On April 10, 1992 the same Newspaper openly apologised, acknowledging that ‘the article published for commemoration revealed the lack of proper awareness of policy and it was a mistake’.

3. On June 29, 1996 on the occasion of the commemoration of the 105th anniversary of the Jindandao Incident the Chaoyang Daily published an article entitled ‘Li Hongzhang who suppressed the Jindandao Uprising’ (by Qin Liu), which was really an article glorifying the Jindandao. Although the Mongols of the Fuxin Mongolian Autonomous County sent a letter to the Chaoyang City Party Committee and Government and demanded an apology, the Chaoyang authorities did not give a clear reply.

4. The Mongols of the Fuxin Mongolian Autonomous County in May, 1997 made a request to the editorial committee of the Chinese encyclopedic dictionary Ci Hai asking for official re-evaluation of the item ‘Jindandao Incident’. There has been no reply yet.

In this light, this paper focuses on the following points: 1. What factors in the Josutu League, the frontier area where the ‘Jindandao Incident’ occurred, made the Mongols and Chinese engage in cycles of conflict and harmony? 2. How was the insurgence portrayed in different time and space? Why did the Mongols put pressure on the authorities to reevaluate the insurgence after 1990? What is the necessary environment to make a minority protest possible in China? And 3. How did the legacy of the Mongols being the ally of the Manchu affect the Mongols’ own history?

My study will be based on the following historical materials in addition to published memorials, documents and local histories: 1. Menggu Jiwen (a manuscript discovered and introduced by Tatsuo Nakami for the first time in the 1980’s) written by Wang Guojun, a Mongol eyewitness to the uprising. 2. Hongmaozhi Shijian Ziliao Xuanbian published in Chifeng city in 1989. It was by far the largest collection of data. 3. Mongoljin-nu Horiyalag-a written by Mr. Toulam-a and others from the Fuxin Mongolian Autonomous County in 1990. It documented the damage situation in the old
THE AGRICULTURALISATION PROCESS OF THE JOSUTU LEAGUE AREA THROUGH THE MONGOLISATION OF THE CHINESE SETTLERS

The Josutu League of Inner Mongolia which received Chinese settlers early on had seen the tendency of agriculturalisation already in the beginning of the Qing dynasty. As is well known, the ‘Borrow Land to Feed People (Jiedi Yangmin) policy’ of the Qing dynasty brought large numbers of famine stricken Chinese farmers from Shandong and Zhili provinces to settle in the Josutu League as early as the first year of Yongzheng. In the 49th year of the Qianlong reign or 1784, the Chinese population was already 55,000 in the three Harachin banners and two Tumed banners under the jurisdiction of Rehe, and the population soared to 8,838,770 in the same area by the 11th year of the Tongzhi reign or 1872. By the end of the Qing dynasty, most of the JosutuLeague area had already turned into a Chinese residential zone governed by provincial administration, and the Mongols also gave up pastoralism and became solely agricultural farmers. We must clarify two issues regarding the agriculturalisation process in the Josutu League area. First, how did the Mongolian society accept and integrate individual Chinese migrants? Second, what kind of relationship was established between the Mongolian society and the Chinese society established by immigrants on Mongolian territory?

In the beginning of the Qing dynasty, Chinese farmers in the Josutu League were seasonal migrant labourers; they crossed the Great Wall in early spring to work in the land of the Mongol nobles, and went home after the autumn harvests. For Chinese farmers, working in the Mongol land was attractive, not only because the Mongol land along the Great Wall was of better quality than their own fields to the south of the Wall, but they did not have to pay land taxes. On the other hand, Mongol nobles welcomed these Chinese migrant farmers, for they generated income for them in the form of cash and agricultural products. For that reason, Mongol nobles protected hard working farmers, and as a result of this symbiotic relationship, Chinese farmers were allowed to make long-term stay in Mongolia. One of the concrete measures to integrate these individual migrants was to allow them to marry Mongol women and register as subjects of the Mongol banners. In today’s jargon, we can say that they changed their ethnicity from Chinese into Mongolian. Below I introduce some historical materials about the Chinese registration as subjects of Mongol banners.

