China's minorities, the Tibetans have a highly organized community in exile. Focused on the person of the Dalai Lama and located in Dharamsala in the Punjab, India, the exiled Tibetan administration has put forward to many parts of the world, especially the West and India itself, accounts of developments in Tibet which place China in an extremely bad light and strongly favour an independent Tibet. In many countries, there are organized groups which see discrediting China's role in Tibet and promoting an independent Tibet to be their primary duty.

The sometimes questionable validity of the statistics issued by governments, especially those of China, is a problem which has quite serious implications for some parts of this study. Nevertheless, throughout the present century, the Chinese authorities have normally been the source of the least unreliable statistics available for the areas claimed as China. In the 1980s and 1990s, the Chinese authorities have issued figures on an immense range of matters relating to the minorities, including those in their statistical yearbooks, statistical data works on specialized subjects such as women, and censuses. While these are immensely detailed, they generally cannot be corroberated by other sources. As in so many other areas, the case of Tibet is exceptional, and there are widely differing statistics available covering such matters as population and Han migration. While the Chinese statistics of the 1980s certainly have weaknesses, they are in general preferable and more reliable than those of the Dalai Lama's supporters. There are two main reasons for this: firstly, they are more scientifically derived and based on more thorough on-the-spot investigation; secondly the need for all Chinese citizens to be registered and identified makes it very difficult to distort figures too much. Although it is true that the Chinese government has political reasons for wishing to falsify figures, the same is true—and to a similar extent—of the Dalai Lama's supporters. Obviously, it has been necessary to examine sources of widely differing kinds and with very different viewpoints. The foregoing account notes only a few of the types of sources used and the problems they raise. While conflicting sources raise difficulties of interpretation and choice, variety of viewpoint can only contribute to a better understanding of an important topic which always has been and will always be controversial.

2

Pre-Twentieth Century History

> In 1500 BC there was no China, and there were no Chinese. The area that is now China was then inhabited by a great number of tribes with different cultures. Though the majority of them belonged to one or another branch of the Mongoloid race, other races were represented. There was no great man who created the first Chinese empire; it grew out of a long, slow process of assimilation and integration over centuries.[1]

In recent years, much thought has been given both inside China and abroad to precisely what constitutes the term 'China', or its Chinese equivalent *Zhongguo*, and how it has developed over history. Since the most ancient times, but especially since 221 BC, when the first great Chinese empire, the Qin, united all territory regarded as Chinese under one rule, the Chinese have referred to the territory they inhabited either by the name of a specific area or by that of the ruling dynasty. There was undoubtedly a concept of the 'central plains' (*zhongyuan*), which was regarded as the heart of Chinese civilization, but the term *Zhongguo*, literally meaning the 'Middle Kingdom', was not used as 'a formal name with the meaning of a modern state', until after the Revolution of 1911.[2]

The view with which this chapter begins is that of the distinguished contemporary anthropological historian of China, Wolfram Eberhard. He steers a course between the once popular Eurocentric view that the Chinese were originally immigrants from the western regions and the traditional Chinese view (which gives no credit at all to the contributions of minority nationalities) that their country descended from a great hero or heroes.[3]

From time immemorial, those people living within the regions of what is now China belonged to numerous cultures, spoke numerous languages, and were ethnically different from one another. Many of those peoples which are nowadays classified as nationalities can trace their ancestry back to well before the time of Christ. Examples are the Manchus of the north-east and the Miao of the south-west. Others are of much more recent origin. In the long course of Chinese history, many groups have disappeared

through being fused with or assimilated into the Han or other nationalities, either due to a natural process or through conquest and forced assimilation.

The territories which the various dynasties and rulers of the past governed were quite different from one another. This raises the difficult problem of just which regions should be described as part of 'China'. Many of the nationalities which dwell within China's borders today once had governments quite independent of the Chinese. There was a powerful united kingdom in Tibet from early times, with the reign of the great king Srong-btsan sgam-po, who died in 649 or 650, marking the high point of medieval Tibetan history. The Bai and several other nationalities of China's south-west once dominated a kingdom known to the Chinese as Nanzhao. Lasting from the seventh century until AD 902, it lay to China's south-west and was centred on the territory today part of western Yunnan province.[4]

PRC scholars solve this problem with the argument that everything which happened in the past in what is *now* Chinese territory is part of Chinese history. The following, written by an official, represents a view which I have found to be very widely held by PRC historians and anthropologists.

> On the question of borders, we are a united multinational country, so the history of our country is the common creation of the peoples of each nationality. It is the history of every nationality's people, no matter what the position and circumstances occupied in history. No matter whether belonging to the territory ruled by the dynasty in the central plains or independent of the dynasty in the central plains, in all cases it was a component part of Chinese history. It can perhaps be said that all the regions where the various nationalities' peoples carried out their historical activities may count as within the borders of our country at different periods. . . . Territories did not remain fixed throughout history, but changed according to the times. So this should be the general principle in our understanding of the historical frontiers of our country.[5]

One of the main ways in which these territories and borders changed was through conquest and migration. One very prolonged example of conquests and migrations, lasting throughout most of the first millenium of the Christian era, was the Turkic invasions from the northern steppe fringe of Inner Asia and southern Siberia, towards the oasis settlements in the region now known as Xinjiang.

The most important of Xinjiang's nationalities in our own time, the Uygurs, transferred their heartland to that region from the Upper Orkhon, in what is today the State of Mongolia, after their weakened monarchy was expelled militarily by the Kirgiz people in 840.

These migrations did not normally involve whole nationalities. As Lattimore states, the 'typical' migration consisted of 'movements of warrior bands, not of the whole people from whom the warriors were recruited'.[6] The bands began by raiding for plunder, but then settled permanently in the areas they had conquered. The defeated rulers might lead their own followers in a migration to and conquest of a different region. According to the historical records, a people had migrated, and its name appeared as the people occupying its new habitat. Meanwhile, the remainder of the defeated tribe left behind was assimilated into the conquering tribe. The process naturally involved substantial change in the composition and population both of the conquering and the conquered tribes. Names sometimes appeared for the first time in the historical books referring to new mixtures of once separate populations.

