

History
UNFOLDING

CHINA AND JAPAN IN THE MODERN AGE



MindSparks
CHALLENGING STUDENTS TO THINK HISTORICALLY

Contents

Introduction	2
Lesson 1	Japan: The Meiji Revolution	4
Lesson 2	China: The Old Order Passes	8
Lesson 3	Japan: Ashes to Asian Superpower	12
Lesson 4	China: Mao and the Future of a Revolution	16
Appendix	Image Close-ups	21

Introduction

Two Nations, Two Paths

The story of China and Japan since the mid-1800s is the story of two parallel responses to the West and to the forces of modernization. Both nations were forced to react to the aggressive actions of Westerners seeking to open them up to trade. Both regarded the West as a mortal threat and took steps to protect themselves accordingly.

But their responses were vastly different.

Japan acted with amazing unity to absorb as much of the West's ways as it needed to industrialize, centralize, and create a fully modern state in an amazingly short space of time. China, on the other hand, took a long and tortuous path to modernity, a path along which it is still struggling today.

Together, the stories of these two great nations illustrate an important point. However much the West may have dominated other regions, those other regions were always active participants in their histories, not the mere passive pawns of others.

This set uses 12 visual displays to focus on several key themes in these stories, comparing and contrasting them at key points along the way. Each lesson uses three visual displays to explore one broad topic. Briefly, the four lessons are as follows:

Japan: The Meiji Revolution

The focus here is on the spirit of reform and the nature of the changes that transformed Japan into a powerful industrial nation in less than half a century. Several Japanese works of art are used to illustrate the spirit of the times for Japanese living through this transformation.

China: The Old Order Passes

The illustrations focus on China's clash with the West and the divided way its leaders responded to the challenge. As a result, warlordism, civil war, and invasion plagued China throughout the first half of the 20th century.

Japan: Ashes to Asian Superpower

Japan's rise to industrial power was flawed. Its weak form of democracy gave way to militarism, dictatorship, war, and disaster. But in a new Meiji-like era after the war, it again drew strength from the West and recreated itself into a thriving and democratic industrial superpower.

China: Mao and the Future of a Revolution

Mao Zedong's totalitarian communist state finally established China as a fully independent state, but at an enormous cost. After the disasters of Mao's rule, China has moved slowly to reform and to abandon the worst excesses of communism, at least with respect to its economy. In many ways, it is even still struggling to find its own route to modernity.

Using Photos, Cartoons, and Other Visuals to Teach History

Many textbooks are full of colorful visuals. However, all too often these visuals function primarily as window dressing. They make the text more entertaining, or at least more palatable. Only occasionally do the visuals in textbooks do more than offer simple pictorial reinforcement of ideas already presented in the text. In many cases, they pander to the visual orientation of the young while doing little to help young people master the challenges of the visual media that dominate their lives.

By way of contrast, our approach to using visual materials emphasizes their unique strengths as historical documents. The lessons in this booklet focus students on the visual symbols and metaphors in editorial cartoons, the dramatic qualities of certain photographs, the potential of many images to make abstract ideas more specific and concrete, the implicit biases and stereotypes in certain images, their emotional power, and their ability to invoke the spirit of a time and place. In the process, we make every effort to strengthen students' visual literacy skills in general, as well as their ability to think critically and engage in spirited but disciplined discussions.

How to Use This Booklet

The booklet is divided into four lessons, with three illustrations per lesson. Each lesson consists of the following:

A BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET This page provides brief summaries explaining the three illustrations on which the lesson is based and their relevance to the lesson's objectives.

DIGITAL IMAGES The booklet's PDF allows you to project the images for use in your class discussions.

DISCUSSION-ACTIVITY SHEETS

Each sheet displays one illustration. It includes a sequence of questions to help you plan an all-class discussion while using the projected images. The questions take students step by step through an analysis of the illustration. If you wish, you may reproduce these pages and hand them out. In addition to the discussion questions on the illustration itself, one or two follow-up activities are suggested. Some of these can be made into individual assignments. Others will work best as small-group or all-class activities.

OBJECTIVE

1. Students will better understand how rapid and sweeping Japan's response to Western pressures was after Commodore Perry forced it to open its ports to trade with the West.

Japan:

The Meiji Revolution

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustrations 1A, 1B & 1C**

In 1853, U.S. Commodore Matthew C. Perry's squadron opened Japan to trade (Illustration 1A), ending Japan's isolation from the West. He also sparked an upheaval that in 40 years turned Japan into Asia's first fully industrialized nation. Japan's old order might have changed anyway. Its military leader, the shogun, faced growing criticism. Two centuries of isolation and peace had produced strains—a growing population, angry peasants, restless merchants, and discontent among the powerful ruling families known as daimyo. In the 1860s, they ended the shogunate and restored the emperor as the symbol of a united nation. The young emperor, Prince Mutsuhito, took the name Meiji (“enlightened rule”) and backed reformers who sought to modernize Japan. He and his wife, Empress Shoken, appear here in Illustrations 1C and 1B.

Illustrations 2A & 2B

To cope with the West, Japan first set about learning from it. Experts were sent to Europe and the U.S. to bring back the best ideas in science, education, technology, and government. With amazing speed, Japan adopted what it needed to modernize, as these paintings suggest. Illustration 2A is a Japanese print from 1870 showing various forms of traditional and modern transportation in Japan. Illustration 2B is one panel of an 1871 triptych print showing foreign and Japanese people on a street, some wearing traditional clothing, others more modern forms of dress. The triptych is by well-known Japanese artist Hiroshige III.

Illustrations 3A & 3B

As Japan modernized, feelings of national pride soared even as Japan hurried to copy many ideas and institutions from the Western nations. In doing this, Japan opened itself up to the West at a time of rapid industrial growth and during the rise of huge corporations reaching worldwide markets. This is suggested by Illustration 3A, an 1892 ad for Singer sewing machines. It shows many small scenes of people all over the world using these machines. Modernization was so rapid, it must often have left the Japanese feeling bewildered. Illustration 3B is another Hiroshige III panel of what was supposedly an American town square. It is actually based on an illustration of the Fredericksburg Castle near Copenhagen, Denmark.

Lesson 1—Japan: The Meiji Revolution

Illustrations 1A, 1B & 1C

1B

1C

1A



Stock Montage, Inc.