I. Li Shouxin

Li Shouxin was a prominent political and military figure in Inner Mongolia in the first half of the twentieth century, and he was known to be a Mongol from the Tumed Right Wing Banner of the Josutu League. His ancestor hailed from Lijia village, Changqing county, Jinan prefecture, Shandong province and came to work in the house of a Mongolian family in the Tumed Right Wing Banner. It is said that his hardworking ancestor married into his Mongolian landlord’s family and became Mongolian, and none of his descendants ever married Chinese again. One can assume that the ancestor of Li Shouxin soon became assimilated into Mongolian society and spoke Mongolian, but when the Mongols in Josutu League became agricultural and began to lose the Mongolian language, the Li family was once again confronted with the language issue.
The Li family’s experience of turning from the Chinese language to Mongolian and then back to Chinese was not unusual in the Josutu League. Yoshigi Enatsu (Yoshiki Enatsu 1995) pointed out the ethnic ambiguity of the .Han Jun Qi Ren. (Chinese Bannermen) who always wavered at the borderline between the Manchu and Chinese; similarly we can gather from the career of Li Shouxin that such people also had a tendency to move between Chinese society and Mongolian society. By the time Li Shouxin was born, his village was already ethnically mixed with Mongolian and Chinese equal in number, and his father already could no longer speak Mongolian and his Mongol-speaking mother stopped using Mongolian in everyday life.

Apparently they worshipped Chinese deities and their lifestyle was no different from any Chinese farmer, except they had a Buddhist wind horse pole (with Buddhist scriptures printed on a piece of cloth hanging from the pole) in the garden. Because the Li family were landowners, Li Shouxin became darxan arad (freeman) by paying a large sum of money to his lord (noyan) -Taiji Sureng. At one point he wanted to change his family registration into Chinese of Chaoyang county, but after being criticised by his relatives and neighbours, he finally became .Sume-yin Hariyatu. (subject of temple).

When serving as a captain in the army of the Fengtian warlord Zhang Zuolin, Li Shouxin directly suppressed the Gada Meirin uprising (Burensain Borjigin 2002), which opposed the Chinese reclamation of Mongolian grassland in the Horchin Left Wing Banner of the Jirim League. Ironically, he managed to control the Mongolian army when Prince De launched the Inner Mongolian autonomy movement.

II. Wang Guojun and his Nei Menggu Jiwen

Nei Menggu Jiwen is valuable historical material for the study of modern Inner Mongolian history, and it is one of the prime sources used in this paper. Its author was Wang Guojun (1853-1921, his Mongolian name was Buyanobilgut), a Mongolian from the Harachin Right Wing Banner, but his ancestors came from Wen county, Dengzhou prefecture of Shandong province. According to Nei Menggu Jiwen, Wang’s ancestors migrated to Long Zhou and Daning Lu before the Manchu conquest of China, and they became subjects of the Uriyanghai tribe of the Mongols. Serving as guides and interpreters for the Manchu army and Harachin army in their conquest of China, and distinguishing themselves in battle, they were registered as .Mongol. under the Harachin jurisdiction. Their Mongol identity was evidenced in this sentence: ‘Even if they have a Chinese family name, they are qualified as Mongol’(Wang Guojun 1994: 2). For seven generations, the ancestors of Wang Guojun held the title of Janggin (company commander) in the Harachin Banner, thereby becoming a privileged class in Mongolian society. It mentioned that Wang Guojun’s father, Cilagu (his Chinese name was Wang Liangfu) worked as the Tamagin Meirin (seal-bearing commander) of the Harachin Right Wing Banner and was very active in fighting against the Jindandao insurgence. In his Nei Menggu Jiwen, Wang Guojun analysed objectively the reality of the Josutu League area in those days, from the standpoint of a Mongolian.

According to Nei Menggu Jiwen, people with such family names as Wu and Li also came to the Harachin area at the end of the Ming dynasty and they worked as administrators for Mongol princes for several generations. Early Chinese settlers also included craftsmen with family names such as Jing, Zhu, Shi and so on, and they came from Zhili, Henan, Beijing and as far as Zhejiang province between the Qianlong and Guangxu reigns. Many of these people registered in the Mongolian banner and married Mongols.
III. Genealogies

