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India's Survival and Evolution as a Complex Modern Nation-State

Part I: The Early Stages

Although numerous events have shaped India as a modern nation-state, a few key moments stand out. In 1601, British East India Company first set foot in India and grew in influence over the next two centuries in the name of trade. Slowly, the 'British Raj' spread from present-day Afghanistan to Burma. As the policies of mercantilism and imperialism continued, the first signs of Indian resentment to British rule were evident with the failed Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. As a direct result, the control over India officially transferred to Great Britain and ended the reign of the Mughal Empire, which had ruled over the subcontinent from 1526 to 1857. The next century was defined by India's growing resistance to the British rule and increasing demand for self-government. Several leaders and freedom fighters fought and died for independence, which eventually came on August 15th, 1947. The independence came at a costly loss, though—The Partition of India. The Partition created two sovereign states—India and Pakistan and resulted in approximately 2 million deaths, 15 million displaced people, and a bitter relationship between the neighbors. Coming at a backdrop of civil unrest and with a monumental task of leading a united India ahead of them, critics and scholars did not give India much chance. Ramachandra Guha highlights why India survives seven decades later in his exhilarating and illuminative work, *India After Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy*. In Part I of "India's Survival and Evolution as a Complex Modern Nation-State," significant moments in

India's early democracy will be discussed—the drafting of the Indian Constitution, integrating the princely states, administering the first democratic elections, and stimulating the economy. In Part II, foreign policy, threats to internal democracy and external security, and elements of national unity will be reviewed. Prime Minister Nehru was the face of independent India and under his leadership for sixteen years, universal adult suffrage and regular fair elections became the norm, higher education was established, a socialist economy was created, the debates on linguistic states was settled, and a bold non-alignment stance was taken amidst the Cold War.

The realization of independence was an achievement in itself but a vision needed to be established. Was India going to be a democracy? In Germany and Italy respectively, the contemporaries of India's founding fathers had yielded Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini out of democracies (MJ Akbar's interview). The USSR, China, North Korea, and Vietnam had accepted communism. The western world had already experimented with several forms of governments in the past 150 years with the US, French, British, and Soviet systems. Additionally, the British rule had caused widespread poverty and prolonged decades of economic decline. In order to revive growth, was this nation going to have a free-market private enterprise, socialist, communist, or a mixed economy? India's pride lies with its vast diversity, but competing languages, cultures, castes, religions, ethnicities posed several possible conflicts. Creating the idea of India and drafting a constitution of this complex nation was going to be a tough task. In order to consider these monumental issues, monumental individuals came to the fore. The Constituent Assembly included delegates from all around the country, affiliated with the Indian National Congress, the remnant of the Muslim League (after Partition), Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, right wing Hindu fundamentalists), Scheduled Tribes Federation, the Communist Party of India, socialists and represented "low-caste groups," "religious minorities,"

women, “linguistic minorities,” the princely states, and other interests. (Guha 116-117). The delegates “had to adjudicate among thousands of competing claims and demands,” to draft a Constitution at the “backdrop of food shortages, religious riots, refugee resettlement, class war, and feudal intransigence” (117). The chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly and the Father of the Indian Constitution was Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a Dalit (untouchable) lawyer who had studied from London School of Economics and Columbia. Other key figures included Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad (president of the Constituent Assembly), Maulana Azad, K.M. Munshi, A.K. Iyer, B.N. Rau, and S.N. Mukherjee among several others, who brought with them “moral vision, political skill, and legal acumen” (118-119). In terms of the system of governance, ‘village panchayats’ were set aside, the “American presidential system” and the “Swiss method of directly electing cabinet minister” were considered and rejected,” proportional representation was “never taken very seriously,” and ultimately, they settled on a form of the “British model” (119). The Parliament would consist of the lower and upper house, where the lower house would be elected by universal adult franchise, and the upper house by state legislatures. The cabinet was to be headed by the Prime Minister, while the President was to be the head of the state and commander-in-chief (with no real powers). In addition, an independent election commission, impartial judiciary, and a “complex system of fiscal federalism,” were established, along with “Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles” and a system of checks and balances (120). The debate on organizing India on linguistic states was postponed because of the fear of further Balkanization after the creation of Pakistan. After heated debates, it was decided that the ‘official language of the Union shall be Hindi in the Devanagri script,” but for fifteen years, the “English language shall continue to be used for all the official purposes of the Union” (131). Separate electorates for Muslims and

women were considered and rejected, but constitutional "reservation[s] for untouchables" and adibasis (tribals) were put in place (125-128). After the framework of the Constitution was established, on November 25, 1949, Dr. Ambedkar provided "three warnings about the future" in a marvelous speech (132). He cautioned against the "place of popular protest in a democracy," violent and non-violent, warned of "unthinking submission to charismatic authority," and urged citizens to "not be content with what he called 'mere political democracy'" (132-33). These warnings are still applicable and just as important to the Republic of India, seventy years after its inception. On January 26, 1950, after toiling for three years, the longest constitution in the world was ratified with 395 Articles and twelve schedules (now more than 100 amendments and other changes) establishing "India as an 'independent sovereign republic' guaranteeing its citizens 'justice, social, economic and political; equality of status; of opportunity, and before the law; freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship, vocation, association and action, subject to law and public morality' – all this while assuring that "adequate safeguards shall be provided for minorities, backward and tribal areas, and depressed and other backward classes'" (117). All in all, as historian Granville Austin states, the "framing of the Indian constitution was 'perhaps the greatest political venture since that originated in Philadelphia in 1787'" (134).

While the Constitution provided legal basis of nationhood, actually uniting the nation was another problem. In 1947, India was an assortment of territory ruled directly by the British along with 565 princely states that were autonomous and had independent treaties with the British government. When the British left India, the princely states had the choice to sign the Instrument of Accession to India, Pakistan, or, theoretically, remain independent. The task of the integration of princely states was given to India's astute Home Minister, Sardar Vallabhai Patel and his secretary, V.P. Menon. In order to gain faith of the princes, delegates from the princely states

were invited in the Constituent Assembly to help form the Constitution. On 25th July, 1947, Viceroy Lord Mountbatten gave an important speech to the Chamber of Princes, trying to persuade them to accede to either the Dominions of India or Pakistan. In the speech, he stressed that the "British would no longer protect or patronize them, and that independence for them was a mirage" (57). Furthermore, he emphasized that if they signed the Instrument of Accession before 15th August, they would get "decent terms with the Congress;" otherwise, a more "'explosive situation'" might arise later. In order to persuade the princes, Patel and Menon would go to these princes one by one in a "process of give and take [that] involved much massaging of egos" and "tortuous negotiations with the rulers" (58). Patel negotiated that for the princely states to "merge with the Union of India," the princes would be "allowed to retain their titles and would be offered an annual allowance in perpetuity" (58). In exchange for this 'privy purse,' the government would receive proportionally generated revenue and land. The Privy Purse would continue till 1971 until the 26th Amendment abolished it under Indira Gandhi's government. By the end of the tiring negotiations, "in a mere two years, 500 autonomous and sometimes ancient chiefdoms had been dissolved into fourteen new administrative units of India" by "wisdom, foresight, [and] hardwork" of Patel and Menon (59).

Although most of the states had peacefully acceded to the Union, the integration of six princely states was troublesome. Before independence, Travancore, Bhopal, and Jodhpur were reluctant to join the Union, while Junagadh, Hyderabad, and Kashmir caused problems (and Kashmir, to this day, still does) after independence. Travancore was strategically located at the extreme southern tip of India, "had the most highly educated populace in India," "a thriving maritime trade," and "reserves of monazite" (important for atomic energy) (60). The diwan (or chief minister) of the state was Sir C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer, and he insisted on Travancore being

an independent nation, like "'Denmark, Switzerland, and Siam'" (60). He had already started negotiating with Pakistan and Britain to be recognized as an independent state. On 27 July, though, he was knifed by a member of the Kerala Socialist Party, after which the movement lost its momentum and he succumbed by asking the maharaja to accede to the Indian Union. Next was Bhopal, a princely state located at the center of the country, with a Muslim ruler and a majority Hindu population. He was hesitant to join India and even warned Mountbatten that India will soon be "'dominated by Communists'" if the Crown did not recognize the princely states (62). Bhopal wished to stay independent and skipped the Chamber of Princes meeting, but because of the growing number of accessions of other princely states, "he capitulated" and signed the document (63). Lastly, there was Jodhpur, a Hindu ruler of a majority Hindu state, but bordering Pakistan. A meeting was arranged between the ruler and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder and governor-general of Pakistan. It is said that Jinnah "handed the maharaja a blank sheet" and said that the maharaja "'can fill in all [his] conditions'" (63). Patel, after hearing about this meeting, offered the prince similar amenities and the maharaja conceded. If the border state of Jodhpur would have gone to Pakistan, a chaotic situation might have erupted on other border princely states.

After some drama, three princely states had integrated with India but the fate of three other states was undecided till after independence. Junagadh was a Hindu-majority state with a Muslim ruler. The state did not border Pakistan but the ruler signed the document acceding to Pakistan. On September 13th, Pakistan accepted Junagadh's accession although it was 82% Hindu (contrary to the two-nation theory on which Pakistan was based upon). The Hindu chiefs in the region broke away from the ruler and wanted to join the Indian Union. With a small military force sent by India and provincial government set up, the administration of Junagadh

was handed to India. Next was the large state of Hyderabad. It had a Hindu majority with a Muslim Nizam as the head of state. "Of its population, 85% were Hindus, but Muslims dominated the army, police, and civil service," (66). With three linguistic zones and located at the center of India, it was referred to as the "cancer at the belly of India" (67). The Nizam's loyalty lied with Pakistan or preferred to remain independent. Had Hyderabad acceded to Pakistan or remained independent, India's southern and northern portions would be cut off. After civil unrest and militant insurrections, a 'Standstill Agreement" was agreed upon between the governments of Hyderabad and India. Yet, tensions grew through 1948 with Hyderabad's urge for independence and on September 13th, 1948, "a contingent of Indian troops was sent into Hyderabad" (68). After the death of "forty-two Indian soldiers and some 2,000 (militant) Razakars," Hyderabad was annexed to the Indian Union. Lastly, the question of Kashmir lingered, which was ruled by a Hindu maharaja. Although Kashmir had sizable Hindu and Buddhist populations, it had a majority-Muslim populace. The state was strategically important as it bordered India, Pakistan, China, and the USSR with the mighty Himalayas as a natural border. Furthermore, India's first Prime Minister, Nehru, had deep sympathies with the state since it was his birthplace and family home. Maharaja Hari Singh intended to remain independent while maintaining cordial relations with both dominions. Negotiations failed and Kashmir continued to dream for an independent nation. On October 22nd, 1947, tribal raiders from North-West Frontier Province in Pakistan crossed the border and invaded Kashmir. Out of desperation, the maharaja asked for defense to India. India granted this request only after Hari Singh had signed the Instrument of Accession to India, which officially integrated Kashmir into the Indian Union. The northwest portion was captured by the raiders with the help of the Pakistan Army, but the Indian Army drove them back from the capital of Srinagar. A ceasefire

was called, and the ceasefire line has now become the Line of Control (LOC) after the 1972 Shimla Agreement. This is now known as the First Kashmir War of 1947-48. India and Pakistan have fought four wars overall, three of them centered on Kashmir with both countries claiming the entire state. In 1948, UN was called to arbitrate the situation but the proposed withdrawal of troops and subsequent plebiscite has not yet taken place. All in all, integrating the separate parts of the country in one united nation was nothing short of an astonishing feat although the unresolved issue of Kashmir persists.

