

# Chinas history as a superpower in earlier eras essay example

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## **Introduction**

China has a rich history which is highly complex and interesting. Warlords, who basically created China by conquests, have ruled over it for a long time. The country has been marred with war and some reigns of peace have characterized the country. All this led to the development of the current Chinese power. China has had times when it had a close relationship with its neighbors in terms of trade and periods that it locked itself up from external influence and became a closed civilization. China was economically superior to the west before the 19th century. However many historians who are more conservative have described china as backward, parochial and stagnant. The west's emergence as superpowers was however boosted by the China's world technological prowess (Fairbank, 1978).

In the years 1100-1800, China rose and consolidated its power into a strong nation. A lot of pointers show that China was a more superior globally in regards to its economic development. During this period, China was leading in the production of steel, technical innovation in textile manufacturing and agriculture as compared to other nations like Britain. In comparison China produced 125, 000 tons of steel while its next competitor, Britain in the year 1788 produced only 76, 000 tons. China was able to reach far and wide in its trading since they had markets as far as Africa, Southern Asia, Europe and the Middle East. Further, in 1588, china had the largest ships that displaced 3, 000 tons while the English ships at the time could displace 3, 000 tons. In the shipping industry, china has maintained its lead until as late as the 18th century. In the 1750s, china experienced a very stable advanced paper money economy, high agricultural yields and mechanized production which

the British manufacturer borrowed and assimilated. The English were always eager to enter into the Chinese lucrative and well developed market (Fairbank, 1978). The rise of British imperialism challenged the Chinese dominance in global position. Textile boom in the British Empire was experienced in the well over seven centuries after the Chinese had the revolution in the technical and innovation in the textile industry.

However, China leadership was not long lived as it fell prey to emerging competitive economies like the British. The British dominance in the quest to be a world power depended on their army to quell and through divide and rule policies over local colonies that they were interested in their search for power and wealth. After the decline of the Qing dynasty, Feng Ru, who had moved to the United States as a young boy, moved back to China with two planes that he had made with the Guangdong Air Vehicle company (Loewe, 1986). He started a new company there. Kang, then made Feng the person in charge of the Chinese aviation industry when he took over the countries leadership. This was the birth of a strategy that led the country into an aviation superpower. The Chinese Air Force used planes from this company. Several changes and improvements by other innovators have been witnessed in this industry further making Chinese aviation superior.

The English industrial revolution was mostly based on conquests using their army and military force. The Chinese during this period 1688-1815 highly relied on the trading in the open markets to sustain their economy (Loewe, 1986). Therefore the predominance of china was mostly based on the reciprocal benefits with those that it traded with. By use of forceful military power, the British used troops drawn from its colonies to forcefully export its

produce to the Chinese markets and use treaties that were not economically fair to the partners. This led to the Chinese markets being flooded with opium from British plantations in India. China's world power ended when the English decided to willingly engage in military force to mark and rule their colonies.

The penetration of the western and subsequent colonization of the Chinese market led to the development of a new breed of wealthy Chinese who were the main importers of goods from Britain. Greater taxations and exploitation was faced on the Chinese country which they paid for the debts accrued by the imperialists during the wars they had in taking over their colonies (Loewe, 1986).

China has risen to the second largest economy in the world after its fall. This was only possible due to the success of the communist revolution that hit the country. The people's liberation army fought the US and Japanese imperialist and defeated them which led to the reunification and reconstruction of china as a sovereign nation. Over the years china has slowly embraced capitalism which was heightened in 1980 when the government commenced a dramatic shift in its approaches to economy performance. After the death of Mao in 1976, Deng, the new leader, introduced many reforms that changed the face of china. Deng encouraged trading between china and its international partners. This led to china's growth in economy and the international markets. China has made a lot of focus on its peace and stability in their local politics as this determines their continued strength as an emerging economy (Fairbank, 1978).

## References

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