

Student Handout 1: Comparing China and Japan's Responses to European Imperialism

Step 1: Read each document and answer the comprehension questions below it.

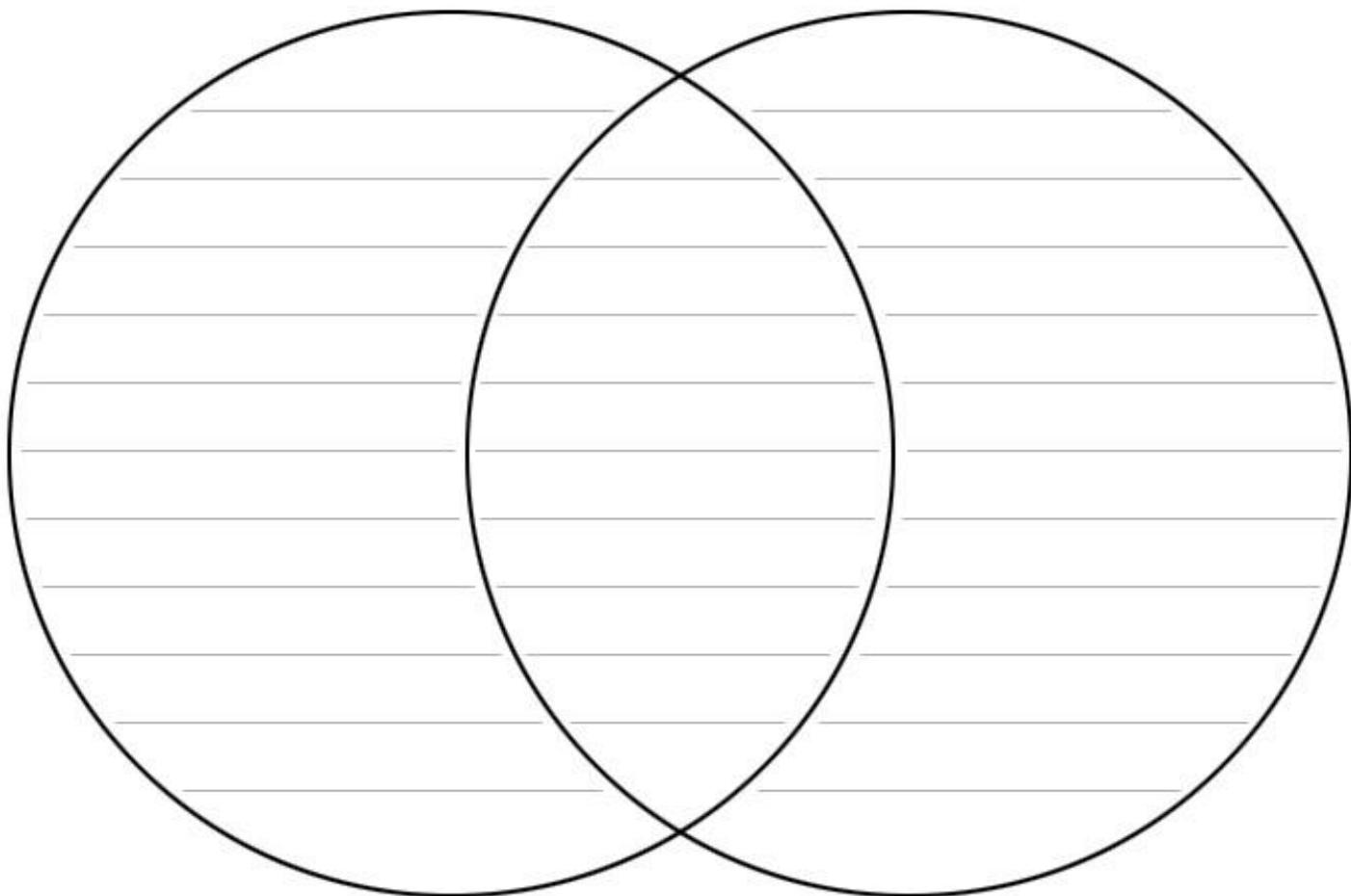
Step 2: Use a Venn Diagram in the space below to compare the two countries on the following subtopics. Give the Venn Diagram and appropriate title.