After the initial years of consolidating India into one united nation, the actual practice of democracy still needed to be implemented. Sukumar Sen, a mathematician turned member of the Indian civil service (ICS), was selected as the chief election commissioner. Establishing universal adult suffrage was an enormous challenge both in idea and practice. Western democracies began their early democracies by granting suffrage to a select portion of educated men, who owned property. In the US, women were not given the right to vote till 1919 and France, till about 1945. In India, both the general elections and all of the state elections had to be simultaneously conducted in a country where the adult population (above the age of 21) numbered 176 million, 85% of whom were illiterate. Allowing women, illiterate, and impoverished individuals to vote in a highly populated nation was seen as an experiment that was the 'biggest gamble in human history.' In practice, each eligible voter "had to be identified, named, and registered," "polling stations had to be identified," and most importantly, "honest and efficient polling officers [had to be] recruited" (144). Widespread chaos was expected. Eventually, though, "224,000 polling booths were constructed and equipped with 2 million steel ballot boxes, requiring 8,200 tons of steel," "380,000 realms of paper were used," 16,500 clerks, 56,000 presiding officers, 280,000 staff, and 224,000 policemen were appointed to administer

about “1 million square miles” of land (144). In order to address illiteracy and voter fraud, innovations such as the usage of “pictorial symbols” and “multiple ballot boxes” were created to represent each party, a week-lasting “indelible ink” was developed by Indian scientists, mock elections were held in various places before the actual elections, and the public was educated by the Election Commission on democracy, “the constitution, the purpose of adult franchise, the preparation of electoral rolls, and the process of voting through ‘films and the radio’” (144-45). “Large public meetings, door-to-door canvassing, [and] the use of visual media” was widespread (145). In the Parliament and state assemblies, about 4,500 seats were up for grab. The parties included Nehru’s Indian National Congress (INC), the Kisan Majdoor Praja Party (Farmer/ Labor Union), the Socialist Party, Jana Sangh (Hindu organization), Ambedkar’s Scheduled Caste Federation, the Communist Party of India (CPI), and other important regional parties. As a result of wide-scale publicity, “60% of registered voters exercised their franchise,” in a free and fair election (107 million citizens voted--In comparison, about 127 million voted in the 2016 U.S. Presidential election) and at the end, the Indian National Congress secured 2247 out 3280 seats in state assemblies, 364 out of 489 seats in the Parliament, and Jawaharlal Nehru was sworn-in as the first elected Prime Minister of the Republic of India. Since 1951-52, 16 General Elections have been held. State elections in India are usually larger than most country’s national elections, while the General Election is considered the largest election in the world. In the latest 2014 General Elections, about 815 million were eligible to vote, 551.3 million voted (about 66.38%) in nine phases with Bhartiya Janata Party (India’s People Party) emerging as the victor and Narendra Modi as India’s Prime Minister.

Pakistan was the first modern nation with religion as the definitive basis of statehood. Usually, ethnicity, region, or as in Europe’s case, language, determines national borders. Indians

were weary that these factors might further break India up, and it was language that caused the biggest uproar since Partition. India consisted of 122 major languages and 1600 dialects (as of 2001 Census). Since the 1910s, several organizations had been formed fighting for linguistic provinces and Mahatma Gandhi was one of the outspoken proponents of linguistic states. The communal bloodshed that followed the Partition delayed the creation of linguistic states in fear of Balkanization but soon, the call for reorganizing states clamored again. For example, the people who spoke Marathi wanted Maharashtra as a state, and Gujarati-speaking wanted Gujarat. Similarly, Telugu, Kannada, Malayalam, Oriya, Punjabi speaking, and the various other languages wanted their own states. Prime Minister Nehru and other veteran leaders like Rajagopalachari were against this proposal. Several movements had started all over India, but the "most vigorous movement for linguistic autonomy was that of the Telugu-speakers of the Andhra country" since it was "spoken by more people in India than any other language besides Hindi, had a rich literary history, was associated with the Vijayanagara Empire," and had a strong Andhra Mahasabha fighting for the cause (194). Since 1951, "petitions, representations, street marches, and fasts" were employed to achieve the statehood of 'Andhra Pradesh' out of what was then Madras State, but the national government did not budge (194). In early 1952, Swami Sitaram began marching for support and "on 19 October 1952, a man named Potti Sriramulu began a fast unto death in Madras" (195). After 58 days of fasting, in which the movement gathered popular support, he passed away. Subsequently, "all hell broke loose," "government offices were attacked, and trains were stopped and defaced" (197). Finally, the national government conceded and created a States Reorganization Commission (SRC), where commissioners would travel through 104 towns, interviewing "more than 9,000 people," and receiving "as many as 152,250 written submissions" in the next couple of years (197). This

culminated in the State Reorganization Act in 1956 and by 1960, with the addition of Maharashtra and Gujarat replacing Bombay State, the map of India had completely changed. Later, due to other statehood movements, newer states were created as well. The creation of linguistic states was a significant moment in India's geographic and social cohesion. Contrary from the initial concern of Balkanization, "in retrospect, linguistic reorganization seems rather to have consolidated the unity of India" because it has "acted as a largely constructive channel for provincial pride" (208). As of 2017, India recognizes 22 official state languages and has 29 states, along with 7 Union Territories. One can say that "if Jawharlal Nehru was the 'maker' of modern India, then perhaps Potti Sriramulu should be called its Mercator" (208).

Apart from socially integrating India, economically developing India was also crucial. In 1947, most of the countrymen were "cultivators and labourers," and "nearly three-fourths of the workforce was in agriculture" (209). Agriculture contributed 60% to the GDP, while the industrial sector represented "12% of the workforce and 25% of the nation's income" (209). Mahatma Gandhi fiercely believed that "the future of India lied in its villages." Agrarian Reform, which included "abolition of land revenue," "expansion of irrigation," and "reform of system of land tenure" was on Congress's agenda after its election victory (211). Nehru also recognized that the future also lay in a fast-industrializing world. The question that was naturally asked was "if India had to be industrialized, which model should it follow? To the leaders of the national movement, 'imperialism' and 'capitalism' were both dirty words" (212). The rising Soviet model was an option, and so was Japan's, given its astonishing development "from agrarian primitivism to industrial civilization in only fifty years" (212). In order to jump start the planning progress, in 1938, "Congress set up a National Planning Committee (NPC)" for economic development. The NPC reported that there were "large areas of the economy where

the private sector could not be trusted, where the aims of planning could be realized only 'if the matter is handled as a collective Public Enterprise'" (213). Surprisingly, Indian industrialists supported the socialist form of economy. In "A Plan of Economic Development for India", also known as the "Bombay Plan," they exclaimed that " 'the existing economic organization, based on private enterprise and ownership, has failed to bring about a satisfactory distribution of the national income'" and "only state intervention could help 'diminish inequalities of income'" (213). The First Five-Year Plan in 1951 focused on food production, transportation, communications, and social services. Apart from food production, most sectors did not grow as much as expected (214). For the second Five-Year Plan, while "power, transportation and communications, and social services retained broadly the same importance," "the decisive shift was from agriculture to industry" (217). Prasanta Mahalanobis, a physicist and statistician, who had "set up the Indian Statistical Institute" in 1931, the National Sample Survey (NSS) in 1950, and the Central Statistical Organization in 1951, was now appointed in-charge of the second Five-Year Plan (214). His proposed plan implemented "heavy industry [to] be owned by the state" along with "plenty of room for private enterprise," in a three-class socialist system (217). In addition to agriculture and industrialization, the Mahalanobis model focused India's growth on power and steel. Impressed by Franklin Roosevelt's Tennessee Valley Authority, India started several hydroelectric dam projects. In addition, the government-owned steel plants were partnered with foreign countries to promote industrialization. With projects like the Bhakra-Nangal project (second highest dam in the world at the time), India's power sector was set in place. Finally, in order to accommodate industrial growth, higher education and science was promoted. "Under Nehru's direction, a chain of new research laboratories were set up," along with the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Atomic Energy Commission, and Indian

Institutes of Technology (IITs) (224). These plans laid the groundwork for India's eventual progress. Despite economic growth, Nehru's economic policies were sometimes met with critical remarks from the point of view of the "free-market critique, the human capital critique, [and] the ecological critique" (231). In addition, although actions attempting to eradicate "inequality in access to land" were implemented, the "diminution in inequality" was "so slight," that in a "democracy committed to 'socialistic pattern of society,'" it was "simply unacceptable" (228). Lastly, even though higher education was promoted, primary education was largely left neglected. Yet, the achievement of launching an impoverished nation forward was remarkable. Back then, most individuals agreed with socialistic style of government. Later, under Indira Gandhi, 'socialism' was strengthened and even officially inserted in the Constitution, along with the word, 'secular.' It was not until 1991, with Finance Minister (and future prime minister), Manmohan Singh, under Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, that India's economy was completely liberalized in the face of an economic crisis.

All in all, what the leaders of India achieved in its early years is nothing short of remarkable. After the creation of Pakistan and the bloody communal violence that followed, uncertainty lingered over the Indian subcontinent Providing an economic backbone, social cohesion, and constitutional safeguards, especially for the concerned minorities, consolidated the idea of India, from which it further built upon. Numerous leaders contributed highly to independent India, but after the deaths of Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel in 1948 and 1950 respectively, no individual embodied the Indian cause as passionately as Jawaharlal Nehru. India's vision is directly reflected by Nehru's renowned for India to the Constituent Assembly. At the dawn of independence, he had expressed, "Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but

very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity." By the time Nehru passed away in office in 1964 after winning three terms, he had put India on the map and ensured it would not break up again.

Part II - The Wars That Shaped India

In the first section of "India's Survival and Evolution as a Complex Modern Nation-State," the ideas that lead to the formation of the Republic of India as well as its early successes and failures were discussed. Designing a single Constitution to safeguard multiple interests, integrating the quasi-independent princely states, establishing democratic institutions amidst chaotic civil unrest, and initiating economic progress post-colonial rule provided a solid platform for India to build a stable nation. In this segment, we will discuss the external conflicts that shaped India. This includes wars with China and Pakistan as well as the Bangladesh Liberation Struggle. Although Jawaharlal Nehru was India's early political catalyst, Indira Gandhi provided India its defining moments. Nehru's policy of non-alignment had asserted India's position in the post-World War II Cold War era. While treaties like NATO and the Warsaw Pact aligned countries toward either the United States or the USSR, Nehru and other major leaders led the non-aligned movement with newly independent Asian and African countries. This was evident in the 1955 Bandung Conference, where half of the world's population joined together and

adopted a 10-point declaration, proclaiming peace and cooperation. While Pakistan signed SEATO and aligned with the United States, India remained neutral. These alliances would have an immense impact on India's external challenges later on. Altogether, the exposure of India's vulnerability in the 1962 China War, the morale provided by Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri in the 1965 Indo-Pak War, the victory against Pakistan in 1971, and the subsequent creation of Bangladesh not only shaped India's foreign policy, but also its national identity.

