

Name: _____ Date: _____ Assignment # _____

Imperialism in China

Directions: Read the following handout on China from the late 1700s until the early 1900s, answering the questions as you go along. Then, complete the timeline.

Part I: China and the West

By the late 1700s, two developments were underway that would have major effects on China's relations with the West. First, the Qing dynasty entered a long period of decline. Burdened with high taxes and limited land, the increasing peasant population had a hard time growing enough food to survive. When floods and droughts caused famine, peasant revolts broke out.

A second development was the Industrial Revolution in Western Europe. The Industrial Revolution increased the military power of European nations. With modern fleets, these strong nations could reach distant places. The British used their military strength to back their demands for expanded trading rights with China.

Part II: International Conflicts

During the late 1700s, Europeans refused to kowtow, or bow low, to the Chinese emperor. The kowtow was a symbol which showed that foreigners accepted their inferior status. Also, Europeans resented being restricted to Macao and Guangzhou (two port cities in China near Hong Kong). They wanted to be accepted as equal partners in trade, and they demanded the right to trade at other Chinese ports.

Thus, the conflict with the West began with the **first Opium War** (1839–42). The British ran a profitable opium (a type of drug) trade in China. Many Chinese citizens became addicted to opium, and China wished to halt the trade. In 1839, the Chinese destroyed a British shipment of opium, and war broke out. With their superior military technology, the British soon defeated the Chinese.

1. What were Macao and Guangzhou?

2. What does the answer from #1 have to do with the Europeans?

Part III: The Unequal Treaties

The **Treaty of Nanjing**, which ended the Opium War in 1842, was the first of many "unequal treaties." In it, the Chinese had to accept British terms for peace. The emperor agreed to pay for the opium that had been destroyed. He also agreed to give Britain the island of Hong Kong and to open other ports to British trade. In the late 1800s, China had disputes with France, Russia, Germany, and the United States, and those countries concluded similar treaties with the Qing emperor.

Also, Westerners won the right to **extraterritoriality**. Under this authority, Westerners accused of a crime in China could be tried in their own courts instead of in Chinese courts. By the late 1800s, the Western powers had carved up China into **spheres of influence**. A sphere of influence is an area in which a foreign nation has special economic privileges, such as the right to build railroads and factories. Economic rights also gave Westerners political influence.

3. Define what a sphere of influence is.

Part IV: Internal Rebellions

Many in China disliked the growing foreign involvement, especially since the Qing Dynasty had begun many Western reforms, including western-style schools and technology such as modern weapons. In addition, the Chinese peasants were angry about poverty in the countryside. People around the country began to rebel. In the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, bands of Chinese attacked and killed at least 250 foreigners as well as Chinese Christians. After European, Russian, U.S., and Japanese forces put down the Rebellion, those foreign powers gained even more control over China.

Part V: Chinese Revolution

Several Chinese groups continued to fight for change in the Qing Dynasty's weak government. They finally succeeded with a revolution that began in 1911. The last Qing emperor stepped down in 1912. Dr. Sun Yatsen and his Kuomintang (Nationalist Party) declared China a republic. For several years, however, different leaders fought for control of China. Sun Yatsen set out his goals of "Three Principles of the People." These goals included nationalism, by ending foreign domination and making China a unified nation; a democracy for China; and a decent living for all Chinese.

However, Sun had little chance to achieve his goals. A powerful general kicked Sun out of office in 1912 and warlords were eventually battling for power.

4. Which political party did Sun Yatsen lead?

Part VI: Nationalists and Communists

In 1928 the Nationalists, a group led by Chiang Kai-shek, took control of China. (Sun Yatsen appointed Chiang to command the Nationalist army before Sun died in 1925). During the late 1920s and 1930s, Mao Zedong emerged as the leader of the Chinese Communists. Mao believed that the Communists would succeed in China only by winning the support of the peasants. He insisted, therefore, that Communist forces treat the peasants fairly and politely. Unlike other Chinese armies, the Communists paid peasants for the food their forces required. With the support of the peasants, Mao's army grew in numbers.

Chiang launched a fierce campaign against the Communists. Greatly outnumbered, the Communists fled from Chiang's armies in 1934. Led by Mao, they walked more than 6,000 miles from southeastern China to the remote northwest. The chase lasted more than a year. About 90,000 Communists with their families set out on the dangerous "Long March." Only about 7,000 people survived. The Long March became a symbol of the bitter hardships the Communists would endure before they finally gained power in 1949.

5. Who became the leader of the Nationalists after Sun Yatsen died?

Part VII: Communist Victory

In 1949 the Communists defeated the Nationalists, who fled to the island of Taiwan. The Communists renamed the country the People's Republic of China. They set up a Communist government with Mao Zedong as its leader. In 1958 Mao started a program, called the Great Leap Forward, to modernize China's economy. The plan failed, however, and many people died of starvation. In 1966 Mao began the Cultural Revolution. Its goal was to strengthen people's belief in Communism. Instead it led to widespread disorder and violence. Young people criticized and in some cases attacked anyone who did not share their idea of what Mao's teachings meant. The unrest continued until Mao died in 1976.

Part VIII: Recent Events

The leaders who followed Mao made efforts to restore order to the country. They maintained their belief in Communism but began to institute some reforms. These included allowing private businesses and more freedom of speech. China also tried to improve relations with other countries. One sign of the country's success came in 2001. In that year the International Olympic Committee chose Beijing to host the 2008 Summer Olympic Games.

Resources

"China " *Britannica Elementary Encyclopedia. Encyclopædia Britannica Online School Edition.*

Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011. Web. 9 Mar. 2011.

World Cultures: A Global Mosaic

Common Core Objective: R.H.9-10.3

Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

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Chinese History Timeline

Directions: Use the reading to complete the timeline below. Remember to include facts about **WHO** was involved and be specific about **WHAT** happened.

Late 1700s (2 problems China had) _____

Why did the Opium War begin?

1842 _____

1912 _____

1934 _____

1949 _____

1966 _____

Also, what does the term "kowtow" mean? What does it have to do with Europe and China's relationship?

1839 _____

What were two terms of the Treaty of Nanjing?

1900 _____

What were the Three Principles of the People?

How many people started the Long March? How many died?

1958 _____