- What **challenges** did other countries pose to China/Japan?
- What **attitudes** did China/Japan have toward the foreigners?
- What changes in **policy** resulted from interaction with foreigners?
- What changes in **culture** resulted from interaction with foreigners?

Activity Title: _____

Item 1: _____

Item 2: _____



Student Handout 2: Documents from 19th c. China and Japan

CHINA

Source 1: The Reception of the First English Ambassador to China, 1792.

The Qing Dynasty of China (ruled 1644-1911) primarily kept the country closed to outside trade and, when they allowed trade, they placed restrictive rules that changed unpredictably. China treated all other nations as “tributaries” and they treated all gifts as tribute—thereby establishing a dominant position in the trade relation. Furthermore, they made all foreigners *kowtow*, or perform a sequence of bows and kneels as a sign that the Qing emperor was a god. In 1792, England sent Lord Macartney as an ambassador to request a trading relationship.

“As soon as the monarch was seated upon his throne, the master of the ceremonies led the [British] ambassador [Lord Macartney] toward the steps. The latter approached, bent his knee, and handed, in a casket set with diamonds, the letter addressed to His Imperial Majesty by the King of England. The emperor assured Macartney of the satisfaction he felt at the testimony which His Britannic Majesty gave him of his esteem and good will in sending him an embassy with a letter and rare presents; that he on his part entertained sentiments of the same kind toward the sovereign of Great Britain, and hoped that harmony would always be maintained between their respective subjects. He then presented to the ambassador a stone scepter, whilst he graciously received the private presents of the principal personages of the embassy. He was perfectly good-humored, and especially pleased with the son of Sir G. Staunton, who talked a little Chinese, and received as a token of imperial favor a yellow plain tobacco pouch with the figure of the five-clawed dragon embroidered upon it.”

From: Eva March Tappan, ed., *China, Japan, and the Islands of the Pacific*, Vol. I of *The World's Story: A History of the World in Story, Song, and Art*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), pp. 189-192. Scanned by: J. S. Arkenberg, Dept. of History, Cal. State Fullerton. Prof. Arkenberg has modernized the text.
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1792macartney.html>

How is Lord Macartney received by the emperor? What pleases the emperor? What does this reveal about the attitude of the Chinese government toward foreigners or toward the British?

CHINA

Source 2: Letter from Lin Tse-hsu to Queen Victoria in 1839.

During the mid-1800s, Great Britain began importing opium to China. Britain undertook this process because they had few trade goods that the Chinese wanted in exchange for their silk, tea, and porcelain. The Europeans were forced to pay for these goods in silver and gold and they wanted to find a commodity to balance the trade. Britain gained access to large amounts of opium after the 1757 Battle of Plassey where they gained the Indian territory of Bengal, a major producer of the opium poppies.

“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 unanimously 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.

We find that your country is sixty or seventy thousand li [three li make one mile] 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!”

<http://web.jjay.cuny.edu/~jobrien/reference/ob29.html>

Does Lin use an ethical, logical or emotional appeal? What arguments are persuasive? What does this reveal about the attitude of the Chinese leaders toward the British?

CHINA

Source 3: The People of Canton: Against the English, 1842.

Canton (also known as Guangzhou) was the main trading port of China open to foreigners before the Opium War (1839-1842). In this war, the Chinese wanted to end the opium trade while the British sought to increase their trading rights. The British Navy easily overpowered the Chinese and China was forced to accept the Treaty of Nanjing which opened five treaty ports as well as allowed British subjects the privilege of “extraterritoriality.” This was the first of several so-called “Unequal Treaties.” The people of Guangzhou did not want to accept the terms of the treaty and the self-proclaimed “gentry and literati” posted signs decrying the foreigners.

