China and the modern world

H1

In 1689, the British East India Company sent its first ship to the southern Chinese port of Canton (present-day Guangzhou). The East India Company sought to meet increasing demand in Britain for Eastern goods such as tea and silk. In the eighteenth century, Chinese silk and porcelain were popular among wealthy Europeans (thus the term 'fine china'). The Chinese emperor, however, was reluctant to import European manufactured goods in return because he wished to keep China self-sufficient.

The ensuing period became a dance between China and the West over who should control key areas and resources. The influx of cheap opium into China in the 1830s set the scene for widespread social change and the famed 'Opium Wars'. By 1918, after ending several thousand years of dynastic rule, the Chinese began a new republican era. This period of nationalism was to be relatively short-lived.

GLOSSARY

cede lose control of a territory

concubine a long-term mistress of a married man, often living as part of the man's household

Confucian relating to the teachings of the philosopher Confucius

imperial pertaining to an emperor or their empire

kowtow to kneel and bow before the emperor as a sign of respect

nationalism belief that people of the same race, culture or ideals ought to belong to the same nation-state and rule themselves

republic a country in which ultimate power is held by the people entitled to vote and the head of state is a representative of them, not a hereditary monarch

trade deficit when the value of a country's imports is higher than the value of its exports

tributary state a subordinate state that sends gifts to the superior state

unequal treaties one-sided treaties that usually benefited Europeans

OVERVIEW QUESTIONS

H1A What were the key features of the Qing Dynasty?

H1B How was Chinese society structured?

H1C How did China come into contact with Europe and what conflicts emerged?

H1D How and why did China end its thousands of years of imperial rule?

LS Before you begin

H1.0.1 The British 67th Foot Regiment taking a fort during the Second Opium War in 1860

Timeline

China and the modern world

Between 1750 and 1918, China's traditional society underwent upheaval and transformation. The imperial Qing Dynasty resisted foreign interactions for a period before becoming more open to outside influences. Unfortunately, one of these influences—the drug opium—brought many social and political problems. China's defeat in the resulting Opium Wars led to economic strain and a Chinese desire to 'self-strengthen' via modernisation. When the Boxer Rebellion caused another international conflict, China again faced humiliation. The failures of the Qing government became more apparent and nationalists overthrew the dynasty after approximately 300 years of rule.

Opium poppies

1644
Qing Dynasty takes control of China after its armies capture Peking

1784
British government drastically cuts the import duty on tea

1793
First British trade mission to China; emperor refuses the proposal after Lord Macartney does not perform a full kowtow

AD 1600 1700 1800 1850

1796
Emperor Jiaqing bans the sale of opium in China

1800
Tea accounts for approximately 90 per cent of British trade with China

1807
The first Protestant missionary arrives in China

1826
Emperor Daoguang forbids Chinese from converting to Christianity

Emperor Shunzhi became the first Qing emperor of China, Mongolia and Manchuria in 1644

The North Gate of the Forbidden City, Beijing (formerly Peking)

1856
Second Opium War begins

1858
Second Opium War ends with the Treaty of Tientsin

1861
The first Office for Foreign Affairs is established and Chinese officials are encouraged to learn foreign languages

1864
Taiping Rebellion crushed with the help of foreign armies

1898
The 'Hundred Days of Reform' involve economic, military, political and educational reforms

1899
The Eight-Nation Alliance of foreign powers sends 50 000 troops to China in response to attacks on their embassies by the rebel Boxers

1901
Dowager Empress Cixi signs the Boxer Protocol and agrees to pay $333 million to the Eight-Nation Alliance

1851 1860 1870 1880 1890 1900 1910 1920 AD

1842
A British fleet occupies Shanghai and proceeds towards Nanking; the First Opium War ends with the signing of the Treaty of Nanking

1839
First Opium War begins: when foreign merchants refuse to cease the sale of opium, Lin Zexu closes the port of Canton to foreign shipping and makes the British destroy 20 000 chests of opium

1833
The British government ends the British East India Company's opium monopoly in India, leading to a flood of cheap opium entering China

1895
China is forced to cede (lose) its most important tributary state, Korea, to Japan

1885
The British add Burma, another Chinese tributary state, to their empire

1884
China goes to war with France over control of Annam (part of Vietnam) and loses

1911
Nationalists overthrow the Qing Dynasty and establish a republic, ending 2000 years of dynastic rule

Dowager Empress Cixi, c. 1890

H1.1 Introducing Qing Dynasty China

H1.1.1 Shunzhi, the first Qing emperor to rule over China, Mongolia and Manchuria

Birth of a dynasty

The Qing Dynasty took control of China in 1644 after its armies captured Peking (present-day Beijing) and made it the capital of its new empire. Shortly after, the last Ming emperor committed suicide and Shunzhi was declared the first Qing emperor over all of China, Mongolia and Manchuria.

The Qing were Manchus from Manchuria, to the north of China. Most Chinese people were of Han descent and did not consider the Manchu to be the rightful rulers of China. The vast majority therefore wanted to restore the Chinese rule of the Ming Dynasty. To deal with this large-scale opposition, Shunzhi ordered all Chinese men to dress as Manchus. They also had to shave the front of their heads and plait their remaining hair in a long pigtail at the back, as was Manchu custom. Many Manchu nobles drove the Chinese off their lands. Eventually, supporters of the former Ming Dynasty throughout China rose in revolt against Qing rule.

H1.1.2 Temple in the Forbidden City, Beijing

In 1645, Qing soldiers massacred hundreds of thousands of their enemies at Yangzhou. This was done to teach the rest of the Chinese population that resistance against Qing rule would be met with brutal terror. By 1662, the last of the resistance had been defeated, allowing the Qing Dynasty to rule China until the early twentieth century.

