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Nationalism in India and Southwest Asia

TERMS & NAMES

- Mohandas K. Gandhi
- civil disobedience
- Mustafa Kemal

MAIN IDEA

Nationalism triggered independence movements to overthrow colonial power.

WHY IT MATTERS NOW

These independent nations—India, Turkey, Iran, and Saudi Arabia—are key players on the world stage today.

SETTING THE STAGE The end of World War I stirred nationalist activity in India, Turkey, and some Southwest Asian countries. The British Empire, which controlled India, began to show signs of cracking.

Indian Nationalism Grows

Indian nationalism had been growing since the mid-1800s. Many upper-class Indians who attended British schools learned European views of nationalism and democracy. They began to apply these political ideas to their own country. Well-educated Indians began to resent the two centuries of British rule.

Two groups formed to rid India of foreign rule: the Indian National Congress, or Congress Party, in 1885, and the Muslim League in 1906. Though deep divisions existed between Hindus and Muslims, they found common ground. They shared the heritage of British rule and an understanding of democratic ideals. These two groups both worked toward the goal of national independence.

World War I Heightens Nationalist Activity Until World War I, the vast majority of Indians had little interest in nationalism. The situation changed as over a million Indians enlisted in the British army. In return for their service, the British government promised reforms that would eventually lead to self-government. Indian leaders bided their time. They expected to make gains once the war was over.

Later in the war, Indian demands led to the declaration in Parliament favoring the “increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions.” To many Indians, these political reforms signaled that Indians would gain a greater voice in government and ultimately achieve their goal of self-rule.

In 1918, Indian troops returned home from the war. They expected Britain to fulfill its promise. Instead, they found themselves once again treated as second-class citizens. Radical nationalists carried out acts of violence to show their hatred of British rule. To curb dissent, in 1919 the British passed the Rowlatt Act. This law allowed the government to jail protesters without trial for as long as two years. To Western-educated Indians, denial of a trial by jury violated their individual rights. Violent protests against the act flared in the Punjab, the Indian province with the greatest number of World War I veterans.

Background

Unlike Europeans, Asians, including Indians, viewed World War I as a civil war among the feuding nations of Europe.

Vocabulary

dissent: difference of opinion.

This Indian soldier fought for the British in World War I.



Amritsar Massacre To protest the Rowlatt Act, around 10,000 Hindus and Muslims flocked to Amritsar, the capital city of the Punjab, in the spring of 1919. At a huge festival, they intended to fast and pray and to listen to political speeches. A small group of nationalists were also on the scene. The demonstration, especially the alliance of Hindus and Muslims, alarmed the British.

Most people at the gathering were unaware that the British government had banned public meetings. However, General Reginald Dyer, the British commander at Amritsar, believed they were openly defying the ban. He ordered his troops to fire on the crowd without warning. The shooting lasted ten minutes. British troops killed nearly 400 Indians and wounded about 1200.

News of the slaughter sparked an explosion of anger across India. Almost overnight, millions of Indians changed from loyal British subjects into revolutionaries and nationalists. These Indians demanded independence.

Background The Punjab is located in northwest India.

HISTORY MAKERS



Mohandas K. Gandhi
1869–1948

From 1893 to 1914, Gandhi worked as a lawyer in South Africa, where he fought racial prejudice against Indians. Shortly after his arrival, Gandhi bought a first-class ticket and boarded a train. A white conductor ordered Gandhi to move to the third-class coach, reserved for Indians. But Gandhi refused. The conductor forced Gandhi off the train at the next station.

To honor Gandhi's act of resistance, South African president Nelson Mandela recognized him with a special freedom award in April 1997. Mandela declared,

Today we are righting a century-old wrong. This station, once one of the world's most notorious symbols of discrimination, intolerance, and oppression, today proclaims a message of dignity restored. . . . Gandhi's magnificent example of personal sacrifice and dedication in the face of oppression was one of his many legacies to our country and the world.

Gandhi's Principles of Nonviolence

The massacre at Amritsar set the stage for **Mohandas K. Gandhi** (GAHN-dee) to emerge as the leader of the independence movement. He began to form his social and political ideas during the mid-1880s before he attended law school in England. Gandhi's new strategy for battling injustice evolved from his deeply religious approach to political activity. His teachings blended ideas from all of the major world religions, including Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity. The Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore described him as "this great soul in a beggar's garb." Gandhi attracted millions of followers. Soon they were calling him the Mahatma (muh-HAHT-muh), meaning "Great Soul."

When the British failed to punish the officers responsible for the killings at the Amritsar massacre, Gandhi urged the Indian National Congress to follow a policy of noncooperation with the British government:

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

This is in essence the principle of nonviolent noncooperation. It follows therefore that it must have its root in love. Its object should not be to punish the opponent or to inflict injury upon him. Even while noncooperating with him, we must make him feel that in us he has a friend and we should try to reach his heart by rendering him humanitarian service wherever possible.

