Chapter 26

Civilizations in Crisis: The Ottoman Empire, the Islamic Heartlands, and Qing China (1750-1914)
Response to the West

Visual Source Documents 1–3

Document 1
Cartoons by Punch

Document 2

Document 3 →

The Granger Collection, New York
What Were Sources of Stress in the Muslim World?

- By the 1700s, all three Muslim empires were in decline.
- In the 1700s and early 1800s, reform movements sprang up across the Muslim world. Most stressed religious piety and strict rules of behavior.
- The old Muslim empires faced western imperialism.
The Ottoman Empire

- After Suleiman I died in 1566 the Sultanate was weakened by palace rivalry and intrigue.
- In 1683, when the Ottomans failed to take Vienna for the second time, it became clear that the Ottoman Empire had started on a gradual decline.
- The Ottomans had not improved their military technology and tactics since 1453 when they used cannons to batter the walls of Constantinople.
- German and Polish reinforcements came to the aid of the besieged Austrians and repelled the Turks.
- Venice, Poland, and Austria, backed by Pope Innocent XI, created a new “Holy League” to force the Ottoman retreat from the Danube basin and ultimately the Balkan peninsula.
- Russia went to war with the Ottomans to gain territory from Mehmed IV’s tributary ruler, the Tatar Khan of the Crimea.
- These events marked the start of 35 years of near continuous warfare in the regions.
Siege of Vienna
Part of the Great Turkish War and Ottoman-Hapsburg Wars

Battle of Vienna on 11 September 1683
Problems in the Ottoman Empire

- A series of weak rulers opened the way for power struggles between rival ministers, religious experts, and the commanders of the Janissary corps, which had become an elite faction.

- Provincial officials and local land-owning classes cheated the Sultan out of taxes due him, while skimming revenue from already impoverished peasants.

Janissaries marching into battle with the Mehter martial tunes played by the Mehterân military band. Ottoman miniature painting, from the *Surname-i Vehbi* (1720) at the Topkapı Palace Museum in Istanbul.
The Ottoman Empire in Decline

By the early 1800s, the Ottoman empire faced serious challenges.

- Ambitious pashas, or provincial rulers, had increased their power.
- As ideas of nationalism spread from Western Europe, internal revolts weakened the multiethnic Ottoman empire.
- European states sought to benefit from the weakening of the Ottoman empire by claiming lands under Ottoman control.
- Attempts at westernization by several Ottoman rulers, especially Selim III and Mahmud IV, increased tensions. Many officials objected to changes that were inspired by foreign cultures.
Continued Internal Tensions

- A reform group called the **Young Turks** fought for a constitutional monarchy and eventually overthrew the sultan.

- They held off the collapse of the empire by winning last-grasp military victories and playing the hostile European countries off each other during WWI.

- Nationalist tensions triggered a brutal **genocide** of the Armenians, a Christian people in the eastern mountains of the empire in the 1890s by Turkish nationals, who accused the Armenians of supporting the Russians against the Ottomans.

- When Armenians protested oppressive Ottoman policies, the sultan had tens of thousands of them slaughtered.

The first congress of the Ottoman opposition (1902) in Paris
The Mamluks in Egypt

- The Mamluk regime in Egypt was a vassal of the Ottoman Empire.
- Their medieval cavalry suffered crushing defeats to the disciplined French legions led by the talented, young commander Napoleon.
- When the British sank most of the French fleet, Napoleon was forced to abandon his army and sneak back to Paris.
- In the chaos that followed the French withdrawal in 1801, a young Albanian officer named Muhammad Ali emerged as the effective leader of Egypt.
The Modernization of Egypt

Called the “father of modern Egypt,” Muhammad Ali introduced political and economic reforms. Before he died in 1849, he had set Egypt on the road to becoming a major Middle Eastern power.

During his reign, Muhammad Ali:

- improved tax collection
- reorganized the landholding system
- backed large irrigation projects to increase farm output
- expanded cotton production and encouraged local industry, thereby increasing Egyptian participation in world trade
- brought in western military experts to modernize the army
- conquered Arabia, Syria, and Sudan

An 1840 portrait of Muhammad Ali Pasha by Auguste Couder
Interview with Mehmet Ali in his Palace at Alexandria (1839) by David Roberts
Bankruptcy, European Intervention, and Strategies of Resistance

- Despite an increase in cotton production and the growing wealth of land-owners, peasants went hungry.

- Food grains became more expensive and made Egypt dependent on a single export and vulnerable to drastic changes in demand and thus price.

- State revenue was squandered on extravagant leisure pastimes of the elite and ineffective military campaigns and Egypt became indebted to European financers.

- France and Britain funded the building of the Suez Canal and later urged the intervention of their governments militaries when the Egyptian elite could not repay their loans.