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustrations

1. In 1853, a special visit sparked one of the biggest turning points in Japan's history. Using Illustration 1A, explain briefly what this visit was. Why do you think it was an important turning point? What point of view about this visit does the painting express?
2. For two centuries before Perry's visit, Japan was ruled by the shogun—though there also was an emperor. What do you know about the shogun and the emperor in Japan?
3. The shogun shared control with powerful landowners called *daimyo*. After 1853, some *daimyo* overthrew the shogun and began the Meiji Restoration. What was this, and why is it called a "restoration"?
4. Illustrations 1B and 1C are of Empress Shoken and her husband Prince Mutsuhito, who became Japan's new Meiji emperor in 1868. "Meiji" means "enlightened rule." The Meiji era was more a revolution than a restoration. Can you explain why? What can you tell about Japan's emperor from these two photos?

Follow-up Activity

1. **Small-group activity:** The Meiji Restoration put an end to the long reign of the Tokugawa Shogunate, which had come to power in Japan in the 1600s. Learn more about the Tokugawa Shogunate, its rise to power, and the nature of the political system in Japan during its rule. In particular, assign one or two group members to learn more about each of the following four figures or groups from the Tokugawa era:

The Emperor
The Tokugawa Shoguns
The Daimyo
The Samurai

Create a timeline of key events in the history of the Tokugawa Shogunate. Use the timeline and what you have learned in a brief talk summarizing its history and the nature of its political system. Open the talk to discussion centered on this question: "Why was the Tokugawa Shogunate a time when Japan tried so hard to isolate itself from the West?"

Lesson 1—Japan: The Meiji Revolution

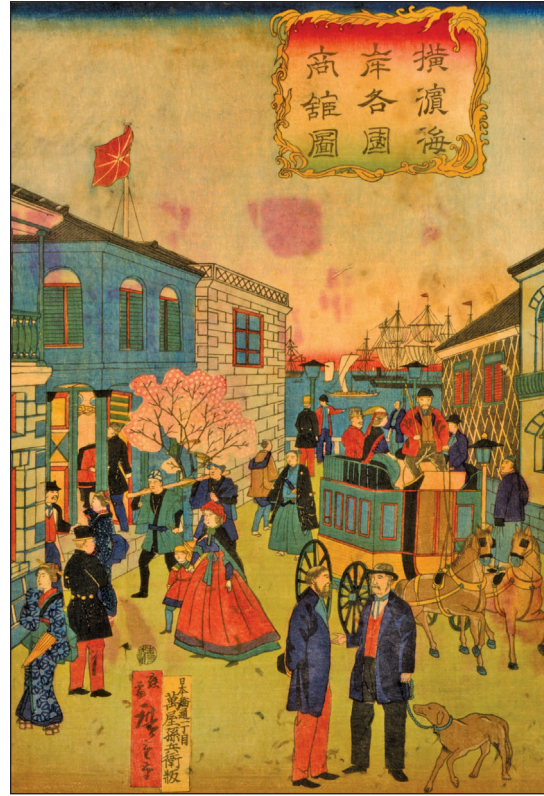
Illustrations 2A & 2B

2A



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

2B



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

Discussing the Illustrations

1. With incredible speed, Japan began learning all it could from the industrialized nations of the West. Both of these paintings from the late 1800s are evidence of the huge changes this brought about in Japan. Actually, Illustration 2A, by an unknown Japanese artist, is evidence of both change and continuity. Can you explain why?
2. Why do you think a Japanese artist might find these various forms of transportation such interesting subjects for a work of art?
3. Illustration 2B is a painting by a famous artist named Hiroshige III (1843–1894). This painting shows Japanese and foreign people on a city street. It too might be seen as evidence of both change and continuity in Japanese life. Can you explain why?
4. What attitude, if any, can you detect in these two paintings toward the new Japan under the Meiji reforms? Explain your answer.

Follow-up Activity

1. **Small-group activity:** Hiroshige III painted a whole series of scenes called “Famous Places on the Tokaido: A Record of the Process of Reform,” issued early in the Meiji Restoration. The Tokaido is a road linking Kyoto and Edo (present-day Tokyo). This road was very important during both the Tokugawa Shogunate and the Meiji era. Learn more about it and its role in Japan in both eras. Create a map of this road. A Tokugawa rule for the *daimyo*, known as *Sankin kotai* (or the “alternate residence” system), added to the social and cultural importance of the Tokaido. Find out why. Finally, learn more about a more famous artist also named Hiroshige—Ando Hiroshige (1797–1858). In the 1830s, he produced a series of paintings of the Tokaido, called *Fifty-Three Stages of the Tokaido*. Learn more about him and find copies of some of his prints from this more famous series of Tokaido illustrations. Use these, your map, and what you have learned in a colorful and entertaining report on the Tokaido.

Lesson 1—Japan: The Meiji Revolution

Illustrations 3A & 3B

3A



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

3B



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

Discussing the Illustrations

1. The Meiji era, when Japan opened its country up to outside influences, was also a time when Western societies were reaching new heights of economic and political power. What are some examples of that growing power of the West in the late 1800s?
2. Large corporations emerged in America and Europe and had a huge impact on many nations, including Japan. How does Illustration 3A, a Singer sewing machine ad, provide evidence of this?
3. Japan increased its trade with the U.S. and Europe. It also came to admire and copy many of the economic, political, and cultural institutions of those societies. The effect of this on the Japanese must have been bewildering. Illustration 3B is another Hiroshige III painting. It is supposedly of an American city, but is actually based on a drawing of Copenhagen. In what nation is Copenhagen? How can you tell this is not actually an American city? In what way might this painting be evidence both of Japanese admiration for, yet also confusion about, the West?

Follow-up Activities

1. Another famous Japanese artist of the Meiji era was Tsukioka Yoshitoshi, a.k.a Taiso Yoshitoshi (1839–1892). Learn more about him. One account of his life says this about him: “The struggle for survival in a new world and the constant fight between tradition and Westernization characterized his life.” Prepare a brief talk to the class on Yoshitoshi, in which you explain this one-sentence description of his life.
2. Meiji era reforms were carried out by a small and powerful elite, but the reformers did create a political system based on an elected parliament. They studied several such systems in the West and decided mainly to use Germany’s as their model. Learn more about Germany’s form of government in the late 1800s and about the government Japan developed. Summarize your findings in a brief essay. In it, take a stand for or against this statement: “By copying Germany, Japan’s attempt to create a democratic system of government was doomed to fail.”

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will better understand the turmoil and the anger at foreign influence that developed in China by the late 1800s.
2. Students will compare the different responses to the West by China and Japan and some reasons for those differences.

