

THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY  
OF CHINA

*General Editors*

DENIS TWITCHETT and JOHN K. FAIRBANK

Volume 9

Part One: The Ch'ing Empire to 1800

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HISTORY OF  
CHINA

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Part One: The Ch'ing Empire to 1800

edited by

WILLARD J. PETERSON

*Princeton University*



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## GENERAL EDITORS' PREFACE

When *The Cambridge History of China* was first planned, more than three decades ago, it was naturally intended that it should begin with the very earliest periods of Chinese history. However, the production of the series has taken place over a period of years when our knowledge both of Chinese pre-history and of much of the first millennium BC has been transformed by the spate of archeological discoveries that began in the 1920s and has been gathering increasing momentum since the early 1970s. This flood of new information has changed our view of early history repeatedly, and there is not yet any generally accepted synthesis of this new evidence and the traditional written record. In spite of repeated efforts to plan and produce a volume or volumes that would summarize the present state of our knowledge of early China, it has so far proved impossible to do so. It may well be another decade before it will prove practical to undertake a synthesis of all these new discoveries that is likely to have some enduring value. Reluctantly, therefore, we begin the coverage of *The Cambridge History of China* with the establishment of the first imperial regimes, those of Ch'in and Han. We are conscious that this leaves a millennium or more of the recorded past to be dealt with elsewhere and at another time. We are equally conscious of the fact that the events and developments of the first millennium BC laid the foundations for the Chinese society and its ideas and institutions that we are about to describe. The institutions, the literary and artistic culture, the social forms, and the systems of ideas and beliefs of Ch'in and Han were firmly rooted in the past, and cannot be understood without some knowledge of this earlier history. As the modern world grows more interconnected, historical understanding of it becomes ever more necessary and the historian's task ever more complex. Fact and theory affect each other even as sources proliferate and knowledge increases. Merely to summarize what is known becomes an awesome task, yet a factual basis of knowledge is increasingly essential for historical thinking.

Since the beginning of the century, the Cambridge histories have set a pattern in the English-reading world for multivolume series containing chapters written by specialists under the guidance of volume editors. *The*

*Cambridge Modern History*, planned by Lord Acton, appeared in sixteen volumes between 1902 and 1912. It was followed by *The Cambridge Ancient History*, *The Cambridge Medieval History*, *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, and Cambridge histories of India, of Poland, and of the British Empire. The original *Modern History* has now been replaced by *The New Cambridge Modern History* in twelve volumes, and *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe* is now being completed. Other Cambridge histories include histories of Islam, Arabic literature, Iran, Judaism, Africa, Japan, and Latin America.

In the case of China, Western historians face a special problem. The history of Chinese civilization is more extensive and complex than that of any single Western nation, and only slightly less ramified than the history of European civilization as a whole. The Chinese historical record is immensely detailed and extensive, and Chinese historical scholarship has been highly developed and sophisticated for many centuries. Yet until recent decades, the study of China in the West, despite the important pioneer work of European sinologists, had hardly progressed beyond the translation of some few classical historical texts, and the outline history of the major dynasties and their institutions.

Recently Western scholars have drawn more fully upon the rich traditions of historical scholarship in China and also in Japan, and greatly advanced both our detailed knowledge of past events and institutions, and also our critical understanding of traditional historiography. In addition, the present generation of Western historians of China can draw upon the new outlooks and techniques of modern Western historical scholarship, and upon recent developments in the social sciences, while continuing to build upon the solid foundations of rapidly progressing European, Japanese, and Chinese studies. Recent historical events, too, have given prominence to new problems, while throwing into question many older conceptions. Under these multiple impacts the Western revolution in Chinese studies is steadily gathering momentum.

When *The Cambridge History of China* was first planned in 1966, the aim was to provide a substantial account of the history of China as a benchmark for the Western history-reading public: an account of the current state of knowledge in six volumes. Since then the outpouring of current research, the application of new methods, and the extension of scholarship into new fields have further stimulated Chinese historical studies. This growth is indicated by the fact that the history has now become a planned fifteen volumes, but will still leave out such topics as the history of art and of literature, many aspects of economics and technology, and all the riches of local history.

