

How did china resist
western influences?



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In the 19th Century, during the Qing dynasty, China had little communications with Western countries due to their self-sufficiency.

However, the British smuggled opium into China, the Chinese found out that people would get addicted to opium, so the Chinese banned smoking opium and led to the Opium War. Soon after the war was declared, other foreign countries such as France and Russia noticed China was a land with a lot of economic resources. Even though many civil wars including the Taiping Rebellion and the Boxer Rebellion were launched, China resisted Western influences through rebellions aiming at ridding China of westerners, treaties regulating peace with Western countries, and movements attempting to reform the government.

China resisted western influences by declaring wars toward foreign countries. The Opium War between China and Britain was caused by Britain's ignoring China's warnings and keeping smuggling opium into China. China lost the war because the technologies of Great Britain were more advanced. The two countries signed Nanking Treaty, which expanded the prologue of unequal treaties.

After the Nanking Treaty, civilians not only distrusted their own government, but also refused accepting westerners due to the fact that numerous western nations forced China to open other ports so that foreigners could export their goods to China. The result led to the unstable market of China. In order to make a great peaceful world many civilians formed a party called Taiping Heavenly Kingdom. Hong Xiuquan, the leader of the party, advocated gender equality and public treasury in addition to spreading Christianity, in which the party broke temples and idols and introduced missionary in China.

Moreover, people distrusted the Qing government as it was deteriorating. Also, foreign countries gave more pressure during that time. An organization called Yi Ho Tuan believed that by joining their group and practicing Chinese Kong Fu with them, they would soon become invincible. Due to their belief, members of Yi Ho Tuan chose not to follow the government's laws. In the spring of 1900, Yi Ho Tuan descended to Beijing, declaring the Boxer Rebellion. They surrounded the European section, however, they suffered a humiliating defeat from the multinational force of 19, 000 troops. Even though the Yi Ho Tuan failed, a strong sense of nationalism and of refusing western countries arose in China.

Since the failure of the several rebellions, China was forced to sign plenty of unequal treaties as a postwar reconciliation. As a settlement, China was compelled to sign Nanking Treaty which included the opening of the five following ports, Guangzhou, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Ningpo, and Shanghai, where Britons were allowed to trade with anyone they wished. And China gave Hong Kong to Britain as well as twenty one million silver as reparation. After the treaty, the trading competitiveness faced unprecedented problems from foreigners to Chinese people. The trend of opposition to westerners kept rising in Chinese people's minds.

Too many defeats made China to give western countries many arbitrary conditions. Even if China were having unfair negotiations, it still had to make concessions. The agreement on tariffs reduced a great number of China's taxes, and the Unilateral Most Favored Nation delighted westerners with impunity. However, these increased Chinese people's hatred to westerners.

The more failure of wars, the more unequal treaties China had to sign. China signed up Beijing Treaty which allowed westerners recruit Chinese slaves. More than that, foreigners could build churches in China. Westerners plundered great amount valuable resources from China. Likewise, these made Chinese people feel unfair that westerners received too many rights in China.

In 1860, China lost Second Opium War so they had to undertake western countries' squeezes, which means more treaties. China was forced to agree with Tianjing Treaty. This treaty allowed Russia, America, Britain, and France to preach in China. The United States had the right to station legations in Beijing. This treaty forced China to open Shanghai, Ningbo, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Guangzhou, Taiwan, and Qiongzhou seven ports to Russia, and Russian troops could park in various ports. Furthermore, opium could be traded and imported freely, which made Qing government very vexed.

By this time, China wanted to be suppressed no longer, so it intended plural reforms that improved it's attribute such as Hundred Days' Reform, and Self-Strengthening Movement. China self-improved by learning foreign policies, making up some incentives for the people who contributed to China, or enhancing military.

The Self-Strengthening Movement was promoted by Zeng Guofan, Li Hongzhang, and Zuo Zongtang after the failure of Second Opium War. They advocated to learning western countries' industrial technologies and business methods because they witnessed the tremendous power of foreign invaders' battleships. They first set up Prime States Office to process foreign

affairs. Then they erected Machinery Manufacturing Bureau and arsenals to form a new military industry to enhance military in every province. They improved their military especially navy. Because conservatives didn't support and the low efficiency of bureaucracy, so this movement didn't succeed, but it paved the way for the Hundred Days' Reform.

China didn't give up after the bungle of the Self-Strengthening Movement. It promoted Hundred Days' Reform, popularized by Emperor Guangxu, Kang Youwei, and Liang Qichao, which was divided into four parts including education, economy, military, and policy. Chinese government established higher level schools and selected some children to go to study in Japan. Because foreign educations were thought to be better at that time. For the development of economy, Qing government set up factories everywhere in China to promote the production. To improve military, it used western ways to train troops. It lifted the exclusion of newspaper and laid off bureaucracy to strengthen government structure and build up the trust of civilians. Even though the overthrow of the Hundred Days' Reform by the conservatives in 1898, China's national power had indeed grown, which made the Chinese believe they didn't need foreigners to conquer them anymore.

All the unequal treaties made China more vulnerable and caused Chinese people to distrust the government and therefore had a lot of riots. China reflected on its own and began to promote the policy of self-improvement. China resisted the western influences. While regulating peace with Western countries by signing treaties and attempting to reform the government, China wanted to be self isolated since it was self-sufficient. However,

numerous revolutions proved that it was impossible not to be influenced by westerners to isolate itself within its own world.

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