Wars and migrations were a constant feature of China's history. The culturally dominant people of the region, namely the Han Chinese, were in fact sedentary. The peoples of the steppes were more warlike, but also much more mobile because of their dependence on the horse and, to a lesser extent, the camel.[7] The Han Chinese were agriculturalists and their livelihood depended not only on animals, such as the pig, which could not move long distances, but on land which, being itself impossible to move, rendered migration very difficult indeed. For these and other reasons, 'in the endemic conflict between peoples of Inner Asia and the sedentary populations', it has usually been the former who have taken the initiative to begin conquest. Since well before the time of Christ the Chinese have been very much afraid of the nomadic and warlike 'barbarians' to their north and north-west. The Great Wall is ample testimony to the lengths to which they were prepared to go to keep out these peoples. According to one contemporary authority, '[m]ilitary conquest played a relatively modest part in the gradual expansion of the sedentary world'.[8]

In the long run, China was able to absorb enormous territories at the expense of its neighbours during one period, or the minority nationalities during another. Of course, its governments used

armies, but a much more important force behind Chinese expansion was the spread of Chinese culture and the Han method of agriculture. In traditional China, rulers administered their territories, including the border regions, from walled cities garrisoned by Chinese troops. Han peasants followed the troops and established their own farming system.

From an early period, the Han considered their own culture superior to those of the people living among or around them. They adopted contemptuous terms of designation, such as *man*, 'southern barbarians', or *di*, 'northern barbarians'. The character for *man* has the insect radical and also means 'uncivilized', while the character for *di* has the dog radical. As far as the Chinese were concerned, it was a favour on their part to bestow the blessings of their own culture on the benighted 'barbarians'. However, while it is true that China contributed a good deal more in terms of culture to the minorities than the other way around, the influences were by no means all in one direction. According to Lattimore, the Chinese 'were in fact not one-way carriers of a superior culture; they brought back with them ideas and practices which were accepted with admiration in China'.[9]

Parts of China on many occasions have been ruled by minorities who later disappeared from history. The period from the third to the sixth centuries was one of prolonged division in China. It was also one in which quite a few nationalities were fused with the Han.[10] One important illustration of this process can be found in the Northern Wei dynasty (AD 386–535) which overcame its last remaining rival state in northern China in AD 439. It was ruled by a people called Xianbei. Under the Northern Wei Emperor Xiaowen (AD 471–99), the court abandoned it own language in favour of Chinese and the aristocrats were encouraged to intermarry with the local Han. As a result of policies such as these, the Xianbei people gradually fused with the Han and ceased to exist as an independent nationality.

South-western Agricultural Nationalities

The policy of the imperial Chinese dynasties towards the minority nationalities of the south-west–Yunnan, Guizhou, Guangxi, and Sichuan—was termed *tusi*. The essence of this system, as a PRC writer puts it, was that 'politically the central feudal ruling classes

used the old aristocratic elements among the minority nationalities to implement their rule, while economically they allowed the original mode of production to persist and collected taxes through the agency of the local aristocracy'.[11] The court was prepared to allow the chiefs to hold power among their own peoples because that allowed the court to exploit the regions inhabited by the minorities more effectively. However, the chiefs were hereditary and supported by hereditary officials. Therefore, the court had no power to choose those it deemed most reliable.

In the fifteenth century, the *tusi* system was changed, with the addition of largely Han officials directly appointed by the central government on a temporary basis and able to control the local minority aristocracies. This new system was termed *gaitu guiliu*, which means literally 'change the locals and return to the current'. The word *tu* can mean earth or dirt as well as 'local'. It is a pejorative way of referring to the hereditary chiefs or officials of the minority nationalities. The 'current' is the regular bureaucratic stream or current of promotions and transfers. The system spread throughout the minority nationality areas of the south-west and some other places during the Ming (AD 1368–1644) and early Qing periods.

Between 1726 and 1732, the Manchu official and aristocrat Eertai was Governor-General in Yunnan, Guizhou, and later Guangxi as well. Eertai was faced with problems of disaffection and rebellion among the minorities. His response was to incorporate the control of the minority areas into the normal provincial administration, which meant abolishing the hereditary chieftaincies and replacing them with normal provincial officials. In other words, he greatly expanded the *gaitu guiliu* system. At his recommendation, the Yongzheng Emperor adopted the system as his formal policy towards the minority peoples of the south-west.[12] The result was that the *tusi* of China's interior weakened or disappeared; those in the border regions were retained, but with central control over them strengthened. Being chiefs of the minorities, the *tusi* were lower in status than the Han officials. 'A *tusi* who had to deal with a Han official was always one rank lower than the Han official, no matter what his proper rank.'[13]

These changes were accompanied by a transformation of the economies of the minorities of the south-west. The Bouyei people of Guizhou serve as one example. Before the Ming, the relationship between the aristocracy and most of the rest of the

population was that between suzerain and serf. In the Ming and Qing the population expanded rapidly, while Han settlers brought more advanced farming techniques which enabled the Bouyei to expand production. These trends made it necessary to open up more land. Two types of land tenure and farming developed: one was land which was bought and sold; the other was land tenanted to peasants who hired their labour to a landlord. The Bouyei aristocracy tended to lose both their power and their wealth, while Han landlords were able to buy much of the newly opened land as well as that formerly owned by the Bouyei aristocracy.[14]

Peasant revolt has been a persistent feature of Chinese history. There are many reasons for this phenomenon, which is not unique to China. The primary one was 'the bitter hardship of peasant life', coupled with the fact that the Chinese peasantry 'never managed to conquer its natural environment'. Natural disasters, recurrent drought, flood, and epidemics frequently caused bad harvests and famines.[15] Rebellions by the largely pastoral nationalities of the far west or north-west of what is today China will be considered separately. Here, the concern is with peasant revolt, and it is not surprising to find that this Chinese tradition encompasses the agricultural minorities. From the Han dynasty (206 BC–AD 220) to the early Qing, there were over a dozen major rebellions in which minority nationalities took part, either alone or in co-operation with Han peasants. Statistics for all rebellions by the minority nationalities from the Zhou to the Ming show far more unrest during the Song dynasty than in any previous dynasty, and even more during the Ming. The provinces most seriously affected with unrest by the minorities in the Ming period were Guangxi, with 218 revolts, and Guizhou, with 91.[16] Especially from the 1850s to the early 1970s, the Qing dynasty was afflicted even more severely by peasant rebellions, whether by Han or minorities or both. People from several nationalities took part in imperial China's largest-scale peasant rebellion, the Taiping (1851–66), including the Zhuang, Yao, Hui, Miao, Dong, and Yi.[17]

Rebellion by minority peasants was thus in some respects part of the overall resistance to an oppressive government. Yet, there were added reasons why the minorities should rebel. One was the southward expansion of the Han people and their discrimination against and contempt for other nationalities.[18] The *gaitu guiliu* policy, with its more direct Han rule, probably also contributed to rebellion. This is suggested by the greater number of revolts

during the Ming than in earlier times and the even more inflamed situation under the Qing. None the less, officials, including those who belonged to a minority nationality themselves, saw the *gaitu guiliu* system as a *response* to rebellion, not a cause of it. The example of Eertai's behaviour in the south-west makes this crystal clear. With their own leaders robbed of their status and wealth, rebellions by minorities on purely ethnic grounds could have been more difficult to mount. Yet, Chesneaux is doubtless right to suggest that 'ethnic antagonism did not replace poor peasant opposition to the landlord–official alliance, but exacerbated it'.[19] In other words, peasant discontent would provide an even greater spur to rebellion for minorities than it would for Han.

