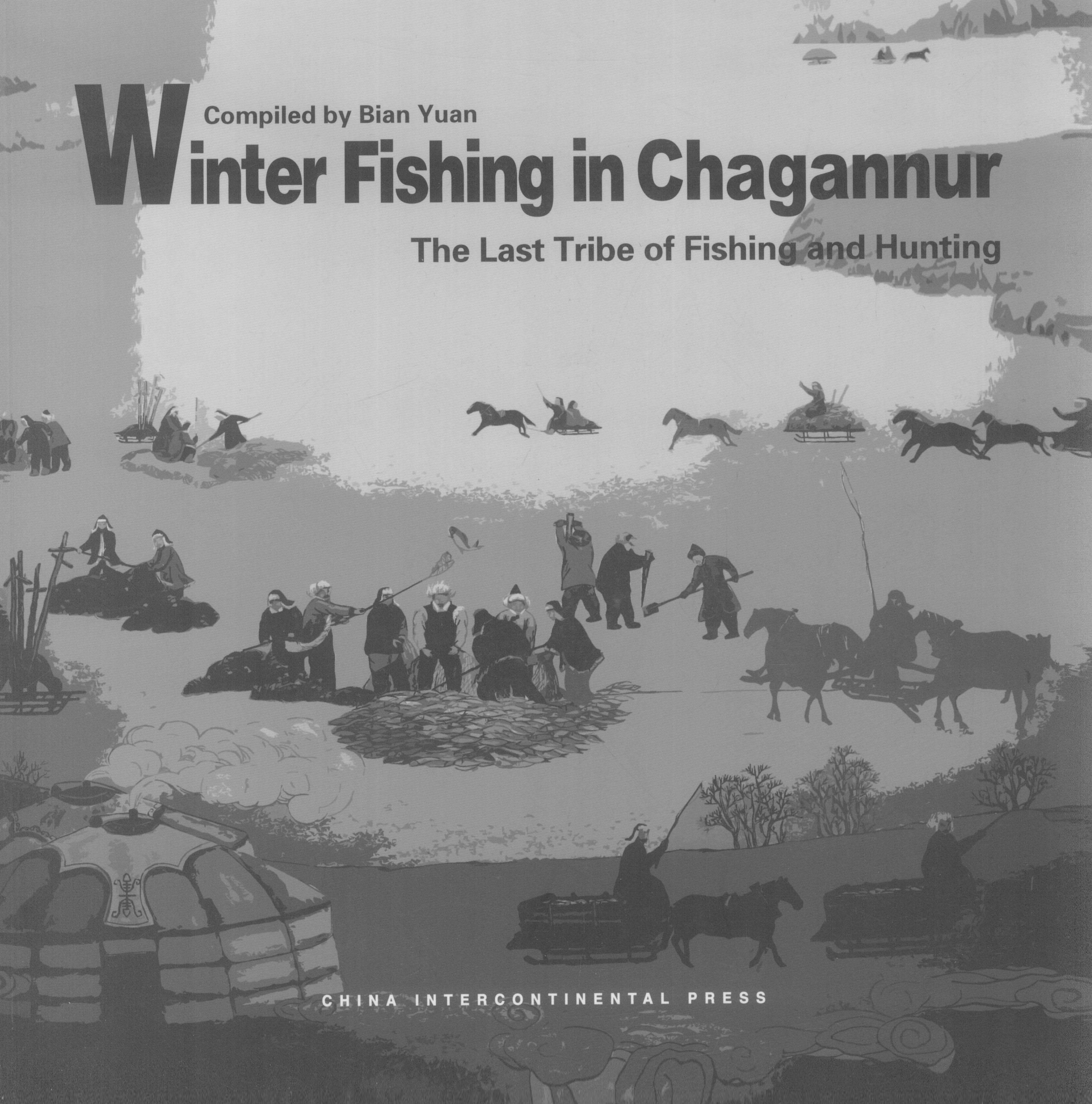




W

Compiled by Bian Yuan

inter Fishing in Chagannur

The Last Tribe of Fishing and Hunting

CHINA INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

Compiled by Bian Yuan

Winter Fishing in Chagannur

The Last Tribe of Fishing and Hunting

江苏工业学院图书馆
藏书章

CHINA INTERCONTINENTAL PRESS

图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

查干湖冬捕: 最后的渔猎部落: 英文/边缘主编; 杨军译. —北京: 五洲传播出版社, 2008.6

ISBN 978-7-5085-1365-2

I. 查… II. ①边…②杨… III. ①风光摄影—中国—现代—摄影集②前郭尔罗斯蒙古族自治县—摄影集 IV. J424

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字 (2008) 第069301号

出版: 五洲传播出版社

总顾问: 魏敏学 于国志 车黎明 陈荷生

总策划: 蓝军 孙鸿志 刘玉忱 金育辉

编委会

主任: 焦洪学

副主任: 闫来锁 包文军

主编: 边缘

首席摄影: 边缘

摄影: (按姓氏笔画排列)

于国志 车黎明 包文军 刘玉忱 闫来锁 陈荷生

封面绘图: 庞志义

撰文: 曹保明

英文翻译: 杨军

责任编辑: 荆孝敏 王莉

查干湖冬捕

最后的渔猎部落 边缘 主编

设计: 大连边缘摄影艺术中心

印刷: 深圳雅昌彩色印刷有限公司

版次: 2008年6月第1版第1次印刷

开本: 1/12 889mmX1194mm

印张: 10

印数: 1-5000册

书号: ISBN 978-7-5085-1365-2

定价: 298.00元

查干湖冬捕

藍軍



Preface of Winter Fishing in Chagannur

Chagan Lake, Chagannur in Mongolian, which means a white holy lake, is located in the northwest of Jilin Province. The water area is 420 sq km. It is 37 km from north to south and 17 km from east to west. The water storage capacity is 700 million cubic meter. It is the seventh largest fresh water lake in China.

During the Song and Liao Dynasties, Chagan Lake was known as the "big lake" which was an important place for the Qidan nobles to hold the "Nabo (hunting trips) in spring". Each spring, the Emperor of Liao Dynasty would have the "First Fish Celebration Feast" and the "First Goose Celebration Feast" here with his courtiers and meet with the tribe leaders. Many unique ancient fishing and hunting practices have been handed down since then, such as to chisel the ice to fish, let the gyrfalcons catch the swans and wild geese, eat the raw fish, etc. After the Yuan Dynasty, it became the nomadic land to the Mongolians. In Ming Dynasty's Jiajing period, the Gorlos of Horqin tribe in Mongolian