Recently discovered genealogical documents recorded the Mongolisation of the Chinese settlers in the Tumed Left Wing Banner. Below is a translation of part of the preface to Man-u Wang Obugtu-yin Ger-un Uy-e-yin Bicimel (Our Wang Lineage Genealogy Book), [13] from Tosqu-yin Tabun Ger Ayil village of Tosqu-yin Ayil Gacag-a in the Fuxin Mongolian Autonomous County, [14] which was written in Mongolian: The history of our Wang family name: It is said that the (first) Wang named person was originally from Moujia village, Anping county, Baoding prefecture. Leaving home and wandering during the Qianlong era of the Qing dynasty, he purchased land in the western part of Toqun Uuken Tabun Gerun Ayil village in the south of the Tumed Left Wing Darxan Beile Banner where he built an enclosure and settled down. Marrying a Mongolian woman and establishing a family, he came to believe in Buddhism in accordance with Mongolian life and custom. There was a famous temple called Altan Siregetu 6 kilometers to the north of the village, and the famous second Living Buddha (Hubilgan) had the power. He listened to the sutra from the Living Buddha, and he devoted himself to the lama by becoming his disciple and making offerings to the temple every year.

Wang had four sons. The eldest son’s name was Aarigun, the second Naiman, third Naimandai, and the fourth Turetu. Three sons maintained lay life and the second son became a lama.

The name of the first Mr. Wang was not written, although the genealogy recorded the Mongolian names from the second generation on and the situation of the branch families which lasted seven generations until the Xianfeng era. It is interesting to note that the first Mr. Wang succeeded in the acquisition of farmland after he came to the Mongolian banner, then married a Mongolian and entered the Mongolian census register as well. It is also important that Mr. Wang swiftly changed his mentality to that of the Mongols by adopting Buddhism, the religion that was predominant in the area.

The Li Family Genealogy [15] from Modun Ayil-village, Yeke Gurban Tolugai Gacag-a in the Fuxin Mongolian Autonomous County, was written entirely in Chinese. According to this genealogy, the first Mr. Li was originally from Lingyang county, Zhending prefecture of Shandong province. The ancestor of the Li family went beyond the Great Wall into their current location during the Kangxi era. Although two people became lamas respectively in the second and third generations, the genealogy recorded no more lamas after that. Except for Mongolian (Tibetan) names used for the lamas, Chinese names were recorded consistently for eight generations. It is interesting to note that although Mr. Li speaks Mongolian now, as he lives in the Mongolian community of Modun Ayil-village, he still practices some Chinese customs.

The Gayiqamsig Jokicagulugci Temple (Rui-Ying Temple/alias Mongoljin Gegen Sum-e) [16] in the Tumed Left Wing Banner of the Josutu League is a very popular temple of more than 350 years old, and remains the center of Buddhism of this region. In this area, the Buddhist influence was so strong in the past that anyone who did not believe in Buddhism would often be treated as a heretic. Therefore, believing in Buddhism was the first requirement for Chinese settlers should they wish to take root in the Mongolian society.

As discussed above, Chinese migrants entered the Mongolian society mainly through marriage. However, since Mongol banners usually put various restrictions to Chinese activities, those who married Mongol women and those who registered in the Mongol banners would still be called ‘subordinate Mongol’ (Sui Menggu) by native Mongols who then became ‘real Mongol’ (Zhen
Menggu) (Liu Yingyuan 1985: 3). Owen Lattimore pointed out that where some Chinese met with Mongols, they brought in the Chinese social system of landownership and subordination to land, thereby damaging Mongol society and impoverishing the Mongols (Lattimore 1935).

It is possible to make the following hypothesis from the above cases in the Harachin and the Tumed banners. When individual Chinese farmers or craftsmen worked away from home and entered into the Mongolian community directly, they usually became Mongolised. In other words, individual migrants could not form a separate Chinese society that could challenge the Mongol communities. In eastern Inner Mongolia, the degree to which the Chinese assimilation into the Mongolian host community determined whether or not Mongols would accept outsiders positively (Burensain Borjigin 2003). From the end of the Ming dynasty to the Qing dynasty, a lot of Chinese farmer migrated to the frontier regions from inland China, and many minority societies disappeared under the impact of such migrations. The eastern part of Inner Mongolia was a rare example of a minority people being able to absorb Chinese migrants while maintaining their vibrant community with distinct identity.