Among the most populous of the south-western nationalities are the Miao of Guizhou, Hunan, and other provinces. They are among those minorities whose history was saturated with rebellion and the inevitable response, bloody suppression, in the late imperial period. For the first sixty years of the fifteenth century and again in the first half of the sixteenth century, unrest and rebellions flared almost like a chain.[20] The first major rebellion of the Qing period, that of 1735 and 1736, followed shortly behind the government's thoroughgoing implementation of the *gaitu guiliu* policy among the Miao and resulted from the taxation and high-handed abuse of power by officials appointed under that system. The rebels gained early successes, but when the Qianlong Emperor ascended the throne in October 1735, he immediately sent Zhang Guangsi against them.[21] Zhang disposed of several tens of thousands of troops from seven provinces—Hunan, Hubei, Guangdong, Guangxi, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Guizhou—and was able to 'pacify' the Miao by November 1736.[22]

In all of Miao history, no period of rebellion was larger in scale than the loosely connected but separate uprisings which occurred over the years 1855 to 1873. They were motivated by poverty and excessive rents and taxation by both Han and minority nationality landlords. The most important of these various Miao rebellious movements was that led by Zhang Xiumei, a farm-hand from Taigong in south-eastern Guizhou. His followers seized control of Taigong and a number of other cities in south-east Guizhou in 1856, and the area remained the focus of his activities. These included undermining the Qing administrative structure by attacking both Han and Miao local officials, seizing land from the rich and redistributing it among ordinary people, and opening up new land.

The Qing government made no serious attempt to suppress the Miao rebels until after it had defeated the Taipings, whom it rightly regarded as a far more serious threat to its own power. A series of military campaigns followed from the mid-1860s, but Taigong was not retaken until November 1870.[23]

The Miao rebellions affected six provinces, especially Guizhou, Hunan, and Yunnan, and a substantial part of the Miao population took part in them. In addition, there was assistance from people of other nationalities in the area, including the Bouyei, Dong, Shui, Yi, and Yao.[24] Among the Dong people, Jiang Yingfang founded a Heaven and Earth Society and began a rebellion in mid-1855 with the slogan 'strike the rich but aid the poor' (*dafu jipin*). The region of the revolt was the Guizhou–Hunan border region near Tianzhu in eastern Guizhou. In 1860, Jiang and Zhang Xiumei even joined forces, with Zhang giving his Dong colleague an official title. In 1862, a coalition of Miao and Dong forces succeeded in seizing a village which Jiang Yingfang used to establish a base area. However, this provoked retaliation from official troops, as a result of which Jiang was arrested and executed late in the same year.[25] Despite such examples of co-operation among members of different ethnic groups, these uprisings were in fact bedevilled with factionalism, not only among leaders of different minorities, but even among those within the Miao. Individual leaders were keen to establish themselves as king (*wang*), and power struggles harmful to their own cause were frequent.

In addition to factionalism, one of the main reasons for the failure of the Miao rebellion was that the Miao landlord and official class stayed loyal to the Qing dynasty. The fact that the rebels belonged to minorities no doubt exacerbated their grievances, but the main issues for the rebels were economic, not ethnic. These uprisings were only secondarily national struggles.[26] Although the Miao and other minorities were aware of being separate and different from the rulers, be they Han or Manchu, the rebellions need not be read as signs of an intense consciousness of national identity.

Mongols, Manchus and Tibetans

Over its long history, only two non-Han nationalities have ruled the whole of China: the Mongols and the Manchus. In the thirteenth century, the Mongols succeeded in subjugating and bringing under a single rule the various independent kingdoms which ruled areas in Tibet and other parts of south-western China. In the middle of the thirteenth century, the Mongols took over the administration of Tibet. In AD 1253, they subjugated the kingdom of Dali centred in western Yunnan province, which had succeeded the Nanzhao upon its fall in AD 902. Also in AD 1253, the Tibetan religious leader 'Phags-pa (1235–80) was given audience at the court of the Mongol prince who later, as Khubilai Khan, ruled the entire eastern Mongol empire. When he ascended the throne as Emperor in 1260, Khubilai Khan put 'Phags-pa in charge of the Tibetan areas, and even promoted him to be a high official in his central government, in charge of Buddhist affairs. In 1279, Khubilai Khan extended the control he already held over northern China to the south. As a result, his Khanate of the Great Khan, the largest of the four khanates of the Mongol Empire, included all of China, Tibet, Mongolia, and Korea, although what is now Xinjiang belonged to a different khanate. The Mongol dynasty, which the Chinese knew as the Yuan, was overthrown in China in 1368.

The second of the non-Han peoples to rule all China, the Manchus, established the Qing dynasty, which ruled China from 1644 to 1911. Both the Mongols and Manchus adopted Chinese ways, the Manchus to a far greater extent than the Mongols. The Qing adopted the Ming administrative structure more or less as they had found it. The great Manchu emperors consciously admired and adopted Chinese culture and the Manchus as a people tended to fuse into the Han. Although they have even now not assimilated fully, the differences between the Han and Manchus had dwindled sharply by the time the Qing dynasty fell.

For a variety of reasons, including the wish to preserve their culture, the Qing government forbade Han immigration to the Manchurian frontier regions—that is, Jilin and Heilongjiang provinces. Yet Han immigration into Manchuria swelled the population of the area to about one million by the end of the eighteenth century and to about three million by the middle of the nineteenth. By the late years of the eighteenth century, more than four-fifths of the urban population of Jilin was Han Chinese. The Han brought with them their language, culture, methods of agriculture, and other aspects of economic livelihood. Despite its own ban, the Qing government even began to send Han Chinese officials into the Manchurian frontier in order to govern the immigrant

communities. 'By 1800 almost everyone in Manchuria south of the Amur spoke some Chinese, and many Manchus, already showing the effects of sinicization, had lost their mother tongue.'[27] It is among the ironies of Chinese history that one of the long-term consequences of the Manchu conquest of China was the Han take-over of Manchuria.

