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Southern and Eastern Asia

Historical Understandings

SS7H3

The student will analyze continuity and change in Southern and Eastern Asia leading to the 21st century.

a. Describe how nationalism led to independence in India and Vietnam.

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Nationalism is the belief that people should be loyal to those with whom they share common history, customs, origins, and sometimes language or religion. People who share these things often think of themselves as a distinct nation, although not all of these characteristics may be the same from one nation to another.



This photo shows a traditional Chinese wedding dress. It's a custom for the people in China to wear red because that color symbolizes happiness in that culture.

INDIA

A feeling of **nationalism** began to surface in India in the 1800s. People began to be upset that their country was a part of the British colonial empire.

They were second-class citizens in their own country. The best jobs and best education were reserved for the British.



Indian craftsmen were not allowed to run their traditional businesses if that meant competition for the British. One example was the production of cloth. Indians grew fine cotton, and weaving was a traditional craft. Indians were forced to send all their cotton to Britain and then had to buy the finished cloth from the British factories.



The first two groups to form in order to work for the rights of Indians were the **Indian National Congress**, organized in 1885, and the **Muslim League**, begun in 1906. The Indian National Congress attracted mainly Indian Hindus, and the Muslim League attracted Indians who followed Islam. As they gathered more members and became better organized, they began to call for Indian independence from British colonial control.



Years of contact with the British had taught Indians about Western ideas of **democracy** and **self-government**. However, the British didn't want to share these two ideals with their colonies.



During World War I, millions of Indians joined forces with the British hoping that their service would be rewarded with more control of their government. The British parliament even promised that when the war ended, India would be able to work toward self-government.

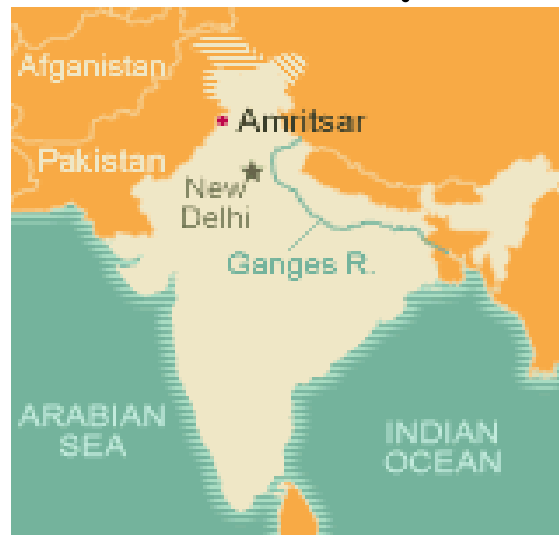


After the war, however, nothing changed. Indians were still treated as second class citizens, or as inferior. Those who began to protest were arrested under the new **Rowlatt Act** which gave the British the power to jail Indians for up to two years without a trial.

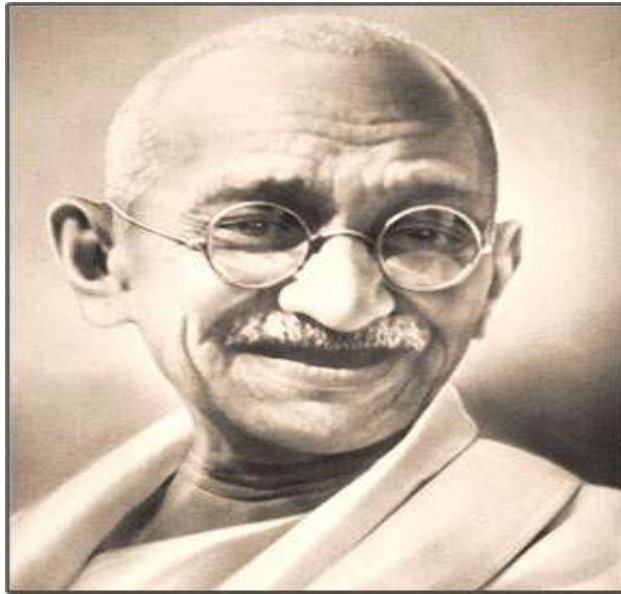


The now-named "Gandhi Barrack", at the Yervada Central Jail.

