Data Curation and History Research:

Creating Innovative and Sustainable Tools for Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

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Self-Introduction

• Historian specializing in Qing dynasty (1644-1911) borderlands and non-Han peoples

• Current area of concentration: Eastern frontier with Russian empire

• Frontier administration: control of human and natural resources
Introduction to the Project

• Tribute 貢 and return gifts
• System operations in Heilongjiang
• Economic and social relations between the imperial government and its subject populations
• Primary objective: to collate data about these transactions

• Trilingual (English, Chinese, and Manchu)

• Key variables: giver/receiver, date, location, quantity and quality of goods

• Searchable, open to addition & revision
Preliminary Design

- Faculty Research Grant (2010-11 academic year)
- Training a research assistant in dataset compilation
- Identifying and acquiring sources
- Setting basic parameters
Limitations and Setbacks

- Data input
- Data organization
- Logistics of preservation and dissemination
• Reviewed the dataset from a database / database user’s perspective
• Worked out a detailed working plan with timeline set
• Applied for TDG
Next Step

• To create an open-accessible database
• Allow users to add new entries, after vetting by a moderator
• Add a GIS component
• Support bilingual/trilingual content/interface (Chinese, English, Manchu)
• Embed data research and data curation in an intermediate-level history course in 2014/15
• Collaboration with academic departments or individual faculty

• University’s vision – teaching, learning, research, community service

• Via technology

• Information management & dissemination
• Discuss & recommend database structure
• Provide inputs to enhance data fields
• Work on database programming & user interface programming
• Convert content to appropriate formats
• Try grant application!!
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Thank You