With the fall of the Mongol Empire in 1368, the Ming dynasty restored Han rule in China. Parts of what had been the Mongol Empire, including Yunnan and Tibet, in effect went their own way. However, the Ming took over Yunnan again in 1381, and it has remained a province of China ever since.

No such conquest was carried out in Tibet. The relationship between China and Tibet under the Ming dynasty remained rather loose, with little Chinese influence over Tibet's government. It was in this period that Tsong-kha-pa (*c.*1357–*c.*1419) founded the Yellow Sect which to this day dominates Tibetan Buddhism. The four great monasteries of the Yellow Sect were all built in the first half of the fifteenth century. These were the 'Bras-spungs and Se-ra just outside Lhasa, the Dga'-ldan some 60 kilometres from Lhasa, and the Bkra-shis-lhun-po in Xigaze. In 1578, the Yellow Sect head of the 'Bras-spungs Monastery, Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho, met the Mongol chief Altan Khan, and exerted a profound influence over him. Not only the Khan, but many of his followers were converted to the Yellow Sect of Tibetan Buddhism, which from this time became increasingly the religion not only of the Tibetans, but also the Mongols. Altan Khan gave Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho the title of Dalai (literally 'ocean') Lama, which was then retrospectively applied to two earlier Yellow Sect leaders, the first being a disciple of Tsong-kha-pa, so that Bsod-nams rgya-mtsho became the Third Dalai Lama. Thus was established the line of Dalai Lamas, who are in theory the reincarnations of Tsong-kha-pa's disciple. It survives to this day.

The other line of reincarnations was that of the Panchen Lamas. The Fifth Dalai Lama (1617–82) appointed his teacher, a man whom he much revered, as the Abbot of the great Bkra-shis-lhun-po Monastery in Xigaze and pronounced that he would continue reincarnation with the title of Panchen Lama. The 'theory of the reincarnation of the Panchen Lamas' was thus instituted by the Fifth Dalai Lama.[28] Despite these auspicious beginnings, the two highest dignitaries in Tibet have in fact frequently been rivals and even bitterly opposed each other. The Chinese government has

been able on a number of occasions to play them off against one another to its own advantage. Even after the fall of the Mongol Yuan dynasty in China in 1368, the Mongols continued to hold power in territory west of China. The Emperor Timur, whom the West knows as Tamerlane, rose to power in 1369, the year after the Ming dynasty was founded. Tamerlane overran Persia and Mesopotamia and invaded India. He planned to seize China and had even begun his expedition there, but his death early in 1405 prevented him from achieving this ambition. Although no Mongol leader was later able to match Tamerlane, let alone his greatest thirteenth-century forerunners, the Mongols continued to spawn leaders who posed a threat to Ming dynasty China. One of them even took the dynasty's Zhengtong Emperor prisoner in 1449 and held him for about a year. Border harassments persisted right to the end of the Ming dynasty. At the same time, the Mongols rendered 'tribute' to the Chinese court, which allowed them to combine the presentation of exotic and luxury goods with trade. A neo-Confucian revival was gaining influence in official thinking in China, bringing with it ideas which disapproved of trade. In the last century or more of the Ming dynasty, 'as border threats grew more dangerous from the direction of Mongolia' and the Ming weakened, trade 'came to be regarded largely as a concession that the court could use to buy peace' with the Mongols.[29]

One of the few administrative innovations of the Manchu Qing dynasty was the Mongol Superintendency (*Lifan yuan*), 'perhaps more properly translated, in view of both the exact meaning of the title and the nature of the institution, as the Barbarian Control Office'.[30] It was established in the summer of 1638—in other words, before the Manchus had conquered the main part of China—in order to help the dynasty deal with the Manchus' premier allies and vassals, the Mongols. They retained the office after 1644 to oversee their relations with the peoples of Inner Asia, including not only Mongolia, but also Tibet, Xinjiang, and Russia. In general, these were the societies which the Chinese regarded as nomadic Asia, lying in a north-western crescent around China.

There was in fact another office, one of the functions of which was to deal with non-Han peoples. This was the Board of Rites (*Libu*), which the Manchus inherited from the Ming dynasty. This office took responsibility for China's relations with countries to its east, south-east, and south, suggesting that these were viewed as countries with sedentary grain-growing economies and political

cultures influenced by the same Confucianism which inspired the ceremonies which the Board oversaw inside China itself. In other words, the distinction between the functions of the two offices was not whether the region of their responsibility was part of China or not, but its geographic location and perceived socio-economic category.[31]

The Manchus had already begun their conquest of the Mongols before they took over the main part of China. They recruited them into their armies and bureaucracy, both as vassals and allies. Their court used the Mongolian language as well as Manchu and Chinese for its business. When the Manchus conquered China and moved their capital to Beijing, they also continued their conquest of the Mongols.

The most powerful of the Mongol leaders in the latter half of the seventeenth century was Galdan, who in the early 1670s became chief of the Jungars, a branch of the Mongols living in Northern Xinjiang. Over the following years Galdan expanded his conquests, with other Mongol tribes either submitting to him or migrating elsewhere. By the 1680s, he had extended his power to southern Xinjiang and northern Mongolia, as a result of which the Northern Mongol khans offered their formal submission to the Manchu dynasty in 1691 in order to form a coalition against him. In June 1696, the Kangxi Emperor himself headed a substantial force which inflicted a decisive defeat on Galdan at the Battle of Jao Modo south of Urga, extending Qing rule over the area of the Khalkha Mongols, equivalent to today's State of Mongolia.[32] Galdan himself died the year after suffering this stunning defeat.

The Manchu court did not follow up its victory immediately by invading the Jungars' homeland in northern Xinjiang, and in the 1720s the Jungars again attacked northern Mongolia. In 1755, the court at last sent troops in an attempt to conquer the Jungars and, thus, prevent any further disturbances in Northern Mongolia. After almost four years of bitter fighting, the Manchus effectivley wiped out the Jungar Mongols and seized control over the whole of Xinjiang as far as Yili in the north-west.

As the Manchus were consolidating their power in the north-west, a major rebellion against the Manchus broke out among the Khalkha Mongols in 1756. Among its main leaders was the Khalkha nobleman Chingunjav, and among its causes were the exasperation of the nobility at the high-handed treatment accorded them by the Manchu rulers, and the anger of the people at the high

taxation they suffered as well as the commercial exploitation which the Chinese trading community inflicted on them. The rebellion was very badly organized and quickly suppressed by the Manchus. In January 1757, Chingunjav was captured and sent to Beijing to be executed.[33] Shortly afterwards, the Qing dynasty appointed Manchu and Mongol residents to exercise control on behalf of the central government.