In 1919, British authorities opened fire on a large gathering of Indians in the town of **Amritsar** (ə-m-rīt'sər) , claiming they were gathering illegally. Over 400 people were killed, and another 1200 were wounded. This massacre made Indians all over the country furious, and almost overnight they were united in a call for complete independence.



Following the slaughter at Amritsar, **Mohandas** (or **Mahatma**) **Gandhi** began to urge Indians to refuse to cooperate with British laws they felt were unjust. He also urged them to be sure they did nothing violent in their protests. His goal was to show the world the injustice, or the unfairness of British colonial rule in India.



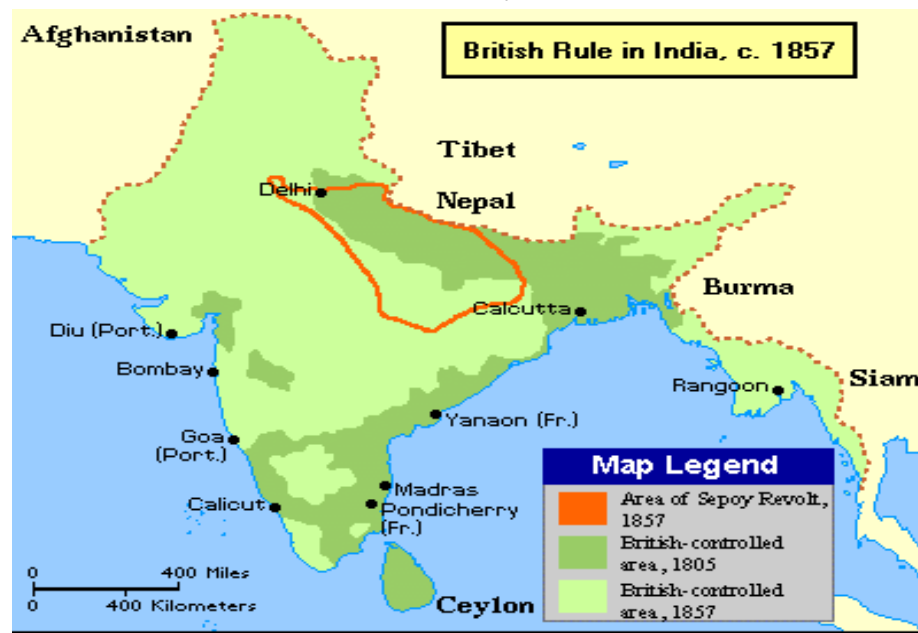
At left:
Mohandas Gandhi

Gandhi's plan was one of what he called **civil disobedience** which is the non-violent refusal to obey an unfair law. Indians all over the country began to follow Gandhi's lead, refusing to buy British-made goods, refusing to attend second-class schools, and refusing to pay unfair taxes.

At right:
Gandhi
with Indian
supporters.



In time, these efforts began to hurt the British economy which was dependent on colonial markets. Though the British authorities often responded with arrests and beatings, Gandhi and his followers refused to react with violence. The world watched as the British Empire found itself unable to stop the protests and the Indian refusal to obey British laws.



In 1935, the British government gave up. Britain passed the **Government of India Act** that gave India some self-government. This was a start, but not the independence most Indians wanted.

