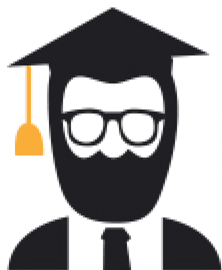

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Chinese. There were more companies (of three hundred men each) in the Manchu banners than in either of the other two; together with their steppe allies, the Mongols, the Manchu troops outnumbered the Chinese by more than two to one. Furthermore, the Chinese banners mainly consisted of Manchurian Chinese, who had been a part of the regime from its inception. Manchu garrison forces were segregated and not under the jurisdiction of Chinese officials. They were given stipends and lands to cultivate. They were not permitted to marry Chinese, their children had to study Manchu, and they were not permitted to bind the feet of their daughters. In 1668, the Manchu court cordoned off northern and central Manchuria by a willow palisade as a strategic tribal territory closed to Chinese immigrants.

In addition to the banners, there were also Chinese constabulary forces known as "armies of the green standard." At first, the distinction between the banners and the Chinese military was critical. Later, as the functioning of the dynasty became routinized, the ethnic basis of its military strength became less important.

The second feature of Manchu government was what has been termed "dyarchy," the appointment of two persons, one Chinese and one Manchu, to each key post in the central government. Early in the dynasty, the Chinese appointed were often bannermen or bond servants personally loyal to the Manchus. At the provincial level, Manchu governor-generals superintended Chinese governors. Beneath the governors, most officials and virtually all district magistrates were Chinese.

The third feature of Qing government was the role of the Manchu language, an Altaic tongue totally unlike Chinese. For centuries Manchu had evolved as an oral tongue, but from 1599, it borrowed the Mongolian script and became a written language. Tracing the writing system back, Mongolian came from Uighur (written vertically), which came from Sogdian (written horizontally), which came, ultimately, from Aramaic. Aramaic, we recall, was also the point of origin for the alphabets of Greek, Latin, and the modern European languages. Many imperial edicts were written in Manchu as well as in Chinese, and Manchu officials were expected to conduct their correspondence with the emperor in Manchu. Mark Elliott notes that in writing to the emperor, Hân Chinese signed off as "your official," whereas Manchu officials used the more intimate "your servant/slave." Within Qing government, those of Manchu birth constituted an inner "clan" of sorts.

QING FOREIGN RELATIONS

As always, the principal foreign threats to China during Qing rule came from the north and northwest. Russia had expanded east across Siberia and south against the remnants of the Golden Horde during the reign of Ivan the Terrible (1533–1584). By the 1660s, Russian traders, trappers, and adventurers had reached the Amur River in northern Manchuria where they built forts and traded with the eastern Mongols. (We are reminded of the French penetration of Canada during the same decades.) To prevent a rapprochement between the Russians and Mongols, Kangxi set up

military colonies in Manchuria during the 1680s and drove the Russians from the lower Amur. This victory during the early years of Peter the Great (1682–1725) led to the 1689 Treaty of Nerchinsk. Negotiated with the assistance of Jesuit translators, the treaty excluded Russia from northern Manchuria while permitting Russian caravans to visit Beijing.

In the west was a complex, three-corner relationship between Russia, the western Mongols, and Tibet. Kangxi, and then Qianlong, campaigned against the Mongols, invaded Tibet, and in 1727, signed a new treaty with Russia. During the campaigns, the Qing temporarily gained control of millions of square miles of new territories. These areas became protectorates under a "barbarian management office," separate from the provincial administration of China proper. It is a telling comment on the Chinese concept of empire that ever since that time, even after China's borders contracted during the nineteenth century, the Chinese have continued to insist that the Manchu conquests of non-Chinese peoples define their legitimate borders.

Contacts with the West

Europeans had made their way to China in the Tang and Yuan dynasties, but only with Europe's oceanic expansion during the sixteenth century did they arrive in considerable numbers. Some came as missionaries, of whom the most educated, calculating, disciplined, enterprising, and successful were the Jesuits. On first arriving in Ming China, they donned the robes of the Buddhist monk, but on learning something of the culture, they switched to the gowns of the Confucian scholar. They studied Chinese and the Confucian classics and engaged in conversation with scholars. They used their knowledge of astronomy, geography, engraving, and firearms to win entry to the court at Beijing and appointments in the bureau of astronomy.

When the Manchus came to power in 1644, after a brief struggle, the Jesuits kept their position. They appealed to the curiosity of the court with telescopes, clocks, and clavichords. They tried to propagate Christianity. They attacked Daoism and Buddhism as superstitions but argued that Confucianism as a rational philosophy complemented Christianity, just as Aristotle's teaching complemented Christian theology in Europe. They interpreted the Confucian rites of ancestor worship as secular and non-antagonistic to Christianity. A few high court officials were converted. Kangxi was sympathetic to the scholarly personalities of the Jesuits and appreciated the cannon they cast but was unsympathetic to their religion: "I had asked [the Jesuit] Verbiest why God had not forgiven his son without making him die, but though he had tried to answer I had not understood him."[3]

Meanwhile, Franciscan and Dominican rivals had reported to Rome that the Jesuits condoned the Confucian rites. The ensuing debate was long and complex, but

[3]J. D. Spence, *Emperor of China: A Self-Portrait of K'ang Hsi* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), p. 84.

in the end, papal bulls issued in 1715 and 1742 decided against the Jesuits and forbade Chinese Christians to participate in the family rites of ancestor worship. Thereupon, though a few Jesuits remained in service at the court, Christianity was banned, churches were seized, missionaries were forced to flee, and congregations declined.