Qing rule was tighter south of the Gobi than to its north, but everywhere officials of the Qing came to hold power which had formerly been held by Mongols. Although the century or so following the conquest of Mongolia was a very good one for Chinese power in Inner Asia, for Mongol nomadic society it was one of sharp decline. Even the population fell. There were many reasons for this, especially the high proportion of the population in the monasteries and the widespread incidence of syphilis and tuberculosis.[34]

With the conquest of Mongolia, the region became open to influence from the Han Chinese and increasingly Qing interests in Mongolia were equivalent to Han interests. Han traders continued to migrate to Mongolia, especially the areas south of the Gobi desert, and were able to reach many sectors of the Mongol communities. Han merchants were even prepared to establish wandering markets by moving outside the cities and travelling into the grasslands selling their wares.[35] One important result of the sale of luxury goods by the Han traders to Mongol aristocrats was that they frequently settled their debts by handing grazing land over to the merchants; the latter then resold the land to Han peasants. As a result, Han people tended to take over territory which had previously belonged to Mongols. The Mongols were forced either to move north or remain in the southern part of Inner Mongolia as subordinates of the Han.[36] Riots erupted against the Chinese traders, during which merchants were beaten up and their warehouses plundered. The earliest recorded case was in the summer of 1829, when some lamas attacked a group of Chinese who had come to watch a performance of a temple dance in Urga. However, there were almost certainly similar unrecorded incidents earlier. In 1881, some 300 to 400 lamas and laity smashed up a Chinese shop, but the ringleaders were never caught. From the early nineteenth century on, there were also signs of popular discontent with the government.[37] The ethnic-identity component behind Mongols disturbances in late imperial China was greater than it was in the minority rebellions in the south-west.

The Mongol leader Galdan had in his youth been sent to Lhasa to be educated as a lama under the great Fifth Dalai Lama, who was possibly the most powerful of his line. Over his long reign, this ruler seized not only religious but political power into his hands to an unprecedented extent and, thus, contributed greatly towards setting up the Tibetan theocratic state. At the end of 1652, he visited Beijing, staying there about two months. The first ruler of the Manchu Qing dynasty upon its seizure of Beijing, the Shunzhi Emperor, then gave the prelate a lengthy religious title confirming him as Dalai Lama.

There has been some debate over whether the Fifth Dalai Lama could be described as an 'independent' ruler,[38] a controversy which need not detain us here. What is perhaps more important is that the first half of the eighteenth century is acknowledged as the period when Chinese suzerainty over Tibet was strengthened into a protectorate with a substantial degree of control. From 1706, the Kangxi Emperor 'tried to exercise a protectorate over Tibet without military occupation' or a permanent resident in Lhasa.[39] After Galdan's defeat in 1696, the Jungars invaded Tibet and sacked Lhasa; the Qing government responded by sending troops to Tibet in 1720 and expelling the Jungars. Immediately upon his accession in 1723, the Yongzheng Emperor withdrew the troops, but civil war broke out in Tibet in 1727, causing him to send residents and further troops to restore order. Further disturbances in 1750, including the murder of the imperial residents, precipitated a third dispatch of Qing troops to Tibet and a major administrative restructuring. In 1751, almost exactly a century after the Fifth Dalai Lama's visit to the Chinese capital, 'the organization of the protectorate took its final shape, which it maintained ... till its end in 1912'.[40] The Qing government created a Tibetan governing council termed *bka'-blon*, consisting of four officials, one clerical and three lay, under the supervision of residents and a garrison of troops representing the Qing court.[41] The Manchu Qing dynasty thus had incorporated Tibet firmly into the Manchu Empire and, at the same time, recognized the Tibetan theocracy with its conjunction of temporal and spiritual power.

In 1774, the first British Governor-General of India, Warren Hastings, sent a mission to Tibet aimed at beginning trade and finding out as much as he could about Tibet. The mission's leader, George Bogle, did meet the Panchen Lama in Xigaze, but was not allowed to go to Lhasa for an audience with the Dalai Lama.

Although his request for trade was rejected, he was the first English person to visit Tibet and represented the beginnings of British interest there. Already Chinese control over Tibet was closing it off to the British. In the nineteenth century, British attempts to deal with Tibet for a variety of trade and other reasons were to become even more frustrating to them. The Qing rulers were convinced that the British were trying to annex Tibetan, and hence Chinese, territory. At the same time, it was fear of the British which led the Lhasa government 'to reinforce the protective image' of Qing authority.[42] Not until 1890 did the British and Chinese sign the Sikkim–Tibet Convention, which defined the border between the two regions. At the end of 1893 in Darjeeling in northern India, Britain and China signed an appendix to the Convention dealing with trade and communications, under which a trade mart was established at Chomo in the Chumbi Valley, that narrow north–south strip of Tibetan territory north of Bengal and separating Sikkim from Bhutan.[43]

Xinjiang and Its Muslim Nationalities

To the north of Tibet, in that part of Inner Asia inhabited by the Uygurs and other Muslim peoples, the Qing government took measures to establish political and military control after it had conquered the region in the late 1750s. From the 1770s on, it adopted a series of measures through which economic and cultural development could contribute to this control. Among the Uygurs, agriculture and handicrafts became more specialized. In agriculture, new irrigation methods and iron tools were introduced, so that each unit area of land could produce much more. Particular areas of the cities became known for specific handicrafts. In strong contrast to the Hui people, who will be discussed below, the Uygurs were not especially noted for their commercial abilities, but with the expansion and specialization of the economy, markets and commercial activities proliferated.[44]

Despite these advances, many Uygurs regarded the imposition of Qing rule as an onslaught on their traditional way of life. One authority has suggested that, even though Qing authority was solidly ensconced in eastern Turkestan by 1814, peasants, artisans and religious authorities alike 'believed in the ultimate illegitimacy and impermanence of the idolaters' dominion'.[45] In other

words, their religion gave them a distinct sense of identity, though it may not have occurred to them to use such a term. In 1815, a rebellion of the Kirgiz people broke out against the Qing garrison troops, but it failed to gain popular support and was quickly suppressed. In 1820, a rebellion broke out against the Qing, led by the Uygur Jehangir. It was defeated early in 1828, and its leader was seized and taken to Beijing for execution by dismemberment later the same year. In 1830, his elder brother raised the standard of opposition to the Qing once again and a series of small- and large-scale revolts erupted in the area over the next several decades. The western Muslim regions have been described as 'the most rebellious territory' in the Qing Empire in the nineteenth century.[46] Given the scope and number of uprisings in China at that time, the statement is saying a great deal.

