

Chinas Last Empire History Of Imperial China

The Tang dynasty is often called China's "golden age," a period of commercial, religious, and cultural connections from Korea and Japan to the Persian Gulf, and a time of unsurpassed literary creativity. Mark Lewis captures a dynamic era in which the empire reached its greatest geographical extent under Chinese rule, painting and ceramic arts flourished, women played a major role both as rulers and in the economy, and China produced its finest lyric poets in Wang Wei, Li Bo, and Du Fu.

The reign of Emperor Jiaqing (1796-1820 CE) has occupied an awkward position in studies of China's last dynasty, the Qing. Conveniently marking a watershed between the prosperous eighteenth century and the tragic post-Opium War era, this quarter century has nevertheless been glossed over as an unremarkable interlude separating two well-studied epochs of transformation. *White Lotus Rebels and South China Pirates* presents a major reassessment of this period by examining how the emperors, bureaucrats, and foreigners responded to the two crises that shaped the transition from the Qianlong to the Jiaqing reign. Wensheng Wang argues that the dramatic combination of internal uprising and transnational piracy, rather than being a hallmark of inexorable dynastic decline, propelled the Manchu court to reorganize itself through modifications in policymaking and bureaucratic structure. The resulting Jiaqing reforms initiated a process of state retreat that pulled the Qing Empire out of a cycle of aggressive overextension and resistance, and back onto a more sustainable track of development. Although this pragmatic striving for political sustainability was unable to save the dynasty from ultimate collapse, it represented a durable and constructive approach to the compounding problems facing the late Qing regime and helped sustain it for another century.

"Chronicles reforms, revolutions, and wars through the lens of institutions, often rebutting Western impressions...[And] warns against thinking of China's economic success as proof of a unique path without contextualizing it in historical specifics." —New Yorker "This thoughtful, probing interpretation is a worthy successor to the famous histories of Fairbank and Spence and will be read by all students and scholars of modern China." —William C. Kirby, coauthor of *Can China Lead?* It is tempting to attribute the rise of China's to recent changes in political leadership and economic policy. But China has had a long history of creative adaptation and it would be a mistake to think that its current trajectory began with Deng Xiaoping. In the mid-eighteenth century, when the Qing Empire reached the height of its power, China dominated a third of the world's population. Then, as the Opium Wars threatened the nation's sovereignty and the Taiping Rebellion ripped the country apart, China found itself verging on free fall. In the twentieth century China managed a surprising recovery, rapidly undergoing profound economic and social change, buttressed by technological progress. A dynamic story of crisis and recovery, failures and triumphs, *Making China Modern* explores the versatility and resourcefulness that has guaranteed China's survival in the past, and is now fueling its future.

China's Last EmpireThe Great QingHarvard University Press

This book explores the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) military, its impact on local society, and its many legacies for Chinese society. It is based on extensive original research by scholars using the methodology of historical anthropology, an approach that has transformed the study of Chinese history by approaching the subject from the bottom up. Its nine chapters, each based on a different region of China, examine the nature of Ming military institutions and their interaction with local social life over time. Several chapters consider the distinctive role of imperial institutions in frontier areas and how they interacted with and affected non-Han ethnic groups and ethnic identity. Others discuss the long-term legacy of Ming military institutions, especially across the dynastic divide from Ming to Qing (1644-1912) and the implications of this for understanding more fully the nature of the Qing rule.

This first book in a six-volume series begins at the creation of an ancient imperial order whose major features would endure for two millennia. It illuminates many formative events in China's long history of imperialism, events whose residual influence can still be discerned today.

To convey modern China's history and the forces driving its economic success, rail has no equal. From warlordism to Cultural Revolution, railroads suffered the country's ills but persisted because they were exemplary institutions. Elisabeth Köll shows why they remain essential to the PRC's technocratic economic model for China's future.

