

The legacy of the qing dynasty assignment

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Assess the Legacy of the Qing Dynasty By Vanessa C. Song INTRODUCTION

The Qing Dynasty lasted for 268 years and was the last dynasty in China and was declared in 1644 by the Manchurian people of outer China after the conquest of the Ming Dynasty. It fell in 1849 to the Chinese communist party (CCP) led by Mao Zedong. Throughout the beginning of the Qing dynasty, the public confusion in regards to the new “ Alien Rulers” caused havoc and widespread chaos, small anti-Qing efforts were formed in order to secure surviving Ming princes and restore the Ming Dynasty, this of course failed.

Despite the issues that arose in the first forty, starting years of the dynasty in regards to rebellions and rejection towards the new government through; urban rioting, social unrest, strikes and outlaw raids in the South of China (Prominently more so in Nanjing), this dynasty, Debatably, was one of the most successful and progressive dynasties of Ancient China through its impact upon growth and expansion on the country at the time.

Significant issues arose in concern to institutional adaptation and development beyond traditional tribal politics that early Manchurians had adopted, but after the takeover, progress was gradual but great. Although a new power and government was in place, the previous practices were not banned but encouraged as Manchurian emperors (particularly the Kangxi and Qianlong emperors) supported the exploration of Chinese culture and traditions, and built the Qing Dynastic empire upon Chinese Confucian values, this also helped to attain the respect of Chinese scholars, and more importantly, the respect of the general public.

Through the use of Mongol military techniques and Chinese administrative Government, the Qing Empire expanded China's control to Mongolia and Taiwan, under the reign of the Qianlong emperor the Qing Dynasty extended its empire to Tibet, small states of SE Asia, Korea and large parts of central Asia, some of what is part of modern-day Russia today.

The Manchurians had managed to establish a successful framework for a progressive and successful dynastic government through a series of changes, mostly during the reign of the second emperor of the Qing Dynasty, Kangxi (Xuanye), whose first-half of his rule was devoted to the stabilization of Qing China through gaining control of the empire and suppressing rebel forces.

The Second-half of the Kangxi emperor's rule was devoted to the promotion of Chinese culture (art and music) and economic progression; this is demonstrated to the Kangxi emperor's "Tours to the South" which led the emperor from Beijing to the culturally enriched areas of the South of China. The Qing dynasty was dominated by the 60-year reigns of the emperors; Kangxi and his grandson Qianlong, their reigns, wrote the course of Chinese history as well as the economic, political and cultural legacy that is currently evident in modern China today.

The main aspects and areas of impact and change included; fiscal and economic change in the Qing Dynasty, political advancement and the cultural changes and advancements that have shaped China to its current, culturally-enriched form. The legacy of the Qing Dynasty is clear in modern China today. ECONOMIC PROGRESSION

During the course of the era of the Qing dynasty, one of the most significant changes was the level of economic activity that vigorously prospered as commercialism and privatisation of business and markets increased and China's population flourished from 200 million to 390 million. Qing China was an immense market with no hindrances to the movement of goods through and across China and its surrounding provinces, important items of trade included medicinal herbs, cotton and rice.

These items, along with things like silk and porcelain were sent to Europe every year, one of the most important commodities that the Qing saw as vital to life was salt, the state did not monopolise its manufacturing, but stated the need for a licence if it was to be transported. Control of the Grand Canal leading from the Southern, agriculturally prosperous areas into Beijing was vital as it became a channel in which the natural market for the demand of goods such as rice, grain and salt could be transported from one place to another with ease.

Silk and porcelain industries in particular flourished; in Jingdezhen, porcelain-making industries recorded almost 100 000 workers and during the late 1600s became a main component of the trade between the east and the west, In Suzhou, Silk manufacturing industries had around 2330 workers and also became a viable item of trade, other places like Hangzhou and Nanjing also produced high quality silk, for which they are renowned for in modern day China.

The early 1800s of the Qing era saw the development of " Remittance Banks" which allowed a merchant to exchange metallic currency for a

remittance certificate, in which he could collect his money elsewhere; these banks became vital to the progression of commercial activity in China. Under the successful but unpopular Qing regime, new crops were established and sweet potato, maize and peanuts became introduced into the Chinese diet.

During the reign of the Yongzheng emperor, the Qing Government also introduced a new tax policy that only allowed the payment of taxes through money (copper or silver, for larger transactions) rather than the previous “goods and wares” tax that allowed the Chinese to pay taxes in things like agricultural produce.

The new amount of tax payed by civilians was almost entirely dependent upon the amount of land a person owned, through the reign of the Qianlong emperor, this tax was also considerably reduced, along with rental expenses, this rose the standard of living for the average civilian and many had learned to become literate. This new policy allowed for the economic growth and expansion, as well as a more reliable and consistent revenue flow on a local and state level, this allowed the Qing government to fund general community maintenances like roads and other general construction.

One of the only connections of trade from the west came in the form of silver, silver was an important article of trade that was in a growing and unmet demand, for the rapidly prospering populace in China at the time, although the Qing empire was wary and fearful of creating steady trading ties with the west as the fear of foreign powers invading China and colonizing it, much like the British East India Company in India.

