

1. Partition is important to the post-1947 history of India because it influenced how the nation was divided and how it would be united. It can be argued that partition of India had a stronger effect than Indian independence from Britain. As a direct result of Partition, problems occurred because of boundary arguments, princely-state integration, and power struggles between the ensuing Pakistan and Indian nations.

The problems that came up were numerous, but the first was the argument over borders. The plan by which to divide the nation was not well set up. Gandhi's objective was to keep the nation as a whole together, creating a multi-religious nation. Jinnah of the Muslim League sought a separation of Pakistan so as to protect the rights of Muslims who were not the Indian majority (Guha, 44). Lord Mountbatten announced a withdrawal date in August 1947 which was much sooner than expected (Guha, 48), so the lines had to be drawn to create the separate nations quickly. Sir Cyril Radcliffe was commissioned to divide the areas, even though he knew very little about the wide assortment of Indian states. Many regions, the Punjab and Bengal especially, were very difficult areas to partition because they did not simply contain Muslims or Hindus or Sikhs, but a cultural mixture of many different groups. Jinnah and The Muslim League could not secure a majority of the popular votes, and were fearful of a Hindu-preferring India. While division conferences were held concerning power and land for each country, arguments became more common. The geography of India is also so vast and diverse as well, that divisions could hardly be made in a way that seemed fair to everybody. So many people were uprooted because they were forced to move to the country of their religious affiliation: Hindus to India, and Muslims to Pakistan. This contributed to the riots, violence, and displacement that occurred and upset many areas.

Another problem was how to unite the nation, which was divided into a collection of states. The states (numbering more than 500) had powers given to the princely leaders of each area by the British. The INC called upon each to become a nation of India, but many of them enjoyed their position, although few of them had much real power under British rule. Integrating the states proved difficult to Nehru, Patel, and Mountbatten, who drew up contracts (Instruments of Accession) (Guha, 56) where princes would relinquish some of their powers to the nation of India. One by one, the states joined the union, realizing independence without the British protection would be difficult if not impossible to maintain. Some wished to remain independent such as Travancore (Guha, 61). Others were undecided on which they should join, India or Pakistan. Some had Hindu leaders but a Muslim majority, and others vice-versa. Others such as Jodhpur (Guha, 63) were overwhelmingly Hindu, but their position close to Pakistan seemed equally tempting. The challenging task was eventually completed, but not without much work and compromise collecting the individual states, especially by V.P. Menon, who had negotiated on many different levels in an effort to secure the independent nationhood of India (Guha, 72).

Partition led to debates over which country would occupy several different states. One of the most heated areas debated over was Kashmir. The state was mostly Muslim but with a Hindu ruler (Guha, 74). Both countries-to-be fought to secure control over the area. Activists in Poonch demanded that Kashmir adjoin to Pakistan, but were denied, and it was thought that Pakistan influenced troops to advance on the Kashmir area (Guha, 79). The INC persuaded Kashmir leaders to sign the Instruments of Accession in repayment for helping fight off the troops. The

area was never formally divided or acceded to either nation, and the area is still debated over to this day, and has caused troubles for the Pakistan-Indian relationship (Guha, 95). States with similar scenarios to Kashmir were fought over, but the disagreement over Kashmir continues to present times. Pakistan and India became very different areas due to Partition, for the reason that they had strong similarities before the division. This started riots and massacres that led to a severe animosity between the two countries and continued for many years.

2. I believe the leaders of the INC and Constituent Assembly made the right choice in moving away from Gandhi's vision for independent India. The "Gandhian constitution," with the primary unit of governance as the basic village, would promote "localism, ..., narrow-mindedness, and communalism," as condemned by B. R. Ambedkar (Guha, 119).

The Gandhian idea might allow minority voices to be heard more easily, but others argued that a village government would end up very despotic, as was seen with the princely states before British rule. The Constituent Assembly was better off modeling its government from democratic precedents used by the Swiss, United States and Britain (Guha, 119). Even though they were not chosen ultimately, consideration for a system involving proportional representation left a large and effective mark on the Indian Constitution. One of the biggest pitfalls of the Gandhian constitution would be that there was no universal adult franchise. With a village government elected by elders, the individual would lose their way of expression in government. Concentrating the basic unit on the individual instead would be more effective than the village republics that Ambedkar said "ha(d) been the ruination of India," (Guha 119) in the past. The modified British Monarchy that India ended up with was criticized for having "nothing Gandhian in th(e) Constitution," by some (Guha, 121). Strong Indian nationalists fought for a Constitution more unique to their particular nation, but learning from past and current governmental systems, and modifying them to fit the Indian nation was a well-thought-out plan in my opinion.