COMMUNITIES IN OPPOSITION

Although the individual Chinese migrants who had been registered in the Mongol banners played an important role in the agriculturalisation of the Mongol region, their number was insignificant compared to the scale of the Chinese migrants who settled en masse in the Josutu League. These latter Chinese created space for their activities by establishing their own settlement communities, and as a result, by the end of the Qing dynasty, in order to administer these Chinese settlers, the Qing government had built 2 Fu (Chengde Fu, Chaoyang Fu), 1 prefecture (Pingchuan Zhou), 5 counties (Jianchang, Jianping, Fuxin, Zhangwu, Lingyuan) in the territory of Josutu League. This policy created two administrations within one territory, a phenomenon known as ‘Yidi liangfu’, that is, Mongols would be administered by the banner government whereas the Chinese by the magistrates of Fu, prefecture, or county. The dual system made the local situations even more complex. First of all, since the Chinese community was created on the Mongol banner territory as a result of the Qing’s policy of ‘Opening up the Mongolian Land’ (Kaifang Mengdi) (cf. Saho Hirokawa 2000), the land ownership nominally belonged to the banner administration, but the Chinese administrations had jurisdiction over the settlers, and were financially more powerful. The conflict over land tax and other fiscal rights was endemic in such regions.

During the Qing period, Mongolian princes and the noble classes, supported by the Qing court, were able to maintain their various rights vis-à-vis the Chinese settlers. However, from the middle of the Qing dynasty the population ratio between Mongols and Chinese settlers began to change, and by the end of the Qing dynasty, the Chinese majority began to challenge the minority Mongol rule. As the Manchu began to lose their power, Chinese nationalists targeted the Mongols as the substitute for the Manchu, often harking back to the Mongol Yuan dynasty, making Mongols the representatives of ‘barbarians’ (Yi Di).

It is well known in history that migrants would do their best to strengthen their power by uniting their group in order to bargain for more rights from their host community. As mentioned above, many peasant religious uprisings such as the White Lotus Uprising, that occurred in Suchuan area in the middle of the Qing dynasty and the Red Lantern Uprising, that followed it (Masaru Yamada 1995), were caused to no small degree by migration boom. When people with different value systems and cultures settled in an area, they often came into conflict with the host community, which was religiously and ethnically different. As the Chinese migrated in large
number and demanded rights and power in their new community, Mongolian nobles and landowners, fearful of the destruction of the social order, and in an effort to maintain their culture, instituted strict rules for the Chinese settlers to follow and they heavily taxed their farmers. This treatment, seen as discrimination by Chinese settlers, was instrumental in causing the Chinese riots. By the end of the nineteenth century, the opposition between Mongols and the Chinese settlers became apparent, as mutual suspicion plagued the two groups and malicious rumors were flying around.

The Jindandao religion began to spread from the fourteenth year of Guangxu (1881). It was one of the numerous folk religious groups and secret societies that appeared in Qing era and was originally a branch of the White Lotus movement. With the rapid expansion of the movement, the insurgence broke out in spring of the 17th year of Guangxu. The starting point of the Jindandao movement was 'Ping Qing Sao Hu' (Defeat the Qing dynasty, and sweep away the barbarians). Soon they raised such slogans as 'Kill Mongols to clear away the accumulated resentment', 'When you meet a Mongol, kill without giving any reason.', and so on. Following the legend about the peasant uprising at the end of the Yuan dynasty, the insurgents communicated with each other through inserting paper slips with the message of 'Kill Mongols' in moon cakes prepared for the Mid-Autumn Festival on the 15th of the eighth lunar month (Zhongguo Renmin Zhengzhi Xieshang Huiyi Chifeng Shi Weiyuanhui Wenshi Ziliao Weiyuanhui 1989: 258-299). According to Yang Yuechun's confession (ibid: 133), the Jindandao insurgence began with the attack of the Aouhan banner prince (beile)'s mansion at midnight on October 9, 1891, and it lasted less than two months before it was put down with the arrest of Yang Yuechun, the founder of the movement on November 26.

Wang Guojun's Nei Menggu Jiwen analysed the causes of the Jindandao insurgence in more detail than any other historical material available. As mentioned above, Wang experienced the Jindandao insurgence himself, and his father, Chilagu was the administration commander in the Harachin Right Wing Banner at that time. When Ye Zhichao, the military commander of Zhili province who was in charge of suppressing the Jindandao insurgence, supported the Jindandao and presented a false report to the Qing Council of State (Junji Chu) alleging that the Mongolian banner army killed innocent Chinese, Chilagu challenged Ye Zhichao, and in an effort to clear up the truth, he wrote a detailed several thousand word long progress report to the Imperial Court (Wang Guojun 1994: 1). Wang, growing up in such a family and social condition, gave a vivid account of how the Mongols suffered serious damage from the insurgency, in contrast to the various accounts that reflected the Chinese standpoint. Nei Menggu Jiwen came to be known to the public only in the latter half of the 1980s, and its contents have hardly been researched.