To ensure that policies were functioning and in place as per proper order, Qing emperors installed a “ Secret Palace memorial System” that allowed for the communication between the emperor and his officials for accurate and adequate reports on progress and development, this particular method helped the Qing Dynasty extend its control over to Mongolia and Tibet in order to ensure proper working policies. In the late 1700s and the early 1800s China’s production of goods accounted for a third of the world’s, China, under Qing rule had come to amount to 29% of the world’s gross domestic product.

CULTURAL PROGRESSION Culture is known to be one of the most vital characteristics of Chinese Society throughout all its previous and current ages; this is plainly clear in modern China today, through a range of different mediums (e. g. Music, artwork, literature, films, plays etc.). During the Qing Era; Art, literature and music flourished under the level of influence it provided. A variety of works were created in regards to different subjects, some anti-Qing and some pro-Qing.

The anti-Qing culturists are referred to as “ Individualists” and their work reflected sorrow, anger or sadness upon the usurping of the previous Ming dynasty, many of which became monks, art, jade sculptures and silk costumes, were in particular more ornate and intricate than in other time periods. Both the Kangxi Emperor and the Qianlong Emperor, indulged in Chinese culture, collecting artworks, artefacts and writing poems.

The Kangxi emperor was an intellectual, theorist and a benefactor of the arts; he amassed “ The Origins of the Calendric System, Music and

Mathematics” and was an avid mathematician. The Qianlong emperor was known to have written more poems than any other poet in China, although his works amassed in quantity, they lacked essence and quality. The Jesuit missionary Giuseppe Castiglione introduced western artwork of horses to the Qing empire, horses were a symbol of dominance in Manchu culture, and Castiglione’s work became an accepted and appraised form of medium.

Emperors from the Qing dynasty dedicated their lives to the religion; Tibetan Buddhism, although they derived many of their philosophies from Taoist and Buddhist beliefs of the Han Chinese. Chinese culture before the Qing dynasty was centred upon strongly rooted beliefs that dictated and supported the rules of society, through the changing of an era and the impact of time in relation to change; it is observed that what was “ socially acceptable” during the Qing Dynasty, would not have been accepted during the Ming Dynasty.

Specific and significant changes towards the rights and roles of women in society were many and lasting, improvements arose in that women could now walk freely in public places, ride horses, practice activities mainly regarded and stereotyped as “ Men’s jobs” and they became able to fight beside men on the battlefield. During this time period, the painful process and tradition of the binding of female feet was banned and women could have respectable imperial status.

This is a crucial set of developments that has affected modern day China today as through the changes during the Qing dynasty, the feminist movement in China, has slowly but steadily progressed and developed to the standard at which it is at today. Not only has the development of culture

affected modern day society in China, it has also affected popular Japanese manga culture through the Shanghai School of Art, which was founded during the 1800s and is most known for incorporating traditional Chinese art with modernist trends (e. . using bolder strokes). The Qing dynasty has also affected popular culture in China today, with TV series made about key events or people of the era, for example the “ Qianlong” TV series, which documents the life of the Qianlong emperor. POLITICAL PROGRESSION The scales upon which political progression was made during the Qing era was both notable and lasting, it's repercussions are not as distinct as the economic and cultural, but are nonetheless influencing factors for modern-day Chinese Government.

Traditional Han Chinese beliefs in concern to the emperor and dynastic coordination included the strong ideology that the emperor had received a mandate from heaven, and that as a divine being, he must be obeyed and that political power steadily flowed from the top of the political pyramid, to the bottom of the pyramid, which consisted of the highest power ??? the Grand Council, which was made up of the Emperor and the high officials. The political revolution that was the Qing Dynasty brought two worlds of knowledge together in order to achieve optimum results.

Although at first, the Qing Dynasty was regarded a highly unpopular empire, because of their sudden conquest of the Ming Dynasty, the Manchurian emperors managed to immerse themselves in a world that was not their own and revolutionise the political context. Changes and notable differences within the political affinity of the Qing Dynasty were mainly swayed towards

a positive centre force, emperors, highly engaged with Han Chinese culture provided a succinct environment to which it could flourish and thrive.

Through the new dynasty, flood control improvements were made as well as introduction of new produce into the agricultural spectrum. The analysis of a series of events is necessary in order to understand the influence upon the modern-day China: The Opium War of 1839-1842, created tensions between Britain and China in an effort to maintain the sales of the drug Opium, as a result of this war; Hong Kong was signed over to Britain.

The Taiping rebellion of 1850, saw the “common” civilians attempt to create multiple social reforms and in result 20 million people were killed, this event saw the Qing empire seeking help from European Powers. CONCLUSION The Qing Dynasty, although the last dynastic government in China, was one of the most successful and prosperous dynasties in the history of China.

Through the multiple efforts of the Qing dynasty and its emperors, it was made possible for an alien ruler to win the acceptance of the Han Chinese people and it was also made possible to revolutionise the standards of living of commoners, the rate at which art and culture flourished and the growth of a civilisation through the retainment of traditional beliefs and the combining of modernist attitudes. In conclusion, the legacy of the Qing Dynasty has remained succinct and present throughout the areas of economic development, cultural advancement and political progression.