

CHAPTER 26

Civilizations in Crisis: The Ottoman Empire, the Islamic Heartlands, and Qing China

Chapter Outline Summary

I. From Empire to Nation: Ottoman Retreat and the Birth of Turkey

Ottoman decline

by early 1700s

power struggles

rivalry with the West for trade

Results

Austrian Habsburgs

Ottomans driven from Hungary, northern Balkans

Russians expanded into Caucasus, Crimea

Christian Balkans challenged Ottomans

Greeks, independent, 1830

Serbia, 1867

By 1870, most of the Balkans independent

Ottoman capital threatened

A. Reform and Survival

Europeans feared Ottoman breakup

British supported Ottomans v. Russia

Selim III

reforms angered Janissaries

1807, deposed, assassinated

Mahmud II

professional army

replaced Janissaries, 1826

reforms: Tanzimat

universities on Western models

railways

1876, European-style constitution

B. Repression and Revolt

Sultanate, ulama, ayan

seen as barriers to reform

Sultan Abdul Hamid (1878-1908)

turned to despotic absolutism

continued work on infrastructure

Young Turks

removed Abdul Hamid

Arabs pushed for independence

II. Western Intrusions and the Crisis in the Arab Islamic Heartlands

A. Muhammad Ali and the Failure of Westernization in Egypt

Napoleon

defeated Ottoman Mamluk vassals in Egypt

Muhammad Ali

emerged after French withdraw

Albanian Ottoman

- reforms
 - military: army, navy
 - agricultural modernization
- B. Bankruptcy, European Intervention, and Strategies of Resistance
 - Muhammad Ali's successors
 - dropped reform
 - peasants profit from peasantry
 - Cotton
 - crucial export crop
 - Indebtedness to foreign creditors
 - Suez Canal, opened, 1869
 - University of al-Azhar
 - center of Muslim thinkers
 - al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh
 - pushed for Westernization
 - underlined traditional Muslim rationalism
 - Ahmad Orabi
 - revolt against khedive, 1882
 - British intervened
 - Period of puppet khedives under British
- C. Jihad: The Mahdist Revolt in the Sudan
 - Sudan challenged British
 - could not control camel nomads
 - Muhammad Achmad, the Mahdi
 - proclaimed jihad against Egyptians, British
 - controlled Sudan
 - succeeded by Khalifa Abdallahi
 - General Kitchner
 - Omdurman, 1896
 - Mahdists crushed
- III. The Last Dynasty: The Rise and Fall of the Qing Empire in China**
 - Nurhaci (1559–1626)
 - Manchu leader
 - drives Chinese south of Great Wall
 - signification of Manchuria
 - 1644, take Beijing
 - founded Qing dynasty
 - Qing
 - retained Ming rule
 - A. Economy and Society in the Early Centuries of Qing Rule
 - Qing social system maintained
 - Manchu
 - rural reforms
 - infrastructure maintained
 - burdens lessened
 - Silver influx to 1800
 - Compradors*
 - merchants along coast
 - tied China to outside
 - B. Rot from Within: Bureaucratic Breakdown and Social Disintegration
 - Qing decline

- exam system corrupted
- Yellow River dikes not maintained
 - flooding
- Unrest: migration, outlaws
- C. Barbarians at the Southern Gates: The Opium War and After
 - British
 - imported Indian opium to China
 - Chinese reacted
 - Lin Zexu
 - blockaded European trade
 - British invaded, 1839
 - Chinese defeated
 - Hong Kong to British
 - ports forced to reopen
- D. A Civilization at Risk: Rebellion and Failed Reforms
 - Hong Xiuquan
 - Taiping rebellion
 - calls for social, land reforms
 - criticized Qing, Manchus
 - crushed by empress Cixi, 1898
 - Boxer Rebellion
 - anti-foreign conflict
 - crushed by Western powers
- E. The Fall of the Qing and the Rise of a Chinese Nationalist Alternative
 - Resistance went underground
 - plots to push Westernization
 - Sun Yat-sen
 - 1905, civil service exams ended
 - end of scholar-gentry
 - 1911, rebellions
 - 1912, last Qing emperor removed

Chapter Summary

Hong Xiuquan. Following a humiliating failure to pass exams that would give him entry to the bureaucracy, Hong Xiuquan took to a wandering life. Reading passages from the Christian Bible convinced him that he had a religious mission. He gathered a large following for his sect, the Taipings. His teachings became increasingly critical of Qing rule, blaming the Manchus for a wide variety of contemporary problems. The Taiping goals included attacks on the scholar-gentry, land reform, social equality, and an end to many traditional practices such as footbinding and judicial torture. The rebellion they inaugurated was long-lasting and bloody. Hong's movement began in a period of breakdown in Chinese civilization. Like that begun by the Mahdi against the Ottoman government, it attacked a well-established order, aiming to replace it with a utopian society, inspired by religious ideals.