This book is the result of a conference organised by the Contemporary Portuguese Political History Research Centre (CPHRC) and the University of Dundee that took place during September 2000. The purpose of this conference, and the resulting book, was to bring together various experts in the field to analyse and debate the process of Portuguese decolonisation, which was then 25 years old, and the effects of this on the Portuguese themselves. For over one century, the Portuguese state had defined its foreign policy on the basis of its vast empire – this was the root of its 'Atlanticist' vision. The outbreak of war of liberation in its African territories, which were prompted by the new international support for self determination in colonised territories, was a serious threat that undermined the very foundations of the Portuguese state. This book examines the nature of this threat, how the Portuguese state initially attempted to overcome it by force, and how new pressures within Portuguese society were given space to emerge as a consequence of the colonial wars. This is the first book that takes a multidisciplinary look at both the causes and the consequences of Portuguese decolonisation – and is the only one that places the loss of Portugal's Eastern Empire in the context of the loss of its African Empire. Furthermore, it is the only English language book that relates the process of Portuguese decolonisation with the search for a new Portuguese vision of its place in the world. This book is intended for anyone who is interested in regime change, decolonisation, political revolutions and the growth and development of the European Union. It will also be useful for those who are interested in contemporary developments in civil society and state ideologies. Given that a large part of the book is dedicated to the process of change in the various countries of the former Portuguese Empire, it will also be of interest to students of Africa. It will be useful to those who study decolonisation processes within the other former European Empires, as it provides comparative detail. The book will be most useful to academic researchers and students of comparative politics and area studies.

A deep and rigorous, yet eminently accessible introduction to the political, social, and cultural development of imperial Chinese civilisation, this volume develops a number of important themes -- such as the ethnic diversity of the early empires -- that other editions omit entirely or discuss only minimally. Includes a general introduction, chronology, bibliography, illustrations, maps, and an index.

The first comprehensive study of China's economic development across 3,000 years of history to be published in English.

China is one of the oldest states in the world. It achieved its approximate current borders with the Ascendancy of the Yuan dynasty in the 13th century, and despite the passing of one Imperial dynasty to the next, it has maintained them for the eight centuries since. Even the European colonial powers at the height of their power could not move past coastal enclaves. Thus, China remained China through the Ming, the Qing, the Republic, the Occupation, and Communism. But, despite the desires of some of the most powerful people in the Great State through the ages, China has never been alone in the world. It has had to contend with invaders from the steppe and the challenges posed by foreign traders and imperialists. Indeed, its rulers for the majority of the last eight centuries have not been Chinese. Timothy Brook examines China's relationship with the world from the Yuan through to the present by following the stories of ordinary and

extraordinary people navigating the spaces where China met and meets the world. Bureaucrats, horse traders, spiritual leaders, explorers, pirates, emperors, invaders, migrant workers, traitors, and visionaries: this is a history of China as no one has told it before.

An award-winning scholar and teacher explores how Shakespeare's greatest characters were built on a learned sense of empathy. While exploring Shakespeare's plays with her students, Paula Marantz Cohen discovered that teaching and discussing his plays unlocked a surprising sense of compassion in the classroom. In this short and illuminating book, she shows how Shakespeare's genius lay with his ability to arouse empathy, even when his characters exist in alien contexts and behave in reprehensible ways. Cohen takes her readers through a selection of Shakespeare's most famous plays, including Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, and The Merchant of Venice, to demonstrate the ways in which Shakespeare thought deeply and clearly about how we treat "the other." Cohen argues that only through close reading of Shakespeare can we fully appreciate his empathetic response to race, class, gender, and age. Wise, eloquent, and thoughtful, this book is a forceful argument for literature's power to champion what is best in us.

The Qing dynasty (1636–1912)—a crucial bridge between "traditional" and "modern" China—was remarkable for its expansiveness and cultural sophistication. This engaging and insightful history of Qing political, social, and cultural life traces the complex interaction between the Inner Asian traditions of the Manchus, who conquered China in 1644, and indigenous Chinese cultural traditions. Noted historian Richard J. Smith argues that the pragmatic Qing emperors presented a "Chinese" face to their subjects who lived south of the Great Wall and other ethnic faces (particularly Manchu, Mongolian, Central Asian, and Tibetan) to subjects in other parts of their vast multicultural empire. They were attracted by many aspects of Chinese culture, but far from being completely "sinicized" as many scholars argue, they were also proud of their own cultural traditions and interested in other cultures as well. Setting Qing dynasty culture in historical and global perspective, Smith shows how the Chinese of the era viewed the world; how their outlook was expressed in their institutions, material culture, and customs; and how China's preoccupation with order, unity, and harmony contributed to the civilization's remarkable cohesiveness and continuity. Nuanced and wide-ranging, his authoritative book provides an essential introduction to late imperial Chinese culture and society.

