**Sources Template Modify as Necessary**

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| **Document A:** **The Treaty of Nanking, 1842\*, \*Source:** Ian Copland, *The Burden of Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 32-33.*At the end of the first Opium War Britain forced the Chinese to accede to the Treaty of Nanking which not only imposed heavy fines to recompense the British for their presumed financial losses during the conflict, but also completely destroyed the restrictions of the Treaty Port system and opened China up to increased foreign exploitation.*ARTICLE IIHis 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 Mercantile pursuits, without molestation or restraint at the Cities and Towns of Canton, Amoy, Foo-chow-fu, Ningpo, and Shanghai . . . .ARTICLE IIIIt being obviously necessary and desirable, that British Subjects should have some Port whereat they may careen [keel to one side] 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, etc., 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, etc., shall see fit to direct.ARTICLE IVThe Emperor of China agrees to pay the sum of Six Millions of Dollars as the value of Opium which was delivered up at Canton in the month of March 1839. . . .ARTICLE VThe 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. . . .ARTICLE VIThe 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 Twelve Millions of Dollars on account of the Expenses incurred . . . .ARTICLE XHis 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 [proclaimed] for general information . . . . |

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| **Document B:** **Chinese Views of the Opium Trade, Source:** Bonnie Smith, *Imperialism: A History in Documents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 35-36*British efforts to find a way out of the trade restrictions imposed by the Treaty Port system eventually led to the expansion of the opium trade with disastrous results for China.  Chinese bureaucrats were well aware of the dangers of the opium trade, both in terms of increased social and economic problems.*At the beginning, opium smoking was confined to the fops of wealthy families who took up the habit as a form of conspicuous consumption; even they knew that they should not indulge in it to the greatest extreme. Later, people of all social strata - from government officials and members of the gentry to craftsmen, merchants, entertainers, and servants, and even women, Buddhist monks and nuns, and Taoist priests - took up the habit and openly bought and equipped themselves with smoking instruments. Even in the center of our dynasty - the nation’s capital and its surrounding areas - some of the inhabitants have also been contaminated by this dreadful poison.The inflow of opium from foreign countries has steadily increased in recent years . . . . Conspiring with sea patrol and coast guards [whom they bribe], unscrupulous merchants at Canton use such small boats as “sneaking dragons” and “fast crabs” to ship silver out and bring opium in. From the third to the eleventh year of Taokuang [1823-31] the annual outflow of silver amounted to more than 17 million taels. From the eleventh to the fourteenth year [1831-34] it reached more than 20 million taels, and since the fourteenth year [1834] it has been more than 30 million taels. Large as they are, these figures do not cover the import of opium in other ports such as those in Fukien, Chekiang, Shantung, and Tiensin, which amounts to tens of thousands if taels per year.Thus we are using the financial resources of China to fill up the bottomless hole in foreign countries. |
| **Document C:** **Five Rules to Regulate Foreigners, China 1759\****Eager to minimize the impact of foreign ideas and concepts on Chinese culture and society, Imperial authorities created the nucleus of what became known as the Treaty Port system in the 14th-15th centuries.  Although applied equally to all non-Chinese merchants hoping to do business in China, beginning in the 16th century European merchants found the restrictions of the Treaty Port system especially galling and continually tried to infiltrate additional ports.   In response the Chinese government issued the following set of regulations.*         Since foreigners are outside the sphere of civilization, there is no need for them to have any contact with our people other than business transactions, whenever they come to China for trade purposes . . . .The following rules, in the judgement of your humble servant, are both simple and practical enough to be adopted.  They are presented here for Your Majesty’s consideration.         1.  Foreigners should never be allowed to stay at Canton during the winter.Canton being the capital of a province, is too important a place to allow foreigners to stay there on a permanent basis, since permanent residence will enable them to spy on our activities.  From now on, when a foreign trader arrives at Canton, the Co-hong merchants should sell all of his goods as quickly as possible, pay him immediately . . . so that he can return home . . . .         2.  While in Canton, foreigners should be ordered to reside in Co-hong headquarters so that their conduct can be carefully observed and strictly regulated.....These foreigners often become drunk and commit breaches of the peace; sometimes they also visit houses of prostitution.  Their behavior in this regard is of course extremely improper.         . . . . Among the foreigners the British are the most violent and are prone to recreate incidents.         **\*Source:** Bonnie Smith, *Imperialism: A History in Documents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 25 |