By far the most important of these rebellions was that of Yakub Beg, which shook the western Uygur and other Muslim regions of China from the mid-1860s until early 1878. After many military successes and victory in a power struggle among his own Muslims, Yakub Beg proclaimed himself Amir of Kashgaria in 1867, with his court in Yarkant. The Qing dynasty was already in serious decline and wracked by rebellion in other parts of China. It was not obvious to the court that the restoration of Chinese control over this area was worth the expense and trouble it would undoubtedly cause. The main advocate of reconquest was Zuo Zongtang who, since the late 1860s, had been active in the suppression of Muslim rebellion further east, in Gansu and Shaanxi. By early 1876, Zuo Zongtang had obtained court approval for a loan to finance his campaign, half the money coming through the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation and half from China itself. In the event, Zuo Zongtang's military conquest proved bloody, but successful. Yakub Beg's khanate was defeated, and he himself committed suicide in May 1877. After several months, Zuo Zongtang's troops completed the conquest of the region.

Once the British had become convinced that Yakub Beg's power would last, they began to court him actively. At the end of 1868, Robert Shaw, whom one authority describes as 'at once a government agent, a tea planter, a would-be trader, and a daring traveler',[47] actually visited Yarkant. The following year, Yakub Beg sent an envoy to India, whom the British received warmly in the hope that they could create a buffer against Russia in the region. In February 1874, Yakub Beg reached an agreement with the

British envoy Sir Douglas Forsyth that Britain would be allowed trading commissioners and consulates within his territory in return for official recognition of Yakub Beg as Amir of Kashgaria. Even though the British contributed towards the loan which financed Zuo Zongtang's campaign against Yakub Beg, they were very doubtful that it would succeed. In 1876, the British Minister in Beijing, Sir Thomas Wade, suggested to the Qing court that Yakub Beg would surrender if he were allowed to keep his khanate under Chinese suzerainty.[48] Yakub Beg sent his nephew and chief adviser to London to seek British help against Zuo Zongtang's military campaign. On 7 July 1877, nine days before it found out about Yakub Beg's death, the British Foreign Office was still suggesting to the Chinese Minister in London, Guo Songtao, that Yakub Beg should be allowed to retain control over the territory the British thought he was still holding.[49]

As early as 1868, Yakub Beg had also approached St Petersburg for support, but the Russians were quite cold towards him. There were two main reasons for their attitude. One was that Yakub Beg had begun his career in Russian Turkestan and fought against them actively before moving to China. They were afraid that, if he prospered, his strong Muslim state could eventually be turned not only against China, but against Russia as well. The other reason was that the Russians were doing quite well in gaining concessions from the Qing court and had no wish to risk alienating Beijing. In July 1871, Russian troops occupied Yili near the Russian border and told the Qing court that they would stay there until Qing forces re-established effective control over the region. At the same time, the Russians did what they could to preserve their commercial and other interests in the region. Although the Russians did eventually return Yili to China in March 1882, it was at considerable cost to the Qing court in terms of money, territory, and humiliation.

Shortly after the Qing conquest of the Muslim frontier regions in the mid-eighteenth century, the Qianlong Emperor had begun sponsoring official compilations about the territories. Quite a few scholars visited the region, either for research or because they were exiled there. By the early nineteenth century, frontier studies had become very fashionable among scholars in China. In 1820, Gong Zizhen (1792–1841) wrote an article proposing that the western regions be made into a province.[50] He advocated large-scale migration of destitute peasants from China's south-east, where he

believed the land was already overpopulated and unable to sustain further development. A number of other writers followed this line of thinking, among whom Wei Yuan (1794–1856) is the best known. As early as 1776, Qianlong had issued an Imperial Edict by which migrants to the western regions would be given a subsidy, and some had taken up the offer. However, in general the court did little about the proposals from Gong Zizhen and others. Later on, Yakub Beg's rebellion and the Russian seizure of Yili demonstrated the disastrous potential of an unstable border. Zuo Zongtang took up the cause and repeatedly urged the Qing government to convert the frontier region into a regular province. Finally, the court agreed, and on 17 November 1884 the region was formally made into a province with the name Xinjiang, meaning 'new frontier'. Nothing could signify more clearly the immense importance the government attached to the western frontier than that this territory should be given such a title, a name it retains to this day.

By the end of the century, the government of this new province had faced two crises. One was over a major Muslim rebellion in Gansu in 1895–6, which the Xinjiang government succeeded in preventing from spreading to Xinjiang. However, the relative peace and prosperity of Xinjiang by that time drew quite a few Muslim refugees from Gansu to Xinjiang. The other crisis concerned Anglo-Russian rivalry in Xinjiang, in particular over territory in the Pamirs in the far west where it met Kashmir, Afghanistan, and Khokand, the last of which Russia had annexed in 1876. This was settled through an agreement between the two powers in 1895 made at China's expense and in which China took no part. The crisis over the Pamirs led to a call in Xinjiang itself for greater protection of China's boundaries. The new provincial administrators could claim to be even more eager in the defence of China's national integrity than the central government. In general, China was very weak at this time. The central government was preoccupied with another crisis incomparably more important for the country as a whole, namely the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–5, which ended in disastrous defeat for China. Against this background, Xinjiang was not doing too badly in the 1890s.

Yet the forging of a province did not cancel age-old regional divisions in Xinjiang. It is likely that, apart from the population's adherence to Islam, the highest level of group identity there until the twentieth century was local, not ethnic.[51] According to one

authority, the new province was made up of three geographical areas which had been disunited prior to the imposition of Qing rule and differed in their attitude towards the Chinese. These were the regions from Turpan and east, roughly the eastern part of Xinjiang; the Tarim Basin in the south; and Jungaria in the north. The first had been the only region to experience a degree of Chinese political control during the Ming dynasty and 'remained generally loyal to the Chinese polity'. The Tarim Basin, on the other hand, 'proved to be a source of constant Turkic Muslim rebellion and discontent'. The north, which included the Yili Valley, was itself divided. After the military campaigns of 1755 and onwards had destroyed the Jungar Mongols, the area had been resettled by Hui and other agriculturalists from further east, who tended to be loyal to China, as well as by Uygurs from the Tarim Basin 'who came increasingly under the influence of the expanding Russian Empire'.[52] Another people who settled this area, the Kazaks, are discussed in more detail in the next section.

