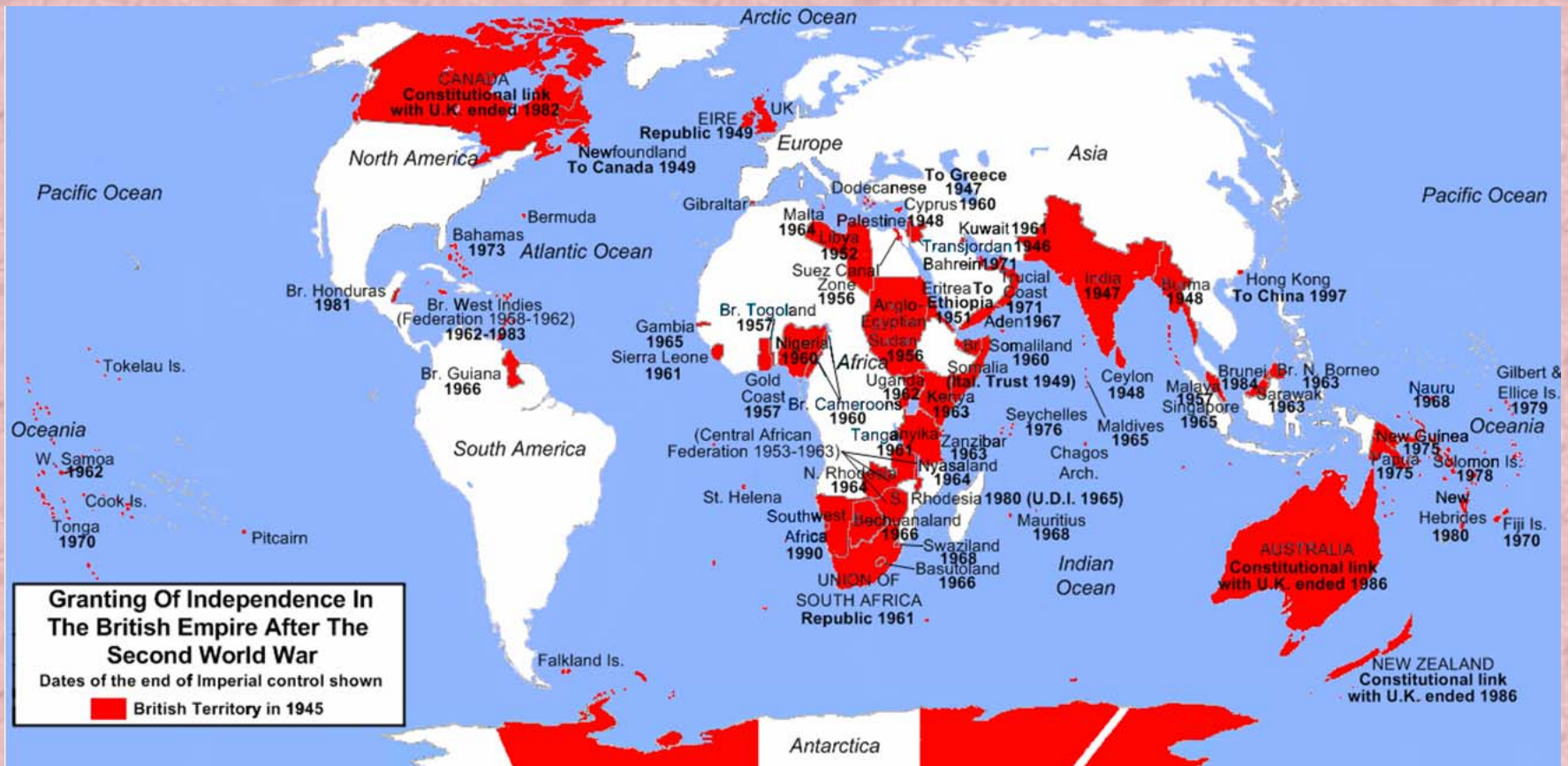


Striving for Independence: Africa & India

TOWARD A GLOBAL COMMUNITY (1900 – PRESENT)



- A major theme of the post WWII world is that colonies around the globe will begin to become independent.



