

Changes in the Structure and Function of Chengdu's Manchu City at the End of the Qing Dynasty and the Beginning of the Republic of China

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Abstract: In the last year of Kangxi, the Qing government moved the Jingzhou Eight Banner Soldiers to station in Chengdu. In order to strengthen the control of the western Sichuan ethnic area and to shield Tibet and other places, after the Manchu and Mongolian Eight Banner Soldiers were stationed in Chengdu, the building was “Manchu City”. After the Revolution of 1911, the city walls were demolished one after another, and were no longer military camps. The original closed urban spatial pattern was broken, and the function of the urban area gradually changed.

1. Introduction

“Manchu City” is also known as Less City in Chengdu. The ancient Less City was first established around 307 BC. Emperor Qin Huiwang sent Zhang Yi to build Chengdu City, which was the beginning of Chengdu's city. For thousands of years, the city site has not changed and the city name has not been changed. It is known as “the oldest cultural city in the world's megacities”.^[1] After the war in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, the city buildings in Chengdu were basically destroyed. The years of Shunzhi and Kangxi were the initial stages of the reconstruction of Chengdu City. The Qing court recruited immigrants from other provinces to reclaim the wasteland in Sichuan, and then Chengdu city was rebuilt. One important feature of the Chengdu city wall in the Qing Dynasty was the establishment and construction of the Manchu City.

The selection of the city site of Chengdu Manchu City is no accident. Sichuan has always been a battleground for military strategists. In the early Qing Dynasty, the Eight Banners did not set up garrisons here. Later, in order to cooperate with the war against the Jungar Ministry, they began to garrison matters, and dispatch a small number of officers to defend. In the fifty-seventh year of Kangxi, 732 official buildings and 4,800 barracks were built. In the fifty-eighth year of Kangxi, “the oblique slab bridge in the northwest corner of the city built a Manchu City, and the city was formed. “It was built in the fifty-seventh year of Kangxi. It was three points on Thursday, eight hundred and eleven feet and seven feet three. It is one inch high, three feet and eight inches high. It opens four doors between the Yuan, and even five from the west gate of the Great City.”^[2] After the Yongzheng dynasty, the change of chieftain system to Liuguan system, the importance of Sichuan's military position became more and more obvious. In March, 1776, a general was set up for management. After the general ruled over Chengdu Manchu City, the original “Vice Capital Administration Office” was used as the general government office. In the last year of Kangxi, on the basis of the original Less City, it was modeled on the Beijing Hutong system and built according to the respectful and orderly Eight Banners garrison structure. Because the base site and form of the Manchu City are similar to those of the Ancient Less City, they are self-contained and the Sichuan Governor has no right to intervene and become an independent kingdom in Chengdu. Manchu City's military function was prominent, and the officers and soldiers stationed inside, which played the role of defending the security of the location.

2. The Location and Internal Structure of Manchu City

Because of its location in the southwest, after the Qing Dynasty entering the Central Plains, in order to control the land of Shu, the Less City was built on the original base site. The Dongyuan preserved the old foundation of the Ming Wall and rebuilt the second north and south. Therefore,

the actual project to build the city is only to add the city walls on the north and south sides and the east extension. Those who are full of the city, in the west gate of Ayutthaya, make three points on Thursday, measuring 11 feet, 7 feet, 3 inches, and 1 foot, 3 feet, and 8 inches.^[3] According to the modern length measurement conversion, the total length of the city wall is more than two meters and the height is 43 meters. Since then, Chengdu has become a military town in the Qing Dynasty to deter the southwest, and the city has since been fixed, becoming a military barrier on the west side of Chengdu. The inner realm of the Eight Banners military and their families.

Manchu City in Chengdu adopted the form of “separation in the same city” of Manchus. In the Qing Dynasty, Chengdu was stationed as an important strategic city for the government to contain soldiers in the southwest. As the ideological foundation for the establishment of the political system was implemented by the ruling class, the division of the flag and the society, the division of the social class was projected into the urban space. It is located in the southwest corner of Chengdu. However, due to the existence of the Manchu City, the urban space is divided, and the development of the city is biased to the east. Manchu City is the military center of the entire city. The entire Dongda street area later became the city's most important business district, and the emergence of a new business mall in 1908 made it a new business center. At that time, the Han and other ethnic groups lived mostly in the east of Chengdu, commonly known as “Seoul”; in the “Mingshu King City” between Manchu City and Seoul, the residents were mainly Muslims.

