

UC-China Institute-USC Fall 2014

Unit Plan- Chinese Response to 19th Century Imperialism: The Opium War

Rationale: The students will compare and contrast three primary sources related to the Chinese response to imperialism: Emperor Qianlong's Letter to King George III, 1793; Lin Zexu's Letter to Queen Victoria, 1839; and the Treaty of Nanjing, 1842. They will contextualize the documents in order to understand the different responses during the time period. They will also use close reading to highlight the vocabulary in order to recognize the tone of the documents. Students will then respond to the documents in several ways: letter writing, compare/contrast, and a Socratic Seminar.

Skill/Objective: The students will:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1- **Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary** and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4- **Determine the meaning of words** and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9- **Compare and contrast** treatments of the same topic in several **primary** and secondary sources.

HSS Standard: 10.4 -Students **analyze** patterns of global change in the era of New Imperialism in at least two of the following regions or countries: Africa, Southeast Asia, **China**, India, Latin America, and the Philippines.

1. **Describe** the rise of industrial economies and their link to imperialism and colonial-ism (e.g., the role played by national security and strategic advantage; moral issues raised by the search for national hegemony, Social Darwinism, and the missionary impulse; material issues such as land, resources, and technology).
2. **Discuss** the locations of the colonial rule of such nations as England, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Russia, Spain, Portugal, and the United States.
3. **Explain** imperialism from the perspective of the colonizers and the colonized and the varied immediate and long-term responses by the people under colonial rule.
4. **Describe** the independence struggles of the colonized regions of the world, including the roles of leaders, such as Sun Yat-sen in China, and the roles of ideology and religion.

Time Frame: This unit plan should take anywhere from 6 to 10 days to complete depending on your pacing and the ability of your students. You know that best and should adjust it accordingly.

Lesson Plan:

(This lesson will come after the students have already studied the Imperialist Motives of various European countries in the previous week and will have pre-read Ch. 7.1 in their textbook which covers China's response to 19th century imperialism)

Day 1: The students will be shown a picture the Chinese navy engaged in battle with the British navy during the Opium War from 1839-1842.

- The students will describe what they see and infer what might be happening in the picture.
- They will then analyze the picture and discuss with a partner who they think is the dominant force and why. *What made the dominant force more powerful than the other one in the picture?* The students will then share out in a whole group setting. This will lead to the background discussion on the Opium War and Imperialism.
- The students will be given a packet of primary source documents: Emperor Qianlong's *Letter to King George III, 1793*; Lin Zexu's *Letter to Queen Victoria, 1839*; *The Treaty of Nanjing, 1842*.
- Using a Close reading strategy, the students will analyze the tone of the first document by defining the specific vocabulary used by Emperor Qianlong. *What tone does the Emperor use toward the British? How do you know? Can you cite specific textual evidence to support your findings?*

Day 2: The students will continue analyzing the first document.

- *Contextualization: When was the letter written? What was happening in Britain/Europe at this time? (Napoleonic Wars, American Revolution, Industrialization starting...) How might this affect the tone that the Emperor is taking with King George III? (China is strong in trade, trade surplus, no desire to trade with the British, Confucianist ideas in China)* All of these questions will be used to guide the students in analyzing the document.
- Once the students have finished reading and analyzing the tone and understand the Chinese stance of the letter, they will be asked to write a response to Emperor Qianlong as King George III. They must think and

write a response that they think King George III would have written at this time. They must establish tone and respond to specific parts of the first letter by using vocabulary words that will convey their message.

- They students will finish it for homework if they need extended time.

Day 3: On day 3, the students will share their letters to their groups and then to the whole class.

- Students will determine what tone is taken in the letter using specific textual evidence to support their thinking. Turn in for a grade.
- Next, in groups, the students will collaborate and read the Letter to Queen Victoria from Commissioner Lin Zexu. In groups they will use Close reading to analyze the letter.
- The Honors classes will also be given two additional documents on the legalization and suppression of opium in China. This may add on and extra day or two at this point in the unit plan.
- Using a graphic organizer, they will compare and contrast the two letters in content and tone, and will use historical contextualization to analyze the similarities and differences.
- The class will have a discussion to explain the similarities and differences.

Day 4: On day four, the students will read the Treaty of Nanjing.

- The students will be divided into 10 groups.
- Each group will be assigned a different provision/clause of the treaty. They will use close reading to define new vocabulary and will analyze the meaning of the clauses.
- After 15 minutes, the groups will share out the clause and what it means. The clauses will be used to determine the shift in power from the Chinese to the British/Western powers.

Day 5: On day five, the students will be given some research questions that will be used to conduct a Socratic Seminar. These questions will be used to direct the discussion of the students during the Seminar. The questions are open-ended so that the discussion can be free flowing.