Ministry settled down here. Since the Mongolians embraced Lamaism, revered the "Tengri", and believed in "animism", they held the sacrificial ceremony honoring the mountain and water. When the whole grasslands were covered by the snow and the lake was frozen, the Gorlos people would invite the monks to blow the horn, recite sutra, have a "Chama Dance" which can drive away the evil and bring in the blessings, and offer scarifies to the god of lake with the highest Mongolian courtesies. After the ceremony, fishermen would take up the fishing gears, jump onto the sledge and go to the depths of the lake which began the winter net fishing under the ice which would last for nearly two months. Over the years, those fishing and hunting practices co-created by the multi-nationalities such as Qidan, Nuzhen, Mongolian, Man, and Han have been followed and inherited by the Gorlos people from generation to generation.

Now, the Chagan Lake with beautiful environment and scenery and it becomes the National Nature Reserve, the State AAAA Tourism Spot, National Water Park and Top 100 Scenic Spots of Tourism Brand in Counties of China. It is also an important production base for the fishing industry in Jilin Province. It abounds in various kinds of fish, such as carps, chubs, and spotted silver carps. The annual output of fresh fish is 6,000 tons. The spotted silver carps of Chagan Lake have passed the certification of the National AA Green Food and Organic Food, and have received the title of "Chinese famous brand of agricultural products". In 2006, the output of the winter single net fishing on Chagan Lake was 104,500 kg, which had created the Guinness World Record as the "largest scope of winter net fishing under the ice". "Ice Fishing Tour Festival on Chagan Lake" has also been awarded as "China's Top 10 Natural Ecological Festivals" by China's Second Session of the Tourism Industry Annual Meeting. Winter fishing on Chagan Lake has been awarded as National Non-Material Cultural Heritage.