Chun-shu Chang uses newfound documents to analyze the ways in which political, institutional, social, economic, military, religious, and thought systems developed and changed in the critical period from early China to the Han empire (ca. 1600 B.C. - A.D. 220). In addition to exploring the formation and growth of the Chinese empire and its impact on early nation-building and later territorial expansion, Chang also provides insights into the life and character of critical historical figures such as the First Emperor (221- 210 B.C.) of the Ch'in and Wu-ti (141- 87 B.C.) of the Han, who were the principal agents in redefining China and its relationships with other parts of Asia. As never before, Chang's study enables an understanding of the origins and development of the concepts of state, nation, nationalism, imperialism, ethnicity, and Chineseness in ancient and early Imperial China, offering the first systematic reconstruction of the history of Chinese acquisition and colonization.

The Confucian doctrine of tianxia (all under heaven) outlines a unitary worldview that cherishes global justice and transcends social, geographic, and political divides. For contemporary scholars, it has held myriad meanings, from the articulation of a cultural imaginary and political strategy to a moralistic commitment and a cosmological vision. The contributors to *Chinese Visions of World Order* examine the evolution of tianxia's meaning and practice in the Han dynasty and its mutations in modern times. They attend to its varied interpretations, its relation to realpolitik, and its revival in twenty-first-century China. They also investigate tianxia's birth in antiquity and its role in empire building, invoke its cultural universalism as a new global imagination for the contemporary world, analyze its resonance and affinity with cosmopolitanism in East-West cultural relations, discover its persistence in China's socialist internationalism and third world agenda, and critique its deployment as an official state ideology. In so doing, they demonstrate how China draws on its past to further its own alternative vision of the current international system. Contributors: Daniel A. Bell, Chishen Chang, Kuan-Hsing Chen, Prasenjit Duara, Hsieh Mei-yu, Haiyan Lee, Mark Edward Lewis, Lin Chun, Viren Murthy, Lisa Rofel, Ban Wang, Wang Hui, Yiqun Zhou

An authoritative history of five millennia of Chinese history

In this book, David Bello offers a new and radical interpretation of how China's last dynasty, the Qing (1644–1911), relied on the interrelationship between ecology and ethnicity to incorporate the country's far-flung borderlands into the dynasty's expanding empire. The dynasty tried to manage the sustainable survival and compatibility of discrete borderland ethnic regimes in Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, and Yunnan within a corporatist 'Han Chinese' imperial political order. This unprecedented imperial unification resulted in the great human and ecological diversity that exists today. Using natural science literature in conjunction with under-utilized and new sources in the Manchu language, Bello demonstrates how Qing expansion and consolidation of empire was dependent on a precise and intense manipulation of regional environmental relationships.

Just over a thousand years ago, the Song dynasty emerged as the most advanced civilization on earth. Within two centuries, China was home to nearly half of all humankind. In this concise history, we learn why the inventiveness of this era has been favorably compared with the European Renaissance, which in many ways the Song transformation surpassed. With the chaotic dissolution of the Tang dynasty, the old aristocratic families vanished. A new class of scholar-officials—products of a meritocratic examination system—took up the task of reshaping Chinese tradition by adapting the precepts of Confucianism to a rapidly changing world. Through fiscal reforms, these elites liberalized the economy, eased the tax burden, and put paper money into circulation. Their redesigned capitals buzzed with traders, while the education system offered advancement to talented men of modest means. Their rationalist approach led to inventions in printing, shipbuilding, weaving, ceramics manufacture, mining, and agriculture. With a realist's eye, they studied the natural world and applied their observations in art and science. And with the souls of diplomats, they chose peace over war with the aggressors on their borders. Yet persistent military threats from these nomadic tribes—which the Chinese scorned as their cultural inferiors—redefined China's understanding of its place in the world and solidified a sense of what it meant to be Chinese. *The Age of Confucian Rule* is an essential introduction to this transformative era. "A scholar should congratulate himself that he has

been born in such a time” (Zhao Ruyu, 1194).

A remarkable re-creation of the life of K'ang-hsi, emperor of the Manchu dynasty from 1661-1772, assembled from documents that survived his reign. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index.

