

F. The Turning Point: The First Opium War (⌘1839-42)

1. How are we to understand the peculiar fact that an ancient culture like China only began to trade with the world in 1978?
2. When the Europeans arrived in China, the Chinese considered them “barbarians” from the “Tai Xi” (the “*far west*”) and did not want to trade with them.
3. The British began to sell opium (a highly addictive drug) to the Chinese people anyways.
4. When the Chinese emperor tried to stop the opium trade, and seized British supplies of it, Britain sent a fleet of advanced steam-powered warships to bombard the Chinese coast and navy.
5. The **First Opium War (⌘1839-42)** was an utter defeat for China, because European industrial and military technology had by that point surpassed that of all other cultures.
6. China was forced to accept trade with Britain and the rest of Europe.

G. The Collapse of Traditional Government: The Chinese Revolution (⌘1911)

1. As the name suggests, the *First* Opium War was not the only one. There was another, *and again China lost*.
2. Then China tried to learn how to use European technology, but it was defeated by Japan in another way, because Japan had become more advanced.
3. Eventually, as was always the case when a Chinese dynasty failed to serve the people, there was a great rebellion against it. This was the **Chinese Revolution of ⌘1911**.

H. The Failed Republic

1. The most important leader of the rebellions was an American-educated man named Sun Yat-Sen, who hoped to create a “republic,” as the new form of Chinese government.
2. Unfortunately, the most powerful military commander in China, Yuan Shikai, had his own ideas.
3. Both men were quite old and they died before they could really create a new government that would last.



Sun Yat-Sen (left) and Yuan Shikai (right) were the competing leaders of China in and after the *Chinese Revolution of 1911*. They died and left China without a clear direction.