- The students will work in groups to answer the questions and research the documents for supporting textual evidence.
- They will continue researching the documents in preparation for the Socratic Seminar the next day.

Day 6: On day six, the students will be paired up with a partner and will take part in a Socratic Seminar.

- The students will sit in a circle around the class. Their partners will be able to help them in answering the questions posed in the Seminar circle.
- The students will respond to each other's responses, either agreeing or disagreeing, and adding their own view of the events or prompts.
- The teacher will act as the moderator and will monitor the time and which questions are asked. The conversation will be guided by the students' responses to the prompts and will follow a natural progression from student to student.
- Half way through the class, have the students switch places with their partners. Those in the inner circle move to the outer circle and may not answer the questions. They may help their partner formulate an answer to the prompts. Only partners in the inner circle may speak to others in the inner circle.
- See the Socratic Seminar questions below:

British Imperialism in China Socratic Seminar

Based on the close reading assignments completed over the past week, answer the following questions in preparation for a Socratic Seminar to be held tomorrow. You must answer them completely and to the best of your knowledge. Be sure to use textual evidence from the documents provided to support your responses. Both the inner circle and outer circle will be used and everyone will be expected to speak.

1. The Opium War was about more than opium. How would you support or challenge this statement?⁷⁵⁷
2. In what ways might the Opium War be regarded as a clash of cultures? In what respects might it be seen as a clash of interests? Was it an **inevitable** conflict or were there missed opportunities for avoiding it?

3. In the context of British and Chinese views of the world, how do you understand the Treaty of Nanjing? Which country's view of the world is more clearly reflected in that treaty?

4. Based on these documents, how well or how poorly did the Chinese understand the British? How might you account for the misunderstandings?

5. How did the political attitude of the Chinese change over the course of these readings?

6. What provisions of the treaty of Nanjing most clearly challenged traditional Chinese understandings of their place in the world? Why?

Documents needed for the lessons:

Modern History Sourcebook:

Emperor Qian Long's Letter to King George III, 1793

from: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1793qianlong.html>

BACKGROUND: For many centuries China had little intercourse with other countries. Various European nations tried to form commercial relations with her, and there was buying and selling between them, but it was most unsatisfactory. The rules made by the Chinese were as fickle as the wind. Often the merchants, or "foreign devils," as the Chinese called them, were in danger of their lives. Several nations had sent representatives to China, and in 1793 England decided to send Lord Macartney as an ambassador to the emperor in the hope of establishing safe and reasonable relations of trade. Even before the ambassador landed, the Chinese contrived to run up a flag on the vessel that bore him up the Peiho, whereon was written "Tribute-bearer from England." This was quite in accordance with the Chinese custom of claiming all gifts as tribute. Another custom of theirs was that whoever approached the throne of the emperor must perform the kowtow, that is, must kneel three times, and at each kneeling must bow three times till his head touched the floor. This was the way in which the greater idols were approached and signified that the emperor was a god. Lord Macartney told the Chinese legate that he would not perform the kowtow unless a high officer of state would

kowtow before a picture of the King of England. The emperor finally agreed to admit the ambassador, who bent his knee, as he would have done before his own sovereign.

Qian Long [Ch'ien Lung], (r. 1735-1795) ruled China for much of the 18th century, the last period in which China was strong enough to resist, or better, disdain external influence. Here is letter he sent in response to a request from George III of Britain (r. 1760-1820) as conveyed by Lord Macartney for trade privileges.



You, O King, live beyond the confines of many seas; nevertheless, impelled by your humble desire to partake of the benefits of our civilization, you have dispatched a mission respectfully bearing your memorial. Your Envoy has crossed the seas and paid his respects at my Court on the anniversary of my birthday. To show your devotion, you have also sent offerings of your country's produce.

I have perused your memorial: the earnest terms in which it is couched reveal a respectful humility on your part, which is highly praiseworthy. In consideration of the fact that your Ambassador and his deputy have come a long way with your memorial and tribute, I have shown them high favor and have allowed them to be introduced into my presence. To manifest my indulgence, I have entertained them at a banquet and made them numerous gifts. I have also caused presents to be forwarded to the Naval Commander and six hundred of his officers and men, although they did not come to Peking, so that they too may share in my all-embracing kindness.

As to your entreaty to send one of your nationals to be accredited to my Celestial Court and to be in control of your country's trade with China, this request is contrary to all usage of my dynasty and cannot possibly be entertained. It is true that Europeans, in the service of the dynasty, have been permitted to live at Peking, but they are compelled to adopt Chinese dress, they are strictly confined to their own precincts and are never permitted to return home. You are presumably familiar with our dynastic regulations. Your proposed Envoy to my Court could not be placed in a

position similar to that of European officials in Peking who are forbidden to leave China, nor could he, on the other hand, be allowed liberty of movement and the privilege of corresponding with his own country; so that you would gain nothing by his residence in our midst.

