

Book Reviews

Forging the Golden Urn: The Qing Empire and the Politics of Reincarnation in Tibet. By Max Oidtmann. New York: Columbia University Press, 2018. Pp. xvii + 330. \$65.00.

The relationship between Qing rulers and Tibetan Buddhist clergy has proved open to conflicting interpretations. Max Oidtmann's *Forging the Golden Urn: The Qing Empire and the Politics of Reincarnation in Tibet* is one of the most sophisticated and successful studies of this subject. Artfully structured as a story in three acts, it concentrates on the Qianlong emperor's 1792 decision to mandate a Golden Urn lottery for determining succession in the reincarnation lines dominating the Tibetan Buddhist world, and the implementation of this policy over the next six years. As his structure suggests, Oidtmann regards this short span as a decisive turning point. Requiring the use of the Golden Urn marked an assertion of Qing state control at the expense of the Geluk church's ability to select its own leadership. Why, then, was this imposition accepted with little overt resistance? Oidtmann's convincing answer to this question, based on an analysis of the manoeuvrings of many actors, will give this study a prominent place in future considerations of Tibet's place in the Qing empire.

Oidtmann begins his story at a moment when two Gurkha invasions of Tibet within four years (1788 and 1791) had exposed serious limitations in Qing imperial oversight. Qianlong's forceful response to this crisis has been recognized as the apex of Qing influence in Tibet before the twentieth century. Previous studies have tended to focus on a package of administrative reforms (the "Twenty-nine Articles") and the trenchant essay, *Lama shuo* 喇嘛說 (On lamas), in which Qianlong enumerated the moral failings of the Tibetan Buddhist clergy. This study, by contrast, concentrates on Qianlong's decision to adapt a method of personnel selection devised for Chinese bureaucrats—drawing lots from an urn—in order to identify reincarnations of high-ranking lamas (that is, *trülku*). In a narrow sense, the author's agenda centres on the questions raised by this importation of a Chinese technique of secular bureaucratic control into Geluk practice: What inspired Qianlong to make this decision? Whose input shaped this emerging policy? What did the emperor hope to achieve, and how did his aims change over time? And, perhaps most importantly, how was this reform received by the Tibetan Buddhist clergy, diverse both in its geographic location and degree of intimacy with the Qing court?

Prominent among the book's dramatis personae are the emperor's agents in the field. At the time of the Gurkha invasions, Tibet was closer to being a state-within-

a-state than any other part of the empire, with its own troops, tax collection, legal and administrative systems, and even its own diplomacy with other Himalayan states. Its government was supervised by two *ambans* dispatched from Beijing, who, in principle, wielded considerable authority but, particularly after the conquest of the Junghars in the late 1750s seemingly eliminated any serious threat to Qing control, rarely chose to invoke it. To reassert control, Qianlong dispatched two elite Manchu troubleshooters, Fuk'anggan 福康安 (1754–1796) and Heliyen 和琳 (1753–1796). Both had impeccable connections, Fuk'anggan being the son of the late Fuheng 傅恆 (1722–1770), one of Qianlong's most cherished ministers, and Heliyen the younger brother of Hešen 和珅 (1750–1799), the emperor's most intimate advisor. Later, in 1794, Qianlong dispatched the Mongol bannerman Sungyun 松筠 (1754–1835), a leading expert in frontier management. This formidable cohort of trusted agents allowed Qianlong to enforce his significant changes.

