

Teachers notes for the Premium TimeMaps Unit

China: the Later Dynasties

China from 1450 to 1750 CE

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Introduction

This Premium TimeMaps unit is a sequence of maps which follows the history of China from 1450 through to 1750.

The unit's aim is to show, quickly and clearly, the significant episodes in the country's history during these centuries: the Ming dynasty at its height and in its decline, the rise of the Manchu state north of the Great Wall, its conquest of China, the foundation of the Manchu, or Qing, dynasty, and its expansion into China's largest empire.

Teachers of AP World History, who have a huge amount of ground to cover, may not wish to spend too much time on this period. In these circumstances you can use this TimeMap to skate through India's early modern history, picking out points you wish to draw your students' attention to. The bullet points in the Presentation notes will help you do this.

For those who have the opportunity to go into more depth, the Additional Teaching notes provide comprehensive coverage of all the thinking skills, themes and key concepts relevant to this Period 4 topic.

How to use this unit

The unit can be used in two ways:

(1) Whole-class presentation

or

(2) Student-based enquiry work

Teachers may wish to use both approaches, perhaps using (1) as a quick introduction, and then (2) for students to carry out a more in-depth enquiry using the student-based questions; or (if you feel your students can manage this) starting them off with (2), to allow them to find out for themselves what happened at this period, before using (1) as a reinforcement exercise.

How does this unit fit in with other Premium TimeMaps units?

This unit follows on from the Premium Unit **Medieval China**, and is followed by the Premium Unit on the **Late Imperial China**, which covers Chinese history between 1750 to 1900.

Section 1: Whole-class presentation

Using a big screen, show the map sequence to your class, talking through each map. To help you do this, we have prepared accompanying Presentation Notes, which are set out below. You can use these either as a script or *aide-memoire*.

This activity can be used as a wrap up / reinforcement exercise, or as a stand-alone unit.

For each map, these notes mostly follow the same formula:

1. Date and introduction

The date to which the map refers, followed by a small introductory paragraph which seeks to encapsulate in a sentence or two what's going on in the map. These are in **bold**.

2. Bullet points

One or more bullet points cover different points of interest in the map, or in the period it covers.

If you are not wanting to spend much time on the topic, these bullet points will be all you need to give your students a clear overview.

3. Additional Notes

The premium map sequence offers a superb framework on which to hang a large amount of information. This more in-depth information is offered in additional notes. If the aim is to give a brief overview of the topic, then skip them.

If you wish to use these Additional Notes, we suggest that, prior to showing the Presentation to your class, you read them through and highlight sections you want to draw on.

These notes cover the vast majority of, if not all, the points referred to in the AP World History course document (these are covered in even more depth in the TimeMaps articles listed at the end of this guidance.)

Some key words or phrases are in **bold**; they are also there to help you see at a glance the key points in a paragraph.

Why not ask questions?

To keep the students engaged, you might like to pepper the presentation with questions. One that could be asked when a new map appears is, how has this map changed from the last one? (This will of course involve skipping between the two maps, which is easy to do).

Before moving on to the next map, you could ask the question, what's the most important thing happening in Europe at this date, do you think?

Presentation Notes

If using these in class it might be helpful to print these notes out.

1450

The Ming dynasty has brought unparalleled peace and prosperity to China.

- The early **Ming emperors** had been able rulers, who secured the empire's borders and brought standards of government up to par after a decline under the Mongols (note 1).
- To protect their empire from the **Mongols**, who remain a potent force on the central Asian steppes, the Ming regime has rebuilt the ancient **Great Wall of China** (note 2).
- The Ming empire is held in awe by its neighbors, most of whom treat the Chinese emperor as their overlord and participate in an international **tribute system** which covers much of East Asia (note 3).

Additional notes

1. The Ming emperors

The great 14th century rebellions which drove the **Mongols** out of China had installed a native Chinese dynasty on the imperial throne. This was the **Ming dynasty**, who have ruled China up to this date (1450).

