Qing Dynasty 清: 1644 - 1911 (last imperial dynasty; ruled by the Manchus, a tribal people whose homeland lies to the northeast of Ming China; consider themselves the successors to the Jurchen Jin dynasty)

Qianlong Emperor 乾隆 (r. 1736-1796), Hongli, 4th son of the YZ emperor. Actually ruled until 1799, but abdicated in 1796 so that his official reign would not exceed that of his grandfather.

Jiaqing Emperor 嘉慶 (r. 1796-1820)

Daoguang Emperor 道光 (r. 1821-1850)

The Opium War (1839-1842)

The Complete Writings of the Four Treasuries (Siku quanshu 四庫全書); encyclopedic collection of over 16,000 works from previous dynasties and arranged by the four categories of classics, history, philosophy, and belles-lettres.

Heshen 和珅 (1750-1799): Imperial Bodyguard; gets the confidence of the Qianlong emperor; quickly ascends ladder of official appointment including posts on the Grand Council and Ministry of Revenue; accused of embezzling enormous sums for his private pleasure; traditionally blamed for the failures of the White Lotus Rebellion suppression campaigns.

White Lotus Rebellion, 1796-1804; begins in the southwest at the end of the Qianlong reign; takes up anti-Manchu rhetoric; spread to 5 provinces; campaigns to suppress the rebellion are costly.

Macartney Mission: an embassy led by Lord George Macartney to the Qianlong Emperor in 1793; the aim of the mission is to expand trade with China; sent by King George III, but backed by the board of the British East India Company.

British East India Company; founded in 1600 by British merchants involved in the spice trade in SE Asia; given a monopoly by the British government to engage in trade in East Asia; via competition with Dutch and Portuguese traders, the company begins to assemble its own military; by the mid 1700s gains colonial control over north and northwest India; the British government takes over this role after 1857. Shareholders in the BEIC pushed for greater trading opportunities in China; established a monopoly on the opium trade in China in the late 18th century; losses its monopoly over the China trade in 1834.

Hoppo: Official head of the Maritime Customs for dealing with western merchants prior to the Opium War; foreign merchants could not communicate directly with the Hoppo; instead they were supposed to communicate their concerns via the Chinese Cohong merchants.
Cohon (combined merchant companies/“gong hang” 共行): The Chinese merchant guild given a monopoly over all trading with western merchants and countries; founded in 1720; after 1760, all trading with westerners is restricted to the port of Guangzhou/Canton; from then on, the Cohong act as agents of the Qing state in all matters dealing with “West Ocean” foreigners; the Cohong must also act as guarantors for the behavior of the foreigners with whom they conducted business. This system is abolished in 1842 with the Qing defeat in the Opium War.

Lin Zexu 林則徐 (1785-1850): Official appointed as imperial commissioner to end the opium trade in Guangzhou; argued against legalization of opium on moral grounds; his attack on opium was directed against both drug users and traffickers; his destruction of three million pounds of British opium at Canton in 1839 enrages British traders and helps to set off the Opium War.

The Treaty of Nanjing (1842): Signed by the British and Qing governments to end the Opium War. Established the opening of five treaty ports (Guangzhou/Canton, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Shanghai & Ningbo) to unrestricted trade and residence by the British; cedes Hong Kong to British control; makes the Qing responsible for 21 million tael indemnity payment; abolished Cohong monopoly on trade with foreigners; allows for foreign nationals to be tried by their own courts (extraterritoriality) in the treaty ports; gives foreign officials equal status and access to Chinese officials.