Sub-Saharan Africa

- Although Europeans prided themselves on bringing “civilization” to their African colonies, imperialism brought negative effects:
 - Men flocked to European built urban areas looking for work leaving their wives and families behind
 - European companies dominated all aspects of commerce (African women did play a role in retail trades – selling stuff at markets, but never made much money)
 - Population movements spread diseases (syphilis, tuberculosis) for which Europeans did little to prevent
 - New political boundaries designed by Europeans upset centuries old ethnic & tribal divisions

- However, foreign occupation also awakened some Africans to new political ideas. Christian missionary schools taught literacy and also allowed Africans to see parallels between biblical stories and their own lives.



- A few Africans gained the opportunity to obtain secondary education abroad. Although small in number these individuals often planted the seeds for better treatment for Africans and ultimately independence.
- In South Africa the ANC (African National Congress) was created to promote the interest of Africans.

- Also inspiring Africans toward “independence” was their involvement in WWII. A million Africans fought in WWII to help “liberate” people from Nazi occupation & racism.
- In 1941 Emperor Haile Selassie led Ethiopian troops into battle to free his country from the Italians.



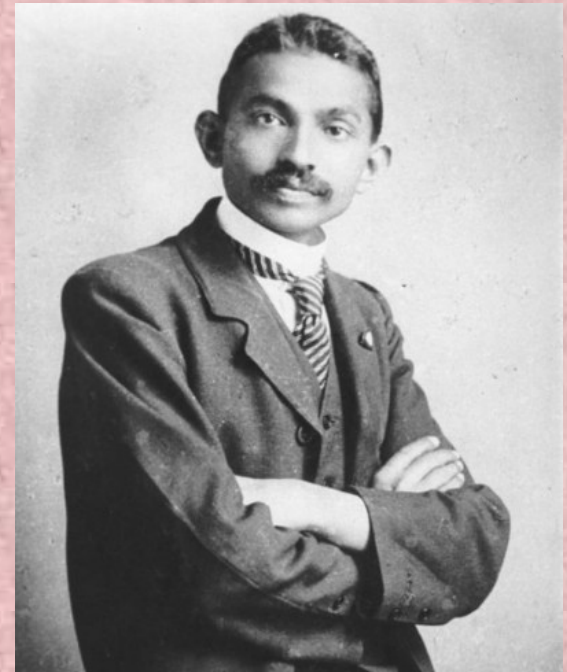
India

- Similar to Africa the “civilization” brought by the English to India did little to benefit the average Indian.
 - Railroads & modern cities may have been built, but there were few good job opportunities for Indians because the British did not want Indians to develop their own industries and thus compete with mother England (In 1925, 51% of the imports coming into India were coming from Britain).
 - As India’s population climbed in the 20th century cities filled with peasants
 - The low status of women remained unchanged even under British rule



- However, also like Africa a small Western-educated middle class developed, which would plant the seeds of independence. English had become the main language of this group.
- Under British rule the subcontinent of mostly Hindus (Muslims were only a majority in the NW) was governed by a viceroy and civil servants who often held racist views.
- These racist attitudes offended India's educated class. As time passed, Indians of all religions and castes became increasingly upset about India's colonial status. Incidents of violence against the British became more frequent.

- The fact that the country did not fall into widespread chaos is credited to Mohandas Gandhi (sometimes referred to as Mahatma, the great soul).
- Gandhi came from a wealthy family, was educated abroad in England, practiced law in South Africa, and then during WWI returned to England.
- Like other educated Hindus he joined the Indian National Congress, a political organization that petitioned the government for greater self-rule.



