

F. The British Conquest of South Asia (c.1756-1858)

1. The destiny of India was permanently changed by the arrival of the British, who engaged in a colonial war with France called the *Seven Years War* from **1756 to 1763**.
2. The number of separate conflicts starting with the *Seven Years War* up until 1858 presents a dizzying amount of detail in which it is easy to get lost. The key is not the details, but the overall trend, so we will use the *entire period* of the **British Conquest of South Asia (1756-1858)** as our anchor fact.
3. In **1858**, by the **Government of India Act**, Great Britain became the imperial ruler of India. Queen Victoria, the famous English queen, became Empress of India.

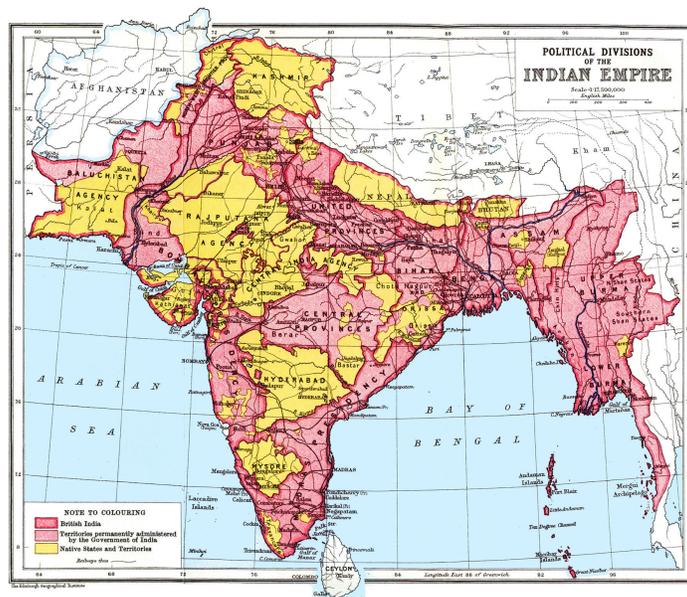
G. The Tutelary Imperialism of the British “Raj”

1. Britain took over a politically un-integrated South Asia that was still at a very low level of technological development.
2. Although the British certainly wanted to take advantage of South Asia’s resources, they also proposed to do something more. They proposed to help the people they had conquered, to serve their needs, and promote progress in their society.
3. This kind of imperialism can be called “*tutelary imperialism.*” (The word “tutelary” means “educational.” It shares the same root as the word “tutor”).
4. Among the improvements made by the British in India was a vast railway network, and a system of universities (and associated schools). Wealthy Indian families could also send their children to universities in England, to receive professional training.
5. The outcome of Britain’s tutelary efforts were that Indian society adapted itself to British rule, and grew into a culture that could manage its own affairs better than ever.



South Asia experienced political integration for the first time under the British Raj, which stretched from Pakistan to Burma (Myanmar today).

(The regions in yellow were princely states that had some autonomy, but were ultimately controlled by Britain).



H. The World Wars and the Push for “Swaraj”

1. When **World War I (1914-19)** arrived in Europe (a war caused mainly by European empires such as Germany, France and Britain) India became entangled despite being completely outside Europe.
2. India, like every part of the British Empire, was technically required to participate, and the enlistment of a million soldiers was undertaken.
3. Being forced to participate in the war created a greater desire for “swaraj” (self rule) in South Asia.
4. The champion of this movement was Mohandas Gandhi, a lawyer trained in England.
5. As the war came to a close in 1919, a protest in the city of Amritsar resulted in the massacre of protesters by British troops.
6. Gandhi became an advocate of non-violent resistance as a way to avoid bloodshed of this sort. He referred to this type of protest as “satyagraha,” which literally means “truth-force,” but it is often figuratively translated as “non-violent resistance.” Gandhi believed that this type of resistance would “force” the oppressors (the British) to see the truth and give up their power.
7. The first satyagraha was a general strike after the Amritsar Massacre. It was at this point that Gandhi began to dress differently, in very humble garb, as a way to symbolize a refusal to participate in the British imperial system of trade.



Mohandas Gandhi, dressed in very simple Indian garb, invented a simple spinning wheel to make thread, which became a symbol of Indian independence.

