

2019

The PRC and its Anti-Drug War: The Opium Suppression Campaign of the Early 1950's

Queen Marcela Pierre
University of Mississippi

Follow this and additional works at: https://egrove.olemiss.edu/hon_thesis



Part of the [Chinese Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Pierre, Queen Marcela, "The PRC and its Anti-Drug War: The Opium Suppression Campaign of the Early 1950's" (2019). *Honors Theses*. 1092.

https://egrove.olemiss.edu/hon_thesis/1092

This Undergraduate Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors College (Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College) at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

The PRC and its Anti-Drug War: The Opium Suppression Campaign of the Early 1950's

By
Queen Marcela Pierre

A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

Oxford, MS
May 2019

Approved By

Advisor: Joshua Howard

Reader: Peter Thilly

Reader: Noell Wilson

Abstract

For centuries, China sought to suppress opium consumption within its borders. Following the Chinese Communist Party's rise to power, the 1950's drug suppression campaign initiated new attempts to bring about the end of opium's presence within Chinese society. What led to this campaign's success is its utilization of different strategies within each region of focus. The combination of strategies used allowed the CCP to eradicate all forms of the opium market in both urban and rural areas where the campaign was active. This thesis examines the methods used during the campaign and how these methods resulted in the campaign's success.

Table of Contents

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>CHAPTER 1: OPIUM TRADE IN THE 1940'S</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>CHAPTER 2: OPIUM SUPPRESSION IN RURAL CHINA</u>	<u>19</u>
<u>CHAPTER 3: OPIUM SUPPRESSION IN URBAN CHINA</u>	<u>31</u>
<u>CONCLUSION</u>	<u>40</u>
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY</u>	<u>42</u>

Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to describe the People's Republic of China's opium suppression campaign between 1949 and 1952 and discuss the reasons why this campaign was more successful in its goal of eliminating opium than previous campaigns. To analyze this campaign, each chapter will discuss different aspects of this campaign. Chapter 1 will cover the presence of opium in China in the decade leading up to the campaign. Chapter 2 discusses the campaign's influence on opium suppression in rural China, while Chapter 3 focuses on opium suppression in urban China.

There were major difficulties in studying this topic. Information regarding this specific campaign is limited due to the mostly secretive nature through which the campaign was carried out, as well as the lack of documentation during the campaign. As a result, research on this campaign is based on the few secondary sources covering this campaign, as well as directives published by provincial governments.

China's history of opium began in the 7th century when opium was exploited for its medicinal properties. Opium possessed pain-relieving properties which made it useful in the treatment of a large variety of illnesses. It was also believed to be able to cure many different diseases, from cholera to plague.¹ As the popularity of opium

¹ Frank Dikotter, Lars Laamann and Zhou Xun. "Narcotic Culture: A Social History of Drug Consumption in China." *British Journal of Criminology* (2002): 317-336.

spread throughout China over the centuries, opium gained other uses, mainly within China's smoking culture.

In the 19th century, opium smoking became a leisure activity among the Chinese elite, especially in cities such as Shanghai which were populated with numerous opium dens. Where tobacco was mainly seen as the product of choice for the average citizen, opium took on a popularity of its own. In Shanghai, smoking opium was tied to the privileged life of the wealthy class, the ability to afford the leisure that others could not enjoy. Opium smoking also stimulated the economies of these cities by stimulating the flow of goods and wealth. This circulation of opium and commodities made opium extremely important to China's urban societies.²

During the 18th and 19th century, Britain as well as the U.S. profited from exporting opium to China. However, the growing trade imbalance eventually culminated into the Opium Wars. On the eve of this conflict, the Imperial Commissioner Lin Zexu sought to purge all opium consumption within China while also ending opium's importation from other countries. Lin Zexu sent a series of letters to the British monarch in an effort to put a halt to the international opium trade taking place in Canton, China. In these letters, Lin argued that the importation and sale of opium in China was immoral and insisted that the monarch prevent future trade. Lin Zexu also attempted to halt opium trade and oust opium merchants from Canton by force. Lin's efforts, however,

² Alexander Des Forges. "Opium/Leisure/Shanghai: Urban Economies of Consumption." *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000: 167-182.

ultimately failed as the British navy overcame Chinese forces and prevented China's emperor from completely eradicating opium sales.³

In the 1850's, the British further expanded their demands to include greater trade rights to British merchants, including the legalization of opium trade. When China was unable to oppose British forces, these demands were incorporated into the Treaty of Tianjin in 1860.⁴ The role of foreigners in the Opium Wars had a lasting effect on how the Chinese viewed opium in the 20th century.

The failure of China to win the Opium Wars, however, did not end the opium suppression movement in China. Other suppression campaigns soon followed the Opium Wars, such as the 1907 campaign led by the late Qing dynasty. However, these campaigns did not generate much success until the mid 20th century, beginning with the 1930's campaign. This campaign consisted of the Six-Year Plan which began in 1935. The plan attempted to control opium by putting all aspects of the opium market, including production, sale and consumption, under government control. While the plan was initially successful, its usefulness in granting the Chinese Nationalist government a means of profiting off of opium taxes eventually undermined the Six-Year Plan's original goal of complete drug eradication. While the 1930's campaign did not completely eliminate opium trade and consumption, it was a turning point in China's opium suppression efforts. Suddenly, China began to see progress in its goal of completely eradicating all signs of opium in the country.

³ Frederic Wakeman Jr., *The Fall of Imperial China*. New York: Free Press, 1977: 131-137.

⁴ Julia Lovell. *Drugs, Dreams and the Making of China*. London: Picador, 2011: 371.

It was not until the early 1950's that China accomplished its goal of eliminating opium from within its borders. This was not a simple task. It required the coordination of numerous regional governments to ensure that opium production and consumption would not be given an opportunity to return. This thesis will explore how China brought opium production and consumption to an end.

The development of this thesis began with an analysis of Zhou Yongming's studies. In *Anti-Drug Crusades in 20th Century China*, Zhou Yongming discusses the 1950's opium suppression campaign in China. Zhou notes different aspects of the campaign, such as its rallies, edicts and connections to the Chinese Communist Party. While Zhou provides a brief overview of the campaign, he does not provide an in-depth description of the various tactics used during the campaign nor why this campaign was successful. This thesis will build on Zhou's arguments regarding the role opium suppression played in the Chinese Communist Party's consolidation of its power, as well as the reasons behind the success of the campaign.

The main cause behind the 1950's campaign's success was its utilization of multiple different suppression strategies. Rural and urban parts of China displayed different opium situations. Poppy fields populated many villages in Sichuan, Yunnan and other agricultural regions. Cities like Shanghai and Nanjing, on the other hand, were littered with drug factories, drug dealers and addicts. Facing different problems within each region required that the PRC government develop different strategies within rural and urban areas. The combined use of these strategies allowed the PRC government to target all segments of the opium market.

The 1950's campaign was highly successful in adjusting to the distinct variations within these regions. As a result of these policies, law enforcement was able to track, arrest, interrogate and punish drug offenders at various levels of the drug market. In rural China, local governments also located poppy fields and destroyed the crop to prevent further opium production. In cities, law enforcement raided drug factories, shut down opium dens and rehabilitated addicts. To prevent the re-introduction of opium to populations, anti-drug rallies were held to sway public opinion regarding drug sales and consumption. To further emphasize the importance of the campaign, anti-drug rhetoric and policies were linked to political campaigns, such as the "Resist U.S. Aggression and Aid Korea" campaign and land reform. The extensive combination of strategies used during the course of these campaigns ensured that opium could no longer persist in China.