As the twenty-first century dawns, China stands at a crossroads. The largest and most populous country on earth and currently the world's second biggest economy, China has recently reclaimed its historic place at the center of global affairs after decades of internal chaos and disastrous foreign relations. But even as China tentatively reengages with the outside world, the contradictions of its development risks pushing it back into an era of insularity and instability—a regression that, as China's recent history shows, would have serious implications for all other nations. In *Restless Empire*, award-winning historian Odd Arne Westad traces China's complex foreign affairs over the past 250 years, identifying the forces that will determine the country's path in the decades to come. Since the height of the Qing Empire in the eighteenth century, China's interactions—and confrontations—with foreign powers have caused its worldview to fluctuate wildly between extremes of dominance and subjugation, emulation and defiance. From the invasion of Burma in the 1760s to the Boxer Rebellion in the early 20th century to the 2001 standoff over a downed U.S. spy plane, many of these encounters have left Chinese with a lingering sense of humiliation and resentment, and inflamed their notions of justice, hierarchy, and Chinese centrality in world affairs. Recently, China's rising influence on the world stage has shown what the country stands to gain from international cooperation and openness. But as Westad shows, the nation's success will ultimately hinge on its ability to engage with potential international partners while simultaneously safeguarding its own strength and stability. An in-depth study by one of our most respected authorities on international relations and contemporary East Asian history, *Restless Empire* is essential reading for anyone wishing to understand the recent past and probable future of this dynamic and complex nation.

As China reclaims its position as a world power, *Imperial Twilight* looks back to tell the story of the country's last age of ascendance and how it came to an end in the nineteenth-century Opium War. As one of the most potent turning points in the country's modern history, the Opium War has since come to stand for everything that today's China seeks to put behind it. In this dramatic, epic story, award-winning historian Stephen Platt sheds new light on the early attempts by Western traders and missionaries to “open” China even as China's imperial rulers were struggling to manage their country's decline and Confucian scholars grappled with how to use foreign trade to China's advantage. The book paints an enduring portrait of an immensely profitable—and mostly peaceful—meeting of civilizations that was destined to be shattered by one of the most shockingly unjust wars in the annals of imperial history. Brimming with a fascinating cast of British, Chinese, and American characters, this riveting narrative of relations between China and the West has important implications for today's uncertain and ever-changing political climate.

This volume explores the history of China between the Mongol reunification of China in 1279 under the Yuan dynasty and the Manchu invasion four centuries later, explaining how climate changes profoundly affected the empire during this period. The Mongol takeover in the 1270s changed the course of Chinese history. The Confucian empire, a millennium and a half in the making, was suddenly thrust under foreign occupation. What China had been before its reunification as the Yuan dynasty in 1279 was no longer what it would be in the future. Four centuries later, another wave of steppe invaders would replace the Ming dynasty with yet another foreign occupation.

In 221 BCE, the Qin state conquered its neighbours and created the first unified Chinese empire in history. So began the imperial era, where dynasties claiming divine assent ruled for more than 2,000 years. Borders shifted and emperors struggled to exert control over every region of their diverse territories. Elites held that they were inheritors of a rich, pre-imperial culture, while their society produced world-changing inventions such as the compass, printing, gunpowder and the gun. And imperial China itself was altered as it came into contact with others through trade, exploration and war. For anyone curious about this fascinating period, Peter Lorge introduces imperial China's major ruling dynasties, religions, arts, thinkers, inventions, military advancements, economic developments and historians.

After the collapse of the Han dynasty, China divided along a north-south line. Lewis traces the changes that underlay and resulted from this split in a period that saw China's geographic redefinition, more engagement with the outside world, significant changes to family life, literary and social developments, and the introduction of new religions.

In this history of China for the 900-year span of the late imperial period, Mote highlights the personal characteristics of the rulers and dynasties and probes the cultural theme of Chinese adaptations to recurrent alien rule. Generational events, personalities, and the spirit of the age combine to yield a comprehensive history of the civilization.

In a brisk revisionist history, William Rowe challenges the standard narrative of Qing China as a decadent, inward-looking state that failed to keep pace with the modern West. This original, thought-provoking history of China's last empire is a must-read for understanding the challenges facing China today.

Remaking the Chinese Empire examines China's development from an empire into a modern state through the lens of Sino-Korean political relations during the Qing period. Incorporating Korea into the historical narrative of the Chinese empire, it demonstrates that the Manchu regime used its relations with Chosŏn Korea to establish, legitimize, and consolidate its identity as the civilized center of the world, as a cosmopolitan empire, and as a modern sovereign state. For the Manchu regime and for the Chosŏn Dynasty, the relationship was one of mutual dependence, central to building and maintaining political legitimacy. Yuanchong Wang illuminates how this relationship served as the very model for China's foreign relations. Ultimately, this precipitated contests, conflicts, and compromises among empires and states in East Asia, Inner Asia, and Southeast Asia – in particular, in the nineteenth century when international law reached the Chinese world. By adopting a long-term and cross-border perspective on high politics at the empire's

core and periphery, Wang revises our understanding of the rise and transformation of the last imperial dynasty of China. His work reveals new insights on the clashes between China's foreign relations system and its Western counterpart, imperialism and colonialism in the Chinese world, and the formation of modern sovereign states in East Asia. Most significantly, *Remaking the Chinese Empire* breaks free of the established, national history-oriented paradigm, establishing a new paradigm through which to observe and analyze the Korean impact on the Qing Dynasty.

