



**Big Era Eight**  
**A Half-Century of Crisis**  
**1900 – 1950 CE**



**Landscape Teaching Unit 8.4**  
**Nationalism and Social Change in Colonial Empires**  
**1914 – 1950 CE**

**Table of Contents**

---

Why this unit?	2
Unit objectives	2
Time and materials	2
Authors	3
The historical context	4
This unit in the Big Era timeline	10
Lesson 1: Gandhi and Indian independence	11
Lesson 2: Vietnam seeks independence	31
Lesson 3: Korean independence	44
Lesson 4: Kenya and the Mau Mau	57
Assessment	71
This unit and the Three Essential Questions	72
This unit and the Seven Key Themes	72
This unit and the Standards in Historical Thinking	72
Resources	73
Correlations to National and State Standards and to textbooks	74
Conceptual links to other lessons	75

## Why this unit?

---

The large number of **nationalist** movements protesting against various types of colonial rule formed a major theme in this Big Era. In many cases European and American ideologies, especially **Marxism** and liberal democratic philosophy, exercised major influences on these movements and often caused some of them to splinter into competing factions. Leaders in each area had their own visions of how their independent **state** would look.

Most nationalist movements had elements in common. They sought sovereign independence for their territory; mobilized people on a mass scale; used newspapers, magazines, and radio to communicate with supporters; enjoyed help from overseas communities; and, to one degree or another, engaged in violent action. But each nationalist movement was also unique in its adaptation to local culture, history, and the nature of colonial rule.

This unit is important because the nationalist movements under study were largely successful. After World War II, the colonized peoples created a large number of new **nation-states** that have increased the world's states to more than 190.

## Unit objectives

---

*Upon completing this unit, students will be able to:*

1. Compare the goals, methods, and tactics of at least two nationalist movements in this unit.
2. Identify the various groups that participated in the movements and compare the roles of students, labor, peasants, and intellectuals in the various countries.
3. Analyze the role that violence, peaceful demonstrations, and political organizations played in nationalist movements.
4. Describe how colonial administrations, colonial educational policies, and indigenous cultural forms influenced various nationalist movements.
5. Analyze and compare how democracy, religious revival, and/or authoritarian rule emerged in the various nationalist movements.
6. Identify and compare the different visions leaders in each area had for their nation.

## Time and materials

---

This unit should take approximately eight days. If time is limited the teacher may concentrate on one or two of the four case studies. Because India was the first colonial territory to achieve independence after World War II and because its freedom inspired many other **nations** in Asia and Africa to intensify their struggles, we recommend that teachers start with India. Alternatively, teachers may use the information in this unit for a single jigsaw lesson.

Materials required are an overhead projector, maps of colonized areas of the world, a CD player and projector, and access to the Internet.

## Authors

---

Donald Johnson taught World History and Asian Studies at New York University for thirty-three years. Jean Johnson taught World History at Friends Seminary in New York City. Don also served as Director of Asian Studies at NYU, conducted an NYU summer graduate study program in India and China from 1972 to 1990, and served on the National Commission for Asia in Our Schools sponsored by the Asia Society. Jean served as a member of the TORCH Program of the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, was the Director of TeachAsia for the Asia Society, and participated in writing the National Standards in World History. The Johnsons have authored several books including *Through Indian Eyes*, *The Human Drama: A World History* (two volumes), and *Universal Religions in World History: Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam*. They also edited *India: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, which won the AAS Buchanan Prize in 2005.

## The historical context

---

As an unintended consequence of European, American, and Japanese imperial policies in the nineteenth century, millions of colonized peoples embarked on a variety of nationalist movements, demanding independence from foreign domination. Egyptian, Persian, and Turkish nationalist movements emerged in the late nineteenth century. Later, during World War I, nationalist movements spread to the Arabic-speaking peoples in West Asia and North Africa. In what the scholar Benedict Anderson calls “imagined communities,” the newly-mobilizing movements from Africa to Southwest, South, and East Asia began constructing narratives about their own national identity as they mounted resistance to foreign rule and economic exploitation.

The various twentieth-century independence movements were given a psychological boost by President Woodrow Wilson’s famous Fourteen Points issued to the United States Congress in 1918. This manifesto kindled nationalist fires all over the world. Among the Fourteen Points was a call for freedom of the seas, international agreements arrived at in public view and, of special interest to the colonized peoples, implementation of the principle of self-determination. Wilson publicly advocated “a free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that, in determining all such questions of sovereignty, the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims of the government whose title is to be determined.”

