

East Asia and the West

BEFORE YOU READ

MAIN IDEA

While Western nations focused their imperial ambitions on East Asia, the reactions and results differed in China, Japan, and Southeast Asia.

READING FOCUS

1. How did Western nations gain power and influence in China in the 1800s?
2. What led to the rise of Japan as a major power?
3. How did European power and influence increase in Southeast Asia?

KEY TERMS AND PEOPLE

unequal treaties
extraterritoriality
Taiping Rebellion
Boxer Rebellion
Sun Yixian
Treaty of Kanagawa
Emperor Meiji
Sino-Japanese War

TAKING NOTES Take notes about the actions of Western nations and the responses of nations in East Asia.

Western Actions	Response of East Asian Nations

THE INSIDE STORY

Why did Great Britain go to war over the sale of illegal drugs?

During the 1700s tea became a popular drink among the British. China was the sole source of tea. Despite Britain's position as the world's greatest industrial power, China had little interest in buying anything Britain produced. So, to pay for its tea habit, Britain sent vast quantities of silver to China. Year after year, silver was leaving Britain for China, and little money was coming back.

To correct the imbalance, Britain needed to find a product that the Chinese would buy, and it found one—opium. Opium had been grown in Asia for centuries, but the Chinese emperor had outlawed the opium trade in 1729. Even so, British traders had been smuggling in small quantities of opium from Britain's territories in India for years. Because of the desire to send silver back to Britain, the British East India Company increasingly ignored opium smuggling in the territory it controlled.

Opium had a devastating effect on China. Workers and peasants fell victim to the drug. It is impossible to know exact figures, but some historians estimate that as many as 1 out of every 10 Chinese were addicted to opium.

The drug's destructive effects on Chinese society led the emperor to stand firm against the British smuggling. Commissioner Lin Zixu wrote a letter to Queen Victoria, stating the Chinese case.

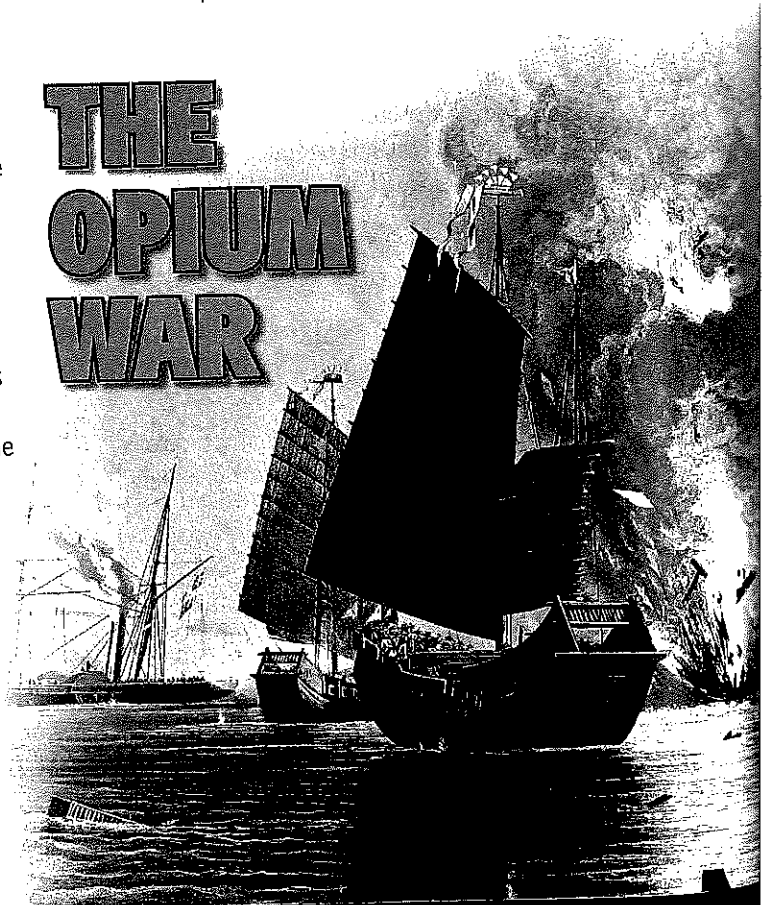
"Let us ask, where is your conscience? I have heard that the smoking of opium is very strictly forbidden by your country; that is because the harm caused by opium is clearly understood. Since it is not permitted to do harm to your own country, then even less should you let it be passed on to the harm of other countries—how much less to China!"

The British never responded to Lin's letter. When Lin ordered the destruction of British opium stored in the city of Guangzhou, the British struck back by sending warships to China. The Opium War had begun. ■

British ships attacking Chinese warships during the Opium War ▶

Iron Steam Ship Nemesis Destroying the Chinese War Junks,
by Edward Duncan, 1841

THE OPIUM WAR



Western Nations Gain Power

In 1800 trade with European merchants was profitable for the Chinese, but the Chinese did not view the Europeans as particularly important. They were just another set of foreigners who might pay tribute to the emperor.