Political features

The emperor

The emperor was the absolute ruler and head of the Qing Dynasty. All policies were determined by him, as were all official appointments and dismissals.

The emperor commanded the army and made treaties with foreign powers. It was commonly believed that the emperor received his authority to rule directly from God. For this reason he had the title Son of Heaven. As long as the emperor governed for the benefit of his subjects, he would keep his mandate (right to rule).

The Grand Council

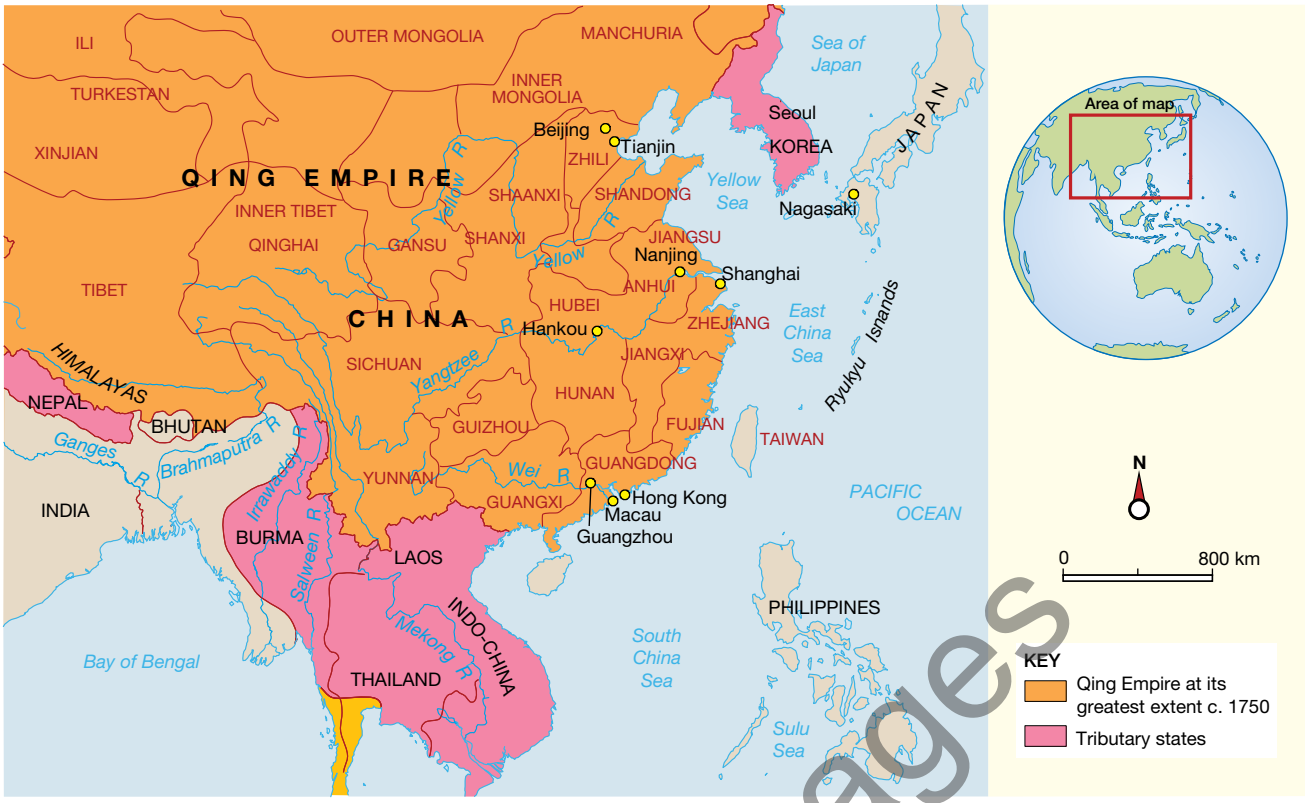
The Grand Council served as the emperor's closest advisors. Only members of the royal family were entitled to sit on the Grand Council, which was usually made up of five or six councillors. All **imperial** (pertaining to an emperor or their empire) edicts and court letters were drafted by the Grand Council and then presented to the emperor for approval.

The Six Boards

The Six Boards were part of the outer court and administered less important matters. Only the emperor could issue orders to the Six Boards. Each board had different responsibilities.

H1.1.3 The responsibilities of the Six Boards

The Board of Civil Office				
The Board of Revenue	**The Board of Rites**	**The Board of War**	**The Board of Punishments**	**The Board of Public Works**
• Taxes and government finances	• Civil service examinations • Court and temple rituals • Visits of foreigners to the imperial court	• Green Standard Army (internal police force)	• Legal system, including the courts and prisons	• Building works • Minting of coins



H1.1.4 China during the height of the Qing Dynasty

Censors

Censors acted as the eyes and ears of the emperor throughout China. They were mainly responsible for discovering secret opposition, corruption and poor performance by local officials. Censors could criticise any official as they saw fit, either publicly or in private to the emperor.

Economic features

Up until the fourteenth century, the Chinese economy was larger than that of Europe. However, from around the sixteenth century new shipping technology resulted in the rise of European economies. By the nineteenth century, China's economy was stagnant and Britain dominated international trade.

The importance of agriculture

China under the Qing Dynasty was an agricultural economy. Since the vast majority of people were peasants, most government revenue came from land and poll taxes (taxes collected per person). These had to be paid twice a year in the form of money, grain and compulsory labour. Most peasants resented the requirement to work for the government as it took them away from their land.

