

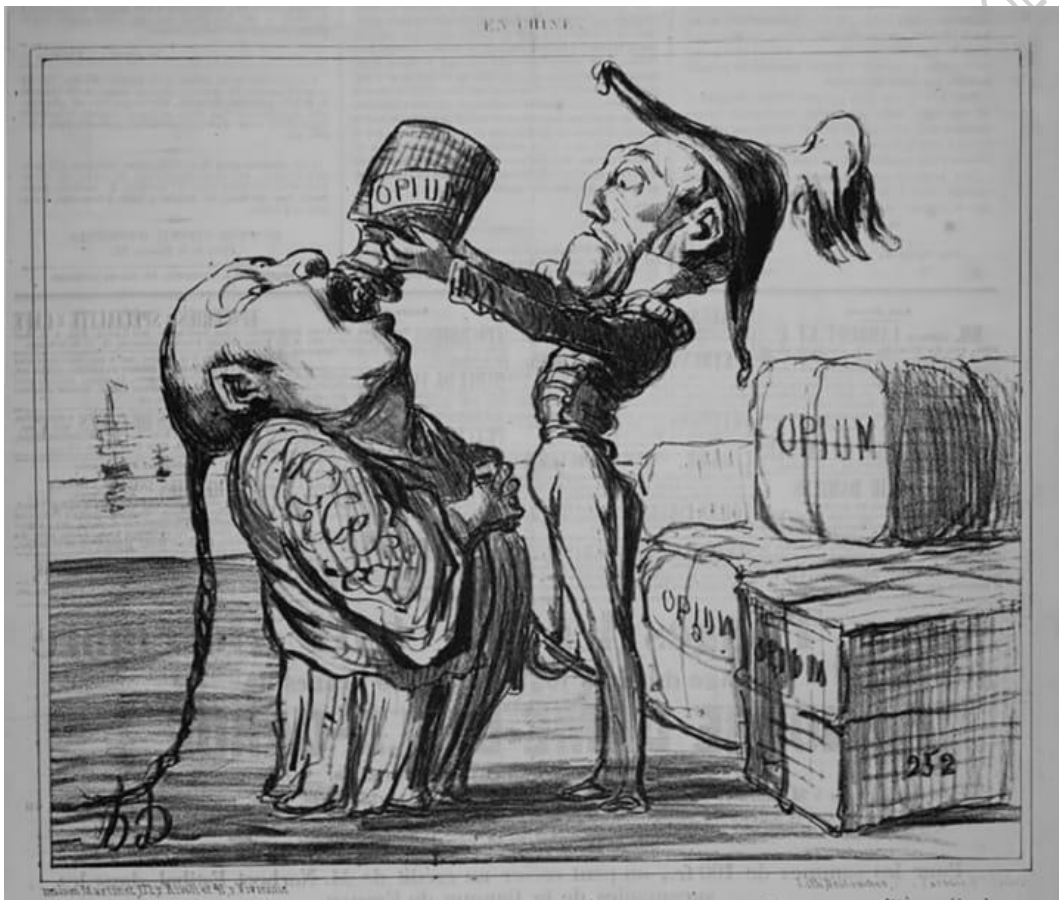
SEMESTER V
UGHISH 505: MODERN TRANSFORMATION OF CHINA(1839-1949)
Module -2