Manchu City is a huge Eight Banners military barracks, with government offices, barracks, checkpoints, ordnance, gunpowder warehouses, military training grounds, warehouses, temples, ancestral halls, Eight Banners official schools, and colleges. There is one per Banners Street, three armored soldiers alleys, eight Eight Banners official streets, and 33 soldiers alleys. There are five gates in the fortified city, including Yankang Gate in the north, Anfu Gate in the south, and the south side (Half Bridge)'s Blessing Gate. The overall structure of the entire Manchu City street resembles a “centipede”. The Qing Dynasty Fu Chongju described the situation of the Manchu City in “Chengdu Tour” as “the shape of a centipede. The general's mansion, according to the head of the centipede, a street directly to the north the gate, like the body of a centipede, and the alleys are arranged on the left and right, like the foot of a clam.”^[4]

3. Manchu's Urban Function Transformation in the Early Republic of China

After the Revolution of 1911, the old imperial power was overthrown, the new regime represented by the bourgeoisie dominated the urban development, and the old city-in-city pattern was broken. More gates were opened due to increasing traffic demand. After foundation of the People's Republic of China, the city walls were partially demolished. In 1921, the northern wall of Less City was first demolished, followed by the southern wall. Due to the growing population. The four gates of the city wall can not meet people's transportation needs. In 1913, Tonghui Gate was added on the side of Xijiaochang. The folk called Xinximen. In order to facilitate the traffic of the residents in the city, Hu Jingyi ordered the opening of a new gate in the direction of Erxian Temple and Qingyang Palace outside Xijiaochang, the name Tonghuimen communicated with Qingyang Palace and Less City Park, the two most important public places.

In 1921, the city wall of Less City was removed. In 1933, the urn of Ayutthaya was demolished and turned into a street. The last section of Less City was demolished in 1935 from Less City Park to Xiaonan Street. After the outbreak of the Anti-Japanese War, a new village was built in the southeastern suburbs of Chengdu for resettlement. A new gate was opened in the southeast of the urban area in the winter of 1937. This city gate has two lanes, one in and one out, which can be regarded as the earliest two-way passage in the true sense of Chengdu municipal construction. In order to show the determination of the Anti-Japanese War and the foundation of the country, the name of the new city gate was Fuxingmen. At this point, Manchu City's three walls were demolished to the north, east and south, and Manchu City began to truly integrate into the Chengdu city.

After the Revolution of 1911, Chinese cities began to undergo a more complete transformation. The functions of “city” defense, enclosure and separation began to weaken, while the functions of

“city” gradually increased, as did the city. In the Qing Dynasty, Manchu City’s functions were mainly military garrisons and Qing’s political domination of the local government. At this time, various regular bazaars in Manchu City gradually prospered, and commercial activities penetrated into many folk festivals and traditional temple fairs. Superimposed on traditional administrative functions, Chengdu has become a political and economic center in the southwest of China.

4. Conclusion

After the restoration of the four dynasties of Shunzhi, Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong, the layout of the city walls, streets, bridges and major buildings in the city basically continued into modern times. In the west of Chengdu's Ayutthaya, the Qing Dynasty also built the Manchu City specifically as a station for officers and men of the Eight Banners and their families. The Qing Dynasty set up a city in Chengdu, in addition to its geographical elements, as well as its political, economic, and military objectives. Manchu City is located in the old site of Qin Less City, which is convenient for planning. The internal division of Qi Han is separated from the life of the aborigines in Chengdu and the original political and economic development.

After entering the 20th century, the city walls of Manchuria were gradually dismantled, and the closed pattern was opened to the public. With the demolition of the city wall, the original urban power center disintegrated, and the urban functions changed to meet the needs of social development. The location of the new administrative agency also makes use of the original official land, such as Zouma Alley and the former General Mansion of Manchu City, which are still important administrative centers. However, due to the convenient geographical location of Chengdu and developed transportation, new functional centers are gradually formed. The administrative institutions gather around, such as new commercial centers and cultural centers are gradually formed, the city adapts to the new social form and the needs of economic development, showing a trend of diversification of central functions, and the functions of the city begin to expand. Since its development, People's Park has become the most important place for public leisure activities in the center of Chengdu. The structure of Chengdu Manchu City began to gradually merge with the imperial city of Chengdu, and gradually became the commercial and cultural center of Chengdu. The increase in its administrative and economic status has made Chengdu a central city in the southwest region.

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