Chapter 1: Opium Trade in the 1940's

To better understand the opium situation that was present when the PRC initiated its campaign to end opium production and consumption in the early 1950's, one must first take a look at the years leading up to the campaign. The 1940's marks a period of time between what is arguably two of China's most important opium suppression campaigns: The Six-Year Plan and the PRC suppression campaign. Between these two campaigns, there were several events that would later shape the 1950's campaign.

After decades of the Chinese combatting the proliferation of opium in China, the 1940's saw significant shifts in the presence of opium in Chinese society.⁵ During the 1930's, measures such as the Six-Year Plan were successful in reducing opium production and consumption but failed to completely eliminate the drug's presence. Enacted by the Chinese Nationalist government in 1935, the Six-Year Plan's official goal was to control and reduce the cultivation, distribution and consumption of opium, mainly by transferring control over all opium-related operations to the government and taxing consumers of opium.⁶ However, corruption and government interest in revenue derived from opium taxes, one of the methods used to control opium consumption,

⁵ Brook, Timothy and Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi. *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000: 25.

⁶ Alan Baumler. *Chinese and Opium under the Republic: Worse Than Floods and Wild Beasts*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007: 177-193.

impeded the complete eradication of opium. Control over opium sales provided the Chinese Nationalist government and warlord governments, such as Long Yun in Yunnan province, an opportunity to generate revenue and pay for their military costs, adding a barrier to opium suppression.

One example of this conflict of interest was the Nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek. In public, Chiang Kai-shek, the chairman of the Military Affairs Commission, openly criticized gambling and opium smoking and rebuked those who engaged in these activities. For example, in 1940, Chiang Kai-shek called for stricter punishments for opium dealers. During one of his speeches, Chiang stated that individuals who cultivate, transport, or sell opium should be executed. Anyone who aids and/or abets in these drug activities should also be executed. Anyone who aids authorities in locating and arresting opium dealers should be rewarded while those who attempt to hide opium stores should be severely punished.⁷ Despite holding such a strong view against opium, some sources indicate that Chiang Kai-shek may have, like several other government officials, secretly profited off of opium trafficking through tax systems.⁸ Furthermore, Chiang Kai-shek had allied himself with Du Yuesheng, leader of the Shanghai Green Gang. The Green Gang regularly participated in drug trafficking and sales to generate revenue while also supporting Chiang's political operations.⁹ The fact that Chiang Kai-

⁷ Wang, Hongbin. *Jindu shijian [Opium Suppression Events]*. Changsha: Yuelu chubanshe, 1997: 446-447.

⁸ Alan Baumler. *Chinese and Opium under the Republic: Worse Than Floods and Wild Beasts*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007: 158-168.

⁹ Brian G. Martin. *The Shanghai Green Gang: Politics and Organized Crime, 1919-1937*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996: 79-82.

shek benefited from opium monopolies in China as well as cooperated with local gangs likely interfered with his drive to eliminate opium's consumption.

The Nationalist government, however, were not the only ones who show evidence of participating in China's opium trade. According to Chen Yongfa, during the Anti-Japanese War, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) also supported itself through the sale of a "special product." This "special product" accounted for 40 percent of the Communist's trade in 1945 Shaanxi and was important to the military's ability to purchase food and weapons.¹⁰ While profiting from opium sales, the CCP simultaneously condemned opium and sought to reform addicts. Chen argues that the Party continued to support opium trafficking until 1948 despite the Party expressing anti-drug values.

Due to these issues regarding willingness to enforce bans and restrictions, regions in the South, such as Sichuan and Xikang, were still producing and exporting opium even at the end of the Six-Year Plan.¹¹ The failure of the Six-Year Plan to completely eliminate opium production allowed opium to be a persistent issue into the 1940's. The U.S. government estimated that three years after the Six-Year Plan ended, China was producing at least 1100 tons of opium annually, making up nearly half of the world's total production of opium.¹²

¹⁰ Chen Yongfa. "The Blooming Poppy under the Red Sun: The Yan'an Way and the Opium Trade." Saich, Tony. *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution*. New York: Routledge, 2004: 98-101.

¹¹ Alan Baumler. *Chinese and Opium under the Republic: Worse Than Floods and Wild Beasts*. State University of New York Press, 2007: 217.

¹² United States. *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*. Government. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government, 1944: 51.

During the 1940's, nationalist discourse on the issue of opium focused on anti-drug rhetoric. Government officials viewed opium as a poison to both families and society, equating drug activities, such as sale and consumption, to treason. Many argued that since opium harbored the potential to harm the bodies, wealth, moral integrity and families of Chinese citizens, its effects would inevitably weaken the entire nation.¹³ A country brimming with opium addicts would be less capable of defending itself from foreign invaders. Based on this viewpoint, nationalists equated opium dealing to a desire to undermine and destroy China as a whole.

This rhetoric was further strengthened with claims that the current opium epidemic was the result of foreign aggression. Officials blamed other countries, such as Britain and Japan, for China's existing opium epidemic.¹⁴ Britain received a portion of the blame due to the nation's involvement in the Opium Wars during the 19th century. However, a majority of the criticism was aimed at Japan. The Second-Sino Japanese War from 1937 to 1945 played a strong role in China's view of opium. During Japan's occupation of China in the early 1940's, collaborationist governments supported themselves with revenue generated from opium produced in China. These Japanese puppet regimes sought to develop opium monopolies in the parts of China under their control. As a result, numerous opium dens and trafficking routes were established by Japanese puppet regimes throughout China. Gangsters and local law enforcement

¹³ Wang, Hongbin. *Jindu shijian [Opium Suppression Events]*. Changsha: Yuelu chubanshe, 1997: 445-446.

¹⁴ Joyce Madancy. "Unearthing Popular Attitudes Toward the Opium Trade and Opium Suppression in Late Qing and Early Republican Fujian." *Modern China* 27, no. 4 (2001): 436-483.

officers in cities aided these governments by collecting information regarding potential markets for opium and trafficking the drug to urban consumers.¹⁵ The result of these monopolies was an increased prevalence in opium consumption in occupied regions. By engaging in these practices, the Japanese were able to further expand opium trafficking in China.

Multiple governments profited off of opium trade. One example is the Mengjiang regime, a puppet state for the Japanese empire operating in present day Inner Mongolia. Between 1939 and 1942, the Mengjiang regime exported more than half of its opium to Shanghai, a narcotics center for opium and heroin and their distribution in China.¹⁶ The Nationalist Party argued that Japan was using opium as a tool to weaken China, thus connecting opium suppression to the Anti-Japanese War efforts. Those who continued to support the circulation of opium in China were considered traitors and were punished severely for their crimes.

The Wang Jingwei government was one such group that is believed to have cooperated with the Japanese to sell opium within China. The Wang regime sought to establish a monopoly over opium trade to garner revenue generated by its sale.¹⁷ At the same time, they desired to support opium suppression programs and avoid undermining

¹⁵ Motohiro Kobayashi. "Drug Operations by Resident Japanese in Tianjin." *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. Ed. Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000: 159.