MOHANDAS K. GANDHI, quoted in *Gandhi the Man*

Civil Disobedience Gandhi developed the principle of satyagraha (SUH-tyah-grah-ha), or "truth-force." In English, satyagraha is called passive resistance or **civil disobedience**—the deliberate and public refusal to obey an unjust law. Gandhi wrote, "Complete civil disobedience is a rebellion without the element of violence . . . One *perfect* civil resister is enough to win the battle of Right and Wrong." In 1920, under Gandhi's influence, the Congress Party endorsed civil disobedience and nonviolence as the means to achieve independence.

Gandhi launched his campaign of civil disobedience to weaken the British government's authority and economic power. He called on Indians to refuse to do the following: buy British goods, attend government schools, pay British taxes, and vote in elections. Gandhi staged a successful boycott of British cloth, a source of wealth for the

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

A. Recognizing Effects What changes resulted from the Amritsar massacre?

Vocabulary
boycott: a refusal to buy.

Background

The spinning wheel is the symbol on the Indian flag.

British. He urged all Indians to weave their own cloth. Gandhi himself devoted two hours each day to spinning his own yarn on a simple handwheel. He wore only homespun cloth and encouraged Indians to follow his example. As a result of the boycott, the sale of British cloth in India dropped sharply.

Throughout 1920, the British arrested thousands of Indians who had participated in strikes and demonstrations. Gandhi's weapon of civil disobedience took an economic toll on the British. They struggled to keep trains running, factories operating, and overcrowded jails from bursting. Despite Gandhi's pleas for nonviolence, protests often led to riots. In 1922, rioters attacked a police station and set several officers on fire.

The Slow March to Independence In 1930, Gandhi organized a demonstration to defy the hated Salt Acts. According to these British laws, Indians could buy salt from no other source but the government. They also had to pay sales tax on salt. To show their opposition, Gandhi and his followers walked about 240 miles to the seacoast. There they began to make their own salt by collecting seawater and letting it evaporate. This peaceful protest was called the Salt March.

Soon afterward, some demonstrators planned a march to a site where the British government processed salt. They intended to shut this saltworks down. Police officers with steel-tipped clubs attacked the demonstrators. An American journalist was an eyewitness to the event. He described the "sickening whacks of clubs on unprotected skulls" and people "writhing in pain with fractured skulls or broken shoulders."

Still the people continued to march peacefully, refusing to defend themselves against their attackers. Newspapers across the globe carried the journalist's story, which won worldwide support for Gandhi's independence movement.

More demonstrations took place throughout India. Eventually, about 60,000 people, including Gandhi, were arrested.

Great Britain Grants India Self-Rule

Gandhi and his followers gradually reaped the rewards of their civil disobedience campaigns and gained greater political power for the Indian people. In 1935, the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act. It provided local self-government and limited democratic elections.

With this act, India began moving toward full independence from Great Britain. However, the Government of India Act also fueled mounting tensions between Muslims and Hindus. These two groups had conflicting visions of India's future as an independent nation. Indian Muslims, outnumbered by Hindus, feared that Hindus would control India if it won independence. In Chapter 18, you will read about the outcome of India's bid for independence.

Gandhi (standing in the center with his head bowed) led Indians in the Salt March. The demonstrators protested the British government's control of salt sales.



THINK THROUGH HISTORY

B. Making

Inferences How did the Salt March represent Gandhi's methods for change?

Unresolved Problems

Economic Issues in the Developing World

Attempts at modernization can bring unexpected difficulties. For example, in Persia, the leader Shah Pahlavi wanted to improve health care. To do this, he had a very modern hospital constructed. The hospital had the most up-to-date equipment and doctors trained in Vienna and New York. However, the hospital was a failure. The failure was caused by the lack of trained nurses and orderlies to carry out doctors' orders and technicians to service the modern equipment. Furthermore, the local population had little understanding of the ideas of sanitation and did not follow doctors' directions correctly.

In another action by the Shah, an 870-mile railroad was constructed that bypassed all but two major cities and did not connect with any neighboring country.

See Epilogue, p. 599.

Nationalism Spreads to Southwest Asia

Just as the people of India fought to have their own nation after World War I, the people of Southwest Asia also launched independence movements during this time. Each group in Southwest Asia chose a different path toward nation building.

The breakup of the Ottoman Empire and growing Western interest in Southwest Asia spurred the rise of nationalism in this region.

Turkey Becomes a Republic By the end of World War I, Turkey was all that remained of the Ottoman Empire. It included the old Turkish homeland of Anatolia and a small strip of land around Istanbul.

In 1919, Greek soldiers dealt a death blow to the Ottoman Empire. They invaded Turkey and threatened to conquer it. The Turkish sultan, weak and corrupt, was powerless to stop them. In 1922, a brilliant commander, **Mustafa Kemal** (keh-MAHL), led Turkish nationalists in overthrowing the last Ottoman sultan. A young woman who played a major role in the revolution described her strong nationalistic feelings: "I suddenly ceased to exist as an individual. I worked, wrote and lived as a unit of that magnificent national madness."

