

Teacher Overview Objectives: *Imperialism Case Study: China*

NYS Social Studies Framework Alignment:

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

Objective	Guiding Question and Activity Description
Describe the motivations behind imperialism in China.	Why were imperialist nations interested in China? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● secondary source analysis ● primary source analysis
Describe the methods used by imperial nations to gain, consolidate, and maintain power in China.	How did imperial nations gain, consolidate, and maintain power in China? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● secondary reading and annotation ● document set analysis and graphic organizer

1

Why were imperialist nations interested in China?

Objectives: Describe the motivations behind imperialism in China.

Introduction

Directions: In the space below, brainstorm what you remember about China and its history.



What do you know about China and its history? What was the last thing you remember studying about China?

China during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912)

Directions: Examine the timeline and text below then answer the questions that follow.

In the 16th century, the Chinese economy was still the most sophisticated and productive in the world, and the Chinese probably enjoyed a higher standard of living than any other people on earth. The Qing (Ch'ing) Dynasty (1644-1912), founded by a group of people called the Manchus from northern China, continued this splendor.

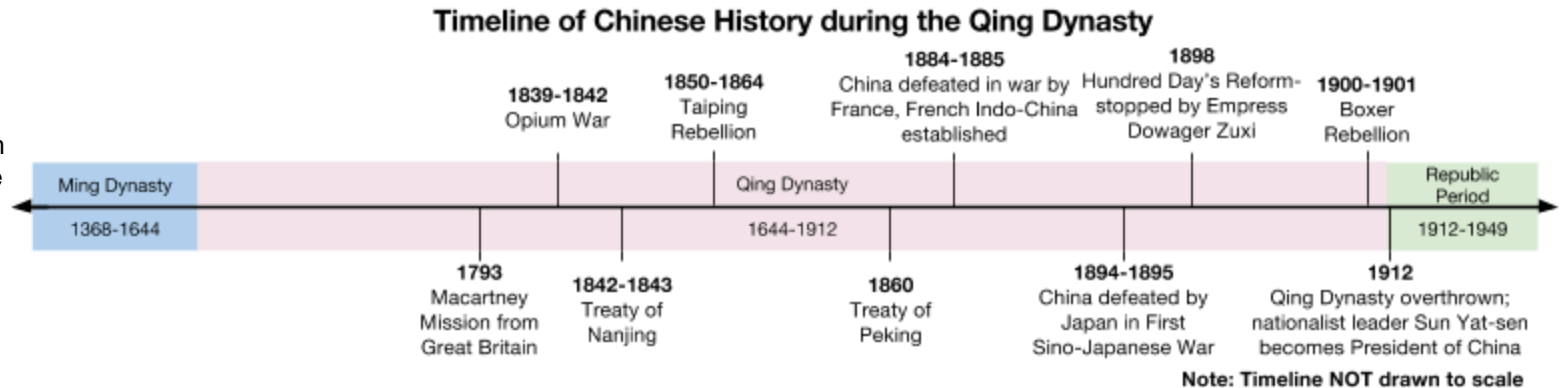
Eighteenth century Chinese scholars referred to this period

as "unparalleled in history," when all aspects of culture flourished. China was a prosperous state with abundant natural resources, a huge but basically contented population, and a royal house of great prestige at home and abroad.

By the late 18th century, however, the strong Chinese state started to struggle, particularly because of its expanding population. Having remained at 100 million people through much of history, under the peaceful Qing (Ch'ing), the population doubled from 150 million in 1650 to 300 million by 1800, and reached 450 million by the late nineteenth century (the population of the United States in 2014 was 318.9 million). By then, there was no longer any land in China's southern and central provinces available for migration: the introduction of New World (American) crops through trade - especially sweet potatoes, peanuts, and tobacco, which required different growing conditions than rice and wheat - had already claimed previously unusable land. So, there was a food and land shortage in China.

To compound these problems, the state's political control was diminishing. The size of the bureaucracy remained the same while the population grew. By the 19th century, district magistrates at the lowest level of the Chinese bureaucracy were responsible for the welfare, control, and taxation of an average of 250,000 people, a number that was difficult to serve. The government's ability to keep up important projects like the Grand Canal, which made it possible to move goods between the north and south, operating decreased. With the government stretched so thin, it struggled to respond to crises like the famines that hit the country between 1876 and 1879 and claimed the lives of 9.5 million people.