The dynasty first ruled from **Nanjing** ("Southern Capital"), in southern China, but later shifted its capital to **Beijing** ("Northern Capital"), the better to keep an eye on the continuing threat from the central Asian nomads. Here it built the magnificent **Forbidden City**, a complex of palaces and government offices from which China was governed.

Under the Ming, the huge country has enjoyed a prolonged period of stability and peace.

The early Ming emperors were able rulers. Not only did they secure the empire's borders, but internally they brought standards of government up to a high level after a decline under the Mongols. They had re-established **Confucianism** as the official ideology of government, and reinvigorated the civil service by restoring the government **examination system** to its former central position in the state.

More recently, young and inexperienced emperors have sat on the throne, and have increasingly relied on their close attendants, the palace **eunuchs**, for support and counsel. Tensions between these and ministers and senior officials, who have been kept at a distance from the person of the emperor (secluded in his inner court), have been mounting.

2. The Mongol threat

The most serious threat to the Ming empire has continued to come from the Mongols, who had occupied China in the 13th century. Although the Chinese drove the Mongols out of their country in the 14th century, they had been unable to land a decisive blow to their power in their homeland on the steppes of **central Asia**. The Mongols therefore remain a potent force.

This has led the Ming regime to rebuild the ancient **Great Wall** of China, a monumental task which is still ongoing in the mid-15th century.

The mid-century years have seen a major humiliation for the Ming, when, on an expedition into Mongol territory in 1449, an imperial army - accompanied, unusually, by the emperor - was ambushed and the emperor captured (he has since been released).

3. The Tribute System and international trade

Beyond its frontiers, Ming China is held in awe by other East Asian countries. The rulers of neighboring **Korea, Myanmar, Siam, and Annam** acknowledge Ming overlordship, and send regular **tribute missions** to the imperial court.

At times tribute is received from as far afield as **Java and Sumatra, Sri Lanka and South India**, and even the **Middle East**.

Apart from the Mongols (see above), of China's neighbors only the **Japanese** have not sent tribute missions. Japanese (and Chinese) **pirates** have plagued the southern coasts of China, only being deterred more recently by the establishment of coastal forts and flotillas of warships to ward them off.

The tribute system is central to what today we would call Ming China's foreign policy, but it is not only a diplomatic process. Along with the government missions come merchants, and the diplomatic niceties are accompanied by considerable amount of **international trade**.

In the early 15th century the Ming government sponsored a series of major **naval expeditions** to the west: under the famous admiral **Zheng He** these reached into the Indian Ocean as far as the Middle East and the east coast of Africa. However, the last of these set sail in the 1420s, and since then the Ming government has prohibited commercial contacts between Chinese and foreigners, including voyages abroad. The only international trade allowed is as a part of tribute missions.

1629

Although China has remained peaceful and prosperous, the Ming government has become steadily weaker. This has allowed a dangerous new threat to emerge.

- Peace and political stability under the Ming dynasty has brought unparalleled **prosperity** to China; and with prosperity has come **population growth** (note 1).
- However, recent Ming emperors have been ineffective rulers, allowing **factional struggles** and gross **corruption** in government to spread (note 2).
- Beyond China's borders, a new danger has been emerging, with the **Manchus**, a tribal people to the northeast of China, creating a powerful new state (note 3).
- **Europeans** have arrived in China, but their activities are tightly controlled (note 4).

Additional notes

1. Population growth

Peace and political stability under the Ming dynasty has brought unparalleled prosperity to China. With prosperity has come population growth.

This has in part been enabled by the continuing spread of new strains of **rice** since Song times, but also by the 16th century introduction of food crops originating in **America**, notably **peanuts**, **maize** and **sweet potatoes**. These tend to grow on land unsuitable for rice, and so increase the range of crops farmers can grow. Farmers have also benefitted from the spread of **cotton** production.