Moreover, our Celestial dynasty possesses vast territories and tribute missions from the dependencies are provided for by the Department for Tributary States, which ministers to their wants and exercises strict control over their movements. It would be quite impossible to leave them to their own devices. Supposing that your Envoy should come to our Court, his language and national dress differ from that of our people, and there would be no place in which to bestow him. It may be suggested that he might imitate the Europeans permanently resident in Peking and adopt the dress and customs of China, but, it has never been our dynasty's wish to force people to do things unseemly and inconvenient. Besides, supposing I sent an Ambassador to reside in your country, how could you possibly make for him the requisite arrangements? Europe consists of many other nations besides your own: if each and all demanded to be represented at our Court, how could we possibly consent? The thing is utterly impracticable. How can our dynasty alter its whole procedure and system of etiquette, established for more than a century, in order to meet your individual views? If it be said that your object is to exercise control over your country's trade, your nationals have had full liberty to trade at Canton for many a year, and have received the greatest consideration at our hands. Missions have been sent by Portugal and Italy, preferring similar requests. The Throne appreciated their sincerity and loaded them with favors, besides authorizing measures to facilitate their trade with China. You are no doubt aware that, when my Canton merchant, Wu Chao-ping, who was in debt to foreign ships. I made the Viceroy advance the monies due, out of the provincial treasury, and ordered him to punish the culprit severely. Why then should foreign nations advance this utterly unreasonable request to be represented at my Court? Peking is nearly two thousand miles from Canton, and at such a distance what possible control could any British representative exercise?

If you assert that your reverence for Our Celestial dynasty fills you with a desire to acquire our civilization, our ceremonies and code of laws differ so completely from your own that, even if your Envoy were able to acquire the rudiments of our civilization, you could not possibly transplant our manners and customs to your alien soil. Therefore, however adept the Envoy might become, nothing would be gained thereby.

Swaying the wide world, I have but one aim in view, namely, to maintain a perfect governance and to fulfill the duties of the State: strange and costly objects do not interest me. If I have commanded that the tribute offerings sent by you, O King, are to be accepted, this was solely in consideration for the spirit which prompted you to dispatch them from afar. Our dynasty's majestic virtue has penetrated unto every country under Heaven, and Kings of all nations have offered their costly tribute by land and sea. As your Ambassador can see for himself, we possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufactures. This then is my answer to your request to appoint a representative at my Court, a request contrary to our dynastic usage, which would only result in inconvenience to yourself. I have expounded my wishes in detail and have commanded your tribute Envoys to leave in peace on their homeward journey. It behooves you, O King, to respect my sentiments and to display even greater devotion and loyalty in future, so that, by perpetual submission to our Throne, you may secure peace and prosperity for your country hereafter. Besides making gifts (of which I enclose an inventory) to each member of your Mission, I confer upon you, O King, valuable presents in excess of the number usually bestowed on such occasions, including silks and curios—a list of which is likewise enclosed. Do you reverently receive them and take note of my tender goodwill towards you! A special mandate.

In the same letter, a further mandate to King George III dealt in detail with the British ambassador's proposals and the Emperor's reasons for declining them.

You, O King, from afar have yearned after the blessings of our civilization and in your eagerness to come into touch with our converting influence have sent an Embassy across the sea bearing a memorial. I have already taken note of your respectful spirit of submission, have treated your mission with extreme favor and loaded it with gifts, besides issuing a mandate to you, O King, and honouring you with the bestowal of valuable presents. Thus has my indulgence been manifested.

Yesterday your Ambassador petitioned my Ministers to memorialize me regarding your trade with China, but his proposal is not consistent with our dynastic usage and cannot be entertained. Hitherto, all European nations, including your own country's barbarian merchants, have carried on their trade with our Celestial Empire at Canton. Such has been the procedure for many years, although our Celestial Empire possesses all things in prolific abundance and lacks no product within its own borders. There was therefore no need to import the manufactures of outside barbarians in exchange for our own produce. But as the tea, silk and porcelain which the Celestial Empire produces, are absolute necessities to European nations and to yourselves, we have permitted, as a signal mark of favor, that foreign *hongs* [merchant firms] should be established at Canton, so that your wants might be supplied and your country thus participate in our beneficence. But your Ambassador has now put forward new requests which completely fail to recognize the Throne's principle to "treat strangers from afar with indulgence," and to exercise a pacifying control over barbarian tribes, the world over. Moreover, our dynasty, swaying the myriad races of the globe, extends the same benevolence towards all. Your England is not the only nation trading at Canton. If other nations, following your bad example, wrongfully importune my ear with further impossible requests, how will it be possible for me to treat them with easy indulgence? Nevertheless, I do not forget the lonely remoteness of your island, cut off from the world by intervening wastes of sea, nor do I overlook your excusable ignorance of the usages of our Celestial Empire. I have consequently commanded my Ministers to enlighten your Ambassador on the subject, and have ordered the departure of the mission. But I have doubts that, after your Envoy's return he may fail to acquaint you with my view in detail or that he may be lacking in lucidity, so that I shall now proceed . . . to issue my mandate on each question separately. In this way you will, I trust, comprehend my meaning....

