

# Civilizations in Crisis:

## Qing China

1644-1911

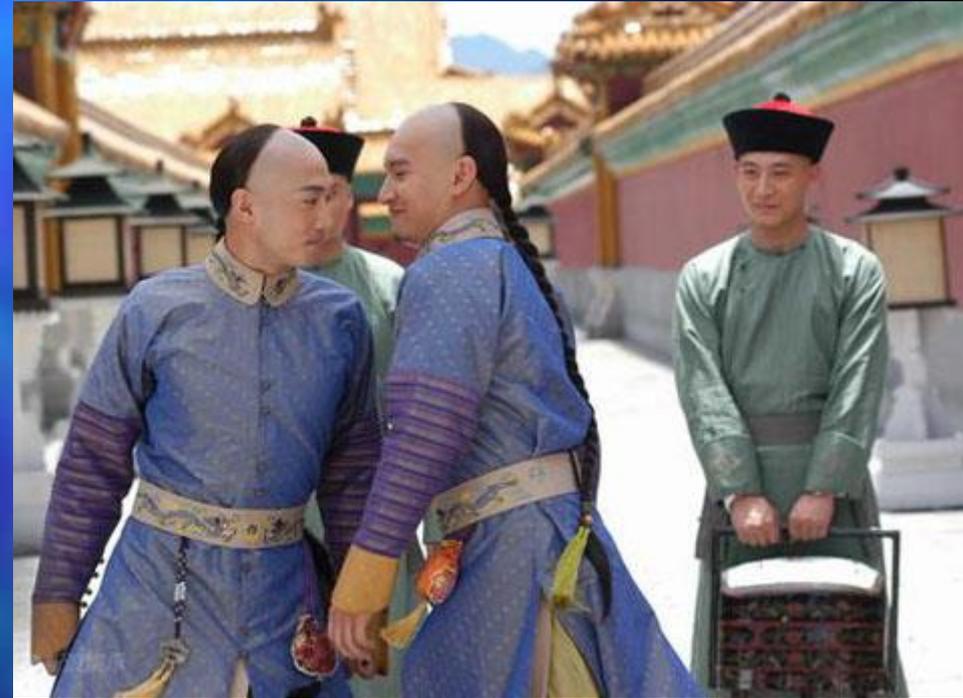
# The Qing (Manchu) Dynasty

- 1644-1912
- Though foreign, the Qing continued most Ming policies, including isolationism.
- Civil Service system was expanded.
- Patronized the arts and sciences



# Qing Expansion

- Added (but didn't assimilate) Mongolia, Tibet, and Xinjiang.
- Used local officials to run conquered regions like colonies.
- Deliberately prevented sinification.



# The Qing impact

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- Solidified the dominance of maritime trade over land based trade (Silk Road)
- Between Qing and Russian expansion, nomadic groups were reduced to irrelevancy.
- China's remained the place that merchants traveled to to trade bullion for luxury goods.

# Chinese society under the Manchu

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- Kept traditional social hierarchy
- Emphasized respect for rank
- Women continued to be dominated
- Daughters less wanted, female infanticide
- Lower-class women continued to work in fields or markets

# Manchu Domestic Policy

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- Focused on rural problems
  - Lowered tax and labor burdens
  - Repaired roads, dikes, and irrigation systems
  - Limited land accumulation by the rich
  - Population growth and a lack of available land severely limited the reforms

# Qing culture, cont'd

- Landlords bought up most of the land, widening the gap between rich and poor
- Commercial and urban expansion increased (until 1800 or so)
- Imported silver led to a huge trade surplus (until 1800 or so)
- The Rise of the Compradors-Chinese merchants permitted to trade with foreigners
  - Grew rich and powerful
  - Were China's outside connection

# The Rot from Within

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- By 1800,
  - The exam system is undermined by cheating and favoritism
  - Government positions were now about gaining influence and building family fortunes
  - The loss of revenue led to a weakening of the military, the infrastructure, etc.