Topic
CHINA FROM CANTON TRADE TO OPIUM WARS

E-LEARNING MATERIAL PREPARED BY

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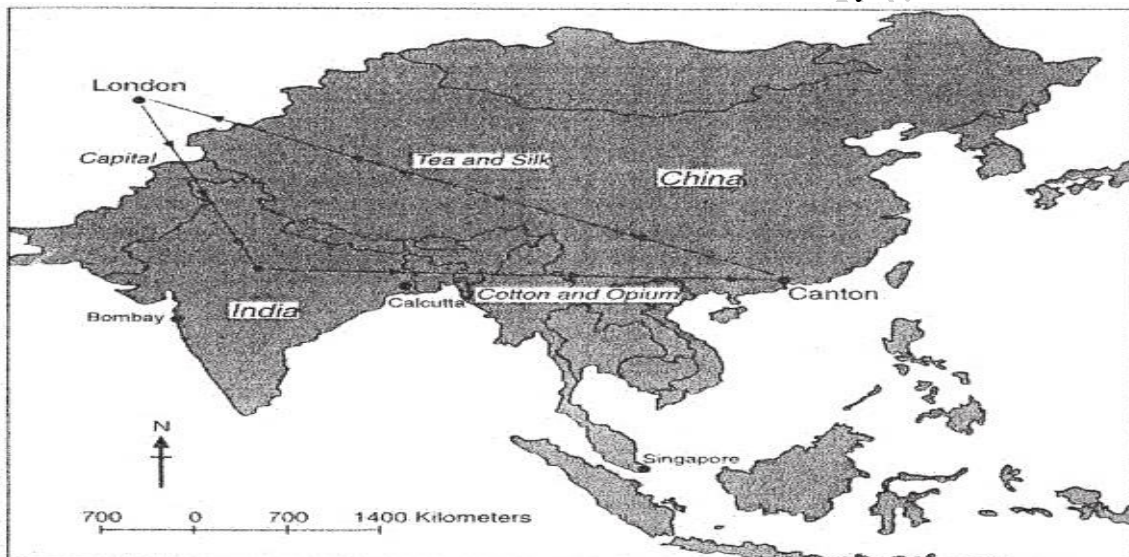
Asansol Girls' College,
for the students (Semester V) of Department of History, Asansol Girls' College.



(Source : <https://vocal.media/potent/history-of-the-opium-wars>)

The Manchu rulers (Qing dynasty) of China were prejudicial of their reaction to the presence of the Europeans in China. The Chinese were of the strong belief that their country is the only true civilization in the world. They were willing to have contact with the Europeans only on the assumption that they were inferiors. The Europeans were required to acknowledge the superiority of the Chinese culture and the emperor of China. They were compelled to present tribute to the emperor also. The foreign envoys did not enjoy the status of equality in China. They had to observe the *Kowtow*. It was a practice of paying respect to the emperor by kneeling before him and bumping the head on the ground. It is interesting to note that the Manchu rulers were interested to control foreign trade. They were not interested to abolish it. That led to the development of the Canton system of trade or CANTON TRADE. Canton was declared as the only legal port for foreign trade with China. This trade

was strictly regulated by the **COHONG** or a guild of Chinese **HONG** merchants . the cohong was an organization under the direct control of the Chinese emperor's administration. . The Cohong fixed prices, collected duties, and levied numerous fees on foreign merchants. It is important to note that the foreign traders were not also allowed to learn Chinese language. In that way the foreign traders were compelled to depend upon the **COHONG**. **The foreign traders were allowed to purchase their daily needs from the local markets under strict control of the local administration. Like the other European traders English East India Company was also interested to get access to the Chinese market & they were not interested to accept the Chinese supremacy. In the eighteenth century the English East India Company enjoyed the monopoly of the Eastern trade.** The Chinese silk, cotton and tea were in great demand in the European markets. For these, payment was made by spice and silver. Thus, the trade was favourable to China. The unequal balance of trade between the two countries created a lot of problem among the British. The principal item of exchange was the Chinese tea, which had become the national drink of the British people during the eighteenth century. It is important to note that English merchants were unable to come up with products which they could sell to the Chinese in similar quantity. The British considered such an imbalance of trade with China as unhealthy.



Map 1. The global triangle of trade, ca. 1820
Source: D. Meyer, p. 36

(Source : <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctv4cbhdf.11>)

MENTALITY OF THE BRITISH POWER & THE EMERGENCE OF OPIUM AS AN IMPORTANT PRODUCT

The British found it frustrating to communicate with the Chinese government about their grievances with the trading procedure. They found that their models and notions of diplomacy were useless in the Chinese context. For the British, as well as all other Western nations, diplomacy was conducted between equally sovereign and independent nation-states. This was not at all the way Qing China conducted foreign relations with its neighbours. The Chinese considered their country the centre of world civilization, and all people were naturally drawn to China because of its wealth, prestige, and power. Apart from that, the Qing government viewed involvement with commerce as beneath the dignity of the Chinese government; commerce involved private contact between petty men concerned with profit, a somewhat ignoble motive in traditional Confucian moral estimations, and did not require government-to-government contact.