In the first twenty five years of its nationhood, India went to war on four occasions with its neighbors, thrice with Pakistan and once with China. The first of these conflicts, discussed in the previous part of the essay series, was the 1947-48 Kashmir War between India and Pakistan which resulted in a ceasefire that left both countries administering part of the state. While India focused mainly on securing the western front, another conflict was brewing with China. In 1954, India and China signed "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" and established mutual trade. The popular phrase "Hindi-Chini bhai bhai" (Indian and Chinese are brothers) was coined after this agreement. Yet, in the next couple of years, tensions began to rise due to border dispute. In 1914, the McMahon line was established between the two nations and after independence, India claimed it to be the de facto border. China asserted that the McMahon line was "'a product of the British policy of aggression against the Tibet Region of China' and 'it cannot be considered legal'" (Guha 310). From 1954-58, several different maps were published in both countries claiming areas of Ladakh, Aksai Chin (in Kashmir), and NEFA (North East Frontier Agency). In addition, China began building a road in Aksai China, providing another roadway from China to Tibet. Nehru and Premier Chou En-Lai exchanged several letters in these years but no resolution was settled upon. At the same time, the Khampa rebellion had caused an influx of Chinese troops in the Tibetan region as a response to the uprising. In early 1959, an Indian government

memo was released “containing five years of correspondence with its Chinese counterpart,” which highlighted “trifling disputes, occasioned by straying armed patrols into territory claimed by the other side, larger questions about the status of the border in the west and the east, and disagreements about the meaning of the rebellion in Tibet” (313). In March 1959, the Dalai Lama secretly arrived in India, where he would eventually be granted political asylum. By this time, the tensions had risen beyond control and a possible conflict between the two populous nations was on the horizon. The root of this border conflict “rested in part on the legacy of imperialism” (317). While British imperialism had secured India a border with the McMahon line, Chinese imperialism had claimed the Tibetan region; in either case, "both claimed sovereignty over territory acquired by less than legitimate means” (317). This border issue would push the seemingly cordial relationship between the two countries in the early 1950s to the brink of war by 1960.

It was evident that India was far less prepared than their counterparts in the ensuing conflict. An internal conflict between the defense minister and the chief of staff further distracted the department of defense. Starting in 1959, in both the disputed territories, the “Chinese and Indians had played cat and mouse, sending troops to fill up no-man’s land, clashing here and there, while their leaders exchanged letters and occasionally even met” (335). What was a border conflict thus far broke out into real warfare on the night of October 19-20. “The Indians were ‘taken by surprise’ as the Chinese quickly overran many positions” (336). After a month of skirmishes, 1,383 Indian soldiers had been killed, 3,968 were taken prisoner; and 1,696 were missing (359). China gained the Aksai Chin area in Kashmir and a ceasefire line, now known as the ‘Line of Actual Control,’ was established. The war left India with a low morale and “underlined Chinese superiority in ‘arms, communications, strategy, logistics, and

planning'" (339). Two newly independent nations with long histories and cultures had collided, and China emerged victorious. This conflict can be summarized as a "clash of national myths, national egos, national insecurities, and—ultimately and inevitably—national armies" (340). The war exposed India's military weakness and Nehru's leadership was broadly criticized. Nehru's waning power was evident and finally on 27 May, 1964, he passed away.

A few days later, Lal Bahadur Shastri was sworn in as the next prime minister. While he was just beginning to understand the weight of the prime minister's office, in 1965, "a conflict broke out over the Rann of Kachchh, a salt march claimed by both Pakistan and India" (398). Twelve years ago, in 1953, the leader of secular Kashmiris, Sheikh Abdullah, was jailed by India. His imprisonment, Nehru's death, and the Kachchh conflict embedded a thought in Ayub Khan's mind, Pakistan's President then. The idea was to "foment an insurrection in the Indian part of Kashmir, leading either to war, ending with the state being annexed to Pakistan, or to international arbitration, with the same result" (398). Subsequently, Pakistan launched Operation Gibraltar, which was named after the Moorish Muslims' victory in Spain in 1492. In August 1965, "a group of irregulars" crossed the 1948 ceasefire line and by September 1st, the official invasion by the Pakistan army began (399). The majority of this conflict took place in the western front along Punjab, Kashmir, and Sindh. At the end of the two-month long war, both India and Pakistan "claimed victory, exaggerate[ed] the enemy's losses and underestimate[ed] its own" (400). Pakistan lost about 3,000-5,000 men, 250 tanks, and fifty aircraft were, while approximately 4,000-6,000 men, 300 tanks, and fifty aircraft were attributed to India's losses. In larger context, this war can be declared a draw although "with their much larger population, and bigger army, the Indians were better able to absorb these losses" (400).

Although the 1965 war was not necessarily an outright military victory, it was a moral victory for India nevertheless. There was "an unmistakably religious idiom associated with an operation initiated by Pakistani Muslims on behalf of their brethren in Kashmir" (401). In retrospect, we can see that this was definitely not the case; on the contrary, the "attack united the Indians" (401). Kashmiris generally supported the Indian Army, a Muslim soldier won India's highest military honor, the Param Vir Chakra, another Muslim—named ironically, Ayub Khan "knocked out a couple of Pakistani tanks," and Muslim intellectuals and divines across India "condemn[ed] Pakistan and express[ed] their desire to sacrifice their lives for the motherland" (401). While the 1962 loss occurred in "wet and slippery Himalaya, this was terrain the Indians knew much better" (401). In addition, after the 1962 loss, the Indian Army had been better equipped and prepared. Another positive was PM Shastri's leadership during the war. He was decisive, "swift to take advice of his commanders and order the strike across the Punjab border, (In a comparable situation, in 1962, Nehru had refused to call in the air force to relieve the pressure.)," and had "coined the slogan *Jai Jawan Jai Kisan* (salute the solider and the humble farmer)" to garner popular support (401). India's agriculture production was low in recent years and his administration focused budget allocations on agricultural research, fertilizer production, and reform that eventually helped revive India's agriculture sector. In 1966, the Soviet Union arbitrated a settlement between India and Pakistan. "After a week of hard bargaining each side agreed to give up what it most prized—international arbitration of the Kashmir dispute for Pakistan; the retention of key posts captured during the war for India. The 'Tashkent agreement' mandated the withdrawal of forces to the positions they held before 5 August 1965, the orderly transfer of prisoners of war, the resumption of diplomatic relations, and the disavowal of force to settle future disputes" (404). On 10 January, 1966, the Tashkent Declaration was signed but later

that night, Shastri passed away with a cardiac arrest. Although Shastri lead the country only for a couple of years, he leaves a rich legacy. He provided the Indian citizens "a mood—a new steeliness and sense of national unity" compared to the "disillusion, drift, fear, and dismay" in 1962 (404). The war with China had "brought the country to a state of near collapse," but in 1965, "'everything worked—the trains ran, the army held fast, there was no communal rioting'" (404). Although Shastri departed from Nehru in terms of his war leadership, he agreed with the secular vision of his predecessor. He exemplified India's secularism in a public meeting after a BBC report had claimed that since "Shastri is a Hindu he is ready for war with Pakistan" (402). In reply, he exclaimed that "while he was a Hindu, 'Mir Mushtaq who is presiding over this meeting is a Muslim, Mr. Frank Anthony who has addressed you is a Christian. There are also Sikhs and Parsis here. The unique thing about our country is that we have Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, and people of all other religions. We have temples and mosques, gurdwaras and churches. But we do not bring this all into politics…This is the difference between India and Pakistan. Whereas Pakistan proclaims herself to be an Islamic State and uses religion as a political factor, we Indians have the freedom to follow whatever religion we may choose [and] worship in any way we please. So far as politics is concerned, each of us is as much an Indian as the other" (402). All in all, Shastri's decisive leadership in 1965 helped India recover from the dreadful loss in 1962.

While the 1962 China loss was a catastrophe and 1965 Indo-Pak War a moral victory, the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War established India as a regional power. After Shastri's death, Indira Gandhi, Nehru's daughter, became Prime Minister. She had a relatively quiet first term from 1967-71, but from 1971-77, her power would rise immensely. The seeds of the Bangladesh conflict were sown early on when Jinnah insisted that Urdu was to be the sole national language,

thereby, subduing the Bengali language in East Pakistan. The catalyst of the conflict, though, was Pakistan's first attempt at democratic elections based on adult franchise, three months before India would hold its fifth elections. The elections were called by General Yahya Khan, Ayub Khan's successor, in the hope of drafting a new democratic constitution. In West Pakistan, the campaign was dominated by Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's, Pakistan People's Party (PPP), while in East Pakistan, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's National Awami League was the leading party. Mujibur Rahman's campaign was based on "East Pakistan's sense of victimhood, its anger at the suppression of the Bengali language and the exploitation of its rich natural resources by the military rulers of the western half of the country" (449). In December 1970, the election results were announced. The PPP had won eighty-eight out of the 144 seats in West Pakistan, while the Awami League won 167 of its 169 seats in the more populous East. Yahya Khan seemed to have announced elections hoping that Bhutto would emerge victorious and "allow him to continue as president" but this result shocked him (449). Now, he worried that since the Awami League had swept the elections, it would "insist on a federation in which the eastern wing would manage its own affairs, leaving only defence and foreign policy to the central government" (449-50). In 1966, Mujib had proposed further autonomy for East Pakistan with a six-point movement that consisted of "control over the foreign exchange its products generated," "its own currency" as well as a separate military wing for Eastern Pakistan (449-50). Furthermore, East Pakistan Muslims looked upon their West Pakistan counterparts as the "predatory foreign ruling classes," who had dismissed their language, drained the agricultural produce to "feed the western sector," discriminated against them, and had inadequately represented Bengalis "in the upper echelons of the Pakistani bureaucracy, judiciary, and army" (450). By the time of the elections of 1970, "the politically-minded" East Bengali had become "allergic to a central authority located a thousand

miles" away separated by India (450). Another spin to this struggle revolved around the Hindu minority in East Pakistan who dominated the professional elite. West Pakistan elite feared that "if Mujib's Awami League came to form the government, "the constitution to be adopted by them will have Hindu iron hand in it" (450). After election results were declared, both Yahya Khan and Bhutto held separate meetings with Mujib, but Mujib was adamant about establishing a federation. This propelled Yahya Khan to "postpone the convening of the national assembly" and led the Awami League to call for "an indefinite general strike" in which "shops, offices, and even railroads and airports" came to a halt (450). Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's historical and electrifying 7th March speech appealed for the lifting of martial law and urged East Pakistanis that "this time the struggle is for our independence" (Speech).