2. Growing problems in government

Trends are steadily moving against the Ming regime. Standards of government are slipping. A succession of young or weak emperors have allowed the palace **eunuchs** to take a dominant position at court. The all-powerful eunuchs regularly have **ministers** (who are career civil servants) humiliated, tortured and executed and there is deep rancor between the eunuchs and the civil service.

The infighting at court has not only crippled sound policy-making, but allowed corruption and weakness to spread in the provinces.

By this date (1629) brutal factional struggles at the Ming court are undermining what remains of good government. From 1624, power has been in the hands of one of the most notorious figures in all Chinese history, the eunuch **Wei Zhongxian**. Wei has had hundreds of court officials executed, and filled all high posts with his friends, regardless of competence.

3. Beyond the Ming borders

The Ming regime has been fortunate in not having any major threat appear from beyond China's borders. The danger from the **Mongols** has receded since the late 16th century after a string of defeats at the hands of the Ming army.

An upsurge in **piracy** along the southern coast has also been countered with a fair degree of success.

A long war in support of the **Koreans** against the **Japanese** (1592-8) was crippling expensive for the Ming government.

Manchu

From the late 16th century, a group of the Jürchen people called the **Manchus** began pressing on the Ming defenses on their northeastern borders.

The Manchu leader, **Nurhachi** (ruled c. 1580 -1626), recruited Chinese gentry who lived north of the border - as well as a growing number of Chinese defectors from Ming rule - to help him set up a Chinese-style state with an administration modeled on that of the Ming.

Nurhachi himself began to rule in the manner of a Chinese emperor rather than a tribal chieftain. At the same time, he divided the Manchu tribesmen into groups, each identified by a coloured flag called a "banner". These groups were provided the regiments for the Manchu army, and were also units of local government. Individual Manchus fought under their banners, and were known as **bannermen**.

In the Manchu army, the warrior ethic of a people of a non-Chinese tribal people has mingled with the organizational and tactical skills of Chinese officers, who are able to rise high in Manchu service. These have introduced the European **artillery** technology already possessed by the Ming into the Manchu army (see below).

4. Europeans

The Ming government has modified its original blanket ban on foreign trade by opening **Guangzhou**, and only Guangzhou, to foreign merchants.

Included in this development are early **European** traders to China (who know this famous port city as **Canton**).

Thanks to supporting Qing forces against pirates, the **Portuguese** have been granted the privilege of a trading settlement at **Macau**, near Guangzhou (in 1557). Many Portuguese, however, as well as **Spanish** and **Dutch** adventurers, have taken to smuggling and piracy as a lucrative alternative to legitimate trade. The attitudes of Chinese officialdom towards Westerners as rough-necked **barbarians** has been shaped by this development.

The Jesuits

Suspicion of Europeans has hampered **Christian** missions to China. However, the **Jesuits**, an order of Roman Catholic missionaries, have been able to establishing a presence in several cities since the 1580s, and have even gained the protection of the imperial court.

As much as for their religious message, they are appreciated for the **European** science and technology that they bring with them, including the manufacture of Portuguese-type cannons and more accurate astronomy.

1683

The Manchu have conquered China and founded a new dynasty, the Qing.

- In the 1630s and 1640s the **Manchu** state continued to expand (note 1).
- Within China, **peasant rebellions** opened the way for the Manchus to occupy Beijing and proclaim the Manchu **Qing dynasty** as rulers of China, though it would take another four decades to pacify the whole country (note 2).
- The Qing government then set about restoring the country to its **former prosperity** (note 3).

Additional notes

1. The Manchu states expands

In the 1630s and 1640s the **Manchu** state continued to expand, bringing all the Jürchen tribe and many Mongol tribes under its control, not to mention a growing Chinese population.

This expansion was accompanied by a growing number of “**banners**” (see above). The original number of four was doubled to eight, and then new banners were created from amongst the Mongol and Chinese populations. By 1644 there were 24 banners, eight for each ethnic group (Manchu, Mongol and Chinese).

