

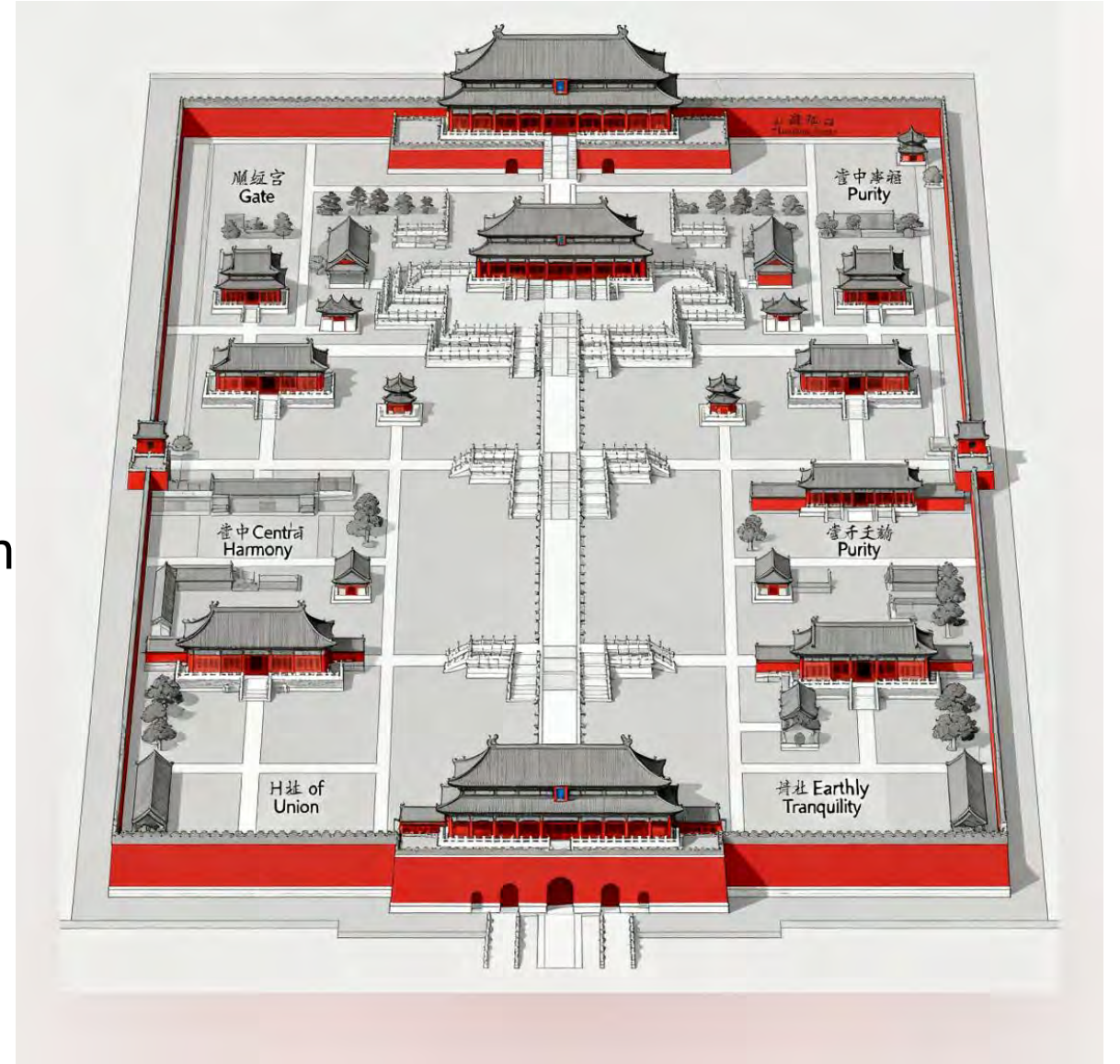


China, from Earliest Times through 20thC

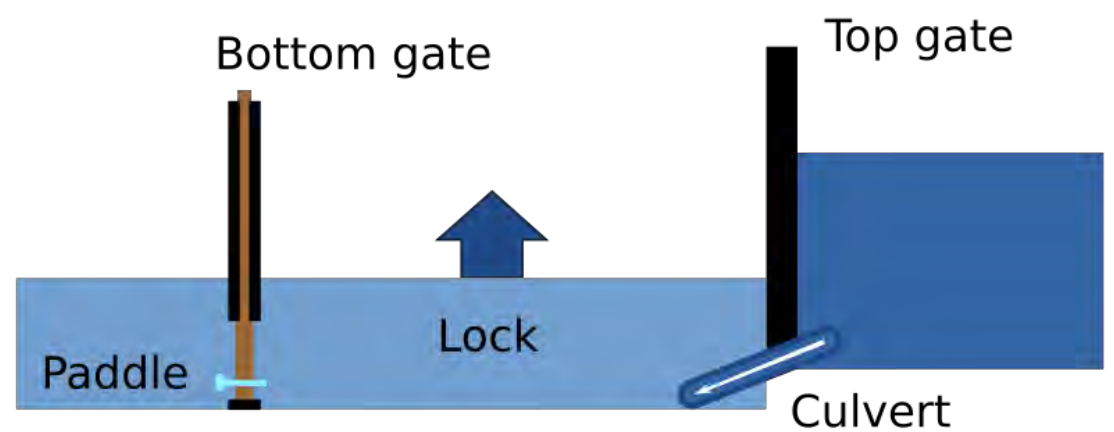
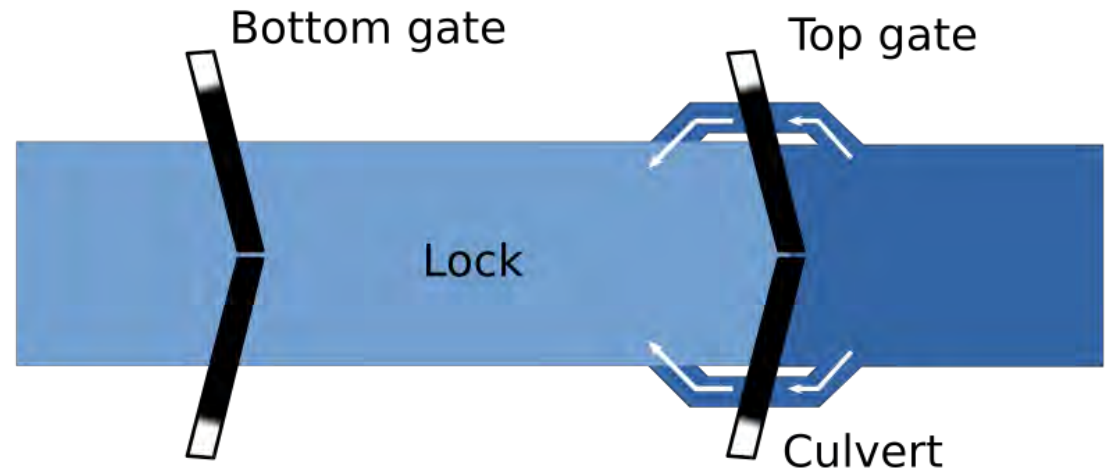
**Fall 2025 Marist CLS
Class Six**

Ming China's Prestige Advances

- The fourth son of **Hongwu**, the founder of the Ming Dynasty, staged a coup over the designated heir and became the **Yongle Emperor**
- Published definitive editions of Confucian classics and a massive encyclopedia
- Led five campaigns into Mongolia between 1410 and 1424
- Built the palace complex in Beijing, with over 9,000 rooms, with a design aligned to Confucian principles
- Rebuilt the Grand Canal
- Pushed into Vietnam and attempted influence in Tibet

