



Oxford Cambridge and RSA

# A Level History A

Y317/01 China and its Rulers 1839–1989

**Friday 9 June 2017 – Morning**

**Time allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes**



**You must have:**

- the OCR 12-page Answer Booklet  
(OCR12 sent with general stationery)

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Use black ink.
- Answer Question 1 in Section A and any two questions in Section B.
- Write your answer to each question on the Answer Booklet.
- Do **not** write in the barcodes.

## INFORMATION

- The total mark for this paper is **80**.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets [ ].
- Quality of extended responses will be assessed in questions marked with an asterisk (\*).
- This document consists of **4** pages.

## SECTION A

Read the two passages and then answer question 1.

- 1 Evaluate the interpretations in **both** of the two passages and explain which you think is more convincing as an explanation of the causes of the Boxer Uprising. [30]

**Passage A**

The Tongzhi Emperor died suddenly of smallpox in 1875, having ruled for fourteen years, but it was a rule over which his mother, Dowager Empress Cixi, had cast a long shadow. Cixi flouted the laws of succession by installing her 4 year old nephew, ruling as the Guanxu Emperor, although, needless to say, she would remain the real power in the empire until her death...

By 1898 China was in a parlous state, at the mercy of the West and with internal threats simmering. At this point Guanxu, more reform minded than the ultra-conservative Dowager Empress, threw his support behind a group of reformers led by political thinker Kang Youwei (1858–1927) and launched what has become known as the Hundred Days' Reform, a radical, national, cultural, political and educational reform movement... The movement lasted only 104 days – from 11 June to 21 September – before Cixi and her supporters crushed it.

Guanxu never recovered from the disappointment of this failure and remained a virtual prisoner for the rest of his life, Cixi even bricking up the windows of his chambers in the Summer Palace. In order to curry favour with the West, however, [Cixi] could not afford to dethrone him. The only alternative for her was to get rid of the westerners and to achieve this she threw her considerable support behind the growing nationalist group, the Righteous Harmony Society, who created the Boxer Rebellion between 1898 and 1901, opposing foreign imperialism and Christianity in China. In 1900 Cixi abandoned the long-held policy of suppressing the Boxers, a decision that brought protests from the West. The movement spread north from Shandong close to Beijing, its members burning churches, murdering Chinese Christians and intimidating Chinese officials who tried to stop them.

Adapted from G. Kerr, *A Short History of China: From Ancient Dynasties to Economic Powerhouse*, published in 2013

**Passage B**

In 1898 and 1899, China almost seemed on the point of partition between the imperialist powers. The Russians who had forced the Japanese out of some of their gains, notably the port of Lushan, now occupied much of Manchuria and Lushan, renaming it Port Arthur. The Germans occupied a port in the Shandong Peninsula and the British, not to be outdone and to stop anyone else having it, took Weihaiwei. They also extended their hold on the South by extracting a 99-year lease on the Kowloon Peninsula to the north of Hong Kong. The French also seized territory in the South. The Qing government seemed helpless and unable to defend Chinese sovereignty.

In this situation, popular feeling in north-east China erupted into what became known as the Boxer Rising. Tension had been growing for some time over western missionaries and their Christian converts. In the spring of 1900 isolated incidents coalesced into a mass frenzy of anti-western outrage. It was fuelled by a mixture of primitive magical beliefs and outraged Han pride. Railways which were spreading in the North were thought to disturb dragons and telegraph wires which dripped rusty water after rain were regarded as sources of poison. Europeans and even those Chinese in possession of dangerous foreign objects such as clocks were killed.

Mobs from the countryside spread to Tianjin and Beijing. The German Ambassador was shot and Europeans retreated to the British legation (embassy) to withstand a siege. The Empress Dowager Cixi in control of the Qing Court threw her support behind the Boxers, in effect declaring war on the west. It was popular, but hopeless.

Adapted from G. Stewart, *China 1900–76*, published in 2006

**SECTION B**

Answer **TWO** of the following three questions.

- 2\*** 'The imperial ambitions of foreign powers were the main challenge that China faced in its relations with the wider world in the years from 1839 to 1989'. How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 3\*** 'Chinese government saw more change under Deng Xiaoping than any other ruler in the period from 1839 to 1989.' How far do you agree? **[25]**
- 4\*** To what extent did the economic aims of Chinese governments stay the same in the period from 1839 to 1989? **[25]**

**END OF QUESTION PAPER**

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