

# Converting to Daoism in the Seventeenth Century: Investigating the Lived Religious Experience of Qing Bannermen from the Bilingual Temple Inscription “Stele of The Palace of Great Peace” (*Taipinggong bei* 太平宮碑) (1662)<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** After the Qing conquest of 1644, and the garrisoning of the Manchus in Beijing, bannermen gradually became familiar with the capital’s network of temples and their Buddhist and Daoist pantheons. They used Manchu, their mother tongue, to compose stele inscriptions. The “Stele of The Palace of Great Peace” (*Taipinggong bei* 太平宮碑), composed for the Beijing Daoist temple Pantaogong 蟠桃宮 (Peach Blossom Palace) by the Manchu bannerman Udari in 1662 (Kangxi 1), offers unique insight into the Daoist beliefs of bannermen less than twenty years after the conquest. This article transcribes and translates the Manchu and Chinese texts of this stele, investigates the status and identity of its author Udari, and reflects on the process by which, in the early Qing period, bannermen moved from unfamiliarity with Daoism to belief in it.

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1. This is an expanded and revised version of an article that appeared in Chinese in the acts of the 2015 International Convention of Young Scholars of Manchu Studies: Guan Xiaojing, “Pantaogong Man-Han hebi Taipinggong bei kaoshu” 蟠桃宮滿漢合璧太平宮碑考述, in Liu Xiaomeng 劉小萌, ed., *Guoji Manxue qingnian xuezhe luntan lunwenji* 國際滿學青年學者論壇論文集 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2017), 75–93.

# 歸心道門：從雙語合璧《太平宮碑》 看17世紀旗人的宗教體驗

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**摘要：**1644年，清軍定鼎京師，滿洲人自關外入主中原，逐漸熟悉寺廟及神佛體系，並開始使用母語滿文撰立碑碣。其中，康熙元年（1662）滿洲旗人吳達禮為京城道觀蟠桃宮所撰《太平宮碑》，為我們揭開在進入北京20年後，一位滿洲旗人道教信仰的神秘面紗。本文擬釋讀《太平宮碑》滿、漢碑文內容，考證撰碑人吳達禮的身份，並考察清初旗人羣體對道教從不熟悉、接受到信仰的轉變過程。

In Beijing, inside and to the southwest of Dongbianmen 東便門 and south of the Second Ring Road, a central stele pavilion stands in a deserted street garden, its sudden unexpected appearance making passersby wonder why it is there. If you take the time to investigate, you will discover that inside there is only a small stele with an inscription so weathered as to be almost illegible—one half is in eroded characters, the other half is an incomprehensible script written in vertical columns. Old photos of the district from the 1930s show that there used to be a Daoist temple here—the Pantaogong 蟠桃宮 (Peach Blossom Palace).<sup>2</sup> It was torn down in the 1990s during the construction of the Second Ring Road.

Pantaogong was built on a smaller scale than major Beijing Daoist temples such as the Baiyunguan 白雲觀 (White Cloud Monastery) or the Dongyuemiao 東嶽廟 (Temple of the Eastern Marchmount); it did not receive imperial restorations or donations, and no famous Daoist served as its abbot.<sup>3</sup> Yet from its foundation under the Ming, and

2. Pantaogong was also known as Taipinggong 太平宮 (Palace of the Great Peace) or Huguo Taiping Pantaogong 護國太平蟠桃宮 (State-Protecting Peach Blossom Palace of the Great Peace). See Wu Changyuan 吳長元, ed., *Chenyuan shiliu 宸垣識略* (Beijing: Beijing guji chubanshe, 1983), 168; and Fucha Dunchong 富察敦崇, *Yanjing suishi ji 燕京歲時記* (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1961), 58.

3. The Dongyuemiao was founded by Zhang Liusun 張留孫 (1248–1321), patriarch of the Yuan dynasty Xuanjiao 玄教 sect of Daoism, and his disciple Wu Quanjie 吳全節 (1269–1346). The patriarch of Quanzhen 全真 Daoism, Qiu Chuji 丘處機

for four hundred years thereafter, it was a center of the capital's religious and social life. Hardly any publications on folk customs omit a mention of Pantaogong's annual fair, which extended several kilometers along the city moat in the third month of the lunar calendar, or the horseraces held there. The temple's high reputation among believers during the Ming and Qing periods was above all due to its shrine to the Queen Mother of the West (Xi Wangmu 西王母) flanked by twelve Niangniang statues, who serve as her helpers: the Goddess of Vision, the Goddess of Smallpox, the Goddess of Fertility, etc., addressing almost every possible problem encountered by women or young children.<sup>4</sup>

### Beijing's Peach Blossom Palace (Pantaogong 蟠桃宮) Temple and the "Stele of The Palace of Great Peace" (*Taipinggong bei* 太平宮碑)

The only physical vestige that remains of this once vibrant temple is a stone tablet engraved in the first year of Kangxi's reign (1662), the *Stele of the State-Protecting Palace of the Great Peace* (*Huguo Taipinggong bei* 護國太平宮碑) (hereafter *Taipinggong bei*).<sup>5</sup> Carved on both sides, the front face contains a bilingual Manchu-Chinese text, with 10 lines of Manchu and 8 lines of Chinese. The text of the Chinese is blurred, while the Manchu characters are relatively clear. The verso of the stele is in Chinese only. The measurements of the rubbing are 167 cm high by 70 cm wide for the front face, and 130 cm high by 67 cm wide for the back. The rubbing of the frontispiece measures 33 by 29 cm.

The stele is comparatively small and in a plain, unornamented style. It was not erected by a member of the imperial family or for an official occasion.<sup>6</sup> Its text is in the first person, and is the highly personal account of a grateful father, Udari. Originally skeptical about Buddhism and about stories claiming a link between deities or ghosts

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(1148–1227), is said to be buried in the foundations of the Baiyunguan. Yuan Bingling 袁冰凌, "Beijing Dongyuemiao xianghui" 北京東嶽廟香會, *Faguo Hanxue* 7 (2002): 397–426; Oyanagi Shigeta 小柳司氣太, *Hakuunkan shi* 白雲觀志 (Tokyo: Tōhō bunka gakuin, 1934), 125.