Source: Adapted from http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/timelines/china_modern_timeline.htm



<p>1. Describe China during the Qing Dynasty before the late 1700s.</p>	<p>2. Identify three effects of the population increase in China during the Qing Dynasty.</p>

Why were imperialist nations interested in China?

Reason #1: Chinese Goods Were in High Demand



Source: Ema Dimitrova, the Noun Project. <https://thenounproject.com/term/tea/21083/>

Tea became a popular drink in England and some other European countries in the 1700s and 1800s. British merchants who wanted to capitalize on the demand for tea back home wanted the Chinese to open their doors to more trade so they could expand their businesses.

Reason #2: Market to Sell Goods



As a result of industrialization in Europe, factory owners wanted new groups of people to sell their manufactured goods to for a profit. Industrialists hoped that China, with its large population, would be a profitable new market.

3. Why were imperialist nations interested in China?

How did the Chinese view foreigners during the Qing Dynasty?

Many Europeans had contact with China over the centuries. When Marco Polo traveled to China in the thirteenth century, he found European artisans already at the court of the Great Khan. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, priests such as the Italian Matteo Ricci journeyed to China, learned Chinese, and tried to make their religion more acceptable to the Chinese. These contacts were made usually by individual entrepreneurs or solitary missionaries. Although some Western science, art, and architecture was welcomed by the Qing court, attempts to convert Chinese to Christianity were by and large unsuccessful.

Direct oceanic trade between China and Europe began during the sixteenth century. At first it was dominated by the Portuguese and the Spanish, who brought silver from the Americas to exchange for Chinese silks. Later they were joined by the British and the Dutch. In the 1750s, the Chinese limited Western trade to the southern port of Canton (Guangzhou). Here there were wealthy Chinese merchants who had been given monopoly privileges by the emperor to trade with foreigners. The Chinese court also favored trading at one port because it could more easily collect taxes on the goods traded if all trade was carried on in one place under the supervision of an official appointed by the emperor. Such a system would make it easier to control the activities of the foreigners as well. Thus trade was restricted to Canton (Guangzhou), and foreigners coming to China in their sail-powered ships were allowed to reside only on the island of Macao as they awaited favorable winds to return home.



A political cartoon entitled, *The reception of the diplomatique and his suite, at the Court of Peking*, by James Gillray (died 1815), published 1792.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_reception_of_the_diplomatique_and_his_suite_at_the_Court_of_Peking_by_James_Gillray.jpg

1. Why did the Chinese limit trade with foreigners to the Port of Canton?

For many years this system was acceptable to both the Chinese and the Europeans. As the demand for tea increased, however, and the Industrial Revolution led them to seek more markets for their manufactured goods, the British began to try to expand their trade opportunities in China and establish Western-style diplomatic relations with the Chinese. This brought them immediately into conflict with the Chinese government, which was willing to allow trade without diplomatic relations, but would only allow diplomatic relations within the traditional tribute system that had evolved out of centuries of Chinese cultural leadership in Asia. In exchange for trading privileges in the capital and recognition of their ruler, neighboring states would send so-called tribute missions to China. These envoys brought gifts for the emperor and performed a series of bows called the "kow-tow" (koutou). Aside from a handful of foreigners who lived permanently in Peking (Beijing) and served the emperor, foreigners only visited the capital on such tribute missions. Therefore, when British citizens came to Peking in the late eighteenth century, their purpose was misunderstood. When they refused to follow the centuries-old system of tribute relations and began demanding both expanded trade and the establishment of embassies in the capital, they were immediately resisted and seen as challenging the Chinese way of life.

2. Identify two reasons that Europeans wanted to increase trade with China.	3. According to the reading, what misunderstanding was there between European merchants and the Chinese government?

One of the most famous British attempts to expand trade with China demonstrates the miscommunication between the two nations. Lord Macartney (George Macartney, 1737-1806) led a mission in 1793 to the court of the Qianlong emperor (1711-1799; r. 1736-1796) of China. This emperor reigned over perhaps the most luxurious court in all Chinese history.