Publishing "The Winter Fishing on Chagan Lake –the Last Fishing and Hunting", the anthology of the photographic works, is aimed at exhibiting the spectacle of Winter fishing on Chagan Lake to the whole world, appreciating the Chagan Lake, the original color of the nature and raising the attention of the whole society to the protection, development and construction of the wetland of Chagan Lake.

Wish Chagan Lake a more harmonious and brilliant future!

Chinese Communist Party Songyuan City Standing Committee member,
Former Secretary of Chinese Communist Party Guo County Committee



The Last Tribe of Fishing and Hunting

Cao Baoming

In the north of the earth, and on the east of the Horqin tender grassland, there is a place called Chagannur, where in winter, white alkaline earth dried up on the boundless grassland, and the naked land was carved to many winkled fossas by the strong winds, and the yellow withered grass was shivering in the cold winds. Beyond the bleak land, there was a vast icy land...

The vast icy land was illuminated by the gloomy sun and shined a cold ray of light.

The snow fell down upon the arrival of the winter and covered the icy land thickly. The wind blew the snow discretionarily as thick fog permeating far away.

Northeasterners were reluctant to go outdoors in such a cold weather. They usually sat around a brazier or on a fired warmed bed, with a little wine pot in their hands, sipping the warm crusted wine and waited for the winter's departure and the spring's arrival, until when the flowers would bloom and the migrated wide goose would be back again.

But men in Chagannur definitely made an exception.

In Chagannur's villages, which were attacked by strong winds and heavy snow, and in country roads where the snow was over the knees, and in the wealds where nippy winds blew, the northern men were spanking. Some were towing horses, some were carrying the fishing nets, some were dragging the coulters, and some were carrying the ice pitons while racing to the glaciers with yelling...

What were they going to do?

According to the local speaking, they were to fish, which was also called "winter fishing".

Shouldn't fishing be conducted in summer? When the river flowed gently carrying the fishing boats, on the boats, were the fishermen casting the fishing nets into the sky, and the nets swiftlys dived into the water and the fishes were caught. How could they conduct fishing in such a cold weather...

The Chagannur men laughed in the snow and cold winds.

The thick snow was just like waves in the sea undulating coldly

on the wilderness. And the strong wind sweeping the snow was just like a knout wiping the bodies of people violently. But the Chagannur men were performing the dance to "sacrifice for the nets".

"Nets! It's time for you to wake up; it's time for you to strut your stuff; come on, let's start. When we harvest trolleys of big and fresh fishes, we'll come to sacrifice for you again. Nets angel..." They shouted happily.

On the ice, the young fishermen had already dug many net holes with the shining ice pitons under the guidance of the fishing foreman. The hundred-meter-long net was ploughed through the thick ice and into the cold water. In the distance, the net which was wrung by the frost-covered horses, making a squeaky sound, and the 500 meters long net was coiled over the axle drawn by the horses.

Those young men handled the derrick mast ceaselessly to pull the net out of the water with the horse-drawn axle. Vapor leaped up from the net, scattered around on the fishermen's coats and hats like smokes, and even froze a layer of white thick frost on the eyebrows and mustaches of the northern fishermen in Chagannur.

With the squeaky sound of the horse-drawn axle, the setting sun disappeared at the end of the boundless weald, and numberless fishes jumped out of the icy holes and weltered in the blood-red light of the setting sun, which brought the reaping fishermen a busy moment.

The able-bodied net operators of Chagannur handled the big round net while re-floating the fishes and throwing them on the ice, and immediately, hills of fishes were piled up in the splendid locale of winter fishing...