Wang Guojun made a six point analysis of the causes of Jindandao insurgence:

In the years of Kangxi and Qianlong of the former Qing dynasty, Chinese were settled in the neighbouring Mongolian banners, under the name of Jiedi Yangmin "borrowing land to feed the people. This was in fact a policy of colonising and consolidating the frontier. It was followed by setting up prefectures and counties. At the beginning of the immigration, princes gave them land and prepared houses and wells without charges. There were only certain amount of land taxes (divided into grain tax and money tax) to be paid each year. Many years later, Chinese gradually changed from guests to masters, and developed habits of abusing Mongols. At the time of paying taxes, they would either claim that there was no harvest because of bad weather or there was not enough money, thereby refusing to pay the original amount. Or they would delay and made the
landlords wait for days, and at their departure, they would then gather some meat and flour, and they would charge the landlords for their daily expenses, sometimes even refusing to pay taxes. Such mean measures were really vicious. This is the first cause for hostility.

Mongols were honest and of simple character without much experience, and most of them lacked judgment. They would stay in tenants' houses when they went to collect taxes, and they did not know that this would cause grudges. And every time they met with inconvenience, they would complain endlessly. The tenants, though not quarrelling with them directly, held grudges in their hearts. This is the second cause for the hostility.

Mongols claimed they were the masters of steppe and mountains, and they would use soil, firewood, trees, stone and grassland freely. But the Chinese had to purchase them should they need any of the above-mentioned items. And they were not allowed to fetch them using their own transportation, they had to borrow Mongols' horses and carts. If they broke any of the rules, they would be fined, lashed, or their things would be confiscated. This is the third cause for the hostility.

Mongolian grassland and mountains, graveyards of the nobles, and sacred mountains were full of grasses and firewood, but it was forbidden to cut trees without authorisation. Mongols could enter and take openly or secretly, but the Chinese were strictly prohibited from entering the mountains to collect firewood and grasses. If anybody violated the rule, and if the matter was serious, the violator would be sent to the banner government for punishment. If the matter was trivial, the village headman would capture the violator, burn the collected firewood and grasses. His rope, shoulder pole, axe, sickle would be confiscated, and he would be lashed and verbally abused at will. This is the fourth cause for the hostility. The princes, dukes and Tabunang (imperial sons-in-law) had the highest privileges in their own regions. When they traveled, pedestrians on the road would be ordered to give way by standing aside by the road, and regardless of women and old and young, Mongol or Chinese, those in carts had to come down, and those on horseback had to dismount and stand by. And they would not be allowed to clasp their hands behind their back or smoke tobacco. If there was any violation, a horseman would rush to lash out at the violator. This is the fifth cause for the hostility.

Originally when the Chinese were settled, they were given extra wilder land. Now all the land was cultivated, and there was the problem of too much land, but too little tax. Mongols wanted to measure the newly opened land to add taxes, but the Chinese, wishing to take profits, often gathered together to resist with force. As a result, there had been endless litigations, and although they were judged by the authorities, Chinese always threatened to rebel, being angry at having to pay taxes. This is the sixth reason for the hostility. [19]

Wang Guojun showed that the biggest reason for the insurgence was the deliberate refusal of the Chinese farmers to pay land tax, taking advantage of their increased population, and this was exactly what angered the Mongols most. The increase in the size of the Chinese population thus dramatically increased the conflicts between Mongols and Chinese in the Josutu League. Actually, when the Jindandao insurgence started, Chinese farmers burned the tax ledgers of the Mongol princes and nobles, and after the insurgence had been suppressed, they demanded that the Mongols produce the documents for the amount of tax owed by the Chinese farmers. In the aftermath of the insurgence, the Qing dynasty tried to remake the ledgers of Mongol banner governments and nobles. However, in consideration of the fact that the cause of the insurgence was the friction between Mongols and Chinese, the Qing court decided that the Chinese prefecture and county magistrates could collect the taxes on behalf of the Mongol nobles,
following the practice of the Mongol nobles collecting taxes from their land inside China proper by proxy through the local Chinese prefecture and county authorities. However, the right of ordinary Mongols to collect taxes from their Chinese tenants had never been restored.