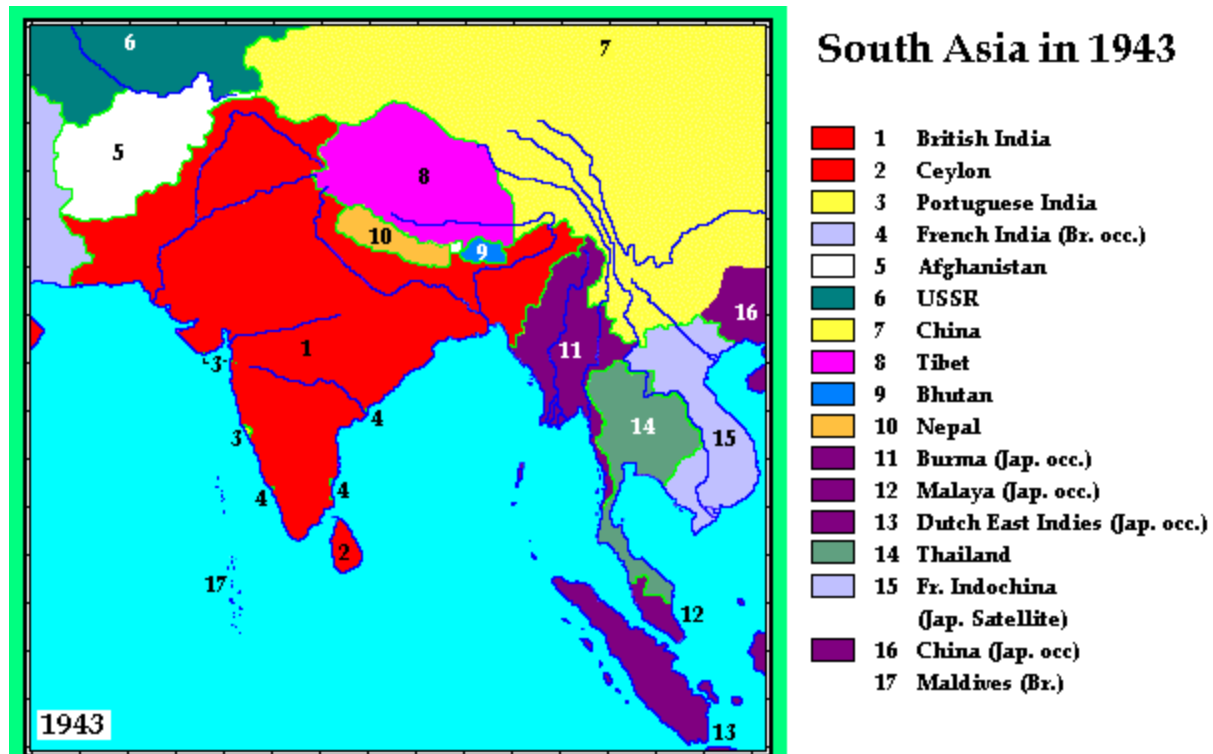


When World War II broke out, Great Britain offered India **dominion** which is the exercise of control, if Indians would help Britain in the war effort. This would mean more independence, but not the complete independence India wanted.

Gandhi and the **Indian National Congress** refused their offer.



Gandhi and the Indian National Congress announced they would not take sides in Britain's war with Japan. The **Muslim League**, however, had begun to worry that Indian independence might mean rule by the more numerous Hindus, and they supported the British war effort.



The Muslim League hoped they would be rewarded for supporting Great Britain after the war ended. While many Indians did help the British war effort, support for the war became tangled up in India's desire for independence.



Above: World War II era Indian grenades

When World War II ended, the British decided to grant India independence. However, by this time disputes has begun between Indian Hindus and Indian Muslims about how power in the new country should be organized. The British colonial leader, Lord Louis Mountbatten, decided that the only way to grant independence and avoid fighting was to divide the country into Hindu and Muslims sections.



Left: Lord Louis Mountbatten, British colonial leader, who later became interim prime minister of Great Britain in 1972,

Feelings of nationalism in each group were more strongly influenced by religion than by any of the other factors the people had in common. The country would be partitioned into three new countries. Hindu India would be in the center, the largest because there were many more Hindus than any other religion.