This became quite visible in June 1793, when the British government sent Lord Macartney to the **Qianlong emperor (r. 1736–1796)** with a wish list for, among other things, residential diplomatic representation in Beijing, trade throughout China, and exemption for British subjects from Chinese legal jurisdiction. The Qing government received Macartney and his retinue as tribute bearers coming to congratulate the Qianlong emperor on the occasion of his 83rd birthday. Macartney, clearly refused to perform the **kowtow**, which would have led to a considerable diplomatic contretemps for both sides had the emperor not ultimately dispensed with the requirement.

In **1816 Britain** made one last attempt to alter China's business and diplomatic practices peacefully. Lord Amherst, a former governor of India, travelled China with a wish list more or less identical with Macartney's. Like Macartney, he refused to perform the kowtow and was ultimately unsuccessful in his mission.

So, from the 18th century the British power tried to gain importance in the Chinese court. But their diplomatic mission was failed. The Chinese officials refused to accept the British demands. In this situation British power took new avenue to get access to the trade. It is clear that for a long time balance of trade was in favour of China.

The balance of Sino-British trade was very much in China's favour throughout the eighteenth century. The Chinese commodity the British most desired was tea, but they also purchased large quantities of silk and porcelain. The Chinese purchased a few odd woolens and bric-a-brac from the British, but it was mostly silver that flowed out of Britain and into China. Finally the British hit upon one commodity for which the Chinese would pay most handsomely & that was opium. It was a highly addictive narcotic that was usually smoked in China. British opium was produced in Bengal and then sold to smugglers who ran the drug into Chinese harbours in small, fast boats under cover of night. Opium flowed into China in insignificant amounts during the eighteenth century, but by the early decades of the nineteenth century the opium habit began taking hold in southern China. It can be said that it was the first product which changed the balance of trade. D.C Wright in *The History of Modern China* clearly mentioned that within the middle 1830s southern China's opium problem was reaching crisis proportions. The British East India Company claimed all the while not to have anything officially to do with the opium trade, but it was an open secret that the British were now essentially dope pushers who were growing enormously wealthy at the expense of an addicted Chinese common people that would do and pay just about anything to sustain its drug habit.

The opium trade and the subsequent opium wars were the manifestations of the British imperialism in China. Opium became the tool by which the British traders eventually broke open the Chinese market. Realising the evil impact of opium on the people, the Chinese government had imposed a ban on the cultivation and import of opium in China. However, the ban was ineffective as the English merchants smuggled opium in large quantities into China with the connivance of corrupt Chinese officials. The opium, while addicting the Chinese population was also draining a huge amount of silver from China. The outflow of a large amount of Chinese silver disrupted Chinese finances and ruined Chinese economy. The **Opium Wars of 1839 to 1842 and 1856 to 1860 marked a new stage in China's relations with the West.**

TOWARDS OPIUM WAR

Under the Canton trade system, established by the Qing dynasty to regulate trade in the 18th century, Western traders were restricted to conducting trade through the southern port of Canton (Guangzhou). They could only reside in the city in a limited space, including

their warehouses; they could not bring their families; and they could not stay there more a few months of the year. Qing officials closely supervised trading relations, allowing only licensed merchants from Western countries to trade through a monopoly guild of Chinese merchants called the Cohong. Western merchants could not contact Qing officials directly, and there were no formal diplomatic relations between China and Western countries.

Western traders, for their part, mainly conducted trade through licensed monopoly companies, like Britain's East India Company. Despite these restrictions, both sides learned how to make profits by cooperating with each other. As the volume of trade grew, however, the British demanded greater access to China's markets. By 1800 the East India Company was buying 23 million pounds of tea per year at a cost of 3.6 million pounds of silver. Concerned that the China trade was draining silver out of England, the British searched for a counterpart commodity to trade for tea and porcelain. They found it in opium, which they planted in large quantities after they had taken Bengal, in India, in 1757.