Chapter Summary. China under the Qing dynasty in the 17th century enjoyed growth and prosperity and had the power to limit European intervention. The Ottomans, on the contrary, were then in full retreat. Russia and Austria seized territories, north African provinces broke away, and local leaders throughout the empire became more independent. Economic and social disruption accompanied the political malaise. Although the Ottoman rulers did not have a solution to their problems, they regained some strength during the 19th century by following Western-style reforms. The Chinese entered a prolonged crisis

period. At the end of the 19th century, the foundations of Chinese civilization had been demolished by internal and external pressures.

From Empire to Nation: Ottoman Retreat and the Birth of Turkey. By the early 18th century, the Ottoman Empire was in decline. Weak rulers left the way open for power struggles between officials, religious experts, and Janissaries. Provincial administrators and landholders colluded to drain revenue from the central treasury. The general economy suffered from competition with the West as imported goods ruined local industry. European rivals took advantage of Ottoman weakness. The Austrian Habsburgs pushed the Ottomans from Hungary and the northern Balkans. The strengthened Russian state expanded into the Caucasus and Crimea. The subject Christian peoples of the Balkans challenged their rulers: the Greeks won independence in 1830, Serbia in 1867. By the 1870s, the Ottomans had lost nearly all of the Balkans, and their capital was often threatened by Balkan or Russian armies.

Thinking Historically: Western Dominance and the Decline of Civilizations. Some general patterns have been associated with the decline of civilizations: internal weakness and external pressures; slow and vulnerable communications systems; ethnic, religious, and regional differences; corruption and the pursuit of pleasure. Nomads took advantage of such weaknesses, but rarely did neighboring civilizations play a major role in the demise of another. The European rise to world dominance from the 18th century fundamentally changed the patterns of the rise and fall of civilizations. In the Americas, European military assaults and diseases destroyed existing civilizations. African and Asian civilizations were able to withstand the early European arrival, but the latter's continuing development by the end of the 18th century made them dominant. The subordinate civilizations reacted differently. Some retreated into an idealized past; others absorbed ideas from their rulers. The various efforts at resistance were not all successful. Some civilizations survived; others collapsed.

Reform and Survival. The Ottomans survived the continuing defeats partly because the European powers feared the consequences of territorial division among the victors. The British propped up the Ottomans during the latter 19th century to prevent the Russians from reaching the Mediterranean. The weakened empire was preserved by internal reform, although rival solutions caused elite tensions. Selim III's modest military and administrative reform attempts angered officials and the Janissaries; he was deposed and killed in 1807. Mahmud II was more successful. With the help of European advisors, he built a professional army that destroyed the Janissaries in 1826. Mahmud II then launched far-reaching reforms patterned on Western models. Between 1839 and 1876, the period of the Tanzimat reforms, university education was reorganized on Western lines, postal and telegraph systems were introduced, and railways were constructed. Newspapers were established, and in 1876 a European-type constitution was promulgated. The many changes opened the empire to European influences and threatened some groups. Artisans lost out to the foreign competition. Women gained little from the reforms as Islamic patterns continued.

Repression and Revolt. The reforms strengthened the state, but they threatened the dynasty. Western-oriented officials, military officers, and professionals viewed the sultanate as a barrier to more reform. They also clashed with the conservative ulama and ayan. Sultan Abdul Hamid (1878–1908) responded by trying to return to despotic absolutism. He nullified the constitution and restricted civil liberties, but he continued military and educational reform, and railway and telegraph construction. Abdul Hamid's harsh rule ended when he was removed by the Young Turks, or reformers, including military officers, who wanted to continue Western-style reforms. The constitution and civil liberties were restored in a regime directed by a figurehead sultan. Factional fights among the reformers hampered their efforts, while wars in the Balkans and north Africa lost territory. The Arabs under Ottoman rule began to seek their independence. The empire survived, but in a very weakened condition, until Turkish entry into World War I resulted in its dissolution.