The winter fishing of Chagannur has a long history. Chagannur in Mongolian means a white lake, which used to be called "a little sea" and is still one of the top 10 biggest fresh water lakes of China. It is located in the former Korros Mongolian autonomous county in the Songyuan municipality in the west of Jilin Province, i.e., on the 45° 09' 30" along north latitude and 124° 03' 34" east longitude.

Chagannur is what people call it nowadays, historically, it used be called "big lake" or "big fishing lake" in Song and Liao dynasties. In "the Outline of Military Science" written by Zeng Gongliang of Northern Song dynasty, it was described as "the big lake is the place for the procreations of ducks and geese, and the big lake's girth is 300 kilometers." When it came to Ming dynasty, this big lake was called "big Bebuchahan Lake" and was also called "the White Horse Lake". The acreage of the lake is 4 million hectares with a water storage of 700 million cubic, the water in the lake originated from the Yansai lake at the end of Holin River on the northern foot of the Futelerhan Mountain in Daxingan Mountain, which is from the influx of rains and snows of all seasons and all the other water poured into the Yansai lake.

In the history, Chagannur together with the Dalai Lake of HunLunbeier and a big part of the Lake Baikal in Russia composed the "kidney" of the earth, accommodating the living environment of human beings and all the living things of the Northern Hemisphere.

In the long history, all the niceness had been substantially the results of the harmony between human beings and the nature. The human beings protected the nature while the nature fostered the human beings. Beforetime, the Mongolians on Horqin Grassland never ate fish and they even had the sense to protect the "water". When children were herding on the grassland, it was forbidden to let the livestock pee into the water as well as people. Children were told by the adults to not pee into the lakes and rivers as to not offend the God of the Water, otherwise, bales would fall upon the grassland. Actually, the sense of protecting the nature was transmitted to the next generation subtly by the kind elders. This is survivability as well as a good quality for the northern nation living in Chagannur.

The quality to live harmoniously with the nature is actually a kind of ability, and even more, a spiritual ability, which created a fine-qualified living environment when it's embodied in the

process of living. Thereupon, the nationality living here protected the large scale of land including Chagannur as its origin magically, which enabled Chagannur lie in the beautiful mountains silently as a fairyland.

Due to the closed district policy of Qing Dynasty, such fancy places as the North-east of China including Chagannur had been hidden away from the outer world for a long time. When it came to the 18th year of Shunzhi in Qing dynasty (1661 AD), the Manchu as a north-east nationality invaded midland, unified China and established the Qing Dynasty. They blocked the north-east of China from the outer world as the birthplace of their ancestors, and the construction of "border osier fence" followed. The "border osier fence" in folk say was "Osier Border", which was also recognized respectively as "new border" and "older border". The "old border" was built to protect the "birthplace of their ancestors" and was also appreciatively demarcated to Mongolian as their nomadic area for their help in overthrowing the reign of Ming Dynasty, that's why in nowadays, some places in the west of the city of Changchun are still called "Kaowubian(near to Wu border)" or "Kaowangbian(near to Wang border)". The place where Chagannur lies used to be the nomadic area of former Korros maharajas of Mongolia, where was also called "Mengdi (the Mongolian territory)" or "Menghuang (the wasteland of Mongolia)".

Chagannur, which is surrounded by meadows and flowers, seems to have been forgotten by people for hundreds of years. It has been lying silently in the embrace of the fresh Horqin Grassland. The huge lake is surrounded by different kinds of natural plants, and accommodates various kinds of insects, which provides plenteous natural feedstuff for the fishes in the lake. The fishes in the lake are fed by the insects in summer, while in the late summer and early fall, the monsoon from the west bank of Chagannur blows a huge amount of grass into the water and then the fishes will be mainly fed by the grass seeds, which

explains why the fishes in the lake have a unique flesh quality with a fresh but not oily taste and emanate a natural smell.

Chagannur is simply a wonderful water area for the natural breeding of fishes, which is due to its wind's direction. The wind's direction has a lot connection with the mesa in its north-west.