What is lost in translation may be a war, a world, a way of life. A unique look into the nineteenth-century clash of empires from both sides of the earthshaking encounter, this book reveals the connections between international law, modern warfare, and comparative grammar--and their influence on the shaping of the modern world in Eastern and Western terms. *The Clash of Empires* brings to light the cultural legacy of sovereign thinking that emerged in the course of the violent meetings between the British Empire and the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911). Lydia Liu demonstrates how the collision of imperial will and competing interests, rather than the civilizational attributes of existing nations and cultures, led to the invention of China, the East, the West, and the modern notion of the world in recent history. Drawing on her archival research and comparative analyses of English--and Chinese--language texts, as well as their respective translations, she explores how the rhetoric of barbarity and civilization, friend and enemy, and discourses on sovereign rights, injury, and dignity were a central part of British imperial warfare. Exposing the military and philological--and almost always translingual--nature of the clash of empires, this book provides a startlingly new interpretation of modern imperial history.

This translation of the introduction to Wang Hui's *Rise of Modern Chinese Thought* (2004) makes part of his four-volume masterwork available to English readers for the first time. A leading public intellectual in China, Wang charts the historical currents that have shaped Chinese modernity from the Song Dynasty to the present day.

This work offers a sweeping re-assessment of the Jiankang Empire (3rd-6th centuries CE), known as the Chinese "Southern Dynasties." It shows how, although one of the medieval world's largest empires, Jiankang has been rendered politically invisible by the standard narrative of Chinese nationalist history, and proposes a new framework and terminology for writing about medieval East Asia. The book pays particular attention to the problem of ethnic identification, rejecting the idea of "ethnic Chinese," and delineating several other, more useful ethnographic categories, using case studies in agriculture/foodways and vernacular languages. The most important, the Wuren of the lower Yangzi region, were believed to be inherently different from the peoples of the Central Plains, and the rest of the book addresses the extent of their ethnogenesis in the medieval era. It assesses the political culture of the Jiankang Empire, emphasizing military strategy, institutional cultures, and political economy, showing how it differed from Central Plains-based empires, while having significant similarities to Southeast Asian regimes. It then explores how the Jiankang monarchs deployed three distinct repertoires of political legitimation (vernacular, Sinitic universalist, and Buddhist), arguing that the Sinitic repertoire was largely eclipsed in the sixth century, rendering the regime yet more similar to neighboring South Seas states. The conclusion points out how the research re-orientes our understanding of acculturation and ethnic identification in medieval East Asia, generates new insights into the Tang-Song transition period, and offers new avenues of comparison with Southeast Asian and medieval European history.

Succeeding the Ming dynasty in 1644, the Qing emperors managed to create one of the largest empires ever to exist in the territories of Asia and the fifth largest empire in the world.

This engaging, deeply informed book provides the first concise history of one of China's most important eras. Leading scholar John W. Dardess offers a thematically organized political, social, and economic exploration of China from 1368 to 1644. He examines how the Ming dynasty was able to endure for 276 years, illuminating Ming foreign relations and border control, the lives and careers of its sixteen emperors, its system of governance and the kinds of people who served it, its great class of literati, and finally the mass outlawry that, in unhappy conjunction with the Manchu invasions from outside, ended the once-mighty dynasty in the mid-seventeenth century. The Ming witnessed the beginning of China's contact with the West, and its story will fascinate all readers interested in global as well as Asian history.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Western scientific interest in China focused primarily on natural history. Prominent scholars in Europe as well as Westerners in China, including missionaries, merchants, consular officers, and visiting plant hunters, eagerly investigated the flora and fauna of China. Yet despite the importance and extent of this scientific activity, it has been entirely neglected by historians of science. This book is the first comprehensive study on this topic. In a series of vivid chapters, Fa-ti Fan examines the research of British naturalists in China in relation to the history of natural history, of empire, and of Sino-Western relations. The author gives a panoramic view of how the British naturalists and the Chinese explored, studied, and represented China's natural world in the social and cultural environment of Qing China. Using the example of British naturalists in China, the author argues for reinterpreting the history of natural history, by including neglected historical actors, intellectual traditions, and cultural practices. His approach moves beyond viewing the history of science and empire within European history and considers the exchange of ideas, aesthetic tastes, material culture, and plants and animals in local and global contexts. This compelling book provides an innovative framework for understanding the formation of scientific practice and knowledge in cultural encounters. Table of Contents: Acknowledgments Introduction I. The Port 1. Natural History in a Chinese EntrepÃ ?t 2. Art, Commerce, and Natural History II. The Land 3. Science and Informal Empire 4. Sinology and Natural History 5. Travel and Fieldwork in the Interior Epilogue Appendix: Selected Biographical Notes Abbreviations Notes Index Fa-ti Fan's study of the encounter between the British culture of the naturalist and the Chinese culture of the Qing is both a delight and a revelation. The topic has scarcely been addressed by historians of science, and this work fills important gaps in our knowledge of British scientific practice in a noncolonial context and of Chinese reactions to Western