(3) Your request for a small island near Chusan, where your merchants may reside and goods be warehoused, arises from your desire to develop trade. As there are neither foreign *hongs* nor interpreters in or near Chusan, where none of your ships have ever called, such an island would be utterly useless for your purposes. Every inch of the territory of our Empire is marked on the map and the strictest vigilance is exercised over it all: even tiny islets and farlying sandbanks are clearly defined as part of the provinces to which they belong. Consider, moreover, that England is not the only barbarian land which wishes to establish . . . trade with our Empire: supposing that other nations were all to imitate your evil example and beseech me to present them each and all with a site for trading purposes, how could I possibly comply? This also is a flagrant infringement of the usage of my Empire and cannot possibly be entertained.

(4) The next request, for a small site in the vicinity of Canton city, where your barbarian merchants may lodge or, alternatively, that there be no longer any restrictions over their movements at Aomen, has arisen from the following causes. Hitherto, the barbarian merchants of Europe have had a definite locality assigned to them at Aomen for residence and trade, and have been forbidden to encroach an inch beyond the limits assigned to that locality.... If these

restrictions were withdrawn, friction would inevitably occur between the Chinese and your barbarian subjects, and the results would militate against the benevolent regard that I feel towards you. From every point of view, therefore, it is best that the regulations now in force should continue unchanged....

(7) Regarding your nation's worship of the Lord of Heaven, it is the same religion as that of other European nations. Ever since the beginning of history, sage Emperors and wise rulers have bestowed on China a moral system and inculcated a code, which from time immemorial has been religiously observed by the myriads of my subjects. There has been no hankering after heterodox doctrines. Even the European (missionary) officials in my capital are forbidden to hold intercourse with Chinese subjects; they are restricted within the limits of their appointed residences, and may not go about propagating their religion. The distinction between Chinese and barbarian is most strict, and your Ambassador's request that barbarians shall be given full liberty to disseminate their religion is utterly unreasonable.

It may be, O King, that the above proposals have been wantonly made by your Ambassador on his own responsibility, or peradventure you yourself are ignorant of our dynastic regulations and had no intention of transgressing them when you expressed these wild ideas and hopes.... If, after the receipt of this explicit decree, you lightly give ear to the representations of your subordinates and allow your barbarian merchants to proceed to Chêkiang and Tientsin, with the object of landing and trading there, the ordinances of my Celestial Empire are strict in the extreme, and the local officials, both civil and military, are bound reverently to obey the law of the land. Should your vessels touch the shore, your merchants will assuredly never be permitted to land or to reside there, but will be subject to instant expulsion. In that event your barbarian merchants will have had a long journey for nothing. Do not say that

From E. Backhouse and J. O. P. Bland, *Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), pp. 32233

Chinese Cultural Studies:

Lin Zixu Lin Tse-Hs (1839 CE)
Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria

From Ssuyu Teng and John Fairbank, *China's Response to the West*, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1954), repr. in Mark A. Kishlansky, ed., *Sources of World History, Volume II*, (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1995), pp. 266-69

[Kishlansky Introduction] Lin Tse-Hsu (1785-1850) was the Chinese Commissioner in Canton whose actions precipitated the Opium Wars (1839- 1842). Although opium was used in China for centuries, it was not until the opening of the tea trade to Dutch and British merchants that China was able to import large quantities of the drug. By the early nineteenth century opium was the principal product that the English East India Company traded in China and opium addiction was becoming a widespread social problem. When the emperor's own son died of an overdose, he decided to put an end to the trade. Lin Tse-Hsu was sent to Canton, the chief trading port of the East India Company, with instructions to negotiate an end to the importation of opium into China. The English merchants were uncooperative, so he seized their stores of opium. This led to immediate military action. The Chinese were decisively defeated and had to cede to a humiliating

treaty that legalized the opium trade. As a result Commissioner Lin was dismissed from office and sent into exile.

Lin Tse-Hsu's "Letter of Advice to Queen Victoria" was written before the outbreak of the Opium Wars. It was a remarkably frank document, especially given the usual highly stylized language of Chinese diplomacy. There remains some question whether Queen Victoria ever read the letter.