Although Wilson intended self-determination only for Europeans, colonized people around the world heard a far different message. Reactions to Wilson’s principles were electric and spread quickly to the emerging nationalist movements. In addition, at the World War I settlement of 1919 (Peace of Paris), the victorious allies talked publicly about building a new social order. Many nationalist leaders from colonized areas attended the Paris Peace Conference. The major world leaders, however, refused to seat the Korean and Vietnamese representatives or listen to

their arguments. Later it was revealed that the United States, Japan, and France had made a secret pact to exclude both Korea and Indochina from the Paris proceedings.

The call for self-determination could not be stopped. After the war, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk arose as leader of Turkey's nationalist cause. The Wafd Party was instrumental in shaping a new national consciousness in Egypt, and the Neo-Destour Party led the early independence movement in Tunisia. Despite their diverse religious and cultural make-ups, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, and Jordan, the new mandated areas that Britain and France carved out of the former Ottoman empire, also formed nascent nationalist identities.

The African experience was quite different. In the period after World War I, European imperialism was at its height in Africa. From Britain's indirect rule to Belgium's direct colonization, the European powers carved the continent into a mix of national colonies and protectorates, all shaped by European interests. Because European powers had created these new nations without regard to local ethnic and cultural identities, conceiving national identities and mounting genuine nationalist movements was more problematic. Despite this obstacle, some educated Africans began to build nationalist movements. In the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, a Graduates' Congress was organized in 1938. In Kenya during the 1920s, the Kikuyu Central Association, whose goal was land reform, also gained followers.

One of the oldest nationalist movements emerged in India in the later nineteenth century. By 1885, English-educated lawyers and groups of rising merchants and bankers were organizing the Indian National Congress. Later, Bal Gangadha Tilak challenged the moderate approach of the early nationalist leaders by demanding immediate freedom (*swaraj*) and advocating the use of violence to achieve it. In 1915, Mohandas Gandhi returned to India from South Africa and soon dominated the nationalist movement. His advocacy of non-violence, while not the only approach nationalist leaders took, gave to the Indian independence movement a unique method of action that could involve average people of all social classes.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, nationalist movements were well established in East and Southeast Asia. The U.S. seized the Philippines by defeating a guerrilla resistance movement between 1898 and 1901. In the late 1930s, the U.S. granted the Philippines Commonwealth status, but the Japanese conquered it in 1942. Nationalist resistance to French rule in Indochina, Dutch rule in Indonesia, and British control in various Southeast Asian lands heightened in the interwar era. But these movements had only limited success until World War II, when Japanese victories over several imperial powers inspired local nationalists openly to resist European rule.

The period between the two world wars witnessed a rapid rise in [globalization](#). The world-wide depression had global effects around the world. At the same time, many colonized peoples were influenced by outside cultural forms such as literature, film, sports, and political philosophy.

Many national leaders borrowed ideologies from Western writers and activists. Some Korean, Vietnamese, and African nationalist leaders were deeply influenced by Karl Marx and Vladimir I. Lenin and saw in Marxism a rationale for their wars of liberation. Indian leaders, such as

Jawaharlal Nehru, leaned to a more moderate socialism advocated in Europe by members of social democratic parties. Despite the cynicism that resulted from Wilson's call for self-determination, many struggling nationalists still looked to him and other American writers for inspiration.