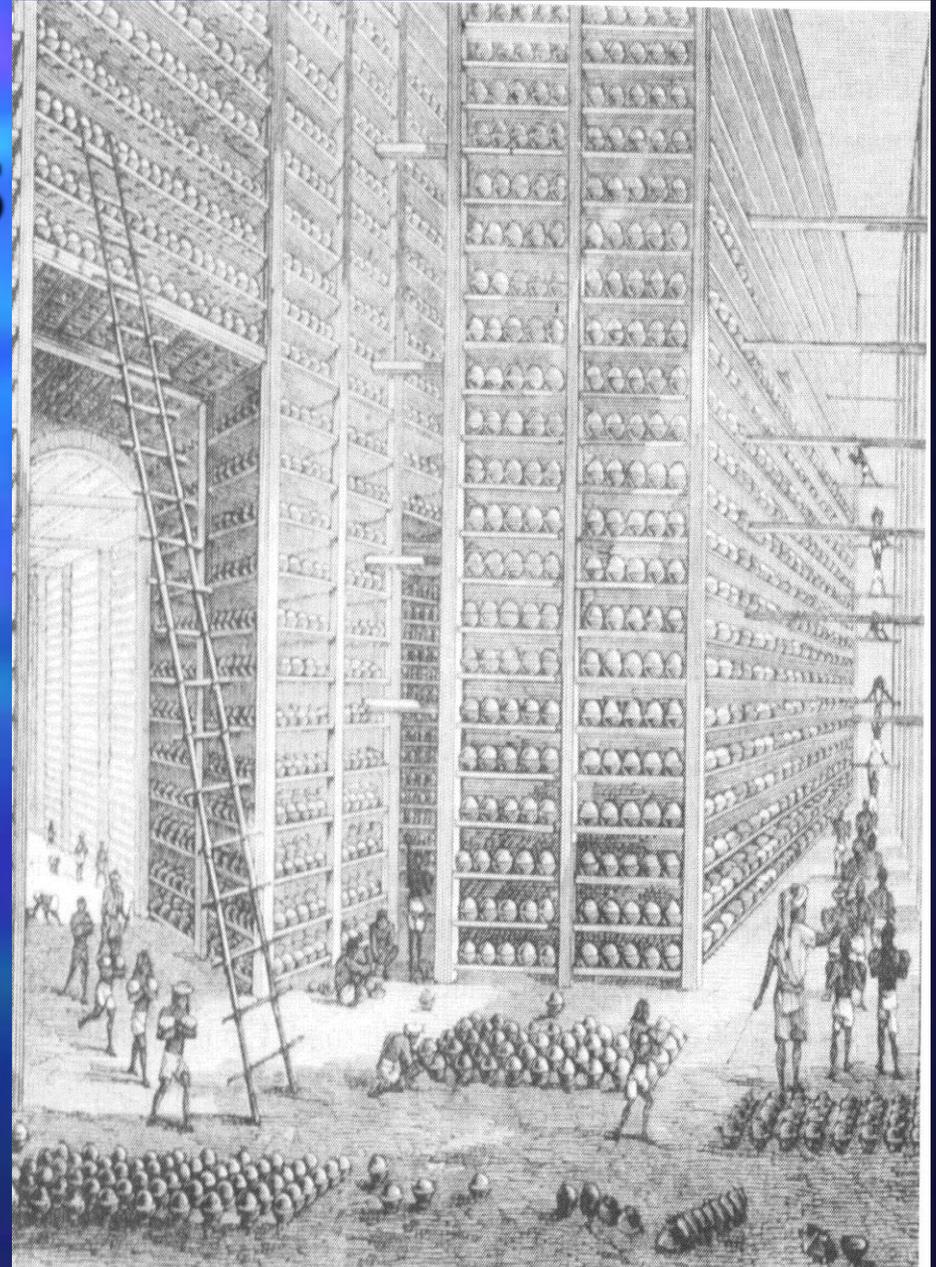
# Still more Rot

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- By 1850,
  - The damaged dikes and canals couldn't work anymore, and millions of peasants were left homeless
  - Mass migrations and banditry ensued
  - Social unrest increased everywhere
  - Neither their social nor economic systems could handle the changes brought by the Colombian Exchange

# The Opium Wars

- The British relied on Opium to fix the trade imbalance
- The Chinese feared the impact of opium trade on their economy and social order.
- The issue came to a head in 1830



# Lin Zexu

- A Chinese official ended trade in the 1830s.
  - Quarantined trade areas
  - Destroyed opium shipments
- The British East India company demanded military action, and the British government declared war in 1839



# Impact of the Opium Wars

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- A series of fights between 1839 and 1858.
- China lost. Badly. On both sea and land
  - China gave Hong Kong to the British, allowed Shanghai to be a foreign port.
  - By 1890, 90 ports were “leased” by foreign companies or governments
  - Opium poured in.
  - By 1850, foreign governments or merchants made nearly all of China’s trade decisions,

# The Taiping Rebellion

- A response to the social unrest of the previous century, as well as foreign incursions
- Led by Hong Xiuquan, the rebellion engulfed China for two decades



# Goals of the Taiping Rebellion

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- Radical equality
  - Abolish private property
  - Extreme land reform
  - Gender equality
    - No footbinding or prostitution
- Industrialize China
  - Railroads, universal health care, public education, open media
- End opium use

# Appeal of the Taiping

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- Both modern and traditional:
  - Denounced the Qing rulers as foreigners, and painted themselves as “real” Chinese.
  - Rejected Buddhism, Daosim, and most importantly Confucianism
    - Embraced a form of Christianity instead

# The gist of the Rebellion

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- Killed up to 30 million people
- Failed to unite with other rebellions
- United many enemies by attacking not only the government, but the regional landlords as well as religious groups.
- In the end, regional warlords came to dominate the interior and western militaries dominated the coast.

# The impact of the Taiping Rebellion

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- The central government is reduced to near-uselessness.
- China became politically dependent on European powers.
- The Dynastic cycle is broken. To what extent is the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century another “warring states period?”

# The Self-strengthening movements

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- On the “stay-Chinese” end:
  - Revamped civil service exam
  - Renewed govt support for the regional landlords
    - New relations with scholar-gentry
    - Repair infrastructure
- On the “copy the west” end:
  - Encouraged foreign investment
  - Mild industrialization
  - Military reforms
  - Rise of the Compradors

# Why did self-strengthening fail?

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- Too little, too late, and with a profound under-appreciation of China's problems
- The landlord class resisted any real change
- How can foreign technology bring you independence?
- Like Russia, they wanted to preserve the existing order rather than transform it.

# In the end...

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- Everyone knew a new China was needed. Nobody could agree on what the new China should be
  - The Boxer rebellion tried to expel all foreigners
  - Regional warlords envisioned leading a new dynasty
  - The sons of the scholar-gentry combined with the compradors to envision a modern Chinese Republic.
  - The only thing they shared was a new heightened sense of Chinese nationalism

# The Final breaths

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- The Dowager Empress Cixi repressed just about all reforms.
- Imperial corruption got continually worse
- In 1905, the civil service exam is abolished
- In 1912, Pu Yi is overthrown and Sun Yixian becomes the first President of the Republic of China.