“Behold that vile English nation! Its ruler is at one time a woman, then a man, and then perhaps a woman again; its people are at one time like vultures, and then they are like wild beasts, with dispositions more fierce and furious than the tiger or wolf, and natures more greedy than anacondas or swine. These people having long steadily devoured all the western barbarians, and like demons of the night, they now suddenly exalt themselves here.

During the reigns of the emperors Kien-lung and Kia-king these English barbarians humbly besought an entrance and permission to deliver tribute and presents; they afterwards presumptuously asked to have Chu-san; but our sovereigns, clearly perceiving their traitorous designs, gave them a determined refusal. From that time, linking themselves with traitorous Chinese traders, they have carried on a large trade and poisoned our brave people with opium. Verily, the English barbarians murder all of us that they can. They are dogs, whose desires can never be satisfied. Therefore we need not inquire whether the peace they have now made be real or pretended. Let us all rise, arm, unite, and go against them.

We do here bind ourselves to vengeance, and express these our sincere intentions in order to exhibit our high principles and patriotism. The gods from on high now look down upon us; let us not lose our just and firm resolution.”

Source (these both have similar examples): Ebrey, “Placards Placed in Guangzhou,” *Chinese Civilization* (source packet) : <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1842canton.html>

What opinions do the people of Guangzhou hold about the British? What does it reveal about the attitude of the Chinese citizens toward the Treaty of Nanjing?

CHINA

Source 4: Excerpts from the Treaty of Nanjing (1842)

Article I

There shall henceforth be Peace and Friendship between ... (England and China) and between their respective Subjects, who shall enjoy full security and protection for their persons and property within the Dominions of the other.

Article II

His Majesty the Emperor of China agrees that British Subjects, with their families and establishments, shall be allowed to reside, for the purpose of carrying on their commercial pursuits, without molestation or restraint at the Cities and Towns of Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo and Shanghai.

Article III

It being obviously necessary and desirable that British Subjects should have some Port where they may careen 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 ... the Island of Hong-Kong, to be possessed in perpetuity by her ... and to be governed by such Laws and Regulations as Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain ... shall see fit to direct.

Article V

The Government of China having compelled the British Merchants trading at Canton to deal exclusively with certain Chinese Merchants called Hong merchants (or Cohong) 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 Three Millions of Dollars, on account of Debts due to British Subjects by some of the said Hong Merchants (or Cohong) who have become insolvent, and who owe very large sums of money to Subjects of Her Britannic Majesty ...

Summarize the main provisions of the treaty? Why might this treaty be called “unequal”? Who in England stands to benefit? Will any Chinese people benefit?

JAPAN

Source 5: Perry's Letter in Connection with the Delivery of a White Flag, July 14, 1853

This letter was sent by US naval officer Commodore Perry to the Japanese, requiring that they change laws that had been in place since the 1600s. These seclusion laws isolated Japan and forbid nearly all trade and interaction with foreigners (with a few exceptions—the Chinese, Koreans and the Dutch were allowed to trade at specific port locations).

“For years several countries have applied for trade, but you have opposed them on account of a national law. You have thus acted against divine principles and your sin cannot be greater than it is . . . If you are still to disagree we would then take up arms and inquire into the sin against the divine principles, and you would also make sure of your law and fight in defense. When one considers such an occasion, however, one will realize the victory will naturally be ours and you shall by no means overcome us. If in such a situation you seek for a reconciliation, you should put up the white flag that we have recently presented to you, and we would accordingly stop firing and conclude peace with you, turning our battleships aside.

COMMODORE PERRY”

Source: Francis L. Hawks, compiler; *Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to China and Japan, performed in the years 1852, 1853, and 1854, under the Command of Commodore M. C. Perry United States Navy, by Order of the Government of the United States*, I. Washington, D.C., A.O.P. Nicholson, Printer, 1856, pp.256-59.
<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/japan/japanworkbook/modernhist/perry.html>

According to Matthew Perry, what has been the impact of the seclusion laws? What does Perry demand? What does he claim will be the consequences if his demands are not met?