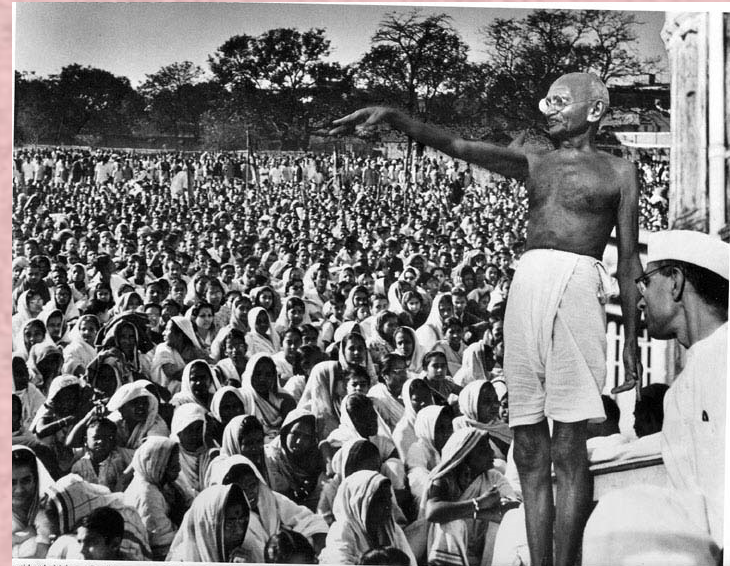
- However, unlike other Indians who wanted to combat the British, Gandhi urged non-violence.
- Also in contrast to upper class Indians he had empathy for the poor - In 1921 he began to dress in peasant garb.
- All of which brought him a greater following and transformed India's independence movement from one of educated elites to a larger mass movement.



- Gandhi was also an advocate of civil disobedience. For example, in 1929 he led followers on an 80 mile walk to the coast to collect seawater in order to make salt. It became known as the Salt March or the Walk to the Sea.
- The act violated the law that gave the British a monopoly on making salt.

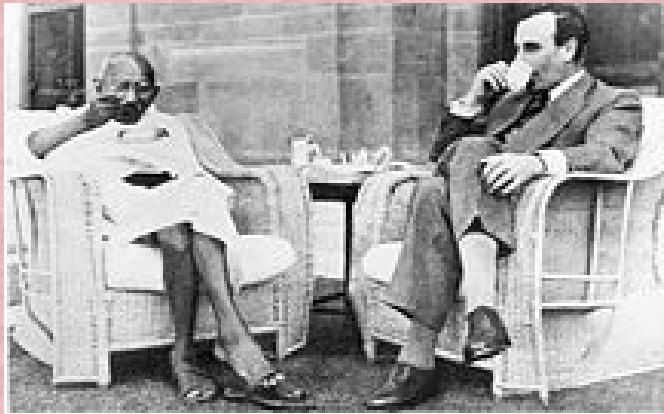


- Throughout the 1930s he protested the violence of colonial rule by fasting (often coming close to death). His civil disobedience repeatedly caused him to be arrested and sent to jail.
- However, his non-violent tactics only made him more popular. Furthermore, the English were starting to become “uncomfortable” with their supposed “superiority.”



- Slowly the British began to relinquish control of India:
 - More Indians were allowed into the Civil Service
 - Steps toward industrialization occurred
 - Indians were allowed to direct education & public works
- However, during WWII the viceroy declared war without consulting a single Indian. The British promised to grant India independence after the war, but Gandhi and other leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru wanted immediate independence. Nehru like Gandhi was educated, but he envisioned a modern industrialized India. In contrast, Gandhi saw industrialization as a threat to a traditional way of life. Gandhi chose the simple spinning wheel as his symbol.
- Indians were divided on the war, while some did fight for the Allies, some were so anti-British they joined the Japanese side.

- At the end of the war, the British Labour Party began taking steps to grant India independence, however conflict between Hindus & Muslims threatened to tear the country apart.
- Muslims wanted a state of their own – Pakistan - in a region of India where Muslims were concentrated (Muslims feared living in a country that would be dominated by Hindus). Although Gandhi & the British wanted to keep India unified partition took place.



- In 1947 India and Pakistan became independent countries – Jawaharlal Nehru became India's first prime minister. Bangladesh was considered East Pakistan and did not become Bangladesh until 1971.
- Partition brought an end to centuries of Hindus & Muslim intermingling throughout Indian society. As people relocated to different areas sectarian massacres took place.
- In 1948 Gandhi himself was shot. He was killed by a radical Hindu nationalist who blamed Gandhi for weakening India.



- As a result of partition the region of Kashmir became contested by both countries. Although in inhabited by mostly Muslims, at the time of partition it was administered by a Hindu, plus it held the headwaters of rivers that irrigated farmlands in India.
- Even today Kashmir is a source of tension between the nuclear powers of India & Pakistan.





Spot Map 23-1
Ways of the World, First Edition
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