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| **Document D:** The Second Opium War: 165 Years Later, OriginsMarch 3, 1857 marked the unofficial beginning of the so-called Second Opium War (officially 1856-1860), a conflict that not only forced that [narcotic drug](https://origins.osu.edu/listen/prologued/2021) deep into [China](https://origins.osu.edu/index.php/article/china-dreams-and-road-revival)’s politics, public health, and economics but also cemented the country’s status as both a prize and a battleground for Euro-American imperialist powers.The conflict’s origins trace back to the late eighteenth century, when Great Britain’s acute trade imbalance with China, then under the rule of the Qing dynasty, left it scrambling to access that nation’s porcelains, silks, and luxury goods but unable to sell in return the goods generated by its nascent industrial revolution.[A depiction of British opium ships at Lintin, China, 1824](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3AWilliam_John_Huggins_-_The_opium_ships_at_Lintin%2C_China%2C_1824.jpg).A British trade mission was famously rebuffed by the Qianlong emperor (r. 1735-1796), who declared, “Our celestial empire possesses all things in abundance and lacks no product within its borders. There is therefore no need to import the manufactures of barbarians in exchange for our own products.”Unwilling to accept an economic playing field tipped in China’s favor, Great Britain found a solution in the latent demand for [opium](https://origins.osu.edu/review/opiums-long-shadow-rimner-opium-wars-china-india-addiction-opiate) in China. Over the course of the early nineteenth century, British traders exported it in skyrocketing quantities in open defiance of Qing laws prohibiting the drug.[Commissioner Lin Zexu (1785-1850) destroying British opium in 1839.](https://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/opium_wars_01/ow1_gallery.html)After one Chinese trade commissioner captured and publicly destroyed British opium stocks, Queen Victoria’s government sent warships to China, resulting in what became known as the [First Opium War](https://origins.osu.edu/listen/prologued/episode-new-and-deadly-menace) of 1839-1842. Ultimately, the Treaty of Nanjing (1842) formalized China’s defeat with a series of humiliating provisions, including the payment of an indemnity and the cession of [Hong Kong](https://origins.osu.edu/article/hong-kong-protest-china-extradition-umbrella) Island to the British. The Qing court also agreed to open five ports to foreign trade, marking the end of its traditional policy of non-engagement with the West.[The Treaty of Nanjing (1842).](https://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/opium_wars_01/ow1_gallery.html)The First Opium War established China’s importance to the Euro-American imperialist powers and laid the groundwork for the next collision, which erupted just over a decade later, on March 3, 1857. Although fighting had already begun some months earlier, on this date, the British Parliament dissolved over disagreements regarding the proper course of action, reconvening a year later with a stronger pro-war majority.[South view of the Summer Palace (Yuanmingyuan) in 1783 engraving.](https://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/garden_perfect_brightness_02/ymy2_gallery_1.html)In the most well-known phase of this Second Opium War, European troops [looted and demolished](https://origins.osu.edu/index.php/article/china-dreams-and-road-revival) the Summer Palace, an eighteenth-century retreat the Qing court typically occupied during the warmest part of the year.