The ethnic dimension of the Jindandao Incident was faithfully reflected in works written by Japanese and Russian scholars, such as The Mongolian Topography (Takayuki Kashiwabara & Junichi Hamada 1918) and Mongolia and Mongols (Pozdneev 1983) and Annals of Chaoyang County and Annals of Jianping County written by Chinese. The truth was even reflected in the personal memoirs published in the 1950s to 1960s, but since then, the official Chinese publications have intentionally concealed the ethnic conflict dimension in the evaluation of the insurrection. For example, the authoritative Brief History of the Mongolian Nationality (Mengguzu Jianshi 1986) and other historical works usually changed the Jindandao slogans such as ‘Ping Qing Sao Hu’ (Defeat the Qing and Wipe out the Mongols) to ‘Ping Qing Mie Yang’ (Defeat the Qing and Destroy the Westerners), and ‘Chou Sha Menggu’ (Kill Mongols in Revenge) to ‘Chou Sha Menggu Wanggong’ (Kill Mongol Nobles in Revenge).

Although some Roman Catholic Churches were burned, it was not the main objective of the insurrection. Although many contemporary historians would emphasise its anti-foreign or imperial dimension (Kimihiko Sato 1984; Hyer 1979), actually, the proclamations of the Jindandao had no mention of the ‘western religion’ (yangjiao), but were full of killing ‘Hu Ren’ (barbarians) and ‘Mongol’.

The number of casualties of the Incident was presented differently in different historical sources. Historical documents produced in the same period of the insurrection were full of conjectures, and this was especially so with regard to the number of Mongol casualties. For example, according to the Annals of Chaoyang County (Chaoyang Xianzhi), in Chaoyang and Jianping counties alone, the number of deaths was 100,000 for Mongols and Chinese, respectively. The report of Ye Zhichao, who was responsible for putting down the Jindandao, wrote that only 20,000 persons died as a result of the insurrection. (First History Archive of China 1998). However, in the investigation report prepared by the Fuxin Mongolian Autonomous County in 1990, it is suggested that in ten days, more than 10,000 Mongolian people were slaughtered by the rebel army active in the Tumed Left Wing Banner, and 1,000 villages were attacked and destroyed, forcing 100,000 Mongols to leave their homes. (Toulm-a 1990). At that time the Mongol population of the Aouhan Banner of the Josutu League exceeded 21,000, but today, after more than a century, it has not recovered to the original number, indicating thereby that many Mongols had either been killed or escaped to other banners. The northward migration of the Mongols from the Josutu League continued for a long time after the insurrection and finally stopped only in 1947 as a result of land reform.

It is abundantly clear that the Jindandao insurrection, despite it having been suppressed, had caused havoc to Mongolian society and established Chinese dominance in Mongol territories.

THE JINDANDAO INSURGENCE AND THE CHANGE OF THE MONGOLIAN SOCIETY

As mentioned above, Mongols were proud of being partners of the Manchu, symbolised by marital alliance. However, toward the end of the nineteenth century, the power of the Qing dynasty passed from Manchu bureaucrats into the hands of Chinese bureaucrats, transforming the Qing dynasty into one of the traditional Chinese dynasties. As the Qing dynasty established by the Manchu was in decline, Chinese nationalist struggles, which aimed at the restoration of the Ming
dynasty, a pure Chinese state, began to target the Mongols, the partners of the Manchu. Paul Hyer pointed out that the purpose of the Jindandao insurgence was precisely to strike at the neighbouring Mongolian society (Hyer 1979).

The opening up of the Mongol grassland for Chinese cultivation was one of the primary targets in the Qing’s New Policy. that was implemented from 1901, and it attracted many inland Chinese farmers to migrate and settle in Mongolia. With the implementation of this policy, the Mongols’ fantasy of their partnership with the Manchu authority finally disappeared and they sought to become independent from the Qing dynasty. On July 23, 1911, the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu sent a Mongolian delegation to the imperial government of Russia to request assistance in their independence from the Qing dynasty. Their petition document included the following description:

In recent years a large number of Chinese have poured into Mongolia, forming communities along the route and settling in Khuriye (Urga) and other places of Mongolia. In the 17th year of Guangxu, Chinese who settled and engaged in agriculture in Inner Mongolia’s Josotu and Jo’uda Leagues revolted suddenly, and indiscriminately slaughtered lamas and lay people, men and women, old and young, and burned many houses. If the same thing repeats, it would be our greatest suffering (Ochir & Perlei 1982).