Population growth

The Chinese population began steadily increasing from the middle of the eighteenth century due to an extended period of economic prosperity and internal peace. By 1850, China's population had reached over 450 million. This resulted in a rural land shortage that caused widespread poverty and famine. Increased taxes and corrupt officials made the peasants' situation worse.

Regional trade

In order to receive China's protection, its smaller neighbours were required make special pilgrimages to pay tribute to the Chinese emperor in Peking. These tributary missions often involved thousands of envoys, courtiers and merchants. Visiting envoys submitted their petitions before the emperor and presented their tribute in the form of gold, silver and expensive gifts. In return, the emperor would promise to protect the **tributary state** from invasion and would send support in times of hardship.

LS H1A

Activities

Remembering and understanding

1 Why was the emperor referred to as the Son of Heaven?
2 What were tributary missions?

Applying and analysing

3 Create a concept map showing the reasons why the Qing Emperor was an absolute ruler.

H1.2 Chinese society and culture

The structure of Chinese society

Nobility

The imperial army was organised into eight Manchu Banners, and all Manchu families belonged to one of these banners. Members of the banners were called bannermen.

Leaders from areas conquered by the Manchus were also made bannermen as a way of ensuring their loyalty.

There were nine ranks of nobility apart from royal family. All noblemen passed their titles onto their eldest son. The eldest son's title would be one rank lower than his father's.

Commoners

Ordinary people who had a reputable occupation were referred to as commoners. This was according to the **Confucian** (relating to the teachings of the philosopher Confucius) principle that those who use their minds should rule over those who use their strength. These people were called 'good people' and belonged to one of four occupations: scholar-official, peasant, artisan or merchant.

Scholar-officials

Scholar-officials were the moral guardians of society who were experts in Confucianism. They often gave public lectures and produced pamphlets calling for virtuous and honourable behaviour. Scholar-officials had to pass a rigorous examination in order to obtain the literary degree needed to work in the civil service. Years of study could be richly rewarded with high status and many privileges.

Peasants

Peasants made up about 80 per cent of the population during the late Qing Dynasty. Since food production was the basis of the economy, peasants were seen as important. In order to control such a large population, the Qing rulers forced peasants to spend some of the year working for no pay on public works such as roads, bridges, defensive walls, dams and canals. Theoretically, peasants were permitted to sit for the civil service examination, though in reality it took years of study to pass—time that the average peasant could not afford away from their land.

Artisans and craftsmen

Artisans and craftsmen included doctors, architects, priests, brewers, tea producers and silk makers. These occupations required training or a special skill that was passed down from father to son. If he became successful, an artisan could hire apprentices and labourers to work for him. Since they owned no land, artisans and craftsmen could not be taxed, and therefore lacked the same rights and status of peasants.

Merchants

Merchants were considered to be at the bottom of the social ladder, regardless of how wealthy they became. This was because Confucian scholars frowned upon the pursuit of profit at others' expense. Nevertheless, the growing demand for tea and silk by Europeans throughout the nineteenth century saw some merchants become incredibly wealthy.

The classless

About 1 per cent of Chinese society during the Qing Dynasty sat outside the social ladder. These were people such as prostitutes, actors and slaves who were denied the rights of ordinary commoners. This group was referred to as 'mean people'. The law forbade mean people from marrying 'good people'.

H1.2.1 *Receiving the Scriptures*, a scroll painting by Qing Dynasty painter Huang Shen, 1687–1772

Lives of men, women and children

Marriage

Marriages were arranged by fathers and were seen as the extension of a family rather than the creation of a new one. After getting married, a woman would join her husband's family. A married woman was expected to submit to her husband and faithfully serve her in-laws, especially her mother-in-law. When her husband died, a woman then had to submit to her son.

Family

Daily life in Qing China involved interactions with numerous relatives—parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. A typical home for a wealthier family could have up to 100 members living together. However, only the blood relatives of the father were considered to be true family. In wealthier families, servants, maids, and even concubines were also part of the household. Becoming a **concubine** (a long-term mistress of a married man) was one of the very few ways for a Chinese woman to improve her position in the world.

H1.2.2 German artist's impression of Chinese concubines, around 1880

Children

Children were expected to obey their parents when they were young and, later, to look after their parents in old age and sickness. A disrespectful child would bring great shame to their family. Since daughters would one day leave the family home to live with their in-laws, most parents wanted to have boys so that they would be looked after in their old age. It was the eldest son who was responsible for carrying on the family name and leading ancestral worship. Girls were usually referred to simply as Daughter Number One, Daughter Number Two, and so on.

Religion and culture

The importance of Confucianism

Confucianism is a humanist philosophy, not a religion, because it is concerned with how people should behave rather than with supernatural gods. At the time of the Qing Dynasty, the Confucianist belief system had been universally accepted in China for several centuries.

The five virtues

Confucian thought is built around the concept of virtue—that is, ideals or ethics that all people should aspire to for the benefit of everyone. The five virtues of Confucianism are:

- *integrity*—do what you promise to do and fulfil your obligations to others
- *humanness* (or altruism)—do to others what you would have them do to you
- *righteousness*—do what is right and just
- *etiquette* (or propriety)—show your respect by following custom and ritual
- *knowledge*—find out as much about the world and avoid errors due to ignorance.

H1.2.3 Confucius, 1770, Granger Collection

Filial piety

According to Confucian teaching, filial piety is the basis of all moral behaviour. This is an ethic based on a deep respect for elders and superiors, and kindness towards inferiors. Confucius identified five relationships in which filial piety was to be observed. These required strict observance of one's own role in order to make society harmonious. These relationships are shown in order of importance in Source H1.2.4.

