

THE GIANT AGRARIAN  
NATION-WORLDS

## COMMENTARY

Like Russia and Japan, the subjects of Chapter 20 —China and India —lend themselves quite well to comparative analysis, and the present unit is another fine example of **comparative history**. The major theme of the chapter is the different paths taken by the two nations, starting from very similar positions, in pursuit of the same goals: national unification and independence, political stability, economic development, technological modernization, social justice, and international respect and recognition. In both countries, the problems to be overcome have been enormous, and their struggles have consumed the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century, have often been violent and divisive, and are still continuing as the new millennium begins.

As Howard Spodek points out, the historical, structural, and environmental similarities between the two societies are striking. They are two of the oldest and culturally influential civilizations in the world. Geographically, both encompass huge areas, constituting virtual sub-continents. They are the two most populous nations in the world, each with a population of approximately one billion inhabitants; and both of those populations exhibit enormous ethnic and linguistic diversity within a surprisingly uniform culture. Although both countries have many large cities and highly industrialized regions, they are still overwhelmingly rural, agrarian societies. At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, both countries suffered under foreign domination and exploitation and both secured independence from that domination in the late 1940s, under the leadership of a dedicated, astute, and **charismatic** leader: **Mao Zedong** in China and **Mohandas Gandhi** in India. Since then, the leadership of both nations has had to confront the daunting problems of overpopulation, health and education, technological and economic development, and environmental pollution; tasks which have been further complicated in both cases by serious internal philosophical and ideological disagreements regarding the proper strategies to be pursued. In addition, there has been enormous popular resistance at times to government programs that have conflicted with centuries-old traditions and institutions. Finally, despite their respective adherence to the two major western political-economic systems of the 20<sup>th</sup> century —**Marxian communism** in the case of China and **parliamentary democracy** in the case of India —both nations have adapted those systems to their own, unique cultural and social conditions and have succeeded in becoming fully independent and very powerful members of the global community.

It is in the process of their political evolution and the specifics of their respective social and economic problems that the two nations differ most noticeably, and it is these differences that form much of the historical narrative in the chapter. First of all, China and India differ markedly in their relationship with the West. Unlike India, which was under British political control and cultural influence for almost 150 years, China was never completely subordinated to colonial rule. Consequently, much of the political discourse in India has centered around how much western influence to retain or reject, while in China it has tended to focus on how much to accept and adapt. Both countries achieved nation-state status through powerful mass movements led by well-organized political parties; but while the tactics of the **Indian National Congress** were those of political negotiation and non-violent resistance (**satyagraha**), those of the **Chinese Communist Party** were essentially those of peasant revolution and civil war. The communist victory in 1949 effected a resumption of China's long history of bureaucratic centralization and political unity, after the fragmentation of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. India, on the other hand, split in two (Hindu India and Muslim **Pakistan**) at the time of independence, in keeping with its history of political disunity. (Pakistan itself split in 1972, with the independence of its eastern region, **Bangladesh**.) China pursued development through centralized state planning, highly authoritarian government, and Mao's version of Marxian communism. India adopted a pluralistic democracy, mixed capitalist-socialist economic system, and a federal form of government that allowed its various regions and ethnic groups a relatively high degree of autonomy. And while China at first aligned itself with the Soviet Union and the communist bloc and then swung around to a position of uncompromising hostility toward Russia and much closer economic and international ties with its former foe, the United States, India has maintained a much more consistent policy of non-alignment and, especially under the leadership of **Jawaharlal Nehru** and his daughter, **Indira Gandhi**, attempted to establish itself as the leader of the nations of the **Third World**. And the differences continue today, as well. Both

nations have achieved noteworthy successes —China with its rapid technological transformation and prodigious economic growth under **Deng Xiaoping**, India with its green revolution and ability to feed its huge population —and both face severe challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. For China, however, these problems are in some ways the consequences of its success so far. There is a growing movement for more political and intellectual freedom and a growing disparity in wealth between the industrial cities on the coast and the agricultural interior. In India, as Spodek notes, the problems mostly stem from unsolved problems (Gandhi's nightmares): rising tensions —exacerbated by a nuclear arms race — with its Muslim neighbor Pakistan, religious and regional separatism, overpopulation and unemployment, continuing class divisions and a growing disparity between the rich and poor, and massive illiteracy in an increasingly complicated technological world.