4. Early research on the Pantaogong was carried out by Japanese researchers, notably Dongfang minzu yanjiuhui 東方民族研究會, ed., *Pantaogong miaoshi* 蟠桃宮廟市 (Beijing: Beijing xinmin yinshuguan, 1942); Sawada Mizuho 澤田瑞穗, "Bantōku no kamigami" 蟠桃宮の神神, *Tōhō shukyo* 62 (1965): 55–75. See also Vincent Goossaert's discussion of several Daoist priests from the Pantaogong in *The Taoists of Peking, 1800–1949: A Social History of Urban Clerics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007), 69. On the Pantaogong's temple fair, see Sui Shaofu 隋少甫 and Wang Zuoji 王作楫, *Jingdu xianghui hua chunqiu* 京都香會話春秋 (Beijing: Beijing yanshan chubanshe, 2004), 212. For a discussion of the foundation and various restorations of the Pantaogong, see Jin Ronghua 金榮華, "Dongbianmen zhi bei yu xiri Pantaogong" 東便門之碑與昔日蟠桃宮, *Wenshi ziliao xuankan* 8 (1991): 30–35.
5. The rubbing is published in Beijing tushuguan jinshi zu 北京圖書館金石組, *Beijing tushuguan cang Zhongguo lidai shike taben huibian* 北京圖書館藏中國歷代石刻拓本彙編 (Zhengzhou: Zhongzhou guji chubanshe, 1989–1991), vol. 62, 5–6.
6. Steles were a symbol of status during the Qing dynasty, and they are strictly regulated and differentiated by status in the *Collected Statutes of the Great Qing* (*Da Qing huidian* 大清會典).

Table 1. Text of the bilingual inscription of the *Tai ping gong bei* (1662)<sup>7</sup>

Part of stele	Chinese inscription	English translation of the Chinese text	Manchu inscription (transcription)	English translation of the Manchu text
Frontispiece	護國太平宮碑	Stele for the State-Protecting Palace of the Great Peace	/	/
Front side	東便門內王母娘娘殿后重建三間殿碑記 今夫熹蒿迂誕之說習，聞而不足征者多矣。 無征不信，不信則不口。 俗傳小兒出痘有鬼神，餘嘗疑之。 其年餘諸子出痘，顧見第五子口 <sub>2</sub> 王母娘娘護佑。 及痘口，口口覓娘娘廟，得於東便門內橋口口香，拜口，見大殿後有隙地少許。	Inscription for the restoration of a three-roomed hall behind the Hall of Our Lady the Queen Mother inside the Eastern Lateral Gate Today absurd discourses about sacrifices are common. [I] have heard many that lack sufficient proof. Without proof I did not believe, as I did not believe I did not [...]. It is popularly said that if a child catches smallpox, ghosts and deities are present. I often doubted this. That year all my children caught smallpox. I saw that the fifth son [...] Our Lady the Queen Mother looked after [him]. When the smallpox [...] [...] searched for Our Lady temples. I found, at [...] the bridge inside the Eastern Lateral Gate. [...] incense, and bowed [...]. I saw that behind the great hall there was a small piece of wasteland.	dergi ildun dukai dolo wang mu niyang niyang ni diyan-i amargi de ilan gyian-i diyan dasame weilehe be ejeme ilibuha bei <sub>1</sub> fuchi enduri sere calgari urtuahun gisun be kemuni donjicibe, temgetu obuci ojoraktungge ambula, temgetu akū-i akdarakū, akdarakū oci dahakū, tuttu ofi, juse erše de <sub>2</sub> huru enduri bi seme jalan-i niyalma gisurere be bi kemuni kenehunjembihe, tere aniya mini geren juse eršere de, sunjaci haha jui <sub>3</sub> wang mu niyang niyang eršembī seme henduhe. eršeme wajija manggi, bi babade niyang niyang ni miyoo be baihai dergi ildun-i dukai dolo kiyoo-i julergi ujan de bahafi, hiyen dagilafi hengkileme wajifi <sub>3</sub> tuwaci, amba diyan-i amargi de emu farsi sula babi.	Stele erected to record the restoration of a three-roomed hall behind the Hall of Our Lady the Queen Mother inside the Eastern Lateral Gate I have often heard disordered and empty words about Buddhas and deities. Those which cannot be proved are many. Because I did not believe I did not follow. Therefore I often doubted when common people said that, if a child falls ill with smallpox, ghosts and deities are present. That year, all my children fell ill with smallpox. My fifth son said that Our Lady the Queen Mother looked after [him]. After the smallpox was over, I searched everywhere for Our Lady temples. At the southern end of the bridge behind the Eastern Lateral Gate I found [one]. I then prepared incense and after performing my kowtows, I saw a strip of wasteland behind the great hall.

(Continued)

7. In this table the subscript numbers (1–6 for the Chinese text and 1–10 for the Manchu text) indicate the end of each column. I have added punctuation to the Chinese text. By contrast, the punctuation marks in the Manchu text are transcribed from the stele.