Right: Lord Mountbatten
In India



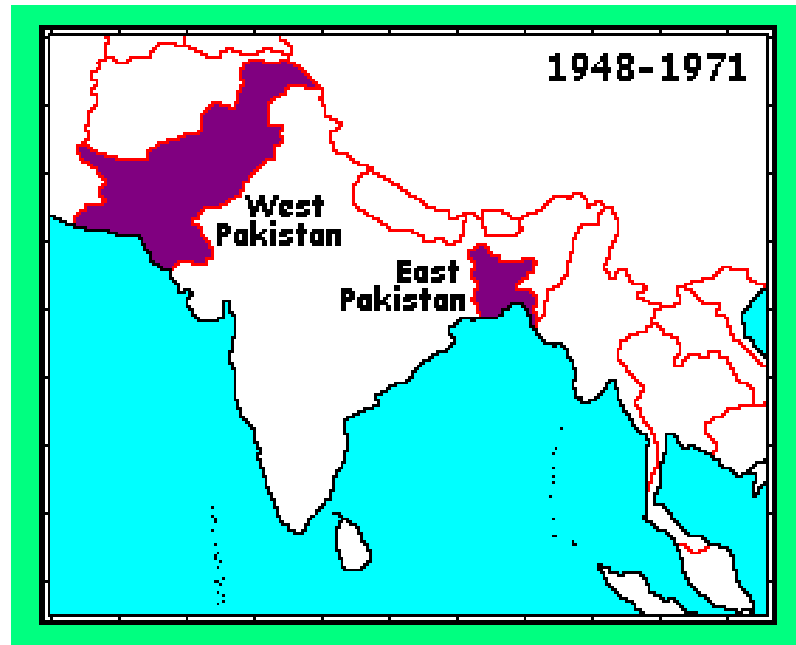
The Muslims would be moved to smaller countries created in both the east and the west along the borders of India. The areas were to be named **East** and **West Pakistan**. Muslims living here would have to move to the newly created India.



Through 1947, millions of people left homes they had lived in from generations to make the moves ordered by the creation of the new governments. There was much fighting and many people lost their lives. In the end, the three new countries were created.



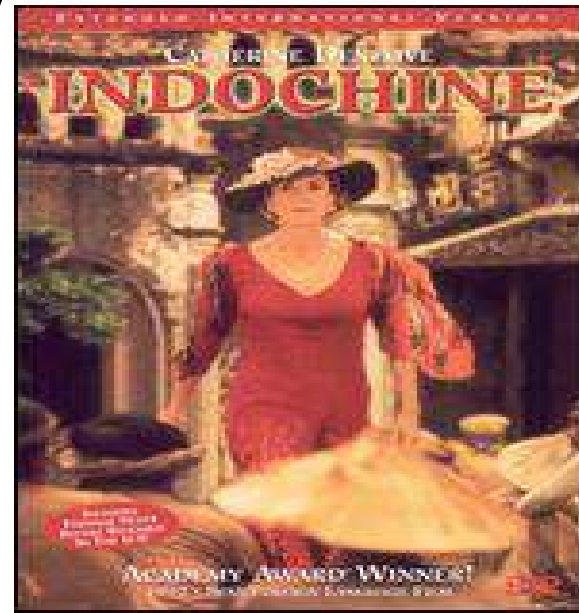
On August 15, 1947, British rule in India came to an end and the independent countries of India, West Pakistan, and East Pakistan. Religion became one factor that had the most important role in determining the nationalism of the people who chose to live in these new countries.



VIETNAM

Vietnam was another Southeastern Asian country controlled by a European country.

In the early 1900s, the French gained control of an area of Southeast Asia known as **Indochina**. Later this became the modern country of Vietnam.



The French wanted control in Indochina because they used the seaports and the area was a rich source of agricultural products and natural resources.