The plot of Oidtmann's drama can be quickly summarized. The first of his three acts concerns Qianlong's original decision to use the Golden Urn. On 17 August 1792, with Fuk'anggan and Heliyen already in Tibet, the emperor first broached the idea of shifting to a lottery for identifying *trülku*. His initial commitment to this radical innovation was tentative, and, as he sought a range of feedback, the urn's "basic procedure and metaphysical meanings were subject to negotiation, debate, and reinterpretation by the court, its field officials, and Tibetan elites" (p. 89). Act II, "Shamanic Colonialism," the book's longest chapter, details the earliest operation of the two Golden Urns in Beijing and Lhasa. Oracular divination, in the form of four human mediums channelling protector deities, had played an important role in the identification of reincarnations. Qianlong eventually decided not only to deprive these oracles of input, but to launch a campaign, with the lukewarm participation of Fuk'anggan and the eager aid of Heliyen, to openly discredit them in the eyes of the Tibetan clergy and wider public. For Qianlong, "the fundamental purpose of the new statute had become the elimination of the oracles" (p. 146). The final act, "Amdowas Speaking in Code," shifts focus to the selection of the Third Jamyang Zhepa, based at Labrang monastery in Amdo, comparing the Qing official record to the ways leading Geluk clerics represented the decision. Qianlong's decision to rig this urn draw to eliminate the candidate child initially favoured by his home community could have made this selection highly contentious. In fact, however, Buddhist elites confirmed the legitimacy of the choice, a milestone of the Golden Urn's acceptance.

A signal accomplishment of this book is its skill in pairing archival documents in Manchu and Chinese with a close analysis of complementary accounts in Tibetan. In *Soulstealers*,¹ which Oidtmann invokes as an inspiration, Philip A. Kuhn used

¹ Philip A. Kuhn, *Soulstealers: The Chinese Sorcery Scare of 1768* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

a single case to offer profound insights into the relationship between an emperor and his officials. This book applies a similar method to Qing Inner Asia, uncovering the subtle dynamics of imperial governance by charting in detail the conception, implementation, and reception of a single, crisis-inspired policy shift. As with the soul-stealing case, Qianlong's battle with spiritual forces threatening to unleash social disorder led him to recognize the limits of his own intelligence networks. The emperor proceeded with caution, shifting his goals (and his mood) as events developed (p. 143). He was careful not to publicly commit to a course of action before testing how it was received by the Tibetan clergy. "Behind the bluster of his public utterances, the limits and uncertainties of imperial influence on Tibet and the Geluk are revealed" (p. 141).

In imperial eyes, Tibet was important chiefly as the home of influential Tibetan Buddhist clerics and monasteries. As Oidtmann puts it, "Qing rulers and their advisors understood no existence of 'Tibet' distinct from its contemporaneous configuration as a domain of the Geluk church" (p. 22). The Geluk church, in turn, was regarded as a keystone of social and political order among the Mongols, and consequently essential for the stability of Qing Inner Asia. Thus, for Qianlong, "the seeming moral collapse of the Tibetan ecclesiastic elite" (p. 61) had implications far beyond central Tibet. The imperial diagnosis was that excessive autonomy had corrupted the Buddhist clergy, and the proposed cure was to subject the commanding heights of the Tibetan Buddhist church, the *trülku* lineages, to the Qing law. Thus, Qianlong's Golden Urn aimed to restore confidence in the Geluk church (p. 88). A central contention of this book is that laws and regulations, not religious patronage nor military force, were the instruments Qianlong ultimately used to bind Tibet more tightly to the empire.

Oidtmann regards the Qing central state's relationship with Tibet in this period as "colonial," a term he uses to highlight "the processes of cultural creation and social differentiation [*sic*] that facilitated the political dominance of the metropole or elite minorities over an indigenous majority" (p. 40). Qing rulers and officials denigrated Tibetan oracles by acknowledged them as superficially similar, but fundamentally inferior, to counterparts in the "interior" (*Ma. dorgi ba*). In this, Oidtmann argues, they resembled the attitudes of British colonial officials interpreting Indian practices (p. 109). More broadly, Qianlong's claim that the integrity of his own state gave him the authority to reform the Tibetan Buddhist church, in effect saving it from its own worst instincts, reveals a colonial mindset.

