

J. The Century of Humiliation, Part 1: The Opium Wars

1. Why did China stop trade with the world, and only begin to trade again in 1978?
2. The answer is that China stopped trade because of the way it was forced to do it in the first place.
3. The British wanted the Chinese to buy things from them so that they could get gold & silver in return, and the only way they could think to do it was to sell a drug called opium (which they could get a lot of from India).
4. When the Chinese emperor tried to stop the opium trade and seized British supplies of it, the British viewed this as an illegal act. They decided to punish China, sending a small fleet of advanced steam-powered warships to destroy the Chinese navy and bombard the coast to force China's submission.
5. The **First Opium War (1839-42)** was an utter defeat for China, because European industrial and military technology had by that point surpassed that of all other cultures.
6. China was forced to pay a large penalty in silver as well as to accept trade with Britain and the rest of Europe at four additional ports along the coast. Also, the island of Hong Kong became British territory.
7. Despite a second attempt to prohibit the opium trade, France joined Britain's side in the **Second Opium War (1856-60)** and China was again defeated, resulting in further penalties.

K. The Century of Humiliation, Part 2: The Collapse of Traditional Government

1. In between the opium wars, the Chinese government had to put down a rebellion led a man named Hong Xiuquan, who claimed to be the Chinese brother of Jesus Christ.
2. This **Taiping Rebellion of 1850-64** showed the imperial family that foreign ideas and beliefs were dangerous, so they did not want to copy foreign cultures.
3. China's neighbor Japan, however, did copy European technology and wanted to build a European-style empire. When Japan decided to control Korea and China tried to stop them, the two countries fought the **Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5**, where China was completely defeated by Japan.
4. Following the defeat in the war with Japan, the Chinese people were desperate to restore their national honor. A private army called the "boxers" attacked the foreign embassies in the **Boxer Rebellion (1899-1901)** in the hope of kicking them out of China, but the imperial family did not help them. When the foreign powers sent in their armies and defeated the boxers, harsh penalties were again imposed on China.
5. Every failure of the royal family made things worse until even China's leading general Yuan Shikai joined a rebellion against them. The emperor Puyi, who was just a child, was forced to give up power. This **Chinese Revolution of 1911** set the scene for the rise of some kind of new government—but what kind would it be?