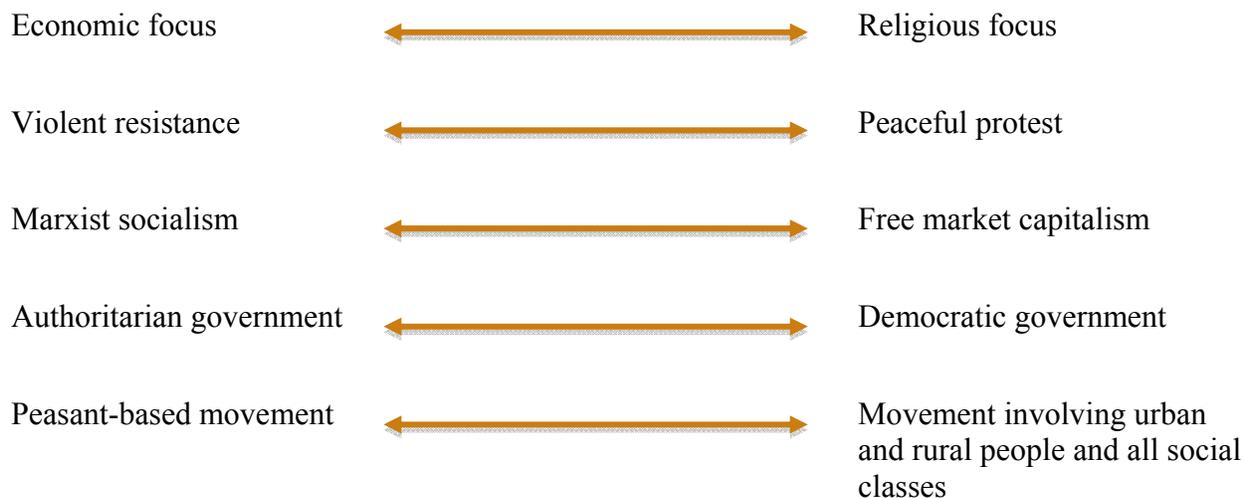
Within many of the nationalist movements, factions divided along a gradual to radical continuum. In their search for identity, they also often divided over whether to emulate Western modernity or to resurrect ideals from their own historic religious traditions. For example, in Egypt, the more radical Muslim Brotherhood called for a return to what they saw as an earlier glorious Muslim society. In India, some advocated following Western models of socialism and modernity, while others counseled a return to older Hindu values. Similarly, in Vietnam, groups argued over political ideology and the role that the past should play in the formulation of its national identity.

The nationalist movements took many different paths. Local factors such as religion, culture, history, and the nature of colonial rule shaped the way various groups imagined their past and responded to [colonialism](#). Spanish, Portuguese, and French colonial policy tended to stress assimilation to the mother country's cultural values and traditions. Early colonial reform in the Dutch and English colonies strove to introduce Western institutions, such as parliamentary government, learned by the colonized through education. At the same time, these two imperial powers generally expressed more conspicuously-racist attitudes toward colonized peoples than the French did.

While the ideal of a nation-state inspired most of the nationalist movements, there were instances of attempts to form larger units of identity. Leaders of these efforts often argued that the colonial states were the products of imperial rulers arbitrarily drawing boundaries for their own convenience. Rejecting these boundaries, they incorporated larger areas in their imagined communities. Leaders such as Gamal Abdel Nasser in Egypt and Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana (the Gold Coast colony) attempted to formulate larger group identities. Nasser led the Pan-Arab movement and Nkrumah the Pan-African movement. These proposals proved impractical, however, because nationalist leaders were more interested in gaining full control of their own colonial territories than in giving up some power to a large multiethnic and multinational political entity.

In every territory, leaders debated the best methods to gain freedom. These debates included whether to attempt violent resistance or to wait for slow reforms to take root. They also included whether to adopt some form of Marxist ideology to avoid the pitfalls of market capitalism as a perceived tool of imperialism or to emulate the capitalist economies. Further debates raged on whether to work for the unity of the territory or accept partition among different ethnic or religious groups.

The options available to nationalist movements can be seen as choices within a range of approaches. Investigating these ranges of choice might help students make generalizations about the various approaches of the nationalist movements introduced in this unit.



The conceptual framework for using this option schema is based on Benedict Anderson's idea of the nation as an "imagined community." Anderson's book, titled *Imagined Communities*, is arguably the most widely-used discussion of this subject. He sees the nation-state as a modern phenomenon that grew out of the Industrial Revolution, market capitalism, and the European Enlightenment. To Anderson, nationalism is a constructed entity, a product of culture, and he argues that nations now command the ultimate human loyalty, replacing religion as the dominant form of identity.

The persistent question throughout this unit should be "How did Indians, Vietnamese, Koreans, and Kenyans imagine themselves as a people?" In analyzing the readings in the lessons that follow, help students focus on how these "imaginings" were argued and debated. Finally, which image came to define each of these modern nation-states?

### Activity Options

The unit is organized as four separate case studies of nationalist movements: India, Vietnam, Korea, and Kenya. Each lesson includes activities for the teacher to use and also handouts that students may use for evidence.

Teachers should ask students to read and discuss the following excerpt from Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, reserving plenty of time to discuss the meaning of words and special terms.

[The Nation] ... is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. ...

In fact, all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined. Javanese villagers have always known that they are connected to people they have never seen, but these ties were once imagined particularistically—as indefinitely stretchable nets of kinship and clientship. Until quite recently, the Javanese language had no word meaning the abstraction “society.” ...