Today, the hypsography of Chen's Well, Huang's Well and Tian's Well etc in Qian'an county is apparently higher than that of the east bank. Monsoons from north-west is the reigning winds which brings a lot of ripe grass seeds into the lake, providing natural feedstuff to the fishes in the lake. While the hypsography of Xinmiao and Qingshantou is smooth, and the area is full of plants as lotus and water caltrop, which are the favorite feed for the fishes. In summer and fall, lots of big fishes migrate here and the area becomes the paradise of fishes for its natural environment. There used to be over hundreds kinds of peculiar fishes such as cyprinoids, crucians, grass carps, chubs, trouts, *Esox reichertis*, whitebaits etc, well-nigh all kinds of fishes. There are even super big sturgeons which are over 150-250 kilograms in the lake due to the connection of the water channel between the meadow and the Nen River.

The habitude of eating fishes was invented by the Han nationality. During the over-hundred-year reign from Shunzhi to Qianlong in Qing Dynasty, the population in mid-land soared due to the prosperity of Qinglong's reign even beyond the accommodation of the land, and natural disasters followed in successive years, which forced millions of farmers to leave their native homeland. They walked to the Shanhai Col to seek plowland in the north, this was the momentous migration of people in Chinese history which was also noticed as the process of "Chuan Guan Dong (seek livelihood in the north-east of China)". The Mongolian ministers and the Qing court couldn't stop the steps of the migration then and had no

choice but to "measure the wastelands" and "allocate the wastelands to peasants", which was considered as "fostering the people by lands". And then the court enacted "the Decree of Recruitment for Reclaiming the North-east of Liaoning", and then a huge amount of Han people migrated into the Horqin Grassland and started living in Chagannur of former Korros...

When the Han people turned up the black fertile soil with their shovels, picks and ploughs, the water resources was also developed, and for the first time, Chagannur, the sparkling pearl on the boundless grassland, attracted the attention of the nation.

After thousands of years' deep sleep, Chagannur finally woke up.

The most splendid and impressing moments are the time for winter fishing. The harmony of human and nature has bred numberless big and fleshy fishes through spring to autumn, and when winter comes, it's time for those fishes under the ice, which seem to have been waiting silently for centuries, to come out to the world...

The Mother Nature has created a set of rules of living for human beings silently. In the north of the earth, on the cold fresh Horqin Grassland, all rivers have been frozen by the severe coldness through late autumn to early winter.

In the past, the traffic of the North was not convenient, and many wide frozen rivers became the roads for sleighs in winter. If the residents dug holes to fish on the ice, the traffic of sleighs and vehicles would be blocked. But the northerners were kind-hearted, they never dug holes to fish on the ice where sleighs and vehicles passed, instead, they dug to fish on small inlets which makes Chagannur the busy piscary in winter. And thanks to the severe coldness and snow in winter, which act as a natural fridge, the harvested fishes were stored and transported freshly, which made

Chagannur's winter fishing a well-known and magical business in the winter of the North.

Winter fishing is differentiated from other fishing activities by its collective team work. Winter fishing is not conducted by individual person or boat but needs the cooperation of various fields of different nationalities. And in order to organize the fishing team, people of different nationalities from employed workers to nets and boats owners, from fishermen to foremen, and various kinds of craftsmen, have to cooperate with each other. People have divided their works in order to conduct the winter fishing, the carpenters make the sleighs, cartwrights make the trolleys, cobblers make the fur coats, shoe-makers make the shoes, weavers prepare the fishing nets, rope-makers prepare the net ropes, reed reapers are busy weaving the fish containers, and even shopkeepers of fish stores, frequent customers, and the hostels have formed a kind of connection due to the winter fishing in Chagannur. Thanks to the winter fishing in Chagannur, human beings are granted the opportunity to develop their civilization, and even animals acquire recognitions. Horses have to drive the axle to lift the nets on ice as a work force, dogs guard the nets warehouse and cattles transport the fishes. The winter fishing builds an intimacy between human beings and animals and creates a concrete harmony between human and nature.