A communication: magnificently our great Emperor soothes and pacifies China and the foreign countries, regarding all with the same kindness. If there is profit, then he shares it with the peoples of the world; if there is harm, then he removes it on behalf of the world. This is because he takes the mind of heaven and earth as his mind.

The kings of your honorable country by a tradition handed down from generation to generation have always been noted for their politeness and submissiveness. We have read your successive tributary memorials saying, "In general our countrymen who go to trade in China have always received His Majesty the Emperor's gracious treatment and equal justice." and so on. Privately we are delighted with the way in which the honorable rulers of your county deeply understand the grand principles and are grateful for the Celestial grace. For this reason the Celestial Court in soothing those from afar has redoubled its polite and kind treatment. The profit from trade has been enjoyed by them continuously for two hundred years. This is the source from which your country has become known for its wealth.

But after a long period of commercial intercourse, there appear among the crowd of barbarians both good persons and bad, unevenly. Consequently there are those who smuggle opium to seduce the Chinese people and so cause the spread of the poison to all provinces. Such persons who only care to profit themselves, and disregard their harm to others, are not tolerated by the laws of heaven and are an anomaly hated by human beings. His Majesty the Emperor, upon hearing of this, is in a towering rage. He has especially sent me, his commissioner, to come to Kwangtung, and together with the governor-general and governor jointly to investigate and settle this matter.

All those people in China who sell opium or smoke opium should receive the death penalty. We trace the crime of those barbarians who through the years have been selling opium, then the deep harm they have wrought and the great profit they have usurped should fundamentally justify their execution according to law. We take into consideration, however, the fact that the various barbarians have still known how to repent their crimes and return to their allegiance to us by taking the 20,183 chests of opium from their store ships and petitioning us, through their consular officer [superintendent of trade], Elliot, to receive it. It has been entirely destroyed and this has been faithfully reported to the Throne in several memorials by this commissioner and his colleagues.

Fortunately we have received a specially extended favor from His Majesty the Emperor, who considers that for those who voluntarily surrender there are still some circumstances to palliate their crime, and so for the time being he has magnanimously excused them from punishment. But as for those who again violate the opium prohibition, it is difficult for the law to pardon them repeatedly. Having established new regulations, we presume that the ruler of your honorable country, who takes delight in our culture and whose disposition is inclined towards us, must be able to instruct the various barbarians to observe the law with care. It is only necessary to explain to them the advantages and advantages and then they will know that the legal code of the Celestial Court must be absolutely obeyed with awe.

We find your country is sixty or seventy thousand li [three li make one mile, ordinarily] from China Yet there are barbarian ships that strive to come here for trade for the purpose of making a great profit The wealth of China is used to profit the barbarians. That is to say, the great profit made by barbarians is all taken from the rightful share of China. By what right do they then in return use the poisonous drug to injure the Chinese people? Even though the barbarians may not necessarily intend to do us harm, yet in coveting profit to an extreme, they have no regard for injuring others. Let us ask, where is your conscience? I have heard that the smoking of opium is very strictly forbidden by your country; that is because the harm caused by opium is clearly understood. Since it is not permitted to do harm to your own country, then even less should you let it be passed on to the harm of other countries -- how much less to China! Of all that China exports to foreign countries, there is not a single thing which is not beneficial to people: they are of benefit when eaten, or of benefit when used, or of benefit when resold: all are beneficial. Is there a single article from China which has done any harm to foreign countries? Take tea and rhubarb, for example; the foreign countries cannot get along for a single day without them. If China cuts off these benefits with no sympathy for those who are to suffer, then what can the barbarians rely upon to keep themselves alive? Moreover the woolens, camlets, and longells [i.e., textiles] of foreign countries cannot be woven unless they obtain Chinese silk. If China, again, cuts off this beneficial export, what profit can the barbarians expect to make? As for other foodstuffs, beginning with candy, ginger, cinnamon, and so forth, and articles for use, beginning with silk, satin, chinaware, and so on, all the things that must be had by foreign countries are innumerable. On the other hand, articles coming from the outside to China can only be used as toys. We can take them or get along without them. Since they are not needed by China, what difficulty would there be if we closed our frontier and stopped the trade? Nevertheless, our Celestial Court lets tea, silk, and other goods are shipped without limit and circulated everywhere without begrudging it in the slightest. This is for no other reason but to share the benefit with the people of the whole world. The goods from China carried away by your country not only supply your own consumption and use, but also can be divided up and sold to other countries, producing a triple profit. Even if you do not sell opium, you still have this threefold profit. How can you bear to go further, selling products injurious to others in order to fulfill your insatiable desire?