## CHAPTER OUTLINE

- A. Introduction: The Giant Agrarian Nation-Worlds
- B. China, 1911-1990s
  - 1. The Prelude to Revolution
  - 2. The 1911 Revolution
    - a. Overthrow of the emperor and warlord rule
    - b. Sun Yat-sen and the Guomindang (GMD)
      - i. Sun's Three Principles
      - ii. Revolutionaries split
  - 3. Power struggles, 1925-1937
  - 4. Mao Zedong and the Rise of the Communist Party from 1921
    - a. Mao and peasant revolution
    - b. Organizing the revolutionary movement
    - c. The struggle with Jiang Jieshi and the GMD
  - 5. Gender issues
  - 6. The Long March and the rise to power, 1934-1949
    - a. The Long March
    - b. Japanese invasion
    - c. 1949 — Communist victory
  - 7. The Great Leap Forward : economic revolution, 1949-1966
    - a. Consolidating the revolution
    - b. Policies on agriculture, urbanization and industrialization
    - c. Uneven results: successes and failures
  - 8. The Cultural Revolution, 1966
  - 9. Economic recovery, 1970-2000
    - a. Deng Xiaoping and industrial growth
    - b. The Four Modernizations (and #5 - democracy?)
    - c. China and the world, 1950-1990s
      - i. China's relations with Russia, the U.S.A. and India
      - ii. Irredentism — Tibet, Taiwan and Hong Kong
- C. India, 1914-2000
  - 1. The independence struggle, 1914-1947
  - 2. New political directions and reform: Gandhi
    - a. FOCUS: Gandhi's First Experience with Racism in South Africa
    - b. Gandhi's philosophy and tactics
      - i. SPOTLIGHT: The Dam Technology Controversies
      - ii. *Satyagraha* and *ahimsa*
    - c. Organizing resistance to British rule
    - d. Opposition to Gandhi's views in India

3. Internal problems (and Gandhi's proposed solutions)
  - a. Hindu-Muslim unity
  - b. Abolition of untouchability
  - c. Cultural policies
  - d. Prohibition (of alcohol)
  - e. Appropriate technology
4. The debate over technology
  - a. Gandhi and the village economy
  - b. Nehru and large-scale industrialization
5. Independence and after
  - a. Pakistan: partition and conflict
  - b. Combating Balkanization and separatism: Punjab and Kashmir
  - c. Indira Gandhi: democracy and emergency rule
  - d. Socialism or capitalism?
  - e. The Nehru Dynasty
7. PROFILE: Indira Gandhi
8. Gender issues
  - a. Women in politics in India
  - b. Continuing uphill battles for women
7. Economic, social and technological change since independence
  - a. India's Green Revolution and its effects
  - b. Population problems
  - c. Industrial productivity and educational issues
8. International relations since 1947

D. China and India: How Do They Compare?

## IDENTIFICATION TERMS

For each term, students should be able to provide an identification or definition, an approximate date, a geographical location (if relevant) and —most important— a concise explanation of its significance in the context of the chapter. Terms that appear in the *Study Guide* are listed in **bold** font in the first column.

<b>Four Modernizations</b>	Three Principles	appropriate-scale technology
<b>Salt March</b>	Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kai-shek)	passive resistance
<b>Indira Gandhi</b>	Great Leap Forward	<i>Hind Swaraj</i>
<b>Taiwan</b>	Cultural Revolution	<i>swadeshi</i> campaigns
<b>satyagraha</b>	Deng Xiaoping	<i>ahimsa</i>
<b>Long March:</b>	Zhou En-lai	Jawaharlal Nehru
<b>harijan</b>	private responsibility system	Muhammad Ali Jinnah
<b>Guomindang</b>	Tiananmen Square	Kashmir
<b>Bangladesh</b>	Tibet	Balkanization
<b>Living Thoughts of Chairman Mao</b>	irredentism	Sikhs
Pakistan	Indian National Congress	Hindu Marriage Act
Sun Yat-sen	Amritsar Massacre	green & white revolutions

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading and studying Chapter 20, students should be able to:

1. Draw significant historical comparisons and contrasts regarding the development of China and India.
2. Explain the origins and progress of the Chinese Revolution from 1912 to the Communist victory in 1949.
3. Discuss how Mao Zedong adapted Marxist-Leninism to the Chinese situation and how and why the CCP eventually emerged victorious in the struggle with the Guomindang.
4. Understand the events leading up to the Cultural Revolution — and its results.
5. Compare the policies of Deng Xiaoping with those of Mao Zedong and assess the effectiveness of each.
6. Understand Mohandas Gandhi's policies of *ahimsa* and *satyagraha* and why his tactics proved so effective.
7. Compare and contrast the respective visions for independence put forward by Gandhi, Nehru and Jinnah.
8. Explain the problem of Balkanization as it relates to India today.