Winter fishing is to fight against the severe nature and dig the ice for fishes, and it's a habitude in Chagannur that those who have not experienced the winter fishing on ice are not "true men". This is one of their standards to judge a true man. In the North, those men who have not joined the winter fishing in Chagannur, who have not chastened by the severe cold winds in Chagannur and who have not experienced the cold nights in Chagannur, would not be qualified to get married. This, of course, is the admiration for those brave fishermen. Chagannur in winter, against the winds and snow,

is in a busy world.

Culture and spirit are displayed and inherited completely in the winter fishing of Chagannur. The winter fishing is a great, entire and splendid exhibition of survival fruits of human being. What entirely burst out in this magnificent activity are people's survivability, spirit features and internal desire of joy. This activity, preparing in spring and summer, makes the self-assured people eager to catch all the fresh fishes growing in the whole summer and autumn under the freezing ice. Then, the winter fishing of Chagannur has fostered the independent custom of its own...

In the severe cold winter, when thick snow covering the Horqin tender grassland, the north wind howling day and night, the winter fishing of Chagannur begins. This time, land is trembling, horses are neighing, people are shouting.

It is the outburst zeal boiling from the bottom of hearts of the people who live on the black soil of the north.

They come back to the nature in dog-fur hat and sheep-fur-padded jacket. That is a kind of turning back, a kind of primitive-colored taste of survival, also a kind of revive and revitalizing of an ancient culture. There is no other inheritance like this pure original surviving form you can experience directly on the earth.

You can get a sense of entering the survival from ancient people when you are getting close to Chagannur. It seems that you are brought to the disappearing site of Loulan, or the tribe of Indians in Peru. The nature accepts you quietly while it embracing you actively.





In winter, the whistling fierce wind blows across this vast unsheltered open country, sweeping away the snow accumulated since winter begins, revealing a huge amazing ice surface. But people have to let their view vanish in the mist, even in sunny days. Just this ice open country, is Chagannur, which is in Horqin grassland on the north earth.

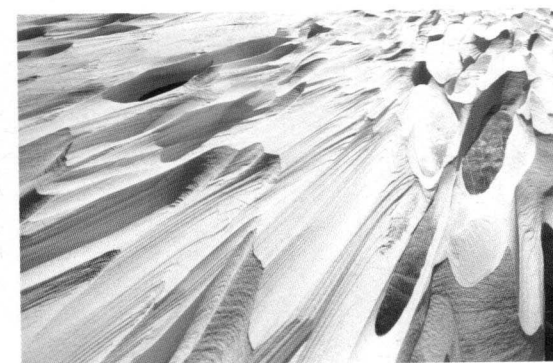
Chagannur, is south to the Nen River which is rising in Yihuli Mountain and west to the Second Songhuajiang River originating from Changbai Mountain.

In winter, cold is magnified in peace, and waves of ice and snow are solidified into strong mystery floating beyond the soft and spacious horizon, which is about to tell a story of life tirelessly.

But where is life? There is no trace of life on this bleak ice open country at all. But when you are listening attentively to the ice dam made of frozen autumn waters and the crystal-like ice under the frigid solidified snow, from where you can find a calling from remote antiquity.

The open country in the north gives life an angle to get close to life, and even gives people a chance to know life.

The life gate of Chagannur once opens, the observant and conscientious persons will throw themselves into the arms of nature immediately. For thousands of years, severe cold has left too much brilliant memory to this land. This is its own memory of survival, distinguishing from all other memories. Maybe due to an occasional partiality of nature and the earth, Chagannur avoids the assimilation of modern society, and enjoys the precious cold and serenity of its own to its heart content.



In ancient times, there was a Bayan (herd owner) in Chagannur. He had a faithful house slave who herded horses named Jiyaqi. That year, Jiyaqi was old, and would be dying soon. But the old man was reluctant to part with horses. He sent people to find Bayan, and told him: "After my death, dress me in the clothes I am in when I herded horses for me, paint a portrait for me carrying a horse-lasso-pole on my arm, put me on the horse I herded, and bury me."

Bayan promised him: "No problem, Jiyaqi."

Thereupon, the old man closed his eyes, died.

