ABSTRACT

Xenophobia often runs deep in modern Chinese history. Towards the end of the 19th century, the aggressive behaviour of the foreign powers stirred up the anti-foreign emotions of the Chinese. The latter were more conscious of themselves as a race as opposed to foreign "intruders". The xenophobia of the Chinese reached its peak after the Sino-Japanese War of 1894 to 1895. Subsequently, the Boxer Uprising broke out and spread quickly under xenophobic influences.

About 60 years later, a similar movement arose during the Chinese Cultural Revolution. Radical youths known as the Red Guards were mobilised and supported by Chairman Mao. They became a genuine mass movement in the Cultural Revolution and launched anti-foreign activities against the foreigners. Activities such as anti-foreign demonstrations and burning of foreign missions were common during this period.

This dissertation aims to explore anti-foreign activities of the Boxer Uprising and the Red Guards. In comparision, the anti-foreign activities of the Boxers and the Red Guards were different in nature and historical background. Therefore, by discussing and comparing the motives and nature of their anti-foreign activities, common features and disparities of the two movements in juxtaposition would be clarified.

This study reveals that local political upheavals and foreign policies were closely related to anti-foreign activities. As observed, foreign support showered upon Emperor Guangxu led to the Empress Dowager supporting the Boxers. From my study, a parallel situation was detected in the Chinese Cultural Revolution period in which the political atmosphere, contributed to the xenophobic attitude of the Red Guards, led to a turbulent and unforgettable decade in the modern history of China.