China:

The Old Order Passes

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustrations 1A & 1B**

China is a vast nation, poor and hard to unite. Over the centuries, it was invaded many times. Perhaps because of this, it viewed the West with deep suspicion in the 1800s, and it was less willing than Japan to copy Western ways. It also reacted against the violence the West used to open China to trade and gain control over it. Before China could begin to reform, several European states (and Japan) demanded and won special rights in various parts of the country. For all these reasons, China's rulers were never able to come together on a plan to modernize, as Japan's did. Unlike the Meiji Emperor, China's Manchu Empress Dowager Cixi (Illustration 1A) mainly backed officials at court who opposed reform. China's road to a more modern society would be a long and difficult one.

Illustration 2

There were those who wanted to reform and strengthen China, but more often than in Japan, they ended up fighting and creating chaos rather than change. Take as an example the "Society of Righteous Fists," known in the West as the "Boxers." Their intense hatred of foreigners and foreign control over China led them to attack Chinese Christians and foreigners in a rebellion that began in 1898. This rebellion only resulted in more Western control over China. Here, Western armies attack the Boxers to free foreign diplomats being held in Beijing.

Illustrations 3A, 3B & 3C

As troubles mounted, China's Manchu rulers lost power. In the early 1900s, hope for reform lay mainly with Sun Yat-sen (Sun Yixian, in Pinyin romanization) shown in Illustration 3A. A revolution in 1911 briefly brought him and his alliance to power, but he quickly lost control. Soon military warlords plunged China into chaos and civil war. After Sun's death, his successor Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi) did unite much of China under the rule of Sun's political party, the Kuomintang. Illustration 3B is of Chiang. Chiang briefly allied himself with Soviet Russia and with China's communist movement. But in 1927, he turned against the communists. For more than 20 years after that, he would battle with communist leader Mao Zedong (Illustration 3C) for control of China. In the end, China's future would be determined much more by Mao than by Sun Yat-sen or Chiang Kai-shek.

Lesson 2—China: The Old Order Passes

Illustrations 1A & 1B

1A



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

1B



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustrations

1. Illustration 1A is of the Empress Dowager Cixi (died 1908). Like Japan's Meiji emperor, she was the most powerful figure in the royal family of another huge and ancient Asian nation. Can you name it? What can you tell about China in the early 1900s by analyzing both Illustration 1A and Illustration 1B?
2. China is a huge nation, different from Japan in many ways. But up until the mid-1800s, it was like Japan in its attitude toward the West and toward trade with the West. Can you explain?
3. Compared to Japan, China's rulers were much more divided about how to respond to the West and its demands for trade. Some wanted to reform China, but the Empress Dowager backed those opposed to rapid reform. Historians say China's geography, its social turmoil in the 1800s, and the Confucian ethics of its ruling officials all help explain why it failed to reform as smoothly as Japan did. How might these factors help explain China's failure to reform in the late 1800s?

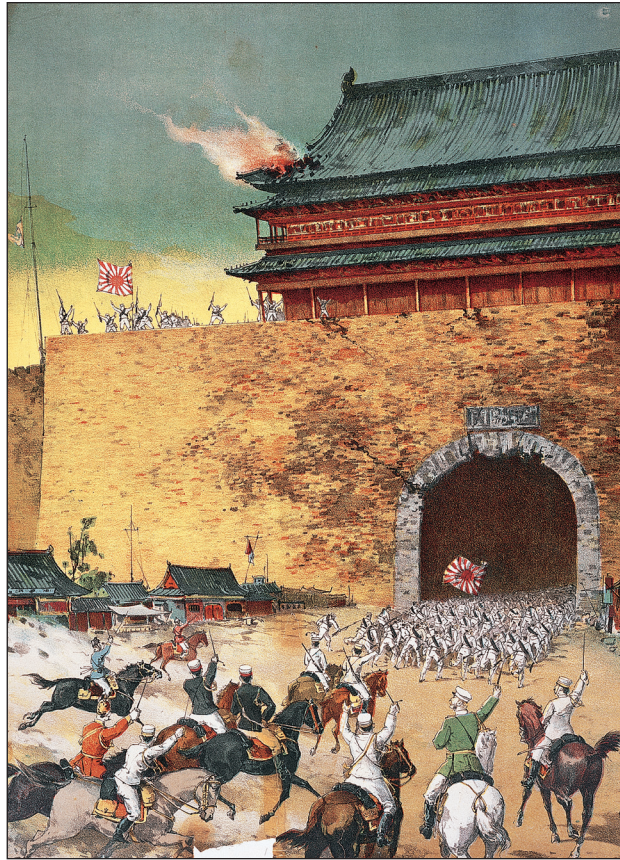
Follow-up Activity

1. **Small-group activity:** Your task is to read more about similarities and differences between Japan and China in the 1800s. Your goal is to prepare a report to the class in which you try to evaluate this historian's statement:

Japan opened itself to the West under circumstances far different from those which accompanied the opening of China. China was ruled by a centralized and thoroughly bureaucratic government long accustomed to the idea that China was the heart of civilization. The Chinese government responded to the West with disdain, believing there was little of value to be learned from foreigners. They never really understood the seriousness of the western challenge.

Use the above statement as the focus of your group's report to the class. Organize your report in such a way as to explain the statement fully and offer your views as to its validity.

Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. Both Japan and China saw the West as a threat. Yet in China, that threat led to much more violent conflict. This painting is of a key clash in one such conflict, the Boxer Uprising. What was this uprising about?
2. The painting shows Western troops freeing the foreign quarters besieged by the Boxers in 1900. The West saw the Boxers as ruthless and barbaric. But many Chinese saw them as only reacting to equally ruthless treatment by the West, such as the two Opium Wars, the “unequal treaties,” and the “spheres of influence” that followed. From what you know about these things, why would they have angered and humiliated the Chinese?
3. What point of view about the Boxers and the West does this painting appear to express? Why?
4. Empress Cixi opposed Westernizing reforms. After some hesitation, she backed the Boxers’ attacks on Western diplomats and missionaries. Was this justifiable? Was it wise? Explain.

Follow-up Activities

1. The Boxer Uprising cannot be understood without knowing more about the Opium Wars of 1838–1842 and 1856–1860. Learn more about these two wars. Write a brief essay about the wars. In the essay, explain why the Boxer Uprising cannot be understood without knowing more about these two wars.
2. **Small-group activity:** The term “Boxers” was used for a group whose actual name has been translated as “Society of Righteous Fists” or “Society of Righteousness and Harmony.” Learn more about the Boxers. Now pretend you are the editors of an American newspaper. It is days after the events shown in Illustration 2 (from the summer of 1900). You decide to use this illustration as part of your front page. Assign each group member the task of writing one story on some aspect of the Boxer Uprising. Go back at least to the start of the troubles in 1898. Write your stories, edit them, and design your front page. Include a timeline with the stories. Post your front page on the bulletin board.