Part of stele	Chinese inscription	English translation of the Chinese text	Manchu inscription (transcription)	English translation of the Manchu text
故老雲，舊有殿三間，為回祿 □□慨然□□焉	Because old people said that formerly there was a three-roomed hall, [...] by the God of Fire [...]. [...] fervently [....] to this.	fe sakdasa alame, dade ilan giyan-i diyān bihe. tuwa de dejibuhebi sere jakade, uhai angga aljafi dasame weileme deribuhe. <sup>6</sup>	Because old men said that originally there had been a three-roomed hall that was burnt down by a fire, I made a vow to begin restoring it. It is innate nature that fathers, mothers, lords all love [their] children.	
夫父母之於□，無有不□者， 天性也。	The [attitude] of fathers and mothers to [...], is that there are none who do not [...]. This is innate nature.	ama, eniye, ejen, gemu juse be gosilengge abkai banin kai.	Even though it is not possible to know [the truth of] the words said about ghosts and deities, I spoke out the sincere respect in the heart that cherishes my son.	
鬼神之說雖不可知，而因愛子 之情展誠□□□神。	Even though [the truth of] what is said about ghosts and deities is unknowable, because of the sentiment of love for my son, I sincerely expressed [....] gods.	huru enduri sere gisun be udu saci ojurakū bicibe, juse be gosire gūnin-i unenggi gīnggun be tucibufi,	Even though it is not possible to know [the truth of] the words said about ghosts and deities, I spoke out the sincere respect in the heart that cherishes my son.	
不可謂非理之所必出也，沈觀 見而足征 <sub>4</sub> 者耶。	It cannot be said that this must come from the irrational. Is not seeing with your own eyes sufficient proof?	enduri de <sub>7</sub> hafulara be giyan waka seci ojurakū bade, tengkūme saha temgetu bisirengge be at hendure.	It is not possible to say that it penetrated to the deity without reason. To understand completely, what more is needed as proof?	
殿成，為樹碑以記，而系之以 辭曰：	When the hall was completed, I erected a stele to commemorate this, and concluded it with a poem saying:	diyān šangaha manggi, ejeme bei ilibufi geli gisun sindahangge.	After the hall was completed, I erected a commemorative stele and also placed these words:	
赫赫王母，尊靈□被兮。	Majestic Queen Mother, Your Spirit [....] everywhere.	horonggo eldengge <sub>8</sub> wang mu. wesihun enduringge iletu akūnaha.	Majestic and glorious Queen Mother, Your holiness is everywhere manifest.	
翠冠霞帔，璀璨綺靡兮。	Jade hat and azure mantle, brilliant elegance.	saikan mahala iletungga etuku. giltari niowari ferguwecuke yengsengga,	The beautiful hat, the bright clothes, the shining blue-green wondrous appearance.	
大德曰生，以保赤子兮。	Great virtue lies in bringing forth and preserving life, <sup>8</sup> it is through the protecting of newborn children.	banjibure erdemu amba ofi, fulgiyen juse be ershe, <sub>9</sub>	Great virtue comes into being through bringing forth life, and you have cured newborn children.	

8. A citation from the *Xici* 繫辭 chapter of the *Yijing* 易經: 天地之大德曰生. Cf. Zhu Xi 朱熹, *Zhouyi benyi* 周易本義 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987), 56. Legge's translation is: "The great attribute of heaven and earth is the giving and maintaining of life." James Legge, *The Sacred Books of China: The Texts of Confucianism* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899), vol. 1, 381.



and smallpox, after his fifth son recovered from smallpox and claimed to have been cured by Our Lady the Queen Mother, he looked all over the capital for Our Lady temples in order to give thanks. When he found the Pantaogong behind the Eastern Lateral Gate, he saw that there was open space behind the main hall. He heard that there had once been a hall there and that it had burned down. Therefore he promised to rebuild a three-roomed hall, and after the work was completed he erected a bilingual inscription recording all this. The inscription thus allows us to follow Udari's change of attitude towards Our Lady through his own words.

### Investigation into the Identity and Status of Udari/Wu-da-li/Wu Dali

The author of the Taipinggong stele was the president of the Board of Works (*gongbu shangshu* 工部尚書), whose Manchu name was Udari. In Chinese his name is given as Wu Dali/Wu-da-li 吳達禮. It is a name which is possible to parse as a Chinese name, with Wu 吳 as the surname. However it also sounds like a transcription of a Manchu name. I have found material on three different Wu-da-li (two whose name is written 吳達禮, and one whose name is written 吳達理) in official texts, epigraphy, local gazetteers, and memorials. Table 2 below shows chronologically what is known about the careers and lives of these three Wu-da-lis. The sources used are listed below the table.

#### *Summary of what is known about the author of the Taipinggong Stele:*

In Kangxi 1 (1662):

- a) He already had at least five children. His fifth son had smallpox.
- b) He was president of the Board of Works.
- c) His Chinese name was made up of the three characters *wu da li* 吳達禮. His Manchu name was Udari.

Table 2. Summary of material on various men named “Wu-da-li”

Period	Wu-da-li 吳達禮A	Wu-da-li 吳達禮B	Wu-da-li 吳達禮C
Tianming 天命 (1616-1626)			His grandson Suo-zhu 索柱 is a bondservant of the Plain White Banner who served as garrison commandant ( <i>chengshouwei</i> 城守尉) before being named guard of the city gates ( <i>chengmen weishi</i> 城門衛士). His family has lived in the territory of the Ula 烏拉 in Manchuria for generations. There is no record of the year of his submission to the Qing.
Tiancong 天聰 (1626-1636); Chongde 崇德 (1636-1643)	Before he was twenty years old, he came to the attention of Hong Taiji (1592-1643). He served as a cavalryman (Ma. <i>aliba coobu</i> ; Ch. <i>xiaoji</i> 驍騎) and was then appointed guardsman in the Vanguard Brigade ( <i>qianfeng shiwei</i> 前鋒侍衛) and, conjointly, administrator in a princely household ( <i>wangfu zhangshi</i> 王府長史). In 1643 (Chongde 8) he was appointed to the Historiography Academy ( <i>guoshiyuan</i> 國史院) as Academician ( <i>xueshi</i> 學士).		
Shunzhi 順治 (1644-1661)	Shunzhi 1 (1644): follows Dodo (1614-1649) south to take part in the conquest of Henan 河南 and Shaanxi 陝西. Shunzhi 2 (1645): Participates in the conquest of Jiangnan 江南. Shunzhi 3 (1646): Participates in the campaign in Fujian 福建 under Prince Bolo (Boluo 博洛). Sent to Quanzhou 泉州 to remonstrate with the pirate Zheng Zhilong 鄭芝龍 (1604-1661); receives his surrender. Shunzhi 4 (1647): Granted the hereditary rank of commandant of the cloud cavalry (Ch. <i>yunjiwei</i> 雲騎尉; Ma. <i>tuwāsara hafan</i> ) (rank 8).	Born in Shunzhi 16 (1659).	
	Shunzhi 5 (1648): Appointed to the Board of Works ( <i>gongbu</i> 工部) as an interpreter ( <i>qixinlang</i> 啟心郎).		