The tensions had finally reached a boiling point. Military reinforcements were sent from the Western sector to the main port in the East, Chittagong, which led to frequent daily "clashes between the police and demonstrators" (450-51). Mujib and his Awami League had an abundance of support from Dacca University. In order to quell this rising support, between March 25th-26th, a "parade of tanks rolled onto the campus, fir[ed] on the dormitories," and "students were rounded up, shot, and pushed into graves hastily dug and bulldozed over by tanks" (451). Local newspapers and politicians were targeted by the army. In addition, in an act of escalation, Mujibur Rahman was taken to a secret location in West Pakistan after being forcefully arrested (451). The genocide by the Pakistan Army had become evident with the army's violence spreading to the countryside, "seeking to stamp out any sign of rebellion" (451). Dissension was evident and numerous troops from East Pakistan mutinied, one soldier even announcing on radio the establishment of the 'Independent People's Republic of Bangladesh.' In order to retaliate against these guerrillas, "the army raised bands of local loyalists, called

Razakars, who put the claims of religion—and hence of a united Pakistan—above those of language" (451). Fighting continued in the next few months between the rebels and the army and caused massive destruction. "A World Bank team visiting East Pakistan found a 'general destruction of property in cities, towns, and villages,' leading to an 'all-pervasive fear' among the population" (452). The 1971 Bangladesh genocide, as it became known later, witnessed approximately 3 million East Pakistanis murdered and about 300,000 women raped. The civil war had propelled Bangladeshis to leave and cross the border as refugees to India. In the matter of nine months, more than 8 million East Pakistanis sought refuge in India. India's central government had accepted responsibility for the well-being of the refugees and pursued an 'open door' policy. India had been taking "a very keen interest in the future of what was already being referred to in secret official communications as the 'struggle for Bangladesh'" (452). Along with providing sanctuary, India secretly trained Bengali guerrillas known as the 'Mukti Bahini' (Liberation Forces). Around 20,000 guerillas were trained and who included "regular officers and soldiers of the once united Pakistan army, plus younger volunteers learning how to use light arms" (453). An escalation of domestic tensions had resulted into an outright military genocide of the Bengalis and the refugee crisis was threating to involve India in this conflict as well.

Another interesting aspect to this liberation struggle surrounded alliances and the atmosphere in a Cold War world. Chinese Prime Minister, Chou En-Lai, conveyed to Yahya Khan "deploring the 'gross interference' by India in the 'internal problems' of Pakistan" and assured Khan that "'should the Indian expansionists dare to launch an aggression against Pakistan, the Chinese Government and people will, as always, support the Pakistan Government and people in their struggle to safeguard state sovereignty and national independence" (453). At the same time, Indian foreign ministry began to correspond with Europe and Africa trying to

garner support. Indira Gandhi "wrote to world leaders urging them to rein in the Pakistani army." In July 1971, Henry Kissinger met Gandhi in New Delhi, where "he was acquainted for the first time with 'the intensity of feelings on the East Bengal issue.'" The influx of refugees had placed a great burden on India and therefore, it was asking the United States "to press such a settlement on the military rulers of West Pakistan" (454). Pakistan's alliance with the US and India's strained relations were evident with America's inaction. Another aspect to consider that involved the United States in this conflict is explored in *The Blood Telegram: Nixon, Kissinger, and a Forgotten Genocide* by Gary J. Bess. One of President Richard Nixon's greatest achievements was the reopening of diplomatic relations between US and China, but the backdrop of the circumstances was unpleasant. After his visit with Indira Gandhi, "Kissinger proceeded to Islamabad, and from there—in secret—to the Chinese capital, Peking" because Pakistan "had brokered this breaking of the ice between two countries long hostile to each other" (454). Yahya Khan had a cordial relation with both Chou Enlai and Nixon and so, he was serving as the middleman. Because Pakistan was supporting US-China relations and was a strategic partner of America in the Cold War, the United States was supporting the military dictatorship. Archer Blood, America's Consul General of Dacca, condemned the US government in his famous 'Blood Telegram.' He criticized that "our government has failed to denounce the suppression of democracy" and has "evidenced what many will call moral bankruptcy," but have consciously "chosen not to intervene" (Blood Telegram). It was signed by several other members of the consulate and is considered one of the greatest acts of dissent by America's foreign consulate against its own government. Ironically, the Pakistan's dictatorship alliance with the democratic US meant that the largest democracy on earth would ally itself with the communist USSR—quite unusual in the Cold War era. By July 1971, "the axes of alliance on the subcontinent were quite

clear: on the one side, there was (West) Pakistan with China and the United States; on the other, (East) Pakistan with India and the Soviet Union" (456). Indira Gandhi travelled in September to the Soviet Union, and subsequently, "visited a series of western cities, ending in the capital of the Free World" highlighting the Bangladesh crisis (456). As she proclaimed to the National Press Club in Washington, this was "'not a civil war, in the ordinary sense of the word; it is a genocidal punishment of civilians for having voted democratically.'" It is the "suppression of democracy" that is the "original cause of all the trouble in Pakistan," and if "democracy is good for you [U.S.], it is good for us in India, and it is good for the people of East Bengal" (456).

When Indira Gandhi was traveling abroad denouncing this tragedy and requesting for assistance, the conditions in the subcontinent worsened. Pakistan's domestic conflict was threating to drag India to another war, and India remained vigilant. Over the next few months, the Indian military prepared in case of war. Since the humiliating defeat to China and the 1965 war with Pakistan, India had being strengthening their military might over the previous decade. India had formed a foreign intelligence agency with the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW), and had further "augmented their equipment, modernized their organization, and laid the foundations of an indigeneous weapons industry," (457). In a famous incident, when Indira Gandhi asked the chief of staff Sam Manekshaw if India was ready for war with Pakistan in April 1971, he disagreed and even offered to resign. Ultimately, he asked for time for the Army to prepare and the monsoon season to end in order to become war ready and train the Mukti Bahini guerilla forces. Indira Gandhi agreed and by the end of the year, India was ready. On the other hand, "the morale of the Pakistan army had been deeply affected by the civil war, by the defection of Bengali officers, and by having to fight people presumed to be one's own" (457). After a year of uneasiness, finally, the "weaker side sought to seize the initiative" and on 3

December, Pakistani bombers attacked airfields along the western border, and "simultaneously, seven regiments of artillery attacked positions in Kashmir" (457). In the next few days, India "retaliated with a series of air strikes," "answered back on ground" in Punjab and Kashmir," and "the navy saw action for the first time, moving toward Karachi" (457). Pakistan's invasion of the western front "provided a perfect excuse for India to move its troops and tanks across the border into East Pakistan, turning a shadowy struggle into an open one." Finally, on 6th December, India officially recognized the Provisional Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh (457). In Mujibur Rahman's absence, Syed Nazrul Islam served as acting president of the new state, with a full cabinet. Within ten days, India had gained an upper hand and on 13 December, the Indian Army bombed East Pakistan's Governor General, AAK Niazi's house. Although Yahya Khan had advised Niazi to "lay down arms" since "'further resistance is not humanely possible,'" General Niazi waited (459). There was some hope that the United States would intervene and support Pakistan but that "threat was idle" since the US was already "tied down in Vietnam" and "could scarcely jump into another war, which might—given the Indo-Soviet Treaty—get horribly out of hand" (459). General Niazi finally admitted defeat and on 16 December, now celebrated as 'Victory Day of Bangladesh,' Lieutenant General J.S. Aurora of the Indian army's Eastern Command flew into Dacca to accept a signed instrument of surrender and take command of 90,000 Pakistani prisoners of war. Later that evening, Indira Gandhi announced in the Lok Sabha 'Dacca is now the free capital of a free country'" (459).

The war had lasted 13 days**.** India had lost 42 aircrafts, 81 tanks, and accumulated around 4,000 casualties compared to Pakistan's 86 aircrafts, 226 tanks, 9,000 soldiers, 25,000 other casualties, and about 93,000 prisoners of war. Indians were ecstatic and a publication even "hailed it as 'India's first military victory in centuries,' meaning here not India the nation, but

India the land mass and civilization" (461). Over the past millennium, India had been invaded by the Delhi Sultanate, the Mughal Empire, the British Empire, and China and now, "Indians could at last savour the sweet smell of military success" (461). On the other hand, a newspaper in Lahore claimed that 'today the entire nation [Pakistan] weeps tears of blood since "today for the first time in 1,000 years Hindus have won a victory over Muslims" (461). Apart from the brave soldiers, the "credit for victory" was bestowed upon a "single specific politician—the prime minister" (461). Indira Gandhi was widely "admired for standing up for the bullying of the United States, and for so coolly planning the dismemberment of the enemy" (461). Her popularity rose immensely as the "men of her party [went] overboard in their salutations," and even "opposition politicians [spoke] of her as Durga, the all-conquering goddess of Hindu mythology" (461). India's "self-esteem and the image in the world improved considerably" and RSS's K.R. Malkani described "1971 as a 'watershed in the political evolution of India'" (461). For the first twenty five years, both India and Pakistan were developing their identity but after the Bangladesh Liberation War, India had established its claim as a regional power while Pakistan had been fragmented into two.

Although India had won the war without any question, it did not have as much success in the post-war negotiations. After the war, President Yahya Khan resigned after tumultuous reaction in Pakistan and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto became the next President. In January 1972, Pakistan released Mujibur Rahman back to Bangladesh, completing Bangladesh's Liberation Struggle. India invited Bhutto to the "old imperial summer capital of Simla, in the last week of June 1972" for negotiations (464). Several members of his staff accompanied Bhutto, along with his daughter and future Prime Minister of Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto. Going into the negotiations, India had an upper hand. India had the command of 93,000 Pakistani prisoners and had captured

about 5,795 square miles of land in the Western front. While the "Indians wanted a comprehensive treaty to settle all outstanding problems (including Kashmir), the Pakistanis preferred a piece-meal approach" (464). India failed to utilize its advantage it had gained after winning the war. In Shimla, "at a private meeting Bhutto told Mrs. Gandhi that he could not go back to his people 'empty-handed'" and so, the "Pakistanis bargained hard" (464). This was evident in the final agreement—the "Indians wanted a 'no-war pact,' but they had to settle for a mutual 'renunciation of force,' Indians asked for a 'treaty,' what they finally got was an 'agreement'" (464). On the Kashmir issue, the two nations had already fought twice, and a U.N. resolution on a referendum had never been implemented. This was India's chance to resolve this issue for once and all. Ultimately, "India said they could wait for a more propitious moment to solve the dispute over Kashmir, but asked for an agreement that the 'line of control shall be respected by both sides'" (464). It has been said that in a private conversation, Bhutto had reassured Indira Gandhi that after his "position was more secure, he would persuade his people to accept conversion of the line of control into the international border" (464). In addition, "Bhutto successfully pressed a qualification: 'Without prejudice to the recognized position of either side.'"(464). Still, although a major resolution was not accomplished, a couple of important decisions were taken at the meeting. At the "insistence of the Indians, a clause was added stating that the two countries would settle all their differences 'by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon'—this, in theory, would rule out third-party mediation or the instigation of violence in Kashmir" (464). Furthermore, the cease-fire line was converted to the 'line of control' (LOC). As a measure of goodwill, India returned the captured land and 90,000 prisoners of war, who had been fed and taken care of for the last few months. The agreement also resumed relations between the two

nations and stated to convene again on the Kashmir issue in the near future. On 3 July, the Shimla agreement was signed, but the future meeting on Kashmir did not happen, the LOC has yet to be made the international border, and in 1999, the two nations went to war again in Kargil (nuclear stand-off). All in all, from the Indian point of view, although the 1971 Indo-Pak war was seen as success the Shimla conference was perceived as a lost opportunity.