JAPAN

Source 6: The Charter Oath of 1868

In 1868, Japan abandoned the Tokugawa Shogunate which had controlled the country since 1600. The Tokugawa Order was a rigid hierarchical society centered on the samurai culture. In 1868, the power of the shogun (military ruler) was transferred to the emperor and this was known, not as a revolution, but as “restoration” of imperial power because the emperor had long been a figurehead. The following declaration, often called the "Charter Oath of 1868" is one of the first documents issued in the name of the new emperor (he was only 15 at the time); it was written by the leaders of the new Meiji Restoration who were former samurai. It reveals much about the new society they hoped to create. This was a time of uncertainty and this was the first public statement of the goals and ideals of the new regime.

“By this oath we set up as our aim the establishment of the national weal [a prosperous state] on a broad basis and the framing of a constitution and laws.

1. Deliberative assemblies shall be widely established and all matters decided by public discussion
2. All classes, high and low, shall unite in vigorously carrying out the administration of affairs of state.
3. The common people, no less than the civil and military officials, shall each be allowed to pursue his own calling so that there may be no discontent.
4. Evil customs of the past shall be broken off and everything based upon the just laws of Nature.
5. Knowledge shall be sought throughout the world so as to strengthen the foundations of imperial rule.”

Source: *Sources of Japanese Tradition*, volume II, compiled by Ryusaku Tsunoda, Wm. Theodore de Bary and Donald Keene (N.Y.:Columbia University Press, 1958) p. 137.
(<http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/japan/japanworkbook/modernhist/meiji.html#essay>)

Summarize the main goals of this new society? How do these goals reflect Western thought, particularly, Enlightenment thought? What does this reveal about the Meiji Restoration?

JAPAN

Source 7: Imperial Proclamation of War by Japan against Russia, 1904

After nearly 30 years of rapid industrialization, around 1900, Japan finally began to export finished goods such as textiles. As the military modernized, Japan began to build its own empire. In 1904, Japan and Russia came into conflict over Korea in the Russo-Japanese War, in which the Japanese were victorious. It served as the first time in the modern era when an Asian power defeated a Western power in a major conflict.

“We, by the Grace of Heaven, Emperor of Japan, seated on the Throne occupied by the same Dynasty from time immemorial, do hereby make proclamation to all Our loyal and brave subjects as follows:

We hereby declare war against Russia and We command our army and navy to carry on hostilities against that Empire with all their strength, and We also command all Our competent authorities to make every effort . . . to attain the national aim with all the means within the limits of the law of nations . . .

The integrity of Korea is a matter of constant concern to this Empire, not only because of Our traditional relations with that country, but because the separate existence of Korea is essential to the safety of Our realm ...

We cannot in the least admit that Russia had from the first any serious or genuine desire for peace. She has rejected the proposals of Our Government; the safety of Korea is in danger, the vital interests of Our Empire are menaced. The guarantees for the future which we have failed to secure by peaceful negotiations We can only now seek by an appeal to arms.

Source: <http://www.russojapanesewar.com/imp-proc-04.html>

What reasons are given for the declaration of war? What does this reveal about the attitude of the Japanese government?

CHINA

Source 8: Photographs from China in the early 20th century

The Boxer Rebellion took place in 1900. It was a part of an anti-foreigner, anti-Christianity uprising. They believed they could not be harmed by the weapons of the foreign powers and they called to “support the Qing, exterminate the foreigners.” This a photo shows foreign troops in Beijing’s Forbidden City during the Boxer Rebellion. European powers had intervened to stop violence against foreigners and secure their trade status and spheres of influence in China.