(Continued)

Table 2. (Continued)

Period	Wu-da-li 吳達禮A	Wu-da-li 吳達禮B	Wu-da-li 吳達禮C
	<p>LZ: Shunzhi 8 (1651): Transferred to the Board of Punishments (<i>xingbu</i> 刑部), and receives the hereditary rank of commandant of light chariots (Ch. <i>qingche duwei</i> 輕車都尉; Ma. <i>adaha hafan</i>) of the third degree (rank 6c).</p> <p>Shunzhi 11 (1654): Promoted left vice-minister in charge of arrests (<i>dubu zuo shilang</i> 督捕左侍郎) at the Board of War (<i>bingshu</i> 兵部).</p> <p>Shunzhi 13 (1656): Deprived of rank because of the small number of arrests carried out; shortly afterwards it is restored. Appointed right vice-minister (<i>you shilang</i> 右侍郎).</p> <p>Shunzhi 17 (1660): Demoted to Commandant of Cavalry (Ch. <i>jidawei</i> 騎都尉; Ma. <i>batulabure hafan</i>) (rank 7) after others complained of his lack of diligence.</p> <p>Appointed commissioner (<i>tongzhengshi</i> 通政使) in the Office of Transmission (<i>tongzhengsi</i> 通政司).</p> <p>Shunzhi 16 (1659): named Right vice-minister of the Board of Personnel (<i>libu</i> 吏部).</p>		
Kangxi 康熙 (1662-1722)	<p>Kangxi 5 (1666): retires from office because of illness.</p> <p>Kangxi 8 (1669): named right vice-minister of the Board of Punishments and president of the Board of Works.</p> <p>Kangxi 14 (1675): transferred to serve as president of the Board of Punishments.</p> <p>Kangxi 16 (1677), 3rd month: transferred to serve as president of the Board of Rites, then almost immediately afterwards (8th month) transferred to serve as president of the Board of Personnel.</p>	<p>Kangxi 61 (1772): appointed regional investigator for Taiwan (<i>xuncha Taiwan yushi</i> 巡察臺灣禦史).</p>	
Yongzheng 雍正 (1723-1735)	<p>Kangxi 20 (1681): dies from illness.</p>		
Qianlong 乾隆 (1736-1795)			

Yongzheng 1 (1723): his mandate comes to an end, but he serves for another year by imperial order.  
 Qianlong 1 (1736): dies at the age of 77.

## Sources

Wu-da-li A: *Wu-da-li yuji bei* 吳達禮諭祭碑 (1681) and *Wu-da-li mubei* 吳達禮墓碑 (1681) in *Beijing tushuguan cang zhongguo lidai shike taben huibian*, vol. 63, 162–63; Ortai 鄂爾泰, *Baqi tongzhi chujì* 八旗通志初集, *juan* 166, 4096; “Wu-da-li liezhuan” 吳達禮列傳, *Guoli gugong bowuyuan tushuwenxianchu Qing guoshiguan zhuangao* 國立故宮博物院圖書文獻處清國史館傳稿, no. 701005650 (consulted through the National Palace Museum Digital Library of Qing Archives, online at <https://qingarchives.npm.edu.tw>); Li Guilin 李桂林 and Gu Yun 顧雲 (rev. Chang Shun 長順), (*Guangxu*) *Jilin tongzhi* (光緒) 吉林通志 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2002, facsimile edition of *Guangxu* 17 [1891] woodblock), *juan* 97, 32–33; Wu Zhongkuang 吳忠匡, ed., *Man-Han mingchen zhuan* 滿漢名臣傳 (Harbin: Heilongjiang renmin chubanshe, 1991), *juan* 8, 214–15.

Wu-da-li B: Taiwansheng wenxian weiyuanhui 臺灣省文獻委員會, *Chongxiu Taiwansheng tongzhi* 重修臺灣省通誌 (Taipei: Taiwansheng wenxian weiyuanhui, 1998), vol. 9, 118.

Wu-da-li C: Liaoningsheng tushuguan gujibu 遼寧省圖書館古籍部, *Baqi Manzhou shizu tongpu* 八旗滿洲氏族通譜 (facsimile edition) (Shenyang: Liao-Shen shushe, 1989), *juan* 13, 198.

To sum up the information found in the Taipinggong stele and other historical sources: Wu-da-li B was the great grandson of the third son of Giocangga, who was Nurhaci’s grandfather. He was a member of the Plain Red Banner and distinguished himself while serving as regional investigator for Taiwan. However, although his status and background correspond to that of the author of the Taipinggong stele, he died in 1736 (Qianlong 1) at the age of seventy-seven and would therefore have been born in 1659, which would make him too young to be the Wu-da-li of this 1662 stele, as he would have been three at the time. As for Wu-da-li C, he was someone who had submitted to the Qing, and certainly not a high-ranking official. His status does not accord with that of the author of our stele, who was president of the Board of Works. Moreover his name is written with different characters. This leaves us with Wu-da-li A, who died in 1681 (Kangxi 20).

The Udari of the Taipinggong stele had five children in 1662, so he must already have been an adult by that date. Wu-da-li A came to Hong Taiji’s attention when he was only seventeen years old, and in 1643, he was appointed to the Historiography Academy as an academician. This suggests that he was born not long before 1626 and would have been around forty in 1662, which could accord with the Wu-da-li of the stele. Looking more closely at Wu-da-li A’s career, he served as an interpreter in the Board of Punishments and in the Board of Rites. This post required him to facilitate communication and avoid misunderstandings between Manchu and Chinese high officials, and for this he would have needed both wide and thorough knowledge of the Confucian classics and  
 e translation in both directions. This means it  
 ave been capable of composing this bilingual

stele. His career path, being promoted from interpreter to vice-president and then transferred to be president of a different board also fits with the status of the author of the stele. Wu-da-li A died in 1682 (Kangxi 20), twenty years after the restoration of the Pantaogong. All these dates and facts correspond with the Wu-da-li who had five children and was president of the Board of Rites when he restored the Pantaogong in 1662.

