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Teacher Overview

[Go directly to student-facing materials!](#)

SQ 8. How did Europeans, the Japanese, and the United States gain, consolidate, and maintain power in China?

Unit Essential Question(s): How do nations seek power and at what cost? [Link to Unit](#)

Supporting Question(s): How did Europeans, the Japanese, and the United States gain, consolidate, and maintain power in China?

Objective(s):

- **Contextualize** imperialism in China.
- **Describe** how Europeans and the Japanese gained, consolidated, and maintained power in China.



Vocabulary

The following words are introduced or reinforced in this lesson. Reference the unit vocabulary tracker for more information. [Click here](#) for the New Visions Global History glossary.

Word/Phrase (part of speech)	Definition
addict	a person who depends on something, such as a drug, that is usually harmful and cannot be easily given up
addictive	tending to cause one to become addicted
artillery	large weapons used in land battles, such as cannons or rockets

astronomically	enormously; immensely
barter	to trade services or things for other services or things without using money
bribe	something promised or given to a person as a way of getting that person to do a certain thing
China	a country in eastern Asia. China is currently called the People's Republic of China. Beijing is the capital of China.
compensation	something that you get in return for doing something
confiscate	to take by the power of authority
concession	something given away
consolidate	to join together or combine
enormous	very large in size or amount; huge
exploitation	the selfish or unfair using of someone or something for one's own advantage
extraterritoriality	the state of being exempt from local law
gain	to get
Hong Kong	a region off the southern coast of China. Hong Kong was once a British colony but was returned to Chinese rule in 1997
imperialism	the policy of extending a country or empire's power and influence over another by taking over its land and/or government
maintain	to keep in good condition
missionary	a person sent to promote a religion in a foreign place
monopoly	the control of trade or business by one company
musket	a heavy gun with a long barrel. Muskets were carried on the shoulder. They were used over three hundred years ago, before rifles were invented
opium	an addictive drug derived from one variety of poppy, containing various narcotic substances, and producing calm, stupor, sleep, or relief from pain
Opium Wars	(1839-1842; 1856-1860) two wars fought in the mid-19th century between China and the British Empire over the British trade of opium and China's independence
point of view	an opinion; a claim
poppy	a plant with brightly colored flowers that is grown in mild climates and can be used to create the drugs opium and heroine
possession	something that is owned
scheme	a plan or plot

smuggle	to bring in or take out in secret
sphere of influence	a country or an area of a country that another country has the power to affect what happens there
trade imbalance	a situation in which one country sells more goods and makes more money in another country than the other country sells and makes in the first country
Treaty of Nanjing	(1842) the agreement signed at the end of the first Opium War that was the first of many unequal treaties China was forced to sign in the late 19th and early 20th centuries
unequal treaty	an agreement that greatly favors one country over another
victim	a person who is hurt or killed by someone or something
woolen fabric	cloth made of sheep's wool

Formative Assessment Possible Responses

These responses represent possible answers to the formative assessment tasks in this lesson. They are not the only correct answers. Create your own list of possible responses before using this resource with students to anticipate student misconceptions and adjust your instruction.

Event: *British Imperialism in India*

Who?

individuals, groups of people, regions, nations involved

Countries that took advantage of the Chinese- European nations (Great Britain, France, Portugal, Russia, Germany, Italy, Austria-Hungarian Empire, Belgium, Spain, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway), the United States, and the Japanese
China, Qing Dynasty

When?

date, year, era, "before __," "after __"

Opium war starting in 1839 and continuing into the early 20th centuries

Where?

continents, regions, countries, geographic features nearby, describe the geography if relevant

China

How?

describe the process that took place

Imperial countries defeated China militarily then forced them to sign unequal treaties that gave them trading rights and legal privileges in China in spheres of influence
Great Britain, sold opium in exchange for tea and other goods

Why?

use words and phrases like "led to," "because, and so to show connections between events and to explain why

To gain access to natural resources, but more importantly to sell goods to China's large population, so companies could make a profit

Combined Contextualization:

Why did it happen **when** and **where** it happened?

Combine your responses from above to contextualize the event.