All of that changed in the 1800s. Little by little, the Qing dynasty lost its power, its prestige, and its sovereignty over China.

The Opium War Chinese rulers had long believed that all nations outside China were barbaric, and they wanted little contact with the outside world. When Europeans pushed for trading rights in China, the Chinese restricted their trade to a single city, Guangzhou.

The Chinese did not want European goods, but they did want silver. They were pleased when tea became popular in Britain and British silver flowed into China. But the British were distressed by the imbalance of trade.

In the late 1700s the British discovered a solution to the trade imbalance—opium. In China there was a great demand for the drug, and opium addiction became such a problem that the Chinese government banned the

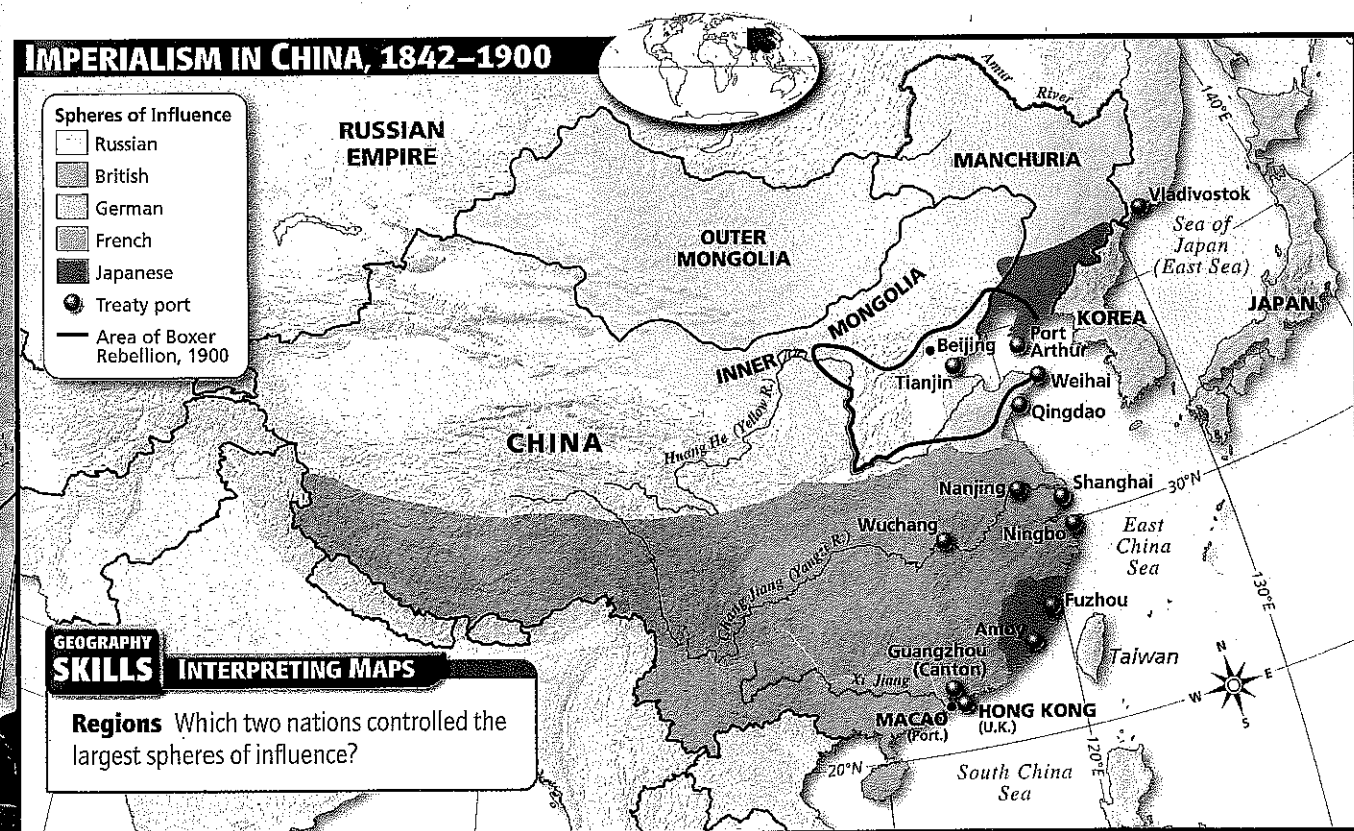
import of opium in 1796. But foreign merchants continued to smuggle the drug into China.

In 1839 Chinese officials ordered the destruction of British opium in Guangzhou. The British responded by sending a naval force to launch an attack. After capturing Shanghai in 1842, the British forced the Chinese to sign a peace treaty, the Treaty of Nanjing.