1. Ruler (benevolent) and subject (loyal)
2. Father (loving) and son (obedient)
3. Older brother (gentle) and younger brother (respectful)
4. Husband (good) and wife (attentive)
5. Older friend (considerate) and younger friend (deferential)

H1.2.4 The five basic relationships of Confucianism

Daoism

Daoism was founded by the ancient Chinese philosopher Laozi in the sixth century BC. The Chinese word 'Tao' means way or path, but Tao is best understood as a force that runs through everything. Daoism is considered a religion because of its belief in a supernatural deity that is to be worshipped, even though it is one that exists in and through everything. Since the Tao exists in everything, Daoism teaches that everything in the world is connected and must be kept in balance—a concept represented by the yin-yang symbol (see Source H1.2.5).

Taoist influence declined during the period of the Qing Dynasty (1644–1912). At this time, there was an increased interest in Confucianism, which was generally considered to be a more practical belief system. Because Daoism was a native Chinese religion that was popular with the masses, the Qing rulers, who were Manchus, were always highly suspicious of it.

H1.2.5 The yin-yang symbol of Daoism

Buddhism

Buddhism originated in India during the fifth century BC and probably came to China some time during the Qin Dynasty (221–206 BC). Buddhism quickly grew in popularity with ordinary Chinese, since it offered new opportunities for younger sons who had little chance of owning land. Under the Qing emperors, Buddhism fared better than Daoism mainly because the Manchus had already shown a strong interest in Tibetan Buddhism before conquering China. Buddhism includes the following main beliefs:

reincarnation—Buddhists believe that all living things are reborn, or reincarnated. For many Buddhists, therefore, death is seen as a temporary end—a transition between one life and the next. When a living thing is reincarnated, the type of person or creature they are reborn as will be determined by the karma they achieved in their previous lifetime.

karma—simply means acting or doing, and any kind of intentional act is considered to be either good or bad karma. According to Buddhists, every birth is influenced by the karma of the person's previous life.

avoid harm—since Buddhists believe animals and even ghosts can be reborn into human beings, they strive to bring happiness to all living things. By following the five precepts of harmlessness (see Source H1.2.6), Buddhists seek to avoid harm to all including themselves.

There are five key precepts (principles) of Buddhism that seek to guide human behaviour:

1. Avoid intentionally killing any living thing
2. Avoid stealing from anyone
3. Avoid sexual misconduct
4. Avoid intoxicants
5. Avoid lying

H1.2.6 Buddhism's five precepts of harmlessness

H1.2.7 Detail of an embroidered silk banner of the Buddha. Found in the Buddhist cave temples of Dunhuang, preserved in a sealed cave. Tang dynasty, 618–906.

Ancestor worship

Most Chinese families were dedicated to the daily worship of their dead ancestors. This practice drew on elements of Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism. One room in every house contained a number of wooden spirit tablets, one for each ancestor. Incense was offered to dead ancestors in the hope that their spirits could help living family members succeed in this world.

H1.2.9 A Chinese man standing in front of ancestral tablets, c. 1905

Did you know?

In the nineteenth century, the practice of foot binding was common for Chinese women. Having lotus feet (bound feet) forced a young woman to take dainty steps. The process of foot binding began at around the age of 3, before the arch of the foot had had a chance to develop. All ten toes were folded back and broken, as was the arch of each foot.

H1.2.8 An unwrapped lotus foot

LS H1B

Activities

Remembering and understanding

1 Which groups in Chinese society were considered to be 'good people' and 'mean people'?
2 Why were Chinese peasants ranked higher than merchants?
3 Identify two examples of women's low status in nineteenth-century Chinese society.
4 Why were sons preferred over daughters?
5 Define the terms 'virtue', 'filial piety', 'Tao' and 'karma'.
6 Why is Confucianism not considered to be a religion?
7 What happened to Daoism during Qing rule?
8 Why did Buddhism become more popular during the Qing Dynasty?

Applying and analysing

9 Construct a social hierarchy pyramid. This should show the status, from highest to lowest, of each group in Chinese society.
10 Construct a table that compares and contrasts Confucianism, Daoism and Buddhism.
11 Consider whether or not the five basic relationships of Confucianism could exist in your own family, school and government today.
12 Investigate the origins and purpose of the Eight Manchu Banners. Also find out what was distinctive about each of the eight banners. Present your information, images, video and sound in a digital format of your own choice.

H1.3 Contact between China and Europe

Early missionary contact

Jesuit missionaries

Jesuit missionaries, members of a Catholic order of priests and brothers, were among the first European visitors to China. In 1630 one of the missionaries, Johann Adam Schall von Bell, a learned astronomer, was appointed to the court of Emperor Shunzhi. As a result of his importance to the emperor, the Jesuits were permitted to build churches throughout China. Within a few decades the number of Christian converts had risen to around 150 000.

Protestant missionaries

In 1807 the first Protestant missionary, Robert Morrison, arrived in China. He worked at translating the Bible into Chinese and was the first to produce a Chinese–English dictionary. In 1826, Emperor Daoguang forbade Chinese from converting to Christianity. Those who refused to renounce their faith were banished to the province of Xinjiang, where they were given to Muslim rulers as slaves. Foreign missionaries responsible for conversions were punished.

> He who propagates the religion, inflaming and deceiving the people, if the number be not large, and no names be given, shall be sentenced to strangulation after a period of imprisonment.

H1.3.1 Quoted in Robert Samuel Maclay (1861), *Life Among the Chinese: With Characteristic Sketches and Incidents of Missionary Operations and Prospects in China*, Carlton & Porter

Early trade contact

European trade

In 1685, Emperor Kangxi first allowed Europeans to trade with China. In China, however, there was very little demand for European goods. The Chinese were determined that China should remain self-sufficient and insisted that all foreigners had to pay for their goods with silver. This resulted in a large **trade deficit** (when the value of a country's imports is higher than the value of its exports) for Britain.