The nation is imagined as *limited* because even the largest of them encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind. The most messianic nationalists do not dream of a day when all the members of the human race will join their nation in the way that it was possible, in certain epochs, for, say, Christians to dream of a wholly Christian planet.

It is imagined as *sovereign* because the concept was born in an age in which Enlightenment and Revolution were destroying the legitimacy of the divinely-ordained, hierarchical dynastic realm. Coming to maturity at a stage of human history when even the most devout adherents of any universal religion were inescapably confronted with the living pluralism of such religions, and the vast [differences] between each faith’s [textual] claims and its territorial stretch, nations dream of being free and, if under God, directly so. The gage and emblem of this freedom is the sovereign state.

Finally, [the nation] is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship. Ultimately it is this fraternity that makes it possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings.

These deaths bring us abruptly face to face with the central problem posed by nationalism: what makes the shrunken imaginings of recent history (scarcely more than two centuries) generate such colossal sacrifices? I believe that the beginnings of an answer lie in the cultural roots of nationalism.

Source: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, New Edition (New York: Verso, 2006), 5-7.

After all students have read and discussed the excerpt from Anderson’s book, teachers may select one of three options for teaching this unit.

### Option one

Teachers may have students study each of these countries separately and then have a culminating activity where students share the similarities and differences among the various independence movements. If teachers do that, they may follow the suggested activities offered in each section.

**Option two**

A second option focuses on two case studies. Teachers who choose this option are recommended to select India and one other case study.

**Option three**

A third option is to organize the entire unit as one integrated jigsaw lesson. The following strategy is suggested:

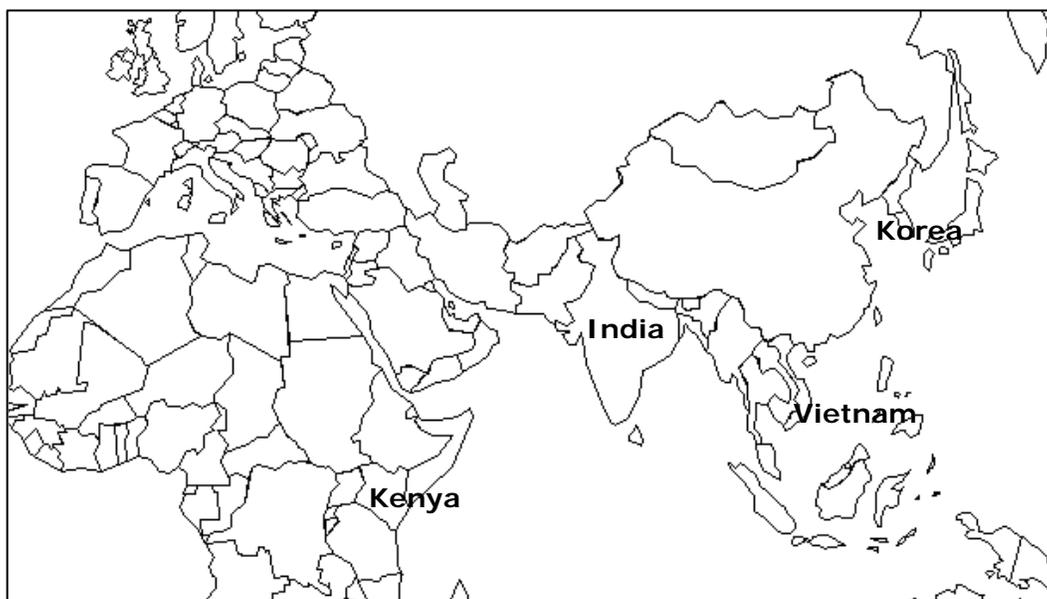
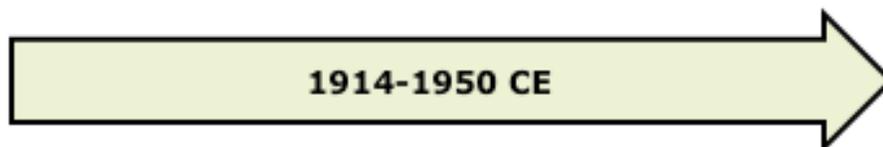
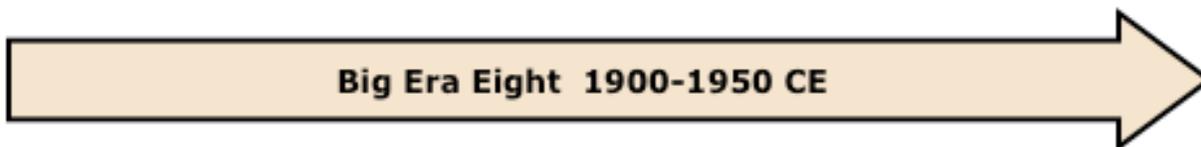
1. Divide the class into four “expert” groups. Each group will examine and study one of the four national case studies. Students within each group may either read all of the Student Handouts for their country or they may give different students the readings and questions for each subtopic A-E indicated below. Even if the members of the expert groups choose to assign each other only one sub-topic, each group as a whole is responsible for answering the questions as they apply to its assigned nation-state, including the summary question: How did the nationalist movement ultimately bring independence to the new nation?
2. Assign each group the following subtopics with questions:
  - A. Colonial rule: What were the specific complaints that the nationalist leaders alleged against colonial rule in their country?
  - B. The role of participants in the nationalist movement: What kinds of people did the nationalist movement attract and which groups were most prominent in the movement, for example, students, intellectuals, religious leaders, peasants, workers, and middle classes?
  - C. Methods of protest: In what way did the nationalist leaders rely on violence, peaceful protests, gradual movements to self-government, or other strategies or a combination of all of these? How did the nationalist movement ultimately bring independence to the new nation?
  - D. Important leaders: Who were the important individuals who led the nationalist movement in their country?
  - E. Contesting ideologies: What were the contending ideologies that characterized the nationalist movement, such as Marxist socialism, liberal democracy, authoritarian rule, or fascism?
3. Have the expert groups meet and discuss the five subtopics indicated above. Students who are responsible for specific subtopics should share their information with other members of their expert group.
4. After the five expert groups have discussed the subtopics and associated questions, form five new groups, composed of one member from each of the expert groups. Assign one of the five subtopics to each new group. Be sure to include the students who studied that subtopic in the appropriate group. Have the students from each expert group share what