Nationalism was a factor in the area known as **French Indochina**. The people who lived there had worked hard to maintain independence from China, their powerful northern neighbor. They saw themselves as a separate people among the many groups of Southeast Asia.



That nationalist energy was directed at the French colonial rulers.

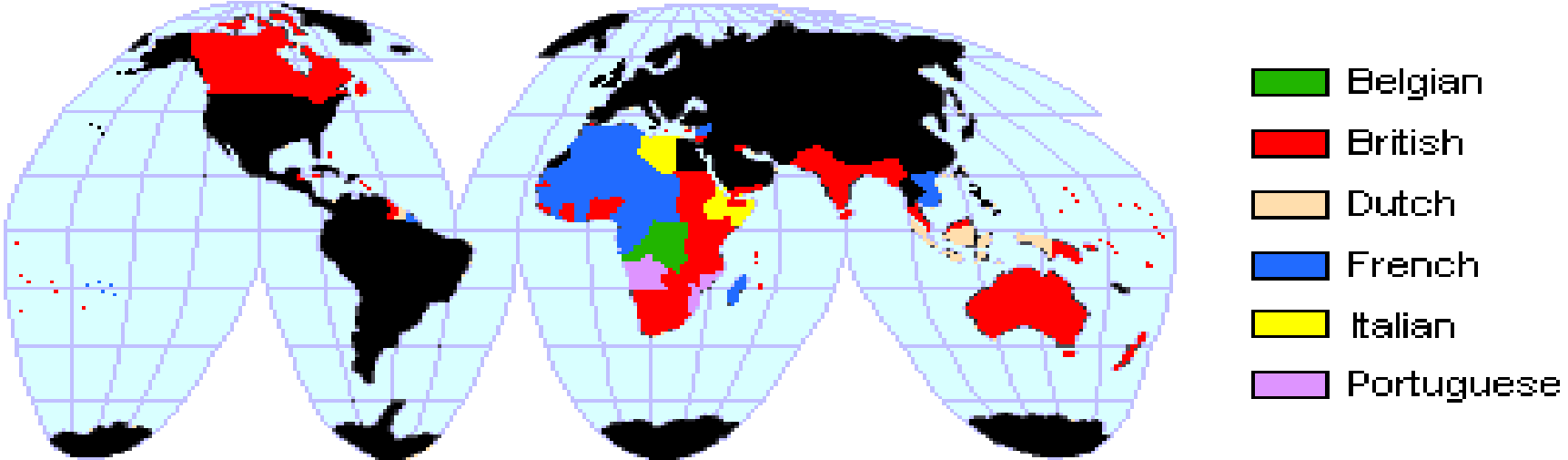
A young man, **Ho Chi Minh**, began to work for Vietnamese independence from the French. He thought the Communist Party might be the best route to take because the communists were outspoken critics of European colonialism.



In the 1930s, Ho Chi Minh organized the **Indochinese Communist Party**. They began to stage protests against French rule. His efforts landed his followers in jail and he had to leave the country to avoid a death penalty.



When World War II began, Ho Chi Minh hoped it would mean the end of French rule in his country. He helped to found a new group, the **Vietminh** [vee-eht-mihn] **League**. Unfortunately, when the war ended, the French moved to regain control of its colonial possession, which they still called French Indochina.



The areas in blue on the map above show the French colonies that existed in the world in 1938 including Vietnam, formerly Indochina. 27

For the next nine years, Ho Chi Minh and his Vietminh fought with the French colonial forces. While the French were able to maintain control of most of the cities, particularly in the south, the people in the countryside worked with Ho Chi Minh. They wanted control of their own country. In 1954, the French decided to surrender control of the country to Ho Chi Minh.



All parties to the conflict went to Geneva, Switzerland for a conference to end French involvement in Vietnam. At the Geneva Conference in 1954, the U.S. became alarmed at the prospect of Ho Chi Minh ruling Vietnam.