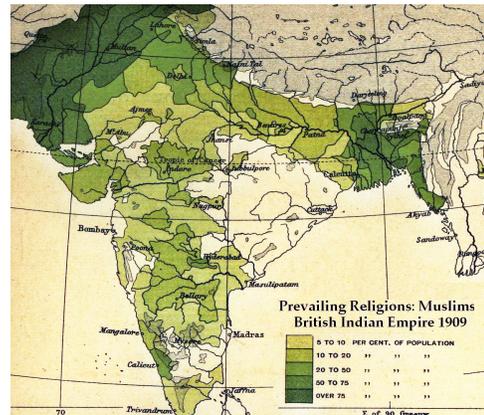
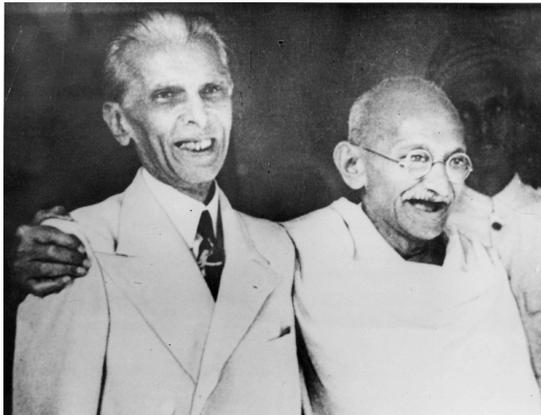
The point of the humble dress, and the practice of making clothes in a traditional way, was to peacefully resist the British imperial system of trade.

8. Another famous satyagraha was the “Salt March” or “Salt Satyagraha” of 1930. Again the target was the British imperial system, which imposed a monopoly on salt. Indians had to buy authorized salt from stores and pay taxes. Gandhi marched 240 miles to pick up a handful of sea salt, in a symbolic protest.
9. The British had no direct answer to satyagraha, but it also did not produce any quick or decisive outcomes.

10. When **World War II (1939-45)** arrived, Gandhi started the “Quit India” movement. He gave a speech against helping Britain. He hoped to bargain for independence by promising to help *after* being given independence. The British had no tolerance for bargaining about it. Gandhi and tens of thousands of his supporters were immediately imprisoned. He was kept in prison for two years—and only released when he became very ill.
11. The efforts of Gandhi and others at satyagraha did not directly result in independence, but Britain was exhausted by fighting for its national survival against Germany in the two world wars, and ultimately decided that it was not practical or proper to retain control of India.

I. Independence and Partition (1947)

1. With World War II behind it, the British Empire began to collapse, as the British government was desperately focused on rebuilding its own country.
2. Britain thus finally agreed to “swaraj” (self rule) by India.
3. The great challenge of independence was the desire for the two main groups of South Asian people to have “swaraj.” Hindus would have been satisfied to make one country, in which they would be the majority, but Muslims feared that outcome, and had organized a “Pakistan Movement,” led by Muhammad Jinnah of the Muslim League, to create a separate country.
4. The outcome of the negotiations by all the groups involved was the creation of two countries: India and Pakistan (which at first included Bangladesh as “East Pakistan.”)



Muhammad Jinnah (the leader of the Muslim League) and Mohandas Gandhi both wanted “swaraj” for South Asia. Jinnah, however, wanted Muslims to have their own country. The areas in dark green on the map (right) show where Muslims were the majority.

J. Post-Colonial South Asia (1947-)

1. As soon as the lines were drawn, a crisis occurred. There were ten of millions of Hindus in the new Pakistan and tens of millions of Muslims in India. Many were afraid of being stuck there, so a mass migration occurred in both directions.
2. One region in northern India called “Jammu and Kashmir” wanted to stay independent, but its population was mainly Muslim, and the leaders of Pakistan tried to force it to join them. The ruler joined India to avoid this outcome, which sparked the *First Indo-Pakistani War (1947-9)*, which did not resolve the problem, and led to the *Second Indo-Pakistani War (1965)*, which also was inconclusive.
3. The other territorial problem was that Pakistan had two very different parts, separated by a thousand miles, and a hostile India! More than that: the people of Bangladesh spoke Bengali, and the people of Pakistan speak Urdu. Their cultures had developed separately throughout history, even though both were Muslim. That was not enough to maintain their unity, and the *Bangladesh War of Independence* became the *Third Indo-Pakistani War (1970-1)* when India helped Bangladesh to become independent.
4. Although hostile to one another, Pakistan and India were both mainly *post-colonial* cultures. That means that their main goal was to be independent of any powerful nation that might seek to control them.
5. When Russia and America squared off for control of the world, India became the leader of the “Non-Aligned Movement” (an organization with many Asian, African, and Latin American countries) in order to avoid being controlled by either one.
6. Pakistan took advantage of India’s desire not to work with the United States and decided to cozy up to America in order to avoid communism and get military help.
7. India, feeling insecure, in a world of nuclear superpowers, decided to develop nuclear weapons of its own, causing Pakistan to do the same in self-defense.
8. The nuclear standoff between the two is part of the puzzle of the world today, and it makes the fate of Pakistan a very difficult problem.
9. Pakistan is not only a Muslim country, but an Islamist one. This means that the United States is actually allies with a country where Islamism teaches people to become terrorists.
10. This also makes it hard for America and India to be friends, because India sees how America acts to help the Islamist country of Pakistan, and obviously doesn’t like it.