Lesson 2—China: The Old Order Passes

Illustrations 3A, 3B & 3C

3A



3B



3C



All images courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustrations

1. These three men dominated the history of China in the 20th century, at least up until 1976. The man in Illustration 3A inspired a revolution that brought an end to the Manchus' Qing dynasty and to China's entire history of dynastic rule. Can you identify him and the year this revolution took place?
2. Sun Yat-sen did not rule China for long. And throughout the 1920s, various warlords fought for power, as did the party Sun founded. Illustration 3B is of the man who led that party after Sun's death in 1925. Can you identify him and the political party he led? What, if anything, do Illustrations 3A and 3B suggest about the differences between these two men?
3. Chiang ruled much of China in the late 1920s and 1930s. But the final victor in the struggle to establish a new government and society in China is the man in Illustration 3C. Who is he? How does the illustration help to suggest what his ideas were and the kind of government and society he sought to create?

Follow-up Activities

1. Sun Yat-sen was briefly in charge of China in 1912, as president of a provisional government during the political upheaval that had begun in 1911. However, two months later he gave way and agreed to let a general named Yuan Shikai become the first president of the Republic of China. From then until 1949, China rarely had a single government able to fully unite the nation. Create a detailed timeline to help students sort out the shifting fortunes of the various contenders for power in China from 1911–1949. Use your timeline and the overhead of the above illustrations in a short talk to the class on "China in Turmoil: 1911–1949."
2. **Small-group activity:** How accurate an impression does each of the above illustrations give of the man it depicts? As a group, divide the task of learning more about these men. Then write brief reports to accompany each image that answer this question: "Does this image give the viewer a good sense of this leader's personality and his political impact on China and its history?"

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will understand how a flawed democratic system led to militarism and war in Japan in the 1930s.
2. Students will appreciate the amazing recovery Japan made under U.S. occupation and later in the postwar era.

Japan: Ashes to Asian Superpower

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustrations 1A & 1B**

In the 1920s, Japan was recognized by all as a major world power. And for a time, it was also seen as a democratic one. Its constitution provided for a parliament, the Japanese Diet. But from the start, a small group of former nobles, military leaders, and powerful business groups held a great deal of power over Japan's government. In the 1930s, in the crisis of the worldwide depression, the military took near-total control of Japan. As Illustration 1A shows, Japan began to pursue a dream of empire. First it conquered Manchuria in 1931. Fighting later spread to many parts of China. In World War II, Japan allied with Nazi Germany, hoping to impose its "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" over most of Asia. Instead, it fought to the bitter end against the United States. In 1945, its dream of empire turned into the atomic ashes of total defeat.

Illustrations 2A–2D

In August 1945, Japan's emperor asked his people to accept surrender, "enduring the unendurable and suffering what is insufferable." And yet the American occupation that followed was not unendurable. The U.S. aim was less to punish Japan than to change it and end its glorification of militarism and conquest. Under U.S. occupation, Japan again proved an amazing ability to learn from outsiders and revive itself. It disbanded its military forces, gave up its imperial possessions, created a democracy, granted women the vote, encouraged labor unions, and redistributed land. It opened itself to a society-wide debate about its entire culture and system of values. Illustrations 2A–2D, including part of one official U.S. document, touch on certain aspects of these big changes.

Illustrations 3A & 3B

During the occupation, powerful groupings of industrial businesses known as zaibatsu were broken up. But Japan's market economy continued to be tightly controlled by similar business groupings and by government. For a while, this control helped Japan forge ahead by directing investment efficiently into new technologies and export industries. In time, this same tight control led to problems, and Japan's growth slowed. Yet the Tokyo skyline and the Meiji shrine at its center are dramatic evidence that the Meiji revolution and ancient traditions are both alive, still pushing Japan forward as Asia's economic powerhouse.

Lesson 3—Japan: Ashes to Asian Superpower

Illustrations 1A & 1B

1A



The Granger Collection, New York

1B



The National Archives

Discussing the Illustrations

1. In the 1920s, many thought Japan had become a peaceful, democratic industrial nation. How did that change in the 1930s? Why do you think democracy failed in Japan in the 1930s?
2. Throughout the 1930s and '40s, Mao and Chiang battled one another for control of China. But during those years both also had to deal with an even greater danger to China. Use Illustration 1A (a 1937 political cartoon captioned "Piece by Piece") to explain why. How does this U.S. cartoon depict Japan and China? How do these depictions reveal the artist's own point of view?
3. Japan allied with Nazi Germany in World War II. What do you think Japan hoped to achieve by allying itself with the Nazis and by attacking the U.S. at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941?
4. Japan's imperial dreams led the nation to utter ruin, as the scene of Nagasaki in Illustration 1B makes horribly clear. Can you explain?

Follow-up Activities

1. In 1937, a full-scale war broke out between Japan and China. To get a sense of what it was like, read Iris Chang's *The Rape of Nanking: The Forgotten Holocaust of World War II* (New York: Basic Books, 1997). Prepare a brief talk on this book for the class.
2. **Small-group activity:** Were the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki justified? Among many books on this topic, a key one against dropping the bomb is *Atomic Diplomacy*, by Gar Alperovitz (Simon and Schuster, 1965) along with his later *The Decision to Use the Atomic Bomb* (Knopf, 1995). In support of dropping the bomb, see Barton Bernstein, "The Atomic Bombings Reconsidered," in the periodical *Foreign Affairs* [74(1), 1995], or Donald Kagan, "Why America Dropped the Bomb," in *Commentary* (September 1995). As a group, learn more about each side in this debate. Then divide the group in two and conduct your own debate in front of the class. Use facts and figures to support your side. Give the rest of the class a chance to join in the debate.

Lesson 3—Japan: Ashes to Asian Superpower

Illustrations 2A–2D

2A



STUDENTS PLAY A RESPECTED ROLE IN UNESCO MEETINGS.