Suppose there were people from another country who carried opium for sale to England and seduced your people into buying and smoking it; certainly your honorable ruler would deeply hate it and be bitterly aroused. We have heard heretofore that your honorable ruler is kind and benevolent. Naturally you would not wish to give unto others what you yourself do not want. We have also heard that the ships coming to Canton have all had regulations promulgated and given to them in which it is stated that it is not permitted to carry contraband goods. This indicates that the administrative orders of your honorable rule have been originally strict and clear. Only because the trading ships are numerous, heretofore perhaps they have not been examined with care. Now after this communication has been dispatched and you have clearly understood the strictness of the prohibitory laws of the Celestial Court, certainly you will not let your subjects dare again to violate the law.

We have further learned that in London, the capital of your honorable rule, and in Scotland, Ireland, and other places, originally no opium has been produced. Only in several places of India under your control such as Bengal, Madras, Bombay, Patna, Benares, and Malwa has opium been planted from hill to hill, and ponds have been opened for its manufacture. For months and years work is continued in order to accumulate the poison. The obnoxious odor ascends, irritating heaven and frightening the spirits. Indeed you, O King, can eradicate the opium plant in these places, hoe over the fields entirely, and sow in its stead the five grains [millet, barley, wheat, etc.]. Anyone who dares again attempt to plant and manufacture opium should be severely punished. This will really be a great, benevolent government policy that will increase the

common weal and get rid of evil. For this, Heaven must support you and the spirits must bring you good fortune, prolonging your old age and extending your descendants. All will depend on this act.

As for the barbarian merchants who come to China, their food and drink and habitation, all received by the gracious favor of our Celestial Court. Their accumulated wealth is all benefit given with pleasure by our Celestial Court. They spend rather few days in their own country but more time in Canton. To digest clearly the legal penalties as an aid to instruction has been a valid principle in all ages. Suppose a man of another country comes to England to trade, he still has to obey the English laws; how much more should he obey in China the laws of the Celestial Dynasty?

Now we have set up regulations governing the Chinese people. He who sells opium shall receive the death penalty and he who smokes it also the death penalty. Now consider this: if the barbarians do not bring opium, then how can the Chinese people resell it, and how can they smoke it? The fact is that the wicked barbarians beguile the Chinese people into a death trap. How then can we grant life only to these barbarians? He who takes the life of even one person still has to atone for it with his own life; yet is the harm done by opium limited to the taking of one life only? Therefore in the new regulations, in regard to those barbarians who bring opium to China, the penalty is fixed at decapitation or strangulation. This is what is called getting rid a harmful thing on behalf of mankind.

Moreover we have found that in the middle of the second month of this year [April 9] Consul [Superintendent] Elliot of your nation, because the opium prohibition law was very stern and severe, petitioned for an extension of the time limit. He requested an extension of five months for India and its adjacent harbors and related territories, and ten months for England proper, after which they would act in conformity with the new regulations. Now we, the commissioner and others, have memorialized and have received the extraordinary Celestial grace of His Majesty the Emperor, who has redoubled his consideration and compassion. All those who from the period of the coming one year (from England) or six months (from India) bring opium to China by mistake, but who voluntarily confess and completely surrender their opium, shall be exempt from their punishment. After this limit of time, if there are still those who bring opium to China then they will plainly have committed a willful violation and shall at once be executed according to law, with absolutely no clemency or pardon. This may be called the height of kindness and the perfection of justice.

Our Celestial Dynasty rules over and supervises the myriad states, and surely possesses unfathomable spiritual dignity. Yet the Emperor cannot care to execute people without having first tried to reform them by instruction. Therefore he especially promulgates these fixed regulations. The barbarian merchants of your country, if they wish to do business for a prolonged period, are required to obey our statues respectfully and to cut off permanently the source of opium. They must by no means try to test the effectiveness of the law with their lives. May you, O King, check your wicked and sift your wicked people before they come to China, in order to guarantee the peace of your nation, to show further the sincerity of your politeness and submissiveness, and to let the two countries enjoy together the blessings of peace How fortunate, how fortunate indeed! After receiving this dispatch will you immediately give us a prompt reply regarding the details and circumstances of your cutting off the opium traffic. Be sure not to put this off. The above is what has to be communicated.

THE TREATY OF NANKING

Nanking, August 29, 1842

Peace Treaty between the Queen of Great Britain and the Emperor of China.

This treaty between Britain and China ended the first opium war, fought between 1839 and 1842. The occasion for the war was the destruction in May 1839 by the Chinese emperor's 'drug tsar', Lin Zexu, of thousands of casks of Indian opium, without compensation, that were destined to be sold by the private British traders operating in Canton harbor to Chinese dealers in defiance of a ban placed on the illegal substance by the Chinese government. Despite the ban, the British government supported the traders on the specious grounds that suppression of the drug was China's responsibility only and that it should not proceed by an assault on the property (i.e., opium) of British subjects.