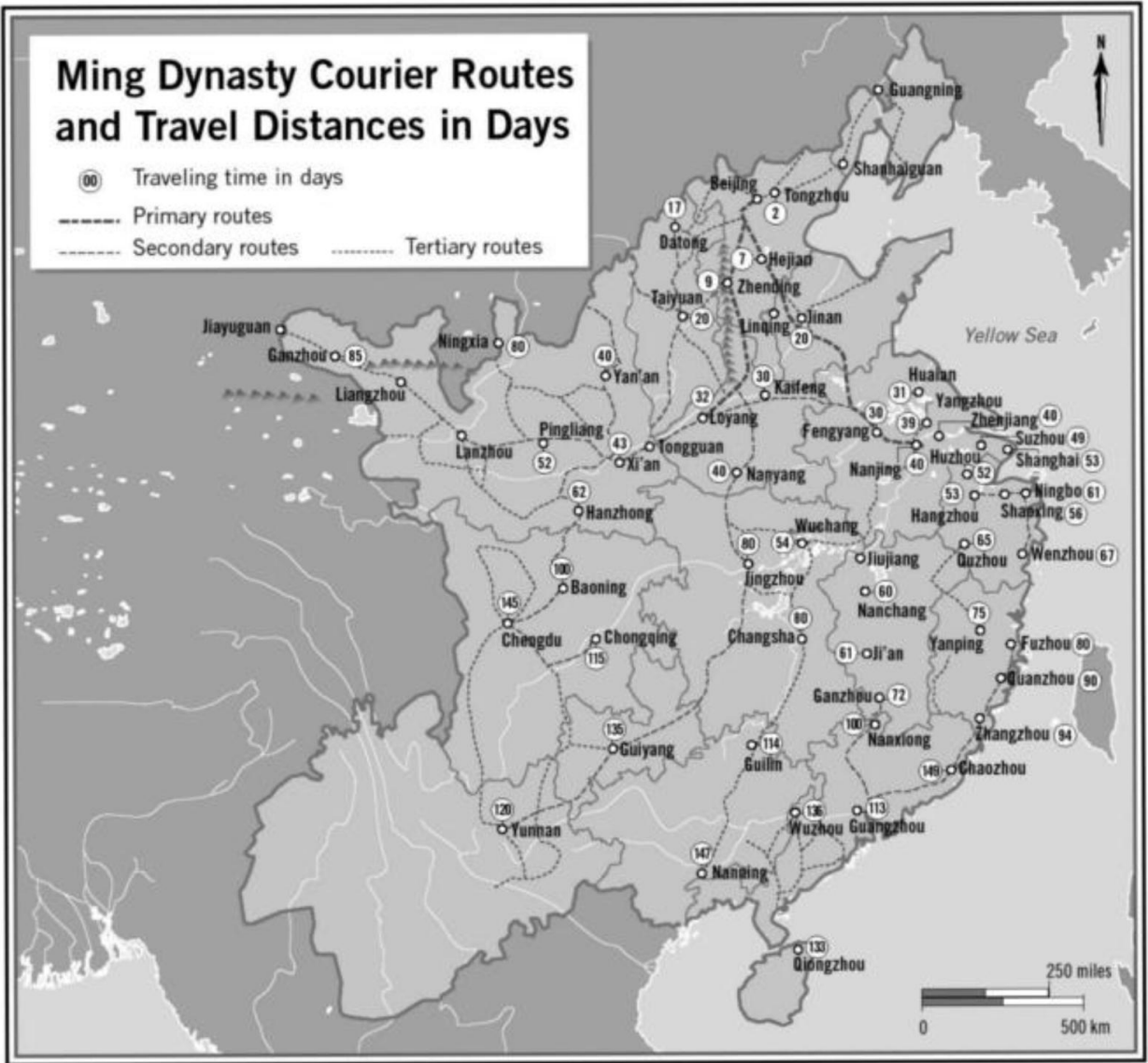


Grand Canal with Pound Lock Details



Ming Dynasty Courier Routes and Travel Distances in Days