The first European trade mission

Until 1793, no European diplomat had ever visited the Chinese emperor. However, in 1792 Emperor Qianlong was informed that Britain's Lord Macartney was coming as part of a tributary mission to celebrate his eighty-third birthday. The eighty-four members of Macartney's mission brought with them an array of gifts for the emperor including a planetarium and mechanical instruments. On 14 September 1793, Macartney finally met with Qianlong but refused to perform the full ceremonial **kowtow** (to kneel and bow before the emperor as a sign of respect). Due to Macartney's lack of respect, Qianlong refused to agree to the requests of the British government (see Source H1.3.2).

Trade between Britain and China was therefore slow to develop, although by 1800 tea accounted for approximately 90 per cent of all British trade with China. By then the British East India Company was importing over 10.5 million kilograms of tea per year.

> Formerly Portugal presented tribute;
> Now England is paying homage.
> They have out-travelled Shu-hai and Heng-chang [famous travellers in Chinese mythology];
> My Ancestors' merit and virtue must have reached their distant shores.
> Though their tribute is commonplace, my heart approves sincerely.
> Curios and the boasted ingenuity of their devices I prize not.
> Though what they bring is meagre, yet,
> In my kindness to men from afar I make generous return,
> Wanting to preserve my good health and power.

H1.3.2 Poem written by Emperor Qianlong about Macartney's mission to China, quoted in Immanuel C.Y. Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, Oxford University Press, 1983

Limiting European contact

To restrict the activity of foreigners, a unique system of trade known as the Canton System was introduced. All foreign trade had to be conducted through the port of Canton in the far south of the empire. Interaction between foreigners and ordinary Chinese people was not allowed and all dealings had to be with one of thirteen government-appointed Hong merchants. All foreigners were subject to Chinese law, which many Europeans objected to (see sources H1.3.3 and H1.3.4).

1. No foreign women or firearms are permitted in the factories.
2. All foreigners must leave Canton after the trading season (October to January).
3. All captains must register their ships with the Chinese authorities in Macau.
4. Foreigners can move freely only within 100 yards of their factory.
5. Foreign factories are not permitted to employ Chinese maids.
6. Foreigners are not permitted to row their boats in the Pearl River.
7. Foreigners are not permitted to learn Chinese or purchase Chinese books.
8. No foreigner is permitted to make direct contact with Chinese people.
9. All trade must be conducted via the Hong merchants—no foreigner is permitted to directly communicate with private Chinese merchants.
10. Hong merchants are not permitted to go into debt to foreigners.

H1.3.3 Regulations on foreign trade in Canton

Continuity and change: Opium in China

The opium trade

Opium is produced from the sap of the opium poppy. The sap is turned into powder, which is then used mainly for medicinal purposes, but it is also a highly addictive drug. Towards the end of the eighteenth century opium became increasingly popular in China. Illegal smuggling fed the growing demand for the drug. In 1796, Emperor Jiaqing banned the sale of opium but this had little effect. In 1833, the British government ended the British East India Company's opium monopoly (exclusive trade) in India. This flooded China with cheap opium and changed society dramatically.

H1.3.5 Growth of opium imports into China

Year	Number of chests imported
1729	200
1790	4000
1820	5000
1830	16 000
1838	28 000
1858	70 000

H1.3.4 The Hongs at Canton c. 1820, artist unknown. Note the flags being flown.

It is estimated that at the height of the opium trade there were as many as 10 million addicts throughout China, and that about 20 to 30 per cent of government officials were opium users. This had severe social and economic consequences, as addicts became withdrawn and apathetic and spent most of their income on opium. Opium addiction was a problem for all classes of Chinese.

China's response to illegal opium

In 1839, Lin Zexu was appointed as the imperial commissioner responsible for destroying the opium trade. He had over 1600 Chinese opium dealers arrested and confiscated more than 42 000 pipes used to smoke opium. Commissioner Lin's perspective on the opium trade can be seen in the letter he wrote to Queen Victoria, pleading for her to stop the trade (see Source H1.3.6).

> We have heard that in your own country opium is prohibited with the utmost strictness and severity: this is a strong proof that you know full well how hurtful it is to mankind. Since then you do not permit it to injure your own country, you ought not to have the injurious drug transferred to another country, and above all others, how much less to the Inner Land [China]!

H1.3.6 Extract from a letter from the Imperial Commissioner Lin Zexu to Queen Victoria in 1839

On 18 March 1839, Lin ordered all foreign merchants to hand over their opium within three days and sign a pledge to never sell it again. When the merchants ignored this, he closed the port of Canton to all foreign shipping and seized control of a British factory with 350 people inside. They were only freed when the British government agreed to destroy 20 000 chests of opium, but they demanded financial compensation for the loss.

The Opium Wars

In response to the destruction of the opium, the British Navy sent a fleet of warships to seize control of Canton and other coastal ports. Wooden Chinese junks stood no chance against steam-powered, iron-hulled British ships. In 1842, the British fleet was able to occupy Shanghai and then proceed up the Yangtze River towards Nanking, bombarding several coastal towns along the way. Hostilities ceased on 29 August 1842, when the Chinese agreed to sign the Treaty of Nanking. This **ceded** (lost) control of Hong Kong to Britain and opened four new ports to British shipping. In addition, China agreed to pay the equivalent of $9 million in compensation for the opium that had been destroyed. In 1844, France and the United States took advantage of China's defeat by obtaining similar **unequal treaties** (one-sided treaties that usually benefited Europeans).

These changed China by effectively ending the Canton System and allowing the Western powers to penetrate inland China.