At the same time, Oidtmann is careful to show that the urn was received as something more than a foreign technology forced upon colonial subjects. Despite his disillusionment, Qianlong never forgot the need to engage and persuade, and Geluk clerics played a role in shaping his reform. Oidtmann shows "the degree to which the Qing court officials were able to use monks based at imperially sponsored institutions such as Yonghegong or the monasteries at Chengde to convey imperial

policy to local elites in Tibet and Mongolia” (p. 104). These monks, for instance, likely suggested switching from a cylindrical Chinese *tong* 筒 to a bulbous Tibetan *bum pa* (p. 266, n. 94). Invoking Johan Elverskog’s concept of a “Qing cosmopolitan culture” (p. 163), Oidtmann shows how the “work of repackaging the [Golden Urn] ritual for consumption by Tibetan Buddhists was undertaken primarily by indigenous elites. The result was a cosmopolitan, ritual amalgam invented in the context of Qing colonialism” (p. 193). Thus, after several layers of interpretation and adaptation, the Golden Urn became “an original Qing ritual” created “out of Tibetan and Chinese components” (p. 163). The durability of the Qing rule must therefore be explained not only at the level of imperial policymaking, but in the ways local elites turned such a policy to their advantage, becoming partners in empire. Qianlong’s “civilizing project” (p. 41) was not to transform Tibet into China, but to impose the Qing law.

Historians of the Qing empire will be particularly interested in the argument that the years 1792–1793 marked a decisive shift in the imperial relationship with Tibet. For Oidtmann, the significance of this moment comes from the intersection of several factors: the complete withdrawal of sovereignty from the Geluk church, the collapse of the “priest-patron” relationship that offered leading Geluk clerics a measure of influence on Qing policy, and a closer identification of the Qing empire with “China.”

The process by which the Qing state established control in Tibet was gradual and open to interpretation. Both official Qing sources and current historiography generally date the first emergence of a real Qing authority to the last decades of the Kangxi period.² After 1720, emperors reserved the right to approve the form of Tibet’s administration. In 1728, when Yongzheng accepted the domination of Tibet by a powerful secular ruler, the Dalai Lama was exiled from Lhasa. Even after his return in 1735, the Dalai Lama remained a “mere cypher.”³ When this arrangement seemed to threaten the Qing control, Qianlong oversaw another reordering that in

² Luciano Petech regards Kangxi’s dispatch of He-shou in 1709 as an abortive “first attempt to establish a sort of protectorate in Tibet”; such a protectorate was established after Kangxi’s later “conquest” of Tibet from the Junghars in 1720. For Matthew Kapstein, “the second quarter of the eighteenth century is when Tibet became in some sense a Manchu ‘protectorate.’” Peter Schwieger goes further, suggesting that already in the time of Lajang Khan (1705–1717) Kangxi can be seen as “acting . . . as the sovereign in Tibetan affairs.” See L. Petech, *China and Tibet in the Early XVIIIth Century: History of the Establishment of Chinese Protectorate in Tibet*, 2nd, rev. ed. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), p. 19; Matthew Kapstein, “Imperial Directives in the Language of *chō-yōn*,” in *Sacred Mandates: Asian International Relations since Chinggis Khan*, ed. Timothy Brook, Michael van Walt van Praag, and Miek Boltjes (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018), p. 116; Peter Schwieger, *The Dalai Lama and the Emperor of China: A Political History of the Tibetan Institution of Reincarnation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), p. 121.

³ Petech, *China and Tibet*, p. 193.

1751 restored the Dalai Lama's leading position in the governance of Tibet, aided by a council composed chiefly of Tibetan aristocrats. In principle, the emperor and his *ambans* reserved to themselves considerable authority, but in practice, with the Junghar menace eliminated, they gave the Tibetan government great latitude. Some characterize this post-1750 arrangement as one in which the Dalai Lama held "sovereignty"; others emphasize that he was subject to imperial commands.⁴ On the surface, the reforms of 1792–1793 were less dramatic than the reorderings of the 1720s or 1751, and can be seen as a fine-tuning of the 1751 settlement to facilitate greater *amban* oversight.⁵ For Oidtmann, by contrast, the Golden Urn marks a qualitative shift: a "permanent transfer of sovereignty to the dynasty" and an "overt assertion of sovereignty in Tibet" (p. 54). Central to his argument is the Manchu term *toose*, which he glosses as "authority to make the final decision" (p. 54). In his view, what was new in 1792 was Qianlong's decision to "extend the application of the 'king's law' to the Geluk church and the confiscation of their sovereignty (Ma. *toose*)," thus gaining "[f]ull control of Tibet" (pp. 91–92). Although the application of the Golden Urn was indeed an innovation, it was not without precedent: in the late 1750s, after a rebellion among the Khalkha Mongols, Qianlong had mandated that future incarnations of the powerful Jebtsundamba Khutughtu lineage be found in Tibet (p. 62). The Golden Urn represented a more systematic and explicit statement that the emperor set the parameters within which incarnations could be chosen.