In the 19th century, imperialist nations, starting with Great Britain, took military action against the Chinese so they could gain access to trade in China. The Opium Wars that started in 1839 were the first major defeat for the Chinese and after that war the British forced the Chinese to sign the Treaty of Nanjing, an unequal treaty that gave the British trading rights and legal privileges in areas of the country called spheres of influence. Other nations in Europe, Japan, and the United States also won victories against the Chinese and carved out their own part of China and its trade.

NYS Social Studies Framework

Key Idea	Conceptual Understandings	Content Specifications
10.4 IMPERIALISM: Western European interactions with Africa and Asia shifted from limited regional contacts along the coast to greater influence and connections throughout these regions. Competing industrialized states sought to control and transport raw materials and create new markets across the world. (Standards: 2, 3, 4; Themes: MOV, TCC, GEO, GOV, EXCH)	10.4a European industrialized states and Japan sought to play a dominant role in the world and to control natural resources for political, economic, and cultural reasons.	Students will trace how imperial powers politically and economically controlled territories and people, including direct and indirect rule in Africa (South Africa, Congo, and one other territory), India, Indochina, and spheres of influence in China.

Social Studies Practices

NYS Social Studies Practices	New Visions Student Social Studies Practices			
<p>Gathering, Using and Interpreting Evidence (A2, A5)</p> <p>Chronological Reasoning and Causation (B1)</p> <p>Comparison and Contextualization (C5)</p> <p>Geographic Reasoning (D1)</p>	 <p>Think Like a Geographer Predict</p>	 <p>Contextualize</p>	 <p>Categorize</p>	 <p>Corroborate</p>

NYS Common Core Learning Standards

Reading	Writing	Speaking and Listening
<p>Craft and Structure: 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.</p>	<p>Text Types & Purposes: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.9-10.1: Write arguments focused on <i>discipline-specific content</i>.</p>	<p>Comprehension and Collaboration: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9-10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.</p>

Associated Classroom Posters

[Student Social Studies Practices Poster](#)
[New Visions Enduring Issues Tips and List](#)

How did Europeans, the Japanese, and the United States gain, consolidate, and maintain power in China?

Objective:

- **Contextualize** imperialism in China.
- **Describe** how Europeans, the Japanese, and the United States gained, consolidated, and maintained power in China.



Introduction

➔ **Directions:** Examine the maps below and complete the See-Think-Wonder chart.

Think Like a Geographer

East Asia, 1789



Source: Timemaps.com

East Asia, 1837



Source: Timemaps.com

East Asia, 1871



Source: Timemaps.com

East Asia, 1914



Source: Timemaps.com

See

What do you see in the maps?

Think

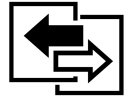
What do you think changed in East Asia from the 17th to 20th centuries?

Wonder

What questions do you have about the information in the maps?



Categorize



Corroborate

Document Analysis Activity: How did Europeans, the Japanese, and the United States gain, consolidate, and maintain power in China?

➔ **Directions:** Examine the videos, images, and text on imperialism in China and annotate as you read by placing a “G” next to examples of methods that the British used to gain power in India, a “C” next to examples of methods they used to consolidate their power, and an “M” next to examples of methods used to maintain power and add information to [this graphic organizer](#).

First Opium War (1839-1842)

 Watch this [History Channel Clip about the Opium Wars from Mankind: The Story of All of Us](#) and [this clip from from another documentary on the Opium Wars \(0:35-7:20\)](#) then read the information below.

In the 19th century, the British had a trade imbalance with China, meaning that they were buying a lot of Chinese goods, but not selling very much to the Chinese. The main reason for this imbalance was that the British became a nation of tea drinkers and the demand for Chinese tea rose astronomically. It is estimated that the average London worker spent five percent of his or her total household budget on tea. To prevent a trade imbalance, the British tried to sell more of their own products to China, but there was not much demand for products like heavy woolen fabrics in a country accustomed to either cotton padding or silk.

