



Lesson Plan to accompany the story
"Ulysses S. Grant in China."

THE BOXER REBELLION

For centuries, the various Chinese kingdoms avoided the outside world as much as possible. Whether united or divided, they, with the occasional exception, cared little for the affairs of lands and lives beyond their borders, except for how it endangered them. Exceptions existed, but they were regional concerns –Japan, equally isolated for several centuries, Korea, a nominal vassal state on and off until the twentieth century, and Thailand, which, as usual, resisted conquest from outsiders with relative success.

By the nineteenth century, however, the Western powers, particularly Great Britain, could ignore the potential lucrative trade markets of Japan no longer. The British had traded with China for tea for some time, but that trade was one sided, with the British paying for said tea in silver. The drain on the British specie alarmed many, and the desire for wider trade increased. The Chinese insisted they had no need for anything the Europeans would sell. The British responded by smuggling opium from India. Two Opium Wars opened China to wider trade with the British and other Western powers, including the United States.

While some in the Chinese government struggled to modernize the nation in the wake of their humiliating defeats, others opposed such efforts. In 1900 the various concerns in China boiled over into a series of peasant revolts and armed assaults on Westerners residing in China. These attacks against Western interests became known as the Boxer Rebellion.

The Rebels assaulted the various foreign consulate offices in Peking, the Chinese capital. In response, the Western powers formed what became called the Eight Nations Alliance. Great Britain, the United States, France, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Italy, Japan, with support from other portions of the British Empire, combined together to defend themselves against the Boxer siege. Eventually relief from related powers arrived, utilizing superior weaponry and tactics against the cult-like Boxers. As the seasons changed, the Boxers, defeated and largely peasant farmers, returned to their lands, seeming to vanish almost as fast as they appeared. China would continue to face unrest and tribulations as it struggled to modernize until the rise of a united, Communist China following World War II.

ASSIGNMENT

Please visit these sites and answer two questions:

<https://www.facinghistory.org/nanjing-atrocities/nation-building/rebels-boxer-rebellion>

<https://www.thoughtco.com/the-boxer-rebellion-china-fights-imperialism-2360848>

<https://www.history.com/topics/china/boxer-rebellion>

- 1) Why did the Boxers target foreigners?
- 2) What were the Western power's response to the Rebellion

Length: your essay should be roughly 300 words.