In 1636 the Manchu ruler, Huang Taiji, proclaimed the start of the **Qing dynasty**. This was a declaration of intent that they intended to become rulers of the whole of China. The Manchu pushed the Ming forces back to the **Great Wall**, and repeatedly raided Chinese territory.

A new Manchu ruler

Huang Taiji died suddenly in 1643 and was succeeded as ruler of the Manchu by his five year old son. His uncle, **Dorgon**, was appointed regent, and he dominated the Manchu state until his death in 1650.

2. The fall of the Ming dynasty

Meanwhile, the Ming court continued to be paralyzed by factional in-fighting, and standards of government continued to deteriorate.

In the face of growing corruption and oppression, **banditry** became widespread within China, and **peasant rebellions** began breaking out. Eventually, in 1644, a rebel leader called Li Zicheng captured the capital, **Beijing**. The last Ming emperor committed suicide.

After sacking Beijing, Li Zicheng led his rebels north to deal with the Ming army stationed on the frontier just 50 miles away, opposite the Manchus. This army thus found itself caught between two hostile forces.

The Ming commander chose to come to terms with the Manchus, and the Ming and Manchu armies together marched against the rebels, quickly routing them. The victorious force then occupied Beijing, and the Manchu **Qing dynasty** began its rule in China when the regent Dorgon placed his nephew on the imperial throne.

The conquest of China

In taking over the Ming capital, the Qing also took over the central Ming bureaucracy; but taking Beijing was one thing; establishing rule over the whole of China was quite another: it took their forces almost four decades to achieve this.

Dorgon delegated the government of southern China to three former Ming generals, the **Three Feudatories**. At first they acted as loyal viceroys, but as they grew in confidence they became

more ambitious, and in 1673 rebelled against their Qing masters. It took much hard fighting to crush them (1681).

In 1683, Qing forces occupied **Taiwan** in order to end the last flicker of resistance from forces loyal to the Ming.

3. A period of reconstruction

The young emperor had unexpectedly died in 1661 and his 12 year old son had succeeded as the **Kangxi** emperor (reigned 1661–1722). For the first few years of his reign he, too, was dominated by older ministers, but on attaining personal power he proved to be one of the greatest emperors China would ever know.

After the pacification of the whole of China had finally been achieved, the Kangxi emperor's government began rebuilding a country ravaged by decades of war.

It granted **tax remissions** on a large scale, especially in the areas worst affected by the fighting, and for those willing to settled abandoned lands. It took steps to bring **new lands under cultivation**, with publicly-organized **irrigation schemes** and **waterway renovation**; and also encouraged private land reclamation projects. The Qing government reintroduced the ancient "**Ever-Normal Granaries**" system, implementing it on a far larger scale than ever before.

1720

The Kangxi emperor set about winning over the Chinese to Qing rule by installing Confucianism as the official ideology and ensuring that Chinese officials reached the top of government in greater numbers.

- In the first decades of Qing rule only **bannermen** filled senior government posts; the **Kangxi** emperor reserved half these posts for Chinese officials (note 1).
- With the return of peace after the long wars of the Qing conquest, the Chinese **economy** began to grow again and prosperity returned (note 2).
- After a dip during the troubled decades of the Manchu takeover, **population** also began to rise again, more strongly than before (note 3).
- The Qing continued the **tributary system** inherited from the Ming in their dealings with foreign states, but adopted a more forceful stance towards the peoples of central Asia (note 4).

Additional notes

1. Qing governing institutions

On taking power in Beijing, the Qing had adopted wholesale the state institutions - above all the **civil service** - they had inherited from the Ming. These would be in place until the final years of the dynasty, with only minor adjustments.

In the first decades of their rule, however, they appointed only **bannermen** to fill senior government posts, with a disproportionately high number of **Manchus** at the very top.