Western Intrusions and the Crisis in the Arab Islamic Heartlands. The leaders and thinkers of the Islamic world were divided about how to reverse decline and drive back Europeans. Their arguments represented a spectrum ranging from a return to the past to the adoption of Western ways. By the 19th

century, the Arabs under the weakened Ottoman Empire were exposed to the danger of European conquest. The loss of Islamic territory to the Europeans engendered a sense of crisis in the Middle East. **Muhammad Ali and the Failure of Westernization in Egypt.** Napoleon's victory over the Ottoman Mamluk vassals in Egypt destroyed the existing local power balance. The easy victory of the French demonstrated the vulnerability of Muslim regions before European power. When the British forced French withdrawal, an Albanian Ottoman officer, Muhammad Ali, emerged as Egypt's ruler. He introduced European military reforms and created a powerful army and navy that freed him from dependence upon his nominal Ottoman overlord. Muhammad Ali also attempted, with limited success, to modernize Egypt's economy through reforms in agriculture, infrastructure, education, and industry. The limited scope of Muhammad Ali's reforms checked his plans for territorial expansion and left Egypt exposed to European threats. His successors confined their energies to Egypt and the Sudan.

Bankruptcy, European Intervention, and Strategies of Resistance. Muhammad Ali's less talented successors abandoned reform and allowed the ayan to profit at the expense of the peasantry. Egypt became dependent on the export of a single crop, cotton. State revenues were spent on extravagant pastimes and military campaigns in the Sudan. The regime and the elite became indebted to European creditors. The Europeans invested in the building of the Suez Canal, which opened in 1869. Muslim intellectuals and political activists looked for ways to protect Egypt from its inept rulers. The ancient University of al-Azhar became a focal center for Muslims from many lands. Some of the thinkers looked to the past, but others, such as al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh, stressed the need for Muslims to adopt Western science and technology. They emphasized the tradition of rational inquiry in Islamic history and contested conservative views that the single source of truth was found in a literally interpreted Qur'an. The persisting difference between the rival interpretations damaged Muslim ability to meet the European threat. The growing Egyptian foreign debt and the strategic importance of the Suez Canal stimulated British and French thoughts of intervention. When army officer Ahmad Orabi led a revolt against the khedive in 1882, the British intervened to save the ruler. British consuls thereafter directed the Egyptian government through puppet khedives.

Jihad: The Mahdist Revolt in the Sudan. The British were drawn into the disorder in the Sudan. Egyptian efforts at conquests from the 1820s had won only an insecure hold over fertile lands along the Nile and towns such as Khartoum. Camel nomads resisted their authority. The corrupt Egyptian regime oppressed sedentary farmers and alienated all classes by trying, in the 1870s under British influence, to end the slave trade. The Muslims of the northern Sudan found a leader in Muhammad Achmad, a religious figure known as the Mahdi. He proclaimed a jihad against the Egyptians and British that would return Islam to its original purity. The Mahdi won control of the Sudan. After his death, the movement continued under the capable Khalifa Abdallahi. The Mahdists built a strong state with a society closely regulated by strict Islamic norms. The British ended this threat to European domination when General Kitchener crushed the Mahdist forces at Omdurman in 1896. Abdallahi was killed and the state disintegrated. The world of Islam suffered serious reverses during the 19th century. From reform to resistance, none of the efforts halted the European advance. As the century closed, Islam, still divided over the explanation for its decline, was seriously threatened by the European rulers of most of the world.

The Last Dynasty: The Rise and Fall of the Qing Empire in China. The Manchu leader Nurhaci (1559–1626) united the tribes of his region into a formidable fighting force that conquered much of Manchuria and drove back the Chinese living north of the Great Wall. The Manchu elite increasingly adopted Chinese ways in bureaucracy and court ceremonies. Many of the Chinese scholar-gentry entered Manchu service. The Manchu seized advantage of the weakness of the Ming dynasty to enter China and seize control of Beijing in 1644. Within two decades, the Manchu were masters of China. As the Qing dynasty, they ruled an area larger than any previous dynasty, except the Tang. The Manchu retained much of the political system of the Ming; Chinese and Manchu officials were paired at the highest posts. The examination system continued. The rulers were generous patrons of the arts and employed scholars to compile great encyclopedias of Chinese learning.

