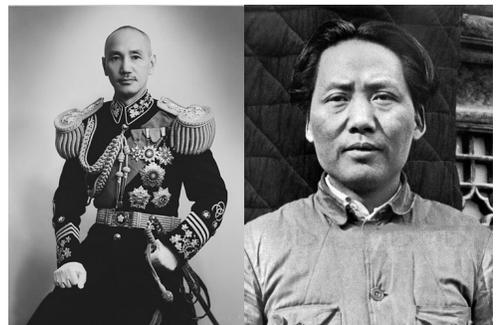


M. The Century of Humiliation, Part 3: The Failed Republic, Civil War, and World War

1. What followed is perhaps the greatest tragedy of Chinese history.
2. An American-educated doctor named Sun Yat-sen wanted to create a *republic* (i.e. a government modeled after the American government) for China.
3. Unfortunately, Yuan Shikai hoped to make himself the emperor of a new dynasty. The rivalry between Sun Yat-sen and Yuan Shikai was never resolved. Both men died a few years apart, leading a great vacuum of power.
4. Two new leaders emerged: a follower of Sun Yat-sen named Chiang Kai-shek, and Mao Zedong, the leader of the communist party (a new group that had arisen in the universities of China where European ideas such as communism were being taught.)
5. The civil war between these two groups began in **1927** and lasted until **1949**.
6. It was made that much worse by the invasion of China by Japan during **World War II in Asia (1937-45)**, where, at least, the two sides in the civil war stopped fighting each other in order to cooperate in the struggle against Japan.
7. Fortunately for China, Japan was defeated by the United States, as the world well knows, by means of twin atomic bombings in 1945.
8. In 1949, the communists won the civil war, and Chiang Kai-Shek escaped to the island of Taiwan to establish a separate government which still exists today.
9. Mao Zedong took over the country as the leader of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) and promised the people a modern, scientific benevolent form of despotism based on communism, which came to be known as *Maoism*.



Sun Yat-Sen (left) and Yuan Shikai (right) were the competing leaders of China in and after the *Chinese Revolution of 1911*. Their failure to resolve their differences and their deaths in quick succession left China without a clear direction.



Chiang Kai-Shek (left) and Mao Zedong (right) were the leaders of the two sides in China's civil war (1927-49), which resulted in the triumph of Mao, and the imposition of *Maoism* on China.

N. Maoism

1. Maoism was based on two earlier sets of ideas known as Marxism and Leninism, named after European philosopher Karl Marx and Russian revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin respectively.

2. Marx had originally imagined a “perfect” society in some far distant future, where he said there would be no private property.
3. Those who believe in Marx’s vision imagine it to be an ideal world, i.e. a “utopia.”
4. The reality created by the followers of Marx, however, is death and destruction.
5. Vladimir Lenin created a version of Marxism by means of the government taking over all property in the Russian Revolution of 1917. When Marxism is forced on the people by the government like this, it is called *communism*.
6. Mao Zedong watched as Lenin took over Russia, and he believed that it could work in China too. Part of his reasoning was that Leninism was like a modern kind of Chinese benevolent despotism.
7. From 1958-61, Mao Zedong tried to be a communist benevolent despot. He was convinced he knew how to make China great again, so he ordered the people to do the kinds of work he was sure would produce results. The program was known as “The Great Leap Forward.”
8. In four short years, the Chinese people, forced to live according to this plan, were starved by a terrible famine because they were not allowed to grow the food they needed. Historians estimate that **45 million** people died.
9. To make matters worse, Mao blamed the people instead of himself. He and the communist leaders insisted that the traditional values of China were blocking progress and that the people needed to be “re-educated.” In the “Cultural Revolution” (1966-76) anyone who opposed communism was killed, leading to as many as **20 million more** deaths!
10. The damage being done to China by its own government was much greater than any harm that had been done by foreigners. If Maoism continued down this tyrannical path, it would face a rebellion, like every other corrupt government in Chinese history. What could be done?