Above: Statue of Ho Chi Minh in the Ho Chi Minh Museum This museum, dedicated to the life and deeds of Ho Chi Minh, was built with help from the USSR.

The U.S. saw Ho Chi Minh as a communist rather than a nationalist leader. The U.S. feared that a communist Vietnam would lead other countries in the area to become communist also. The U.S. used its influence to have Vietnam temporarily divided into two parts. Ho Chi Minh was in charge in the north and the U.S. was in control of the south.



The plan to divide Vietnam was to stabilize the country and then let the people vote on what sort of government they wanted. The U.S. hoped to find someone they could back as a democratic alternative to Ho Chi Minh so the country could be reunited, but as a democracy rather than as a communist state.



The Geneva Conference in 1954 began the United States' long involvement in the politics of Vietnam. Northern and southern zones were drawn into which opposing troops were to withdraw. The northern and southern parts were to be reunited after free elections to be held in July 1956.



As the years stretched out, the Vietnamese became more and more anxious to gain independence. Many in the southern part of the country sympathized with those in the north, seeing them as fellow countrymen rather than the enemy.

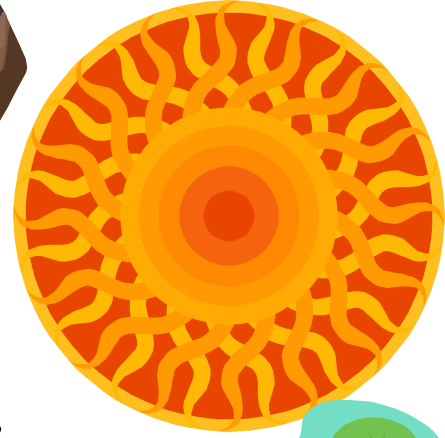
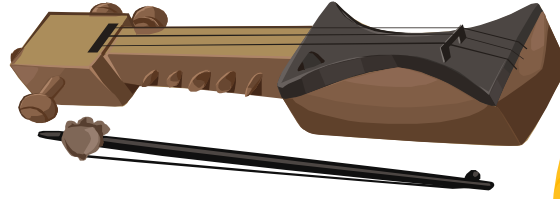


Feelings of nationalism were more important than ideas about what political system the Vietnamese should have. After many years of fighting and the loss of many thousands of lives among the Vietnamese as well as the American soldiers, the U.S. decided to withdraw its forces from Vietnam. The last American helicopters left Vietnam in April 1975.



The forces of the North Vietnamese army took over the country and unified it the next day as the **Socialist Republic of Vietnam**. While the new country was communist, most of the other countries in the region didn't become communist as the U.S. had feared.