¹⁶ Motohiro Kobayashi. "An Opium Tug-of-War: Japan Versus Wang Jingwei Regime." *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. Ed. Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000: 344-346.

¹⁷ Brian G Martin. "In My Heart I Opposed Opium: Opium and the Politics of the Wang Jingwei Government, 1940-45." *European Journal of East Asian Studies* (2003): 365-410.

their credibility by supporting the Japanese. While the Wang regime did implement new suppression policies in the early 1940's, the imbalance between their desire to profit off of opium and eliminate opium continued to undermine these policies. One such policy was an opium tax. The opium tax contributed to approximately 5 percent of the government's revenue, allowing them to continue earning money from opium trafficking while passively discouraging its consumption.¹⁸

Along with foreign aggression, opium was also tied to the issue of warlords, feudal bureaucrats, and landlords in southwest China. Many of these individuals profited off of forcing peasants to cultivate large tracts of opium poppy and smuggle the product throughout China. In regions, such as Shaanxi, Sichuan, Yunnan and Fujian, peasants were coerced into converting farmland into poppy fields. Peasants who failed to grow opium poppy were frequently forced to pay taxes that made not planting opium poppies impractical.¹⁹ Sichuan and Shaanxi were particularly notorious for these taxes. In some counties, officials would charge exorbitant land taxes that farmers could only afford if they grew opium. In other regions, peasants who did not grow a minimum amount of opium poppies were required to pay a "laziness tax" incentivizing locals to continue cultivating opium poppy. However, those who successfully grew opium were also burdened with problems. In some regions, troops would be dispatched to extort an

¹⁸ Motohiro Kobayashi. "An Opium Tug-of-War: Japan Versus Wang Jingwei Regime." *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. Ed. Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000: 346-352.

¹⁹ Edward R. Slack. *Opium, State, and Society: China's Narco-Economy and the Guomindang, 1924-1937*. University of Hawaii Press, 2000: 11.

opium tax from local farmers. These somewhat contradictory taxation systems eventually led to violent protests from farmers.²⁰ Alongside targeting farmers, warlords would also use the opium produced to control local troops.²¹ During the early 1940's, warlords would supply opium to troops, eventually making the troops entirely dependent on the warlord to feed their opium addiction. In this way, warlords were able to use opium to foster obedience among their soldiers. To go along with their control over troops, was these warlord's ability to bribe, intimidate, and undermine any government officials who attempted to enforce eradication programs. Any officials seeking to reduce opium consumption within these territories were met with challenges from the warlords and landlords controlling these lands. Local magistrates would also falsify data regarding the prevalence of poppy cultivation so that it would appear that little intervention was needed. These forces inhibited opium suppression in southwest and northwest China.

The government took many efforts to combat poppy cultivation during the early 1940's. Despite continued attempts to pass and enforce further legislation to combat opium production, the resistance to these policies frequently rendered them ineffective. This was especially the case in rural regions of China where farmers heavily relied on opium poppy as a cash crop.

²⁰ Lucien Bianco. "The Responses of Opium Growers to Eradication Campaigns and the Poppy Tax, 1907-1949." *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000: 306.

²¹ Alan Baumler. *Chinese and Opium under the Republic: Worse Than Floods and Wild Beasts*. State University of New York Press, 2007: 89.

County magistrates, such as the one in Luxi, Yunnan, would order farmers to grow poppy, encourage farmers to bribe officials to protect their crops, then falsely report that poppy plants had been destroyed.²² When the Luxi court magistrate continued to extort opium farmers, farmers fought and killed soldiers sent to uproot poppy plants as well as the magistrate.

Luxi, however, wasn't the only example of conflict between Chinese troops, officials and poppy farmers. The Chinese Nationalist government dispatched troops to different parts of Sichuan province to uproot and destroy opium crops. Many opium growers resisted these military forces through different means. Bribery, which had been used in the past to encourage government officials to ignore opium cultivation, was less effective during the 1940's as many of these military forces were under the supervision of provincial authorities. Although rare, other farmers would sometimes resort to violence to oppose the destruction of their opium crops. In March of 1944, such battles broke out in the villages of Xiaoyuan and Houyuan in Fujian province.²³ Opium farmers successfully drove off military forces and later reached an agreement with local officials. Rather than immediately destroying all poppy crops, the magistrate allowed farms to continue growing their existing poppy crops for one more year before banning poppy cultivation.

²² Lucien Bianco. "The Responses of Opium Growers to Eradication Campaigns and the Poppy Tax, 1907-1949." *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000: 311.

²³ Lucien Bianco. "The Responses of Opium Growers to Eradication Campaigns and the Poppy Tax, 1907-1949." *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000: 306-307.

At the same time, opium farmers resented new policies controlling poppy cultivation because of the conflicts these policies created with existing practices. In parts of Guizhou, magistrates ordered farmers to increase poppy production so that they could charge a tax on the crop. However, in 1943, the year following this order, the magistrate received orders from the Guizhou government calling for the immediate removal of opium crops. Villagers violently resisted this order, eventually culminating in a standoff between hundreds of farmers and armed military forces. While poppy removal was eventually successful in this region, these conflicts resulted in the deaths and injuries of hundreds of farmers.²⁴

While rural China faced the problem of poppy cultivation, urban China was troubled by another issue. War as well as restrictions on trafficking led opium to become a relatively scarce but valuable commodity in large cities like Shanghai. The opium market became a useful means of collecting money. Chinese merchants hired to work under official supervision distributed opium throughout Shanghai. Japanese teams participated in reopening and registering old opium dens to revive drug consumption and attract new customers. Registration of these dens allowed Chinese dealers to gain access to opium supplies that would have been otherwise unavailable to them and sell the drug under the cover of Japanese protection. At the beginning of the 1940's, the amount of opium imported into Nanjing each month was estimated to be roughly 2,500

²⁴ Lucien Bianco. "The Responses of Opium Growers to Eradication Campaigns and the Poppy Tax, 1907-1949." *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000: 307.

kilograms per month.²⁵ Some of this raw opium was sent to factories where it was refined to make morphine and heroin. These products were sold by drug dealers to addicts within Nanjing. Thus, opium consumption remained an enduring issue in China's major cities.

Even after the end of Japanese occupation, opium continued to be an issue. In 1946, the Shanghai government issued measures for registering smokers. Despite registering over 6,000 opium smokers, Shanghai still struggled to deal with opium dealers and manufacturers. The Shanghai Department of Public Security estimated that the city contained 23 drug factories and over 30,000 people participating in the production and trafficking of drugs.²⁶ Despite Shanghai establishing the Shanghai Anti-Smoking Association in 1947, drug dealers and traffickers remained present throughout the city.

Although China made numerous attempts to curtail poppy cultivation and opium consumption during the 1940's, none of these attempts were successful on a national scale. Therefore, it became necessary for the CCP to introduce a new suppression campaign to bring an end to the drug's persistence.

²⁵ Brook, Timothy and Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi. *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000: 362.