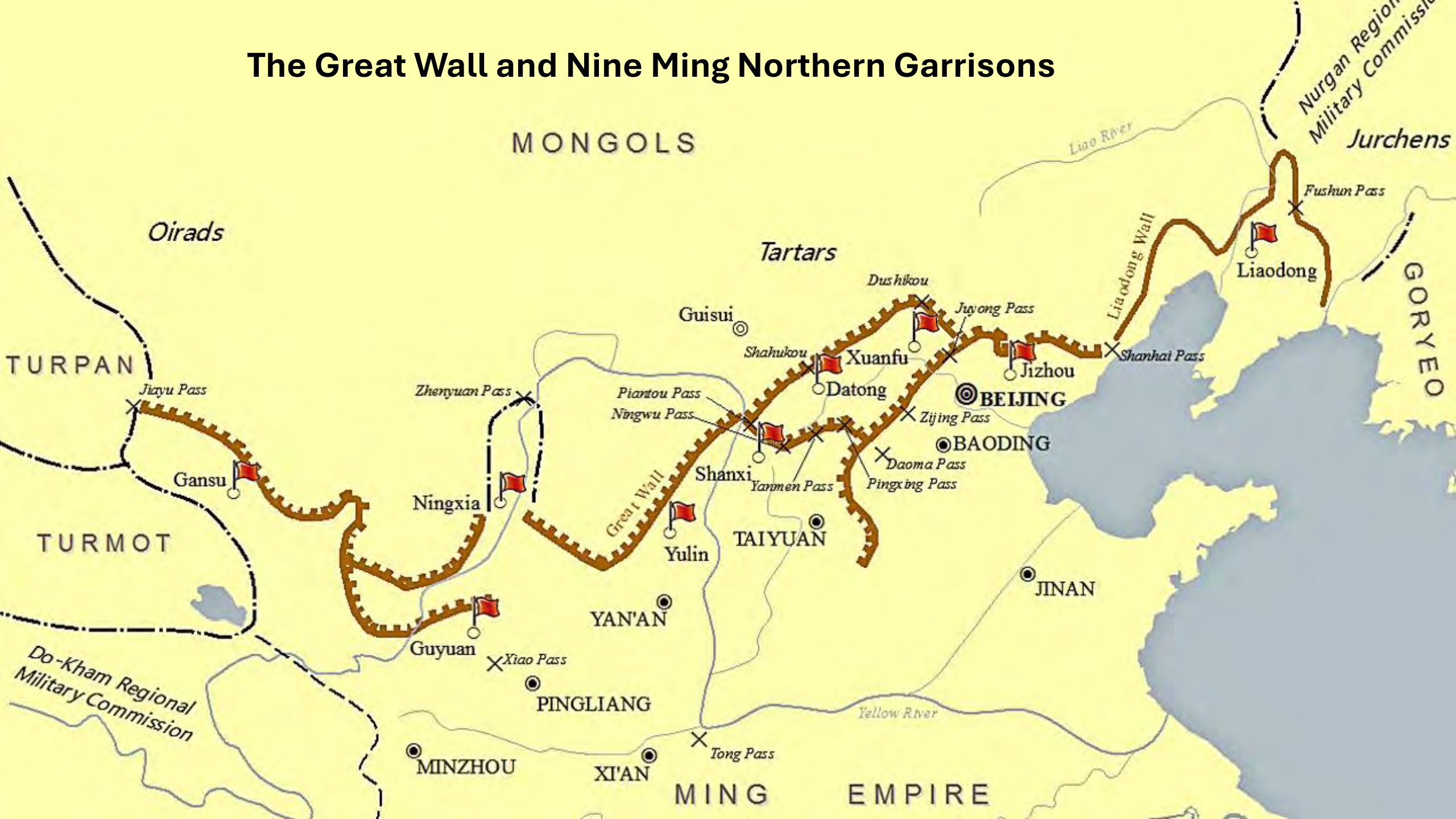
- ⊙ Traveling time in days
- Primary routes
- Secondary routes
- Tertiary routes