Why did the Geluk church continue to hold a vestige of autonomy, or even sovereignty, as late as 1792? One explanation is that early Qing emperors, Mongol khans, and Tibetan Buddhist clerics shared a common conception of "Buddhist government" (*törü šasin*) and were committed to building a political order in which secular and spiritual authorities would cooperate.⁶ In this arrangement, *trülku* were more than mere subjects and implicitly had a mandate to guide imperial governance. Another explanation, not incompatible, is that *ambans* were both the personal representatives of the emperor in his capacity as a devout Buddhist and enforcers of Qing state regulations. Under these circumstances, the former identity could efface the latter.⁷ Oidtmann's interpretation of the relationship hews more closely to that of

⁴ Ibid., pp. 231–32; Schwieger, *The Dalai Lama*, p. 158.

⁵ Petech, *China and Tibet*, p. 260. He describes these reforms as only a "modification" of the existing order, granting *ambans* direct rather than indirect powers.

⁶ Ishihama Yumiko, "The Notion of 'Buddhist Government' (*chos srid*) Shared by Tibet, Mongol and Manchu in the Early 17th Century," in *The Relationship between Religion and State* (*chos srid zung 'brel*) in *Traditional Tibet*, ed. Christoph Cüppers (Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2004), pp. 15–31.

⁷ Komatsubara Yuri 小松原ゆり, "Jūhachi seiki kōhanki no Chūzō daijin: Darairama seiken ni taisuru Chūzō daijin no dōkō to yakuwari" 18世紀後半期の駐蔵大臣—ダライラマ政権に対する駐蔵大臣の動向と役割, *Sundai shigaku* 駿台史学 128 (August 2006), p. 12.

Peter Schwieger, who notes the long-term tendency of Qing emperors to assert their hierarchical superiority even as they offered patronage and sought spiritual guidance. In 1792, Oidtmann argues, Qianlong went further than claiming to be the predominant partner. The concept of “Buddhist government” as a partnership between state and clergy was abandoned, and “the emperor arrogated to himself the roles of both patron *and* priest” (p. 134; original italics).

Revoking the vestiges of Geluk autonomy marked a shift in the Qing imperial identity. In Oidtmann’s view, Qianlong and his agents were asserting not just the supremacy of the Qing state but, “increasingly in the late 1700s, ‘China’” (p. 40). The Golden Urn itself, of course, was originally a Chinese technology. Its implementation showed that “[w]orries that preoccupied the court in sustaining its rule over China were beginning to bleed into the way it thought about Inner Asia” (p. 77). To be sure, Qianlong did not wish to promote Chinese culture in Tibet, if that is taken to mean the cultural and moral values of Confucianism. There is little reason to doubt his claim that he aimed to safeguard the continued dominance of Buddhism. Moreover, Qianlong was hardly succumbing to the wishes of the Han Chinese elite, still less granting them political influence in Inner Asia. To the contrary, Oidtmann acknowledges that “Qing rule over China could be as ‘colonial’ as its governance in the outer regions” (p. 41). If Qianlong used his professed mastery of Buddhist teachings to deny the religious authority of the Geluk clergy, he applied similar tactics to tame the Confucian literati. What made the Qing state overlap with “China” was its increasing commitment to rule by an emperor conceived in the Chinese political tradition as the sole authority. No longer was there room for parallel sources of moral or spiritual instruction, or for identities other than monarch and subject. The increasing “Chineseness” of the Qing central government did not challenge the presence in the realm of Tibetan Buddhism and its clergy, but rather required their full subordination to the state. From the Tibetan perspective, this turn might not have been unexpected. In Tibet and Amdo, “Tibetan texts seldom distinguished ‘China’ from the Great Qing” (p. 276, n. 162).⁸ By the 1820s, there is evidence that at least some Tibetan scholars were coming to regard themselves as being ruled by an alien and unsympathetic China, not a devout Buddhist emperor (p. 213).