As can be seen from the above passage, the impact of the Jindandao insurgence was not confined to Inner Mongolia alone. Paul Hyer (1979) pointed out that the shock of this insurgence spread out to the whole of the Mongolian society at the end of Qing era including Inner and Outer Mongolia, and it sharpened the conflict between the Mongols and Chinese in the following ten years, thereby galvanising the Mongolian independence and self-determination movements. As a matter of fact, prince Haisang from the Harachin Right Wing Banner of the Josutu League went to Khuriye at this time, and he went to St. Peters burg as a member of the Mongolian delegation to the Russian imperial government in 1911 (Tatsuo Nakami 1976).

The Josutu and Jo’uda Leagues had already been troubled by the settlement of Chinese and agricultural development in the early days of the Qing dynasty. But the Jindandao revolt was a devastating blow to these already weakened, southernmost Mongolian communities. In the aftermath of the massacre, many local Mongols migrated northward and took refuge in northern banners, bringing about the agriculturalisation of the area. By the 1940s, already more than 200,000 Mongols had settled in the northern banners (Inaho Kikutake 1941: 28–9).

The Jindandao insurgence was the biggest event in the Mongolian area from the end of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, and it brought about a fundamental reorganisation of Mongolian society. Particularly, it spurred the rapid agriculturalisation of the Mongolian banners at the southeastern foot of the Hingan mountains caused by the migration of large numbers of Mongol refugees from the Josutu League and the southern part of the Jo’ude League, both agricultural zones.

It is also abundantly clear from the recent researches that currently the majority of the residents in the Mongolian agricultural villages at the southern foot of the Hingan mountains hail from the Josutu League and the Aouhan Banner of the Jo’uda League (Burensain Borjigin 2003). This was confirmed by this author’s recent fieldwork investigation in the Aruhorchin banner. A study in 1939 during the Manchuko era found that many of the residents in West Sarhoolai village of the Naiman Banner (Juntaro Yamane & Masao Muraoka 1944) were refugees who escaped from the Jindandao massacre. It is also known that the agricultural development in the Horchin
Right Wing Front Banner (formerly known as the Jasagtu Banner) was initiated by many Mongol refugees from the Josutu League escaping the Jindandao massacre (Zhang Wenxi 1990). Owen Lattimore (1934) also recorded that in 1930 Mongols migrants from the Josutu League were employed to work the land at Manchu Tun (village) located in the upper stream of the Toor River (25 kilometres to the southwest of Solun).

CONCLUSION

It is well known that in socialist China, there is one simple paradigm in writing history. Since the main purpose of their writing history is to overthrow the reactionary regimes in history, those who had been denounced as traitors or rebels by the past authorities are then reevaluated as revolutionary or progressive. The evaluation of the Jindandao insurgence as an anti-imperialist, anti-federal peasant uprising is characteristic of this paradigmatic thinking, and it is not worth further counter-argument. However, where it does not necessarily follow the Chinese historiographical paradigm, we must take note.

For example, although reactionary regimes from the Qing to the warlords had habitually called rebellious Mongols Mongol Bandits. (Meng Fei) or Barbarian Bandits. (Hu Fei), not all of them have been reevaluated as positively as Gada Meiren (Burensain Borjigin 2002), and to a lesser extent Togtohu Taiji (Tatsuo Nakami 1995). The problem is that China chooses to conceal historical facts of inter-ethnic bloodshed as much as possible, and uses history as a weapon to achieve unity of the state. As a result, although historical truth was recorded in documents prepared by Mongolian victims such as the one left by Wang Guojun, and even though the truth of the insurgence was told faithfully by the Chinese themselves in local histories such as the Annals of Chengde Fu, written before 1949, the truth has been suppressed in socialist China.

Mongol victims of the Jindandao insurgence with their strong memories of the horror have refused to accept the insurgence as a just peasant uprising. Their articulations were facilitated by the collapse of the Soviet Union and regimes in Eastern Europe and its serious implication for the multiethnic China, which faced similar ethnic tensions. This international situation gave the minorities the best opportunity to engage in ‘legitimate struggle’ to put pressure on the Chinese Communist Party to improve its treatment of minorities (Bulag 2002). Although China tightened its rule of the minority regions, the state still had to listen to the complaints and discontents expressed by the ethnic minorities. The request to revaluation of the so-called ‘Jindandao Incident’ by the Mongols who live in the former Josutu League area was really a burst of their discontent, which had been repressed for many years. However, despite several years’ protest from the Mongols, the official Chinese stance on the ‘Jindandao Incident’ has not changed. For the Chinese to change their stance would require their fundamental rejection of the ideology that frames the studies of modern and contemporary histories of China and that justifies the system in contemporary China. The Mongols know the futility of their protest, but for them, making protest is no less meaningful than getting the rightful conclusion.