The fighting, via sporadic land and naval battles, ended in complete victory for Britain which was thus in a position to impose the following onerous terms on China in relation to the opening of additional ports of trade and the elimination of barriers to the convenient conduct of a centuries old lawful trade. Note that no mention is made of opium which continued to be an illegal substance. Moreover, the drug trade could now continue without interruption as far as the traders were concerned for the treaty also ceded to Britain the offshore island of Hong Kong where the opium traders could thenceforth conduct their illegal operations.

HER MAJESTY the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Majesty the Emperor of China, being desirous of putting an end to the misunderstandings and consequent hostilities which have arisen between the two countries, have resolved to conclude a Treaty for that purpose . . .

Who, after having communicated to each other their respective Full Powers, and found them to be in good and due form, have agreed upon and concluded the following [selected] Articles:

I.

The Government of China having compelled the British merchants trading at Canton to deal exclusively with certain Chinese merchants, called Hong merchants (or Co-Hong), who had been licensed by the Chinese Government for that purpose, the Emperor of China agrees to abolish that practice in future at all ports where British merchants may reside, and to permit them to carry on their mercantile transactions with whatever persons they please; and His Imperial Majesty further agrees to pay to the British Government the sum of 3,000,000 of dollars, on account of debts due to British subjects by some of the said Hong merchants (or Co-Hong), who have become insolvent, and who owe very large sums of money to subjects of Her Britannic Majesty.

There shall henceforward be peace and friendship between Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and His Majesty the Emperor of China, and between their respective subjects, who shall enjoy full security and protection for their persons and property within the dominions of the other.

II.

His Majesty the Emperor of China agrees, that British subjects, with their families and establishments, shall be allowed to reside, for the purposes of carrying on their mercantile pursuits, without molestation or restraint, at the cities and towns of Canton, Amoy, Foochow foo, Ningbo, and Shanghai; and Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain, &c., will appoint Superintendents, or Consular officers, to reside at each of the above-named cities or towns, to be the medium of communication between the Chinese authorities and the said merchants, and to see that the just duties and other dues of the Chinese Government, as hereafter provided for, are duly discharged by Her Britannic Majesty's subjects.

III.

It being obviously necessary and desirable that British subjects should have some port whereat they may [maintain] and refit their ships when required, and keep stores for that purpose, His Majesty the Emperor of China cedes to Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain, &c., the Island of Hong-Kong, to be possessed in perpetuity by Her Britannic Majesty, her heirs and successors, and to be governed by such laws and regulations as Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain, &c., shall see fit to direct.

IV.

The Emperor of China agrees to pay the sum of 6,000,000 of dollars, as the value of the opium which was delivered up at Canton in the month of March, 1839, as a ransom for the lives of Her Britannic Majesty's Superintendent and subjects, who had been imprisoned and threatened with death by the Chinese High Officers
And it is further stipulated, that interest, at the rate of 5 per cent. Per annum, shall be paid by the Government of China on any portion of the above sums that are not punctually discharged at the periods fixed.

V.

The Government of China having compelled the British merchants trading at Canton to deal exclusively with certain Chinese merchants, called Hong merchants (or Co-Hong) . . . the Emperor of China agrees to abolish that practice in future at all ports where British merchants may reside, and to permit them to carry on their mercantile transactions with whatever persons they please; and His Imperial Majesty further agrees to pay to the British Government the sum of 3,000,000 of dollars , on account of debts due to British subjects by some of the said Hong merchants, who have become insolvent, and who owe very large sums of money to subjects of Her Britannic Majesty.

VI.

The Government of Her Britannic Majesty having been obliged to send out an expedition to demand and obtain redress for the violent and unjust proceedings of the Chinese High Authorities towards Her Britannic Majesty's officer and subjects, the Emperor of China agrees to pay the sum of 12,000,000 of dollars, on account of the expenses incurred; and Her Britannic Majesty's Plenipotentiary voluntarily agrees, on behalf of Her Majesty, to deduct from the said amount of 12,000,000 of dollars, any sums which may have been received by Her Majesty's combined forces, as ransom for cities and towns in China, subsequent to the 1st day of August, 1841

VII.

It is agreed, that the total amount of 21,000,000 of dollars, described in the 3 preceding Articles, shall be paid as follows:

6,000,000 immediately.

6,000,000 in 1843; that is, 3,000,000 on or before the 30th of the month of June, and 3,000,000 on or before the 31st of December.

5,000,000 in 1844; that is, 2,500,000 on or before the 30th of June, and 2,500,000 on or before the 31st of December.