2B



2C



2D

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CIVIL INFORMATION AND EDUCATION SECTION ARE CENTERED IN FIELDS WHERE THE RESULTS CANNOT BE MEASURED EASILY OR OBJECTIVELY. THEY DEAL LARGELY WITH INTANGIBLES, WITH MATTERS CLOSELY RELATED TO THE THOUGHT AND CULTURE PATTERNS OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE. THESE PATTERNS HAVE EXISTED FOR YEARS, EVEN CENTURIES, AND IT WAS RECOGNIZED IN THE BEGINNING THAT ATTEMPTS TO ALTER THEM OVERNIGHT WOULD RESULT IN MISUNDERSTANDING AND CONFUSION. INTENSIVE STUDY AND CAREFUL PLANNING HAVE BEEN GRADUAL AND ARE IN THE MAIN THE RESULT OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE JAPANESE THEMSELVES. THE PERSONNEL OF THIS SECTION SERVE IN ADVISORY CAPACITIES TO JAPANESE AGENCIES AND GROUPS.

All images courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustrations

1. These photos and the written document all concern Japan under the U.S. occupation in the 1940s, after the end of the war. Who was in charge of the U.S. occupation of Japan?
2. The U.S. occupation's aim was not as much to punish Japan as it was to change Japan. How do the three photos and the written document here suggest what the goals of the U.S. occupation were?
3. Summarize some of the major changes in Japan that were achieved during the U.S. occupation.
4. In a way, Japan's defeat in 1945 led to another time like the Meiji era. That is, Japan again completely transformed itself in response to ideas and pressures from the West. Why do you think the Japanese were so open to making these changes?

Follow-up Activity

1. Historian Paul Johnson says this about General MacArthur and the U.S. occupation of Japan:

[MacArthur] was able to play the role of enlightened despot and impose on Japan a revolution from above, like the Meiji Restoration of the 1860s. . . . Taken in conjunction with other Occupation laws, creating free trade unions, a free press and devolved control of the police (the armed forces as such were abolished), the constitution, and the "American era" which it epitomized, succeeded in destroying the mesmeristic hold the state had hitherto exercised over the Japanese people.

As a group, read more about the U.S. occupation of Japan. Prepare a report on your findings for the class. Use Johnson's statement as the focus of your group's report. Organize your report in such a way as to explain the statement fully and offer your own views as to its validity.

Lesson 3—Japan: Ashes to Asian Superpower

Illustrations 3A & 3B

3A



© Instructional Resources Corporation

3B



© Instructional Resources Corporation

Discussing the Illustrations

1. Illustration 3A shows the modern skyline of Tokyo. Illustration 3B shows the Imperial Palace in the heart of modern Tokyo. How do these illustrations together help to tell the story of Japan in the years since the U.S. occupation?
2. In World War II, Japan sought a huge empire, in part to secure supplies of vital resources, especially oil. Yet after the war, it needed no empire at all to recover and become Asia's supreme economic superpower. What might be some reasons for this?
3. Japan worked hard to reassure other Asian nations that it no longer intended to adopt any warlike and expansionist policies. Yet suspicions and hard feelings continue to be felt throughout the region. Do you think such suspicions and hard feelings are justified? Do you think Japan has in fact reached a point where it will no longer be a military threat to its neighbors? Explain your answers.

Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** Create a visual record of Japan's rise from the ashes of defeat in World War II to the Asian economic superpower it is today. Look through old news magazines and illustrated histories of Japan during and after the war. If possible, scan images or create slides as part of a presentation or bulletin-board display. Include a broad range of images, and write a paragraph for each image explaining why you included it in the display.
2. **Small-group activity:** How have America's views of Japan since the war changed over time? To find out, do a spot-check of articles on Japan by going to the library and looking through past issues of *Time*, *Newsweek*, or other weekly news magazines. Have each group member look for articles on Japan in one of the following sets of years: 1947–48, 1967–68, 1987–88, and 1997–98. Select one or two passages that seem typical of the times for each of these sets of years. Use these in a brief group talk to the class on how our views of Japan have changed since 1945.

OBJECTIVES

1. Students will better understand the nature of communism in China under Mao Zedong.
2. Students will discuss the pros and cons of recent efforts at reform in China.

China: Mao and the Future of a Revolution

Use the background information on this page to help your students better understand the three illustrations making up this lesson. The questions and activities presented in the rest of the lesson can be used to help students clarify meanings and debate important issues.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION**Illustration 1**

In 1949, the long civil war between Chiang's Kuomintang and Mao's Communist Party ended with Mao's victory. China was united, and all foreign control over it ended. However, Mao's desire to remake China into a perfect communist society led to new and destructive upheavals. One was the "Great Leap Forward." This was an effort to develop China's industry completely from within. As part of it, villages and factories made steel in so-called "backyard furnaces," with disastrous results. Millions starved in famines, largely due to the wasted, misplaced effort. Later, in 1966, Mao launched the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution." Its aim, supposedly, was to get rid of officials who were not revolutionary enough. This poster captures the spirit of that frightening time, when bands of young Red Guards roamed China attacking educated people and anyone else identified with China's political, social, or cultural past.

Illustrations 2A & 2B

The Cultural Revolution was in fact Mao's effort to weaken his opponents in the Communist Party—at the cost of hundreds of thousands killed in the resulting chaos. Mao was often pictured to his people as an almost god-like figure, as in Illustration 2A. Illustration 2B is a Western cartoon making fun of that fact. It shows Mao as a Buddha carried aloft by followers who slavishly recite his words from his famous "little red book."

Illustration 3

Mao died in 1976. Soon after, China began to modify its strict communist system, at least with regard to the economy. Reforms by Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping in the 1980s allowed more private ownership of business. Foreigners began investing billions to help China become a modern industrial nation. In the 1970s, nearly 80% of China's industrial output was from government-owned industry. By the 1990s, that figure was down to about 40%. State-run businesses in communist nations generally do poorly—given a lack of incentive for workers or owners to strive to earn profits, and given that prices of goods in such a system rarely reflect their true costs. This political cartoon depicts the rundown, government-owned part of China's economy as a big drag on its efforts to reform. As for political life, moreover, China's communist one-party state still controlled society and limited freedom in many ways.

Illustration 1



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Discussing the Illustration

1. While Japan was starting to rise from the ashes of defeat in the late 1940s and early 1950s, China began a very different and even more drastic effort to transform itself totally. Can you explain?
2. Mao's goal was to create a perfect communist society that would end all economic and social inequality. This goal was used to justify sweeping campaigns such as the "Great Leap Forward" and the "Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution" of 1966. The poster is from the Cultural Revolution. What do you know about either upheaval?
3. In these upheavals, ordinary peasants were glorified and seen as the hope of the nation. At the same time, many "class enemies" or "enemies of the revolution" were singled out and depicted as evil and deserving of public scorn and severe punishment. How does this poster express that spirit? Why do you think Mao felt a need to launch such campaigns?