We will now turn to look at Wu-da-li A and the history of his family in greater detail.

### A Native Manchu Bannerman who Followed Nurhaci through the Pass

Wu-da-li A belonged to the Nara (Nala 納喇) clan and was a member of the Manchu Plain Blue Banner. He was born towards the end of the Ming. His family had lived in the Hoifa (Huifa 輝發) Basin region for generations, making a living through hunting and fishing, as well as through agricultural activities. His family rose through their services on the battlefield, and they made major contributions to the stabilization of Qing territory. His paternal grandfather was called Santan 三禪 (also written with the character 坦) and served as a judge (Ma. *jarguci*; Ch. *lishiguan* 理事官) under Nurhaci. Many of Wu-da-li's relatives died in the campaign against the Three Feudatories: in 1674 his nephew Yin-er-du 尹爾都 died whilst campaigning against Geng Jingzhong 耿精忠 (1644–1682). That same year, his paternal cousin Meng-bao 孟寶 fell in a battle against Wu Sangui 吳三桂 (1612–1678) at Yuezhou 嶽州. In 1675, his paternal cousin Ya-lai 雅賴 died under artillery fire while campaigning against Wu Sangui. In 1679, his nephew Ha-er-qin 哈爾沁 fell in an attack on Amoy.<sup>9</sup>

He distinguished himself at a rather young age and impressed the future emperor Hong Taiji. At seventeen he was recruited to the elite Light Division (Xiaoqiying 驍騎營), a unit that selected its recruits from the best soldiers in all the banners, with an appointment as an officer. When not yet twenty he served in Dodo's expedition to the South and participated in the pacification of the Henan and Jiangnan regions. He possessed intelligence as well as bravery, and in Fujian 福建 he persuaded Zheng Zhilong 鄭芝龍 (1604–1661), the most formidable pirate on the southeastern coast, to submit. This put him on track for a career as an official in the capital, where he received successive promotions through merit. During his career he would eventually serve as president of

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9. Ortai 鄂爾泰, *Baqi tongzhi chujì* 八旗通志初集 (Changchun: Dongbei shifan daxue chubanshe, 1985), *juan* 166, 4096–99.

the Board of Works, the Board of Rites, the Board of Personnel, and the Board of Punishments. When Wu-da-li died, the Kangxi emperor bestowed an imperial offering stele (*yuji bei* 諭祭碑) on him. In this bilingual inscription, Kangxi wrote: “his character and conduct were pure and good, his talent and capacity were equal to his office, and he bent himself to the task unsparingly” (性行純良，才能稱職，鞠躬盡瘁 / *banin yabun gulu sain, erdemu tušan be akūmbume mutehe*). Such marks of distinction were only conferred upon high officials who had headed one of the six ministries and who had distinguished themselves in war and peace, and certainly not on someone with an ordinary background.

In Qian Shifu’s 錢事甫 *Chronological Tables of Qing Dynasty Officials* (*Qingdai zhiguan nianbiao* 清代職官年表), Wu-da-li is recorded as only having been president of the Board of Works from 1669 (Kangxi 8), seven years after the carving of the Taipinggong stele.<sup>10</sup> However, this is perhaps an error resulting from the complexity of his succession in alternating roles as president of the Board of Works, the Board of Punishments, the Board of Rites, and the Board of Personnel.

### The “Taipinggong Stele” and Bannermen Daoist Believers in the Early Qing Period

At the beginning of the Kangxi reign, Udari and his family had only lived in Beijing for twenty years, and the stele is a rare and precious source of first-hand information on the attitude of the Manchus to the popular goddesses and temples of China during the early post-conquest period of the Qing dynasty.

In Manchuria, where Udari was born and bred, the extent of Buddhist and Daoist influence varied between region and according to social status. It is possible that the Yongle 永樂 emperor’s (1402–1424) foundation of a Buddhist temple at the mouth of the Amur River (Heilongjiang 黑龍江) in 1413, the Temple of Eternal Tranquility (Yongningsi 永寧寺), may have left some traces of influence among the Jurchen tribes living to its south. As we know, the Jurchen were divided into three tribes, from South to North: the Jianzhou 建州, the Haixi 海西, and the Donghai 東海. By the mid-seventeenth century, the Jianzhou Jurchen, living closest to Liaodong, where temples and believers were numerous, had already been in contact with Buddhism and Daoism for a long time. Liaoyang’s 遼陽 Emperor Guan Temple (Guandimiao 關帝廟), Fuxin’s 阜新 Palace of the Great Obscure Sincerity (Daxuanzhengong 大玄真宮) and Shenyang’s 瀋陽 City God Temple (Chenghuangmiao 城隍廟) were all Liaodong Daoist or Buddhist temples founded under the Yuan dynasty.<sup>11</sup> As Nurhaci moved his capital from Fe

10. Qian Shifu 錢事甫, *Qingdai zhiguan nianbiao* 清代職官年表 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1980), 157. See also Wang Hongbin 王鴻賓, ed., *Dongbei renwu dacidian* 東北人物大辭典 (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1992), 386.

11. On temples and the Jurchen in the pre-conquest period, see Liu Xiaomeng 劉小萌 and Ding Yizhuang 定宜莊, *Samanjiao*

Ala 佛阿拉 to Hetu Ala 赫圖阿拉, then to the Eastern Capital (Dongjing 東京) in the region of Liaoyang, and finally to Shenyang, he restored and founded several Buddhist and Daoist temples. For example, in 1615 he founded seven temples at Hetu Ala, including a Jade Emperor Temple (Yuhuangmiao 玉皇廟), a Ten Kings Hall (Shiwangdian 十王殿), and a Buddhist monastery. According to Korean ambassadors, he Nurhaci would often “hold a rosary in his hand and count on it” 手持念珠而數.<sup>12</sup> These sources demonstrate that at the end of the Ming dynasty Buddhist and Daoist beliefs already influenced the upper echelons of Jurchen society.