The opium trade was so vast and profitable that all kinds of people, Chinese and foreigners, wanted to participate in it. Wealthy literati and merchants were joined by people of lower

classes who could now afford cheaper versions of the drug. Hong merchants cooperated with foreign traders to smuggle opium when they could get away with it, bribing local officials to look the other way. Smugglers, peddlers, secret societies, and even banks in certain areas all became complicit in the drug trade.

Opium, as an illegal commodity, brought in no customs revenue, so local officials exacted fees from merchants.

Even missionaries who deplored the opium trade on moral

grounds commonly found themselves drawn into it, or dependent on it, in one form or another. They relied on the opium clippers for transportation and communication, for example, and used merchants dealing in opium as their bankers and money changers.

By the 1830s, up to 20 percent of central government officials, 30 percent of local officials, and 30 percent of low-level officials regularly consumed opium. The Daoguang emperor (C.E 1821-50) himself was an addict, as were most of his court. As opium infected the Qing military forces, however, the court grew alarmed at its insidious effects on national defence. Opium imports also appeared to be the cause of massive outflows of silver, which destabilized the currency. While the court repeatedly issued edicts demanding punishment of opium dealers, local officials accepted heavy bribes to ignore them. In 1838, one opium dealer was strangled at Macao, and eight chests of opium were seized in Canton. Still the emperor had not yet resolved to take truly decisive measures. Meanwhile, in 1834 the British East India Company was disbanded, and private traders started opium trade. Knowing that a multiplication of private British traders would require greater governmental facilitation, the

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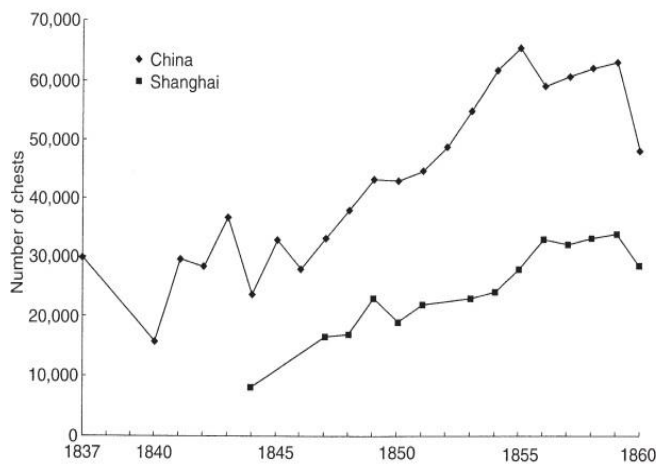


Figure 1. Opium Smuggling into China and Shanghai, 1837-1860

Sources: J. Fairbank, *Trade and diplomacy on the China Coast*, p. 229; Y. Hao, *The commercial revolution in nineteenth-century China*, table 9, p. 130; H. Morse, *The international relations of the Chinese empire*, vol.1, p. 358, 465, table G, p. 556; D. Meyer, p. 62.

British government sent Lord William John Napier to China as superintendent of trade, an official government position. Napier, a pompous and overbearing man from a family line that served British imperialist interests, was overly anxious to extend the dignity of the British crown and his own office to the Chinese. In presenting himself to the Chinese authorities in Canton he violated just about every Chinese sensibility and regulation imaginable, and when they were taken aback by his rough manner he blustered that Britain was quite ready for war with China. Napier eventually backed off and returned in September to Macao, where he died the next month. After the **Napier incident**, the British government appointed Captain Charles Elliot superintendent of trade in 1836 and instructed him to be less confrontational in dealing with the Chinese. Elliot eventually engaged in open military conflict with China over opium. **By the late 1830s the Qing government decided, after a brief flirtation with the idea of legalizing the opium trade, to interdict opium.** A fiery and energetic Chinese official named Lin Zexu was appointed imperial commissioner and sent to Canton as the emperor's personal representative to rid China of the opium problem once and for all. Commissioner Lin arrived in Canton in March 1839 and gave the foreigners (mainly the British) a deadline for surrendering all their stockpiles of opium. When his deadline passed with no action, Lin blockaded the foreign factory area in Canton, trapping several foreigners inside, including Charles Elliot himself. After several weeks passed, a crisis atmosphere emerged as foreigners in the surrounded factories began running out of food and supplies. Then a remarkable idea dawned on Elliot: he would simply give Commissioner Lin exactly what he wanted. In his official capacity, Elliot issued a proclamation making all of the opium in Canton the property of the British crown, and no longer the property of the private traders. His motive was simple: if Commissioner Lin trifled with Crown property, it would be sheer effrontery to Her Majesty. This in turn would constitute a Chinese provocation and serve as a perfect pretext and justification for war with the Chinese. On June 6 Commissioner Lin accepted the surrendered opium and destroyed it. Elliot then reported this "outrage" to the British government, and in the late 1839 he learned that a British expeditionary force would be sent to China. **In early 1840, Britain declared war on China.**