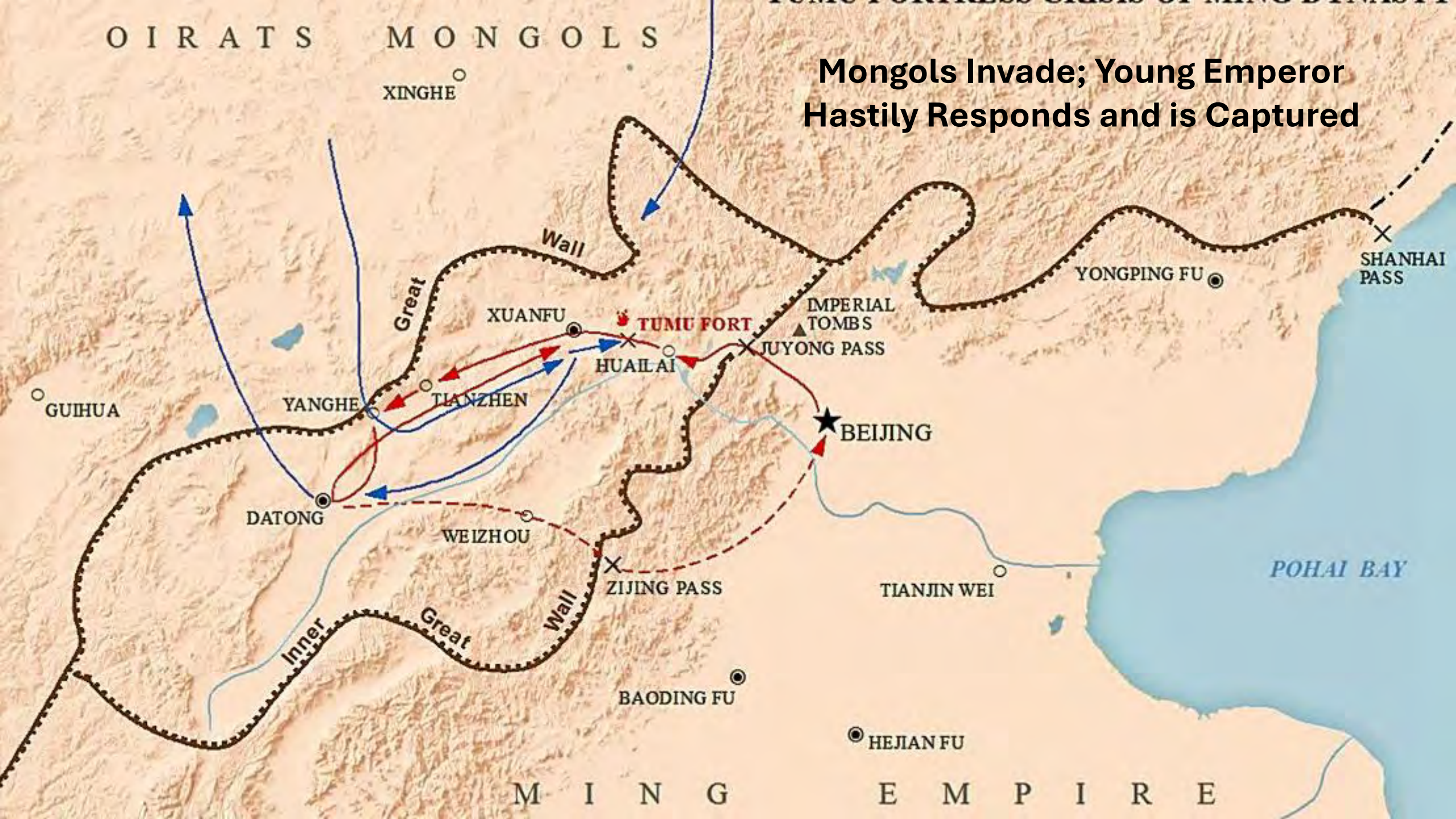
Later Ming Dynasty

- Yongle Emperor's descendants occupied the throne through end of the dynasty
- Emperor Xuanzong ruled from 1426-1436; reorganized government and prioritized military objectives
- However, despite good political judgements and his exceptional artistic talents, his dissolute behavior in court detracted from the dynasty's reputation amongst leading families
- Few of the succeeding emperors were even barely competent
- Palace eunuchs assumed outsized authority during remainder of the Ming

The Great Wall and Nine Ming Northern Garrisons



Mongols Invade; Young Emperor Hastily Responds and is Captured



Several Generations after Admiral Zheng, The Columbian Exchange Moves New Crops, Manufactured Goods and Silver Around the World



