

CHAPTER 27

TRADITION AND CHANGE IN EAST ASIA

INTRODUCTION

In the early modern age, powerful dynasties emerged in both China and Japan, featuring centralized, autocratic governments and efficient bureaucracies. In China, the Ming dynasty drove out the Mongols in 1368 and rebuilt the infrastructure of the empire, including the Great Wall, the Grand Canal, and irrigation systems. Ming Emperor Hongwu built a large navy and sponsored expeditions to southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean (see Chapter 23). However, later Ming rulers reversed this policy, destroyed the fleet, and restricted foreign contact.

In the mid-seventeenth century, Manchurian tribesmen invaded China, overthrew a corrupt Ming state, and established the Qing dynasty with a Manchu ruling class. Also in the seventeenth century, the Tokugawa shoguns of Japan broke the power of the provincial lords (the *daimyo*) and created a centralized military government. Although Chinese and Japanese traditions are very different, there are some common elements in this period, including

- A centralized bureaucracy. A hierarchy of Confucian-trained administrators ran the Qing Empire from the new capital at Nanjing. The Tokugawa shogunate required regular attendance by the *daimyo* at the capital city, Edo.
- Neo-Confucian values. Confucian teachings were appropriated by the state, stressing duty, order, and submission to authority. The patriarchal family was the basic social unit. Patriarchal values were grotesquely expressed in China in the practice of binding girls' feet.
- Agricultural economies with limited trade. Peasant farming fed the state, and crafts and luxury goods provided additional wealth. Both states severely restricted foreign trade to a few, carefully controlled port cities.
- Cultural insularity. For nearly two hundred years, Chinese and Japanese citizens did not travel abroad and had little knowledge of the outside world. By the eighteenth century, both dynasties had fallen behind the West in science and technology.

OUTLINE

I. The quest for political stability

A. The Ming dynasty

1. Ming government (1368–1644) drove the Mongols out of China
 - a) Centralized government control; faced new invasions from the Mongols
 - b) Rebuilt and repaired the Great Wall to prevent northern invasions
 - c) Restored Chinese cultural traditions and civil service examinations
2. Ming decline
 - a) Coastal cities and trade disrupted by pirates, 1520s–1560s

- b) Government corruption and inefficiency caused by powerful eunuchs
 - c) Famines and peasant rebellions during the 1630s and 1640s
 - d) Manchu invaders with peasant support led to final Ming collapse, 1644
- B. The Qing dynasty
1. The Manchus (1644–1911), invaders from Manchuria to the northeast
 - a) Overwhelmed the Chinese forces; proclaimed the Qing dynasty, 1644
 - b) Originally pastoral nomads, organized powerful military force
 - c) Captured Korea and Mongolia first, then China
 - d) Remained an ethnic elite; forbade intermarriage with Chinese
 2. Kangxi (1661–1722) and his reign
 - a) Confucian scholar; effective, enlightened ruler
 - b) Conquered Taiwan; extended to Mongolia, central Asia, and Tibet
 3. Qianlong (1736–1795) and his reign
 - a) A sophisticated and learned ruler, poet, and artist
 - b) Vietnam, Burma, and Nepal were made vassal states of China
 - c) Under his rule, China was peaceful, prosperous, and powerful
- C. The son of heaven and the scholar-bureaucrats
1. Emperor considered “the son of heaven”
 - a) Heavenly powers and an obligation to maintain order on the earth
 - b) Privileged life, awesome authority, and paramount power
 2. Governance of the empire fell to civil servants, called scholar-bureaucrats
 - a) Schooled in Confucian texts, calligraphy
 - b) Had to pass rigorous examinations with strict quotas
 3. The examination system and Chinese society
 - a) Civil service exam intensely competitive; few chosen for government positions
 - b) Others could become local teachers or tutors
 - c) System created a meritocracy with best students running the country
 - d) Wealthy families had some advantages over poor families
 - e) Confucian curriculum fostered common values

II. Economic and social changes

- A. The patriarchal family
1. The basic unit of Chinese society was the family; the highest value, filial piety
 - a) Included duties of children to fathers, loyalty of subjects to the emperor
 - b) Important functions of clan