The expeditionary force did not arrive until June 1840, when British warships took the fight right to the emperor's doorstep, anchoring off the shore of Tianjin, Beijing's outlet to the sea. When Qishan, the Manchu governor-general of the region, persuaded the British to return south to Canton for talks without firing a shot, he was handsomely rewarded by the Qing government and appointed to deal with the British. When the talks began, Qishan was shocked at British demands for payment of an indemnity for the lost opium and permanent cession of the island of Hong Kong, demands he knew Beijing would never accept. Ultimately unable to placate the British any further and unsuccessful at preventing a resumption of Sino-British hostilities, Qishan was recalled in disgrace and exiled to northern Manchuria. Eventually a British naval force sailed up the Yangtze River to the city of Nanjing and poised itself to bombard the city if a formal peace agreement were not forthcoming. **The thought of this was more than the Qing government could bear, and in August 1841 the Treaty of Nanking was concluded aboard a British ship anchored outside Nanjing.** The treaty provided for the formal cession of Hong Kong in perpetuity to the British Crown, the opening of five other port cities along China's southern and eastern coasts to British trade, payment to a large indemnity, abolition of the trade restrictions disliked by the British, and a uniform tariff. A subsequent agreement gave the British some measure of extraterritoriality, or exemption from Chinese legal jurisdiction. For the Chinese, the Opium War was about just that: opium. They had not asked the British to come to China, after all, and yet they were willing to accommodate Britain's insatiable appetite for commerce as long as the British respected Chinese ways and ceased selling dangerous and addictive narcotics. The British, on the other hand, insisted that the Opium War was fought

because of China's obstreperous impedance of commerce, indignities offered the Crown, and refusal to bend to Britain's diplomatic norms. The British pretended that opium itself was a mere epiphenomenon compared to these larger issues, and they won their point through simple force of arms. As the first of the humiliating "unequal treaties" imposed on China by imperialist powers, the Treaty of Nanking endures in infamy in the modern Chinese nationalistic consciousness. Other western powers were also started to force China to sign treaties with them. **In July 1844 the Treaty of Wanghsia was concluded with the Americans, and in October 1844, the Treaty of Whampoa with the French.** The rest of the nineteenth century was a time of sustained nibbling away at the edges of the Qing empire by imperialist powers (mainly Britain, Russia, and Japan) in specific instances too numerous to discuss in detail in this brief narrative. With the Treaty of Nanking, China's Century of Humiliation had begun, one that would be compounded synergistically in future decades by internal upheavals. The Opium War did not solve all of the friction between Britain and China, and the Treaty of Nanking did not provide for Britain's ultimate goal of diplomatic representation in Beijing itself. Even though other coastal cities or "treaty ports" were opened to British commerce and residence as per the Treaty of Nanking, the city of Canton refused to admit the British. Attempts to open Canton and extend trade to other Chinese cities were unsuccessful, and by the mid-1850s the British had concluded once again that only war would convince China to bend to their demands.

The direct conflict between China & British power was started from the end of 1839.