India went to war three times in a space of nine years against China and Pakistan. While the 1950s sowed the seeds for India's democracy and future economic success, the 1960s was a time of uncertainty. Nehru had passed away, India was defeated by China, and the nation was suffering from an agrarian crisis. The sheen of the independence movement was vanished. In this period, the morale boost provided by Lal Bahadur Shastri in 1965 and Bangladesh's liberation under Indira Gandhi lifted India's spirit. Indira Gandhi provided Congress and the people of India with a new image and hope. This was a start of a new era. Before moving on to the next phase in India's development, there are a few questions that need to be addressed pertaining to the survival of these two nations at this juncture of their histories. What did the creation of Bangladesh mean for Pakistan's identity? Through their histories of constant animosity and domestic troubles, how do both of these countries still manage to survive? And lastly, how does the role of the United States in this conflict reflect on their foreign policy and identity? The events of 1971 seem to offer an answer to all three of these questions. Pakistan was created on the basis of the two-nation theory. The two-nation theory held that the Indian subcontinent is not one country, but actually a combination of two nations—one for Hindus and one for Muslims. In a history of communal crisis in the subcontinent, the substantial minority Muslims feared the majority Hindu rule and subsequently, Pakistan was created on the name of religion. The civil war between East and West Pakistan, though, contradicts the two-nation

theory. One of the main oppositions to West Pakistan rule was the denial of the Bengali language in favor of Urdu. Eventually, it was a distinctive ethnicity of the Bengalis, a different language in Bengali, and the geographic separation across India that would lead to the division of Pakistan. By 1971, India's secular identity was secure, but the two-nation theory, which formed the idea of Pakistan, began to cast doubts. Early on, India was not given a chance by the western world who claimed that Pakistan is a more practical idea. Yet, India held on in the early years, did not Balkanize, and rather, created a homogenous national identity based on diversity and rights for all. On the other hand, Pakistan has suffered due to political instability and military coups. Still, Pakistan survives. In *Tinderbox: The Past and Future of Pakistan,* Indian journalist, MJ Akbar describes Pakistan as a 'jelly state.' Due to its army and other institutions, Akbar states that Pakistan will not disappear and melt like butter. Rather, it will survive but suffer from bouts of instability like a jelly. In an interview, he concludes that 'the idea of India is stronger than the Indian and the idea of Pakistan is weaker than the Pakistani" (MJ Akbar interview). On a separate note, the role of the United States in the lead up to 1971 is a curious one. Post World War-II, the United States has usually been both praised and criticized for its Cold War foreign policy. Generally, there are two criticisms for America's actions. One is that the US invades other countries without necessarily asking for their outright permission. The second criticism, which reflects the hypocrisy in the world, is when the United States has been unable to help in time of a humanitarian crisis. In either case, history shows that America has usually tried to be on the right side of the moral compass. The Bangladesh genocide crisis, though, is a major exception. As the Blood Telegram illustrates, although the US consulate in Dacca conveyed the details of the crisis to Nixon and Kissinger, America did not intervene. Not only did the US not intervene, it consciously supported the instigator of the genocide since

Pakistan was supporting US-China relations. Altogether, although the US played a minor role in the 1971 Indo-Pak war itself, its intentional inaction in Bangladesh had a major impact. All in all, 1971 was a major turning point for several nations. While China-US reopened relations, Bangladesh celebrated its independence after suffering a brutal genocide, India gained an international image, and Pakistan arguably witnessed its nadir after the dismemberment of their nation. In the next part of the series, the Emergency, India's only taint on democracy, will be discussed and the series will conclude with a detailed reflection on 'Why India Survives?'

Part III - The Emergency: The Gravest Threat to Indian Democracy

Thus far, we have discussed the ideas that framed modern-day India and the wars that have shaped its character. In this segment of "India's Survival and Evolution as a Complex Modern Nation-State," we will discuss internal threats that have challenged Indian democracy. While Nehru and Shastri guided India in the first couple of decades, it was Indira Gandhi who would be the monumental figure in the 1970s and early 1980s. By 1972, Indira Gandhi was a towering personality. She had just won a crucial reelection campaign with major reform promises to help alleviate India's poverty. The Indian National Congress dominated the national agenda and held the majority in the central government as well as most of the state assemblies. Indira Gandhi's leadership helped India achieve its first decisive military victory in a millennium, liberated the Bangladeshis from West Pakistan's rule and genocide, and established India as a prominent regional power. By 1971, the uncertainty around a united India and more importantly, a democratic India, had subsided. Although secessionist movements in the Kashmir Valley and Nagaland in the northeast still persisted, the threat was not as serious anymore. Most

of the citizens had now bought into the idea of India. Furthermore, despite being involved in four wars in the first twenty five years, India had managed to survive geographically. Now that external security seemed assured, internal disturbances began to surface. The period from 1975-77 is now infamously referred to as the Emergency, India's most prominent blemish to democracy. The events leading up to the Emergency had generated civil unrest, which propelled Mrs. Gandhi to impose this extreme measure. In the nineteen month period that followed, India would see its basic democratic principles such as the freedom of press and freedom of speech drastically restricted. It would be dominated by the radical social programmes proposed by Mrs. Gandhi's son, Sanjay Gandhi. In the upcoming essay, we will discuss Ramachandra Guha's analysis of the Emergency in *India After Gandhi* —the events leading up to the Emergency, Indira Gandhi's consolidation of power, Sanjay Gandhi's social programmes, the aftermath of the Emergency, and a reflection of her leadership.

The Emergency was a response to a series of events that had begun to occur two years prior. The seeds of the Emergency were sowed in early 1974 in the state of Gujarat, where Chimanbhai Patel was the chief minister. Due to corruption charges, students protested against his incumbent government and demanded its dismissal. This movement "turned violent, with busses and government offices being burned," forcing Patel to resign and causing Gujarat to come under 'President's Rule.' (Guha 476). As it turned out, the impact of these protests would change the course of Indian history. The actions in Gujarat "inspired students in Bihar to struggle against misgovernment in their own state," a state known for its political instability (476). In Bihar, the "Congress regime" had been in power for a couple of years, "corruption was rife," land inequality had caused "deep discontent in the countryside,", and "steep rise in the prices of essential commodities" generated anxiety in the cities (476). The members involved in

the protest included leftist groups such as the Communist Party of India (CPI) and right-wing student groups such as ABVP (Akhil Bharatya Vidyarti Parishad). "Campus life was in turmoil and classroom instruction came to an abrupt halt" and finally on 18th March, a group of protesters marched on the state assembly (476). The police clashed, students were hurt, three died, and these student-police clashes spread. In order to gather momentum, the students requested Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) to lead their movement. JP, a freedom fighter who was now seventy-one, was considered "a great moral authority" in India (477). He had stayed away from politics despite invitations from Nehru in his cabinet, and rather, was a "veteran of movements," devoting his energy towards social causes across India (477). Following the police clashes, Narayan accepted their request since he could "no longer 'remain a silent spectator to misgovernment [and] corruption' " (477). Along with corruption, he protested against "blackmarketing, profiteering and hoarding," fought "for the overhaul of the educational system," and called for a 'total revolution' in order to establish a "real people's democracy" (477). What started with student protests against a state government had now turned into a national movement known as the 'JP Movement.' His supporters went as far as declaring that JP's movement was the "'second freedom struggle,' completing the business left unfinished by the first" (483). At the same time, massive railway strike halted the nation, leading to numerous arrests. The famous picture of trade unionist George Fernandes smiling in handcuffs epitomizes the rising tensions. The JP movement worsened as the public crisis slowly turned personal. Mrs. Gandhi and JP traded public remarks against each other and "exchanged a series of letters, beginning on a civil note but ending in acrimony" (479). By the end of the year, the "polarization was nearly complete" with citizens who were not in the opposition but still "thought the Congress too corrupt and Mrs. Gandhi too insensitive to criticism" (483).

Indira Gandhi's rising power was evident with the diminishing authority of important national institutions. In her second term, Indira moved out of her father's shadow and pushed India into a new era. Most of the stalwarts from Nehru's generation were at the twilight of their careers and had differing opinions to Mrs. Gandhi on numerous issues. The growing support towards Indira Gandhi provoked a rift within the Congress Party, breaking it into two factions. Similarly, her increasing power was visible with her actions towards the judiciary. In 1973, in an unprecedented move, the government would supersede three senior judges and appoint Justice A.N. Ray as the chief justice, a judge who had made favorable decisions towards their government in the past. In addition, "many key jobs in government had been assigned to bureaucrats who shared the socialist ideology of Mrs. Gandhi and her advisers" (473). The political culture was beginning to shift towards support for a single individual rather than the involvement of competing ideologies. With the backdrop of her growing power and the JP Movement, another factor fueled the situation. At the Allahabad high court, Raj Narain, her opponent in the previous election, had filed a "petition alleg[ing] that the prime minister had won through corrupt practices, in particular by spending more money than was allowed, and by using in her campaign the official machinery and officials in government service" (486). This lawsuit forced Indira Gandhi to testify in a court, the first Indian prime minister to do so. Although she was acquitted of twelve out of the fourteen charges on electoral malpractice by Justice Sinha, the case was now appealed to the Supreme Court. Calls for her to resign grew louder, but "516 members of Parliament from the Congress party signed a resolution to urge her to stay on" (488). On 23 June, the Supreme Court declared that the "prime minister could attend Parliament but could not vote there until her appeal was fully heard and pronounced on" (489). In addition, her election was termed as 'null and void' and she was barred against running for any office for

another till six years. The press insisted that Mrs. Gandhi resign. Several of her cabinet members now agreed and "advised [her] to step down temporarily and let one of her colleagues in the cabinet" take her place until the Supreme Court upheld her decision. On the other hand, at the advice of her son, Sanjay Gandhi, and chief minister of West Bengal, Siddhartha Shankar Ray, an ordinance declaring a state of internal emergency was being prepared which would let her stay in power. Although the domestic unrest was out of control, it was the lawsuit that actually pushed Indira Gandhi over the edge.

On 26 June 1975, three days after the Supreme Court's decision, Indira Gandhi declared from the "a studio of All India Radio (AIR)" that "The President has proclaimed Emergency" (490). Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed was the President at the time. This was actually the third time India had declared emergency, but the other two were imposed due to external disturbances, the 1962 China War and 1971 Indo-Pakistan War. She specifically stressed in the radio announcement that "there is nothing to panic about" and this radical action was taken "in response to the 'increasing violence' caused by a 'campaign of hate and calumny'" (491). Under the Emergency, the fundamental freedoms such as the freedoms of speech, expression, assembly, association, press, and movement would be suspended. The large-scale impact was immediately palpable. Overnight, thousands were arrested under the Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) including opposition leaders, student activists, and trade unionists to name a few. Any opposition was quelled. Even the queens (rajmatas) of Jaipur and Gwalior were jailed "under an act supposedly meant for black marketeers and smugglers" because of their old political enmity with Mrs. Gandhi (492). Indira Gandhi claimed that the "'extra-constitutional challenge [of the JP movement] was constitutionally met,'" and "the emergency was 'declared to save the country from disruption and collapse'" (492). From the actions of the prime minister, one could notice

that India was leaning towards a quasi-dictatorship. Just like other military dictators, she claimed that although “she had denied her people freedom, she would give them bread in exchange” (493). Within a week of the declaration, she offered a ‘Twenty Point Programme for Economic Progress,’ which included a “reduction in prices of essential commodities, the speedy implement of land reforms, higher wages for workers, lower taxes for the middle class, and the abolition of indebtedness and of bonded labour” (493). Initially, prominent businessmen and social workers applauded the declaration. Normalcy, discipline, and calm had returned. Government officials came to work on time, inflation was low, some of the economic programmes succeeded, and corruption was nonexistent because of the government’s fear. Yet, the cons outweighed the pros. Around 40,000 individuals were jailed without trial, freedom of press was censored except for communicating government’s agenda, and amendments were added to the Constitution to ensure Congress stays in power. There were a few courageous newspapers that resisted the censorship and published their views disguised as political satires. However, there was no political opposition. Since the opposition members of the Parliament were locked away, several constitutional amendments were passed to prolong Mrs. Gandhi’s rule. The Thirty Eighth Amendment, “barred judicial review of the emergency,” the 39th “stated the election of the prime minister could not be challenged by the Supreme Court, and the 42nd gave “unprecedented powers to the Parliament” (498). The actions of the Congress Party are best described by J.B. Kripalani, one of India’s greatest freedom fighters. As a nonagenarian he regretfully expressed “I have no Constitution—all that is left are Amendments” (564). All in all, one newspaper headline epitomizes the Emergency: “D.E.M. O’Cracy, beloved husband of L.I.Bertie, brother of Faith, Hope and Justice, expired on June 26.”

