



# Opium Wars & the Taiping Rebellion

*The iron ship Nemesis in action in 1841 against Chinese junks.*

## 1. British-Chinese trade

canton system

British imported goods from China; exported mainly silver

Growth of opium trade

## 2. Chinese attempt to shut down trade

Lin Zexu appointed in 1838 to stamp out opium trade

Zexu destroyed stocks of opium in China; then demanded smugglers turn over their stocks

## 3. First Opium War (1839-42) & Second Opium War (1856-60)

By the outbreak of the Second Opium War, exports of silk and tea were still triple imports of opium.

## 4. Treaties that ended the fighting: Treaty of Nanjing (1842) & Treaty of Jiantian (1860)

Britain allowed to trade in ports all along Chinese mainland (not just Canton); allowed to have embassy in Beijing; freedom from persecution for Christians, freedom of travel for British; British subjects under British law; indemnities (combining both treaties) equivalent to some £16 million, including payment for the cost of the opium that was surrendered.

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The Taiping Rebellion revealed China's internal divisions. The Taiping movement was a strange mixture of Christianity and Chinese culture. The Taiping: wanted to replace Confucian classics with the New Testament in exams for bureaucrats; murdered all Manchus; insisted that men and women sleep and fight battles in separate units; utilized communal property.

1850 Taiping army formed

1851 Taiping captured Jintian (in south China), their first large city

1864 Nanjing (Taiping capital) fell to imperial forces

1871 last Taiping force defeated

*When combined with deaths due to famine and pestilence, the Taiping Rebellion took an estimated 20 million lives.*