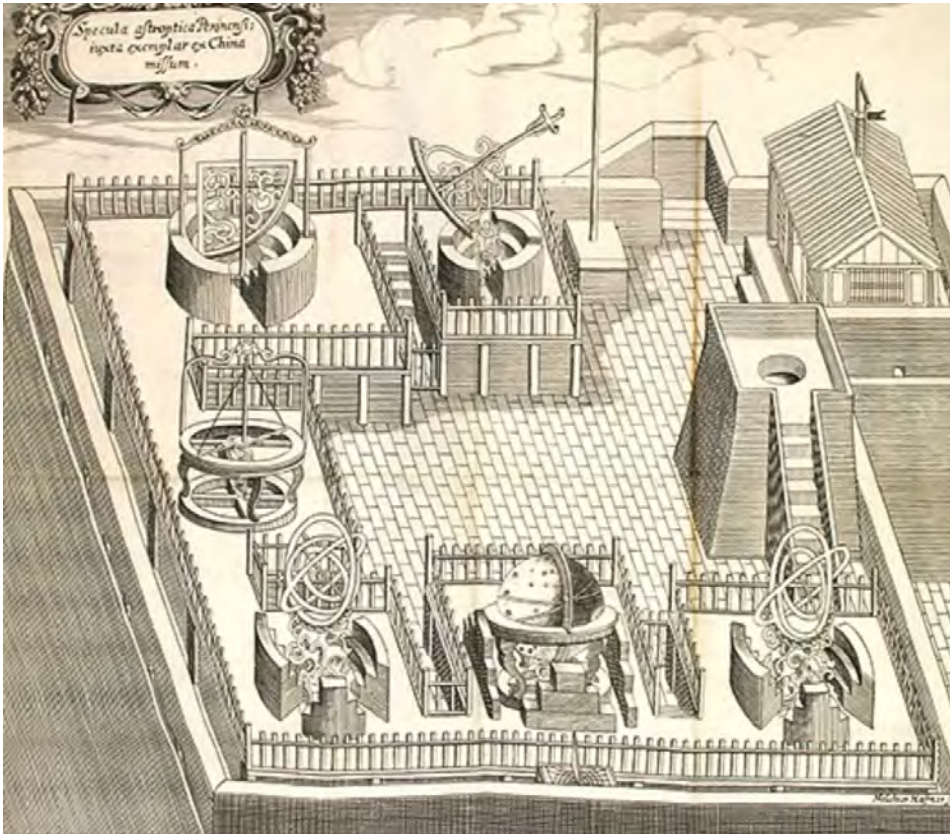
Ming China and the Columbian Exchange

- Potato, sweet potato, tobacco which can flourish on poorer soils, may result in:
 - rapid population growth
 - erosion from deforestation
- Silver flooded into China:
 - About 75% of the silver was produced from the New World; approximately 20% ended in China
 - Rapid inflation
 - Taxes became due in silver, not the common copper coins
 - Foreign influence via silver would cause future economic disasters
- Commerce boomed and population rapidly doubled
- Efforts to suppress banditry failed when the best general was sent to block Manchu threat in Northeast
- **Manchu** forces moved in behind the bandit attack, signaling end of the Ming

Aspects: Ming

- Conservative culture limited adaptability
- Martial resources were expensive, but second-rate; “barbarians against barbarians” tactics failed
- Expansion of population in Beijing strained resources to obtain sufficient rice from the South
- Bloated palace staff muddled governance
- Explosive growth throughout the country required fresh approaches towards minorities and the use of China’s latent naval abilities