While Mrs. Gandhi was consolidating her power politically, it was her son, Sanjay Gandhi, who came to the fore socially. He had been an early supporter of the Emergency and had persuaded her to not resign. Although he was not officially elected, he was often sighted by "Mrs. Gandhis' side, and was even advising her on cabinet appointments" (506). For example, I.K. Gujral (future prime-minister) was replaced "as being too soft on the press" while the most experienced and uncontroversial member, Swaran Singh, was "replaced as defence minister by Sanjay's friend Bansi Lal" (506). While fighting to end privy purse in her first term, Mrs. Gandhi had "once chastised the India princes for promoting birth over talent" but now she had succumbed to that temptation herself" (508). To complement her mother's twenty-point economic programme, Sanjay Gandhi unveiled a five-point social programme with (1) family planning, (2) afforestation, (3) abolition of dowry, (4) eradication of illiteracy, and (5) slum clearance. Of these five, the Emergency is known for its harsh implementation of slum clearance in Delhi and family planning nationwide. At this time, "the capital was dotted with slums that had formed spontaneously" where "sweepers, rickshaw pullers, domestic servants, and office boys" resided (508). There were approximately 100 such settlements in Delhi amounting to about a half a million residents. Several of these settlements were forcefully bulldozed and demolished. The most infamous incident was known as the Turkman Gate incident, where the residents resisted and were subsequently massacred by the police (Since the press was censored, this news did not reach the public till later). Although slum clearance's implementation was controversial, it was the forced sterilization of citizens in the name of family planning that became the icon of the Emergency. The "Malthusian spectre had long haunted India," with "western journalists [fearing] large-scale famine, [and] western biologists [writing off] India altogether" (511-12). At the turn of the twentieth century, India's population numbered 240

million but by 1971 it had reached nearly 550 million. Sanjay Gandhi believed that "if his programme was implemented, '50 % of our problems will be solved'" (512). Even the World Health Organization (WHO) endorsed family planning in India. In order to implement compulsory sterilization, "targets were announced to district officials," "truck drivers would not have their licenses renewed if they did not produce a sterilization certificate," and "slum dwellers would not be allotted a plot for resettlement" if they did not do the same (513). Officials were rewarded or transferred depending if they met their targets or not, and in order to fulfill them, coercion was used. However, just like with the slum demolition, resistance emerged. Underground newspapers reported a "'wave of protests' against family planning in Delhi and Uttar Pradesh," especially "schoolteachers, who had been asked to conduct house-to-house surveys in pursuance of the sterilization campaign" (513). Around hundred and fifty of these teachers were jailed. The worst of these incidents, though, the "Turkman Gate of family planning, so to speak took place in the town of Muzaffarnagar," where the mob-police clash caused about 50 deaths. The Turkman Gate and Muzaffanargar clashes only portray the major incidents that occurred during the Emergency, but numerous other incidents occurred frequently. Sanjay Gandhi's social programmes created a violent atmosphere, especially towards individuals that were not well off or not politically connected. His surge in public life was reflected by the emergence a new generation of Indian Youth Congress in the political life. Altogether, although Indira Gandhi imposed the emergency, it is Sanjay Gandhi that is associated with this infamous period due to his controversial social programmes.

On January 18th, 1977, after a year and a half under the Emergency, Indira Gandhi suddenly announced on All India Radio "that Parliament was to be dissolved and elections were to be held," (516). Her political opponents in prison were released immediately. This decision

was puzzling because of its sudden nature and also for the fact that it was Indira Gandhi's individual decision, without even Sanjay's consultation. She had no opposition and the Parliament could easily have extended their stay every year. There was no reason for Indira to remove the Emergency. So, the question arises, why did Indira Gandhi take this decision? The author elaborates on at least three theories. First, the "gossip was that her intelligence chief had assured her that the Congress would be re-elected with a comfortable majority" (517). She had hoped that since the civil unrest had dissipated, the INC would be easily elected again. Second, "some people felt that her decision was a consequence of competitive one-upmanship" since Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto announced elections in a historically unstable Pakistan. A third explanation comes from Indira Gandhi's secretary. He asserted that the Emergency "had cut Mrs. Gandhi off from the public contact that previously nourished her" (517). Mrs. Gandhi "'was nostalgic about the way people reacted to her in 1971 campaign and she longed to hear again the applause of the multitudes' " (517). Lastly, another facet to the conversation might be international pressure. Although India's media was censored, foreign observers and press were vocal about India's deviation from democracy, something that the prime minister may have been impacted by. A few months before the emergency was enacted, the "*Indian Express* had paid tribute "to the resilience and maturity of Indian democracy," noting that it allowed 'even the most serious differences [to] be harmonized and reconciliations effected'" (473). Ironically, the *Indian Express* and other Indian newspapers were now censored, and so, the foreign press had to take the burden to mount the pressure against the Indian government. Fenner Brockway from the *Times*, for example, "deplored the conversion of 'the world's greatest democracy' into a 'repressive dictatorship' (515). Regardless, the fact that the Emergency was reversed saved Indian democracy. One may never may know what would have happened if the Emergency

would have stayed for longer. India's political atmosphere may not have returned to a democracy and political instability may have creeped in like its neighbors. Ultimately, elections were called and democracy was reinstated. Indira Gandhi's unexpected decision pulled India out of the depths of a dictatorship and returned it back to normalcy.

The day after the emergency was lifted, an opposition movement began. Four parties, made up of the right-wing Jana Sangh, farmer based Bharatiya Lok Dal (led by future prime minister, Charan Singh), the Socialist Party, and Morarji Desai's old Congress combined to make a new party, Janata Party (People's Party). In the next few days, Jagjivan Ram, a respected Congressman and leader of the Scheduled Castes, decided to resign from the INC. He made his own party, Congress for Democracy (CFD) and led an alliance with the Janata Party. Fascinatingly, "it was Ram who had moved the resolution endorsing the emergency" in the Parliament (519). Ram was known for "his political acumen," and his decision was "considered a sign that [Congress's] ship was, if not yet sinking, leaving heavily" (519-20). The intelligence report had underestimated the strength of the opposition. The election results were announced on March 20th, 1977. Indira Gandhi lost to Raj Narain, Sanjay Gandhi lost to "an obscure student leader," Congress lost all 85 seats in the state and only won 153 seats from 540 nationally. On the other hand, the opposition of the Janata Party and the CFD swept the elections with 298 seats, and Morarji Desai, a lifelong Congressman, became India's new prime minister. It was the power of democracy that had swept away the Congress in the north (the impact of the Emergency in the south was not as severe and so Congress's influence stayed there). This was the first non-Congress national government. There were lawsuits against the prior administration and although some were found guilty, police action could not be taken due to lack of evidence. Nevertheless, modifications to the Constitution ensured that an Emergency

could not occur again. In the next three years, India witnessed turmoil from the Janata Party. The Janata government was marred by administrative inefficiency and personal battles. By 1979, the conglomeration of the four parties would break apart and Morarji Desai would resign. Charan Singh would be the interim prime minister for six months until elections were held. In the 1980 elections, the mandate from the public against the administration was evident and—Indira Gandhi would become the Prime Minister yet again. On another note, Sanjay Gandhi died in a plane crash in 1980 and Indira Gandhi would be assassinated in 1984, which would push her older son, Rajiv Gandhi, to become prime minister. India had survived its only test against a democracy. The 1977 and 1980 elections portray that the Indian public were more concerned with social and economic progress rather than personal battles—yet not at the expense of losing individual liberties.

In 1971, Indira Gandhi was at the height of her popularity, but by 1977, she was heavily defeated. How should one assess her leadership? She was definitely India's strongest prime minister but also its most controversial. Along with Israel's Golda Meir and UK's Margaret Thatcher, Indira Gandhi was one of the three major women leaders in world politics during the twentieth century. The twentieth century saw powerful dictators, but Indira Gandhi may have been the closest to a women dictator. Her own words perhaps best describe the nature of her power. In an interview after the Emergency, she exclaimed "'What else could I have done except stay? You know the state the country was in. What would have happened if there had been nobody to lead it? I was the only person who could, you know' " (489). It was not the imposition of the Emergency that is revealing in this interview but exactly why it was imposed. India was indeed suffering from internal disturbances, but the fact she believed she was the *only* person who could be the savior, escalated the issue. Her leadership during her first and second

term was extremely contrasting, but Guha warns that although “it is tempting to view Mrs. Gandhi’s political career as being divided into two phases, with the emergency and Sanjay Gandhi providing the dividing line,” it is wise not to do so (514). Guha states that some may argue that “before Sanjay, she won elections, created Bangladesh, reformed the Congress party, and made bold attempts to reorganize the economy” but “under Sanjay’s malign influence she turned her back on these larger social goals and became obsessed with the preservation of herself and her family” (514). On the contrary, he stresses that the Emergency was not necessarily a “radical departure from [Mrs. Gandhi’s] past practice, but a deepening of it” (515). One can see Mrs. Gandhi’s “impatience with the democratic procedure had been manifested early” with the packing of the judiciary, bureaucracy, and the INC itself with her supporters (564). Sanjay’s arrival took the process further, “vulgarized and corrupted it, and made it more violent” (515). In comparison to U.S. politics, Indira can loosely be compared to Andrew Jackson and even Abraham Lincoln. Both Andrew Jackson and Indira Gandhi were powerful head of states but were responsible for changing the political institutions and instilling a degree of ‘spoils system.’ Lincoln’s suspension of the writ of habeas corpus is debatable but he is widely acknowledged for his leadership during the Civil War. In comparison, Indira presided over the Indo-Pakistan victory of 1971, but was responsible for the removal of fundamental rights.