²⁶ Zhang, Shengyuan. "Shanghai jiefang chuqi de jinchang, jindu gongzuo [Shanghai's Ban on Prostitution and Opium During the Liberation Era]." 2 November 2018. *Shanghaishi difangzhi bangongshi*. 19 February 2019: 1.

Chapter 2: Opium Suppression in Rural China

The PRC's opium suppression campaign between 1949 and 1952 targeted both rural and urban regions of China in order to achieve complete eradication of opium. By contrast, previous campaigns had achieved only partial success. The Nationalist government had carried out methods that did not take into consideration the specific conditions and environment in which opium trade was propagated within the region. In some rural areas, local governments focused on uprooting poppy fields without addressing other related factors, such as warlordism, rampant drug addiction or even the motivations of the individuals cultivating poppies. These officials' lack of foresight failed to bring opium trafficking and consumption to an end. To successfully eliminate opium in both of these environments, PRC officials would have to introduce tactics that were applied on a case-by-case basis.

There were stark differences between the presence of opium in rural and urban China. While the consumption of opium was centered in cities such as Shanghai, poppy fields were pervasive in several rural, southern regions of China. Within Sichuan, China, an estimated 134,045 mu (20,000 acres) of farmland was used to cultivate opium poppy in 1949.²⁷ In Guangdong Province, it is estimated that around 150,000 mu (22,400 acres)

²⁷ Due to rampant misreporting of the prevalence of poppy cultivation in China, there is a high likelihood that the actual acreage dedicated to poppy cultivation is much higher than what was recorded.

was used for cultivating opium poppy that same year. Overall, documents from the 1940's estimate that roughly 3 percent of the agricultural sector in rural China was dedicated to opium production.²⁸ Farmers viewed opium poppies as a valuable cash crop because less land was required for cultivation, and the opium crop was more lucrative than food crops grown in the same region. An acre of fertile farmland could produce as much as 90 kilograms of opium in a single year.²⁹ The process of collecting opium was also very simple. Farmers would make cuts along the stems of maturing poppies and allow sap to collect on the surface of the stem. Once the sap had dried, the opium sap was harvested then sold in markets.³⁰ The raw opium could be refined into a more potent product (morphine) or used to chemically synthesize heroin. Raw opium could be worth two to six times the value of other crops, providing a strong incentive to grow poppies over other plants.³¹ Farmers used the extra money earned to purchase new tools or extra grain. Even after the opium had been harvested from the poppy, the leftover leaves, seeds and dried stalks could be used as a source of food or fed to livestock animals.

The pervasiveness of poppy fields was not the only difference between rural and urban China. Another difference was that poppy cultivation in regions such as Yunnan

²⁸ Tony Saich and Hans van de Ven. *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution*. Armonk: M. E. Sharpe, 1995: 277-286.

²⁹ Edward R. Slack. *Opium, State, and Society: China's Narco-Economy and the Guomindang, 1924-1937*. University of Hawaii Press, 2000: 8.

³⁰ Endicott, Stephen. *Red Earth: Revolution in a Sichuan Village*. London: I.B. Taurus, 1988: 33.

³¹ R. Bin Wong. "Opium and Modern Chinese State-Making." *Opium Regimes: China, Britain and Japan, 1839-1952* (2000): 192.

and Sichuan supplied many opium dens in cities. This meant that the opium produced from poppy fields in rural areas tended to be more valuable if it was transported and sold in cities rather than sold to locals. The increased value of marketed opium led to the creation of numerous trade routes connecting poppy fields and rural markets to large cities. These factors led to opium production being more prevalent in rural regions as opposed to urban regions.

Small-scale opium suppression campaigns predating the 1950's typically targeted opium users and smugglers, especially those located in cities. The focus on smoking, the predominant form of opium consumption, allowed many opium farmers to go unnoticed and continue their operations. Furthermore, as mentioned in Chapter 1, several of these opium farms were under the control of Chinese warlords who resisted any government attempts to reduce poppy cultivation. Thirdly, Japanese occupation provided an opportunity for new poppy operations to be developed within China. These issues inhibited efforts to eradicate opium and poppies in rural China.

During the 1950's campaign, however, these problems were largely avoided. Vestigial Chinese warlordism had become nearly non-existent by the 1950's due to conflict with the Kuomintang, followed by the Communists' unification in 1949. Moreover, the PRC government decided to carefully catalogue drug activity within each region of interest before making any coordinated attempts at eliminating drug usage. It was this planning and information-gathering that allowed the 1950's campaign to avoid many of the significant issues that previous suppression campaigns had faced.

The first step of the 1949 to 1952 opium suppression campaign was collecting intelligence and planning out how the campaign would address opium in each region. Before drug suppression operations could be carried out, the PRC government needed to gather information about the existing circumstances surrounding poppy cultivation and drug trafficking in China's rural counties. Variations in the levels of opium consumption, poppy cultivation and drug trafficking between each region could play a significant role in the success of anti-drug operations. Within each of these regions, government agents worked to develop records detailing trends in poppy fields and lists of individuals involved in the trafficking and consumption of opium. The reason for developing these lists instead of immediately arresting drug offenders was that some provincial governments feared that too many arrests would alert drug lords of the agents' operations. With regards to rural China, since poppy cultivation was the most prevalent aspect of the opium market being studied, much focus was put into determining the extent of these operations. Only after this research had been conducted did cadres carry out orders to wipe out poppy cultivation in regions where there was no military presence.

During previous suppression attempts, troops would uproot poppy fields and charge poppy farmers exorbitant tax rates to try to discourage continued cultivation of the plant. This tactic proved to be ineffective as these actions were met with resistance from farmers who were not always able to afford the high tax rates. Worse still, taxation acted as an incentive for local magistrates to encourage the continued propagation of opium poppies rather than their destruction. The taxes collected from poppy farmers

was a convenient source of revenue for magistrates while they made halfhearted attempts at lessening poppy cultivation.

The 1949 to 1952 campaign, unlike previous campaigns, utilized a different set of approaches towards mitigating poppy cultivation. The most important measure in this campaign was the “General Order.” The General Order’s mandates are as follows:

1. Create propaganda to mobilize the masses
2. The People’s Government at all levels and within all regions should hold committees regarding opium suppression and eliminate opium within a suitable timeframe
3. Eliminate opium in regions not occupied by the military, and immediately eliminate opium after the end of military operations in regions that are currently under a military presence
4. Outlaw the cultivation, production, trafficking and sale of all illegal narcotics
5. Encourage citizens to relinquish any opium or other narcotics in their possession
6. Register all addicts within a suitable timeframe
7. Provide resources such as clinics and medications to aid opium addicts in rehabilitation, but require that these medications be under the strict control of the Chinese Health Department
8. Create rehabilitation centers in cities with severe drug problems
9. Each provincial government must develop specific methods and timetables while cooperating with the People’s Government

In accordance with the "General Order," any region without military presence immediately banned opium.³² The ban would mean that no exceptions would be granted to individuals who grew, trafficked, or used opium regardless of their circumstances. In every case where opium was discovered in an individual's possession, the General Order required that their supply of opium be confiscated, and the offender be punished. Punishments sometimes included executions, but in most cases were limited to prison sentences usually ranging from 2-5 years. These punishments also extended to addicts who failed to register or failed to quit opium within a specified time frame. These new measures were carried out all across China.

