The Rise of the Manchus

Ming Dynasty 明: 1368 - 1644
- Wanli Emperor 萬曆 (1572-1620)
- Tianqi Emperor 天啟 (1621-1627)
- Chongzhen Emperor 崇禎 (1628-1644)
(Southern Ming): 1644 – 1662 (ruins court of Ming loyalists)

Late Ming Rebels:
Zhang Xianzhong 張獻忠 (1605-1647); leads a destructive rebellion in the region of Sichuan in the 1640s; conducts class warfare against the gentry; greatly depopulates the province of Sichuan; finally defeated by Qing troops.

Li Zicheng 李自成 (1606-1645); a laid-off post-station groom who launches a peasant rebellion against the Ming from his power base in Shaanxi in 1639; succeeds in taking the capital in Beijing unopposed in 1644; establishes the short-lived Shun Dynasty; eventually defeated by the former Ming general Wu Sangui and Manchu troops.

Shun Interregnum 大順: 25 April 1644 - 5 June 1644
Qing Dynasty 清: 1644 - 1911 (ruled by the Manchus, a tribal people whose homeland lies to the northeast of Ming China; considered themselves the successors to the Jurchen Jin dynasty [1115-1234])
- Nurhaci 努爾哈赤 (1559-1626): begins to consolidate territory and set up the Manchus as a dynastic power; takes on the dynastic title of the Later Jin in 1616.
- Hong Taiji 洪太極 (1592-1643; r. 1626-1643): eighth son of Nurhaci; khan/emperor of the Manchus after the death of Nurhaci; extends Manchu rule throughout the Liaodong Peninsula; makes a concerted effort to win Chinese advisors to his empire-building project.
- Dorgon 多爾袞 (1612-1650): Manchu military leader; younger half-brother of Hong Taiji; acts as regent for the boy Shunzhi Emperor; responsible for the campaign that takes the former Ming capital in Beijing.
- Dodo 多鐸 (1614-1649): Brother of Dorgon; leading prince and commander of the Qing conquest armies; responsible for “pacifying” the Yangzi River delta region; sanction the massacre of yangzhou.
- Shunzhi Emperor 順治 (1644-1661)

Manchu terms & names:
- niru (arrow), squads of ten men used in hunting expeditions; later expanded to 300 men; used as the basis for organizing Manchu military and administrative life. Become the basis of the Eight Banners. Eight Manchu banners created in 1615; eventually an additional eight banners are added for Mongol companies in 1635 and for Han companies in 1642, for a total of 24 banners. The banners were color coded – red, blue, yellow & white (with & without borders).
- beile – Manchu princes.
- Hada – name of the Jurchen tribe recognized by the Ming court between 1552-1582.
- Aisin Gioro – name of the Manchu imperial clan.
Hong Chengchou 洪承疇 (1593-1665): turncoat Ming official. Captured in the battle at Jinzhou in 1641. After surrendering to the Manchu side, he becomes instrumental in helping to model the Qing bureaucracy in imitation of Ming institutional structures.

Wei Zhongxian 魏忠賢 (1568-1627); a powerful eunuch who dominates the court between 1620 & 1627; gains influence over the emperor via association with the emperor's former wet-nurse; terrorizes and persecutes his political enemies, especially the Donglin scholars.

Wu Sangui 吳三桂; general under the Ming; first sides with Li Zicheng's rebels; then allies with the Manchu troops, paving the way for their entry into the city of Beijing and establishment of the Qing Dynasty; in 1673 Wu launches a rebellion against the Qing, which is suppressed by 1681.

Chen Yuanyuan 陳圓圓: The consort of Wu Sangui; held hostage by Li Zicheng's troops to try and leverage Wu Sangui's support for the Shun regime. In popular legend, this is given as the cause for Wu Sangui's alliance with the Manchus.

Yuan Chonghuan 袁崇煥 (1584-1630): Ming civil official; takes initiative to beef up Ming defenses along the northeastern border of China; becomes the victim of Ming factional politics; persecuted by Wei Zhongxian; eventually executed at the command of the Chongzhen Emperor on suspicion of conspiracy; his death is a boon to the Manchu victory.

Place names:
Dalinghe 大凌河
Fushun 撫順
Jehol/Rehe 熱河
Jinzhou 錦州
Liaodong Peninsula 遼東
Ningyuan 寧遠
Shanhaiguan 山海關 (Shanhai Pass)
Shenyang 沈陽