The striking advances in our knowledge of China's past over the last decade will continue and accelerate. Western historians of this great and complex subject are justified in their efforts by the needs of their own peoples for greater and deeper understanding of China. Chinese history belongs to the world not only as a right and necessity, but also as a subject of compelling interest.

JOHN K. FAIRBANK

DENIS TWITCHETT

## PREFACE

Since the initial planning for *The Cambridge History of China* series more than thirty years ago, certain conventions have been observed and certain inconsistencies have infiltrated.

For romanizing proper names (names of persons, places, titles) and selected terms in Chinese, the Wade-Giles system is the standard. The standard is compromised for place names deemed "familiar" in the established (i.e., pre-*pinyin*) literature, such as Peking (for Pei-ching, and not Beijing) and Canton (for Kuang-chou). For place names deemed "not familiar," a Wade-Giles romanization is used. When place names appear in titles in the bibliography, they are consistently in the Wade-Giles romanization system. Generally, the convention for this volume has been to try to observe the practice followed in Volumes 7, 8, and 10, but some arbitrary decisions have been required. Generally, place names (e.g., provinces) in use during the Ch'ing period to 1800 are used in this volume, except in cases where a current geographical term is introduced to clarify the reference. For Manchu and Mongol names, the standard set in A. W. Hummel, ed., *Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing Period*, has been noted and sometimes adjusted for linguistic reasons.

Translations of terms and official titles are uniform between chapters, with some violence done to the preferences of the authors of certain chapters. Translations cannot be consistent between Volumes 7-8 and Volume 10. The glaring difference is "Ministry" for *pu* in the Ming volumes and "Board" in Volume 10; the point is debatable, but the editorial decision was that *pu* in the Ch'ing period considered in this volume were more like ministries than like boards. There are other examples, and they reflect the unfortunate fact that, until recently, nineteenth-century history was treated as part of "modern China" and separate from what went before. The editorial bias for this volume is to seek continuities with the Ming volumes.

The names of the reigns (K'ang-hsi, Ch'ien-lung) of emperors are routinely treated as if they were the names of the emperors themselves. There are several good reasons for this practice, even though it is historiographically erroneous. We adopt it here as a convention that needs no apology.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The editor of this volume, like the editors of the other volumes in *The Cambridge History of China* series, has accrued many debts of gratitude. The foremost debt is to the authors of the chapters gathered here. They generally were prompt in meeting deadlines, responsive to queries, and forbearing toward editorial tinkering. They were long-suffering. Half of them were recruited many years ago by Frederick Wakeman, Jr., who originally planned this volume, and I acknowledge my gratitude to him for them. All of us, chapter authors, the readers, and I are indebted to Denis C. Twitchett, my mentor and former colleague, whose vision and perseverance have been essential for the existence of *The Cambridge History of China*. We are also grateful to Ralph Meyer, whose skill and patience are taxed to find and implement means to process, reconcile, and integrate the disparate information in the chapters, annotations, and bibliographies of several lengthy volumes simultaneously. This editor could not have produced this volume without his valued assistance.

The East Asian Studies Program at Princeton University, directed during the relevant years by Martin C. Collcutt, has generously supported *The Cambridge History of China* project in numerous direct and indirect ways. The project has been privileged to receive financial support from the National Endowment for the Humanities and from the Chiang Ching-Kuo Foundation for International Scholarly Exchange in Taiwan. We are grateful to these institutions for their financial support and the scholarly recognition it implies.

