

## Classroom Connection

**How did China's involvement in international trade change at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century?** A lesson activity designed for 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade World History and United States History classrooms with a focus on 21<sup>st</sup> century skills

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### Historical Background:

Following the Opium Wars, China increasingly felt the intrusive presence of both Western and Japanese adversaries. This presence resulted in a weakening of the Qing Dynasty, a level of world trade not seen since the Yuan, and a growing dissatisfaction with both the dynastic system and western imperialism. Combined, these factors would later lead to the Boxer Rebellion along with radical changes in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Acquired from

[http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/1900/filmmore/reference/interview/lafeber\\_boxerrebellion.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/1900/filmmore/reference/interview/lafeber_boxerrebellion.html), August 2, 2010

### Handout 1: Secondary Source-Data Charts

Chart 1: China's foreign trade: imports and exports, 1870-1900  
(Value of trade expressed in Haikwan taels-monetary unit)

			<i>Net Imports</i>	<i>Export excess (+)</i>
<i>Year</i>	<i>Net imports</i>	<i>Exports</i>	<i>&amp; Exports</i>	<i>Import excess (-)</i>
1870	63,693,000	55,295,000	118,988,000	- 8,398,000
1875	67,803,000	68,913,000	136,716,000	+ 1,110,000
1880	79,293,000	77,884,000	157,177,000	- 1,410,000
1885	88,200,000	65,006,000	153,206,000	- 23,194,000
1890	127,093,000	87,144,000	214,238,000	- 39,949,000
1895	171,697,000	143,293,000	314,990,000	- 28,404,000
1900	211,070,000	158,997,000	370,067,000	- 52,074,000

Source: Hsiao Liang-lin, *China's Foreign Trade Statistics, 1864-1949* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974), pp. 22-3. Acquired from

<http://www.hku.hk/history/history/firstyear/Lin/Linl04.html#4.1>, August 2, 2010

Chart 2: The three principal imports and their respective shares in China's foreign trade, 1871-1903 (Total value of imports = 100%)

Period	Opium	Cotton cloth	Cotton yarn	Others
1871-1873	37.7	30.2	2.8	29.3
1881-1883	37.0	22.8	5.8	34.4
1891-1893	20.5	20.5	14.6	44.4
1901-1903	12.3	19.7	18.6	49.4

Source: Yan Zhongping *et al.* (ed.) 嚴中平等編, *Zhongguo jindai jingjishi tongji ziliao xuanji* 中國近代經濟史統計資料選輯 [*Selected Statistical Materials on Modern Chinese Economic History*] (Beijing: Kexue chubanshe 北京科學出版社, 1955), p. 76. Acquired from <http://www.hku.hk/history/history/firstyear/Lin/Linl04.html#4.1>, August 2, 2010

### Handout 1: Secondary Source- Data Guide

#### Chart 1

1. What happens in terms of China's import economy from 1870-1900?
2. What happens in terms of China's export economy from 1870-1900?
3. As of 1900, did China have an equal balance of imports and exports? If not, describe the trade situation.
4. What events may explain the changes in trade?

#### Chart 2

5. In examining the principle imports to China from 1871-1903, what products are increasingly being transported to the Chinese markets?
6. What nations would have an economic interest in providing these products?
7. Based on your knowledge of world history, what technological advances, colonial empires, etc. would aid these interests?

### Suggested Answers

### Handout 1: Secondary Source- Data Guide

#### Chart 1

1. What happens in terms of China's import economy from 1870-1900?
  - *China experienced an increase from 63,693,000 Haikwaen taels worth of imports in 1870 to 211,070,000 Haikwan taels worth of imports in 1900, an increase of 231%.*

2. What happens in terms of China's export economy from 1870-1900?

- *China experienced an increase from 55,295,000 Haikwan taels worth of exports in 1870 to 158,997,000 Haikwan taels worth of exports in 1900, an increase of 188%.*

3. As of 1900, did China have an equal balance of imports and exports? If not, describe the trade situation.

- *No. China increasingly began an import market.*

4. What events may explain the changes in trade?

- *The impact of unfair treaties following the Opium Wars and the increasing involvement of industrialized nations.*

Chart 2

5. In examining the principle imports to China from 1871-1903, what products are increasingly being transported to the Chinese markets?

- *Cotton and other products.*

6. What nations would have an economic interest in providing these products?

- *Emerging industrial powers such as the United States and Japan.*

7. Based on your knowledge of world history, what technological advances, colonial empires, etc. would aid these interests?

- *Important technological advances in cotton production, mechanization of textiles combined with the industrial growth of the United States and Japan led to competition with cotton products produced in India for the British Empire.*