In 1923, Kemal became the president of the new Republic of Turkey, the first republic in Southwest Asia. He ushered in many sweeping reforms to achieve his goal of transforming Turkey into a modern nation. Kemal separated the laws of Islam from the laws of the nation. He abolished religious courts and created a new legal system based on European law. Under Kemal, women gained more freedom. He granted women the right to vote and to hold public office. Kemal also launched government-funded programs to industrialize Turkey and to spur economic growth.

Persia Becomes Iran Before World War I, both Great Britain and Russia had established spheres of influence in the ancient country of Persia. After the war, when Russia was still reeling from the Bolshevik Revolution, the British tried to take over all of Persia. This maneuver triggered a nationalist revolt in Persia. In 1921, a Persian army officer seized power. In 1925 he deposed the ruling shah.

Persia's new leader, Reza Shah Pahlavi (PAL-uh-vee), like Kemal in Turkey, set out to modernize his country. He established public schools, built roads and railroads, promoted industrial growth, and extended women's rights. Unlike Kemal, Reza Shah kept all power in his own hands. In 1935, he changed the name of his country from Persia to Iran.

Saudi Arabia Keeps Islamic Traditions While Turkey broke with many Islamic traditions, another new country held strictly to Islamic law. In 1902, Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud (sah-OOD), a member of a once-powerful Arabian family, began a successful campaign to unify Arabia. In 1932, he renamed the new kingdom Saudi Arabia after his family.

Ibn Saud carried on Arab and Islamic traditions. Loyalty to the Saudi government was based on custom, religion, and family ties. Alcoholic drinks were illegal. Like Kemal and Reza Shah, Ibn Saud brought some modern technology, such as telephones and radios, to his country. However, modernization in Saudi Arabia was limited to religiously acceptable areas.

Oil Resources Spur Economic Development While nationalism steadily emerged as a major force in Southwest Asia, the region's economy was also taking a new direction. The rising demand for petroleum products in industrialized countries brought new oil explorations to Southwest Asia. During the 1920s and 1930s, European and American companies discovered huge oil deposits in Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and

Background

The Ottoman Empire had ruled in Southwest Asia for about 500 years.

THINK THROUGH HISTORY

C. Comparing How were Kemal's leadership and Reza Shah's leadership similar?



Southwest Asia and Northeast Africa, 1922–1934

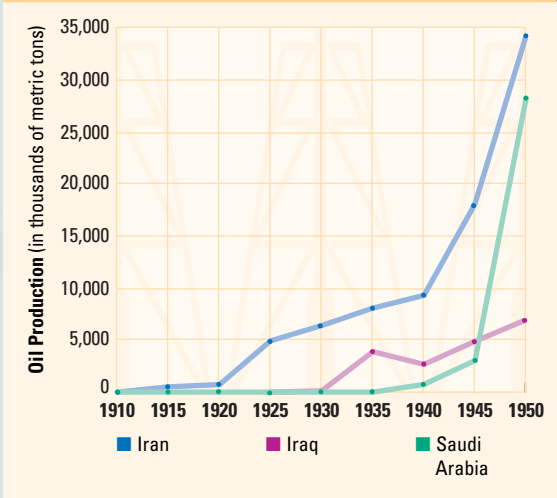


Persia was renamed Iran in 1935. Oil was discovered in the early 1900s and continues to be Iran's most important natural resource.

Turkey became a republic in 1923.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was established in 1932. Oil was discovered near the coastline of the Persian Gulf in 1938. Saudi Arabia's oil industry was not developed until after 1941.

Oil Exports



GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

- Location** Along what geographical feature are most of the oil-producing regions located?
- Region** Based on the graph and map, what country was the leading producer of oil by 1938? Why?

Kuwait. Foreign businesses invested huge sums of money to develop these oil fields. Geologists later learned that the land around the Persian Gulf has nearly two-thirds of the world's known supply of oil.

This important resource led to rapid and dramatic economic changes and development. Saudi Arabia, for example, would soon become a nation of wealthy oil exporters. Yet oil proved to be a mixed blessing for Southwest Asia. Though oil brought huge profits, it also encouraged Western nations to try to dominate this region. Meanwhile, Western nations were about to face a more immediate crisis as power-hungry leaders seized control in Italy and Germany.

Section 4 Assessment

1. TERMS & NAMES

- Identify
- Mohandas K. Gandhi
 - civil disobedience
 - Mustafa Kemal

2. TAKING NOTES

Create a web diagram like the one below. Show the different forms of nationalism that developed in the Asian countries shown.



In which of these countries did World War I trigger nationalist movements?

3. HYPOTHESIZING

What do you think a nation might gain and lose by modernizing?

THINK ABOUT

- what positive changes occurred in Turkey and Iran
- why modernization was limited in Saudi Arabia
- why Kemal set rules for clothing
- why Gandhi wore only homespun cloth

4. THEME ACTIVITY

Science and Technology

Work in small groups to research products and consumer goods made from petroleum. Create an illustrated list of items that were in great demand in industrialized countries during the 1930s.