The **Kangxi** emperor set about winning over the Chinese civil service to Qing rule. He learned Chinese, promoted **Confucianism** as the official ideology, and ensured that Chinese were able to reach the top of government in greater numbers.

For the remainder of the dynasty, half of the topmost posts were reserved for Chinese, and half for Manchu (though this of course still favoured individual Manchus, given their tiny numbers compared with the Chinese population).

2. The Chinese economy

With the return of peace after the long wars of the Qing conquest, the Chinese **economy** began to grow again. **Trade** expanded at all levels - local, interregional, national and international. **Maritime commerce** with foreigners was no longer prohibited.

Foreign trade

This trade was primarily with Southeast Asia, Japan and the Philippines, but **Europeans** were increasingly active. International trade was no longer restricted to **Guangzhou** (Canton), but this remained the preferred *entrepôt* for Western trade; the **British East India Company**, for example, set up a trading base here in 1685.

Chinese exports to the West (notably **tea, silks** and **porcelain**, for all of which there was a high demand in Europe) were largely paid for in **silver**.

Most of this ultimately derived from Spanish-ruled **South America**. Since the Spanish also ruled the nearby **Philippine** islands, trade with this archipelago became the source of most of China's silver, which flowed into the country in vast quantities and **stimulated economic activity** there. In the 18th century Spanish silver dollars came into widespread use in some parts of the country.

These various developments increased the **monetization** of the economy, reflected in the **tax changes** of the early 18th century which commuted payment in kind to payment in silver.

3. Population growth

The stability and economic progress of the period naturally led to a rise in **population**, a process which took wings from the late 17th century onwards.

Population growth was aided by several factors, apart from peace and economic expansion.

Progressive policies of the Qing government under the Kangxi emperor helped. For example the “Ever-normal Granaries” system achieved a high level of success in offsetting regional food shortages in years of poor harvests by local authorities buying grain surpluses in good times for distribution in bad times.

The continued **movement** of people from long-settled regions into new undeveloped lands, particularly in the southwest of the country, allowed these regions to host ever larger populations over time.

A third factor was the continued spread of **new crops** of American origin, such as maize, potatoes and peanuts, which allowed a wider range of soils to be exploited. These crops played an important part in the cultivation of marginal land, and **tobacco** (also from America) rose in importance as a cash crop.

All these developments allowed more and more mouths to be fed.

4. Foreign relations

The tributary system

The Manchu inherited the **tributary system** from the Ming in their dealings with foreign states. **Korea** in particular became almost a vassal state of the Qing. The Korean court sent regular embassies to Beijing, and consulted the Qing government on matters of public policy. The Qing emperor confirmed the authority of the Korean rulers, approved the Korean choice of consorts and heirs, and expected to be consulted on the Korean court’s dealings with foreign nations.

Expansion in Central Asia

In **central Asia**, where the main historic threat to China’s borders still remained, a forceful policy was adopted.

In the late 17th to the early 18th century, Qing armies conquered the tribes of **Inner Mongolia**, absorbing the region into the Qing empire. Also, in order to check Mongol advances in **Tibet**, the Qing occupied that country as well.

Russia

The Qing also had to contend with an entirely new development in central Asia, the expansion of **Russia**, which had reached the Pacific ocean by the mid-17th century. **Diplomacy** was the main - and successful - tool used here, and the **Treaty of Nerchinsk** (1689) fixed the border between the two huge states. In a break with traditional Chinese practice, this was formulated as an agreement between equals, rather than between senior and junior parties.

1760

The reign of the Qianlong emperor (1735–96) marked the high point of the Qing dynasty - and arguably for the history of imperial China as a whole.

- In **central Asia**, he pushed the empire's borders far out towards the west (note 1).
- Internally, the economy continued to **expand** strongly and to gain in sophistication (note 2).
- **Society** became more fluid and complex (note 3).
- Relations with the **Europeans** were gradually deteriorating (note 4).