The General Order had its strongest impact on poppy cultivation in rural China. The regions with the most widespread poppy cultivation were Sichuan, Yunnan and Guizhou. Shaanxi and Fujian also showed extensive poppy cultivation. Several other provinces, such as Gansu, contained moderate levels of poppy cultivation and thus were also impacted by the General Order's mandates. All of these regions showed changes in the way in which their provincial governments managed poppy cultivation and any trafficking connected to them.

First, in an effort to encourage the prioritization of opium suppression in rural China, the campaign's goals were linked to land reform. This was a rather unique tactic because it took advantage of existing social changes taking place within rural China. A

³² Government Administration Council. "Zhengwuyuan guanyu yanjin yapian yandu de tongling [Directive on Opium Suppression]." 24 February 1950. *Baidu*. 17 February 2019.

major focus during the PRC's early years was the division and redistribution of land owned by the landlord class.³³ In 1950, the Chinese government passed the Agrarian Reform Law. Under this law, land owned by rural landlords was divided and redistributed, severing the landlord's control over the land. The Agrarian Reform Law affected poppy cultivation because farmers produced opium by seeding large properties with opium poppy which made it easier for landowners to mass produce the poppy-derived drug. Dividing and redistributing ownership of these properties made it more difficult for poppy farmers to sustain their previous levels of poppy cultivation. A second benefit of the Agrarian Reform Law is that it led to the creation of cadres who also took part in the destruction of poppy fields. As a result, land reform aided in the reduction of poppy cultivation in rural China.

Guangxi, now an autonomous region in southern China, suffered from a combination of poppy cultivation and opium trafficking. Part of this issue originated with warlordism in Guangxi. During the 1920's and 1930's, Guangxi warlords forced peasants to grow opium so that the warlords could profit off of the revenue collected from opium and strengthen their military and political power. Guangxi was also an important region for drug traffickers. The "Guangxi Corridor" connected opium farms in Yunnan to large cities along eastern China. These factors allowed Guangxi to establish itself as an important constituent in opium trade. Its role in opium trade continued into the 1940's and early 1950's. With over 200,000 mu (32,947 acres) of farmland dedicated

³³ Zhou Yongming. *Anti-Drug Crusades in Twentieth-Century China: Nationalism, History, and State Building*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999: 160-161.

to poppy cultivation and over 30,000 drug traffickers, Guangxi had to employ multiple methods of control to tear down the entire region's market.³⁴

Guangxi's provincial government began by outlawing poppy cultivation. Poppy farms were uprooted, and any opium or drug paraphernalia found in a citizen's possession was confiscated by law enforcement and destroyed. To deal with drug smugglers, Guangxi officials developed lists of individuals suspected to be involved in drug smuggling before arresting them in waves. The drug offenders arrested would be interrogated, then sentenced to jail for up to ten years. Over the course of this campaign, Guangxi's poppy farms and smuggling rings were permanently shut down.

Liangshan (Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture of Sichuan), another significantly rural region of China, also contained widespread poppy cultivation. It is estimated that in some parts of Liangshan, 60-80 percent of locals grew opium poppy. Another 50-60 percent regularly smoked opium.³⁵ Because both smoking and production of opium were present in Liangshan, local magistrates employed two main methods of suppressing opium. First, farmers were taxed for growing opium. If officials discovered opium poppies growing on the locals' farmland, these locals would be charged a tax for growing the crop. The taxes were significant enough that farmers would profit more by cultivating other crops. These taxes helped discourage farmers from continuing to grow the crop. Along with this method, in 1950, Liangshan's local

³⁴ Ma Weigang. *Jinchang jindu [Oppose Prostitution, Suppress Opium]*. Beijing: Jingguan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1993: 385.

³⁵ Ma Weigang. *Jinchang jindu [Oppose Prostitution, Suppress Opium]*. Beijing: Jingguan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1993: 209.

government issued a statement ordering the closure of all opium dens in the region.

This decision left opium smokers with fewer places where they could smoke the drug.

Yunnan was also careful in the way in which it carried out its own suppression campaign. Historically, Yunnan was known for producing high quality opium. Its fertile soil allowed Yunnan farmers to produce opium that could be sold at double the price of opium produced in other provinces. Even in the 19th century, Yunnan was known as a principal region for opium cultivation in China to the extent that opium poppies were considered one of the regions' most valuable exports.³⁶ Drug traffickers purchased expensive Yunnan opium and shipped the drugs to other provinces. Therefore, it was important that Yunnan address the activities of opium farmers and smugglers.

In 1949, the Yunnan Provincial government found that at least 2,400,000 mu (395,369 acres) in the province was used for growing opium poppies, and yearly production of opium was approximately 250,000 liang (12,500 kilograms). Some sources claim that up to 3 percent of agricultural land in Yunnan was composed of poppy fields.³⁷ In June of 1950, Yunnan released an Opium Suppression Directive describing ways in which Yunnan would seek to eliminate opium. To counter opium, Yunnan disseminated propaganda and began uprooting poppy fields. Some parts of Yunnan were visited by government officials who educated locals about the dangers of opium

³⁶ Wilbur Burton. "The French Strangle-hold on Yunnan; a First-Hand Survey." *China Weekly Review* (1933): 20.

³⁷ Actual statistics regarding opium production rates vary significantly between different sources. These inconsistencies may be the result of the difficulty of collecting reliable data on cultivation patterns, as well as over- or under-reporting of actual cultivation.

addiction. In some more populated parts of Yunnan, cartoons and small rallies discouraged cultivation and consumption.³⁸ Propaganda encouraged locals to voluntarily end the cultivation of opium poppies and report drug trafficking. In 1951, Yunnan uprooted over 6000 kilograms of opium poppy. Local law enforcement agents also located and arrested drug dealers. Captured drug dealers were most frequently given jail sentences and, in some cases, were executed.³⁹ By 1951, the Yunnan government announced that it had eliminated opium in all but its most outlying counties.

Not all of the anti-drug policies involved the use of force. Citizens were also encouraged to play active roles in drug suppression. The Guizhou Provincial government encouraged locals to create a “new Guizhou.” Citizens were given the option to voluntarily surrender any drugs in their possession and avoid facing jailtime for their crimes. Addicts could also register themselves with anti-drug agencies, such as the Central Ministry of Public Security, and receive help from health volunteers in quitting their addictions. As a result of these lenient directives, out of the 18,000 drug offenders discovered in Guizhou in 1951, 11,700 of them were able to be registered and rehabilitated.⁴⁰ Addicts who took part in rehabilitation programs were provided medications that alleviated their withdrawal symptoms and helped them gradually

³⁸ Helan Niu. "Yunnan sheng jianguo chuqi jindu douzheng dui dangqian jindu gongzuo de qishi [The War Against Drugs in Yunnan Province at the Founding of the Country]." *Journal of Yunnan Police Officer Academy* (2011): 17-20.

³⁹ Ibid. 17-18.

⁴⁰ Zhou Yongming. *Anti-Drug Crusades in Twentieth-Century China: Nationalism, History, and – State Building*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999: 96.

reduce their consumption of opium. Regions like Guizhou were able to carry out successful rehabilitation programs.