The Treaty of Nanjing was the first of the **unequal treaties**—so called because they benefited European countries at the expense of China. The treaty opened five more ports to Western trade. It also gave **extraterritoriality** to the British, meaning that British citizens accused of crimes had the right to be tried in British courts rather than in Chinese courts.

In the next two decades, China was forced to sign more treaties with Britain, France, the United States, and Russia. Slowly but surely, the Qing dynasty was losing control over China to Western intruders.

The Taiping Rebellion The failure of the Qing dynasty to resist the Western powers led some Chinese to believe that the dynasty had lost the mandate of heaven. That belief led to a series of rebellions starting in 1850.



In the 1850s the most serious rebellion was led by Hong Xiuquan (shee-oo-CHOO-ahn), who believed that he was the brother of Jesus. He wanted to create a "Heavenly Kingdom of Great Peace," (*Taiping Tianguo*) where no one would be poor. His followers formed a movement called the **Taiping Rebellion**.

Hong and his followers captured large territories in southeastern China and by 1853 controlled the city of Nanjing. Qing soldiers, as well as British and French armies, attacked the Taiping army and finally defeated it in 1864. Although the Qing dynasty emerged victorious, the cost was great—more than 20 million Chinese died in the Taiping Rebellion.

Foreign Influence Takes Hold After the Taiping Rebellion, reform-minded officials of the Qing dynasty tried to make changes. For example, they pushed to build coal mines, factories, and railroads. They encouraged the government to make modern weapons and ships. They tried to introduce Western knowledge and languages to China. This movement, called the

self-strengthening movement, ultimately failed because of strong resistance from traditional Confucian scholars and powerful officials.

While China struggled to reform, Japan was emerging as a major military power. China went to war with Japan over Korea in 1894, but the Japanese soundly defeated China.

Noting the weakness of the Chinese military, Western powers rushed to claim more territory in China. Germany, Russia, Great Britain, and France all carved out spheres of influence there.

By the late 1890s the United States got involved. Americans feared that European nations would divide China among themselves and the United States would lose its profitable trade in China. To prevent such a loss, U.S. secretary of state John Hay proposed the Open Door Policy, which would allow free trade in the Chinese ports under European control. This policy would allow the United States to continue its trade in China. Although the European nations never formally agreed to the Open Door Policy, they did allow free trade in their ports.

READING SKILLS

Identifying Supporting Details

What kind of reforms did Qing officials make?