However there is very little evidence documenting Buddhist or Daoist activity among the ordinary members of Jurchen society and no record of, for example, temple restorations by local associations. One piece of evidence can be found in the *Jueyu jilüe* 絕域紀略 (Record of Distant Lands) (1662) of Fang Gongqian 方拱乾 (1596–1666), who was exiled to Ningguta for his implication in the 1657 Jiangnan provincial examination cheating scandal. He writes:

Originally the Manchus did not know that there was a Buddha, and when sutras were chanted, crowds gathered to stare and listen. In the beginning they laughed at it. However, recently they have become accustomed to clasping their hands and standing in a position of respect. The Western Tartars [i.e., the Mongols] know of Buddha and the sutras, and can make prostrations. [Their religion is] more or less the same as Lamaism and different from that of the Western Lands. [The Manchus] do not sacrifice to the deities, they only know of Emperor Guan, and they have no temples. Recently, however, they have constructed an earthen shrine.

滿人不知有佛，誦經則群伺而聽，始而笑之，近則漸習合掌以拱立矣。西達子則知有佛，有經，能膜拜，大約與喇嘛教同，與西土異。不祀神，惟知有關帝，亦無廟，近乃作一土龕。<sup>13</sup>

Fang's record gives us a portrait of the level of familiarity with and knowledge of Buddhism and Daoism among Manchus in the Northeast more than ten years after the Qing conquest, as well as showing the difference in beliefs between Manchus and Mongols, with the Manchus, unlike the Mongols, being familiar with neither Chinese deities nor with the Buddha or Buddhist sutras. This concurs with the evidence of the Taipinggong stele on Daoist beliefs among Manchu bannermen in the early post-conquest period.

*yu Dongbei minzu* 薩滿教與東北民族 (Changchun: Jilin jiaoyu chubanshe, 1990).

12. Liaoning daxue lishixi 遼寧大學歷史系, *Lanzhong rilu jiaodui: Jianzhou wenjianlu jiaodui* 欄中日錄校對——建州聞見錄校對 (Shenyang: Liaoning daxue lishixi, 1978), 43.

13. Fang Gongqian 方拱乾, *Ningguta zhi* 寧古塔志, *juan* 26, in *Zhaodai congshu xinbian* 昭代叢書新編 (Wujiang: Shenshi Shikaitang, 1919), 82.

It seems that, in 1662, Udari was not familiar with Daoism or with Our Lady temples. In the stele's opening passage, he proclaims his skepticism about Buddhism: "I have often heard disordered and empty words about Buddhas and deities. Those which cannot be proved are many." He is also doubtful about the attribution of smallpox to the presence of deities and ghosts. It is only when his son tells him of the healing and protective force of Our Lady the Queen Mother that he recognizes the power of this Daoist goddess. Our Lady the Queen Mother is also known as the Golden Mother (Jinmu 金母), or the Queen Mother of the West (Xi Wangmu 西王母). The Warring States-period *Classic of Mountains and Seas* (*Shanhaijing* 山海經) describes her as resembling "a human with a leopard's tail and tiger's teeth. She is adept at whistling and wears a Sheng [勝]-crown on top of her unkempt hair."<sup>14</sup> Here her appearance is ugly and repulsive, and the *Classic of Mountains and Seas* also describes her as a goddess who controls epidemics and metes out punishments. By the Han period (206 BCE–220 CE), however, her iconography had become that of a dignified and gentle matronly figure, accompanied by a crowd of immortal maidens as her servitors. Folktales around the legend of the victory banquet of the peaches of immortality that the Queen Mother of the West offered to all the immortals led to her becoming a symbol of immortality.<sup>15</sup> The most important focus of prayer in the Pantaogong was the clay statue representing Our Lady the Queen Mother in the central hall, flanked on either side by a row of six statues of immortal maidens. It was this statue that gave the Pantaogong its high position among Beijing's Our Lady temples, and contributed to the temple's success. However, despite the temple's renown, Udari describes himself as having "searched everywhere for Our Lady temples" before finding the Pantaogong. This might perhaps indicate that, because he lived in the "Tartar City," he was not familiar with the temples in the area outside the city walls.<sup>16</sup>

The Taipinggong Stele also allows us to follow the process by which a Qing bannerman, Udari, came to accept Daoism's truth claims. Udari's restoration of Pantaogong's halls and erection of the Taipinggong stele were done in order to express gratitude for the responsiveness and efficacy of the Daoist goddess Our Lady the Queen Mother who had cured his fifth son of smallpox. Smallpox could be transmitted through airborne droplets of saliva or mucus and was highly infectious. It was also often fatal, especially for children and adolescents who had no immunity or had not been inoculated, and it was said that in eight or nine out of ten cases the patient would die. Therefore, particular vigilance was exercised

14. Richard E. Strassberg, ed. and trans., *A Chinese Bestiary: Strange Creatures from the Guideways through Mountains and Seas* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 109.

15. See Ren Jiyu 任繼愈, ed., *Zongjiao cidian* 宗教辭典 (Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2009), 351.

16. Similarly, the Western Peak Bixiyuanjun Temple (Xiding Bixiyuanjunmiao 西頂碧霞元君廟) at Landianchang 藍靛廠 outside Xizhimen 西直門 was to become a cultic center for Mongol and Manchu banner worshippers. But the first stele at this temple recording bannermen's donations dates to 1670 (Kangxi 9), and before this there is no evidence of large-scale participation of bannermen in the temple's activities. See: "Xiding niangniang jinxianghui bei" 西頂娘娘進香會碑, *Beijing tushuguan cang lidai shike taben huibian*, vol. 62, 151–53.

by all Manchus, from the imperial family down to ordinary bannermen. A special post of “smallpox-verifying adjutant” (*chadou zhangjing* 查痘章京) was even created to verify the inoculation of members of the banners and of commoners living within the Inner City.<sup>17</sup>