King George III (1738-1820) of England sent Macartney to convince the Chinese emperor to open northern port cities to British traders and to allow British ships to be repaired on Chinese territory. Macartney arrived in North China in a warship with a group of 95 advisors, an artillery of 50 soldiers, and 600 packages of magnificent presents that required 90 wagons, 40 barrows, 200 horses, and 3,000 porters to carry them to Peking. Yet the best gifts of the kind of England had to offer — elaborate clocks, globes, porcelain — seemed insignificant beside the splendors of the Asian court. Taken on a yacht trip around the palace, Macartney stopped to visit 50 pavilions, each "furnished in the richest manner . . . that our presents must shrink from the comparison and hide their diminished heads," he later wrote. Immediately the Chinese labeled his mission as "tribute," and the emperor refused to listen to British demands. He also ordered Macartney to perform the kow-tow and dashed off the letter below to the British king.

4. What was the purpose of Lord Macartney's journey to China in 1793?

The Qianlong Emperor's Letter to George III, 1793

...Our dynasty's majestic virtue has penetrated unto every country under Heaven, and Kings of all nations have offered their costly tribute by land and sea. As your Ambassador can see for himself, we possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufactures. This then is my answer to your request to appoint a representative at my Court, a request contrary to our dynastic usage, which would only result in inconvenience to yourself. I have expounded my wishes in detail and have commanded your tribute Envoys to leave in peace on their homeward journey. It behooves you, O King, to respect my sentiments and to display even greater devotion and loyalty in future, so that, by perpetual submission to our Throne, you may secure peace and prosperity for your country hereafter.

Yesterday your Ambassador petitioned my Ministers to memorialize me regarding your trade with China, but his proposal [to open more northern ports to trade] is not consistent with our dynastic usage and cannot be entertained... as the tea, silk and porcelain which the Celestial Empire produces, are absolute necessities to European nations and to yourselves, we have permitted, as a signal mark of favour, that foreign *hongs* [merchant firms] should be established at Canton, so that your wants might be supplied and your country thus participate in our beneficence.

Your request for a small island near Chusan, where your merchants may reside and goods be warehoused, arises from your desire to develop trade. As there are neither foreign *hongs* nor interpreters in or near Chusan, where none of your ships have ever called, such an island would be utterly useless for your purposes....Consider, moreover, that England is not the only barbarian land which wishes to establish . . . trade with our Empire: supposing that other nations were all to imitate your evil example and beseech me to present them each and all with a site for trading purposes, how could I possibly comply? This also is a flagrant infringement of the usage of my Empire and cannot possibly be entertained.

Source: From E. Backhouse and J. O. P. Bland, *Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking* (Boston:

5. The Qianlong Emperor states, "Our dynasty's majestic virtue has penetrated unto every country under Heaven, and Kings of all nations have offered their costly tribute by land and sea." Based on this quote, how did the Chinese see themselves and their place in the world?

6. What does the quote, "we possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufactures" mean? If you were George III of England, how might you react to that quote?

7. What was the Qianlong Emperor's response to Lord Macartney's request to open more ports to trade and setup an island for merchants to reside on near Chusan?

8. Based on the language in this letter what was the Qianlong Emperor's perception of Europeans?

2

How did imperial nations gain, consolidate, and maintain power in China?

Objectives: Describe the methods used by imperial nations to gain, consolidate, and maintain power in China.

Directions: As you read the information below, annotate it by placing a “G” next to examples of methods that imperialist countries used to gain power in China, a “C” next to examples of methods they used to consolidate their power, and an “M” next to examples of methods used to maintain power. Then, complete the questions on the right hand side of the page. At the end of the activity, you will summarize your discoveries in a graphic organizer.

First Opium War (1839-1842)



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

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

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

The cost to China was enormous. The drug weakened a large percentage of the population (some estimate that 10 percent of the population regularly used opium by the late nineteenth century), and silver began to flow out of the country to pay for the opium. Many of the economic problems China faced later were either directly or indirectly traced to the opium trade. The government debated about whether to legalize the drug through a government monopoly like that on salt, hoping to barter Chinese goods in return for opium. But since the Chinese were fully aware of the harms of addiction they outlawed the drug and in 1838 the emperor decided to send one of his most able officials, Lin

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

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

Tse-hsu (Lin Zexu, 1785-1850), to Canton (Guangzhou) to do whatever necessary to end the traffic forever.