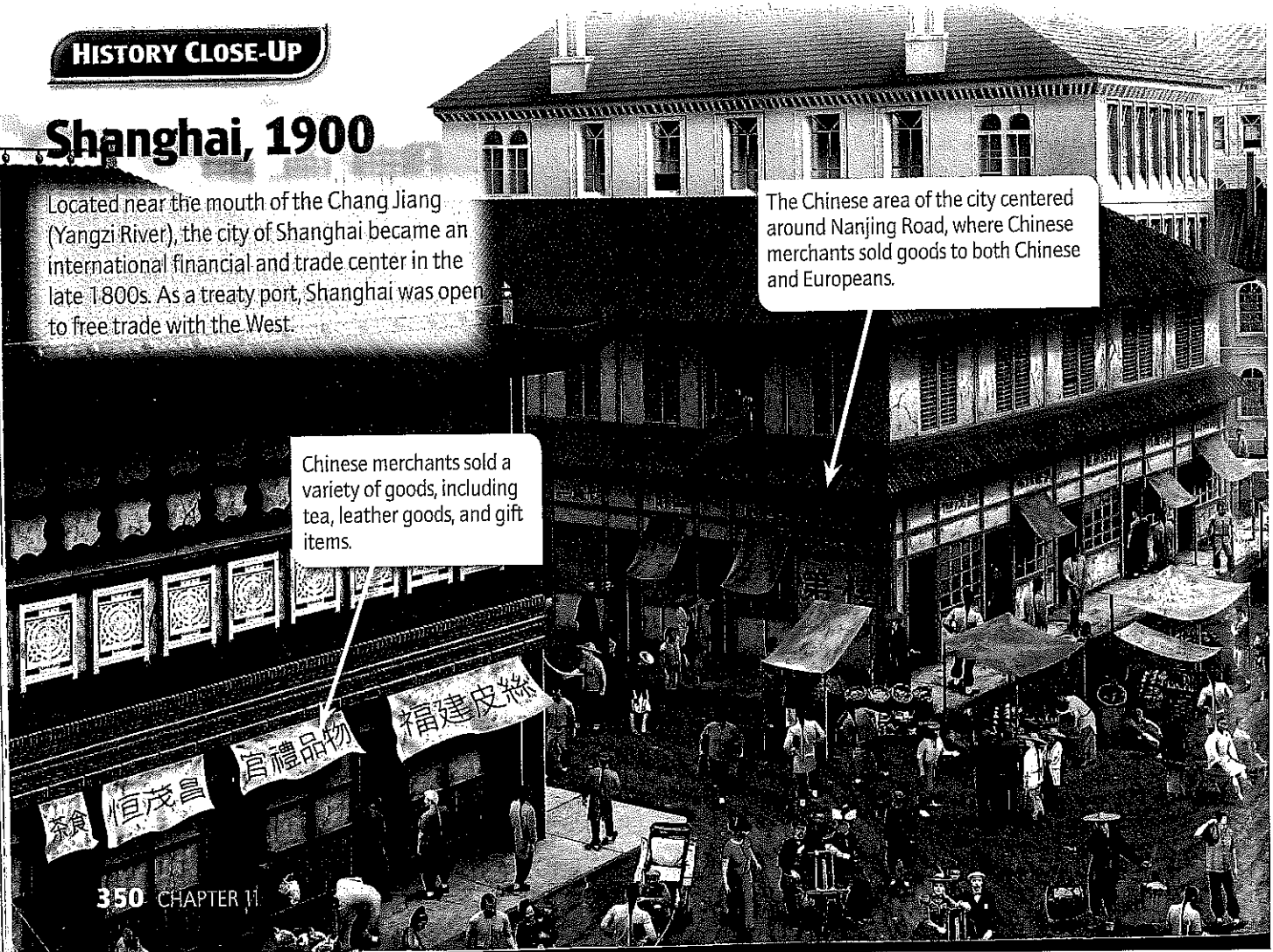
HISTORY CLOSE-UP

Shanghai, 1900

Located near the mouth of the Chang Jiang (Yangzi River), the city of Shanghai became an international financial and trade center in the late 1800s. As a treaty port, Shanghai was open to free trade with the West.

The Chinese area of the city centered around Nanjing Road, where Chinese merchants sold goods to both Chinese and Europeans.

Chinese merchants sold a variety of goods, including tea, leather goods, and gift items.



By the end of the 1800s, China was in a desperate position. The war with Japan had exposed China's military weakness, and Europeans now controlled large portions of Chinese territory. Something had to be done if China were to remain independent.

In 1898 the Chinese emperor decided to enact a series of reforms, including changing the civil service examinations and building a modern army. But Empress Dowager Cixi, the most powerful person in China, stopped the reforms because she believed they threatened the rule of the Qing dynasty. People who believed the reforms were necessary now began to call for an end to the Qing dynasty.

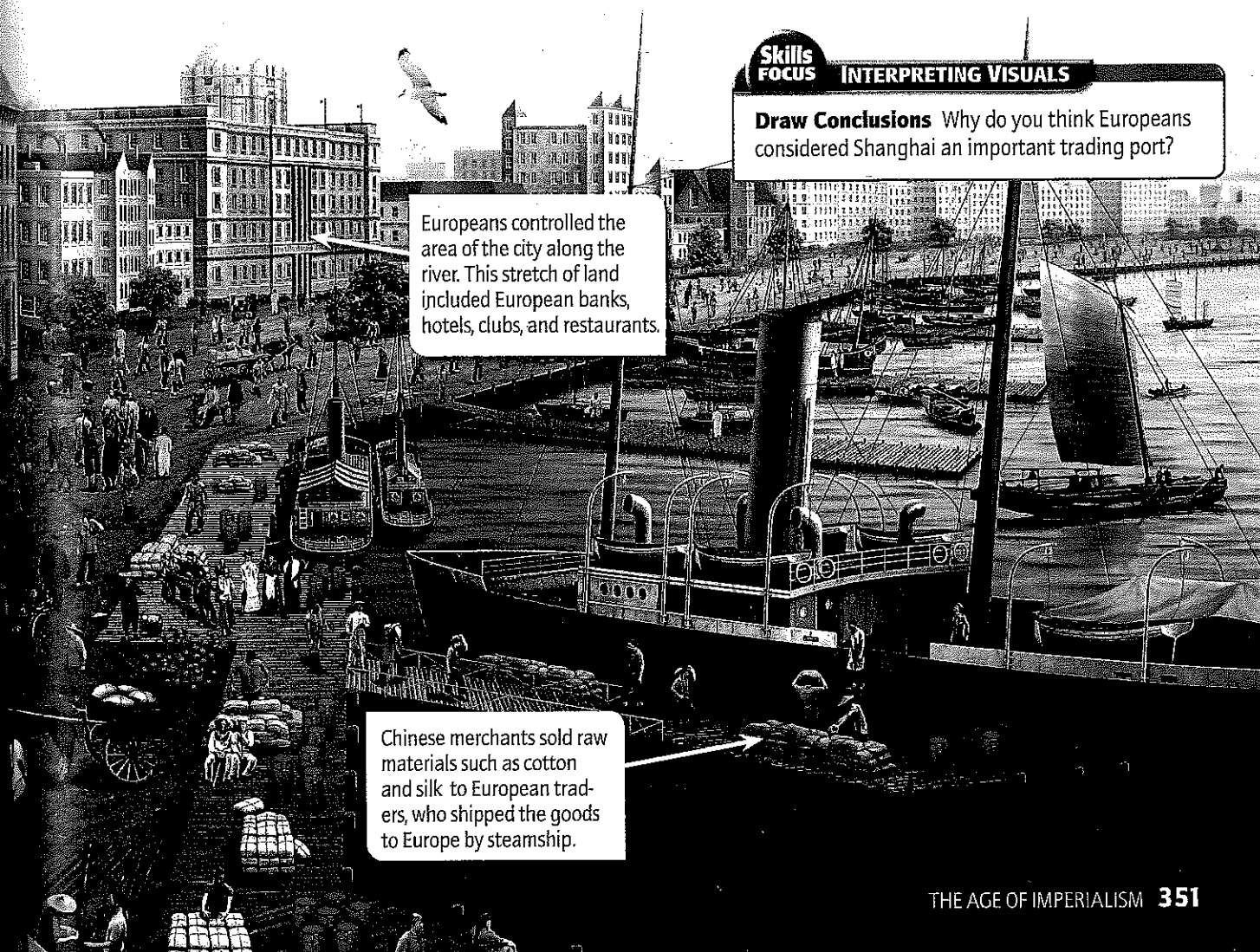
The Boxer Rebellion The humiliation of China by the West produced several nationalist movements intent on restoring China's glory. The most important was the Harmonious Fists, or Boxers. This secret society combined martial arts training, hatred of foreigners, and a belief that they were invulnerable to Western weapons. The **Boxer Rebellion** began in 1899 when

