The Cultural Revolution & The Rise of Mao’s China

How did Mao Zedong reshape Chinese government and society?
What did China look like at the end of the Chinese Civil War?

- China, at the end of the war, was a poor nation in need of rebuilding and reform:
  - Need for land reform & an end to the landlords
  - Rebuild cities & modernize industry

- The pull of the Cold War
  - Nationalists = US
  - Communists = USSR
Mao & the Soviet Union, 1950’s
How is Mao going to address China’s problems?

- Land reform:
  - Agrarian Reform Bill (1950)

- The new law breaks up large landowning plantations & gives the land to the peasants
  - Very popular among the peasants
  - Landlords who refuse are executed

- Encouraged communal farming & village life among China’s peasants (just like in the USSR)
Communal Living in Mao’s China
At Work in the Fields, Comrades!
“The Fruits of Our Labor...”
How is Mao going to address China’s social problems?

- Mao is also going to reshape Chinese society:
  - Full equality for women (outlaw footbinding)
  - State-sponsored child care / health services
  - Communal villages
  - Destruct of the ancient class system of China

- Mao’s main desire was to create the perfect Marxist “utopia”
Footbinding Outlawed
More Gender Equality...
State-Sponsored programs
When do things start to go wrong for Mao & his version of China?

- Things start to go wrong when Mao institutes a policy called “The Great Leap Forward”
  - 1958-1961

- The Great Leap Forward was an effort to rapidly modernize China

- Poor planning and management doomed the plan
  - Famines
“The Feats of Our Industry...”
Famine in Communist China during the Great Leap Forward
What happens as a result of Mao’s failings?

- The Communist Party removes Mao from his positions of power (figurehead)
  - Start trading and dealing with Western countries again
  - Viewed by Mao as “betraying the revolution”

- Embittered, Mao uses his popularity with young people to fight back
  - Propaganda / “brainwashing”

- “The Red Guard”
  - High school / college students who support Mao’s vision for a “utopian” society (gangs)
The Power Behind Mao: Madame Mao
Chinese Film / Theatre
Mao’s Little Red Book
Mao Supports & Their Red Books
The Uniform of the Red Guard
Cult of Personality - “Chairman Mao”
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How does Mao successfully regain control of the Chinese government?

- The Cultural Revolution
  - 1966-1976
  - Mao tries to regain power by force using his popularity

- The enemies of this revolution are “intellectuals”
  - Teachers, politicians, artists, etc.

- Thousands will be rounded up, abused, and executed
  - Exact number of victims is unknown
Book Burnings of “un-Revolutionary” materials
Punishment for Opponents = “Struggle Sessions”
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Executions During the Cultural Revolution
How did the Cultural Revolution come to an end?

- The Cultural Revolution comes to an end in 1976
  - Mao’s death

- The Chinese people desired a new leader & a new direction

- Today, most Chinese citizens look negatively upon the efforts of Mao during the Cultural Revolution