

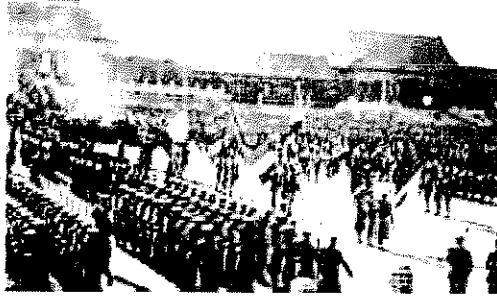
The Boxer Rebellion

Throughout the nineteenth century, foreigners took control of China and forced the people to make humiliating concessions.

Italy, Japan, and Russia all claimed exclusive trading rights to certain parts of China. They divided the nation into "spheres of influence" where they had exclusive trading rights. The

United States proposed an

"Open Door Policy" where all nations would share China.



A secret society in northern China began a campaign of terror against Christian missionaries and Chinese converts. Foreigners called them "Boxers" because they practiced martial arts and callisthenic rituals. They believed they were immune to bullets and pain. The society wanted to overthrow the Qing Dynasty and expel all foreigners and foreign influences; in which Boxers believed would lead China into a new Golden Age.

The empress Dowager publicly opposed the Boxers, but her ministers quietly convinced them to join forces in order to drive foreigners from China. In the early months of 1900, thousands of Boxers roamed the countryside, attacking Christians. When an



international force of 2,100 soldiers attempted to land in China, the empress Dowager ordered her imperial army to stop the foreign troops. Throughout the summer of 1900 the Boxers burned churches and foreign residences and killed Chinese Christians on sight.

In the spring of 1900, the Boxers descended on Beijing. Shouting "Death to the foreign devils," the Boxers surrounded the European section of the city. They kept it under siege for several months. The Dowager

Empress expressed support for the Boxers but did not back her words with military aid. In August, a multinational force of 19,000 troops marched on Beijing and quickly defeated the Boxers.