Follow-up Activity

1. **Small-group activity:** Mao Zedong's political ideas developed over a very long and active life. As a group, learn more about Mao's life. Have each group member concentrate on learning more about one of the following:
 - Mao's early years in the Chinese Communist Party in the 1920s
 - The time of the "Long March" in the 1930s
 - The final years of China's revolution: 1945–1949
 - The Great Leap Forward
 - The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

On the basis of what you learn in your group, prepare a brief talk in which you debate the pros and cons of this statement: "Mao's whole life proves he was a totalitarian who never really cared for the peasants or for China, but who was interested mainly in his own absolute power."

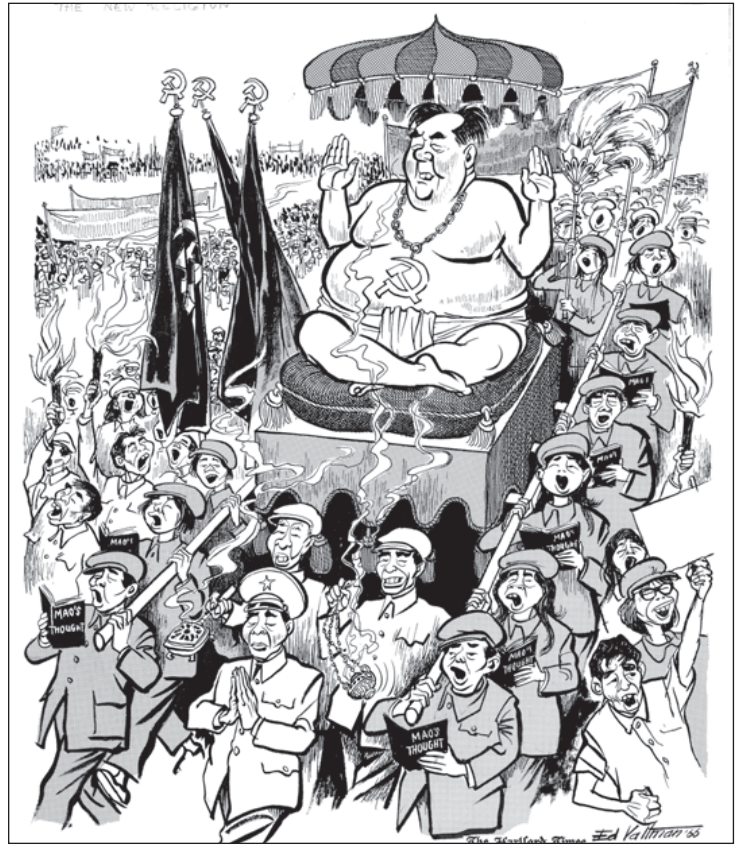
Illustrations 2A & 2B

2A



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

2B



Edmund S. Valtman, courtesy of the Library of Congress

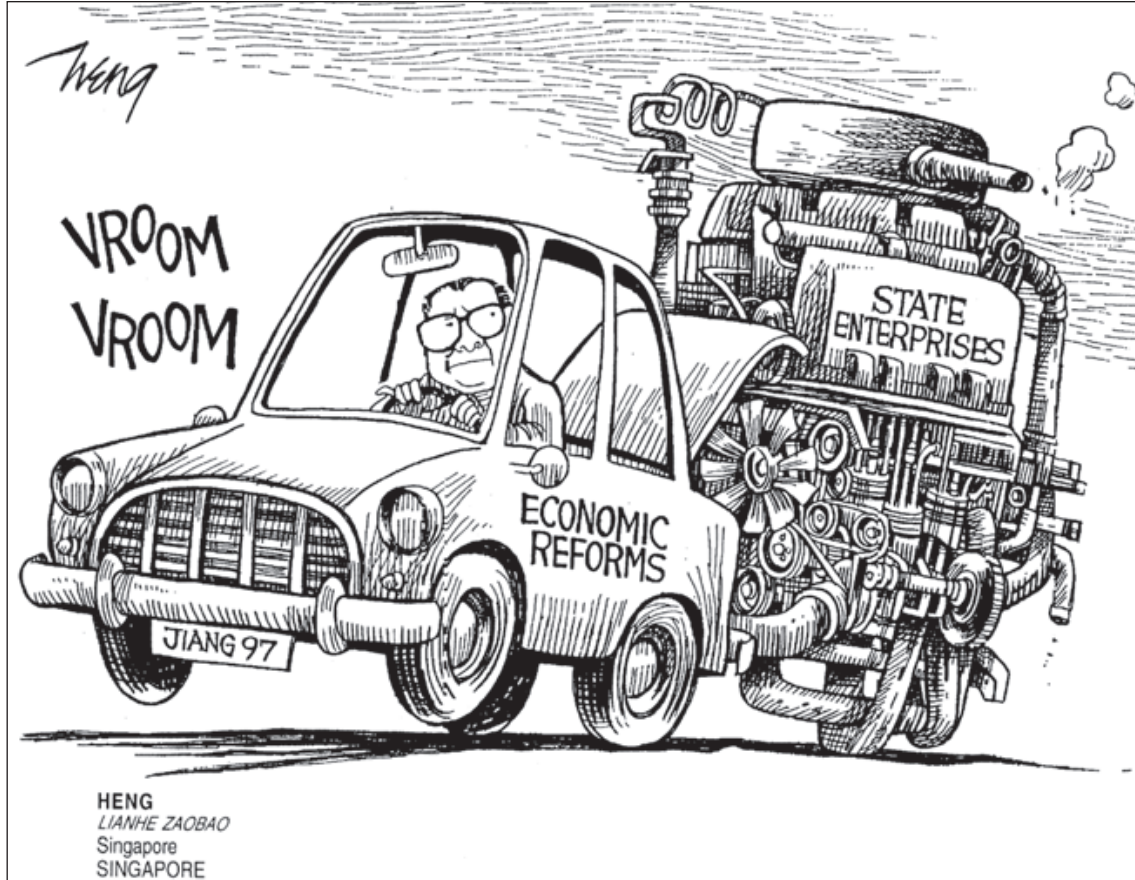
Discussing the Illustrations

1. Illustration 2A is a Chinese poster from the time of the Cultural Revolution. Illustration 2B is a 1966 U.S. cartoon offering one point of view as to how Mao was seen in China—or how the Communist Party wanted him to be seen. What point of view does the cartoon express regarding this? How does it make that point of view clear?
2. Some would say Illustration 2A, the Chinese poster, helps to make the cartoon's point. Why do you think they say this? Do you agree? Why or why not?
3. In the Great Leap Forward, the economy was thrown into chaos, and millions of people died in famines linked to it. In the Cultural Revolution, hundreds of thousands were killed or imprisoned, often simply for being professors, writers, or officials whose attitudes did not seem revolutionary enough. Some historians say the effort to achieve the communist dream of absolute equality inevitably leads to massive violence and chaos of this sort. Why do you think they say this? Do you agree with them? Why or why not?

Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** A gripping tale of life during the Cultural Revolution is *Life and Death in Shanghai*, by Nien Cheng (Penguin USA, 1988). Cheng was declared a “class enemy” during the Cultural Revolution and imprisoned for more than six years. The book is long and a bit repetitious; your task is to summarize it for the class. Read and discuss it, and prepare a talk on it. As the main part of your talk, choose several passages from the book to read to the class. Choose a wide enough range of passages to tell Nien Cheng's story as completely as you can.
2. Learn more about Mao's “little red book.” Read the book and choose five to 10 passages that together seem to sum up Mao's philosophy and the “thoughts” he most wanted his people to learn and accept. Use these passages in a presentation to the class. In your presentation, offer your own view as to the effect of this book in China, given the role it had during the Cultural Revolution.

Illustration 3



Cartoonists & Writers Syndicate

Discussing the Illustration

1. Mao ruled China from 1949 to his death in 1976. For about the next 20 years, China's leader took China in a very different direction. Can you name him?
2. Although Deng was a communist, he backed major reforms in China's economy that seemed aimed at ending communism and creating a free-market (or capitalist) economic system. What big changes would this mean China was making?
3. Under communism, "the people" collectively (through their government) are supposed to own and run all businesses. This cartoon suggests those kinds of businesses are not well run. How does it make this point? Why do you think businesses in communist economies have generally been so poorly run?
4. The cartoon suggests those industries still under government control are limiting the impact of Deng's reforms. Why might this be so? What other factors, economic or political, have limited reform efforts in China in recent years?

Follow-up Activities

1. **Small-group activity:** In 1989, huge protests in China called for political reforms to make China more democratic. For weeks, protesters gathered in Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Collect old magazine and newspaper reports on the protest and on the government's final response to it. Use these and any other materials you can find to create a bulletin-board display telling the story of the pro-democracy protests in Tiananmen Square.
2. How have China's reforms affected farmers in the countryside? Use encyclopedias, almanacs, and other sources to make a table comparing China's farmers in the 1970s to today's. Try to find information on average personal income, sizes of farms, crop yields, use of machinery, etc. Put the information in a table comparing the year 1975 to the most current year for which you have information.

Image Close-ups

Japan: The Meiji Revolution

Illustrations 1A, 1B & 1C

1B



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

1C



1A



Stock Montage, Inc.