When faced with smallpox, there were several shamanic deities that Manchus might turn to. Within the complicated pantheon of Manchu shamanism, several spirits were charged with the protection of young children. The Donghai 東海 Jurchen folk epic *Wubuxiben mama* 烏布西奔媽媽 (“Mother Wubuxiben”) that Fu Yuguang 富裕光 recorded in the 1950s mentions the Smallpox God (Huashen 花神) *Ilha*<sup>18</sup> (*Yiga* 衣嘎), the Chickenpox God (Shuidoushen 水痘神) *Molo*<sup>19</sup> (*Mo-ruo* 莫若), and the Pox Poison God (Doudushen 痘毒神) *Handa*<sup>20</sup> (*Hata* 哈它).<sup>21</sup> The shamanic deity whose worship was most widespread was *Omosi Mama* (Old Lady of Grandchildren) (Ch. *Zisun Niangniang* 子孫娘娘, Our Lady of Sons and Grandsons). The imperial family and common Manchus would all pray to her for the protection of young children.<sup>22</sup> There was also the Goddess of Smallpox, *Sure Mama* (Doudushen 痘毒神), who also specialized in the protection of children.<sup>23</sup> In the *Imperially Commissioned Rites for the Manchu Worship of the Spirits and Heaven* (*Qinding Manzhou jishen jitian dianli* 欽定滿洲祭神祭天典禮) there is a rite and a song for “asking for blessings for infants with a willow branch” 樹柳枝為嬰兒求福 in which the emperor winds the willow branch, which represents the protection of children, around his neck and wears it like this for three days to show his sincerity.<sup>24</sup> In the *Song of the Nišan Shamaness*, the Nišan shamaness (Nishansaman 尼山薩滿) enters the home of *Omosi Mama*, a “majestic and beautiful palace” with “five-colored clouds piled around it.” When she sees *Omosi Mama*, she describes her as “an old woman whose hair was white as snow [. . .] sitting in the middle of the palace. Her eyes protruded, her mouth was large, her face long, her chin stuck out, and her teeth had become red—unpleasant to look at!”<sup>25</sup> This strange and hideous appearance is very different from the representation of *Zisun Niangniang* in the iconography of the popular religion of the Chinese in the late imperial period.

17. Yu Zhengxie 俞正燮, *Guisi cunqiao* 癸巳存稿 (Shenyang: Liaoning jiaoyu chubanshe, 2003 [1937]), *juan* 9, 250. For an analysis of the smallpox epidemic in the early Qing period, see Du Jiaji 杜家驥, “Cong Qinggong yian kan tianhua de fangzhi: zhongdou yu zhidou” 從清宮醫案看天花的防治—一種痘與治痘, *Zhongguo shehui lishi pinglun* 8 (2007), 59–69.

18. Manchu *ilha* “flower.”

19. Manchu *moyo* “chickenpox; dull, not sharp.”

20. Manchu *handa* “pox-mark or scar; chickenpox.”

21. Fu Yuguang 富裕光, *Wubuxiben Mama* 烏布西奔媽媽 (Changchun: Jilin renmin chubanshe, 2007), 80.

22. See Liu Xiaomeng and Ding Yizhuang, *Samanjiao yu Dongbei minzu*, 106.

23. *Yuzhi zengding qingwenjian* 御製增訂清文鑒 (Taipei: Taiwan shangwu yinshuguan [Wenyuange sikuquanshu 文淵閣四庫全書 facsimile], 1986), *juan* 19.

24. *Qinding Manzhou jishen jitian dianli* 欽定滿洲祭神祭天典禮, *juan* 4, in Jin Yufu 金毓黻, ed., *Liaohai congshu* 遼海叢書 (Shenyang: Liaohai shushe, 1985), vol. 9.

25. Citations taken from Stephen Durrant’s translation in Stephen Durrant and Margaret Nowak, *The Tale of the Nišan Shamaness: A Manchu Folk Epic* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1977), 75–77, transcription 152–55. See also Fu Yuguang, *Samanjiao nüshen* 薩滿教女神 (Shenyang: Liaoning renmin chubanshe, 1995), 201 and 295.

In popular Daoist beliefs, Our Lady of Smallpox (Douzhen Niangniang) also took several forms. In the South, offerings were made to the Pearl Mother (Zhuma 珠媽), who was an avatar of the Lady of Linshui (Linshui furen 臨水夫人). In the North, offerings were made to Our Lady the Queen Mother, the goddess closely associated with women's prayers for fertility, safe childbirth, and the wellbeing of infant children. Our Lady the Queen Mother appears as the chief female deity, who "will always respond to a prayer" (*youqiu biying* 有求必應). The twelve goddesses who often flank her in temples were each charged with carrying out the commands of the Our Lady the Queen Mother in their respective fields of competence. One of these twelve goddesses is Our Lady of Smallpox, who defended infant children suffering from smallpox from the plague demons.<sup>26</sup>

At a critical point in his children's illness, Udari heard the words "Our Lady the Queen Mother protects" from his son's own mouth, and after praying to Our Lady the Queen Mother, his son recovered. In the inscription, he therefore writes with sincere feeling: even though there is no way of knowing whether Buddhas and deities exist, it is natural for fathers and mothers to love their children, and to express sincere gratitude for their protection, and here he has seen with his own eyes the deity's response. The Taipinggong stele was erected only eighteen years after the Manchus entered through the pass and conquered China. It records the experience of Udari, who was born and raised beyond the pass and rose to become a powerful Manchu official, and who moved from skepticism about claims that ghosts and spirits caused smallpox to believing that he had personally witnessed a healing granted through Our Lady's compassion and actively seeking out Our Lady temples to burn incense in thanks, finally restoring a temple and composing a stele to record these events and his gratitude. It allows us to trace the changes in his attitude to Daoism, from doubt to understanding, to acceptance, to sincere belief.