Additional notes

1. Continued expansion

Qianlong came to the throne in succession to his father, the **Yongzheng** emperor (reigned 1723-1735). Yongzheng, like his father Kangxi, had been an able and conscientious ruler, and Qianlong continued this line of three great Qing emperors.

He inherited well-functioning government institutions from his predecessors, including a **civil service** at the peak of its performance and a large and comparatively **efficient army**. Under his father the Yongzheng emperor, **Outer Mongolia** was occupied by the Qing, and now Qianlong has spent enormous sums on a series of military campaigns which, by the mid-18th century, have pushed the empire's borders out as far west as Lake Balkhash, half way to Europe.

These new territories in central Asia have been organized as the huge new province of **Xinjiang**. This contains large populations with non-Chinese cultures, the majority being **Muslims**. The traditional Chinese policy of giving such peoples the option of assimilating into the dominant Chinese (Han) culture or retaining their traditional cultural identity and forfeiting a full place in Chinese society is stretched to the limit. The newly conquered peoples have overwhelmingly clung to their previous ways of life, meaning that for the first time large parts of the Chinese-ruled world has majority non-Chinese populations. This will in time cause problems for the Qing government.

2. The Economy of China

Money and finance

Internally, the **economy** continued to expand strongly, as did the population. A notable development of the period was the growth of a sophisticated **banking** sector to service the needs of long-distance trade within China.

Banks accepted **deposits**, made **loans**, issued **bills of credit** and **transferred funds** from one region to another. They thus facilitated the purchase of large quantities of goods in one region for sale in another. **Paper notes** issued by the banks began to circulate widely for the first time since early Ming times, and became the prime medium of exchange in long-distance commerce.

Commercial organizations

Other commercial innovations made large-scale, long-distance commerce more efficient. Business partnerships could be formally recognized by written **contracts**, as could the sale of land and commodities and the hiring of wage labour. **Share** partnerships allowed large firms to develop, not dissimilar to European joint-stock companies. "**Native-place**" associations spread through market towns, providing lodging for merchants from a particular province, providing

assistance for their business dealings, and storing goods. Trade **guilds** also became more prominent, frequently helping to run towns and cities.

Proto-industrialism

Just as in the more economically advanced regions of Europe at this very time, China saw an intensifying **manufacturing** sector which, also as in Europe, revolved around textile production and involved the “**putting-out**”, or **domestic**, system.

This was operated by merchants who bought in the raw material (in China’s case, usually **silk**), put it out to **peasant households** to turn into thread, then, having bought it back in, putting it out again to other households to turn into bolts of cloth before sending it for sale in local, regional and international markets. In this way the work of peasants, supplementing their income from agriculture and undertaking specialized tasks, was co-ordinated into a highly efficient network of production.

Porcelain, on the other hand, was manufactured in **factories** employing large numbers of highly-skilled workers. **Tea** was grown in large, efficiently-run **plantations** located mostly in southeast China.

3. Chinese society

Social mobility

Social mobility increased during this period. The civil service remained the most prestigious career in Qing society, and the education of sons for the civil service examinations remained commonplace. But with a thousand or more degree holders for each government post, this could only satisfy the ambitions of a tiny minority.

Other socially acceptable activities therefore opened up for **gentry** families. Many devoted their energies to scholarship, literature and the arts. Others became involved in leadership roles in their localities, performing duties as quasi-magistrates: mediating disputes, organizing local defense against brigandage, managing irrigation of land reclamation projects, and so on.

The dynamic commercial economy was producing an ever-growing **middle class** in the towns and cities, which was creating an urban social *milieu* to some extent outside the traditional, gentry-dominated class structure of imperial China. Many wealthy merchants were intent of achieving gentry status for their families by buying **estates** and educating their sons for the examinations, but others were increasingly content to build fortunes as **merchants, bankers** and **industrialists**. Many of these ended up far wealthier than the majority of gentry families, and were looked on askance by the latter for challenging some of the fundamental social mores of traditional Chinese society.