Oidtmann nestles his study of the period between 1792 and 1798 within a lengthy introduction and conclusion demonstrating his mastery of the long sweep of Qing-Geluk relations and their legacy up to the present. A closer consideration of the decade or so leading up to the beginning of his Act I in 1792 would strengthen

⁸ There was doubtless a link between Tibetan and Oirat views of the Qing as “China”: see Hosung Shim, “Oyirad Terms for the Manchus,” *Saksaha: A Journal of Manchu Studies* 15 (2018), pp. 113–36.

his argument that Qianlong was asserting the supremacy of imperial law. Although the Golden Urn idea originated in 1792 and its proximate cause was Qianlong's dissatisfaction with the corruption and disorder made evident by the second Gurkha invasion, the move to assert full Qing sovereignty seems to have been part of a more gradual shift. In 1780, twelve years before his introduction of the Golden Urn, Qianlong received the Panchen Lama in Jehol and Beijing with perhaps the most ostentatious deference ever accorded by a Qing ruler to a *trülku*. Although Qianlong's reception reflected his personal faith, he also followed his predecessors in recognizing that patronage of the Geluk church was crucial for the Qing imperial project. Yet Manchu emperors were familiar with Chinese histories attributing the downfall of the Yuan partly to the fact that its khans, from excessive religious piety, had allowed clergy to interfere in secular governance. Patronage had therefore always been paired with assurances that the Qing law would guard against clerical abuses.⁹

Qianlong's reception of the Panchen Lama was perhaps the closest the Qing state came to upsetting this delicate balance. Ishihama Yumiko 石濱裕美子 has shown that he was not only excused from virtually all the ritual obligations normally owed by subjects to the emperor, but himself made the object of imperially mandated veneration by much of the court. Qianlong evidently made the obeisance due to a teacher and may have worn a monk's robe during the visit.¹⁰ Some at court were likely dismayed by this reception. Korean envoys at first refused to make an obeisance before a "Tibetan monk" (番僧) and had to be ordered to do so.¹¹ According to Korean reports, a *juren* 舉人 from Shanxi was executed partly for submitting a

⁹ David Farquhar writes that "[t]here is, in fact, substantial evidence that these founding emperors disliked lamas and their influence on the Mongols." Tak Sing Kam notes that "[t]he Manchus did not conceal their anti-clericalism." As early as 1636, Hong Taiji 皇太極 excoriated lamas for various forms of reprehensible behaviour, remarking that "the lamas of today should be called deceivers, they should not be called lamas" (*te i lama sabe holo seci acambi. lama seci ojarahū*). See David M. Farquhar, "Emperor as Bodhisattva in the Governance of the Ch'ing Empire," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 38, no. 1 (June 1978), p. 20; Tak Sing Kam, "Manchu-Tibetan Relations in the Early Seventeenth Century: A Reappraisal" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1994), p. 98; *Manwen rōtō* 滿文老檔, trans. and annot. Kanda Nobuo 神田信夫 et al. (Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 1962), v. 6, p. 961.