The opening of China

For the next decade, Chinese authorities were reluctant to carry out the terms of the unequal treaties. This led to the start of the Second Opium War in 1856, with even worse consequences for the Chinese. The Treaty of Tientsin in 1858 required many changes, including the opening of eleven new ports to foreign shipping and the freedom for all foreigners, including Christian missionaries, to travel throughout China. Previous laws that made foreigners subject to Chinese law were also abolished.

Activities

Remembering and understanding

1. How did Emperor Daoguang respond to the spread of Christianity in China?
2. Explain how and why trade between China and Britain first began to develop.
3. What did the failure of Lord Macartney's trade mission show about attitudes of Europeans and Chinese towards each other?
4. Why did the opium trade develop and how did the Chinese try to deal with it?

Applying and analysing

5. Examine Source H1.3.3. Explain how each regulation aimed to limit European contact. Discuss whether or not you think each regulation would have been effective.
6. Analyse the Opium Wars by creating a five-column table and listing the following:
   - *causes*—reasons for the outbreak of the wars
   - *course*–turning points during the wars
   - *consequences*—results of the wars
   - *characters*—important individuals and groups involved
   - *controversies*—issues which were or are still debated.
7. Carefully examine Source H1.3.2. Write a similar poem from the perspective of the Commissioner Lin Zexu on the growing opium trade in 1839.

Evaluating and creating

8. Evaluate Source H1.3.7. What message does it convey and what techniques does it use?

H1.3.7 'China: The cake of kings and emperors', 1898, *Le Petit Journal*

H1.4 Consequences of contact with Europeans

Mixed consequences

Positive consequences of the contact between China and Europe included:

- the beginning of modernisation
- new economic opportunities
- reform of the Qing government
- Chinese emigration worldwide
- the beginning of trade relations
- new cultural awareness.

Negative consequences of the contact between China and Europe included:

- a weakened Chinese military following defeat and humiliation in war
- increased opium imports and addiction
- loss of China's prestige in Asia
- an influx of foreign ideas
- a weaker Qing Dynasty following rebellions such as the Taiping Rebellion
- the decline in traditional cottage industries
- territorial losses to Russia
- concessions made in the unequal treaties.

Effects of the Opium Wars

Economic effects

With the opening of several new 'treaty ports' after the Opium Wars, China experienced an influx of foreign goods. This led to a serious decline in traditional cottage industries. Canton suffered the most, since the city had been the only port open to European traders for well over 150 years. As a result, there was a mass movement of people from Canton to Shanghai. This brought with it enormous social problems such as homelessness and crime.

Religious effects

China's southern provinces were the first to experience an influx of Christian missionaries from the West. Christianity appealed to the growing number of people who had been forced to leave their homes in search of work. This led to tension. Christians accused Buddhists and Taoists of superstitious idol worship, while Christians were accused of accepting a foreign faith.

H1.4.1 French-British army enters through the Tchao-yant gate, Peking

The Taiping Rebellion

The most serious of the rebellions against the Qing Dynasty at this time was the Taiping Rebellion. The Taiping Rebellion became a 14-year civil war that resulted in the deaths of around 20 million soldiers and civilians.

Did you know?

The Protestant beliefs of the Taiping rebels were at odds with mainstream Confucian values. Many Chinese were wary of the Protestant view that all believers are equal, since this threatened to destroy the roles and responsibilities between superiors and inferiors in society.

The leader of the rebellion was Hong Xiuquan, a recent Christian convert. Establishing a capital for his Taiping Heavenly Kingdom in Nanking, Hong eventually built a civilian army of over 1 million men. As they gained control of new territory, the Taiping rebels:

- redistributed the land equally to all men and women over the age of 16
- destroyed temples and shrines and forbade ancestor worship
- introduced measures to support the sick and people with disabilities
- prohibited opium smoking, foot binding, slavery and prostitution.

> I have no hope of any good ever coming of the (Taiping) rebel movement ... They do nothing but burn, murder and destroy ... They have held Nanking eight years, and there is not a symptom of rebuilding it. Trade and industry are prohibited.

H1.4.2 Alexander Michie, an Englishman who visited the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom in Nanking in 1861 (quoted in Hsu, *The Rise of Modern China*, Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 245)

Defeat of the rebellion

The Taiping Rebellion was eventually crushed in 1864 with the help of foreign armies. This occurred only after the rebels began to threaten foreign trade. By guaranteeing the continuation of foreign trade, the Qing Dynasty was able to draw support from European powers.

H1.4.3 The Taiping Rebellion, 1850

Modernisation

The shock of defeat in the Opium Wars and, later, the near success of the Taiping Rebellion led to a period of 'self-strengthening' by the Qing Dynasty. The Qing Dynasty survived for almost 50 more years, mainly because its officials recognised the need to modernise China. In 1898, during the 'Hundred Days of Reform', economic, military, political and educational changes were made.

China looks abroad

As part of the 'self-strengthening' policy, Chinese students were encouraged to study overseas to find out about Western scientific knowledge. As a result, small-scale industry began to emerge, including gun factories, shipyards and textiles factories. In 1861, the first Office for Foreign Affairs was established and Chinese officials were encouraged to learn foreign languages.

Foreign wars

In 1884, China went to war with France over control of Annam (part of present-day Vietnam) and lost. Annam had long been one of China's tributary states.

In 1885, the British followed the French example and added Burma, another of China's tributary states, to their vast empire. In 1895, after a short and decisive naval battle against Japan, China was forced to cede its most important tributary state, Korea. This was the first time in centuries that China had been defeated by another Asian power.