Economy and Society in the Early Centuries of Qing Rule. The Manchu also maintained the social system of the Ming. The values of respect for rank and acceptance of hierarchy were emphasized. The extended family remained the core unit among the elite. Women continued under the dominance of elder males. Their lives centered on the household. Daughters were less wanted than sons and female infanticide probably rose during this period. Lower-class women continued to work in fields and markets. The Manchus attempted to alleviate rural distress and unrest through decreasing tax and labor burdens, repairing roads, dikes, and irrigation systems, and limiting land accumulation by the elite. Population growth and the lack of available land checked the success of the reform efforts. Landlords increased their holdings, widening the gap between rural classes. Commercial and urban expansion increased under the peaceful conditions of the first century and a half of Manchu rule. Until the end of the 18th century, the influx of silver in payment for exports created a favorable balance of payments. European traders came to Canton, and Chinese merchants traveled overseas. A new group of merchants, the compradors, who specialized in the import-export trade along the south coast, were a major link between China and the outside world.

Rot from Within: Bureaucratic Breakdown and Social Disintegration. By the late 18th century, the Qing were in decline. The exam system, furnisher of able bureaucrats, was riddled by cheating and favoritism. Positions in government service were seen as a method of gaining influence and building family fortunes. The resulting revenue loss caused a weakening of the military and deterioration of the dikes confining the Yellow River. By the mid-19th century, flooding left millions of peasants without resources. Throughout the empire, mass migrations and banditry increased social unrest. The existing Chinese social and economic systems could not cope with the changes stemming from the greatly increased population resulting from the introduction of American crops.

Barbarians at the Southern Gates: The Opium War and After. Although the advances by Europeans in science and industry made them dangerous rivals to the empire, the Manchus continued to treat them as just another type of barbarian. Confrontation occurred over the importation of opium from India into China. The British lacked commodities, apart from silver, to exchange for Chinese goods. Indian-grown opium reversed the trade balance in their favor, but the Chinese saw the trade as a threat to their social order. Silver left the country, and opium addiction became rampant. Government efforts to check the problem failed until the 1830s when an important official, Lin Zexu, came to end the trade at Canton and nearby. When he blockaded European trading areas and destroyed opium, the merchants demanded and received military intervention. The British invaded in 1839; the Chinese were defeated on sea and land and sued for peace. Another conflict ended similarly in the 1850s. The settlement after the first war awarded Hong Kong to the British and opened other ports to European trade and residence. By the 1890s, 90 ports were open and foreigners had gained long-term leases over ports and surrounding territory. Opium continued to pour into China. By mid-century, British officials managed China's foreign trade and customs system, and the court had to accept European ambassadors.

A Civilization at Risk: Rebellion and Failed Reforms. The dislocations caused by the European incursions spawned a massive rebellion in south China during the 1850s and 1860s. Inspired by Christian ideas, Hong Xiuquan led the Taiping Rebellion. The dissidents offered programs of social reform, land redistribution, and liberation of women. Their move against the traditional Chinese elite motivated the provincial gentry to support the Qing. Efficient and honest scholar-gentry leaders succeeded in defeating the rebellion. In the last decades of the century, these dynamic provincial leaders led a "self-strengthening movement" aimed at countering the challenges of the West. They encouraged foreign investment in railways and factories, and supported military modernization. But the Manchu rulers wanted only to preserve the existing order, not to transform it. The last decades of the dynasty were dominated by dowager empress Cixi; in 1898 she crushed a serious reform effort. Central authority was further weakened when Western powers intervened in 1901 to suppress the Boxer Rebellion, an anti-foreign movement backed by Qing household members. The Europeans increased their authority over internal matters, while the Manchu increasingly were unable to control provincial officials.

The Fall of the Qing and the Rise of a Chinese Nationalist Alternative. After the defeat of the Taipings, resistance to the dynasty centered on rival secret societies. The revolts they inspired failed, but

they were a training ground for more serious resistance. By the end of the century, sons of the scholar-gentry and compradors became involved in plots to overthrow the regime and to create a government modeled on the West. Sun Yat-sen was one of their most articulate leaders. The revolutions were deeply hostile to European involvement in Chinese affairs. Sporadic outbursts failed until 1911. A spreading rebellion ended with the deposition of the last Qing emperor in 1912. An even more important change had occurred in 1905 when the civil service exams system ended. The step signified the ending of the use of Confucian values as a base for governing society. The era of the scholar-gentry had closed.