- Ming did set new high cultural standards, including the publication of exchanges between Jesuits and the Ming on mathematics, military technology, hydraulics and cartography
- Produced the ever-popular five novels and in many artistic and ceramic styles

The Ming and Challenges of Modernity



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“A Hundred Birds and the Three Friends (三友百禽圖)” by Bian Wenjin

- Combines the grandeur of landscape form with the symbolic flower-and-bird genre and perfectly illustrates the Ming imperial ideal of benevolent and virtuous rule through art
- There were even guides to help the connoisseur of the arts, such as a 1635 book by Liu Tong (c. 1593–1637) that gave advice on how to tell the difference between real and fake works of art
- the Italian Jesuit missionary, Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), who lived in China from 1579 until his death thirty-one years later, reflected on ‘the exceedingly large numbers of books in circulation here and the ridiculously low prices at which they are sold’

Early 17th Century Neighborhood





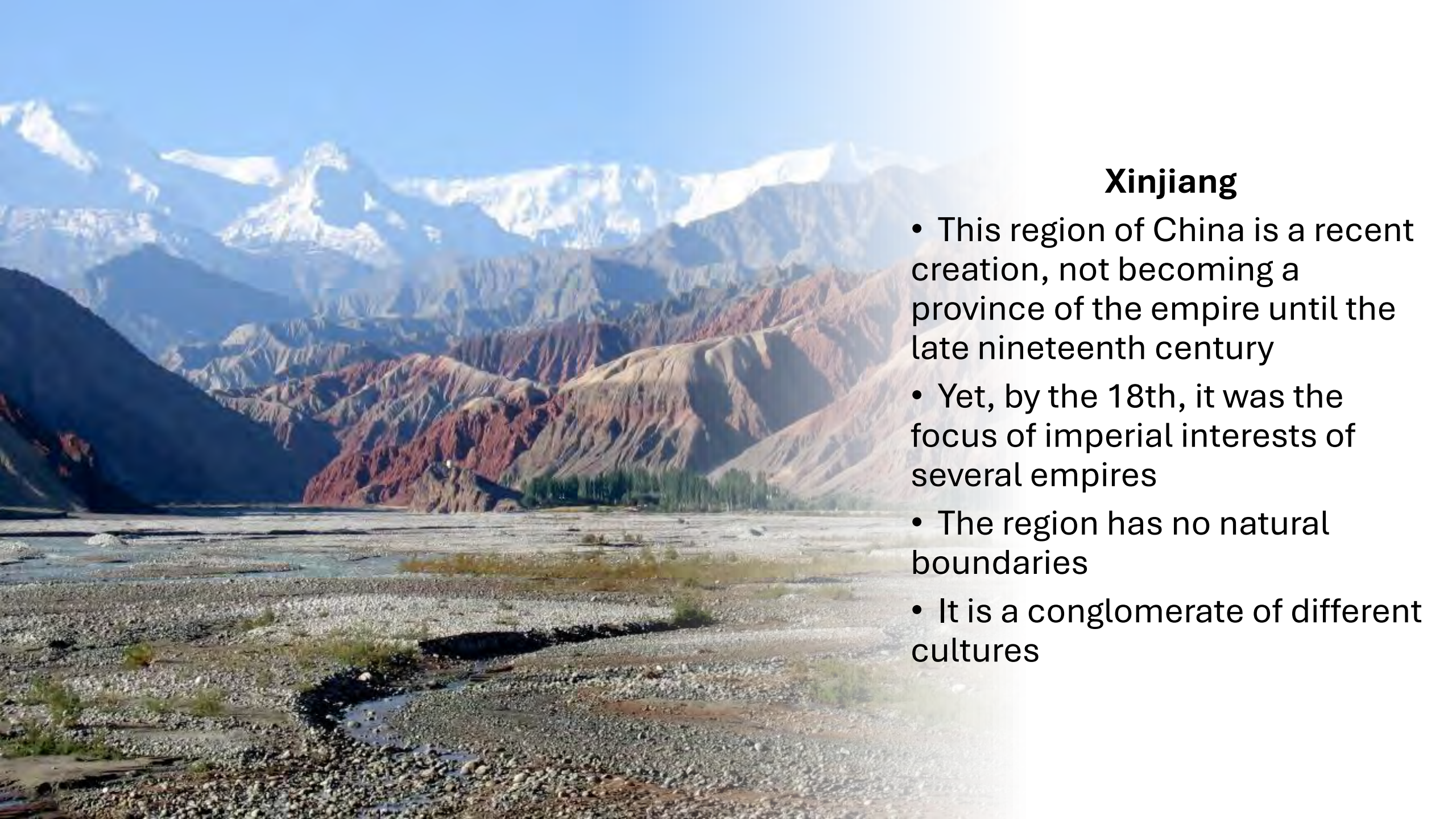
Manchu Soldiers and the Triumph of the Qing Dynasty