4,000,000 in 1845; that is, 2,000,000 on or before the 30th of June, and 2,000,000 on or before the 31st of December.

And it is further stipulated, that interest, at the rate of 5 per cent per annum, shall be paid by the Government of China on any portion of the above sums that are not punctually discharged at the periods fixed.

VIII

The Emperor of China agrees to release, unconditionally, all subjects of Her Britannic Majesty (whether natives of Europe or India), who may be in confinement at this moment in any part of the Chinese empire.

IX.

The Emperor of China agrees to publish and promulgate, under his Imperial sign manual and seal, a full and entire amnesty and act of indemnity to all subjects of China, on account of their having resided under, or having had dealings and intercourse with, or having entered the service of Her Britannic Majesty, or of Her Majesty's officers; and His Imperial Majesty further engages to release all Chinese subjects who may be at this moment in confinement for similar reasons.

X.

His Majesty the Emperor of China agrees to establish at all the ports which are, by the 2nd Article of this Treaty, to be thrown open for the resort of British merchants, a fair and regular tariff of export and import customs and other dues, which tariff shall be publicly notified and promulgated for general information; and the Emperor further engages, that when British merchandise shall have once paid at any of the said ports the regulated customs and dues, agreeable to the tariff to be hereafter fixed, such merchandise may be conveyed by Chinese merchants to any province or city in the interior of the Empire of China, on paying a further amount as transit duties, which shall not exceed [see Declaration respecting Transit Duties below] on the tariff value of such goods.

XI.

It is agreed that Her Britannic Majesty's Chief High Officer in China shall correspond with the Chinese High Officers, both at the capital and in the provinces, . . . on a footing of perfect equality . . .

XII.

On the assent of the Emperor of China to this Treaty being received, and the discharge of the first installment of money, Her Britannic Majesty's forces will retire from Nanking and the Grand Canal, and will no longer molest or stop the trade of China. The military post at Chinghai will also be withdrawn, but the Islands of Koolangsoo, and that of Chusan, will continue to be held by

Her Majesty's forces until the money payments, and the arrangements for opening the ports to British merchants, be completed.

XIII.

The ratification of this Treaty by Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain, &c., and His Majesty the Emperor of China, shall be exchanged as soon as the great distance which separates England from China will admit; but in the meantime, counterpart copies of it, signed and sealed by the plenipotentiaries on behalf of their respective Sovereigns, shall be mutually delivered, and all its provisions and arrangements shall take effect.

Done at Nanking, and signed and sealed by the Plenipotentiaries on board Her Britannic Majesty's ship Cornwallis, this 29th day of August, 1842

(L.S.) HENRY POTTINGER.

[SIGNATURES OF THE THREE CHINESE PLENIPOTENTIARIES]

DECLARATION respecting Transit Duties.

Whereas by the Xth Article of the Treaty between Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and His Majesty the Emperor of China, concluded and signed on board Her Britannic Majesty's ship Cornwallis, at Nanking, on the 29th day of August, 1842 it is stipulated and agreed, that His Majesty the Emperor of China shall establish at all the ports which, by the 2nd Article of the said Treaty, are to be thrown open for the resort of British merchants, a fair and regular tariff of export and import customs and other dues, which tariff shall be publicly notified and promulgated for general information; and further, that when British merchandise shall have once paid, at any of the said ports, the regulated customs and dues, agreeable to the tariff to be hereafter fixed, such merchandise may be conveyed by Chinese merchants to any province or city in the interior of the Empire of China, on paying a further amount of duty as transit duty;

And whereas the rate of transit duty to be so levied was not fixed by the said Treaty; Now, therefore, the undersigned Plenipotentiaries of Her Britannic Majesty, and of His Majesty the Emperor of China, do hereby, on proceeding to the exchange of the Ratifications of the said Treaty, agree and declare, that the further amount of duty to be so levied on British merchandise, as transit duty, shall not exceed the present rates, which are upon a moderate scale; and the Ratifications of the said Treaty are exchanged subject to the express declaration and stipulation herein contained.

In witness whereof the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed the present declaration, and have affixed thereto their respective seals.

Done at Hong-Kong, the 26th day of June, 1843

(L.S.) HENRY POTTINGER.

[SEAL AND SIGNATURE OF THE CHINESE PLENIPOTENTIARY]

NOTE:

In the following year, on Oct. 8, a supplementary treaty was concluded which included extraterritorial provisions regarding crimes and offences committed both by British subjects and Chinese at the five ports. Art. XI stated that 'lawless natives of China' found in Hong Kong or aboard British vessels would be handed over to Chinese officials for trial. Likewise, China was to hand over to British officials any British subjects who fled to Chinese territory.