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS: Muslim and Chinese Decline and a Shifting Global Balance. Both the seriously weakened civilizations of China and Islam were thrown into prolonged crisis by the challenges posed by the West. A shaken Islam survived, but Chinese civilization did not. Why? The Muslims had faced the threat of the West since the Middle Ages. The Chinese had to face a sudden and brutal challenge. Muslims shared many aspects of culture with Judeo-Christian and Greek tradition. Since their civilization had contributed to the rise of the West, borrowing from the rival civilization could be justified. The Chinese regarded Westerners as barbarians with an inferior culture. The Muslims had many centers to defend; the fall of one dynasty did not mean the end of Islamic independence. They had time to learn during the long Western advance. To the Chinese, defense of their civilization necessitated survival of the Qing. Once the dynasty failed, the Chinese had little to fall back on. Muslims could cling to the truths of Islam, but the Chinese did not have a great indigenous religious tradition.

KEY TERMS

Selim III: Ottoman sultan (1789–1807); attempted to improve administrative efficiency and build a new army and navy; assassinated by Janissaries.

Mahmud II: 19th-century Ottoman sultan who built a private, professional army; crushed the Janissaries and initiated reforms on Western precedents.

Tanzimat reforms: Western-style reforms within the Ottoman Empire between 1839 and 1876; included a European-influenced constitution in 1876.

Abdul Hamid: Ottoman sultan (1878–1908) who tried to return to despotic absolutism; nullified constitution and restricted civil liberties.

Ottoman Society for Union and Progress: Young Turks; intellectuals and political agitators seeking the return of the 1876 constitution; gained power through a coup in 1908.

Mamluks: rulers of Egypt under the Ottomans; defeated by Napoleon in 1798; revealed the vulnerability of the Muslim world.

Murad: Mamluk leader at the time of Napoleon's expedition to Egypt; defeated by French forces.

Muhammad Ali: controlled Egypt following the French withdrawal; began a modernization process based on Western models, but failed to greatly change Egypt; died in 1848.

Khedives: descendants of Muhammad Ali and rulers of Egypt until 1952.

Suez Canal: built to link the Mediterranean and Red seas; opened in 1869; British later occupied Egypt to safeguard their financial and strategic interests.

Al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh: Muslim thinkers in Egypt during the latter part of the 19th century; stressed the need for adoption of Western scientific learning and technology and the importance of rational inquiry within Islam.

Ahmad Orabi: student of Muhammad Abduh; led a revolt in 1882 against the Egyptian government; defeated when the khedive called in British aid.

Mahdi: Muhammad Achmad, the leader of a Sudanic Sufi brotherhood; began a holy war against the Egyptians and British and founded a state in the Sudan.

Khalifa Abdallahi: successor of the Mahdi; defeated and killed by British General Kitchener in 1898.

Nurhaci: (1559–1626); united the Manchus in the early 17th century; defeated the Ming and established the Qing dynasty.

Banner armies: the forces of Nurhaci; formed of cavalry units, each identified by a flag.

Kangxi: Qing ruler and Confucian scholar (1661–1722); promoted Sinification among the Manchus.

Compradors: wealthy group of merchants under the Qing; specialized in the import-export trade on China's south coast.

Lin Zexu: 19th-century Chinese official charged during the 1830s with ending the opium trade in southern China; set off the events leading to the Opium War.

Opium War: fought between Britain and Qing China beginning in 1839 to protect the British trade in opium; British victory demonstrated Western superiority over China.

Taiping Rebellion: massive rebellion in southern China in the 1850s and 1860s led by Hong Xinquan; sought to overthrow the Qing dynasty and Confucianism.

Cixi: conservative dowager empress who dominated the last decades of the Qing dynasty.

Boxer Rebellion: popular outburst aimed at expelling foreigners from China; put down by intervention of the Western powers.

Sun Yat-sen: (1866–1925); Chinese revolutionary leader, of scholar-gentry background.

Puyi: last Qing ruler; deposed in 1912.