Sources: http://teachpol.tcnj.edu/amer_pol_hist/thumbnail258.html

<http://images.china.cn/images1/200710/408706.jpg>

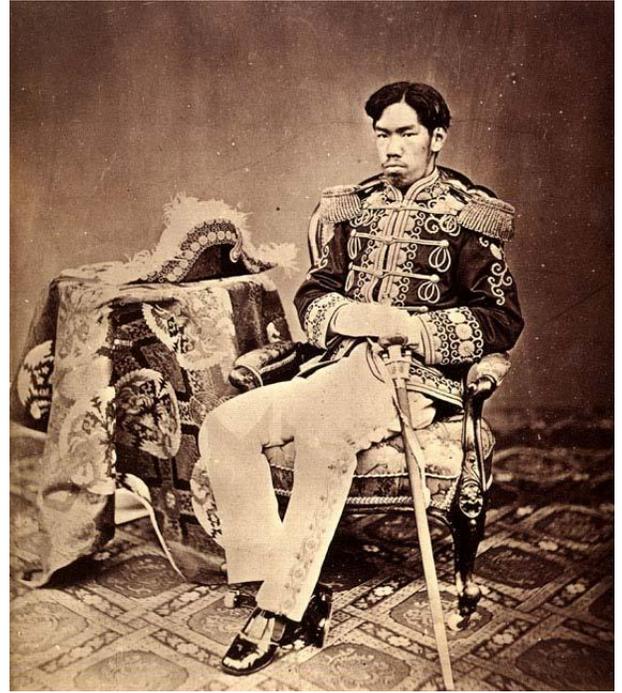
This second photo shows the young Puyi, the last emperor of China, in traditional dress before his overthrow in the nationalist Revolution of 1911. The Qing Dynasty would end the dynastic cycle.

JAPAN

Source 9: Photos of Japan at the Turn of the Century



Kunikazu Utagawa, *View of Shimbashi Ginza Street*, Tokyo, 1903 (note the rising sun flag in the backdrop) Source: <http://www.nyu.edu/pages/greyart/exhibits/shiseido/meiji10.htm>



The pioneer Japanese photographer Uchida Kyuichi took these rare formal portraits of the Meiji emperor 1873.

Source: MIT Visualizing Cultures
http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/throwing_off_asia_01/toa_vis_02.html



Transportation and communications were vital to the development of a modern economy, and by the 1870s Japan had made dramatic strides in this direction by early introduction of steamships, railways, and a telegraph system. As the following prints reveal, such “prosperity” took place in a setting of increasing Westernization in architecture, clothing, and the like. Source: MIT Visualizing Cultures http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/throwing_off_asia_01/toa_vis_04.html

CHINA (Optional Resource)

Source 9: An excerpt from Feng Guifen's "On the Adoption of Western Learning"

In the aftermath of the Qing defeat in the Opium War (1839-42) and the Arrow War (also known as the Second Opium War, 1856-1859), a number of Qing officials put forth and put into action proposals meant to increase the empire's military strength by adopting Western military and industrial technology and other Western techniques. Feng Guifen (1809-1874) was one of the leaders of the movement calling for adopting Western technology. He was a classically educated scholar and successful government official and advisor.

Document Excerpts with Questions (Longer selection follows this section)

From *Changing China: Readings in the History of China from the Opium War to the Present*, by J. Mason Gentzler (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977), 70-71. ©1977 Praeger Publishers. Reproduced with the permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

Excerpts from "On the Adoption of Western Learning" By Feng Guifen

Books on mathematics, mechanics, optics, light, chemistry, and others all contain the ultimate principles of understanding things. Most of this information is unavailable to people in China. ...

I have heard that with their new methods the Westerners have found that the movements of the earth conform closely to those of the heavens. This can be of assistance in fixing the calendar. ... I have heard that the Westerners' method of clearing sand from harbors is very effective. ... This can be of assistance to keep the water flowing. Also, for agricultural and sericultural tools, and things required for the various crafts, they mostly use mechanical wheels, which require little energy but accomplish much. ...

There are many intelligent people in China. Surely there are some who, having learned from the barbarians, can surpass them ...

Source: http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/ps/china/feng_guifen_western_learning.pdf