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



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

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Destroying_Chinese_war_junks_by_E_Duncan_1841.jpg

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

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

China to the West and marked the beginning of Western exploitation of the nation.

Treaty of Nanjing

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

- the British gained possession of the island of Hong Kong which it held until 1997
- several Chinese cities were forced to trade with British merchants
- the Chinese had to pay the British 21 million ounces of silver for compensation
- British citizens gained the right of **extraterritoriality**. Extraterritoriality is the state of being exempt from local laws, so the British, while in China, could follow their own laws and could not be arrested or punished by the Chinese.
- Christian missionaries were allowed to preach in China
- the British would have exclusive rights (as opposed to other nations) to trade with the Chinese in British **“spheres of influence.”**



A French political cartoon from 1898 entitled, "China- the cake of kings and...of emperors."

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:China_imperialism_cartoon.jpg

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

5. What is extraterritoriality?

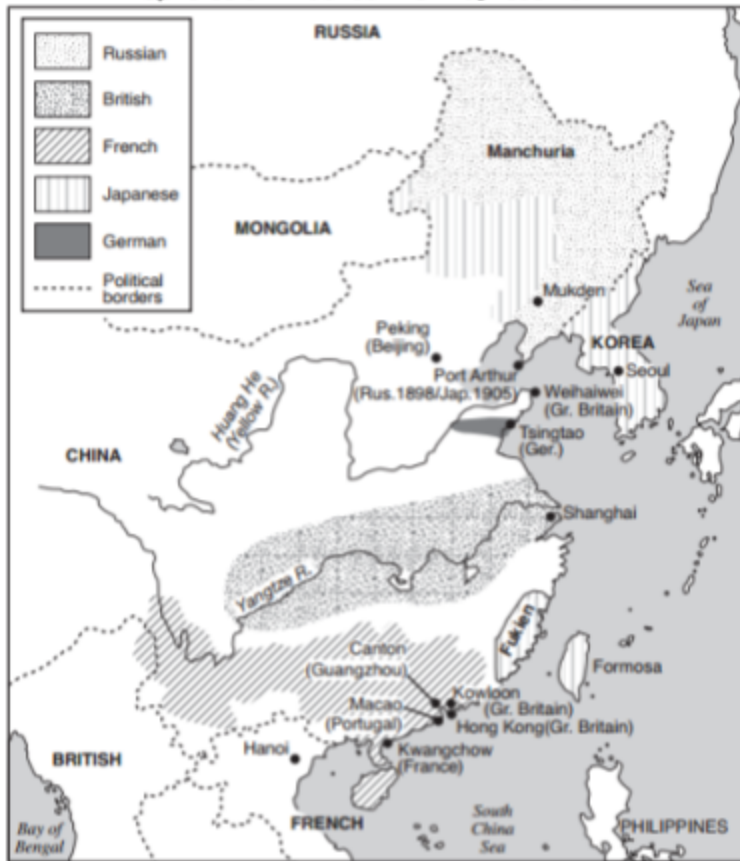
6. What is a “sphere of influence”?

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Other Unequal Treaties

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

Spheres of Influence in China, 1895–1914



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

List of Some of the Unequal Treaties

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




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

7. If you were a European, American, or Japanese merchant, how would you view the unequal treaties with China?

8. If you were a Chinese person, how would you feel about the unequal treaties and the government that signed them?

Document Analysis Activity

Directions: After examining documents on imperialism in China, fill in the chart below. For each method of control listed, identify if it helped imperial nations gain, consolidate, and/or maintain power in China. Then, explain why you think so.

<p>GAIN</p>  <p>Gaining power is the process of getting it and expanding it.</p>	<p>CONSOLIDATE</p>  <p>Consolidating power is the process of taking control from other people who also have power.</p>	<p>MAINTAIN</p>  <p>Maintaining power is the process of keeping one's power.</p>
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Method of Control	Gain, Consolidate, and/or Maintain Power? <small>Circle all that apply.</small>	Explanation <small>Explain why the method of control described made it possible for imperial nations to gain, consolidate, and/or maintain power in China.</small>
Treaties	GAIN	
	CONSOLIDATE	
	MAINTAIN	
Control of Trade	GAIN	
	CONSOLIDATE	
	MAINTAIN	
Conquest and Military Strength	GAIN	
	CONSOLIDATE	
	MAINTAIN	



Regents Multiple Choice Check for Understanding

Base your answer to question 1 on the passage below and on your knowledge of social studies.