2. Gender relations: strict patriarchal control over all females
 - a) Parents preferred boys over girls; marriage was to continue male line
 - b) Female infanticide; widows encouraged to commit suicide
 - c) Footbinding of young girls increased
 - d) Lowest status person in family was a young bride
- B. Population growth and economic development
1. Intense garden-style agriculture fed a large population
 - a) American food crops in seventeenth century: maize, sweet potatoes, and peanuts
 - b) Available land reached maximum productivity by mid-seventeenth century
 2. Population growth: 100 million in 1500, 225 million in 1750
 3. Manufacturing and trade benefited from abundant, cheap labor
 - a) Exported large quantities of silk, porcelain, lacquerware, and tea
 - b) Compensation for exports came in the form of silver bullion
 4. Foreign trade brought wealth to the dynasty, but threatened scholar-bureaucrats
 - a) Kangxi began policy of strict control on foreign contact
 - b) Western merchants restricted to Macao and Quanzhou
 5. Government and technology
 - a) Ming and Qing dynasties considered technological change disruptive
 - b) With abundant skilled labor, labor-saving technologies unnecessary
- C. Gentry, commoners, soldiers, and mean people
1. Privileged classes
 - a) Scholar-bureaucrats and gentry occupied the most exalted positions
 - b) Directed local government and society
 2. Peasants, the largest class, esteemed by Confucius for their honest labor
 3. Artisans and other skilled workers, some economic status
 4. Merchants often powerful and wealthy
 5. Lower classes or “mean people”: slaves, servants, entertainers, prostitutes

III. The Confucian tradition and new cultural influences

- A. Neo-Confucianism and pulp fiction
1. Confucian education supported by Ming and Qing emperors
 - a) Hanlin Academy in Beijing and provincial schools prepared students for civil service exams
 - b) Imperial cultural projects: encyclopedias and libraries
 2. Popular culture expanded to include novels, romances, travel adventures

B. The return of Christianity to China

1. Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), an Italian Jesuit in the Ming court
 - a) A learned man who mastered written and oral Chinese
 - b) Impressed Chinese with European science and mathematics
 - c) Popular mechanical devices: glass prisms, harpsichords, clocks
2. Confucianism and Christianity
 - a) Jesuits respectful of Chinese tradition, but won few converts
 - b) Chinese had problems with exclusivity of Christianity
3. End of the Jesuit mission
 - a) Rival Franciscan and Dominican missionaries criticized Jesuits' tolerance
 - b) When the pope upheld critics, Emperor Kangxi denounced Christianity
 - c) Jesuits had been an important bridge between Chinese and western cultures, introducing each to the achievements of the other

IV. The unification of Japan

A. The Tokugawa shogunate

1. Tokugawa Ieyasu brought stability to Japan after 1600
 - a) Japan divided into warring feudal estates
 - b) As shogun, Ieyasu established a military government known as *bakufu*
2. First need to control the daimyo, powerful local lords
 - a) Each daimyo absolute lord within his domain
 - b) Tokugawa shoguns required daimyo to live alternative years at Edo
 - c) *Bakufu* controlled daimyo marriages, travel, expenditures
3. Control of foreign relations
 - a) The shoguns adopted policy of isolation from outside world, 1630s
 - b) Foreign trade was under tight restriction at the port of Nagasaki
 - c) Despite the policy, Japan was never completely isolated

B. Economic and social change

1. Population growth
 - a) Agricultural production doubled between 1600 and 1700
 - b) Population rose by one-third from 1600 to 1700
 - c) Then slow growth due to infanticide, contraception, late marriage, abortion
2. Social change
 - a) Peace undermined the social and economic role of warrior elites
 - b) Merchants became prominent, and often wealthier than the ruling elites

C. Neo-Confucianism and floating worlds

1. Neo-Confucianism (loyalty, submission) became the official ideology of the Tokugawa
2. Scholars of “native learning” tried to establish distinctive Japanese identity
3. “Floating worlds”—centers of urban culture
 - a) Included teahouses, theaters, brothels, public baths
 - b) Ihara Saikaku, poet and novelist
 - c) *Kabuki* theater and *bunraku* (the puppet theater) popular

D. Christianity and Dutch learning

1. Christian missions, under Jesuits, had significant success in sixteenth century
2. Anti-Christian campaign launched by Tokugawa shoguns
 - a) Feared any movement that might help daimyo
 - b) Buddhists and Confucians resented Christian exclusivity
 - c) After 1612, Christians banned from islands, thousands killed
3. Dutch learning was one limited connection to the outside world
 - a) Dutch merchants permitted to trade at Nagasaki
 - b) Japanese scholars were permitted to learn Dutch and, after 1720, to read Dutch books
 - c) Shoguns became enthusiastic proponents of Dutch learning by mid-eighteenth century
 - d) European art, medicine, and science began to influence Japanese scholars

IDENTIFICATION: PEOPLE

What is the contribution of each of the following individuals to world history? Identification should include answers to the questions *who, what, where, when, how, and why is this person important?*

Yongle

Kangxi

Qianlong

Zheng He

Matteo Ricci

Ieyasu

IDENTIFICATION: TERMS/CONCEPTS

State in your own words what each of the following terms means and why it is significant to a study of world history. (Terms with an asterisk are defined in the glossary.)