¹⁰ Ishihama Yumiko, *Chibetto Bukkyō sekai no rekishiteki kenkyū* チベット仏教世界の歴史的研究 (Tokyo: Tōhō shoten, 2001), pp. 337–40.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 339; Hanung Kim, "Another Tibet at the Heart of Qing China: Location of Tibetan Buddhism in the Mentality of the Qing Chinese Mind at Jehol," in *Greater Tibet: An Examination of Borders, Ethnic Boundaries, and Cultural Areas*, ed. P. Christiaan Klieger (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016), p. 40.

document criticizing Qianlong's excessive reverence.¹² A more prudent Han literatus spoke bitterly to this Korean mission about the return of a Tibetan monk depicted in Yuan sources as interfering in government.¹³

Qianlong was likely well aware of the political risk he ran, especially as a non-Han ruler. He informed officials that they could bow to the Panchen Lama as a private act of faith, but not a formal act of state.¹⁴ In 1785, responding to a case of lost property involving an emissary of the new Panchen Lama, he accused some lamas of bullying Chinese officials. There was no need, he stressed, for bureaucrats to shy away from enforcing the law from fear that lamas wielded political clout in Beijing. Remarkably, in a span of eleven days he issued three edicts raising the fear that his relationship with Buddhist clergy was misunderstood: "may we not expect that the ignorant will come to fear that our dynasty is excessive in its veneration of lamas, like the sheltering of Tibetan monks in the late Yuan?" (外間無識之徒，不幾疑本朝於喇嘛，過事尊崇，如元季之庇護番僧).¹⁵ His awareness of the perceived conflict between piety and good government is evident following the first Gurkha invasion in 1788. In that year, as Komatsubara Yuri has shown, he charged that *ambans* were paying excessive deference to the Dalai and Panchen Lamas, and thereby neglecting their duty of oversight. In 1790 he was worried that if he failed to restrain the misguided wishes of the Dalai Lama, this would dampen the Mongol faith in the Geluk church.¹⁶ In 1792, as Oidtmann shows, he justified his decision to punish lamas in Tibet by citing the need to avoid baleful Yuan examples (pp. 67–68). He invoked the same commitment to avoiding the Yuan precedent in his *Lama shuo* (p. 240). In short, it seems that Qianlong had come to fear that he was losing—and was perceived to be losing—the balance his ancestors had achieved between venerating the Tibetan Buddhist clergy as a spiritual force and tightly managing their secular role. The Golden Urn was a forceful solution to this predicament.

How did the elite cohort of banner men tasked with executing Qianlong's policy toward the Geluk church respond to this delicate moment? In 1780, they had joined Qianlong in his deferential welcome. According to the Korean envoy, grand councillors attended the Panchen Lama dressed as monks, and Qianlong's sixth son

¹² Ishihama, *Chibetto Bukkyō*, pp. 340–41; Kim, "Another Tibet," p. 48.

¹³ Kim, "Another Tibet," pp. 47–48.

¹⁴ Nobuaki Murakami, "Etiquette and the Communication of Power Relations," in *Sacred Mandates*, p. 141.

¹⁵ *Qing shilu: Gaozong Chun huangdi shilu* 清實錄：高宗純皇帝實錄, *juan* 1229, edict of 50/4/29 (6 June 1785). These edicts date to QL50/4/19 (27 May 1785), QL50/4/20 (28 May 1785), and QL50/4/29 (6 June 1785). Cf. Hirano Satoshi 平野聡, *Shin teikoku to Chibetto mondai: Taminzoku tōgō no seiritsu to gakai* 清帝国とチベット問題—多民族統合の成立と瓦解 (Nagoya: Nagoya daigaku shuppankai, 2004), pp. 122–23.

¹⁶ Komatsubara, "Jūhachi seiki," pp. 1–19.

Yong-rong 永瑔 (1744–1790) joined his father in paying him ritual deference. No less a figure than the president of the Board of Rites, Deboo 德保 (1719–1789), angrily threw his hat on the ground when the Koreans refused to make an obeisance.¹⁷ Fucanggan 福長安 (d. 1817), a probationary grand councilor, personally served the Panchen Lama, as Hešen served the emperor.¹⁸ It seems that no bannermen openly demurred, but there are hints that some in the banner elite were dissatisfied. The Koreans met a high-ranking Manchu *jinshi* 進士 in the Confucian school in Jehol, who “condemned Buddhism with great sternness” (斥佛甚峻).¹⁹ Zhao-lian 昭槿 (1776–1829), an unofficial historian of the banner milieu, lauded the attitude of Umitai 伍彌泰 (d. 1786), a Mongol bannerman who had served two tours as *amban* in Lhasa:

班禪額爾德尼來朝，上命公護送，往返數千里，公不與談，不和南稱弟子，惟行主賓之誼。先恭王赴質莊親王約，同謁班禪於清淨化城，公岸然曰：「王素守儒道者，奚必隨人蹊徑至此？」王退告人曰：「此行有愧於伍公多矣。」其嚴正也若此。²⁰

When the Panchen Lama came to court, the emperor ordered his lordship to escort him, a round-trip journey of several thousand *li*. His lordship did not chat with him, and he did not prostrate himself in worship [*vandana*] or declare himself a disciple, but merely fulfilled the obligations between a host and a guest. The late Prince Gong fulfilled an appointment he had made with Prince Zhizhuang [Yong-rong] and went together with him to pay his respects to the Panchen Lama in the Qingjing Huacheng. His lordship [Umitai] loftily remarked: “You, prince, have always maintained the Confucian Way. Why must you follow others down a path to this point?” The prince withdrew and told someone: “This behaviour has caused me much shame before his lordship Umitai.” Such was his strict righteousness.²¹

In another anecdote, Zhao-lian extolled the Manchu general Fiyanggū for killing a “living Buddha” who had dared to behave insolently before the Kangxi emperor. To justify himself Fiyanggū stated, “Although a Tibetan monk may be worthy of respect, he is also a subject. How can I allow him to be arrogant before my lord, disordering

¹⁷ Ishihama, *Chibetto Bukkyō*, p. 339; Kim, “Another Tibet,” p. 40.

¹⁸ Pak Chi-wŏn 朴趾源, *Yŏrha ilgi* 熱河日記 (Seoul: Taeyang Sŏjŏk, 1973), v. 2, pp. 262–63.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 122. This was Cifengge 奇豐額 (d. 1806), of the Manchu Plain White Banner, then appointed provincial surveillance commissioner of Guizhou. He told the envoys that he was of Korean ancestry. Cf. Kim, “Another Tibet,” pp. 43–44.

²⁰ Zhao-lian, *Xiaoting zalu* 嘯亭雜錄 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), pp. 293–94.

²¹ Qingjing Huacheng, also known as the Xihuang Si 西黃寺, was the residence of the Panchen Lama during his stay in Beijing.

the laws of our state?” (番僧雖尊，亦人臣也。豈可使其倨於君父前，亂我國法).²² Both anecdotes hint at concerns that powerful *trülku* were incompatible with the Confucian state order. Not surprisingly, Zhao-lian lauded the Golden Urn policy.²³

If we accept this portrait of Umitai as a self-conscious Confucian *amban*, this raises the question of how far a schism within the Manchu and Mongol banner elite, between those personally devoted to Tibetan Buddhism and those sceptical of its influence, may have played out in the realm of policy. In 1790, Qianlong removed a pair of feuding *ambans*, one charged with allowing his piety to interfere with his political duties, and the other who apparently refused to meet the Dalai Lama at all.²⁴ Among Qianlong's agents in Tibet during the implementation of the Golden Urn, Fuk'anggan, whose younger brother had personally attended on the Panchen Lama, leaned toward the side of devotion (pp. 206–7); he evidently would have prostrated himself if the Dalai Lama had not tactfully urged him to desist (pp. 57–58). Heliyen, whose older brother Hešen was also a grand councillor during the Panchen Lama's visit, flatly declined to make an obeisance, which Oidtmann describes as “a radical and not entirely authorized act” (p. 69). Sungyun, a Mongol bannerman, whom Zhao-lian praised for “reading the books of Song Confucians from his childhood” (幼讀宋儒之書), followed the imperial command not to make a prostration.²⁵ One wonders whether he, like his fellow Confucian Mongol bannerman Umitai, would have resisted even without an imperial order.