Immigrant Nationalities

There are quite a few peoples the ancestors of whom migrated from a territory now outside China's borders to one inside them, and who may consequently be considered immigrant peoples as far as China is concerned. Among those which have migrated into China over the last thousand years or so, three stand out for their importance and the size of their populations: the Hui, the Kazaks, and the Koreans.

In the twentieth century, the major difference between the Hui and the Han is the adherence of the former to Islam, although the Hui are by no means the only Muslim nationality in China. There have been Muslim merchants from Arabia and Persia in China since the seventh century. However, the members of their communities did not intermarry with the Chinese and remained essentially foreign enclaves in several southern Chinese port cities such as Quanzhou and Guangzhou.

During their conquests of the thirteenth century, the Mongols occupied large areas of Muslim Western Asia. They sent many thousands of these Muslims east to China, mainly as soldiers and military scouts, but also as land reclaimers, merchants, and craftsmen. From about the time the Mongols reunited the whole of

China in 1279, the Muslims began to adopt Chinese culture. They married Chinese women, and they began to use Chinese languages. Like the Han Chinese themselves, they were victims of the Mongol occupation, but the Mongol rulers trusted them more than the Han Chinese and quite a few were given official posts at various levels. By the Yuan dynasty, some had already settled for land reclamation purposes in regions as far from the north-west as Yunnan. Although the main concentrations remained in north-western provinces, such as Shaanxi, Gansu, and Qinghai, over the following centuries the Hui spread to a great many parts of China.

During the Yuan dynasty, the term 'Huihui' was used to designate all those non-Chinese from Western and Central Asia. However, by the Ming period, the Muslims referred to themselves as Huihui. They were identifying themselves as a Chinese group and were seen as such by the Han. In this sense, they were no longer immigrants, but a minority nationality of China.[53] At the same time, the Hui adopted many aspects of Chinese culture and became well-integrated with the Han people. Yet, they never abandoned Islam nor the many attitudes and social customs which distinguish Muslims from Han Chinese—among them, belief in a single God, abstention from eating pork, and circumcision. The only part of the original Arabic language which they retained in preference to Chinese was that which they needed for their Islamic religion. They continued to live in special districts, which they reserved for themselves and set apart from people of other nationalities.

The fact that the Hui adopted so many aspects of Chinese culture did not prevent the growth of a very strong tradition of mutual contempt, resentment, and hatred between the Hui and Han. On the Chinese side, it is likely that these hostile feelings date back as far as the Yuan, when the Muslim newcomers were often in positions of authority over the Han Chinese in the latter's own country. The fervent Islam of the Hui enabled them to look down on the unbelieving Han Chinese. According to one contemporary writer, the contempt which Muslims felt for the Chinese was so deep-seated that, when a Chinese became converted to Islam, 'it was customary in many parts of China to have him eat crude soda to obtain internal purification'.[54] If a Hui married a Han Chinese, it was necessary for the latter to convert to Islam.

The tradition of rebellion which the Hui share with most of China's other nationalities dates back to the seventeenth century.

The early Qing saw a large-scale Hui rebellion in Gansu aimed at restoring the Ming dynasty, and there were Hui uprisings in the 1780s. From 1855 to 1872, the Hui rebel leader Du Wenxiu held Dali in western Yunnan—which is actually the heartland of the Bai minority, not that of the Hui—and was able to set up a sultanate there. In its heyday it controlled the western half of Yunnan province, but at the end of 1872 Qing troops retook Dali and Du Wenxiu was executed on 26 December.

The most serious of the Hui rebellions was that from 1862 to 1877, which engulfed much of north-west China, especially Shaanxi and Gansu, including what is today Ningxia. It espoused a militant, revivalist, and millenarian form of Islam known as the New Sect. This rebellion came after the movement of the anti-Qing rebel Taiping and Nian troops into Shaanxi in 1862. In fighting against them, the Qing forces burned down Hui villages and carried out a massacre of Hui and Han in Xi'an, capital of Shaanxi, sparking off the rebellion.

The main leader of the Hui was Ma Hualong, who focused his activities on Jinjibao, just east of the Yellow River in what was then Gansu but is now Ningxia. A campaign by Zuo Zongtang succeeded in 'pacifying' Shaanxi by 1869. Troops loyal to Zuo began their attack on Jinjibao in September 1869, but encountered extremely fierce resistance and did not actually retake Ma Hualong's rebel stronghold until January 1871. Ma Hualong was executed on 2 March 1871. By the end of 1873, the whole of Gansu was retaken. As we saw earlier, Zuo Zongtang had still to cope with Muslim rebellion further west in Xinjiang. The cost of the rebellion in Shaanxi and Gansu was horrific in both human and material terms. Both provinces were devastated, and the Hui suffered catastrophic population losses.[55]

Despite this appallingly bleak side of relations between Han and Hui, the Hui made a significant economic contribution to China with their commercial skills, one of their most notable characteristics from as early as the Yuan. They ran enterprises selling furs, pelts, and various foodstuffs, such as melons, vegetables, salt, and meat (beef and mutton, but not pork). They undoubtedly played an important role in China's development from a self-sufficient economy towards commodity production and, eventually, to a higher-level commodity economy. One contemporary PRC scholar claims that 'the commercial capital of the Hui nationality played an active role in the sprouts of Chinese capitalism'.[56] He also

suggests that, by carrying on trade between China and other countries, especially those of South-East Asia and the Muslim world, 'Hui commerce gave an impetus to economic and cultural exchange between China and foreign countries', thereby enhancing international friendship.[57]

Another Muslim nationality, the Kazaks, is noted not for commerce, but for their pastoral skills. The Kazaks were a subject people of the Mongol empire and herded their flocks over a wide area of Inner Asia. The Kazaks came into contact with the Chinese government when the Qing rulers conquered Jungaria in the middle of the eighteenth century and annihilated the Jungar Mongols. They accepted the domination of the Manchus and began sending tribute missions to the Beijing court. The Kazaks had suffered greatly at the hands of the Jungars and were quite happy to see them defeated.