[Summer Palace after being ransacked by European forces, 1873 photo.](https://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/garden_perfect_brightness_03/ymy3_gallery_1.html)The Second Opium War resulted in the Treaty of Tianjin (1858), which imposed another indemnity on China, opened ten additional ports to foreign trade, allowed British, French, Russian, and American representatives to establish a diplomatic presence in China’s capital, Beijing, and permitted foreigners to sail and settle freely in the Chinese interior.In the wake of this settlement, China legalized the trade and consumption of opium, setting the stage for the spread of opium smoking throughout the population. Historians debate the relative harms of the drug from the standpoints of public health and fiscal stability, but there is no question that the struggle to rid China of opium was a major social initiative and policy goal of all political contenders and regimes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[Signing of the Treaty of Tianjin.](https://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/garden_perfect_brightness_03/ymy3_gallery_1.html)Despite its wide-ranging impacts on Chinese politics, public health, and international relations in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, observers then and now have seldom paid much attention to the Second Opium War.In contrast to the First Opium War, which forms the subject of an exhaustive body of award-winning scholarly and popular literature, the most recent major English-language book to tackle the Second Opium War appeared more than two decades ago. When the Second Opium War has been remembered, its meaning and legacy has often been twisted.[A depiction of the East India Company's ships destroying the Chinese war junks in Anson's Bay during the First Opium War, 1841.](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ADestroying_Chinese_war_junks%2C_by_E._Duncan_%281843%29.jpg)At the time, it represented only another flashpoint of China’s so-called [Century of Humiliation (1842-1945)](https://origins.osu.edu/index.php/article/china-dreams-and-road-revival) at the hands of the Western powers. The Treaty of Tianjin was but one of many unequal agreements that the imperialist states of Europe and America imposed.From the perspective of the European belligerents, the resulting legalization of the opium trade changed little, as they had already proven their willingness to defy Chinese law in pursuit of profit. In fact, the conflict coincided with ventures they deemed far more important to their imperial interests, including the [Crimean War](https://origins.osu.edu/connecting-history/51314-top-ten-origins-stories-crimea) (1853-1856), Anglo-Persian War (1856-1857), and the Sepoy Rebellion (1857).More recently, some historians of China have regarded the Second Opium War as a relatively minor event next to other late nineteenth-century natural and human catastrophes, such as the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864) that resulted in the death of approximately twenty million people.[Opium smokers in nineteenth-century China.](https://visualizingcultures.mit.edu/opium_wars_01/ow1_gallery.html)For one thing, there has been a tendency to write opium out of the story entirely, thereby obscuring (and absolving) the central role of Western imperialism. In the twentieth century, for example, historians sometimes referred to it simply as the “Arrow War”—referencing a British ship seized by China on suspicion of piracy—reducing its complex causes to only its precipitating event.Frequently-used terms like the “Second Anglo-Chinese War” and “Second Sino-British War” have also conveyed the impression that it was incited less by Western states’ deliberate drugging of China in the name of profit than by a minor rogue ship or breakdown of relations between sovereign states. Worse still, some historians have even labeled the war the “Anglo-French expedition to China,” which erases the reality of Western hostility altogether.[British troops take Beijing, 1860.](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ASecond_Opium_War_British_Beijing_1860.jpg)One consequence of the tendency to minimize the importance of the Second Opium War has been the periodic repurposing of its name to describe other events entirely. In the 1950s, for example, observers of [communist China](https://origins.osu.edu/index.php/review/modern-china-and-its-institutions) described Chairman [Mao Zedong](https://origins.osu.edu/index.php/milestones/august-2016-chinese-cultural-revolution-fifty)’s campaign to eradicate narcotics from Chinese society as a “Second Opium War.”Today, reporters, journalists, and others occasionally use the term to refer to the export of fentanyl and other synthetic painkillers from China to the United States—a practice implicated in the surging [opioid epidemic](https://anchor.fm/originsosu/). The characterization of this traffic as a “Second Opium War” inverts the directionality of the nineteenth-century illegal drug trade. It mistakenly implies a balancing of the scales of historical justice: having been the victim of smuggling on the part of great powers of the West in the nineteenth century, China is represented as the origin of some of the most lethal mind-altering substances in circulation today.Such careless misuse of history is a powerful argument for recalling the events of the Second Opium War of 1856-1860 and reflecting on the true nature of their causes and legacies.*March, 2022* |