Ming dynasty*

Great Wall

Forbidden City

Qing dynasty*

Scholar-bureaucrats

Footbinding

Neo-Confucianism*

Tokugawa shogunate*

Daimyo*

Floating worlds

STUDY QUESTIONS:

1. What steps did the Ming dynasty take to restore traditional Chinese culture and remove all foreign influences associated with Mongol rule?
2. What factors led to the collapse of the Ming dynasty? How did Manchurian invaders gain control of China?
3. Describe the structure of the typical Chinese family. What was the status of women within Ming and Qing societies?
4. What factors led to rapid population growth in China?
5. Why did the Qing dynasty discourage Chinese travel abroad and try to control contacts with foreigners? What was the impact of this policy?
6. How was Chinese society structured? Which classes enjoyed the greatest status? Which had the least?
7. What are some of the principles of Confucianism that influenced Chinese notions of government and society at this time?
8. How did the Tokugawa shogunate come to power in the sixteenth century in Japan? What steps did the shoguns take to control the daimyo?

9. What factors led to the economic and population growth of Japan under the Tokugawa shoguns?
10. To what extent was the culture of Japan influenced by China?
11. Why did the shoguns decide to cut off relations with the outside world? How was this isolation accomplished? What did this decision mean for the future of Japan?

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

1. Consider the process of becoming a scholar-bureaucrat. What might be the impact of this civil service system on the administration and culture of China? What were the future prospects for most of the students pictured on page 730 in the textbook?
2. What tone does Emperor Qianlong take in his letter to King George III of England (page 736)? How do you think King George and the English public reacted to this letter? Try to imagine an appropriate response.
3. Discuss the successes and failures of the Jesuit mission to China in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Why was it so difficult for Christian missions to attract converts in China?

STUDENT QUIZ

1. Although the Ming emperor Yongle encouraged maritime exploration, later emperors discontinued that practice because
 - a. Portuguese adventurers defeated the Chinese navy.
 - b. new Mongol invasions turned China's attention to the north.
 - c. the navy was considered too great a drain on the imperial resources.
 - d. Qing emperors feared that new ideas would lead to political instability.
 - e. all of the above.
2. Which of the following is *not* true of the Manchus?
 - a. They were nomadic warriors from Manchuria.
 - b. They spoke a different language from their ethnic Chinese subjects.
 - c. They rejected Confucian principles in favor of a Mongol-style tribal council.
 - d. They established the Qing dynasty.
 - e. They ruled China from the Forbidden City in Beijing.
3. Which of the following is *not* true of the scholar-bureaucrats of China?
 - a. They came almost entirely from aristocratic families.
 - b. They were independent warlords, far from court and above the law.
 - c. They were responsible for the security and stability of the country.
 - d. Their appointment was based on their performance in the civil service exams.
 - e. They enjoyed positions of power and prestige.

4. Which of the following is *not* true of China's civil service system?
 - a. It was open to all men regardless of social standing.
 - b. It provided the poor with an avenue for upward social mobility.
 - c. It ensured that the most progressive men available governed China.
 - d. It guaranteed the central place of Confucianism in Chinese education.
 - e. It was very competitive with only a fraction of those applying gaining a government post.

5. The person with the *lowest* status in the Chinese household was
 - a. an unmarried son.
 - b. the mother of grown sons.
 - c. a young husband.
 - d. dead ancestors.
 - e. a daughter-in-law.

6. All of the following are indicative of the low status of Chinese women in the Ming and Qing dynasties *except*
 - a. the practice of footbinding.
 - b. female infanticide.
 - c. the forced burning of widows.
 - d. a wife's obligations to her in-laws.
 - e. arranged marriages.

7. Foreign traders sought all of the following Chinese products *except*
 - a. silk.
 - b. silver.
 - c. porcelain.
 - d. lacquerware.
 - e. tea.