Activities

LS H1C

Remembering and understanding

1. Outline two effects of the opening of China after its defeat in the Opium Wars.
2. Who was Hong Xiuquan? What did he believe and attempt to do?
3. Why was the Qing Dynasty able to survive the Taiping Rebellion?

Applying and analysing

4. Give an example of how contact with European powers did not always benefit China.
5. Imagine that the year is 1839 and you are Commissioner Lin Zexu. Faced with solving the problem of the British opium trade, consider the options that are realistically available to you. Think about both intended as well as unintended outcomes of all of the available options. You may include real decisions and actions made by Commissioner Lin.

H1.5 The Boxer Rebellion and its aftermath

Causes of the Boxer Rebellion

Growing anti-Western feeling

In 1898, the Yellow River burst its banks. The flood caused crop failure and resulted in a famine directly affecting over 2 million people. Widespread poverty and hunger led to frustration and anger. Banditry and violence became common throughout the countryside. To protect their villages from looting, a movement of Chinese martial artists called the Yihequan (the Righteous and Harmonious Fists) arose. Nicknamed Boxers by the British, this movement turned into a large peasant revolt intent on ridding China of all foreign influence.

Many Chinese blamed their problems on the arrival of foreigners and turned to the Boxers. It was believed the Boxers had mystical powers that would enable them to defeat the foreigners. These powers included spells that, if chanted correctly, would supposedly make the individual invulnerable to bullets.

H1.5.1 'Boxer' of the Boxer Rebellion in China, 1900

Course of the Boxer Rebellion

Attacks on Christians
The Boxer Rebellion began in the province of Shandong in northern China. At first, the Boxers attacked churches throughout the countryside. Chanting slogans such as 'Destroy what is foreign' and 'Kill the foreign devils', the Boxers and their supporters ripped up railway tracks and telegraph lines.

The Siege of Peking
By 1899, the Boxer movement had grown into a considerable force and spread northwards to Peking, where it aimed to destroy foreign embassies. The Boxers also wanted to overthrow Emperor Guangxu, whom they blamed for allowing the spread of foreign influence. For 55 days, the Boxers laid siege to Peking, trying to destroy the foreign embassies and kill the diplomats, their families and the Chinese Christians who took refuge there. During the siege, sixty-six foreigners were killed and more than 150 were wounded.

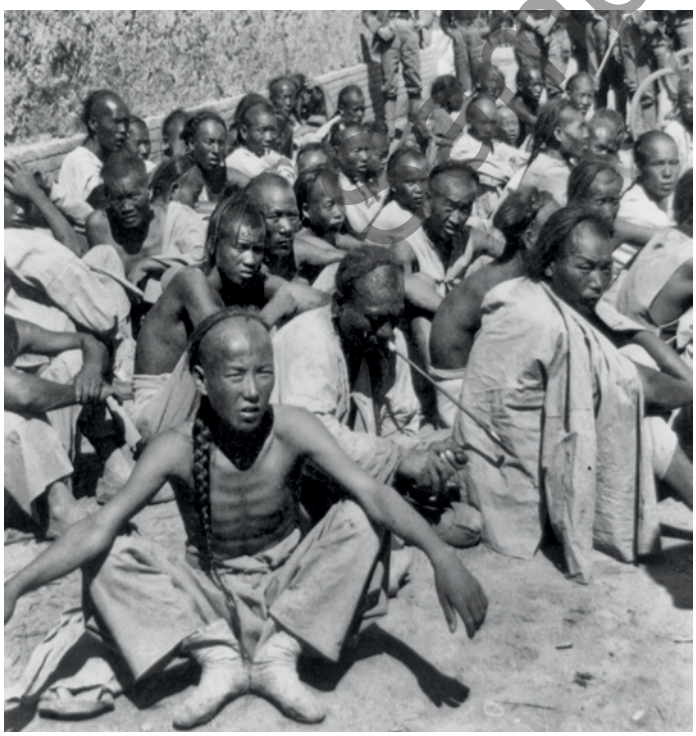
Fearing the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty, the Dowager Empress Cixi (widow of the previous emperor) sided with the Boxers. With the support of anti-Western officials within the palace, Cixi deposed her own son, Guangxu, and had him imprisoned. On 21 June 1900, Cixi promised to support the Boxers.

Western intervention
In response to the attacks upon their embassies, Britain, France, Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary, the United States of America, Italy and Japan formed the Eight-Nation Alliance and sent a multinational force of 50 000 troops. In July 1900, the first foreign forces arrived with badly needed supplies and went into battle with the Boxers (see Source H1.5.2). Over the next year, the forces of the alliance gradually gained control over the provinces of northern China.

Did you know?

The Chinese secret society known as the Yihequan (the Righteous and Harmonious Fists) emerged from the coastal area of Shandong. The group practised boxing and calisthenics in the hope of becoming indestructible, which is why they became known as the 'Boxers'. They intensely disliked Western foreigners and attempted to overthrow the Qing Dynasty because of its perceived weaknesses in relation to foreigners.

H 1.5.2 American, British and Japanese troops storming the Imperial Pekin castle in Beijing, China, 14 August 1900



H1.5.3 Boxer prisoners captured and brought in by the 6th US Cavalry in Tientsin, 1901

Consequences of the rebellion

Relations with foreign powers

On 7 September 1901, the Dowager Empress Cixi signed the Boxer Protocol, a peace agreement that forced the ruling dynasty to pay around $333 million to the Eight-Nation Alliance. China was prohibited from importing weapons and ammunition, and all anti-foreign activity was to be punishable by death. Ten leading officials of the Qing court were executed for their role in supporting the rebellion and the massacre of Christians.

Did you know?

A contingent of naval troops from the colonies of Victoria and New South Wales was sent to assist the British in the fight against the Boxers in late 1900. The Australians took part in a number of actions and played a role in restoring order once the rebellion had been crushed, but they saw little direct combat.

