The foundation of the Manchu Empire and the Mongols, based on the a Daicing gurun i fukjin doro neihe bodogon i bithe

The main points of the PhD dissertation

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Background

Mongolian territories located south of the Gobi desert became part of the Manchu Empire in the first half of the 17th century. According to today’s history books, the Manchu leader, Hung Taiji (ruled between 1626-1643) was elected to be the ruler of the Mongolians in 1636. However, Manchu sources and recently published Mongolian archives suggest that a reevaluation of these processes has become necessary.

Sources

The primary source used for this paper was *The Strategy of the Foundation of the Manchu Empire* (*daicing gurun i fukjin doro neihe bodogon i bithe*), its compilation started in 1774, upon request of Emperor Qianlong (ruled between 1735–1796). The compilation lasted for thirteen years, finally it was published in 32 printed volumes. The work describes the development of the empire from the Manchu legend of origin until 1644, the entry of the Manchus to Beijing. The text follows a strict chronological order, focus is placed predominantly on political and military events, with the Manchu ruler being in the focal point in all cases. The work opens with a poetic summary of the content, partly written by the emperor, Qianlong. *The Strategy of the Foundation of the Manchu Empire* is a core source in spite of the fact that the compilation is dated much after the events actually took place. In order to be able to better analyse the source, I have typed the whole text (amounting to nearly 500 pages).

Another fundamental source regarding the events of 1636 is the registry book of the ministry dealing with Mongolian affairs, published in Mongolian language, which records the events on a daily basis (it was published in a facsimile form in 2004, titled *Mongyol dangsa ebkemel-ün emkidkel*).

Methods

Having typed in the entire text of the primary source, *The Strategy of the Foundation of the Manchu Empire*, the search for certain words became simple. The search for the expression used for submission, *dahame ji-* , allowed for collecting all the tribes that opted for Manchu sovereignty. This was used to compile a list including the date of submission of certain tribes (or dates, since not all tribes submitted to the Manchu Empire at the same time). This allowed for the drafting of the process of how the Manchu Empire was formed. Studying the two crucial events of 1616 and 1636 (the foundation and the restructuring of the empire), contemporary Manchu and Mongolian sources were consulted in order to reconstruct the flow of events.
Structure

Following the general introduction, including among others an overview of the Mongolian-Jurchen relations, the paper describes the primary source, *The Strategy of the Foundation of the Manchu Empire*. Further explanation of the Manchu storytelling, historical attitudes, and versification was necessary, since the source includes a poetic summary, the translation of which is included in my dissertation. Following the description of the source, the paper provides an overview of the structure of the Manchu Empire as well as the role of the Mongolians. The new results of the research are included in this part of the paper.

A page of *The Strategy of the Foundation of the Manchu Empire*
Results
(The process of the creation of the empire and the role of the Mongolians)

The foundation of the Manchu Empire comprised of two phases: in 1616, Nurhaci established the “national” empire consisting almost completely of Jurchens, the reason for which is rooted in the dramatic increase in the number of subjects in the period between 1610 and 1615.

The unification of the Jurchen tribes was mostly finished by 1619, following which Nurhaci started focusing on Chinese and Mongolian territories, and the exchange of messengers with various Mongolian tribes became more frequent. Mongolians responded to the challenges caused by the increasing power of the Manchus in basically three ways: resistance, forming alliance, or becoming Manchus (which, in practice, meant being listed among the Manchu families). The smallest of these groups was those who resisted, while the majority chose to submit to the Manchus, or to become Manchus after their submission.

From the beginning of the 1620s, various Mongolian groups started arriving to the Manchu court from Mongolian territories, sometimes with the arrival of merely one family, whereas on other occasions with the arrival of thousands of people. This process came to an end by the beginning of the 1630s. Evidence supporting this is the great number of people taking part in the campaign against Ligdan in 1632. Furthermore, the laws imposed by Hung Taiji in 1634 on the Mongolian tribes inhabiting the territories situated south of the Gobi desert suggest the existence of a subordinate, dependent relationship.

The years of 1635 and 1636 were devoted to the restructuring of the Manchu empire, this was the time when the Manchu name was taken on, the empire was ceremonially likewise given a new name (Daicing gurun), and Hung Taiji acquired the title of emperor. One of the heydays of the restructuring process was the summit of Mukden, which Mongolian noblemen also attended.
Publications connected to the topic of the dissertation

1. Монгол сурвалж дахь Aisin Gioro-гийн гарлын тухай домгууд. Угсаатан судлал. Том. XX.
2. Тávoli kapcsolat a közeli ellen – Nurhacsi első káni címe. „Közel, s Távol” III. Az
   Eötvös Collegium Orientalisztikai Műhely éves konferenciájának előadásaiból. Szerk.
4. Vers a mandzsu birodalom megalapításáról. 1. rész: bevezetés és szövegkiadás. Távol-
5. Vers a mandzsu birodalom megalapításáról, 2. rész: fordítás. Távol-Keleti Tanulmányok
6. Mandzsuk és a történelem. „Közel, s Távol” IV. Az Eötvös Collegium Orientalisztikai
   Műhely éves konferenciájának előadásaiból. Szerk. Takó Ferenc. Eötvös Collegium,
   Budapest, 2016.