Willard J. Peterson

2002



## ABBREVIATIONS

BIHP	<i>Chung-yang yen-chiu yüan li-shih yü-yen yen-chiu so (Bulletin of the Institute of History and Philology, Academia Sinica)</i>
CPYC	<i>Yung-cheng chu p'i yü chih, O-erh-t'ai</i>
CS	<i>Ch'ing-shih, Chang Ch'i-yün</i>
CSL-CC	<i>Ta Ch'ing Jen-tsung Jui huang-ti shih-lu</i>
CSL-CL	<i>Ta Ch'ing Kao-tsung Ch'un huang-ti shih-lu</i>
CSL-KH	<i>Ta Ch'ing Sheng-tsu Jen huang-ti shih-lu</i>
CSL-SC	<i>Ta-Ch'ing Shih-tsu Chang huang-ti shih-lu</i>
CSL-YC	<i>Ta Ch'ing Shih-tsung Hsien huang-ti shih-lu</i>
CSWP	<i>Huang-ch'ao ching-shih wen-pien, Ho Ch'ang-ling</i>
DMB	<i>Dictionary of Ming Biography, Goodrich and Fang</i>
ECCP	<i>Eminent Chinese of the Ch'ing period, Hummel</i>
HJAS	<i>Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies</i>
JAS	<i>Journal of Asian Studies</i>
PCTC	<i>Ch'in-ting Pa-ch'i t'ung-chih ch'u-chi, O-erh-t'ai</i>

## CH'ING RULERS TO 1800

Personal Name	Lived	Chinese Name of Reign Period	Reign Period (Calendar Years)	Chinese Posthumous Names
Nurhaci	1559-1626	—	—	T'ai-tsu, Kao
(Unknown; referred to as Hung Taiji, a.k.a. Abahai)	1592-1643	—	1627-1643	T'ai-tsung, Wen
		T'ien-tsung	1636-1643	
Fu-lin	1638-1661	Shun-chih	1644-1661	Shih-tsu, Chang
Hsuan-yeh	1654-1722	K'ang-hsi	1662-1722	Sheng-tsu, Jen
Yin-chen	1678-1735	Yung-cheng	1723-1735	Shih-tsung, Hsien
Hung-li	1711-1799	Ch'ien-lung	1736-1795	Kao-tsung, Ch'un
Yung-yen	1760-1820	Chia-ch'ing	1796-1820	Jen-tsung, Jui

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## INTRODUCTION: NEW ORDER FOR THE OLD ORDER

Willard J. Peterson

In the grand sweep of more than three thousand years of Chinese history, the period from roughly 1680 to 1780 has been celebrated as a prosperous age. From other perspectives, the period has been disparaged as a time when China's people were held down and held back by autocratic foreign rulers. Such dichotomies reveal that the possibilities remain open for both positive and negative assessments of the period of Chinese history from the founding of the Ch'ing dynasty to the end of the Ch'ien-lung emperor's life in 1799. Without promising to resolve the conflicting historical interpretations, this introduction explores some of the issues and problems that are raised in the chapters of this volume and by interpretations of Ch'ing history to 1800 in general.

Simple historical chronology locates the subject matter of this volume after 1644, the conventional date for indicating the fall of the Ming dynasty, and before the end of rule by the Ch'ing imperial house in 1911. In terms of the historiography of the *Cambridge History of China* series, this volume is located between Volumes 7 and 8, with the shared title of *The Ming Dynasty, 1368-1644*, and Volume 10, entitled *Late Ch'ing, 1800-1911*.

Volume 10 was the first volume of the entire series to be published (in 1978). In Volume 10's Introduction, titled "The Old Order," the late John K. Fairbank, who was editor of the volume and a main organizer of the entire series, characterized the late Ch'ing period as the end of the "old China" in conflict with the "outside world," especially as represented by Western and Westernizing nations pursuing imperialist interests. For Fairbank, the avowed purpose of investigating the history of the late Ch'ing and the "old order" was to better understand what he called "the great Chinese revolution," or put more generally, "what has happened in modern China, how and why" (p. 2). Although Fairbank recognized the need to try to reconstruct "views, motives and historical understanding of people at the time when events occurred," he also was committed to being "present-minded" as well as "past-minded" (p. 5), which I take to be an expression of the perspective from which he invited readers of Volume 10 to view late Ch'ing history.