

### **Cartoon I: Background Information**

When this cartoon was published, China's Manchu (Qing) Dynasty was in decline. Rapid population growth was causing growing hardships among land-hungry peasants (China had more than 400 million people by 1850). A huge uprising, the Taiping Rebellion, was underway. Millions died in it. Earlier, Great Britain had finally found a product the Chinese wanted – opium. In the Opium Wars of the 1840s, and again in the late 1850s, the British forced China to open itself up to trade. This 1858 cartoon shows a graceful and commanding Britannia having tea with a childish, cowardly, and deceitful China.

### **Cartoon I: Questions for Answer**

1) By the mid-1800s, Great Britain and other Western nations were finally forcing China to open up to allow more trade with the rest of the world. This 1858 cartoon depicts a meeting between Great Britain and China. Who is the figure pouring tea and who does she represent? Who is the figure on the right supposed to represent? Who is the 3<sup>rd</sup> figure in the picture?

2) The tea party is actually a meeting between Britain and China to discuss a peace treaty. The Chinese were not happy about the treaty Britain wanted them to accept. In the cartoon, Britannia asks, "A little more gunpowder, Mr. China?" Along with the unusual "teapot," what does this suggest about Britain's attitude and intentions in dealing with China?

3) How is China depicted in the cartoon? What is the British view of China as shown in this cartoon? How does the cartoon reflect British attitudes about themselves at this time in its history?

### **Cartoon 3: Background Information**

The nations of Europe were not the only “Western” powers with imperial ambitions and an ability to back them up. By the 1890s, a new colossus had arisen in North America. And in the early 1900s, U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt took several steps to carve out a greater role for the U.S. in the world. He acted decisively to build the Panama Canal to protect America’s interests abroad, and he asserted the right of the U.S. to intervene anywhere in the Western Hemisphere. Roosevelt vowed to “speak softly, and carry a big stick.” Here, a gigantic Roosevelt uses his “big stick” diplomacy to intervene and manage a dispute in which a number of European leaders were seeking to collect debts from certain Latin American countries.

### **Cartoon 3: Questions for Answer**

1) Theodore Roosevelt said that no European nation should ever interfere in the problems of nations in the Western Hemisphere. Whom did he feel should take care of the problems in the Western Hemisphere? How does the way he is drawn here help to show what he believed?

2) Look closely at the way the smaller figures in the cartoon are drawn. From the way these figures are drawn, what do think the artist’s attitude is towards these other parts of the world?

3) Teddy Roosevelt felt the U.S. was right to play the role of “world constable.” How might the other sides in this argument felt about this attitude? If you had to redraw the cartoon to reflect the other side’s arguments, what would the cartoon look like (you may actually redraw the cartoon or simply describe it in words)?