the Boxers started attacking missionaries and Chinese converts to Christianity.

In June 1900 the Boxers laid siege to the foreign compounds in Beijing and held the foreigners hostage for 55 days. A few weeks later, an army of 20,000 foreign troops captured Beijing and suppressed the uprising. The foreign powers imposed a heavy fine on the Chinese government for secretly supporting the Boxers. The result was more humiliation for the Chinese government at the hands of foreigners.

The 1911 Revolution With the defeat of the Boxers, Qing officials finally began to enact reforms. They eliminated the system of examinations for officials and tried to establish primary and secondary schools. Qing officials took steps to create a new national army. They even created elected provincial assemblies, which began to meet in 1909.

Still, these reforms were too little, too late. Radicals living in Japan and the United States called for the overthrow of the Qing dynasty and the creation of a new Chinese republic.



**Skills
FOCUS**

INTERPRETING VISUALS

Draw Conclusions Why do you think Europeans considered Shanghai an important trading port?

Europeans controlled the area of the city along the river. This stretch of land included European banks, hotels, clubs, and restaurants.

Chinese merchants sold raw materials such as cotton and silk to European traders, who shipped the goods to Europe by steamship.

FACES OF HISTORY

SUN Yixian

1866–1925



Known as the Father of Modern China, Sun Yixian first became interested in pursuing a political career after China's disastrous

defeat in the Sino-Japanese War. By 1905 he began developing a plan to restore economic and political strength to China. His ideas centered around the concept of political tutelage—that a strong government would teach the Chinese people the principles of representative government until a true democracy could emerge. Sun Yixian was practical and formed many alliances—even with Russian Communists—in an effort to unite the Chinese people.

Draw Conclusions What was Sun Yixian's main goal throughout his career?

Sun Yixian, known in the West as Sun Yat-sen, was the most prominent of these radicals. Sun based his revolutionary ideology on three basic principles—nationalism, democracy, and “people’s livelihood.” The last of these principles involved equality in landownership and was often translated as socialism.

Sun believed that China should eventually become a democracy, but that the Chinese people were not ready yet. First, he called for the overthrow of the Qing dynasty and its replacement by a ruling nationalist party. He wanted this party to act as a guardian of the Chinese people until they were ready for democracy.

Other people in China also began to call for the overthrow of the Qing dynasty. Revolutionary ideas took root among intellectuals and junior officers in military academies. In October 1911 a group of young officers led a revolt in the city of Wuchang. Support for the revolt grew rapidly. In January 1912 the revolutionaries declared a republic.

The Qing wanted a general named Yuan Shikai to quash the rebellion. Instead of crushing the rebels, though, Yuan negotiated peace with them. At the peace talks, Yuan convinced the Chinese emperor to abdicate. This event brought an end to the 268-year rule of the Qing dynasty. After the abdication, Yuan Shikai agreed to become the first president of the new Republic of China.

READING CHECK Find the Main Idea How did European intervention in China contribute to the downfall of the Qing dynasty?

The Rise of Modern Japan

Japan learned from the Chinese example about how *not* to respond to the West. Like China, Japan resisted contact at first. But once that contact was made in the mid-1800s, Japan reacted differently. Instead of descending into turmoil and revolution, Japan emerged as a great military and imperial power.