NOTES

[1] It was also known as Xue Hao Dui or Hong Mao Zi.

[2] Present day Chaoyang city and Fuxin city of Liaoning province and the Chengde area of Hebei province.
The Fuxin Mongolian Autonomic County was established on the basis of the Tumed Left Wing Banner (a.k.a. Mongoljin Banner) of former Josutu League in 1958. Chaoyang Municipality was built on the Harachin Left Wing Mongolian Autonomic County which was organized from the former Harachin Left Wing Banner. Currently, there are 150,000 Mongols in the Fuxin Mongolian Autonomic County with a total population of 700,000. Chaoyang Municipality or the former Harachin Left Wing Mongolian Autonomic County has 50,000 Mongols in a total population of 350,000.

Protestors were mainly retired cadres.

The source is omitted here in order to protect the identities of the people involved.

Although the Qing dynasty in general forbade Chinese from settling and cultivating land in Mongolia, it rented Mongol land to Chinese refugees from Shandong and Zhili areas, who flooded into the Josutu League in large numbers. This policy was called Jiedi Yangmin.

According to Liu Yingyuan (1985), the childhood name of Li Shouxin was Nasunbayar or San Lama. His ancestors migrated around the eras of Kangxi, Yongzheng, and Qianlong.

Long Zhou is an error for Jianzhou. It was in the southwest of today.s Chaoyang. Long Zhou of the Liao Dynasty was at the location of Huanglong Fu, and Daning Lu of the Yuan time was far away from Zhong Jing of Liao. Daning Lu was changed to Beijing Lu in the seventh year of Zhiyuan or 1270, and its jurisdiction covered areas north of the Great Wall and south of Chifeng, and areas between Pingquan and Yebaishou.


Goulbagan-a, Togtanbayar, Agula, Tunggalag, Gereltu (1991: 331). Wu Sousong, Togtanbayar, and Agula discovered the family genealogy from the home Li Sutang in Modun Ayil of Yeke Gurban Tolugai Gacag-a in 1989. It was compiled in 1873 or the eighth year of Guangxu.

This temple was built in the eighth year of Kangxi or 1669.

From the end of the nineteenth century to the 1930s Chinese settlers in Mongol banner lands organized numerous religious cults and secret societies. Lingshandao activities in the southern Jirim League in the 1920s were documented in 'The Lingshandao Organization’in Jirim League Archive and the article ‘The Lingshandao in Naiman, published in The Cultural and Historical Materials of the Naiman Banner.
Wang Yuhai's (1999) reference to it was a rare exception. Although Wang Yuhai quoted descriptions from Nei Menggu Jiwen faithfully, his research framed the insurgency as one related to land and class struggle. He concluded his book saying that the Mongolia and Chinese laboring people lived together peacefully, and there was no fundamental conflict of interest between them. (Wang Yuhai 1999: 131-5).

The six points are in Wang Guojun (1994: 124-5).

According to Zhongguo Renmin Zhengzhi Xieshang Huiyi Chifeng Shi Weiyuanhui Wenshi Ziliao Weiyuanhui (1989: 138), Jindandao declared the following 10 religious commandments: 1. Do not shave hair. 2. Do not drink liquor. 3. Do not smoke tobacco. 4. Do not do rape. 5. Do not gamble. 6. Do not conceal a Mongol. 7. Do not take people's property. 8. Practice filial piety. 9. Do not kill draft ox. 10. Do not bully people. In an article entitled 'Jindandao Qishi Qinliji' ('Eyewitness Account of the Jindandao Insurgence') by Li Yuting (ibid: 150-51) we find two of the 13 military disciplinary items ordered by the founder Yang Yuechun: 'Anyone in our army and among civilians who releases a Mongol or conceals a (Mongol) relative or friend will be executed'. 'Mongols are our old enemies. Anyone who is revealed to have released or concealed a Mongol out of sympathy will be executed immediately and his house and property will be awarded to the informer.'Li was one of the few Mongol survivors who escaped from the Aouhan banner government.

Chaoyang Xianzhi, Chapter 33.

REFERENCES