The constituent assembly already contained many minorities, religions, classes, castes, and both genders to ensure there would be no overpowering by one single faction (Guha, 116). Gandhi set precedents and principles that had many effects on the Assembly, and for good cause. His former actions made sure that representation did not stray too far from the village system, ensuring the rights of groups such as the untouchables. Ambedkar proved to be a strong leader in the Constituent Assembly. He was very against the Gandhian approach to government, but was aware that "too much centralization" (Guha, 132) could also lead to severe problems and arguments. The Assembly did not decide ultimately on a governmental system that was too far or near to Gandhi's view. Gandhi was an effective and popular leader, but his view of independence had too much room for error with a government dependent on the village system.

3. The biggest problem confronting the new Indian state was the refugees displaced by Partition. The need for more land, supplies and jobs, violent attacks, and the physical and mental pains of displacement for so many people made the refugee crisis a problem of foremost importance. The integration of the Princely States was a large issue, but the government, while not yet a formal one was still able to control the issue because the creation of the Indian Nation was such a necessary goal. The INC was so prominent that extremist groups and fissures within the Congress held little force against the strength that it already possessed. The reason for refugees being such a massive problem compared to these issues was due to the incredible amount of people it affected.

Numerous camps were set up for refugees fleeing the new nation of Pakistan, but nowhere near enough to provide for the masses, numbering close to 8 million (Guha, 113). Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, and many other areas were overwhelmed by the influx of people, and cities and outlying areas were transformed into tented landscapes of homeless Indians. Non-refugee citizens became upset by the amount of people who overtook their cities, especially in Delhi, where immigrants came to “gain a commanding influence” (Guha, 102). India needed help providing for the masses and social workers came to aid from Indian areas as well as foreign countries (Guha, 98). People displaced from their workable land asked for allotments and a standardized procedure was created to give people land based on how much they held previous to partition, but in percentages because there were so many in need (Guha, 99). Those with other jobs were helped to get back on their feet through service groups and shelters, but many still had little to do and were confined to horrible living conditions. Food shortages furthered the sickness in these camps. People also were removed from their normal and sacred places of worship, and areas of the region that their families had been connected to for many years. They would not be able return or move these with them, and were forced to create new ways of practice while adjusting to this more difficult lifestyle (Guha, 104).

One of the most disturbing aspects of the refugee problem was the treatment of women fleeing Pakistan. There were massacres and violence for many refugees, but women and younger girls were targeted and abducted, breaking up many families, but over 12,500 women were returned thanks to government efforts (Guha, 108). The harsh conditions that immigrants faced helped breed participation in radical extremist movements (Guha, 105) challenging the government and gaining popularity for the communist party at times, but this was able to be controlled by the government and an even stronger Indian pride in building the new nation. The problem of refugees outweighs any other problem connected to the newly independent India, because it illustrates the struggles that so many people faced on personal levels.

4. The film, *Dynasty: the Nehru Gandhi Story* contributes to the period of Indian history we have been learning about but does oversimplify it. It focuses on specific people and their personal histories more, while Guha’s text tells a more broad and enveloping history of the Indian Nation.

Both the film and our text have different ways of introducing important figures in the history of India. *Dynasty* becomes more involved in the lives and history of Gandhi, Nehru, Jinnah, Lord Mountbatten, and his wife. The text generalizes their backgrounds and offers just as much information as necessary to understand their impact on a situation. For example, the text introduces Gandhi in the preface from a historical background based on what he was remembered for most (Guha, 12). It then comes back to him throughout the chapters when he is relevant to the situation. *Dynasty* begins with a more in-depth biography of each character, detailing their personal background and where they studied. This is the opposite for events and situations pertaining to Indian history. The film connects an event to an individual, but the text describes the event before going into more detail based on how someone affected or felt about it. In the film, the fight over Kashmir is touched upon briefly compared to the chapter it is given in Guha’s text. *Dynasty* automatically takes the stance that Pakistan encouraged Muslim tribes to invade Kashmir. In the text, both sides of the argument are presented, and details of the fighting and negotiations about Kashmir last for a whole chapter (Guha, 74-96).

The relationship between Nehru and Lord Mountbatten’s wife is detailed in the film, probably because it is more interesting through the media of film than in writing. This is only

touched upon in our readings though because it relates little to Indian history. *Dynasty* provides great footage of these individuals, as well as interviews with living persons, which makes it difficult to concentrate on events, which are difficult to film as a whole. In order to be more entertaining, centering a film around characters is certainly effective, but less relative to the history behind the subject.