The U.S. Renews Contact The Tokugawa regime ruled Japan from 1603 to 1867 and tried to limit contact with the outside world. Yet American and European merchants wanted to trade with Japan. To open up trade, in 1852 U.S. president Millard Fillmore sent Commodore Matthew Perry on a mission to Japan. Perry appeared in Edo (Tokyo) Bay in 1853 with four warships and again in 1854 with nine ships.

The threat of the U.S. navy convinced Japanese officials to sign the **Treaty of Kanagawa** in 1854. This treaty allowed American ships to stop at two Japanese ports. Another treaty in 1858 opened five more Japanese ports to Western merchants. This treaty also established extraterritoriality for Westerners in Japan.

Many Japanese found these treaties deeply humiliating. They were especially angry that Westerners committing crimes in Japan received extremely mild punishments or no punishment at all. These treaties contributed to the rise of Japanese nationalism.

The Meiji Restoration Throughout the Tokugawa period, the emperor had been little more than a symbolic figure. The shogun, or supreme military ruler, was the real power in Tokugawa Japan. But many Japanese people, resenting the way that the shogun had given in to Western demands, forced the shogun to step down. This ended the military control of the Japanese government.

The young emperor, Mutsuhito, took back the power of the government in 1868, taking the name **Emperor Meiji**, which means “enlightened rule.” The period of his reign from 1868 to 1912 is called the Meiji period, and the emperor’s return to power is called the Meiji Restoration.

From China’s example, the Meiji emperor learned about the risk of resisting Western demands. China had clung to its traditional ways and had been unsuccessful in keeping

its sovereignty, or independent control of its government. The Meiji emperor believed that the best way to preserve and build Japan's strength was to modernize and reform.

Meiji Reforms The reforms undertaken during the Meiji era were far-reaching. A group of Japanese officials made a two-year journey called the Iwakura Mission, in which they traveled to the United States and Europe to learn about Western society, military practices, and economics. The officials were to determine which aspects of Western life would help Japan modernize efficiently.

Japan soon required all children to attend school and allowed some students to study abroad. Japanese military officials adapted practices of the U.S. and European armed forces to strengthen their own military.

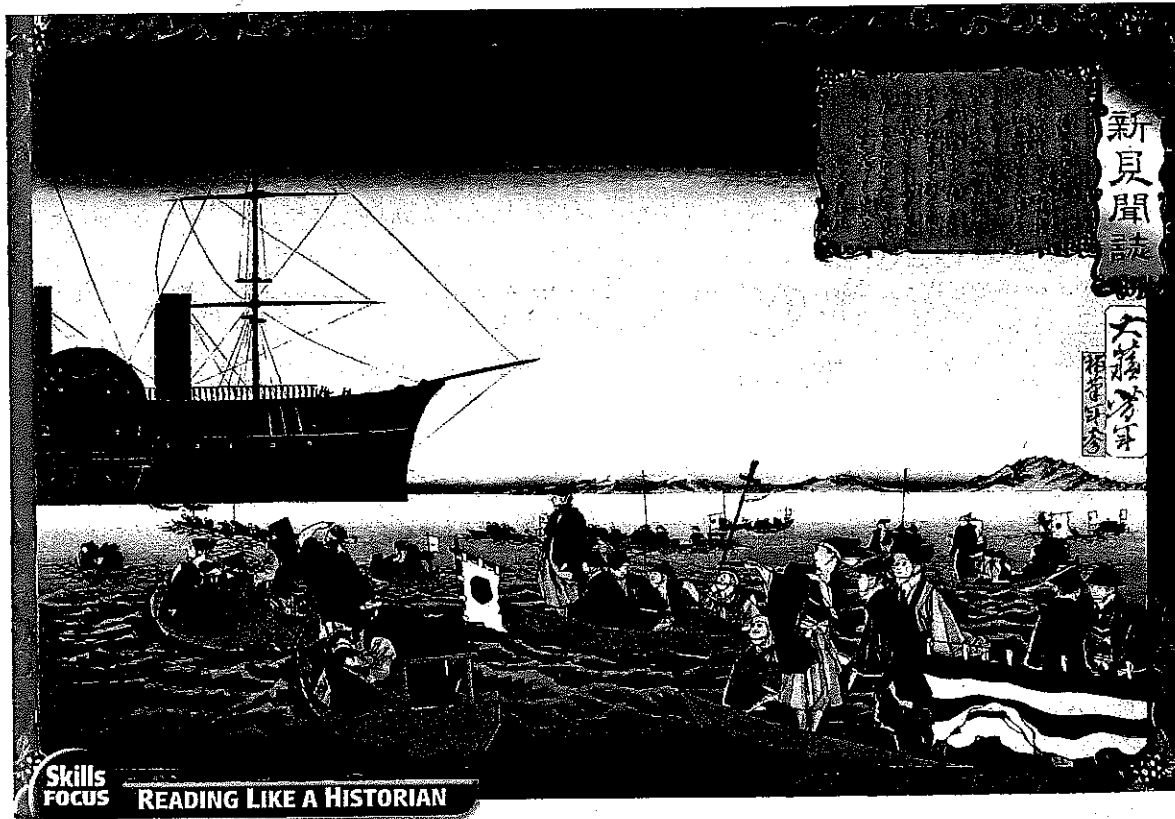
Most significantly, the emperor supported rapid industrialization. The government financed the construction of the infrastructure