A paradox of Oidtmann's study is that Qianlong's decisive assertion of sovereignty was apparently not widely perceived as a fundamental shift in Qing-Tibet relations (p. 207). Apart from the Golden Urn, a tool of Qing control that was apparently accepted by most Geluk clergy, there was little or no formal reorganization of the relationship of the Qing state and the Geluk clergy in Inner Asia or Beijing. Even Belmang Pandita, who saw the Qing state as “China,” does not seem to have seen the 1790s as a turning point.²⁶ Still, there is no doubt that a major shift had taken place among emperors and bannermen. It is tempting to connect this shift to the Jiaqing emperor, who seems to have had little interest in Inner Asia or its dominant faith (p. 45). As Oidtmann reminds us, however, we are dealing not with a Qianlong-Jiaqing transition, from a sincere Buddhist father to a monochromatic Confucian son, but with a Qianlong-Qianlong transition, as the imperial duty to subject the clergy to legal control won out over the religious duty to respect them as teachers. After 1793, any

²² Zhao-lian, *Xiaoting zalu, xulu* 續錄, p. 416.

²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 54–55.

²⁴ Komatsubara, “Jūhachi seiki,” pp. 1–19.

²⁵ Zhao-lian, *Xiaoting zalu*, p. 109.

²⁶ Oidtmann is more explicit about this point in his “A Case for Gelukpa Governance: The Historians of Labrang, Amdo, and the Manchu Rulers of China,” in *Greater Tibet*, p. 133.

danger that the Qing court might follow the Yuan trajectory was gone. While on the surface the Qing-Geluk relationship was largely the same, the notion that the highest *trülku* were something more than subjects had vanished. Perhaps the most illustrative comment on this shift comes from the high Manchu official Ying-he 英和 (1771–1840). The son of Deboo, who had flung his hat in vexation over the recalcitrant Korean envoys, Ying-he supported a policy of generous treatment toward *trülku* as a matter of good governance:

胡圖克圖之與喇嘛，猶菩薩之與和尚。當國家發祥之始，胡圖克圖等各建大勳，說降蒙古諸部落。所謂「轉世」者，即宦場之世襲也。是以列聖恩禮有加，以酬其庸，非秦始皇之求仙，漢明帝之佞佛比也。²⁷

Khutukhtus [the Mongol title given to *trülku*] stand in relation to lamas as bodhisattvas stand to monks. When our dynasty first rose to power, the khutukhtus established their great merit by persuading the Mongol tribes to submit. What is called “reincarnation” is simply the inheritance of a hereditary rank in the context of secular governance. Thus, a series of emperors favoured them with especially gracious treatment as repayment for their usefulness. This cannot be compared with the First Emperor of Qin seeking immortals, or Emperor Ming of Han fawning on the Buddha.

The law had triumphed, and reincarnation could be understood in purely secular terms as a method of strengthening Qing state control.

Forging the Golden Urn is an outstanding work, erudite in its conception, thorough in its research, balanced in its analysis, and lively in its presentation. The inspired decision to concentrate on the events of 1792–1798 lends this study a convincing granularity that few works on Qing Inner Asia can equal. Its core conclusions, that through the Golden Urn Qianlong was using law as his instrument to exert full authority over the Geluk church, and that Geluk clergy for their own reasons chose to acquiesce in this intervention, are persuasive. Anyone interested in the Qing empire, Tibetan Buddhism, or the contemporary China-Tibet relationship is urged to read this book.

MATTHEW W. MOSCA

University of Washington, Seattle

²⁷ Ying-he, *Enfutang biji* 恩福堂筆記, in *Xuxiu Siku quanshu* 續修四庫全書 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002), v. 1178, pp. 561–62 (*juan* 2, pp. 31b–32a). A similar interpretation of the practice can be found in Fu-ge 福格, *Tingyu congtao* 聽雨叢談 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984), p. 165. Zhao-lian had already argued that the *trülku* system was so corrupt before Qianlong’s intervention that “it was no different than China’s hereditary ranks” (與中國世爵無異). See *Xiaoting zalu*, p. 55.