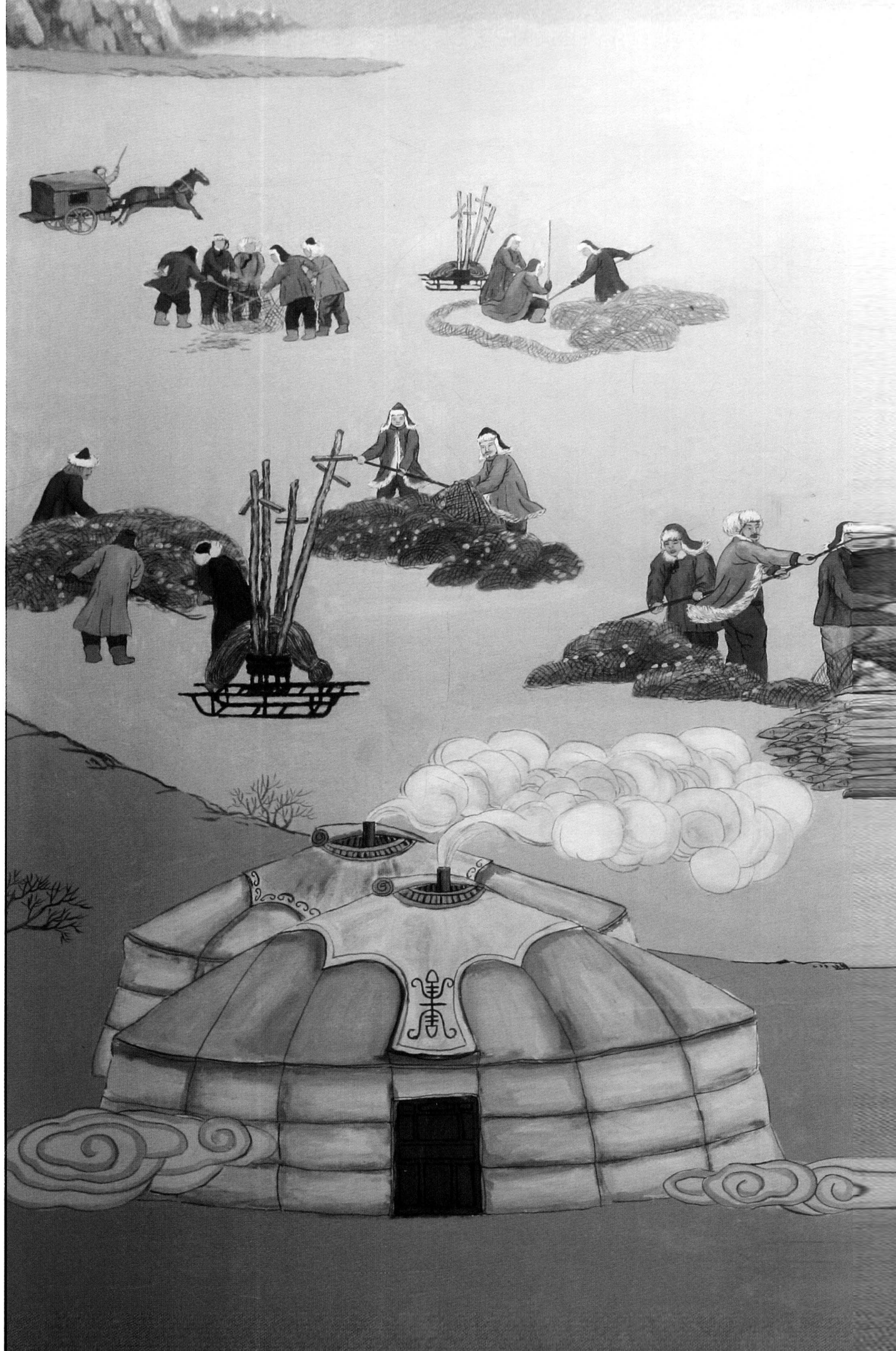
But after the old man's death, Bayan forgot Jiyaqi's words completely. A few months later, Bayan astonishingly found that many horses disappeared from herd, and pestilence followed closely. Bayan got into a panic, so he invited the wise man Bo (Saman) on the grassland.