Japan: The Meiji Revolution

Illustrations 2A & 2B

2A



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

2B



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

Japan: The Meiji Revolution

Illustrations 3A & 3B

3A



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

3B



Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division

China: The Old Order Passes Illustrations 1A & 1B

1A



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

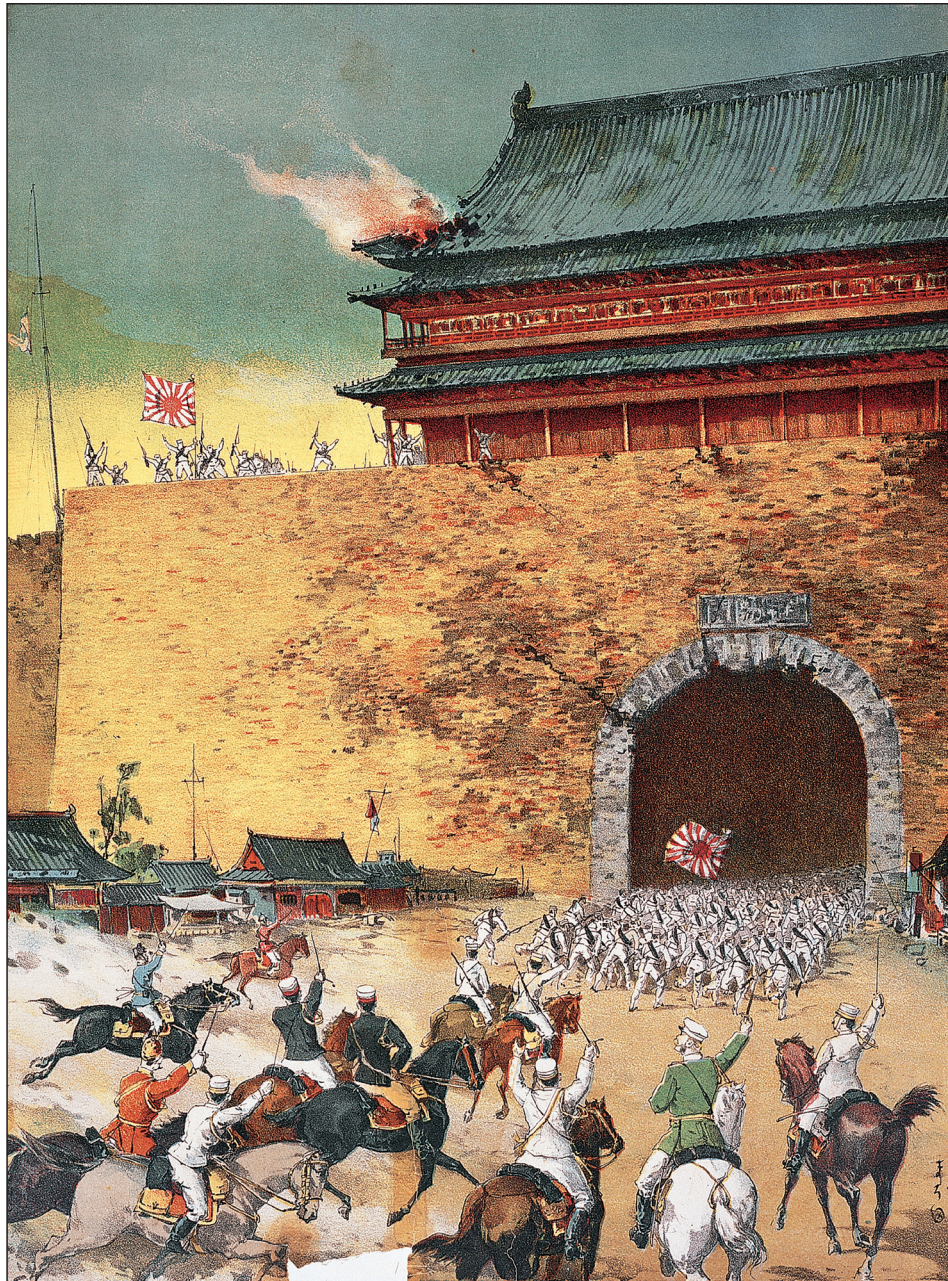
1B



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

China: The Old Order Passes

Illustration 2



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

China: The Old Order Passes

Illustrations 3A, 3B & 3C

3A



3B



3C



All images courtesy of the Library of Congress

Japan: Ashes to Asian Superpower

Illustrations 1A & 1B

1A



The Granger Collection, New York

1B



The National Archives

Japan: Ashes to Asian Superpower

Illustrations 2A–2D

2A



2B



2C



2D

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CIVIL INFORMATION AND EDUCATION SECTION ARE CENTERED IN FIELDS WHERE THE RESULTS CANNOT BE MEASURED EASILY OR OBJECTIVELY. THEY DEAL LARGELY WITH INTANGIBLES, WITH MATTERS CLOSELY RELATED TO THE THOUGHT AND CULTURE PATTERNS OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE. THESE PATTERNS HAVE EXISTED FOR YEARS, EVEN CENTURIES, AND IT WAS RECOGNIZED IN THE BEGINNING THAT ATTEMPTS TO ALTER THEM OVERNIGHT WOULD RESULT IN MISUNDERSTANDING AND CONFUSION. INTENSIVE STUDY AND CAREFUL PLANNING HAVE BEEN GRADUAL AND ARE IN THE MAIN THE RESULT OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE JAPANESE THEMSELVES. THE PERSONNEL OF THIS SECTION SERVE IN ADVISORY CAPACITIES TO JAPANESE AGENCIES AND GROUPS.

All images courtesy of the Library of Congress

Japan: Ashes to Asian Superpower

Illustrations 3A & 3B

3A



© Instructional Resources Corporation

3B



© Instructional Resources Corporation

China: Mao and the Future of a Revolution

Illustration 1



Courtesy of the Library of Congress

China: Mao and the Future of a Revolution

Illustrations 2A & 2B

2A



Courtesy of the
Library of Congress

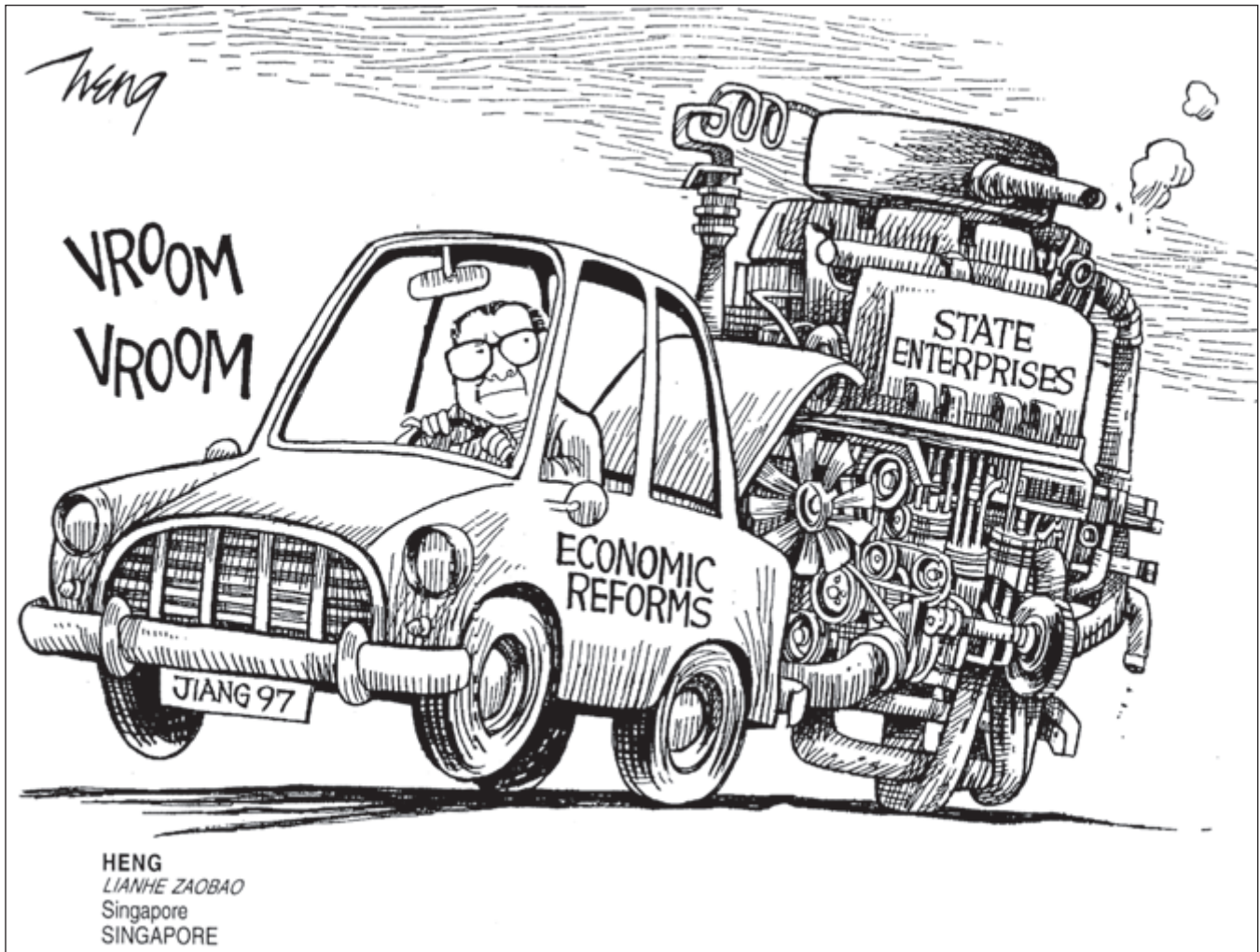
2B



Edmund S. Valtman, Courtesy of the Library of Congress

China: Mao and the Future of a Revolution

Illustration 3



Cartoonists & Writers Syndicate