necessary for a modern industrial economy. It built telegraph lines, set up a postal service, established a national currency, and helped build a railroad system. By the 1890s, the Japanese economy was booming. In fact, between 1895 and 1915, manufacturing grew more rapidly in Japan than in the United States. Japan was quickly becoming one of the world's great industrial powers.

Becoming an Imperial Power Now that Japan had modernized, it was ready to take its place on the world stage. It began by strengthening its influence over Korea. In the 1870s Japan forced Korea to open three ports to Japanese merchants—even though Korea had traditionally pledged its allegiance to China. When a rebellion broke out in Korea in 1894, Japan and China both sent troops to Korea. This action led to the **Sino-Japanese War**, which lasted only a few months and ended in a humiliating defeat for China.

Japan Reacts to U.S. Military Might

Commodore Matthew Perry Arrives in Japan, by Yoshitoshi Taiso



In this print, artist Yoshitoshi Taiso depicts the arrival of Commodore Perry in Edo Bay in 1853. Perry's hulking black warships sent the Japanese a strong message about U.S. military power.

Analyzing Visuals How did the artist show the difference between Japanese and American power?

See **Skills Handbook**, p. H26

THE MEIJI REFORMS

QUICK
FACTS

During the Meiji era, a number of significant reforms quickly transformed Japan into a modern industrialized nation.

Governmental Reforms

- Ended feudalism; local government based on prefectures (districts)
- Enacted European-style constitution

Rapid Industrialization

- Government invested in transportation and communication
- Government directly supported businesses and industries

Military Reforms

- Modeled army and navy after those of Prussia and Britain
- Required three years' military service from all men



▲ Factory workers during the Meiji era

The Japanese victory established Japan as the most powerful state in Asia. As a result of the war, China recognized Korea's independence. Japan gained control of Taiwan, which became its colony, and won the right to build factories in China. Western powers treated Japan with a newfound respect, giving in to Japan's request to end extraterritoriality.

Japan's status as a great power was confirmed by its victory in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905. This war was caused by Russian competition with Japan over influence in Manchuria and Korea. Although the Japanese won a series of battles, they could not get the Russians to surrender. Instead, the two sides asked U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt to help negotiate a peace treaty, called the Treaty of Portsmouth.

The treaty gave Japan control over Russian railway lines in southern Manchuria and transferred Russian leases on two Manchurian ports to Japan. The treaty also recognized Korea as under Japanese influence.

Japan's victory over Russia was celebrated all over Asia. It showed that an Asian power could defeat a European power. But growing Japanese power also presented a threat to its Asian neighbors. In 1910 Japan annexed Korea as a Japanese colony, demonstrating that its power in Asia was growing.

READING CHECK Draw Conclusions How did Japan gain the strength to become an imperial power?

Europeans in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia had long been a source of spices, such as cloves and pepper, that Europeans valued highly. To get these spices, Europeans established colonies there in the 1500s.

In the 1600s and 1700s, the Dutch controlled the spice trade by holding key Southeast Asian ports and fortifications. The Dutch began to grow sugar and coffee on large plantations in their Southeast Asian colonies. This shift to plantation agriculture set the pattern for future colonies in Southeast Asia.

In the 1800s the British began to compete with the Dutch in Malaysia. The British attained control of Malacca (part of modern-day Malaysia) from the Dutch in 1824. Britain already controlled the port cities of Singapore and Penang on the Malay Peninsula. In the late 1800s, the British moved into the interior of the peninsula. There, they established rubber plantations to provide raw material for bicycle-tire factories in Britain.