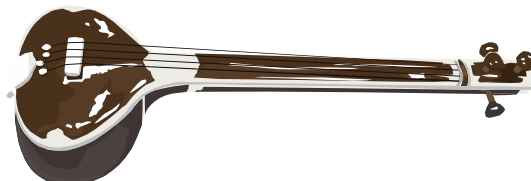
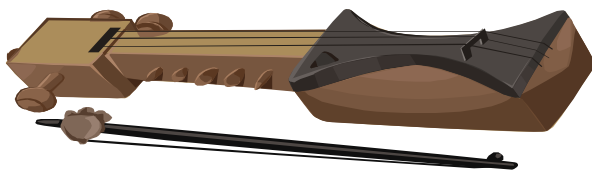
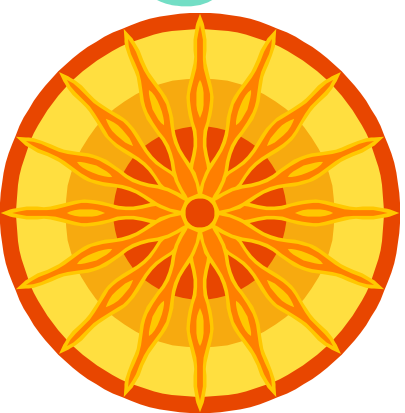
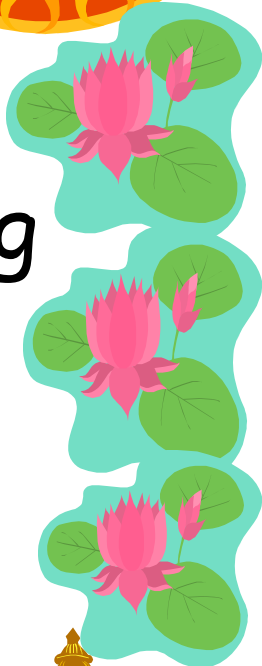
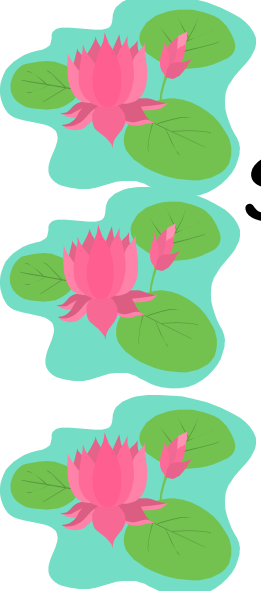




SS7H3

The student will analyze continuity and change in Southern and Eastern Asia leading to the 21st century.

b. Describe the impact of Mohandas Gandhi's belief in non-violent protest.



Mohandas K. Gandhi, born in 1869, was an Indian political leader who began his adult life as a lawyer. He lived for a time in South Africa, where he encountered that country's strict apartheid system that legally separated the races.



When Gandhi returned to India in 1914, he brought with him his determination that people should be treated equally, no matter what their nationality or situation in life.



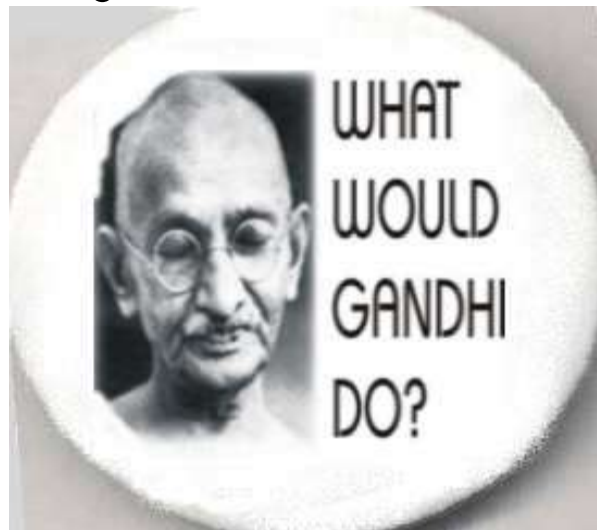
AN EYE FOR AN EYE
MAKES THE WHOLE
WORLD BLIND

Though Gandhi was a Hindu, he saw much to admire in many different religions. Above all, he believed that all people deserved to be treated with equality and justice, and he felt the colonial government of India did not offer that justice to Indians. He himself lived a very simple life, and as he became widely known and admired, his followers began to call him **Mahatma**, or the "**Great Soul**."