8. In the view of Emperor Qianlong, the trade between China and England was
 - a. unnecessary to China but a favor to England.
 - b. mutually beneficial to both countries.
 - c. dangerous to both countries.
 - d. dangerous to England but beneficial to China.
 - e. none of the above.

9. By far the biggest social class in early modern China was the
 - a. peasants.
 - b. gentry class.
 - c. workers and artisans.
 - d. merchant class.
 - e. "mean people."

10. According to traditional Confucian values, merchants were
 - a. honored for their contributions to society.
 - b. considered social parasites.
 - c. considered "mean people."
 - d. ineligible for civil service positions.
 - e. all of the above.

11. Confucian education tended to support
 - a. widespread literacy and popular fiction.
 - b. an open mind to different religious traditions.
 - c. conservative values such as filial piety and submission to authority.
 - d. independent thinking and resistance to authority.
 - e. none of the above.

12. Which of the following statements is *not* true of the Jesuit mission in China?
 - a. Jesuits attracted many converts, and Christianity became a popular religion.
 - b. Jesuits made an effort to learn Chinese and to understand Chinese culture.
 - c. Jesuits captured Chinese interests with European science and technology.
 - d. Other Catholic missionaries criticized the Jesuits' tolerance of Chinese traditions.
 - e. Most Chinese were put off by Christian claims to be the only true religion.

13. Tokugawa Ieyasu ruled Japan as
 - a. hereditary emperor.
 - b. a temporary military ruler in support of the emperor.
 - c. the elected lord of the daimyo.
 - d. a powerful regional warlord.
 - e. none of the above.

14. In order to control daimyo and maintain political stability, the Tokugawa *bakufu*
 - a. obliged the daimyo to live in the capital on alternative years.
 - b. limited contacts between individual daimyo.
 - c. had final approval over all marriage alliances among the daimyo.
 - d. limited contacts between daimyo and the outside world.
 - e. all of the above.

15. The isolationism of the Tokugawa government included
 - a. forbidding Japanese from going abroad.
 - b. forbidding Chinese and Dutch merchants from trading at Nagasaki.
 - c. forbidding scholars of neo-Confucianism from teaching in Japan.
 - d. banning all foreign religions such as Confucianism and Buddhism.
 - e. all of the above.

16. The population growth in Japan slowed after 1700 because of the practice of
 - a. abortion.
 - b. contraception.
 - c. infanticide.
 - d. late marriage.
 - e. all of the above.

17. In the floating worlds in the major Japanese cities, one could find
 - a. centers of neo-Confucian learning.
 - b. important Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples.
 - c. *kabuki* theaters, brothels, public baths, and teahouses.
 - d. decorated luxury boats floating over the river water.
 - e. all of the above.

18. What became of the Christian community in Japan under the Tokugawa shogunate?
- Christians were restricted to a few carefully controlled missions.
 - Christians were brutally persecuted and driven into secrecy.
 - Christianity merged with Buddhism and Shintoism into a new syncretic religion.
 - Japanese Christians continued to worship but lost support after European trade was restricted.
 - None of the above.
19. "Dutch learning" in Tokugawa Japan referred to all of the following areas *except*
- weapons and armaments.
 - representational drawing and linear perspective.
 - astronomy and calendars.
 - anatomy and medicine.
 - Dutch language.
20. In his treatise "Deus Destroyed," Fabian Fucan expressed his concerns that
- Japanese Christians were being persecuted by the shogunate.
 - Japanese converts had too easily abandoned Christianity.
 - Christian missionaries were misguided as to the true faith.
 - Christian missionaries planned to subvert Buddhism and destroy traditional Japanese culture.
 - without the Christian mission in Japan, the country would lose all contact with the outside world

MATCHING

Match these figures with the statements that follow.

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| A. Yongle | F. Qianlong |
| B. Manchurians | G. Matteo Ricci |
| C. Ming dynasty | H. Tokugawa Ieyasu |
| D. Qing dynasty | I. Tokugawa shogunate |
| E. Kangxi | J. Zheng He |

- ___ Shogun and effective ruler of Japan who established the *bakufu* government.
- ___ Qing ruler who embodied the Confucian ideal: a scholar, an effective administrator, and a conqueror who expanded Chinese influence into Tibet and Taiwan.
- ___ Ming emperor who sponsored the consolidation of Confucian learning into massive encyclopedias.
- ___ Dynasty that defeated the Mongols and restored traditional Chinese values.
- ___ Nomadic people who took advantage of the chaotic conditions in China in the seventeenth century and conquered the empire.
- ___ Dynasty that began with sweeping economic reforms but grew increasingly isolated and conservative.