4. Relations with Europeans

The Qing period saw a hardening of attitudes towards **Europeans**.

Although European traders were officially able to operate at a couple of other ports, in reality foreign trade was increasingly restricted to Canton; and there, it was increasingly regulated as the **Canton System** took hold. This funneled European trade through a small but powerful group of Chinese merchants, who took an ever-larger slice of profits in the form of bribes.

European traders, particularly the **British**, experienced growing frustration by these restrictions, and tensions increased on both sides as misunderstandings began to multiply.

Meanwhile, **Christianity** came under increasing suspicion. The European religion was increasingly understood to be a rival belief system to **Confucianism**, and thus aroused the growing hostility of the Chinese **gentry**. All Christian missionaries were expelled from China, except technical advisors who remained in the capital, Beijing.

After the Presentation

Here is a quick quiz you might like to use to make sure your students haven't gone to sleep.

The answers are given (*in Italics*).

Quiz:

1. What is the complex of places and government offices in Beijing called? (*The Forbidden City*)
2. What is the name given to the ancient defensive system which was revived and rebuilt by the Ming? (*The Great Wall, or Great Wall of China*)
3. By what designation is the system of international diplomacy and trade known, by which the Ming - and after them the Qing - emperors of China were recognized as the superior ruler in East Asia? (*The Tribute System*)
4. Who are the tribal people who established a kingdom to the north of the Great Wall in the late 16th century? (*The Manchus*)
5. What is the port on the south coast of China to which most foreign merchants are restricted by the Ming? (*Guangzhou, or Canton*)
6. Members of which order of Christian missionaries gained access to the Ming court, thanks in part to the scientific and technical know-how? (*The Jesuits*)
7. What was the name given to divisions of the Manchu army, which were also units of local government? (*Banners*)
8. What was the Ming capital, which fell first to rebels and then Manchu forces in 1644, and became the Qing capital as well? (*Beijing*)
9. Who was the emperor who came to the throne as a boy in 1661, and would prove to be one of the greatest of all emperors of China? (*The Kangxi emperor*)
10. What traditional Chinese practice did Kangxi use on a much larger scale than ever before to help deal with poor harvests? (*Ever-Normal Granaries*)
11. Name one of the products so much in demand by foreigners. (*Tea, Silks or Porcelain*)
12. How did Europeans pay for these, and so help stimulate economic activity within China? (*They paid with silver from America*)
13. Which country became almost a vassal state of Qing China? (*Korea*)
14. Name one of the area occupied by Qing forces under Kangxi. (*Inner Mongolia or Tibet*)
15. Which was the new country that China had to deal with in central Asia in the later 17th century? (*Russia*)

Section 2: Student-based enquiry work

The students can tackle these tasks either as individuals or in small groups. They will obviously need to have access to this Premium TimeMap unit.

They can present their answers in essay form or as presentations.

The questions are designed to stimulate enquiry, thought and discussion. We have offered suggested points that students might cover in their answers. These are given in *italics* just below the questions.

Task 1.

Answer the questions: Why did the Ming government fail to hold on to its rule; and how and why did the Qing regime succeed in firmly establishing its rule?

There are two parts to this question, and should probably be best answered in two parts.

1. Why do the Ming fail:

- mediocre emperors;*
- faction fighting at court;*
- government corruption and oppression;*
- peasant unrest;*
- unchecked rise of danger from beyond frontiers (ie. Manchus).*

2. How and why did the Qing succeed?

- able and conscientious emperors;*
- gained support of the officials and gentry, the traditional leaders of Chinese society by appointing Chinese to top posts; maintaining civil service, the examination system, Confucianism*
- wise policies gaining the support of the majority of people, such as the “Ever-Normal Granaries” and sponsoring migration to undeveloped areas;*
- new crops from America, which enabled the population to expand while keeping hunger at bay;*
- an expanding economy, which maintained or increased standards of living at all levels of society; this was helped by the influx of silver.*

OR:

Answer the question: What were the changing challenges facing the Manchu leadership in the half century after taking over Beijing from the Ming in 1644, and how did they deal with them?