On November 3, 1839, still with no declaration of war having emanated from either side the unresolved Kowloon incident coupled with other complications precipitated a dramatic military confrontation at Chuanbi on Canton Bay. On this occasion, two British frigates the 28-gun *Volage* and 18-gun *Hyacinth* took on 29 Chinese vessels that were blockading the harbour. One junk was blown to bits by a lucky shot to its magazine, several other junks were sunk or heavily damaged, and only one British sailor was wounded as opposed to at least 15 Chinese killed. Despite this humiliation, Commissioner Lin's report to the throne gave no hint of defeat and the emperor was in no doubt that the Chinese had won a great victory. In these unstable circumstances, a formal declaration of war against China was issued **on January 31, 1840** not by London, but by British authorities in India acting on behalf of the home government. In the months that followed, a large British fleet was assembled for dispatch to China.

The forces dispatched to Canton in response to Captain Elliot's entreaties arrived in June 1840 under the command of his cousin, Rear Admiral Sir George Elliot. The fleet consisted of 48 ships, 16 warships mounting 540 guns, four armed steamers, 27 transports, and a troop ship and carried fuel for both the steamers and the troops in the form of six million pounds of coal (3,000 tons) and 16,000 gallons of rum. The fighting force numbered some 4,000 men. After the fleet's arrival, the British moved quickly to assert their authority and demand compensation for the seized opium, abolition of the restrictive Canton trade system, and the right to occupy one or more islands off the coast. Admiral Elliot avoided confronting the Chinese forces Lin had assembled at Canton. Instead, he imposed his own naval blockade there and proceeded to move north along the coastline with a portion of his forces, accompanied by Charles Elliot, England's chief diplomat on the scene.

One objective of this push north was to find responsible officials at a major port who would agree to deliver the British government's ultimatum to the emperor in Peking (Beijing). A second, related objective was to pressure the Qing court into agreeing to negotiations by threatening to cut off north China from the resource-rich and economically critical south.

By early July after blockading Amoy (Xiamen), where local officials refused to allow a landing party the fleet was approaching the Yangtze River delta, some 700 miles north of Canton. On July 4, officers from the warship *Wellesley*, along with the an interpreter, met

with local officials from strategically located Chusan (Zhoushan) Island in a vain attempt to persuade them to surrender peacefully.

After occupying Chusan, the fleet blockaded Ningpo (Ningbo), a major port close by. The force then headed north toward Tientsin (Tianjin) and the Pei-ho (Hai He), the strategic waterway leading to Peking. While the expedition was advancing toward Tientsin, the British also engaged in a brief show of force in the south, known as the Battle of the Barrier. Commissioner Lin had mobilized forces that threatened to drive the British from Macao. In a preemptive assault that began and ended in a single day (August 19), British warships silenced the Chinese battery at the barrier; fired on the ineffective war junks anchored offshore; landed a brigade of some 380 men; destroyed the Chinese military stores; and then withdrew.

Near the end of August, the fleet carrying the two Elliots reached the approach to Peking and succeeded in conveying the British demands to local officials at Tientsin. Finally awakened to the real nature of the foreign threat, the emperor responded with fury and Lin became transformed from hero to scapegoat. On August 21, the emperor chastised him harshly. Lin warned the emperor that negotiating with the foreign barbarians would never work: —the more they get the more they demand, and if we do not overcome them by force of arms there will be no end to our troubles. **Qishan, the successor of Lin**, took a softer line. He persuaded the two Elliots to return to Canton by intimating that the Chinese were prepared to engage in serious discussions there.

The promised discussions began in Canton in late December. Charles Elliot as chief negotiator on the British side was there. Qishan offered only a smaller protection than requested. It is interesting to note that the even was done without the proper approval of emperor. By January 1841, the British had become aware that Qishan was not prepared to make substantial concessions. The fleet had been reinforced during this lull, and the next great show of British force was unleashed at a familiar place of battle: Chuanbi. The famous Second Battle of Chuanbi took place on January 7. There approximately 500 Chinese were killed.

On January 20, Qishan acknowledged his helplessness and indicated that, among other things, China was willing to give up Hong Kong and reopen Canton to trade. But ultimately the Daoguang emperor refused to accept Convention of Chuanbi. Qishan was imprisoned.