While the British increased their control over Malaysia, the French conquered part of Indochina. French missionaries and traders were active in Vietnam in the early 1800s. The ruling Nguyen (NGWEEN) dynasty saw the French as a threat and tried to expel French missionaries from the country. They also tried to crack down on Vietnamese converts to Christianity. In response, French emperor Napoleon III sent a fleet to Vietnam. The French defeated the Vietnamese forces in the Mekong

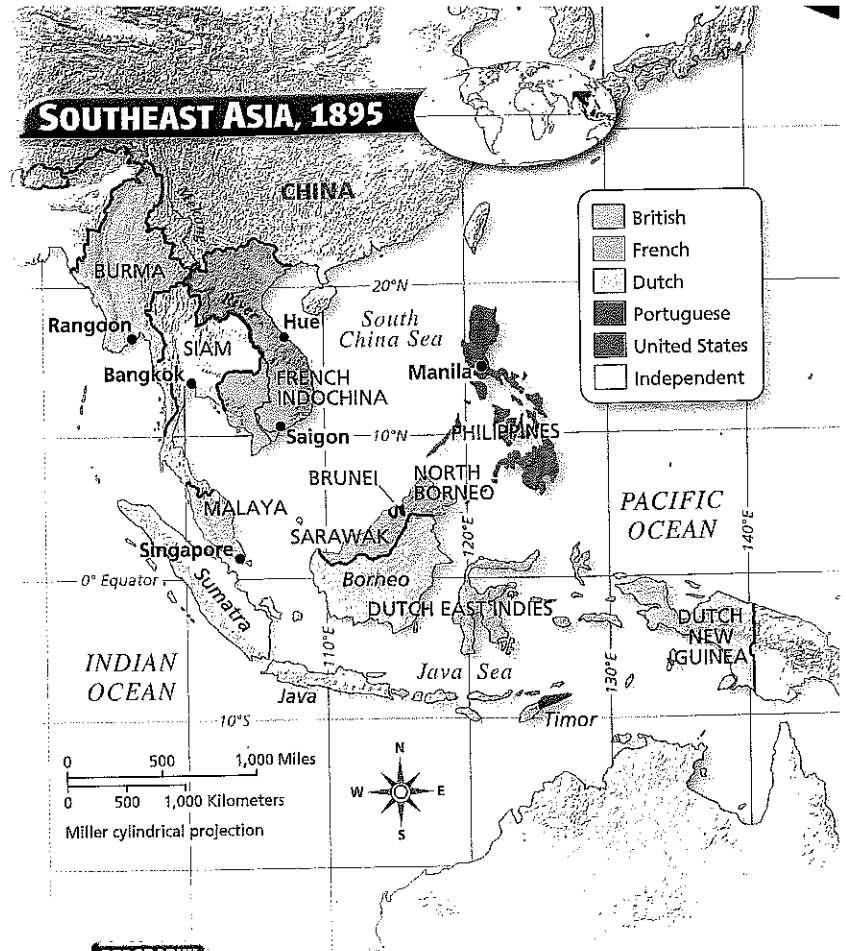
Delta and forced the Vietnamese ruler to sign the Treaty of Saigon in 1862. This treaty gave the French control of most of the territory in southern Vietnam.

France took control of the rest of Vietnam in 1884 and annexed neighboring Laos and Cambodia, creating a territory known as French Indochina. Like the British in India, the French built roads, railroads, and irrigation systems in Indochina. They also introduced some reforms in education and medical care.

French colonialism in Indochina largely benefited the French, however. Many French citizens became rich from their large tea and rubber plantations. Meanwhile, many Vietnamese farmers fell into debt when they were unable to pay high taxes. Due to these factors, Vietnamese peasants often lost their farms and were forced to become wage laborers. Vietnamese resentment against the French rulers grew throughout the 1800s and early 1900s.

Siam (called Thailand today) was the only Southeast Asian country to retain its independence in the 1800s. Siam served as a buffer between British-controlled Burma and French Indochina. By skillful exploitation of European rivalries and by careful modernization, the monarchs of Siam preserved the nation's freedom.

READING CHECK Summarize Why were Europeans interested in colonizing Southeast Asia?



GEOGRAPHY SKILLS INTERPRETING MAPS

- 1. Location** Which nation served as a buffer state between British-controlled Burma and French Indochina?
- 2. Place** According to the map, which nation controlled the most land area in Southeast Asia?

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

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Online Quiz

Keyword: SHL IMP HP

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

- 1. a. Recall** What were the unequal treaties?
 - b. Draw Conclusions** How did European imperialism lead to problems for the Qing dynasty?
 - c. Elaborate** How did the Chinese people react to the growing influence of Westerners in China?
- 2. a. Identify** Who was Emperor Meiji?
 - b. Contrast** How did Japan's reaction to Western imperialism differ from China's?
 - c. Evaluate** Why was Japan more successful than China in maintaining its independence?
- 3. a. Recall** What was the Treaty of Saigon?
 - b. Make Generalizations** How did Siam retain its independence?

Critical Thinking

- 4. Compare and Contrast** Using your notes from the section and the chart below, compare and contrast European imperialism's effects on China and Japan.

	Effects on Japan	Effects on China
Political		
Economic		
Cultural		
Military		

FOCUS ON SPEAKING

- 5. Persuasion** Suppose you are an official at the court of the Chinese emperor, just after China's defeat in the Sino-Japanese War. Prepare a short presentation to the emperor explaining the types of reforms China needs to make to become a great power again.