9. Compare and contrast the relative progress in the status of women in China and India in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR LECTURE TOPICS

1. Drawing on background material from Chapters 16 and 17, discuss the origins of the Chinese Revolution, making appropriate comparisons and contrasts with the Ottoman Empire, Russia and Japan.
2. Trace the development and revisions of Marxist thought and practice from Karl Marx through western European democratic socialism, Leninism and Stalinism, and Maoism, demonstrating how Mao Zedong, like the German and French revisionists and Lenin, adapted Marxist principles to fit the peculiar conditions of his own society.
3. Compare the actual policies and practices of the Guomindang under Jiang Jieshi and the CCP under Mao and explain how and why the Communists were able to emerge victorious in the Chinese civil war.
4. Follow the twists and turns of Chinese communist economic and social policies from 1949 to the present, emphasizing the differing approaches of Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping. Compare these differences with the disagreements between Mohandas Gandhi and Nehru regarding the most appropriate technology and economy for India.
5. Compare Gandhi's success at mobilizing the movement for India's independence with his failure to prevent the partition of India or the adoption of economic policies he found abhorrent.
6. Discuss the Balkanization problem in modern India, relating it to its historical roots in the country's past.
7. Discuss India's successes and failures in dealing with its many problems since it gained its independence in 1947.

## TOPICS FOR ESSAYS OR CLASS DISCUSSIONS

1. India's economy could best be described as a mixture of capitalism and socialism, reflecting the philosophy of the Indian National Congress under Nehru and the fact the neither communism nor free-market capitalism has been able to win overwhelming support in the country. According to the author, what characteristics of communism and capitalism, respectively, might have inhibited their popularity in India?
2. In what respects did the policy of the Four Modernizations under Deng Xiaoping reflect the victory of the bureaucratic realist wing of the CCP over the ideological Reds? In what ways, however, did the new policy tend to de-stabilize China?
3. Compare the changes in the status of women in China and India since the 1940s. Which government has been more successful in achieving its stated goal of gender equality? What specific problems has each government tried to address? What factors have affected their success?
4. Current events and issues: According to the author of the text, what are the most serious problems facing India today? How and with what degree of success is the Indian government addressing these problems?
5. Explain *satyagraha*. What were its major aspects? Why did Gandhi consider it the best tactic to achieve his goals for India? How did he reinforce the policy with regard to his own behavior? How effective was it, ultimately, in achieving his goals?
6. (This is a comparative question for students who have read the chapters on China and India (7 and 8) in Volume I of *The World's History*.) In Volume I, Howard Spodek argues that, During this time [c. 200 B.C.E. to 910 C.E.] China created political and cultural forms that would last for another thousand years, and, as we shall see in Chapter 20, perhaps even today. To what forms could he be referring? In what respects is the current government and society of China very similar to that of the Han and Tang Dynasties, the Revolutions of 1911 and 1949 notwithstanding? Could the same statement be made, in some respects, about the India of today and the India of the Mauryas and the Guptas? Cite specific similarities and/or differences to support your answer.
7. How did Mao Zedong's revolutionary philosophy and economic policies differ from those of Karl Marx, V. I. Lenin and Josef Stalin? How do you account for those differences in communist viewpoints? (Cite specific evidence and quotations from Marx, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong to support your points.)
8. Explain the concept of appropriate technology and discuss its relationship to policy debates regarding industrialization and development in both China and India. What sort of technology was considered appropriate for China by Mao Zedong? For India, by Mohandas Gandhi?

9. Enumerate and explain the Three Principles of Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary program for China. From what sources might he have derived those ideas? In what respects did they address China's problems at the time? In what respects might they have foreshadowed the later split among Chinese revolutionaries?
10. **Debate:** China and India are both huge nations facing remarkably similar problems. India is the world's largest democracy, while the Communist Party of China maintains a one-party dictatorship even as it abandons the Maoist version of communism for a market economy. Which political system is working better within its own country, according to your reading of the evidence?