The Kazaks wanted access to the pastures of Jungaria, which the destruction of the Jungars had left vacant. Initially, the Qing court tried to prevent this, preferring instead to bring in agriculturalists and Mongols who had opposed the Jungar confederation. This policy lasted for about a century, but was not ultimately successful. In the second half of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth, Kazaks migrated into Jungaria or northern Xinjiang on a large scale. The change was due mainly to the weakening of the Qing dynasty, but also coincided with the Russian expansion to the west of Jungaria. Alma Ata, later to become the capital of Kazakhstan, was founded in 1854, and the temporary seizure of Yili by the Russians has already been noted. To this day, by far the most important concentrations of Kazaks in China are in northern Xinjiang, but only about 13 per cent of all Kazaks inhabit China. The overwhelming majority live in Kazakhstan.

The other 'immigrant nationality', the Koreans, stands in sharp contrast to the Hui and Kazaks in many respects, above all because it has no tradition of belief in Islam. Whereas the main concentrations of Hui are in the north-western provinces of China and those of the Kazaks in the far north-west of China's most north-western region, those of the Koreans are, not surprisingly, near Korea itself, in China's north-east. The Koreans and the Kazaks are somewhat more recent immigrants than the Hui.[58]

Although the Mongols had conquered Korea, they never removed the reigning dynasty there. When the Mongol Yuan dynasty was overthrown by the Ming in China in 1368, the Korean dynasty

simply restored an independent Korea. The Yi dynasty, which took power in Korea in 1392, was quite willing to regard its relationship with the Ming dynasty as a tributary one. When the Manchus rose to power to their north in the early seventeenth century, a Korean military leader who had rebelled against the court appealed for help from the Manchus and, when he was defeated, fled with many of his followers to Manchuria. The Manchu court took the cue to send troops into Korea in 1627. Their real aim was to secure the support of the ruling Yi dynasty against the Ming. The Manchus gained a speedy victory and withdrew from Korea, but signed an agreement with the Koreans by which they established a traditional 'elder and younger brother' relationship, confirming their mutual borders at the Yalu River on the west and the Tumen River on the east.[59]

The net result of these events was that, in the first half of the seventeenth century, a small number of Koreans migrated to the Manchu areas which are now part of China. These are the earliest Koreans in China who have left definite and identifiable Korean descendants in twentieth-century China.[60] However, in 1677, the Qing court, which by then had extended its control from Manchuria to China, designated the region just to the north of the Yalu and Tumen Rivers, and that lying between, as its own 'place of origin' and closed the area to anybody who was not a Manchu. Korean immigration ceased.[61]

The first major Korean migration to north-east China began in the 1860s. The principal impetus was a severe famine in the northern part of Korea, which drove many people over the border to China. Most of the Korean immigrants settled in Yanbian, the area just across the border, but some went to other places in the north-east of China. In 1885, the Manchu government designated an area north of the border as a special Korean reclamation zone, thus rescinding the total exclusion policy it had adopted in 1677.[62] This change in attitude caused a further immigration wave from Korea to Yanbian in China. Landlords and the government were both keen to attract peasants from Korea, and there was no dearth of people willing to come.

One specialist has written that the history of the Koreans in China 'is inextricably linked to the development of rice cultivation in the swampy environment of the Yalu and Tumen plains of Jilin province'.[63] Despite the prevalence of frost in Yanbian, they were able by the end of the nineteenth century to develop

paddy rice cultivation to a significant extent. Where land for paddy cultivation became scarce, they planted dry rice fields.

Conclusion

The peoples of greatest concern to the Manchu Qing dynasty were the Manchus and the Han. They also attached considerable importance to the Mongols, Muslims, and Tibetans. Those minorities dwelling in territories which had been Chinese provinces since the Mongol conquest or earlier, including the Zhuang of Guangxi, the Bai of Yunnan, and the Miao and Bouyei of Guizhou, appear to have been regarded as tribal or inferior Han. After all, they were agricultural and sedentary and had undergone Confucian influence. Moreover, they had had many centuries to become assimilated with the Han. The Manchu rulers, who came from the opposite end of China from these peoples, were conscious of them mainly when they rebelled against the government and required suppression. Yet, just like the Mongols, Manchus, and others, they too saw much of their land taken over by Han settlers in the late imperial era. In their case also, it was the Han, not the Manchus, who benefited from the settlements carried out under the aegis of Manchu rule. While it is true that they had undertaken their own rebellions against the Qing dynasty, peasant rebellions were very frequent in the nineteenth century and the ruling classes could easily ignore the ethnic aspect of such rebellions; they certainly could not ignore ethnicity in the case of the Muslim uprisings in Xinjiang and elsewhere.

The other major nationality which the Qing dynasty ignored in its classifications was the Koreans. This minority did not impinge greatly on the consciousness of the Manchu rulers. They caused but little trouble and were not very numerous. They certainly had their own identity and culture, but were strongly influenced by Confucianism, which made the people accept the Chinese state. Although they were not the only immigrants, it was during the Qing dynasty that they settled in China, making them relative latecomers.

Joseph Fletcher has described the first half of the nineteenth century as 'the heyday' of Qing rule in Inner Asia. Yet, three major regions—Tibet, Xinjiang, and Mongolia—fared very differently under the Qing. Tibet retained its own government throughout

and was affected much less by Qing rule than anywhere else in China. Mongolia remained quiet, but in fact declined under Qing rule. Among the three regions, it was Xinjiang which did the best economically. Ironically, this was the region where rebellion against Qing rule was fiercest, mainly because of the influence of Islam on the people of Xinjiang. As Fletcher has observed: 'Their world view challenged the very cornerstone of imperial order: the emperor's ultimate authority. Without being a lamaist the emperor could reign as the legitimate patron of the lamaist church, but he could not, as an unbeliever, have such a role in the Muslim world.'[64]

Yet, it was undoubtedly the century or so after 1750 which solidified Chinese territory, including the border areas which are the home of some of the most culturally powerful minority nationalities. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the central government resisted British influence in Tibet as well as strong attempts against its authority in Xinjiang. With the very significant exception of Outer Mongolia, the territory under Qing rule from the mid-eighteenth century on still remains in essence what the international community recognizes as China.

During this period, China was governed by one of its own minority nationalities, the Manchus. Ironically, however, it was the Han who benefited most from the process of conquest which consolidated Chinese territory and from the central appointment of officials in the minority areas of the south-west. The Manchus themselves became so heavily influenced by the Han that, by the time the Qing dynasty fell, there was not much difference between the two nationalities. The economic, political, and cultural impact of the Han varied from place to place, being weakest in Tibet. Resistance to Han influence likewise varied, being strongest among the Muslims of Xinjiang. Nevertheless, by the end of the nineteenth century, the balance of power between the Han and those minority nationalities which now make up China was far more heavily weighted in favour of the Han than it had been when the Manchus conquered the whole of China in the seventeenth century.