Another interesting aspect from a political science perspective is the contrasting political leadership of Nehru and Indira. Nehru tried to establish India into a socialist democracy with “honest attempts to promote a democratic ethos in a hierarchical society” but ironically, this “was undone by his own daughter, and in decisive and dramatic ways” (515). Nehru’s death had pushed Indira reluctantly into politics, but Indira consciously groomed her sons, Sanjay and later, Rajiv into politics (although Rajiv was also a reluctant entrant). Nepotism had creeped into

politics and the tradition of family lineages in politics continues even today. Nehru most likely would not have approved of nepotism or of an opposition-less Parliament. A *New York Times* reporter concluded that "had Jawaharlal Nehru lived while Indira Gandhi reigned, the two would have been political opponents, rather than allies" while another reporter "captured that imagined scenario: 'Indira is in the Prime Minister's house, and Jawaharlal is back to writing letters to her from jail again" (518). It is intriguing to compare Nehru's views on democracy in *Glimpses of World History* with one of his letters to Indira. In a special postscript, from November 14th, 1938, Nehru "outlined the major political developments of the latter part of the decade in which he wrote the following:

> 'The growth of fascism during the last five years and its attack on every democratic principle and conception of freedom and civilization have made the defence of democracy the vital question today. Unfortunately, democracy and freedom are in grave peril today, and the peril is all the greater because their so-called friends stab them in the back'" (518).

Little did Nehru know that the arrival of 'peril' to democracy and freedom in India would be due to the Indira and rather than a friend, it would be his own daughter that would be stabbing the protectors of democracy. MJ Akbar describes democracy as not necessarily the "right to vote in elections every five years; [rather], it is the right to say nonsense every day." During the Emergency, the Indian people had lost the latter privilege for nineteen months and maybe it is because of that experience, India's democracy survives today. In the next essay, we will conclude Ramachandra Guha's review on *India After Gandhi*, reflect on the highs and lows from 1980 to the turn of the century, and culminate by analyzing this intriguing question further, 'Why India Survives'?

Part IV - The Conclusion: Why India Survives?

After the era of the Emergency and the subsequent failure of the Janata Party to complete its term, Indira Gandhi and the Congress were reelected to power in 1980. The early 1980s was marked by the emergence of the Khalistan movement, which called for a separate homeland for the Sikhs. The movement grew militant in nature and one of its leaders, Jarnail Singh Bindrawale, took refuge in the Golden Temple at Amritsar, one of the holiest sites for Sikhs. As the situation worsened, Indira Gandhi initiated Operation Blue Star, in which the army moved into the Golden Temple with arms and tanks. This controversial decision led to a three-day battle in the Golden Temple, and around 500 militants were killed, along with thousand army casualties. Operation Blue Star served a major blow to the militant movement, yet it had tragic consequences. It led to the assassination of Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards, which in turn provoked the brutal Hindu-Sikh riots of 1984. Ramachandra Guha asserts that "even by the standards of Indian politics, 1984 was an especially turbulent year" with Operation Bluestar, the assassination of Indira Gandhi, and the devastating Bhopal Gas Tragedy. The Bhopal gas leak would lead to 2000 deaths by direct exposure, while another 50,000 would suffer from its side-effects. After the death of Indira Gandhi, her son, Rajiv Gandhi was sworn-in as the prime minister. Rajiv Gandhi was India's youngest prime minister but a reluctant entrant into politics. As an outsider, he was charismatic and "was compared to John F. Kennedy, who had likewise 'symbolised youth and the hope of a new generation'" (572-73). During his tenure, the secessionist tensions with the Mizos, Sikhs, and Assamese eased through negotiations, and India began its transformation to the computer age. His administration had the "intention to take India

directly from the sixteenth century to the twenty-first, from the age of the bullock cart to the age of the personal computer" (573). Yet, his term was marred by the divisive Shah Bano case and the Bofors Scandal, which subsequently led to the loss of the Congress Party in the 1989 elections. In the international frame, Rajiv Gandhi sent peace keeping forces during the Sri Lankan Civil War and intervened in the Maldives coup. A couple of years later, while campaigning for the 1991 elections, Rajiv Gandhi would be assassinated by members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) who had opposed Gandhi for his role during the Sri Lankan Civil War. 1991 was also a breakthrough year for India as Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and Finance Minister Manmohan Singh liberalized India's economy and moved from the socialist models of the past. All in all, the early 1990s was marked by the era of coalition governments, rise of the backward classes, movement against affirmative action, and the rise of the right. The rise of Hindu fundamentalism was apparent on December 6th, 1992, when a nationwide campaign caused the chaotic demolition of the Babri Masjid, a historic mosque located in Ayodhya, regarded as a spiritual city for Hindus. This generated widespread communal violence across India, which in turn, provoked the 1993 Bombay Bombings. Along with these occurrences, the consequences of other major events during the 1990s are still unwinding today and hence, will not be discussed in this essay. Rather, we will conclude "India's Survival and Evolution as a Complex Modern Nation-State" by analyzing Guha's riveting epilogue, 'Why India Survives?' from *India After Gandhi*. In the following essay, three aspects of India's survival will be analyzed—the factors that contributed to India's nationhood, the state of Indian democracy, and a brief comparison of India with other nations. India's story of survival can be attributed to the work of its founding fathers, the commitment of its citizens to

protect India's plurality, secularism, and diversity, and the importance of social and cultural cohesion.

Before analyzing India's journey as a nation, let us first analyze factors that have historically fueled nationalism. Isaiah Berlin asserted that the "'necessary' condition for the birth of nationalist sentiment" to transform into a "widespread political movement" requires a "general unifying factor or factors—language, ethnic origin, a common history" (739). In the western world, "a shared language, shared religious faith, shared territory, or a common enemy" were evident in forming a national spirit. For example, the majority Protestant British united over an island in opposition to the French, France "combined [language] powerfully with religion," Americans utilized a "shared language and a widely shared faith" with "animosity toward the colonists," and "the Poles, the Czechs, the Lithuanians, etc." were "united by a common language, a mostly common faith, and a shared bitter history of domination by German and Russian oppressors" (739). None of these factors are major unifying aspects of Indian nationhood. India does not "privilege a single language or religious faith" and "although the majority of its citizens are Hindus, India is not a Hindu nation" (739). One could view India's nationalism based on the opposition to British colonialism, but even in this aspect, India's journey is slightly unique. The British historian, Michael Howard, "claims that 'no Nation, in the true sense of the word…could be born without war…no self-conscious community could establish itself as a new and independent actor on the world scene without an armed conflict or the threat of one'" (745). Although the independence movement united the Indian people, the non-violent approach was unique to other independence movements worldwide (745).

Most of India's freedom fighters were fortunate enough to live through its first couple of decades. Guha stresses that "few nations have had, living and working *at the same time,* leaders

of such acknowledged intelligence and integrity as Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, and B.R. Ambedkar" (744). Mohandas Gandhi had passed away a year after independence, and by 1950, "Patel had died, and Ambedkar had left office; but by then [Patel] had successfully overseen the political integration of the country and [Ambedkar] the forging of a democratic constitution" (744). Furthermore, Nehru completed three full terms and set defining precedents till his death in 1964. He had the support of "outstanding leaders in his own party—K. Kamaraj and Morarji Desai, for instance—and in the opposition, in whose ranks were such men as J.B. Kripalani and C. Rajagopalachari" (744). Other nations in South Asia such as Myanmar, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal did not have such luck as their founders passed away or lost power within a few years of the country's independence.

The founding fathers' work laid the groundwork for the country's stability. Important decisions during India's early days that helped preserve the nation included establishing the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), forming an apolitical army culture, and keeping the English language. When the British departed, although it was "expected the Indians would embrace metropolitan traditions such as parliamentary democracy and cabinet government," it was surprising that the Indians "endorse[d] and [retained] a quintessentially colonial tradition—the civil service" (746). Various members of the legislative assembly did not support the Indian Civil Service because of its role during the colonial era. Vallabhbhai Patel, though, understood the importance of the bureaucracy and was impressed by their loyalty to the previous British Crown. Members of the civil service were crucial in "those first, difficult years of Indian freedom" as "they helped integrate the princely states, resettle the refugees, plan[ned] and overs[aw] the first general elections, maintain[ed] law and order in the districts, work[ed] with ministers in the Secretariat, and supervis[ed] famine relief" (746). Today, along with the IAS,

the Indian Police Service (IPS), Indian Forest Service (IFS), and other sub-branches complete the bureaucracy. The elite civil service, which was a crucial investment made by the founders, remains "an essential link between the Centre and the states" and "more generally are a bridge between state and society" (747).

Along with the civil services, the army has played an important role in India's survival. As mentioned earlier, India had to face four wars in the first twenty-five years. The fact that India's geography was not greatly altered is a reflection of the Indian military. Yet, there were major losses on the way and "although its reputation as a fighting force has gone up and down, as an agency for maintaining order in peacetime the Indian army has usually commanded the highest respect" (748). Apart from external warfare, the army has been crucial in maintaining domestic peace, especially during communal riots. In addition, "in times of natural disaster the army brings succor to the suffering" and is "always the most efficient and reliable actor around" (748). Furthermore, the culture of the Indian army has been a major reason that Indian democracy did not fall into military dictatorships like several other countries in South Asia. The author describes the Indian Army as a "professional, wholly non-sectarian, and apolitical body" (748). Jawaharlal Nehru stressed that any member of the army is "subordinate to the elected politicians," and "the pattern set in those early years has persisted into the present" (748). As Lieutenant General J.S. Aurora observed, "Nehru laid down some very good norms," which ensured that "politics in the army has been almost absent'" (749). Lastly, it is astonishing that "no army commander has ever run in an election" and if officers "have held public office after retirement, it has been at the invitation of the government," usually in the form of ambassadors or state governors (750).

Apart from the army and the civil services, the preservation of the English language was another important decision which has had a lasting impact. One of India's foremost leaders, Rajaji, stressed that "The colonial rulers, had 'for certain accidental reasons, causes and purposes…left behind a vast body of the English language.' But now that it had come, there was no need for it to go away" (750). Along with Hindi, English is the other official language of India. In the Constituent Assembly, it was decided that although Hindi would be the official language of the Union, English would be used for all official purposes for fifteen years. After the fifteen years, English was renewed as the joint official language, and it has remained such ever since. Throughout the years, "English has confirmed, consolidated, and deepened its position as the language of the pan-Indian elite," has "become the language of power and prestige, and the language of individual as well as social advancement" (751). English "is the passport for employment at higher levels in all fields, is the unplanning to migrate abroad, has meant a tremendous enthusiasm since described as the only non-regional language in India (751). The founding fathers anticipated that English "might help consolidate national unity and further scientific advancement," "but its role in economic growth has been largely unanticipated" (751).

In addition to the remarkable work conducted in the first decade, India's commitment to preserving diversity is one of unifying factors of Indian nationalism. Two of the main pillars of Indian diversity are religious and linguistic diversity. Although Mahatma Gandhi's revolution was "built on harmony and cooperation between Hindus and Muslims," the Partition of India could not be prevented (739). The pain of Partition and creation of Pakistan solidified India's desire to be a secular country and convinced the founders that "if India was anything at all, it was *not* a 'Hindu Pakistan'" (739-40). Seventy years post-independence, has India's secularism survived? The answer is yes, but there is a wide room for improvement. The Constitution

provides protection for the minorities and "membership in a minority religion is no bar to advancing in business or the professions" (740). At the time of writing, "the richest industrialist in India", Bollywood stars, singers, cricket captains, "three presidents," four chief justices, and other influential officials have been Muslim (740). In addition, "many of the country's most prominent lawyers and doctors have been Christians and Parsis" (740). Yet, communal riots have occurred, and discrimination still exists in certain areas of society. The rise of the right-wing parties has caused concerns to the supporters of secular India. The "nationalism once promoted by the old Jana Sangh and promoted now, in a more sophisticated form, by the BJP" have historically invoked a "common 'Aryan' ancestry for the Hindus, a common history of suffering at the hands of (mostly Muslim) invaders," and created a "popular slogan: 'Hindi, Hindu, Hindustani" (739). Over the course of the past seventy years, imposing a national language has slowly dwindled, "but the desire to impose the majority religion persisted," which has generated "much conflict, violence, rioting, and death" (743). In 2002, a couple of thousand citizens lost their lives in the dreadful Gujarat riots, which "to some extent was approved by the central government," which led to "fears about the survival of a secular, democratic India" (743). Regardless of these occasional occurrences, democracy has laid its root in India and even if right-wing party members "privately wish for a theoretic Hindu state, for public consumption they must endorse the secular ideals of the Indian constitution" (744).

