Bringing Korea in to the Classroom: Lesson Plan

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Lesson Title: The Consequences of Western Imperial Policy in Asia: A Comparison of the Treaty of Kangwha (1876) to the Treaty of Kanagawa (1854)

Time Range: 1-2 class periods (approximately 60 minutes)

Ohio Standards:
Imperialism (1800-1914)
The industrialized nations embarked upon a competition for overseas empires that had profound implications for the entire world. This “new imperialism” focused on the underdeveloped world and led to the domination and exploitation of Asia, Africa and Latin America

Ohio Benchmarks:
11. Imperialism involved land acquisition, extraction of raw materials, the spread of Western values, and maintenance of political control.
12. The consequences of imperialism were viewed differently by the colonizers and the colonized

Grade Level Indicators: History 9

Introduction/Lesson Summary:

Emerging on the tail end of the Age of Industrialization (19th Century), the Age of Imperialism (1800-1914) saw the globalization of Western policies, culture, and economics. This was seen as progress by the Western nations and was heralded as the key to “modernizing” the global marketplace. As more nations took part in this global scramble for markets of goods and resources, lesser-developed nations began taking up similar practices as a means of coping (if not competing) with the Imperial powers.

According to Asia for Educators:

Imperialism: Western and Japanese

- By the mid-nineteenth century Korea was one of the last Asian holdouts against Western imperialism, which had conquered much of southern Asia and was making inroads on China. Vietnam, which like Korea was a close tributary state to China, had been conquered by the French in the 1860s.
- Following the successful opening of Japan to trade and diplomacy with the West in 1854 through the "gunboat diplomacy" of Commodore Perry of the US Navy, the British, the French, and the Americans all attempted to open Korea in a similar fashion. Korea, however, refused to comply to Western demands, and engaged in naval skirmishes with the French and the Americans in the 1860s and early 1870s.
- In the end, the country was forced to open up not by the West, but by Japan itself. The 1876 Treaty of Kangwha between Japan and Korea, named after the island off the west coast of Korea where it was signed, was a classic "unequal treaty" of the kind Western powers were imposing on Asian countries, including China and Japan, in the nineteenth century. The treaty gave Japan special trading rights and other privileges in Korea that were not reciprocated for Koreans in Japan. The United States and major European countries soon followed with their own treaties of trade and diplomacy with Korea.
- By the end of the nineteenth century, rivalry over Korea led to war between Japan and China (1894-95) and, ten years later, between Japan and Russia (1904-5). Japan won both wars, and in 1910 Japan annexed Korea as a colony, ending the Choson dynasty after more than 500 years of independent rule.

(http://afe.easia.columbia.edu/main_pop/kpct/kp_koreajapan.htm)
**Materials:**

Image of Matthew Perry at the signing of the Treaty of Kanagawa (1854)
https://samurairevolution.omeka.net/site_info

Copies of the Treaty of Kanagawa (1854)
From the Avalon Project, Yale Law School
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/japan002.asp

Copies of the Treaty of Kangwha (1876)
Project Gutenberg
http://www.gutenberg.us/articles/treaty_of_ganghwa

Image of Queen Min

http://sakuramochi-ji.blogspot.com/2012/06/empress-myeongseong-had-beautiful.html

Account of the assassination of Queen Min
http://zeroempty000.blogspot.com/2006/02/queen-min-assasination-of-queen-min.html

**Vocabulary:**
Gun-Boat Diplomacy, Unequal Treaty, Annexation, Extraterritoriality

**Sample Assessment Items**

**Extended Response Questions:**

1. How does the Treaty of Kangwha (1876) compare to the Treaty of Kanagawa (1854)?
2. How does the Treaty of Kangwha (1876) show Western Imperialist Influence?
3. How does the way the Japanese instituted the Treaty of Kangwha on Korea reflect a Western Imperialist influence?

**Lesson Guidelines**

**Introduction (10-15 minutes):**

Display picture of Perry at the signing of the Treaty of Kanagawa (1854) on projection board.

In their notes, Have students:

a. Denote what they see and,

b. Connote what they can interpret

c. All of this should be done in the context of the unit of study, Western Imperialism

-discuss student responses
Develop (20-25 minutes):

- Have students pair up.
- Give each pair a copy of the Treaty of Kanagawa (1854) and the Treaty of Kangwha (1876)
  - Have the pairs analyze each treaty independently, making note of the main provisions of each
  - Have the pairs circle similar wording, provisions, and implications of the treaties
- After the comparisons have been made, facilitate a discussion about the similarities in the two treaties.

Further Exploration (15-20 minutes):

Go over the way in which the Treaties were Imposed on their respective targets and how these were “unequal treaties” in the same nature as the many treaties imposed on the lesser-developed world by the Western nations.

Ask students to compare this to other situations they know or have studied. Make a list on the board and discuss similarities.
- Examples may include the Open Door Policy in China, the Scramble for Africa, or even the Colonial Americas
- Ask students what the implications of such treaties might be, what might this lead to?
- Again, generate a list and discuss

Conclude (10 minutes):

- Display a picture of Queen Min. Have students read the account of the assassination of the queen and its aftermath.
- Allow for discussion.
- Unequal Treaties produce Unequal Relationships