### TEXT REOSURCES (Spodek, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)

Timetables, charts and graphs:	China and India, 1900-1990s Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution Indian Independence: Key Figures	(pp. 680-1) (p. 687) (p. 699)
Large photographs or illustrations:	Poster from 1960: Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution Women of Shanghai with bound feet Trial of a landlord Tiananmen Square, June, 1989 Gandhi and Nehru, 1946 The Salt March Mass migration, 1947	(p. 683) (p. 686) (p. 689) (p. 691) (p. 700) (p. 703) (p. 705)
Maps:	World population distribution today The Communist Revolution in China Political change in South Asia after 1947	(p. 678) (p. 684) (p. 704)
SPOTLIGHT:	The Dam Technology Controversies	(pp. 696-7)
PROFILE:	Indira Gandhi	(p. 706)
SOURCES:	Gandhi's First Experience with Racism in South Africa	(p. 695)

### ADDITIONAL PRIMARY SOURCES (*Documents Set & www.prenhall.com/Spodek*)

20-1	The furor over footbinding: the New China collides with the Traditional
20-2	Cult of the Chairman: the Little Red Book [from <i>Quotations from Chairman Mao</i> ]
20-3	Beijing, 1989: The Square of Shattered Hopes
20-4	Mohandas Gandhi: the gentle voice of Soul Force
20-5	Jawaharlal Nehru: the second Founding Father
20-6	Benazir Bhutto: against the odds [from Benazir Bhutto, <i>Daughter of Destiny</i> ]
www	A crumbling idol: a view of China in Mao's declining years

## AUDIO-VISUAL RESOURCES (videos, DVDs, CD-ROM, and websites)

***Biography -- Mao Tse-tung: A&E Home Video* [video; 50 minutes, color and B&W]**

This program from the *Biography* series follows the life and political career of Mao from the formation of the Chinese Communist Party, through the Long March, Civil War, Great Leap Forward and Cultural Revolution to Mao's death. His impact on China and the world are also reviewed.

***Caste at Birth: Filmmakers Library, 1991.* [video; 52 minutes]**

This prize-winning film exposes the continuing injustices suffered by India's Untouchables despite decades of government reform attempts.

***China After Mao: History Channel Videos* [video; 50 minutes, color]**

Part of the *20<sup>th</sup> Century* series, this documentary narrated by Mike Wallace surveys the enormous changes that have come about in China under the direction of Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin.

***Chinese History and Culture: <http://www.cernet.edu.cn/history.html>* [website]**

This Webpage provides links to numerous other websites on modern Chinese history, politics and culture. It also includes a narrative timeline of Chinese history, lists of imperial dynasties, sound archives and film footage on the Communist Revolution and other useful information.

***Chinese Human Rights: <http://www.actionworks.org/guides/frlinks/prchumanrights.htm>* [website]**

This site includes articles on human rights issues in China from 1995 to the present and discusses China's treatment of political dissenters, democracy advocates and religious minorities, including Falun Gong.

***The Dynasty: the Nehru-Gandhi Story: PBS Home Video.* [2 videos; 180 minutes, color and B&W]**

This documentary traces the impact and accomplishments of Jawaharlal Nehru, his daughter Indira Gandhi, and her sons and daughters-in-laws, from the 1930s to the 1990s.

***Eqbal Ahmad and the Partitioning of India: Films for the Humanities & Sciences.* [video; color]**

Part of the new *Stories My Country Told Me* series, this film relates the story of the 1947 partition of India through the eyes and words of Pakistani historian Eqbal Ahmad, who himself experienced the upheaval and forced migration.

***India: Turmoils of the Century: Point du Jour/Filmmakers Library.* [2 videos; 104 minutes, color and B&W]**

This documentary narrates India's history in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, using contemporary film footage from as early as 1899 (much of which has never been seen before), to explain the story of India's independence from British rule and subsequent partition, and to review the story of Indian-Pakistani relations since 1947.

***Indian Culture and History: <http://www.webhead.com/wwwvl/India>* [website]**

This site is devoted mainly to modern Indian history and culture, focusing on the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

***Mahatma Gandhi —The Great Soul Lives: Films for the Humanities & Sciences.* [video; 60 min., color and B&W]**

Using Gandhi's writings, vintage film footage, and interviews with contemporaries and historians, this video traces Gandhi's life and career from the beginnings of his activism in South Africa to his assassination in 1948; and surveys his continuing influence on India and the world.

***A Passage to India, 1984.* [2 videos; 163 minutes, color]**

E. M. Forster's portrayal of tensions between the British and the Indians under the British Raj provides an excellent view of the contradictions and injustices of imperialism.

***The Play's the Thing —China's Cultural Revolution: Films for the Humanities & Sciences.* [video; 25 min., color]**

This film reveals the origins of the upheaval that cost the lives of over half a million Chinese.

***Women in China: SVT/Filmmakers Library.* [2 videos; 100 minutes, color]**

This documentary surveys the life and conditions of women in China today, using case studies from four very different geographical, cultural and economic regions.