Bo asked Bayan whether he had forgotten one's dying words. Bayan gave a negative response. Bo reminded him to think it over. Bayan suddenly reminded an insignificant old man, his faithful herdsman. Hence, Bayan sacrificed to Jiyaqi at his burial ground at once, and accomplished Jiyaqi's portrait, nailing it on cow fur and enshrining it. As expected, the lost horses came back, and the pestilence subsided. That's because wolves feared Jiyaqi's portrait. Bayan finally understood Jiyaqi's mind.

The story let people living on this land know what promise is.

Going to the wilderness to wake up the life under ice is the promise that life gives to life. This is the primitive totem that nature leaves to this land.

In the winter here, human being fully experience the intimacy between lives and the promise established between lives.





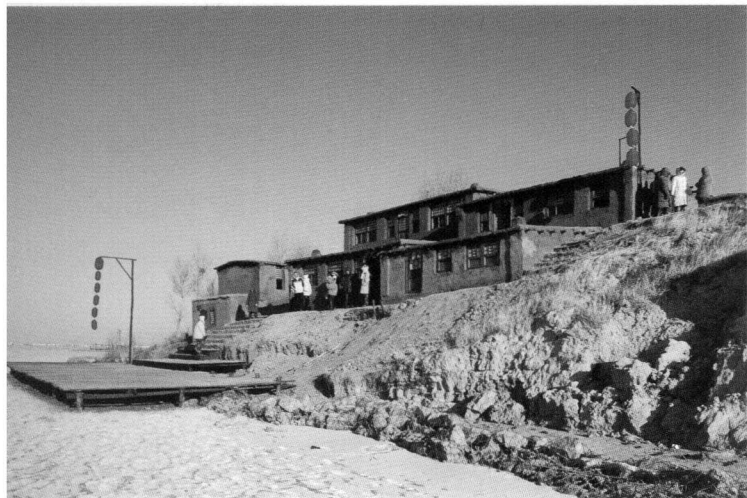
Earth is the life source of ice country ethnic group. Exuberant vitality was born here generation by generation, which is called "net house" in folk adage.

Yellow soil, grass and trees were solidified into memory, which pass on a kind of emotion, with the setup and pattern sending strong flavor of fishing and hunting.

The "net house" tells the far-back and vivid history of fishing and hunting here. Big chimney made of yellow soil and lattice window with window-paper plastering outside, are engraved on people's mind of different generations. Cold wind blows in winter's Chagannur. Strong wind and heavy snow cannot hit the old wood-made lattice window. The old window-paper keeps cold out in frigid days, and life goes on.

When cold wind chills one to the bone in spring, violent wind still cannot tear the window-paper into pieces. In the winter night, north wind beats the window with grit and snow, sounding like a galloping powerful army. People in Chagannur pass the long and cold winter, sleeping on the heated Kang in the warm earth-made houses.









The time-honored cultural course is relatively passed on its fishing and hunting formation. The main content of the sacrifice to lake is to wake net.

Ah, net, wake up from dreamland, please. Set out with people together.

Different from other ordinary places, the net here is woken up till winter.

The net awaking ceremony is held by lama in the Miaoyin Temple in Chagannur. He chants the sutra, and prays that the god of water bless the fishermen peaceful.

Shaman in the north keep beating fur drums, chanting the sutra devoutly. And then, they begin walking around the cairn. This time, the "ghost dancing" begins.

The "ghost dancing" is just the Shamanistic dance, a kind of old primeval totem dance.

That every animal and god masks put on suggests all the bygoners have revived. The primitive and desolate songs are simple but active. The dancing postures are of a distinct natural trait. All the things are full of experience and process, which fully indicate that people here have had strong survivability.

After the fusion of human and god, the leader of fishermen will sacrifice wine to the grassland and the Heaven which are revered by human being. His bleak calling and pray vibrate the frost on the beard and hat of the men in the northeast, with the hope from their hearts dashing to the horizon faraway.