7. ___ Dynasty that effectively ruled Japan under the fiction that the military government was simply a temporary replacement for the emperor.
8. ___ Jesuit missionary who succeeded in introducing Western science and technology to China but was less successful in attracting converts to Christianity.
9. ___ Qing emperor who added Vietnam, Burma, and Nepal as vassal states to the empire.
10. ___ Ming-era admiral who led massive expeditions to southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean.

SEQUENCING

Place the following clusters of events in chronological order. Consider carefully how one event leads to another, and try to determine the internal logic of each sequence.

A.

- ___ The fleet is mothballed and navigational charts are destroyed.
- ___ Eunuch admiral Zheng He leads seven massive expeditions to southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean.
- ___ The Ming dynasty begins by reasserting Chinese naval power in defense of coastal cities.
- ___ Scholar-bureaucrats determine that the navy is too expensive and foreign influences too dangerous.

B.

- ___ Several powerful daimyo and many commoners are converted.
- ___ Tokugawa Ieyasu establishes the *bakufu* government and begins to rein in the daimyo.
- ___ Francis Xavier establishes a Jesuit mission in Japan.
- ___ Christian missionaries are banned and thousands of Japanese converts are persecuted.
- ___ The shogunate closes off Japan to outside trade and influence.

C.

- ___ Ming dynasty
- ___ Qing dynasty
- ___ Yuan (Mongol) dynasty
- ___ Song dynasty

QUOTATIONS

For each of the following quotes, identify the speaker, if known, or the point of view. What is the significance of each passage?

1. "Japanese ships are strictly forbidden to leave for foreign countries. No Japanese is permitted to go abroad. If there is anyone who attempts to do so secretly, he must be executed. The ship so involved must be impounded and its owner arrested. . . . If any Japanese returns from overseas after residing there, he must be put to death."
2. "Our Celestial Empire possesses all things in prolific abundance and lacks no product within its own borders. There [is] therefore no need to import the manufactures of outside barbarians in exchange for our own produce. But, as the tea, silk, and porcelain which the Celestial Empire produces are absolute necessities to the European nations, we have permitted as a signal mark of favor, that trading agents should be established at Guangzhou."
3. "The study of mathematics and that of medicine are held in low esteem, because they are not fostered by honors as is the study of philosophy, to which students are attracted by the hope of the glory and the rewards attached to it. . . . The nine volumes of Confucius . . . present a collection of moral precepts for the future good and development of the kingdom."
4. "And therefore the adherent of Deus have no recourse but to subvert the Royal Sway, overthrow the Buddhas and the gods, eliminate the customs of Japan, and then to import the customs of their own countries; thus only will advance the plot they have concocted to usurp the country themselves."

MAP EXERCISE

Study Map 27.2 on page 727 in the textbook. On the outline map of east Asia below, locate and label the following:

- Boundaries of the Qing dynasty in 1644 and at its height in 1750
- Peripheral territories: Korea, Manchuria, Mongolia, Taiwan, Tibet, Vietnam
- Cities: Beijing, Nanjing, Macao, Guangzhou
- Features: Gobi Desert, Himalayas
- Bodies of water: Huang He River, Yangzi River, Yellow Sea, South China Sea



CONNECTIONS

In fifty words or less, explain the relationship between each of the following pairs. How does one lead to or foster the other? Be specific in your response.

- The Forbidden City and scholar-bureaucrats
- Confucianism and footbinding
- The Great Wall and Chinese technology
- Neo-Confucianism and Dutch learning
- The daimyo and the floating worlds

FILMS

Shogun (1977). This ten-hour epic set the standard for TV miniseries. Richard Chamberlain plays a shipwrecked English mariner in Tokugawa Japan at the time of the expulsion of foreigners.

Peach Flower Fan (1963). Based on a classic play from the Qing dynasty, this story of the romance between a famous prostitute and a writer is set against the collapse of the Ming dynasty. In Chinese with subtitles.

The Seven Samurai (1954). Set in seventeenth-century Japan, impoverished villagers appeal to the honor of a group of samurai warriors to defend them from bandits. Classic action sequences by the master filmmaker, Akira Kurosawa. English subtitles.