- Despite superb horsemanship, Manchus had been settled agriculturalists for generations
- Its leadership had established primacy in 1611 over steppe tribes
- Manchu forces worked under “Banner Troops” method of organization
- Perfected technique of firing an even more powerful **composite** bow than **Mongols** had used
- Despite military might, it took forty years to subdue South China



- First half of Manchu Dynasty saw three strong emperors dominate most of the period
- Expelled Christians
- Conducted “Ten Military Campaigns”
- Responded to currency and related financial pressured with aggressive tax policy towards big landlords
- Administered an efficient government with a minimum of paid bureaucrats
- Women’s status bettered gradually





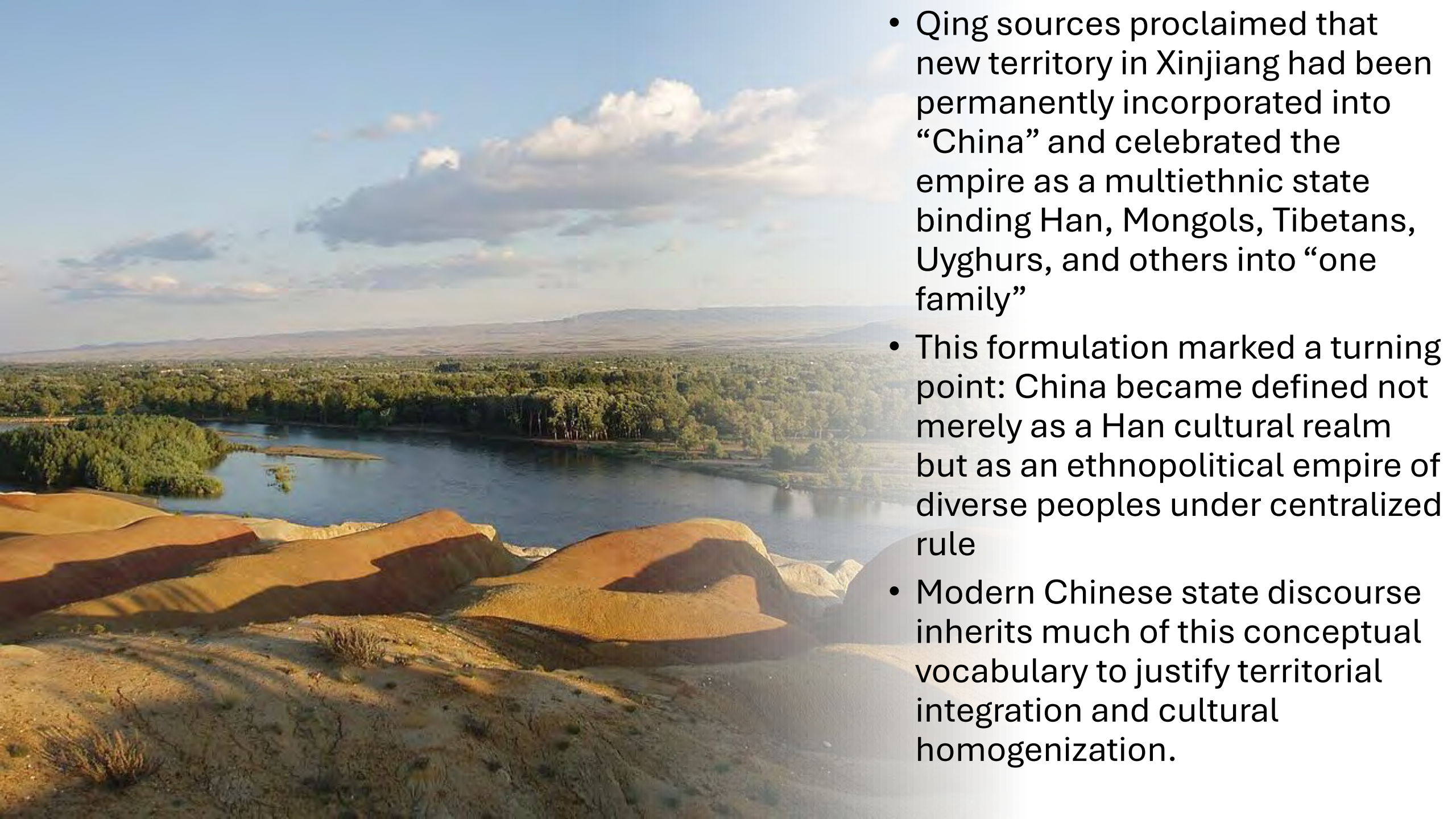
Xinjiang

- This region of China is a recent creation, not becoming a province of the empire until the late nineteenth century
- Yet, by the 18th, it was the focus of imperial interests of several empires
- The region has no natural boundaries
- It is a conglomerate of different cultures

Dzungar Khanate



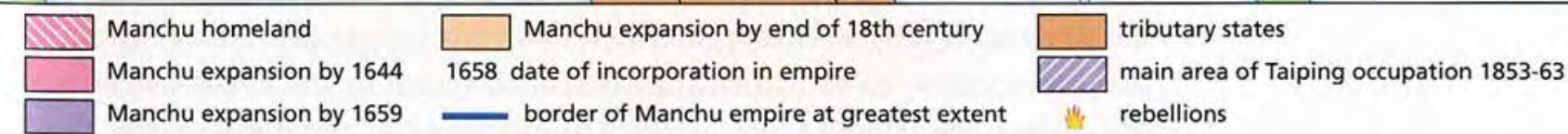
- Last major nomadic empire in Central Asia by early 17th century
- Rivals of the Qing since 1680s
- Succession disputes after death of last strong khan an opportunity for Qing invasion
- Qing ordered massacre of most of Dzungars
- Xinjiang brought under Qing rule



- Qing sources proclaimed that new territory in Xinjiang had been permanently incorporated into “China” and celebrated the empire as a multiethnic state binding Han, Mongols, Tibetans, Uyghurs, and others into “one family”
- This formulation marked a turning point: China became defined not merely as a Han cultural realm but as an ethnopolitical empire of diverse peoples under centralized rule
- Modern Chinese state discourse inherits much of this conceptual vocabulary to justify territorial integration and cultural homogenization.



Imperialism by China and Foreign Powers





Aspects: Qing

- More than most dynasties, the Qing mastered the military and civil balance
- However, it forever antagonized Han with the que hairstyle; by early 19thC this would imperil its rule
- Adopted radical but achievable solutions for adjacent foreign enemies in first half of rule, when faced with competition from Britain and Russia; this success would fade in the later era
- Manchu expansion into Central Asian territories that comprise modern China's claim to Tibet and the area later known as Xinjiang set the basic outlines of modern China

Qing Dynasty Cultural Assumptions

- From the beginning in 1644, men could “Lose their head and keep their hair or Lose their hair and keep their head”
- Women were discouraged from foot binding
- But both Manchu identifiers were rejected (inwardly or not) by ethnic Han
- Attempt to unify backfired



End of Formal Presentation