That ended an era of conflict. But it started a new arena of conflict. It made Captain Elliot much more active. In the last week of February and first week of March—in a succession of quick battles sometimes known as the **Battle of the Bogue, Battle of the First Bar, and Battle of Whampoa**—British warships gained control over the Pearl River and placed themselves in position to encircle Canton. Control over Whampoa enabled the British to bring up a large force for an attack on Canton, which they proceeded to carry out the following May. **On May 21**, at Elliot's urging, British subjects still in Canton left the city following which Chinese soldiers and mobs plundered and gutted the —factories where they conducted business. By May 24, the British force had taken the forts protecting the city and commenced bombarding Canton itself. Local officials together with wealthy hong merchants responded quickly by offering Elliot a —ransom of six million dollars to desist—leading to a truce agreed to on **May 27**.

The truce at Canton set the stage for one of the most celebrated moments in later Chinese recollections of the war. **On May 29, as Chinese troops began to withdraw from the city and British forces prepared to do likewise, local gentry in surrounding villages mobilized militia to attack the invaders. They had only primitive arms like hoes, spears, and a few matchlock guns, but were furious at the foreigners' destruction of local tombs.**

On May 30, in the midst of a torrential rainstorm near the village of Sanyuanli, this militia encountered and surrounded a detachment of Indian sepoy led by English officers. The downpour left the foreigners mired in paddy-field mud, and caused their flintlock muskets to misfire. Fearing an attack by the main British army, senior officials associated with the Manchu court's regular military forces quickly dispersed the militia .

The scenario was changed with the coming of Sir Henry Pottinger . Sir Henry Pottinger was Elliot's successor. He as a diplomatic and chief superintendent of trade arrived in Macao in August with instructions from London to do just that. In the later part of August, the fleet headed north with 14 warships including four steamers quickly occupying, once again, **Amoy, Tinghai, (capital of Chusan) and Ningpo.**

On March 10, a brave attempt of thousands of Chinese fighters to take on the foreigners within Ningpo . Although it was not successful. On March 15, five days after this defeat, the Chinese suffered a comparably harsh defeat at Segao, near Ningpo. Two months after this, beginning in mid-May, the British expedition resumed its push north, greatly replenished by reinforcements from India. The first noteworthy battle in this final advance came **on May 18, 1842**, with a British victory at Chapu that provided heroes and horrors in equal measure. One month after Chapu, the British expedition attacked Woosong on the mouth of the Hwangpu River that flows through Shanghai on June 16, and Shanghai itself three days later. Part of the advance on Shanghai was done on land, with British forces picking up coolie labor along the way. With the fall of Chinkiang, the way to Nanking now lay open. By early August, the British forces were within firing range of the celebrated walls of the great city, and Qing officials finally realized the foreigners were in position to cut off all vital commerce between south China and the north. With this the first opium war ended.



Ill. 5 Battle at Canton, ca. 1845

Source: Holachina.blog, 29-3-2009. See also en-Wikipedia 'British ships in Canton' for another battle (May 1841).

(Source : <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctv4cbhdf.11>)

TOWARDS THE TREATY OF NANKING

The First Opium War continued till 1842 . China was forced to sign the Treaty of Nanking. **Under the Treaty of Nanking, signed on August 29, 1842**, China agreed to open the five ports requested (**Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai**) to trade and residence of British merchants, pay an indemnity of 20 million silver dollars. **Treaty of Nanking** also forced China to abolish the **Cohong's** monopoly over the trade through Canton. They lost their power to moderate tariff on exports and imports also. The treaty provided for the

formal cession of Hong Kong in perpetuity to the British Crown, the opening of five other port cities along China's southern and eastern coasts to British trade, payment to a large indemnity, abolition of the trade restrictions disliked by the British, and a uniform tariff. A subsequent agreement gave the British some measure of extraterritoriality, or exemption from Chinese legal jurisdiction. Being not satisfied with the commercial advantages secured by the Treaty of Nanking, the British also imposed an additional treaty on the Chinese government known as the Treaty of Bogue. By this treaty the British obtained from the Chinese the extraterritorial jurisdiction in criminal cases. As per this provision any British national who commits a criminal offence in China would be tried according to the laws of England and not according to the laws of China. England was also granted by China the most favoured nation treatment. According to this provision any concession given by China to a third power was to be extended to England as well.