Other Europeans came to China to trade. The Portuguese came first in the early sixteenth century but behaved badly and were expelled. They returned in mid-century and were permitted to trade, but only on a tiny peninsula at Macao that was walled off from China. They were followed by Dutch from the East Indies (Indonesia), by the British East India Company in 1699, and by Americans in 1784. At first, the Westerners mingled with merchants from Southeast Asia in a fairly open multiport pattern of trade. Then, during the early eighteenth century, the more restrictive "Canton system" evolved. Westerners were permitted to trade only at Guangzhou—which they called "Canton." They were barred from entering the city proper but were assigned land outside its walls along the river. They could not bring their wives to China. They were subject to the dispositions of Chinese law. They were under the control of official merchant guilds. Nevertheless, both they and their Chinese counterparts prospered.

QIANLONG'S EDICT TO KING GEORGE III OF ENGLAND

The Chinese emperor rejected the requests of the 1793 Macartney mission for change in the restrictive Canton system. His edict reflects the Chinese sense of their superiority to other peoples and their belief that China was the "central kingdom" of the world.

What philosophical principles underlie the emperor's sense of superiority?

You, O King, are so inclined toward our civilization that you have sent a special envoy across the seas to bring to our Court your memorial of congratulations on the occasion of my birthday and to present your native products as an expression of your thoughtfulness. On perusing your memorial, so simply worded and sincerely conceived, I am impressed by your genuine respectfulness and friendliness and greatly pleased.

The Celestial Court has pacified and possessed the territory within the four seas. Its sole aim is to do its utmost to achieve good government and to manage political affairs, attaching no value to strange jewels and precious objects. The various articles presented by you, O King, this time are accepted by my special order to the office in charge of such functions in consideration of the offerings having come from a long distance with sincere good wishes. As a matter of fact, the virtue and prestige of the Celestial Dynasty having spread far and wide, the kings of the myriad nations come by land and sea with all sorts of precious things. Consequently there is nothing we lack, as your principal envoy and others have themselves observed. We have never set much store on strange or ingenious objects, nor do we need any more of your country's manufactures.

From *China's Response to the West* by S. Y. Teng and J. K. Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press). Copyright © 1954, 1979 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College. Reprinted by permission of Harvard University Press.

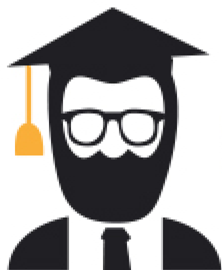
The British East India Company developed a triangular commerce between China, India, and Britain that enabled the English to drink tea and wear silk. Private fortunes were built. Specie flowed into China and the Chinese officials in charge grew immensely wealthy. Chafing under various restrictions, the British government in 1793 sent the Macartney mission to China to negotiate the opening of other ports, fixed tariffs, representation at Beijing, and so on. The emperor Qianlong permitted Macartney to present his gifts—which the Chinese described as tribute, even though Macartney refused to perform the kowtow—but turned down Macartney's requests. Western trade remained encapsulated at Guangzhou, distant from Beijing and little noted elsewhere in China.

MING–QING CULTURE

One thing that can be said of Ming–Qing culture, like population or agricultural crops, is that there was more of it. Whether we speak of gentry, scholar officials, or a professionalized class of literati, their numbers and works were far greater than in previous dynasties. Even local literary figures and philosophers were likely to publish their collected works or have them published by admiring disciples. Bookstores came of age in the Ming: They sold the Confucian classics and commentaries on them; collections of Tang and Song poetry; as well as colored prints, novels, erotica, and collections of model answers for the civil service examinations.

Chinese culture had begun to turn inward during the Song in reaction to Buddhism. This tendency was accelerated by the Chinese antipathy to Mongol rule and continued into the Ming and Qing, when Chinese culture became largely impervious to outside influences. Manchu rule seems to have affected this only marginally. Even works on mathematics and science translated into Chinese by the Jesuits left few traces in Chinese scholarship. Chinese cultural self-sufficiency, of course, reflected a tradition and a social order that had stood the test of time, but it also constituted a closed system of ideas with weaknesses that would become apparent in the nineteenth century. Orthodox thought during these five centuries was Zhu Xi Neo-Confucianism. From the mid- to the late Ming, some perturbations were caused by the Chan-like teachings of the philosopher Wang Yangming (1472–1529), whose activism caused him to be jailed, beaten, and at one point exiled during an otherwise illustrious official career.

Several other original thinkers' refusal to accept bureaucratic posts under the Qing won them plaudits during the anti-Manchu nationalism of the early twentieth century, but they had only a limited influence on their own times. The most innovative was Gu Yanwu, who wrote on both philology and statecraft. He used philology and historical phonetics to plumb the original meanings of the classics and contrasted their practical ethics with the "empty words" of Wang Yangming. Gu's successors extended his philological studies, developing empirical methods for textual studies, but lost sight of their implications for politics. The Manchus clamped down on unorthodox



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