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► **To cite this version:**

Alice Crowther. Compte rendu de Jerry Norman. A Comprehensive Manchu-English Dictionary (Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press, 2013) Hardcover, quarto (26cm), xxvi + 418pp.. 2014. <hal-04663474>

HAL Id: hal-04663474

<https://hal.science/hal-04663474v1>

Preprint submitted on 30 Jul 2024

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HAL Authorization

Jerry Norman *A Comprehensive Manchu-English Dictionary* (Cambridge, MA : Harvard University Press, 2013). Hardcover, quarto (26cm), xxvi + 418pp. \$45.00/ £33.95.

Jerry Norman's *A Concise Manchu-English Lexicon* (320 pages) published in 1978 by the University of Washington Press was the first Manchu-English dictionary. The new *A Comprehensive Manchu-English Dictionary* is a revised and expanded version of this lexicon with roughly a third more material in the form of new entries or additions to existing entries.

A Concise Manchu-English Lexicon was the result of the two years (1965 – 1967) that the American linguist Jerry Norman (1936 – 2012) spent in Taiwan completing a phd dissertation on the Jianyang 建陽 dialect of Fujianese, whilst at the same time studying Manchu under the direction of Professor Guang Lu 廣祿 (1900 – 1973), a native speaker of Sibe from the Cabcal region of Xinjiang. Before coming to Taiwan Norman had worked as part of a group compiling a Fuzhou dialect – English dictionary. The basis of his Manchu lexicon – of which he published a first version privately in Taiwan in 1967 – was the translation into English of the entries in the Japanese 滿和辭典, supplemented by translation of material not included in the 滿和辭典 but found in Erich Hauer's (1878-1936) *Handwörterbuch der Mandschusprache* (712 pages, published posthumously in 1952), and by information given by Guang Lu.

Manchu is always given in transliteration, and the system of transliteration used is the Möllendorf system. The dictionary also includes a ten-page note on the Manchu script and on the pronunciation of Manchu that Norman based on Guang Lu's pronunciation of written Manchu – a traditional pronunciation he had learned growing up in the Ili valley region and that differed from his pronunciation of spoken Sibe where for instance he would often shorten or reduce vowels. The dictionary is intended as a tool for reading texts and does not include proper names, etymologies or examples of usages. For official titles the Chinese characters are given as well as an English translation taken from H.H. Brunnert and V.V. Vagelstrom's 1912 *Present Day Political Organisation of China*.

The English translations given are clear and evocative, and colloquialisms are avoided. Where no direct translation is possible a concise description is given. Verbs are given in the *-mbi* form and a note indicates whether verbs with a root in *i* or *u* will take *-ha* or *-he* in their perfect participial form. Derived verbal forms (passive, causative etc.) have separate entries.

To give an example of the information that the dictionary gives and does not give, as well as of the admirable clarity of the translations: *buleku* is glossed as i) mirror, lens, and ii) a round piece of metal used to protect the heart in combat. In the same entry are sub-entries for *buleku bithe* (dictionary), *buleku dohton* (case for a mirror) and *buleku obumbi* (to draw lessons from, to use as a reference). *Bulekušembi* and *bulekušebumbi* are given separate entries.

The selected bibliography the author gives in the preface indicates the particular attention he has given to the translation of animal and plant names, drawing

particularly on the work of Anglophone botanists and zoologists who visited the north-east in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and on the *Zhongguo jingji dongwuzhi* 中國經濟動物志 series published by the Chinese Academy of Sciences in the 1960s. Where possible the Latin name of a plant, bird or animal is given followed by a vernacular English name, otherwise a simple description is given – i.e. *taiha*: “a hunting dog with long hair on its ears and tail”.

Norman’s earlier Manchu-English lexicon has long been out of print and this new dictionary will be of daily use to the small but growing group of students studying Manchu in the English-speaking world. It is probably not a coincidence that it has been published by the Harvard University Asia Center, one of the few Western universities where Manchu is regularly taught, with a foreword by Mark Elliott, one of the key figures in the American “New Qing History” movement that lays emphasis on the importance of the use of Manchu, Mongolian, Tibetan and Turkic sources alongside Chinese-language sources for the study of the Qing dynasty. It will be an invaluable tool for students and non-native English speakers wishing to produce English translations of Manchu texts, avoiding the subtle changes in sense produced by passing from a Manchu-Chinese or Manchu-Japanese dictionary and then a Chinese-English or Japanese-English dictionary.