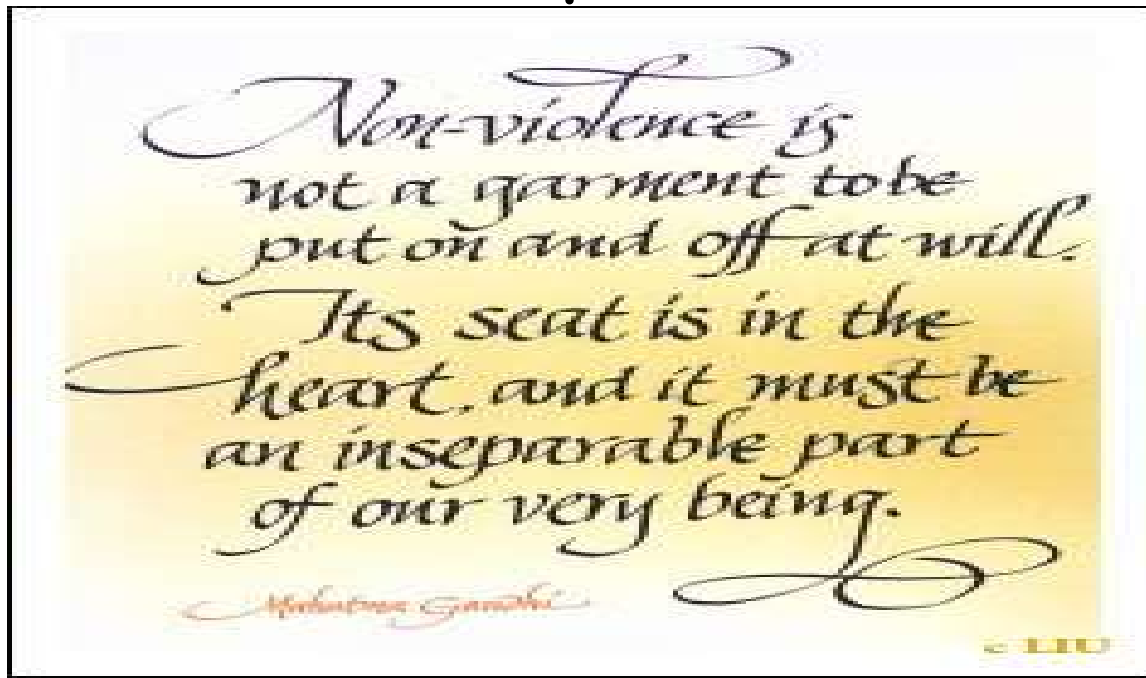
*The greatness of a nation
and its moral progress
can be judged by the way
its animals are treated.*

- GANDHI

It was the awful massacre of Indians by the British at the Temple of Amritsar that spurred Gandhi to real action against the British colonial authority. He believed it was time for the people of India to stop obeying what he felt were unjust British laws.



Because Gandhi was a believer in non-violence, he urged people to resist unfair laws, but to do it without any violence on their part. He developed what he called a system of **civil disobedience**, which is the refusal to obey unfair laws even if the result is punishment.



Gandhi spoke of the power of what he called **Satyagraha** [suht-yah-grah-huh], or "the force of truth". He believed civil disobedience would make the world recognize the injustice in British rule in India and force change without having to resort to violence. The **Indian National Congress** adopted Gandhi's strategy on civil disobedience in the 1920s.



Gandhi urged the people of India to resist British control in many ways. They were to stop buying British goods and to refuse to pay taxes that did not benefit the Indian people. Gandhi also told Indians to resist paying a British tax on salt. He led a march across the country to the sea where people made their own salt by evaporating saltwater.



Above middle: Gandhi on the salt march in 1930.

At a later march aimed at closing down a British salt factory, the British guards responded by clubbing and beating the peaceful demonstrators. The international press coverage of this violent response on the part of the British gave Gandhi and his followers a **moral advantage** because people around the world saw Indians as doing the right thing. Indians had not had that before.



People around the world began to call for the British to give the Indians the independence they wanted. Gandhi's campaign of civil disobedience gradually wore the British down.



After the end of World War II, the British formally gave up their colonial claims to the Indian subcontinent. Unfortunately, by 1946, disputes broke out among the Indians about how the country should be ruled. The final decision was to divide India into three countries.



East and West Pakistan would be created for Muslims. India would be a Hindu country. Gandhi was very disappointed by the decision. He wanted all Indians to live together in one country. He was even more distressed when violence broke out as Muslims and Hindus began to move from one area to another.