Though the Qing Emperor declared that his country had no interest in European goods, the British found one product that they could profit from in China: opium. Opium is an addictive drug that comes from the poppy plant and is usually smoked. It is grown in regions of Central Asia that during the 18th, 19th, and part of the 20th century were a part of the British colony of India. The British did all they could to increase the trade. They bribed officials, helped the Chinese work out elaborate smuggling schemes to get the opium into China's interior, and distributed free samples of the drug to innocent victims.



Painting of The East India Company's iron steam ship *Nemesis*, commanded by Lieutenant W. H. Hall, with boats from the *Sulphur*, *Calliope*, *Larne* and *Starling*, destroying the Chinese war junks in Anson's Bay, on 7 January 1841 during the first Opium War.

[Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons and is in the public domain

The cost to China was enormous. The drug weakened a large percentage of the population (some estimate that 10 percent of the population regularly used opium by the late nineteenth century), and silver began to flow out of the country to pay for the opium. Many of the economic problems China faced later were either directly or indirectly traced to the opium trade. The government debated whether to legalize the drug through a government monopoly like that on salt, hoping to barter Chinese goods in return for opium. But since the Chinese outlawed the drug and in 1838 the emperor decided to send one of his most able officials, Lin Tse-hsu (Lin Zexu, 1785-1850), to Canton (Guangzhou) to do whatever necessary to end the traffic forever.

Lin was able to put his first two proposals into effect easily. Addicts were rounded up, forcibly treated, and domestic drug dealers were harshly punished. His third objective — to confiscate foreign stores and force foreign merchants to sign pledges of good conduct, agreeing never to trade in opium and to be punished by Chinese law if ever found in violation — eventually brought war. Opinion in England was divided: Some British felt morally uneasy about the trade, but they were overruled by those who wanted to increase England's trade with China and teach the Chinese a lesson.

Western military weapons, including percussion lock muskets, heavy artillery, and paddlewheel gunboats, were far superior to China's weapons. The result was a disaster for the Chinese. By the summer of 1842 British ships were victorious and were even preparing to shell the old capital, Nanking (Nanjing), in central China. The emperor therefore had no choice but to accept the British demands and sign a peace agreement. This agreement, the first of the "unequal treaties," opened China to the West and marked the beginning of Western exploitation of the nation.

1. What is opium? Why was it valuable for the British?

2. How did the Chinese government respond to the British opium trade?

3. Who won the Opium Wars? Why were they victorious?

Treaty of Nanjing, 1842

The Treaty of Nanjing was signed at the end of the first Opium War and was the first of many **unequal treaties** that the Chinese were forced to sign with imperialist nations.

The treaty stated that:

- the British gained possession of the island of Hong Kong which it held until 1997
- several Chinese cities were forced to trade with British merchants
- the Chinese had to pay the British 21 million ounces of silver
- British citizens gained the right of **extraterritoriality**.

Extraterritoriality is the state of being exempt from local laws, so the British, while in China, could follow their own laws and could not be arrested or punished by the Chinese.

- Christian missionaries were allowed to preach in China
- the British would have exclusive rights (as opposed to other nations) to trade with the Chinese in British “**spheres of influence**.” A sphere of influence is a country or an area of a country that another country has the power to affect what happens there.



A French political cartoon from 1898 entitled, “China- the cake of kings and...of emperors.” [Image](#) is courtesy of wikimedia commons and is in the public domain

