## Imperialism in China Name:

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| From 1839-1945, China was repeatedly imperialized by foreign powers—primarily from Europe but also Japan and USA. This period is frequently referred to as the **Century of Humiliation**. | |
| **Trade with Britain**: China in 1800 had very few economic desires because China was mostly self-sufficient. However, China did like Indian cotton, which came to China from the British. So the British sold cotton and silver to buy Chinese tea and porcelain. However, in the 1820s, Chinese cotton manufacturing began to increase and improve. Now the British could only trade silver. However, Britain found another product to sell—Opium—a predecessor to heroin that was illegal both in Britain and China. British merchants increasingly smuggled Opium into China, operating as distribution for a growing drug empire that had stretched throughout eastern China by 1835. China became concerned as a drug epidemic became a major problem for the first time in Chinese history. | **Who traded what in the British/ Chinese trading system?**  **Why did Britain start smuggling opium?** |
| **The Opium War (1839-1842):** in 1839, China began a crackdown on opium. This upset British merchants, who had no respect for Chinese law and considered themselves the victims. Britain dispatched a war fleet to blockade China but eventually the situation exploded into war. The fleet repeatedly destroyed all Chinese ships sent against it. The fleet then began sailing up rivers, bombarding cities and forts. The British army won several small land engagements near the coast but didn’t push more than 10 miles from a major body of water. China surrendered in 1842. This was a shock to China, who viewed itself as supreme on Earth. | **What events led to war between Britain and China?**  **How did Britain win the war?** |
| **Treaty of Nanjing:** China was forced to sign the first of what are called the Unequal Treaties. The treaty ended the First Opium War but it forced China to do a number of things. 1) China had to open several ports to foreign trade. 2) China had to pay Britain an enormous amount of silver to pay for Britain’s loss of trade (in opium) and for Britain’s military campaign. 3) China had to surrender Hong Kong to the British—who would administer it for the next 150 years. | **Why did China sign this?**  **What did it force China to do?** |
| **The Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864):** For however humiliating western imperialism was, the greatest problem facing China at this time was from within. It came in the form of the Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace (called Taiping from “Great Peace”). This came from illegal Christian missionary work in the 1810s. By the 1830s, a small number of Chinese missionaries began to preach their own particular brand of Christianity called the God Worshipping Society. This revolved around their leader, Hong Xiuquan, who believed he was the younger brother of Jesus and named himself Heavenly King. By 1850, the Taiping had some 30 million worshippers and an army of 500,000 (the 7th largest in the world). The Heavenly King denounced the authority of the Emperor and war began. This was the bloodiest war in history until this period. 20-30 million people died as the armies of both factions put cities to the sword. The Taiping were eventually beaten but the Qing never recovered from the devastation. | **How was the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom connected to Christianity?**  **What was the scope of the rebellion? (how large was it?)** |
| **Later Wars (1856-1895)**: After the first Opium War, European presence in China increased but China still had heavy restrictions on trade and still maintained a position of political supremacy in East Asia. Starting with the Second Opium War (1856-1860), imperial powers began to force more demands upon China. Adding to this was the Sino-French War (1885-1886) and the First Sino-Japanese War (1894-1895). All of these wars forced China to accept more imperial demands. | **Why did other countries continue to attack China after the Opium War?** |
| **Treaties:** by 1895, 80 treaty ports were open in China, where foreigners could trade and held special privileges. Chinese courts were forbidden to put foreigners of English, American, French, Russian, Japanese, or German nationality on trial, even if they committed murder or rape. China had been forced to surrender Hong Kong, Macau, Qingdao, Weihei, Lushun, and Zhanjiang to foreign control and had been stripped of most of its own imperial possessions (Mongolia, Tibet, Formosa, Korea, Vietnam). It also owed thousands of tons of gold and silver as war debts. | **List the demands of the Unequal Treaties:** |
| **Reform Movements:** China realized after the Second Opium War that it needed to catch up to Western technology and economy. However, China’s government held the view that its way of doing things was the key to stability. Therefor it was believed that any change to the government, society, or education system would destabilize China. Because of this, reforms were very conservative and focused only on military and economy. The bureaucrats tasked with performing these reform efforts mostly wasted the money to enrich themselves rather than help China. Many reformers pushed for greater reforms but were consistently thwarted by the conservative government led by the Dowager Empress Cixi. | **Why was the government unwilling to change the government or society?**  **What did the reforms focus on?**  **Why did the reforms fail?** |
| **Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901):** In 1899, a rebellion erupted in northern China that sought to restore the power of the Empress against Western powers. The Empress tried to fight the Boxers at first but after realizing how much support the Boxers had from the Chinese people, she decided to support them. An Eight Nation Alliance of Britain, America, France, Russia, Germany, Italy, Austro-Hungary, and Japan invaded China and quickly defeated both the Boxers and the Qing army. After the war, Beijing and Tianjin were subjected to atrocities as the armies spent over a year looting, raping, and murdering in the major cities and the countryside around them. China was forced to pay reparations and turn over those imperial administrators who had advised the queen to join the Boxers to a war crimes tribunal. Most were sentenced to death and executed. | **What did the Boxers want? Why did the Empress support them?**  **What did the 8-Nation Alliance do to get revenge on China?** |
| **Xinhai Revolution (1911-1912):** finally the people got fed up with the central government and revolted. A massive revolution began in 1911 in China’s north and quickly spread through the country. By 1912, it had overthrown the Emperor and Empress and the 2000 year old Chinese Empire came to an end. This new government was no longer shackled by the traditionalism of the old government and could actually reform the country. Unfortunately the new government proved incapable of handling the reform efforts either and China soon entered into a Civil War that would last until 1945. Meanwhile Japan continued to imperialize China, while the presence of Western powers slowly faded from China and East Asia. | **Describe the revolution:**  **What happened to China after the Xinhai Revolution?** |
| **2nd Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945):** the defining struggle in the Century of Humiliation was the 2nd Sino-Japanese War. Japan once again invaded China, this time attempting to conquer all of China. Japanese troops were brutal, committing countless atrocities against the people of China. However, China had been modernizing since the revolution and finally had the opportunity to show the success of those reforms. The war was very hard for China, who lost almost 20 million people (mostly civilians), but eventually China defeated the Japanese army in alliance with many western powers and in support, many ended their unequal treaties with China. After the war, China’s civil war finally came to an end in 1950 with a communist victory. The new communist government made it a mission to end all remnants of imperialism in China and finally had the strength to succeed in that mission. | **Describe the war:**  **How did the end of the Sino-Japanese War and the Chinese Civil War end imperialism in China?** |