During the 19th century the treaty ports became the largest commercial centres in China, with Shanghai and Hong Kong leading the way. The first Opium War was widely regarded in England as a great triumph, both for the nation and for Western notions of commercial and technological progress more generally.

In 1856, fourteen years after the Treaty of Nanking, China and England (together with France) embarked on a second Opium War. Actually first opium war only provided a temporal solution .

The Opium War did not solve all of the friction between Britain and China, and the Treaty of Nanking did not provide for Britain's ultimate goal of diplomatic representation in Beijing itself. Even though other coastal cities or "treaty ports" were opened to British commerce and residence as per the Treaty of Nanking, the city of Canton refused to admit the British. Attempts to open Canton and extend trade to other Chinese cities were unsuccessful, and by the mid-1850s the British had concluded once again that only war would convince China to bend to their demands. All the British needed was a *causus belli*, a provocation to justify military action. **This came on October 8, 1856**, not this time as an indignity to the Crown, but to the flag. The Arrow, a Chinese-owned but British-registered ship flying the British flag, was boarded near Canton by Chinese forces searching for a wanted pirate. When the British protested the boarding, the Chinese coolly informed them that this was none of their affair: the ship was owned by Chinese and was boarded by Chinese in Chinese waters. The ship's flag was all that mattered to the British, and in response they shelled Canton for five days in late October. After this the British sent Lord Elgin (who had been Governor-General of Canada from 1847 to 1854) at the head of another expeditionary force, this time joined by the French, to chastise the Chinese. In December 1857, marines under Elgin's command stormed Canton, captured the defiant and xenophobic governor-general who resided there, and carried him away in captivity to British India. Elgin's force then sailed northward to **Tientsin** in early 1858 and menaced the city. The terrified Qing government sent negotiators to deal with the British, and Elgin bullied them into signing the **Treaty of Tientsin on June 26, 1858**. The treaty provided for residential British diplomacy in Beijing, the opening of several new ports, indemnities for Britain and France, and unrestricted travel through all parts of China for all foreigners, including Protestant and Catholic missionaries. The treaty provided under mentioned privileges to the foreign powers & foreigners in China --

1. Britain, France, Russia, and the United States would have the right to establish diplomatic legations in the closed city of Peking.
2. Ten more Chinese ports would be opened for foreign trade
3. The right of all foreign vessels including commercial ships to navigate freely on the Yangtze River.

3. China was to pay an indemnity to Britain and France of 2m taels of silver each.
4. China was to pay compensation to British merchants in 2m taels of silver for destruction of their property.
5. The right of foreigners to travel throughout China.

But the fighting was not over yet. **In March 1859 the Qing government** offered minimal resistance when the British ambassador attempted to travel to Beijing to take up his post there. This provoked Britain into dispatching another expeditionary force against China, once again led by Lord Elgin. This time British and French ground troops made it all the way into Beijing, and eventually they burned the Manchu emperor's Summer Palace (Yuanming Yuan) to the ground. This was the first time a modern imperialist power had ever stormed into a Chinese capital, and tales of it still elicit Chinese indignation.

On October 24, 1860, Lord Elgin dictated to the Chinese the **Convention of Peking**, which allowed the British once and for all to station residential diplomats in Beijing. Other provisions included more indemnities, the cession to Britain of **the Kowloon Peninsula opposite the island of Hong Kong**, and the right of French Catholic missionaries to own property in the Chinese hinterland. **Convention of Peking legalized Opium Trade. It also forced china to accept that the Treaty of Tientsin is valid.** It also forced China to open Tientsin as a trade port. According to the convention of Peking the area of Kowloon south of Boundary Street and Stonecutters Island was ceded to Britain. The United States and Russia gained the same privileges in separate treaties. In June 1898 the Second Convention of Beijing granted Britain a 99 year lease for the New Territories to the north of Boundary Street on the Kowloon Peninsula. Beginning on 1 July 1898 it ended on 1 July 1997.

In this way we can see that the opium war of 1842 actually open a Pandora's Box not created any permanent solution . The Opium Wars had far reaching consequences on the history of China. After the Opium war China witnessed one of the greatest Chinese peasant rebellions, the Taiping (Great Peace) Rebellion.

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