4. Identify three ways the British benefited from the Treaty of Nanjing.

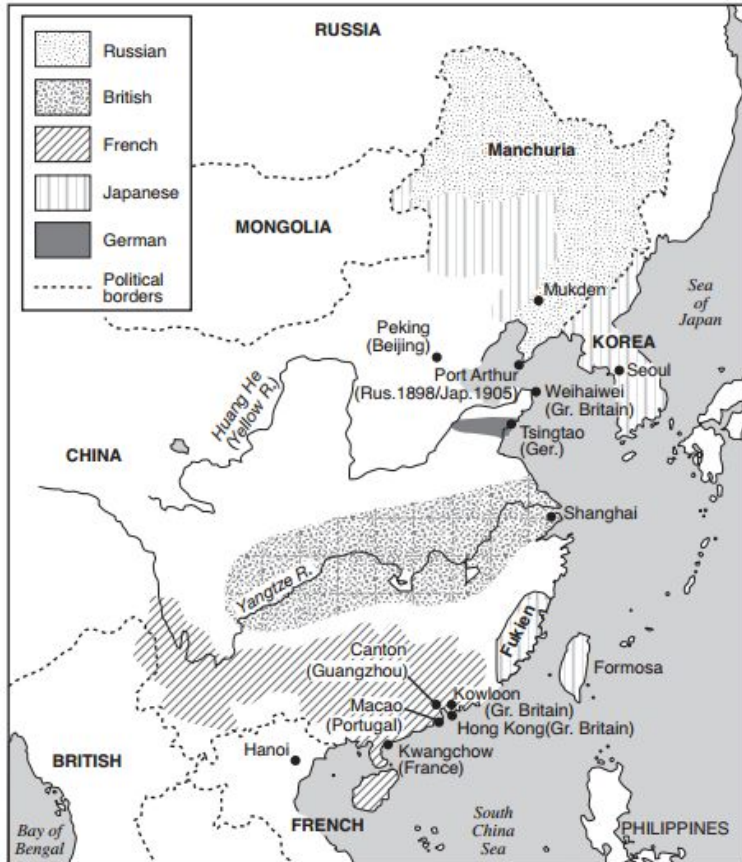
5. What is extraterritoriality?

6. What is a “sphere of influence”?

Other Unequal Treaties

Between 1842 and 1933, the Chinese were defeated in a number of wars with European powers, the United States, and Japan. Each conflict ended with treaties which included concessions similar to the Nanjing Treaty. They resulted in more Chinese ports opening for trade, territory given to the winners of the war, and the right of **extraterritoriality** for the citizens of more nations. Most of these countries were given **spheres of influence** in Chinese cities in which to trade.

Spheres of Influence in China, 1895–1914



Source: Historical Maps on File (adapted) from the NYS Global History and Geography Regents Exam, June 2012.

List of Some of the Unequal Treaties

Treaty	Year	Imposing Nation
Treaty of Nanjing	1842	British Empire
Treaty of Wanghia	1844	United States
Treaty of Whampoa	1844	French colonial empire
Treaty of Canton	1847	United Kingdoms of Sweden and Norway
Treaty of Aigun	1858	Russian Empire
Treaty of Tientsin	1858	French colonial empire, British Empire, Russian Empire, United States
Convention of Peking	1860	British Empire, French colonial empire, Russian Empire
Treaty of Tientsin (1885)	1885	French colonial empire
Sino-Portuguese Treaty of Peking	1887	Kingdom of Portugal
Treaty of Shimonoseki	1895	Empire of Japan
Li-Lobanov Treaty	1896	Russian Empire
Boxer Protocol	1901	British Empire, United States, Empire of Japan, Russian Empire, French colonial empire, German Empire, Kingdom of Italy, Austro-Hungarian Empire, Kingdom of Belgium, Kingdom of Spain, Kingdom of the Netherlands
Simla Accord	1914	British Empire
Twenty-One Demands	1915	Empire of Japan

Source of list: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unequal_treaty

7. If you were a European, American, or Japanese merchant, what might your point of view be concerning the unequal treaties with China?

8. If you were a Chinese person, what might your point of view be concerning the unequal treaties and the Chinese government that signed them?

SQ 8. How did Europeans, the Japanese, and the United States gain, consolidate, and maintain power in China?



Contextualize

➡**Directions:** Respond to the questions below to contextualize European and Japanese imperialism in China and complete [this graphic organizer](#).

Event: *European and Japanese Imperialism in China*

Who?

individuals, groups of people, regions, nations involved

When?

date, year, era, "before __" "after __"

Where?

continents, regions, countries, geographic features nearby, describe the geography if relevant

How?

describe the process that took place

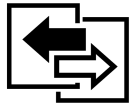
Why?

use words and phrases like "led to," "because," and so to show connections between events and to explain why

Combined Contextualization:

Why did it happen **when** and **where** it happened?

Combine your responses from above to contextualize the event.



Corroborate