Provincial governments also recognized the reasons why peasants would cultivate opium poppies. Poppy plants were popular in Yunnan due to the high value of the opium sap produced by the poppies which could be harvested and sold in markets or trafficked to cities. The money earned could be used to purchase grain and daily necessities. Another motivation was that opium was a popular pain-killer for laborers. Provincial governments addressed these motivations by providing farmers with the means to grow other crops. Provincial governments gave farmers seeds which they could use to cultivate grain and cash crops without relying on revenue from poppy cultivation. Newly opened clinics also aided laborers in treating their opium addiction.⁴¹ These measures made it easier for peasants to end their contribution to the opium market.

These more lenient measures, rather than arrests and executions, most likely played a more significant role in the success of the campaign. While executions and mass arrests were occasionally used to intimidate drug offenders into either turning themselves in or ceasing their illegal behavior, they had little long-term effect. Incentivizing citizens to give up opium proved to be a more reliable method because it provided peasants and other members of society a means through which to end their reliance on opium.

⁴¹ Helan Niu. "Yunnan sheng jianguo chuqi jindu douzheng dui dangqian jindu gongzuo de qishi [The War Against Drugs in Yunnan Province at the Founding of the Country]." *Journal of Yunnan Police Officer Academy* (2011): 17-18.

Poppy cultivation came to a swift end when the Government Administrative Council released a directive officially banning all poppy cultivation and granting law enforcement the right to seize and destroy any opium found in rural regions in 1952. However, complete elimination of opium in rural China did not happen all at once. Each region needed to employ its own methods to bring an end to opium production.

The strength of rural China's opium campaign was not just that it was implemented in every region where the PRC found opium to be present. It was also the coordination through which the campaign took place. It was only through careful planning, selection and execution that these rural counties and provinces were able to eliminate all forms of drug offending. Unlike former campaigns which still left routes through which opium propagation and trafficking could continue, the 1950's campaign left no opportunities for opium to persist where the campaign had completed its work.

While the tactics described in this chapter were highly successful in rural China, urban China presented a different set of challenges. The PRC government needed to apply new solutions to the complex situation of opium in China's cities.

Chapter 3: Opium Suppression in Urban China

Both rural and urban regions of China suffered from the pervasiveness of opium.

Despite this commonality, these two distinct regions of China saw opium's presence manifested in different ways. While rural China was the main location of poppy cultivation, a majority of opium smoking took place within cities. Shanghai was estimated to have at least 8,000 sellers and 20,000 opium dens in 1949.⁴² Several cities were populated with opium dens, locations where citizens would congregate to smoke the illegal drug. In some cities, there was as many as eight opium dens for every square mile on average.⁴³ In the countryside, regions were less densely populated with opium dens and thus smoking wasn't as common.

The stark difference in smoking habits between cities and rural villages was connected to the history and culture surrounding Chinese opium. In late Qing Shanghai, opium smoking played a significant role in the city's economy and its citizens' recreational activities. Opium, due to its light weight and relative value, could be exchanged as a form of currency and used to trade for valuable goods. Also, wealthy officials, merchants and scholars would frequent opium dens where they smoked opium as a form of leisure. Opium smoking was seen as a luxury that only the wealthiest and most powerful citizens could enjoy. In this way, smoking became a form of conspicuous

⁴² Qi Ji. *Zhongguo Gongchandang jindu shi [Chinese Communist Party Period of Opium Suppression]*. Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue xueyuan chubanshe, 2017: 203.

⁴³ Ibid.

consumption. Because of the way in which many Chinese valued opium as a luxury good, cities were able to develop extensive opium trading networks that sustained their many opium dens for decades.

While suppression campaigns during the early 20th century impacted the openness with which Chinese citizens residing in cities could smoke opium, smoking continued well into the 20th century. The two largest centers for opium smoking were Shanghai and Nanjing. However, opium smoking was also present in other cities. Cities in Fujian contained up to 100,000 opium dens in 1949.⁴⁴ Opium produced in regions like Yunnan and Sichuan was transported to cities in significant quantities and sold to smokers by drug dealers. At the beginning of the 1940's, Nanjing was importing at least 2550 kilograms of opium each year.⁴⁵ These levels of importation were sustained throughout the 1940's.

The Communists sought to introduce new suppression measures to China's cities. However, for Nanjing, opium suppression was not a new concept. The city had previously attempted to eradicate opium during the 1920's. Prior to the 1950's campaign, the city used propaganda "showing the evils of the use of opium" and handed out licenses to addicts and opium shops.⁴⁶ The goal was to exert control over opium consumption and slowly restrict smokers' access to the drug. Contrary to expectations,

⁴⁴ Qi Ji. *Zhongguo Gongchandang jindu shi [Chinese Communist Party Period of Opium Suppression]*. Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue xueyuan chubanshe, 2017: 203.

⁴⁵ Ma Weigang. *Jinchang jindu [Oppose Prostitution, Suppress Opium]*. Beijing: Jingguan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1993: 363-380.

⁴⁶ Henry F. Misselwitz. "Nationalists Move to Suppress Opium." *New York Times* 7 October 1928: 1.

this licensing system revealed itself to be ineffectual as it provided a loophole through which opium shops could continue their operations. The Opium Suppression Committee later banned the licensing system in an effort to stamp out any remaining drug activity. In the 1930's, Nanjing also butted heads with the National Anti-Opium Association when it attempted to enforce opium suppression legislation within the city. Instead of receiving the city's cooperation, the association was met with opposition as Nanjing benefitted from the taxes derived from the sale of opium.⁴⁷ In the end, both of these attempts to reduce opium consumption in Nanjing failed.

Because of the previous difficulties faced while controlling opium within cities, the PRC government utilized multiple methods of eradicating drug activity. First, propaganda was created and distributed to shift public opinion on the matter of opium. Propaganda pushed a narrative that citizens must "resist America, aid Korea: oppose reactionaries and suppress opium."⁴⁸ Connecting the Communist Party's anti-drug efforts to the Korean War aided the CCP in gaining the confidence of Chinese citizens and further solidify their control over the country. Citizens were encouraged to liken success in opium suppression to success in the CCP's political and war efforts. Along with connecting opium suppression to the Korean War, some propaganda campaigns told citizens that the sale of opium and other drugs was part of a secret plot by foreigners to bring harm to Chinese people and society. Propaganda equated quitting

⁴⁷ Edward R. Slack. *Opium, State, and Society: China's Narco-Economy and the Guomindang, 1924-1937*. University of Hawaii Press, 2000: 96-97.

⁴⁸ Zhou Yongming. *Anti-Drug Crusades in Twentieth-Century China: Nationalism, History, and State Building*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999: 385.

opium smoking to patriotism, and supporting the drug's trafficking to opposing the PRC government. Since the PRC government sought to avoid bringing international attention to the suppression campaign, the Directive on Anti-Drug Propaganda outlawed the use of paper propaganda. In the place of newspapers and other forms of media that could potentially leave the country, propaganda trucks and buses would drive through cities expressing anti-drug sentiments over speakers. Also, in Tianjin, propagandists would travel door-to-door informing locals of upcoming meetings and spreading propaganda. The use of propaganda vehicles and verbal news sharing aided the suppression campaign in telegraphing propaganda throughout cities.