In addition to secularism, "pluralism of language" is one of the "cornerstones of the Indian Republic" (740). After the State Reorganization Act of 1956, the linguistic states have stayed. In the past sixty years, linguistic states have become a pillar of unification because "a common language has provided the basis of administrative unity and efficiency" and has led to "an efflorescence of cultural creativity, as expressed in film, theatre, fiction, and poetry" (740).

The creation of linguistic states did not cause separatist sentiment, but only emboldened regional pride. On the contrary, it was "religious and territorial, not linguistic distinctiveness, that incited the three "major secessionist movements in independent India—in Nagaland in the 1950s, in Punjab in the 1980s, and in Kashmir in the 1990 (741). India's pluralism is best demonstrated on its currency. Apart from being printed in Hindi and English, the currency is also printed "in all the other languages of the Indian Union" in smaller font. At least "seventeen different scripts are represented" on one note (741). All in all, after seventy years, it has "proved possible—indeed, desirable—to be Kannadiga and Indian, Malayali and Indian, Andhra and Indian, Tamil and Indian, Bengali and Indian, Oriya and Indian, Maharashtrian and Indian, Gujarati and Indian, and, of course, Hindi-speaking and Indian" (741).

Economically, India has progressed as a united nation as well. Its "economic integration is a consequence of its political integration" since "the greater the movement of goods, capital, and people across India," has given a greater sense that India is, "after all, *one* country" (752). In the early days, Nehruvian socialism helped grow India's economy and solidified the sense of unity. For example, "Bhilai and its steel plant were seen as bearing the torch of history, and as being as much about forging a new kind of society as about forging steel" (753). After the country had stabilized, in 1991, India moved from socialism and liberalized its economy. Now, the "private sector, if with less intent, has furthered the process of national integration" (752-53). The IT boom in India occurred in the early 2000s, especially in the southern cities like Bangalore, the 'Silicon Valley' of India. Rise in economic opportunity has increased migration throughout the country. The free movement of people and cross-mixing across states through employment has been one of the major factors of India's unity.

Apart from the political and economic perspective, the social cohesion of India has proved to be just as important. Indian cinema and sports are crucial part of individuals' livelihood. Bollywood is the "great passion of the Indian people, watched and followed by Indians of all ages, genders, castes, classes, religions, and linguistic groups" (753). Mumbai is the center of Bollywood, but there are other regional film centers like Tollywood (Telegu), Kollywood (Tamil), Mollywood (Malayalam), etc. industries that thrive as well. India produces more films than the United States, numbering to approximately 1,600 films throughout the different languages and grosses third-largest revenues in the world. Film has made an immense impact on the social sphere, with "movie theatres dominat[ing] town" centers of smaller towns, and theatres "strung across [larger metropolises] locality by locality" (711). Actors have become revered members of Indian society. The "actors, musicians, technicians, and directors come from all parts of India," and the nationwide adoration for movies have created another form of social unity. Apart from movies, sports are a major unifying form of entertainment. Traditional games like as kho-kho and kabaddi along with field hockey, football (soccer), and cricket are extremely popular. India won eight consecutive Olympic golds in field hockey between 1928 and 1956, and field hockey remains a popular sport. Soccer is prominent, especially in the northeast regions. Cricket, though, remains the most popular sport, especially after India won the 1983 World Cup. This achievement "coincided with the spread of satellite television, which took the game to small towns and working-class homes" (721). This victory led to the widening of the "social base" as players emerged from smaller backgrounds. Now, "cricket ha[s] come to equal film in mass attention and popularity" and India versus Pakistan games can even take nationalistic tone. India would later win the 2011 World Cup and with the advent of the lucrative Indian Premier League (IPL) in 2007, it has become the center of world cricket

economically. Aside from team sports, India has also produced billiard and chess champions and more recently, in badminton, wrestling, and boxing. Lastly, other than movies and sports, classical Indian music, dance, and live theatre are important social pastimes. Altogether, sports and movies have blurred state lines and have provided the general public something to cheer upon.

National unity was one of the pieces in India's survival—the stability of its democracy is the other. The right to vote remains and has largely remained uncorrupted over the years. More people vote today and vote from different backgrounds. Yogendra Yadav, a political analyst, points out, "India is perhaps the only large democracy in the world today where the turnout of the lower orders is well above that of the most privileged groups" (716). Ramachandra Guha has an interesting view on the state of India's democracy. He emphasizes that looking at the "hardware of democracy, self-congratulation is certainly merited" since "Indians enjoy freedom of expression, movement," and the right to the vote (738). On the other hand, if one considers the details or "examines the software of democracy, the picture is less cheering" (738). Guha exposes that "political parties have become family firms, most politicians are corrupt, many come from criminal background, institutions central to the functioning of a democracy have declined precipitously, and the percentage of truly independent-minded civil servants" and "fair-minded judges" has deteriorated as well (738). Given the extremes, how should India's democracy be viewed? According to the author, India is neither a 'proper' democracy, nor a 'sham' democracy. He answers this question by employing "an immortal phrase of the Hindi comic actor Johnny Walker—'Boss, *phipty-phipty*.'" The actor in the movie answers that he has a "50% of success and 50% of failure" regardless of the question he is asked, whether that is the likelihood of him marrying or getting a job (738). Guha asserts that, likewise, India is a 'phipty-

phipty' democracy. It is a functioning democracy because of its history of "holding election[s] and permitting freedom of movement and expression," yet it is not as functioning because of its "politicians and political institutions" (738). Another political scientist, Pratap Mehta, exhibits that India's political class has become full of "corruption, mediocrity, indisciple, venality and lack of moral imagination of the [Indian] political class" and that "the lines between legality and illegality, order and disorder, state and criminality, have come to be increasingly porous" (745). Yet, Ramachandra Guha concludes that the fact that "India is even 50% a democracy flies in the face of tradition, history, and conventional wisdom" (738). Guha asserts that "the distance—intellectual or moral—between Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi, or between B.R. Ambedkar and Mulayam Singh Yadav, is not necessarily greater than that between, say, Abraham Lincoln and George W. Bush" (745). Although 'visionaries' and statesmen are required to establish democracies, "they can be managed by mediocrities" (745). In India, Guha states, "the sapling was planted by the nation's founders, who lived long enough (and worked hard enough) to nurture it to adulthood. Those who came afterwards could disturb and degrade the tree of democracy but, try as they might, could not uproot or destroy it" (745).

An intriguing way to analyze India's modern history is by comparing its journey with other major regions. The author compares "independent India as being Europe's past as well as its future" (755). Economically, Europe's past is paralleled by India's "modernizing, industrializing, urbanizing society," but socially, India reflects the "European attempt to create a multilingual, multireligious, multi-ethnic political and economic community" (755). While India is the world largest 'multiethnic' democracy, the United States is the world's first 'multiethnic' democracy. Yet, the way in which the two countries regulate "relations between its constituent ethnicities have been somewhat different" (755). Samuel Huntingdon describes the U.S. as

being held together "by a 'creedal culture'" which have revolved around the "Christian religion, Protestant values, moralism, a work ethic, the English language, British traditions of law, justice, and the limits of government power, and a legacy of European art, literature, philosophy, and music" (755). Diversity in both nations are slightly dissimilar. America encompasses cultures from all around the world, while India's diversity comes from within. A salad bowl analogy has been utilized to describe both nations since different cultures do not necessarily melt together but coexist side by side. Next, China and India are the world's two most populous countries, and both began their journey around the same time. The only difference was that China adopted communism, while India adopted democracy. Over the last two decades, China has rapidly progressed economically. Yet, even though "China might win economically, [it] will lose politically" (737). As opposed to China, "in India, the press can print more or less what it likes, and citizens can say exactly what they feel, live where they want, and travel to any part of the country" (737). Lastly, several other sub-Saharan African countries and smaller Asian nations gained its independence in the mid-twentieth century at the downfall of colonial era. In terms of stability and progress, India has done well compared to several others of these independent states. Altogether, analyzing India's progress through the lens of other nations lead to some interesting insights.

All in all, India managed to survive and in several spheres of influence, even thrives. As seen in the previous essay, India's democracy suffered a scare during the Emergency between 1975-77. Yet, the "elections of 1977 (called by an individual who had proven dictatorial tendencies) and the elections of 2004 (called by a party unreliably committed to democratic procedure) both testified to the deep roots that democracy had put down in the soil of India (744). Scientist Haldane called India a 'wonderful experiment' and fifty years later, the

experiment "might be counted as a modest success" (759). Although poverty persists in certain places, it is declining rapidly, and it is "certain that India will not the way of sub-Saharan Africa, and experience widespread famine" (759). Although secessionist movements are alive in certain regions, "there is no fear anymore that India will follow the former Yugoslavia and break up into a dozen fratricidal parts" (759). Although some politicians are corrupt and "powers of the state are sometimes grossly abused, no one seriously thinks that India will follow neighboring Pakistan" (759). Guha describes India's journey as 'simply sui generis.' India's story "stands on its own, different and distinct from alternative political models such as Anglo-Saxon liberalism, French republicanism, atheistic communism, and Islamic theocracy" (759). Guha concludes by stating the following:

"Speaking now of India the nation state, one must insist that its future lies not in the hands of God but in the mundane works of men. So long as the constitution is not amended beyond recognition, so long as elections are held regularly and fairly and the ethos of secularism broadly prevails, so long as citizens can speak and write in the language of their choosing, so long as there is an integrated market and moderately efficient civil service and army—and lest I forget—so long as Hindi films are watched and their songs sung, India will survive'" (759).

India's journey as a modern nation began at a troubling junction with the Partition, civil war, and refugee resettlement. Under Nehru and Patel, India integrated into one state and formed a stable democracy. In the 1960s, India lost to China, but revamped its military to survive the threats from Pakistan. In 1971, Bangladesh was liberalized and Indira Gandhi came to the forefront. A few years later, she would call the Emergency and paralyze Indian democracy. After democracy was reinstated, the decade that followed would be filled with sectarian violence, riots, and assassinations. Yet, India would emerge at the turn of the twenty-first

century as a rising modern nation. Over the last twenty years, three coalition governments have successfully finished full terms, which reflects the strength of its democracy. Even though the right wing party is in power, India's secularism is not necessarily in danger. MJ Akbar describes that a modern nation is built upon four pillars comprised of (1) democracy (equal rights), (2) equality and freedom of faith, (3) gender equality, and (d) economic equity. In his analysis of modern India, India is progressing well on the first three, but its challenge is to bring economic equity. In any case, India's transformation from a devasted state, economically, politically, and socially, to a stable democracy has been an astonishing journey.