Finally, from the *verso* of the Taipinggong Stele, we learn that Udari cooperated with the Quanzhen Daoist priest Xu Zhenyu 徐真育 for the temple's restoration, and that Xu played an important role in fundraising for the project. The *verso* of the stele reads:

The [teaching of] the pupils of Primordial Chaos was inherited by Xu Zhenyu, disciple of the Quanzhen Teaching. Double-bodied, he instigated the collection of donations. The palace eunuchs and the Emperor's meritorious relatives-by-marriage, the civil and military officials and the common people, and amassed faithful were of one accord to raise funds and hire workmen for construction, only desiring the Holy Mother's compassion and silent aid.

太上混源門下嗣全真教弟子徐真育雙身創建募化，宮闕內監勳威文武黎庶善信眾等同意捐財鳩工建造，惟願聖母垂滋默佑。

26. Sawada Mizuho, "Bantōku no kamigami," 58.

From the temple surveys carried out by the National Beiping Research Institute (*Guoli Beiping yanjiuyuan* 國立北平研究院) in the 1930s in preparation for the compilation of the *Beiping Gazetteer* (*Beipingzhi* 北平志), we know that Xu Zhenyu was already serving as abbot of the Pantaogong during the Shunzhi reign. The survey recorded an inscription from the stone frontispiece of the front hall of the Pantaogaong saying “[erected by] the Quanzhen disciple Xu Zhenyu in the first month of Summer of the fifth year of the Shunzhi reign [1648]” 順治五年全真教弟子徐真育. Founded by Wang Chongyang 王重陽 (1112–1170) under the Jin 金 dynasty (1115–1234), Quanzhen 全真 (Complete Authenticity) Daoism became the main Daoist current in the North under the Yuan 元 dynasty (1271–1368). During the Ming 明 dynasty (1368–1644), the Quanzhen Baiyunguan temple received several imperial investitures and was responsible for the ordination of Daoist priests in the Beijing region.

The collaboration between a high-ranking Manchu official and a Quanzhen cleric in the restoration of the Pantaogong allows us to see that this restoration involved a wide range of actors, involving both court officials and Daoist priests. That only eighteen years after the conquest a Manchu bannerman was familiar with Quanzhen Daoism and with popular beliefs about Our Lady gives us an intriguing glimpse of religious life in early Qing Beijing.

### The Manchu Epigraphy of Beijing’s Temples and Trends in Religious Beliefs among Bannermen

We know of around one hundred multilingual (combining Manchu, Mongolian, Tibetan, Uyghur, Latin, or Chinese) inscriptions erected in Beijing during the Qing period (1644–1911). These stone inscriptions document details of the construction, repair or embellishment of temples, of participation in worship, and of donations of land and property. They are precious sources for everyday life in the city.

Following the Qing conquest of Beijing, Manchu bannermen were garrisoned in the northern half of Beijing (what became known as the Tartar City), and the Chinese inhabitants were driven out.<sup>27</sup> Those allowed to remain, apart from the bannermen and their families, included religious personnel. Because of this, Daoist and Buddhist monks became a key point of connection between bannermen and Beijing culture. In the early Qing period, Manchu bannermen gradually became familiar with the city’s

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27. There is debate over the numbers enrolled in the banners at the time of the conquest. According to the most recent research summarized in Mark Elliott, Cameron Campbell, and James Lee, “A Demographic Estimate of the Population of the Qing Eight Banners,” *Études chinoises* 35, no. 1 (2016): 9–39, an estimate would be between 1.3 and 2.4 million, of which approximately half were stationed in Beijing and its surrounding regions.

network of temples and Buddhist and Daoist pantheons, and they began to dedicate and to write stele inscriptions as well as to participate in other activities of the religious life of the temples. Some of the inscriptions on the stelae that they erected were written in Manchu. Amongst these inscriptions the earliest to use Manchu (apart from those erected by the emperor) is the Pantaogong's Taipinggong stele, erected by Udari in the fifth year of Kangxi's reign (1662). It appears as a fragment in the stream of history, capturing the changing religious beliefs of bannermen.

Following the defeat of the Rebellion of the Three Feudatories (1681), an initial stage of stabilization of the Qing dynasty was reached during Kangxi's reign. The accumulation of capital brought about economic prosperity, and Beijing's bannermen no longer lived the hard life of the saddle and yearly wars.<sup>28</sup> In this society trending towards stability, Manchu bannermen began to have time to become more familiar with the temples around them, and to use Chinese and Manchu to inscribe stelae to offer to temples.<sup>29</sup> Manchu was one of the official languages under the Qing, but it was also the mother tongue of many bannermen. Using Manchu to inscribe stelae was a way of purposefully demonstrating their ethnic language and identity within the religious domain.

At the same time, on a wider canvas than the appearance of this small number of Manchu language temple inscriptions, from the Kangxi period onwards, the participation of the Beijing banner population in the life of the capital's temples gradually entered an active and independent phase. Bannermen began to take part in activities held in temples in the outer (or Chinese) city and the suburbs. They joined incense associations (*xianghui* 香會), their names appear in registers of associations holding theatrical and martial arts representations throughout the city, and they established new religious organizations linked to the city's temples.<sup>30</sup> More and more bannermen appear in the lists of donors found on Chinese-language stelae. Many became pious Daoists or Buddhists, and as their links to temples grew stronger they donated land and financed temple restorations and enlargements.<sup>31</sup> As new immigrants to Beijing in the Qing period, the banner population had an important and complex influence on the development of Beijing's temples, religion and folk traditions, and relations and assimilation between the capital's different ethnic groups.

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28. See Liu Xiaomeng 劉小萌, *Qingdai beijing qiren shehui* 清代北京旗人社會 (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 2016), 62.

29. There is no space within the scope of this article to compare the religious beliefs of members of the Mongol banners with those of the Manchu banners. It is a subject for another, future article.

30. Sui Shaofu and Wang Zuoji, *Jingdu xianghui hua chunqiu*, 9.

31. See Guan Xiaojing, "Qingdai Beijing qiren simiao beike kaoshu" 清代北京旗人寺廟碑刻考述, *Faguo Hanxue* 17 (2016), 138–63.

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