- Al-Afghani and Muhammad Abduh stressed the importance of Muslims to borrow scientific learning and technology from the West and revive their earlier capacity to innovate.
Iran and the European Powers

**Russia** wanted to protect its southern frontier and expand into Central Asia.

**Britain** was concerned about protecting its interests in India.

For a time, Russia and Britain each set up their own spheres of influence, Russia in the north and Britain in the south.

The discovery of oil in the region in the early 1900s heightened foreign interest in the region.

Russia and Britain persuaded the Iranian government to grant them **concessions**, or special economic rights given to foreign powers.
“The rays of education are penetrating and shedding their wholesome light inside most Indian homes; hundreds of thousands of Indians are as well educated as any average English gentleman, and we see scores of our countrymen every year crossing the ‘black waters’ to witness with their own eyes the proceedings of the great British Parliament, and personally familiarize themselves with the political institutions of the English nation.”

- Why do you think Lala Lajpat Rai held up the “average English gentleman” as the standard for measuring how well-educated Indians were?

- Do you think that having Indians observe the British Parliament helped or hurt India in its struggle for independence? Did it help or hurt British imperialists who wanted to preserve and expand the British empire?
Prior to the 1800s, Chinese rulers placed strict limits on foreign traders.

- China enjoyed a *trade surplus*, exporting more than it imported.
- Westerners had a *trade deficit* with China, buying more from the Chinese than they sold to them.

In 1842, Britain made China accept the *Treaty of Nanjing*, the first in a series of “unequal treaties” that forced China to make concessions to western powers.

- China paid a huge *indemnity* to Britain.
- The British gained the island of Hong Kong.
- China had to open five ports to foreign trade and grant British citizens in China *extraterritoriality*. 
Internal Problems

By the 1800s, the Qing dynasty was in decline.

- Irrigation systems and canals were poorly maintained, leading to massive flooding of the Huang He valley.
- The population explosion that had begun a century earlier created a terrible hardship for China’s peasants.
- An extravagant court, tax evasion by the rich, and widespread official corruption added to the peasants’ burden.
- The civil service system was rocked by bribery scandals.
- Between 1850 and 1864, peasants took part in the Taiping Rebellion, the most devastating rebellion in history in which 25 million people, many civilians, were killed.
Greatest extent of the Taiping Rebellion
Reform Efforts

- In the 1860s, reformers launched the “self-strengthening movement” in an effort to westernize and modernize China.

- The movement made limited progress because the government did not rally behind it.

- After China was defeated in the Sino-Japanese War, in which the Qing Dynasty and Meiji Japan fought for control of Korea, Emperor Guang Xu launched the Hundred Days of Reform.

- Conservatives soon rallied against the reform effort and the emperor was imprisoned.
Fall of the Qing Dynasty

- As the century ended, anger grew against foreigners in China.

- In the **Boxer Rebellion** (1898-1901), angry Chinese attacked foreigners across China. In response, western powers and Japan crushed the Boxers.

*Military of the Powers during the Boxer Rebellion, with their naval flags, from left to right: Italy, United States, France, Austria-Hungary, Japan, Germany, United Kingdom, Russia. Japanese print, 1900.*
Boxers fighting the Eight-Nation Alliance
(British and Japanese soldiers depicted)
Imperialism in China to 1914

The map illustrates the spheres of influence and areas occupied by various imperial powers in China up to 1914. Key areas include Manchuria, Korea, China, French Indochina, and British India. The map highlights regions occupied by Russia, Japan, and Germany, among others.
Defeat at the hands of foreigners led China to embark on a rush of reforms.

Chinese nationalists called for a constitutional monarchy or a republic.

When Empress Ci Xi died in 1908, China slipped into chaos.

In 1911, revolution toppled the Qing dynasty and established the Chinese Republic.

Sun Yixian was named president of the new Chinese republic. Sun wanted to rebuild China on “Three Principles of the People”: nationalism, democracy, and economic security for all Chinese.
Spheres of Influence in China

French political cartoon from the late 1890s. A pie represents "Chine" (French for China) and is being divided between caricatures of Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom, William II of Germany (who is squabbling with Queen Victoria over a borderland piece, whilst thrusting a knife into the pie to signify aggressive German intentions), Nicholas II of Russia, who is eyeing a particular piece, the French Marianne (who is diplomatically shown as not participating in the carving, and is depicted as close to Nicholas II, as a reminder of the Franco-Russian Alliance), and the Meiji Emperor of Japan, carefully contemplating which pieces to take. A stereotypical Qing official throws up his hands to try and stop them, but is powerless. It is meant to be a figurative representation of the Imperialist tendencies of these nations towards China during the decade.
Response to the West

Visual Source Documents 5–7

Section 3

Bell Work

Document 5

Document 6

Document 7