The propaganda campaign was very important in motivating Chinese citizens. Many doubted the campaign's potential for success. In many cities, locals saw little to no change in the level of drug activity despite hearing claims that law enforcement was attempting to curb the issue. Several drug dealers were arrested only to walk free within a few days and continue their drug operations giving locals more reason to doubt the Communists' ability to eradicate opium. To help renew citizens' trust in the PRC government, cities began organizing meetings and rallies in conjunction with propaganda campaigns to inspire locals. Hundreds of thousands of public meetings were held between 1949 and 1952 to encourage citizens to report any drug activity and for drug offenders to turn themselves in. The city of Guangzhou held 11,000 anti-drug rallies, of which approximately 1.2 million people participated. Shenyang saw similar levels of participation. These rallies had a significant impact on the success of the 1950's

campaign as approximately 700 people confessed to their crimes following a single meeting in Xian.⁴⁹

Along with supporting opium suppression, these rallies also fostered a sense of patriotism among Chinese citizens. On April 14, 1951, 40,000 people in the city of Dali in Yunnan Province held a rally that strengthened opposition to both opium and American involvement in the Korean War. By connecting opium suppression to the Korean War and social movements within China, the PRC government was able to further mobilize the masses to assist in the efforts to eliminate opium from cities.

To encourage greater participation in anti-drug rallies, Beijing offered opium addicts the opportunity to register during rallies.⁵⁰ By registering during these rallies, addicts could potentially avoid being punished for possessing opium. This incentive proved to be successful as registration rates significantly increased in Beijing following rallies.

Cities also encouraged citizens to participate in decision-making regarding anti-drug operations. Shanghai and other large cities formed committees composed of heads of society and community leaders. These committees assisted city governments in setting up plans for propaganda, rallies, inspections and sentencing. The active participation of citizens in opium suppression within urban areas fostered the mass mobilization of Chinese citizens during the anti-drug campaign.

⁴⁹ Zhou Yongming. *Anti-Drug Crusades in Twentieth-Century China: Nationalism, History, and State Building*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999: 103.

⁵⁰ Legal Daily. "Jiemi 1952 Nian Beijing Dagui Jindu Xingdong [Beijing's Large Scale Opium Suppression]." 6 November 2015. *Zhongguo jindu wang*. 15 March 2019.

Along with organizing propaganda campaigns and rallies, the Communists also worked towards aggressively seeking out and punishing drug offenders. Since poppy cultivation was less extensive in the vicinity of China's cities, municipal governments instead focused on the existing networks of opium dealers and addicts. In many cities, instead of focusing efforts on arresting individual drug users, law enforcement officers arrested and punished drug lords and major distributors.⁵¹ These individuals were important in maintaining the underground network of smugglers and dealers that fed drug trade in urban areas.

Nanjing was one such city that took major efforts to arrest drug offenders. At the start of the PRC's opium suppression campaign, Nanjing suffered from a serious drug trafficking problem. Its large population made the city a prime target for opium dealers and smugglers. According to Ma Weigang's research, out of 145 of Nanjing's local industries, 56 showed signs of participating in Nanjing's drug trafficking system.⁵² While Nanjing was able to identify many of the participants in drug trade, the city often handed out lean sentences to those offenders who were caught. From May to December 1949, officers uncovered 1,569 cases of opium smuggling and caught 472 drug offenders. Of these 472 offenders, however, only 26 of them faced jail sentences. The vast majority were either released or only served minor punishments. In 1950, 2,090 offenders were arrested, but only 345 of them went to court. These statistics

⁵¹ Zhou Yongming. *Anti-Drug Crusades in Twentieth-Century China: Nationalism, History, and State Building*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999: 98.

⁵² Ma Weigang. *Jinchang jindu [Oppose Prostitution, Suppress Opium]*. Beijing: Jingguan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1993: 363-380.

indicate that while Nanjing experienced some success in uncovering smuggling, little was done to punish the drug offenders discovered. The main cause of the leniency was most likely the incentives Nanjing put in place for confiscating drugs but not for arresting and punishing drug offenders, an issue that unintentionally led to less severe punishments.

The Interior Ministry of the Government Administrative Council agreed that punishments for drug-related crimes needed to be more severe. To harshen the punishments for drug offenses, the council ordered that no bonuses be awarded to law enforcement or informants based on the amount of opium seized. Since some districts offered law enforcement officers bonuses for seizing opium but not arresting offenders, many officers would simply confiscate opium but fail to arrest and punish the drug dealers the opium was confiscated from. As a result, law enforcement was allowing drug dealers to continue their operations in exchange for opium that could be turned in for bonuses. Outlawing these bonuses removed a major incentive for officers to ignore drug offenses. Secondly, several districts were issued guidelines requiring stricter punishments for arrested drug offenders. In Shanghai, for instance, these guidelines laid out who could be considered a drug offender and the ways in which these drug offenders had to be punished.⁵³ These changes helped cities confront corruption and bribery among law enforcement agents.

⁵³ Shanghai Archives Department. "Luelun 1952 nian Shanghai de jindu yundong [1952 Shanghai's Opium Suppression Activity]." 28 September 2012. *Shanghai*. 15 March 2019.

Shanghai had better luck handling drug dealers. After the passing of the General Order, Shanghai immediately banned the production, sale and consumption of opium. Agents raided drug factories and confiscated tools used for the production of drugs. Shanghai also began efforts to locate individuals in possession of drugs and to confiscate drug paraphernalia. From 1950 to 1951, Shanghai had experienced 6,873 drug seizures, arrested 12,211 suspects and confiscated over 18,000 kilograms of drugs.⁵⁴ These arrests and seizures continued until the end of the campaign in 1952 when Shanghai successfully eradicated opium consumption.

As was the case in rural regions of China, during the second wave of the campaign from 1950 to 1952, law enforcement agents in cities made arrests in waves to avoid alerting targeted drug offenders. After arresting suspected drug dealers, agents would interrogate suspects for more information regarding their drug operations. In Tianjin, arrested offenders would be interrogated regarding their crimes, then sentenced to harsh prison terms. Law enforcement used information gathered during these interrogations to locate drug lords and factories where opium products were produced.

Along with drug dealing, city governments also addressed the issue of opium addiction. To aid drug addicts, cities opened rehabilitation centers. Over the course of the campaign, Shanghai's municipal government donated 360 million old yuan to addicts undergoing rehabilitation. In Nanjing, rehabilitation centers were built and over

⁵⁴ Ma Weigang. *Jinchang jindu [Oppose Prostitution, Suppress Opium]*. Beijing: Jingguan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1993: 360-383.

one thousand addicts voluntarily signed up for rehabilitation. Unfortunately, due to limited resources, many of Nanjing's rehab centers were closed shortly after being opened.

Despite the initial setbacks faced during the campaign, cities were successful in eradicating opium. Nanjing, for example, managed to seize over 100 kilograms of crude opium and heroin between 1949 and 1951. In 1953, Shanghai announced that all known opium operations had been eliminated. By the end of the campaign in 1952, only a few pockets of opium consumption were left to be dealt with throughout China.

