**QING CHINA CONFRONTS CRISIS, 1800s-1912: PRIMARY SOURCES**

**Document 1:** Chinese/British Trade at the Port of Canton, 1835-36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade Item:</th>
<th>Value (in Spanish dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>opium</td>
<td>17,904,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cotton textiles</td>
<td>8,357,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all other items (sandalwood, lead, iron, tin, watches, clocks)</td>
<td>6,164,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>32,426,623</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade Item:</th>
<th>Value (in Spanish dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tea</td>
<td>13,412,623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>raw silk</td>
<td>3,764,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other goods (sugar products, camphor, silver, gold, copper, musk)</td>
<td>5,971,541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>23,852,899</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Doc 1: Questions for analysis:**

1. At first glance, what do these figures suggest about the role of opium in British trade with Qing China in the 19th century?
2. Calculate opium exports as a percentage of British exports to China.
3. What would Britain’s trade deficit with China be *without* opium sales?
   
   \[ \text{Total British exports to Canton - Value of opium exports to Canton} = \text{Total value of British exports to Canton without opium} \]
   
   \[ \text{Total value of British exports to Canton without opium} - \text{Total value of British imports from Canton} = \text{British annual trade deficit without opium} \]

4. What is Britain’s trade surplus *with* opium?
   
   \[ \text{Total value of British exports to Canton} - \text{Total value of British imports from Canton} = \text{British trade surplus with opium} \]

5. What did this trade pattern mean for China?
“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 people of the world; if there is harm, then he removes it on behalf of the world...

We find that your country is sixty or seventy thousand li \([li = \text{approximately one-third of a mile}]\) from China. Yet there are barbarian ships that strive to come here for the purpose of making a great profit. The wealth of China is used to profit the barbarians.... By what right do they use this poisonous drug to injure the Chinese people?

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 in your 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 \([\text{used as medicine}]\), 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? ... 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....Nevertheless, our Celestial Court lets tea, silk, and other goods be 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....

We have heard heretofore \([\text{before now}]\) that your honorable ruler is kind and benevolent. Naturally you would not wish to give unto others what you yourself do not want....

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?....

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 of a harmful thing on behalf of mankind....

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.”

Doc 2: Questions for analysis:
1. On what basis does Commissioner Lin Zexu appeal to Queen Victoria?
2. How does Commissioner Lin Zexu describe the products China has to trade in comparison with the products that Britain trades?
3. What arguments does Lin Zexu offer for ending the opium trade?
4. What assumptions about the West does this letter reveal? Which were accurate and which represented misunderstandings?
5. Although there is no evidence of a response to the letter, how might you imagine British reaction to it?
Docs 3A & B: Questions for analysis:
1. Based upon the images, how were the British able to successfully defeat the Chinese in two Opium Wars (First Opium War, 1839-1842; Second Opium War, 1856-1860)?
2. After their defeat in the Opium Wars, consider the steps China could possibly take to hold off future threats from industrialized powers.
Document 4: Excerpts from the Treaty of Nanjing, August 1842

Background information: Following China’s defeat by the British in the Opium War of 1839-42, the following conditions were imposed on the Qing government by the British in a treaty signed in the city of Nanjing (Nanking).

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, Foochowfu, Ningpo, and Shanghai, and Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain, etc., 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.

Article III
It being obviously necessary and desirable, that British Subjects should have some Port whereat they may careen [to turn a ship on its side for cleaning] 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 V
...The Emperor of China agrees...to permit them [British merchants] to carry on their mercantile [business] transactions with whatever persons they please, and His Imperial Majesty further agrees to pay to the British Government the sum of Three Million Dollars, on account of Debts due to the British Subjects by some of the said Hong [Chinese] merchants who have become insolvent [bankrupt], and who owe very large sums of money to Subjects of Her Britannic Majesty.

Article VII
It is agreed that the Total amount of Twenty-one Millions of Dollars, described in the three preceding Articles, shall be paid as follows: Six Millions immediately. Six Millions in 1843... Five Millions in 1844... Four Millions in 1845...

Article X
His Majesty the Emperor of China agrees to establish 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 further amount as Transit Duties which shall not exceed ___ percent on the tariff value of such goods.”

Doc 4: Questions for analysis:
1. How would the conditions laid forth in this treaty affect the fiscal [economic] health of the Qing empire?
2. In China, (and in many Western texts), the Treaty of Nanjing is called the first of the “unequal treaties.” Is the term “unequal treaty” justified by the content and wording of the treaty? Please explain.
3. On the British side, whose interests are best served by this treaty? In other words, who or what kind of people stand to gain?
4. Are there Chinese who might gain something from some of the terms of this treaty? Explain.