science in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition to the culture of Victorian naturalists and Sinology, Fan shows an admirable grasp of visual representation in science, Chinese taxonomic schemes, Chinese export art, British imperial scholarship, and journeys of exploration. His treatment of the China trade and descriptions of Chinese markets and nurseries are especially welcome. I learned a great deal, and I strongly recommend this book. --Philip Rehbock, author of *Philosophical Naturalists: Themes in Early Nineteenth-Century British Biology* By focusing on the experiences of British naturalists in China during a time when it was gradually being opened up to foreign influences, Fan makes at least two important contributions to history of science: He gives us an authoritative study of British naturalists in China (as far as I know the only one of its kind), and he forces us to rethink some of our categories for doing history of science, including how we conceive of the relationship between science and imperialism, and between Western naturalist and native. Fan's scholarship is meticulous, with careful attention to detail, and his prose is clear, controlled, and succinct. --Bernard Lightman, editor of *Victorian Science in Context*

International scholars and sinologists discuss culture, economic growth, social change, political processes, and foreign influences in China since the earliest pre-dynastic period. The Qing dynasty was China's last, and it created an empire of unprecedented size and prosperity. However in 1911 the empire collapsed within a few short months, and China embarked on a revolutionary course that lasted through most of the twentieth century. The 1911 Revolution ended two millennia of imperial rule and established the Republic of China, but dissatisfaction with the early republic fuelled further revolutionary movements, each intended to be more thoroughgoing than the last, from the National Revolution of the 1920s, to the Communist Revolution, and finally the Cultural Revolution. On the centenary of the 1911 Revolution, Chinese scholars debated the causes and significance of the empire's collapse, and this book presents twelve of the most important contributions. Rather than focusing on Sun Yat-sen's relatively weak and divided revolutionary movement, as much previous scholarship has, these studies examine the internal dynamics of political and socio-economic change in China. The chapters reveal how reforms in education, army organization, and constitutional rule created new social forces and political movements that undermined dynastic legitimacy within China and on its frontiers. Through detailed analyses, using new archival, memoir, diary, and newspaper sources, the authors cast new light on the sudden collapse of an empire that many thought was at last embarked on a road to reform and national rejuvenation. *China: How the Empire Fell* will be of huge interest to students and scholars of modern Chinese history as well as those of contemporary China.

"In the first half of the nineteenth century the Qing Empire faced a crisis. It was broadly perceived both inside and outside of government that the "prosperous age" of the eighteenth century was over. Bureaucratic corruption and malaise, population pressure and food shortages, ecological and infrastructural decay, domestic and frontier rebellion, adverse balances of trade, and, eventually, a previously inconceivable foreign threat from the West seemed to present hopelessly daunting challenges. This study uses the literati reformer Bao Shichen as a prism to understand contemporary perceptions of and proposed solutions to this general crisis. Though Bao only briefly and inconsequentially served in office himself, he was widely recognized as an expert on each of these matters, and his advice was regularly sought by reform-minded administrators. From examination of his thought on bureaucratic and fiscal restructuring, agricultural improvement, the grain tribute administration, the salt monopoly, monetary policy, and foreign relations, Bao emerges as a consistent advocate of the hard-nosed pursuit of material "profit," in the interests not only of the rural populace but also of the Chinese state and nation, anticipating the arguments of "self-strengthening" reformers later in the century."

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