There were several reasons why urban campaigns succeeded in eradicating opium. One major reason was the level of coordination by the Central Ministry of Public Security in organizing the drug campaign across multiple cities. The Ministry of Public Security determined where further information needed to be acquired, when arrests should be made, as well as where propaganda should be disseminated. A second reason was the mass mobilization of city residents. Residents participated in rallies and committees providing opportunities for millions of citizens to aid in opium eradication. Another significant aspect of the campaign was that each city adjusted their tactics to solve the most pressing concerns involving opium's presence within the city. These strategies are what allowed the 1950's campaign to eradicate opium within Chinese cities.

Conclusion

For centuries, opium persisted as a popular drug within China. Because of its addictive effects and association with foreign invasion, opium had become a major focus of numerous Chinese governments' attentions. Lin Zexu attempted to end opium trade in Canton during the 1830's. The Chinese Nationalists made multiple attempts to end opium consumption and poppy cultivation a century later. Despite these attempts to curb the spread of opium throughout China, not until the early 1950's did China eradicate the drug.

The 1950's represents a critical period of time when the Chinese Communist Party made significant progress in China's anti-drug campaign. The 1950's opium suppression campaign allowed China to accomplish its goal of eradicating opium trafficking and consumption on a national basis. The campaign was so successful that there were no reported cases of opium-related drug activity until the 1980's when heroin use spread to China.

The campaign also played a significant role in unifying China beneath the Communist Party. After the Chinese Civil War ended in 1949, the Communists worked to consolidate its control over regions that were originally under the control of the Chinese Nationalist Party. The opium suppression campaign was a convenient means through which the CCP could achieve this goal. The anti-drug campaign gained moral support for the Communist Party and solidified power for the Communists in China's cities.

By studying this campaign, the key to the campaign's success becomes apparent. The PRC government's emphasis on combining many tactics to achieve the complete eradication of opium within each region the campaign operated in. The PRC government not only cut off vital pillars supporting the production and trafficking of opium within each region, but also mobilized the Chinese public to cooperate with eradication efforts. This distinct method of drug eradication is what made the 1950's campaign accomplish its goals despite failures in previous decades.

The key strategies that China utilized during the 1950's campaign are applicable to the world's current opiate crisis. The causes and complications surrounding this opiate crisis are highly complex and will require extensive planning and consideration to remedy. For example, the return of opiates in contemporary China was the result of smuggling of addictive drugs from neighboring countries into China. Similarly, the United States also suffers from an opioid epidemic due to the spread of heroin and other opioids in drug markets. The resulting outbreak of drug addiction persists to this day. An analysis of China's history eradicating opium allows for some insight into how countries could address their drug epidemics. By employing similar anti-drug strategies within other nations, the current opiate crisis could potentially be remedied.

Bibliography

- Baumler, Alan. *Chinese and Opium under the Republic: Worse Than Floods and Wild Beasts*. New York State University of New York Press, 2007.
- Brook, Timothy and Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi. *Opium Regimes: China, Britain, and Japan, 1839-1952*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Burton, Wilbur. "The French Strangle-hold on Yunnan; a First-Hand Survey." *China Weekly Review* (1933): 20.
- Chen Yongfa. "The Blooming Poppy under the Red Sun: The Yan'an Way and the Opium Trade." Saich, Tony. *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution*. New York: Routledge, 2004. 98-101.
- Dikötter, Frank, Lars Laamann and Zhou Xun. "Narcotic Culture: A Social History of Drug Consumption in China." *British Journal of Criminology* (2002): 317-336.
- Endicott, Stephen. *Red Earth: Revolution in a Sichuan Village*. London: I.B. Taurus, 1988.
- Fay, Peter Ward. *The Opium War, 1840-1842: Barbarians in the Celestial Empire in the Early Part of the Nineteenth Century and the War by which they Forced Her Gates Ajar*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997.
- Government Administration Council. "Zhengwuyuan guanyu yanjin yapian yandu de tongling [Directive on Opium Suppression]." 24 February 1950. *Baidu*. 17 February 2019.
- Helan Niu. "Yunnan sheng jianguo chuqi jindu douzheng dui dangqian jindu gongzuo de qishi [The War Against Drugs in Yunnan Province at the Founding of the Country]." *Journal of Yunnan Police Officer Academy* (2011): 17-20.

- Lawrence, Alan. *China Since 1919 - Revolution and Reform*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Legal Daily. "Jiemi 1952 Nian Beijing Dagui Jindu Xingdong [Beijing's Large Scale Opium Suppression]." 6 November 2015. *Zhongguo jindu wang*. 15 March 2019.
- Lovell, Julia. *Drugs, Dreams and the Making of China*. London: Picador, 2011.
- Ma, Weigang. *Jinchang jindu [Oppose Prostitution, Suppress Opium]*. Beijing: Jingguan jiaoyu chubanshe, 1993.
- Madancy, Joyce. "Unearthing Popular Attitudes Toward the Opium Trade and Opium Suppression in Late Qing and Early Republican Fujian." *Modern China* 27, no. 4 (2001): 436-483.
- Martin, Brian G. "In My Heart I Opposed Opium: Opium and the Politics of the Wang Jingwei Government, 1940-45." *European Journal of East Asian Studies* (2003): 365-410.
- . *The Shanghai Green Gang: Politics and Organized Crime, 1919-1937*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.
- Misselwitz, Henry F. "Nationalists Move to Suppress Opium." *New York Times* 7 October 1928: 1.
- Newman, R. K. "Opium Smoking in Late Imperial China: A Reconsideration." *Modern Asian Studies* 29, no. 4 (1995): 765-794.
- Platt, Stephen R. "Mao Haijian, the Qing Empire and the Opium War: The Collapse of the Heavenly Dynasty." *The American Historical Review* 123, no. 5 (2018): 1650-1651.

- Qi, Ji. *Zhongguo Gongchandang jindu shi [Chinese Communist Party Period of Opium Suppression]*. Shanghai: Shanghai shehui kexue xueyuan chubanshe, 2017.
- Saich, Tony and Hans van de Ven. *New Perspectives on the Chinese Communist Revolution*. Armonk: M. E. Sharpe , 1995.
- Shanghai Archives Department. "Luelun 1952 nian Shanghai de jindu yundong [1952 Shanghai's Opium Suppression Activity]." 28 September 2012. *Shanghai*. 15 March 2019.
- Slack, Edward R. *Opium, State, and Society: China's Narco-Economy and the Guomintang, 1924-1937*. University of Hawaii Press, 2000.
- Tai, Heping. *Yunnan yapian wenti yu jinyan yundong [Yunnan Opium Problems and Suppression]*. Sichuan minzu chubanshe, 1998.
- United States. *Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs*. Government. Washington D.C.: U.S. Government, 1944.
- Wakeman, Frederic Jr. *The Fall of Imperial China*. New York: Free Press, 1977.
- Waley, Arthur. *The Opium War through Chinese Eyes*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1968.
- Wang, Hongbin. *Jindu shijian [Opium Suppression Events]* . Changsha: Yuelu chubanshe, 1997.
- Zhang, Shengyuan. "Shanghai jiefang chuqi de jinchang, jindu gongzuo [Shanghai's Ban on Prostitution and Opium During the Liberation Era]." 2 November 2018. *Shanghaishi difangzhi bangongshi*. 19 February 2019.

Zhou, Yongming. *Anti-Drug Crusades in Twentieth-Century China: Nationalism, History, and State Building*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1999.