Answers should include some combination of the points below:

- Challenge: establishing rule over the whole of China, not just the capital.*
- Dealt with by: first delegating authority over the south to the “Three Feudatories”, then, when they rebelled, conquering the whole region and taking it under direct control;*
- Challenge: maintaining Manchu leadership while gaining the loyalty of senior Chinese civil servants on whom the system of government depended to work properly.*
- Dealt with by: first putting Manchu in all top government positions - which, while maintaining the Manchu in charge did nothing to gain the support of Chinese officials; then brought Chinese officials into half the top positions while reserving half for Manchu.*
- Challenge: reconciling the mass of the Chinese population to rule by a non-Chinese dynasty.*

- *Dealt with by: keeping Confucianism, the traditional Chinese system of belief, to which the majority of the population were deeply attached, as the state ideology; maintaining the examination system, which gave educated Chinese the opportunity to enter government; and maintaining civil service, which the Chinese were long accustomed to viewing as the legitimate ruling institution, in its entirety; wise social policies, for example resuscitating the “Ever-Normal Granary” system and encouraging the settlement of new or devastated areas.*

Task 2.

Answer the question: What are the long-term themes running through Chinese history during this period?

Answers should include:

- *population growth*
- *commercial expansion*
- *central Asia*
- *the Tribute System*
- *the Europeans*

Task 3.

Give an account of China’s relations with foreigners during this period.

Points to cover:

- *in their dealings with the peoples of central Asia: the Ming were on the defensive while the Qing were on the offensive;*
- *the tribute system remained the same, though it was expanded under the Qing;*
- *Russia spread to the Pacific in the 17th century, and the Russian and Qing governments signed treaties specifying the borders and regulating trade between them;*
- *maritime trade was forbidden by the Ming, except as part of tribute missions; later it was allowed, but only at Canton;*
- *Christianity was treated with suspicion under the Ming because of Westerners’ unruly behavior; under the Qing this suspicion hardened into hostility as Christianity increasingly seen as a threat to Confucianism, and missionaries were banned, with the exception of...*
- *.. the Jesuits, who under both Ming and Qing able to establish a mission in Beijing, were appreciated for their scientific and technical know-how; under the Ming they also had missions in several other cities, but these were expelled by the Qing;*
- *Europeans were involved in smuggling and piracy under the Ming, and regarded as rough barbarians by the Chinese elite;*
- *under the Qing, foreign trade was opened up somewhat, but still mostly restricted to Canton, and was increasingly regulated, to the growing frustration of traders, especially the British.*

Task 4.

For discussion:

Looking forward, what in your opinion might be the challenges facing the Qing regime in the later 18th century and 19th century?

This is speculation - something that a good historian should be doing all the time. Some issues I would highlight are:

Emperors - the Qing have been fortunate in the ability of their emperors - would this continue? - and what might happen if they aren’t? (Hint - look at the late Ming and other dynasties)

Population - this has been expanding; so far new crops and economic expansion have meant that standards of living have been maintained - can this go on for ever? What happens if no new crops come along? Will economic expansion continue to keep pace with population growth?

Foreign trade - Europeans have been paying for their goods with silver - will they be happy to do this in the long term? Does it matter if they aren't?

Newly conquered lands - these include a majority of non-Chinese peoples, who are hard to assimilate- is this a problem?

APPENDIX I

TimeMaps articles for further reading

A list of all TimeMaps articles for Period 4 can be found on the Encyclopedia home page. Here is a selected list of the key articles which students should find most helpful:

Medieval China

Ming dynasty China

Qing dynasty China

Modern China

Early Modern Europe

European World Empires