... Our celestial empire [China] rules over ten thousand kingdoms! Most surely do we possess a measure of godlike majesty which ye cannot fathom! Still we cannot bear to slay or exterminate without previous warning, and it is for this reason that we now clearly make known to you the fixed laws of our land. If the foreign merchants of your said honorable nation desire to continue their commercial intercourse, they then must tremblingly obey our recorded statutes, they must cut off for ever the source from which the opium flows, and on no account make an experiment of our laws in their own persons! Let then your highness [Queen Victoria] punish those of your subjects who may be criminal, do not endeavor to screen or conceal them, and thus you will secure peace and quietness to your possessions, thus will you more than ever display a proper sense of respect and obedience, and thus may we unitedly enjoy the common blessings of peace and happiness. What greater joy! What more complete felicity [harmony] than this! ... — Chinese High Commissioner Lin Zexu's letter to Queen Victoria

1. Which event is most directly related to the 19th century situation described in this passage?

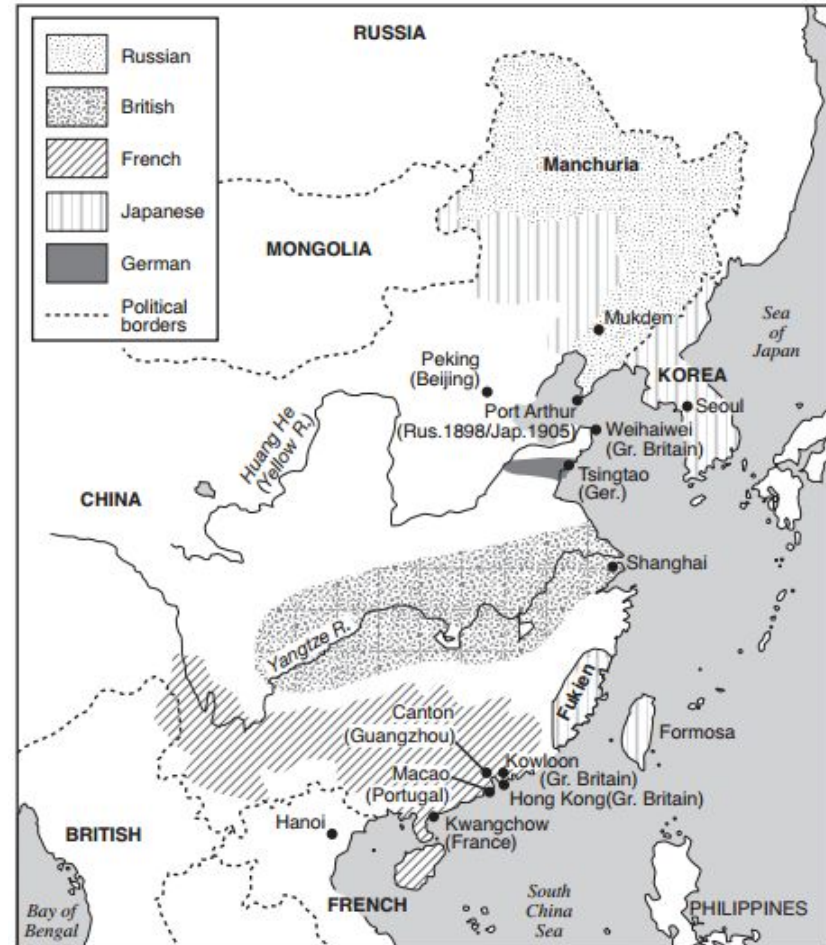
- (1) signing of the Treaty of Nanjing
- (2) Russo-Japanese War
- (3) Monarchies were restored throughout Europe.
- (4) The slave trade with South America was eliminated.

2. During the 19th century, European nations established spheres of influence in China mainly to

- (1) profit from the ivory trade
- (2) introduce Islam to the Chinese people
- (3) gain commercial advantages in China
- (4) obtain human rights for Chinese citizens

Base your answer to question 3 on the map below and on your knowledge of social studies.

China, 1895–1914



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

3. What is the primary focus of this map?

- (1) population density
- (2) resource distribution
- (3) imperialism
- (4) urbanization