H1.5.4 Dowager Empress Cixi

Chinese perspectives

> For the past 30 years [foreign powers] have taken advantage of our country's benevolence and generosity, as well as our whole-hearted conciliation to give free rein to their unscrupulous ambitions.

H1.5.5 Dowager Empress Cixi, 1900

La Chine aux Chinois! — Tel pourrait être le titre d'une publication répandue à foison dans toute la Chine et dont nous reproduisons ici quelques images en résumant le texte qui les accompagne. Ce livre a dû puissamment contribuer à la préparation des événements actuels. Il s'ouvre par une image représentant des Chinois prosternés autour d'un porc crucifié, tandis que derrière eux, des chrétiens courtisent leurs femmes.

H1.5.6 *China for the Chinese*, 1891—a popular Chinese print calling for attacks on foreigners

A Western perspective

H1.5.7 'Civilisation is telling the Chinese emperor to slay the Boxer dragon, otherwise she will be forced to do it', *Puck*, c. 1900

Chinese nationalism and the collapse of the Qing

Sensing the decline of Manchu power, many Han Chinese (from the majority ethnic group) saw an opportunity to overthrow the Qing dynasty. The belief that the Han should rule China is known as Chinese **nationalism** (belief that people of the same race, culture or ideals ought to belong to the same nation-state and rule themselves).

In 1911, the nationalists overthrew the Qing Dynasty and established a new **republic** (a country in which ultimate power is held by the people entitled to vote and the head of state is a representative of them, not a hereditary monarch). This brought an end to over three centuries of Manchu rule and more than 2000 years of dynastic rule in China.

China and World War I

The new Chinese republic under Yuan Shikai was initially neutral in World War I but declared war on Germany in 1917.

In January 1915, Japan issued Twenty-One Demands which China reluctantly accepted. The demands included confirmation of Japan's railway and mining claims in Shandong province, the granting of concessions in Manchuria and access to areas along the Chinese coast. Chinese anger at what it saw as generous treatment of Japan at the post-war Paris Peace Conference in 1919 contributed to the rise of the Chinese Communist Party, which seized control of China in 1949.

Skills builder

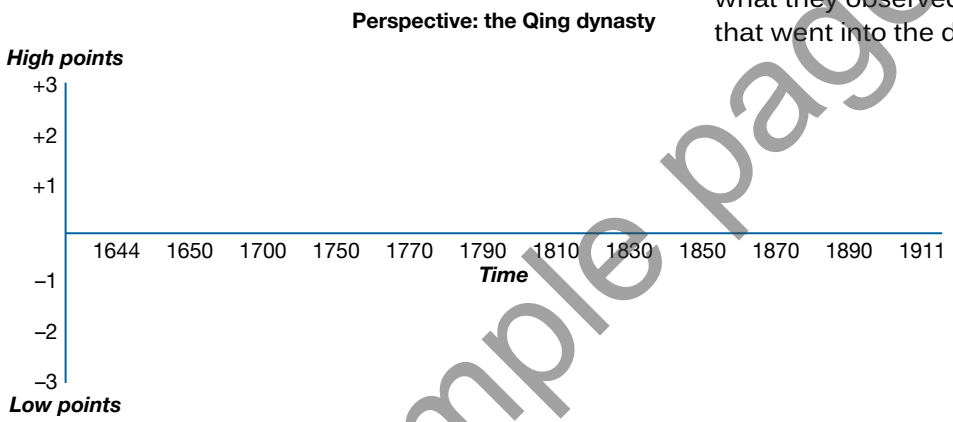
Historical thinking with living timelines

In history we often use timelines, but how can we use them to generate historical thinking?

Historical thinking explores five key areas: chronology, sources as evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, and historical significance. Living timelines can help you to think about these ideas and to consider history from a range of perspectives and angles.

Here is one suggestion for creating a living timeline in your classroom. You will need a clear area on the floor, index cards, blank paper, pens, and two long pieces of string.

1 Using the string and index cards, create an arrangement like this on your classroom floor:



2 Working in small groups, create cards listing key events in the period. Use this chapter to find the information. An event that occurred over a period of time should appear on a long, thin piece of paper.

3 Appoint a student to take notes on the activity and the discussion to follow. The note-taker should focus not so much on the choices people make but on the reasons they give.

4 Taking turns, place each event in the appropriate place on the timeline. You should make your judgements from the perspective of the Qing government. For example, the seizure of China by the Qing Dynasty in 1644 might appear as a high point of +3, while the overthrow of the Qing in 1911 might be a low point of –3. Each placement should be justified, and if others disagree with the placement, the placement should be discussed.

5 When all the events have been placed on the timeline, discuss any patterns or features that appear. The note-taker should report back on what they observed about the historical thinking that went into the decision-making.

6 You could then repeat the activity from a different perspective, such as that of Britain, or anti-foreign Chinese such as the Boxers. Alternatively, you could measure economic or social life in the same period.

Activities

LS H1D

Remembering and understanding

1 Identify the events that occurred in the years 1898, 1899, 1900 and 1901.

2 Who were the Boxers and why did many Chinese peasants support them?

3 Explain how the Boxer Rebellion affected the Qing emperor Guangxu.

4 How were the Boxers eventually defeated?

Applying and analysing

5 Examine sources H1.5.5 to H1.5.7. In a Venn diagram or other graphic organiser, compare and contrast Chinese and Western perspectives on the Boxer Rebellion.

Evaluating and creating

6 Read about living timelines in the Skills Builder. Create a living timeline about the level of conflict experienced by China (internally and externally) in the period 1750–1918.