they have learned about that issue for their specific countries. Members of the five new groups will attempt to create a synthesis of subtopic issues from all four specific case studies. You may ask them to make a poster or other visual summaries of their conclusions.

5. Have each new group report its findings to the class, using visuals or any other materials it has created. After each group report, have the class discuss similarities and differences among the various national efforts on that topic.
6. Finally, hold a general discussion on themes, trends, and generalizations in twentieth-century anti-colonial nationalism based on the four case studies. Teachers may want to introduce other questions, such as the importance of differences among the colonial cases, the effect of outside developments (e.g., World War II), changes in world opinion about colonialism, and the issue of why colonialism largely ended within thirty years of the end of World War II.

## This unit in the Big Era Timeline

---



## *Lesson 1*

### *Gandhi and Indian Independence*

#### **Preparation**

Students should have read relevant parts of their textbook or other sources of basic knowledge on Indian nationalism and Gandhi's influence. Students should have studied the colonial impact on the Indian economy and should understand the disastrous effects of colonialism on India's manufacturing and trade. If they do not already have this background, share the information in the introduction. They should also have a general knowledge of who Gandhi was.

#### **Materials**

- CD of the movie "Gandhi" directed by Richard Attenboro
- overhead projector
- CD projector
- maps of India
- notebooks, pens, chalk board

#### **Introduction**

Although the British have long argued that their colonial rule in the subcontinent brought India and Pakistan into the modern world and prepared a backward people for democratic rule, the record of India's two-hundred-year experience with European occupation suggests a far different story.

The gradual expansion of the English East India Company's rule and control of India after 1757 was aimed at making a profit by exporting India's raw materials to Britain for processing and exporting finished products like cloth back to India to be sold in a closed market. The result of this policy was the dramatic decline of India's cloth export trade which, for centuries, had made India the cloth merchant of the world.

In 1750, on the eve of British control, India and China produced about two-thirds of the world's manufacturing. By 1947, when India gained independence from Great Britain, that once-powerful center was producing about 2 percent of the world's manufacturing. This "de-industrialization" and de-urbanization of the Indian subcontinent left the newly-independent India with a population about 85 percent rural and few basic industries on which to achieve rapid development.

Moreover, the British cultural policy of racism after the uprising of 1857 practically stopped the liberal reforms advocated by some British leaders. This racist policy saw Hindus and Muslims as biologically and culturally inferior and not fit or ready for self-rule. The British cultural policy of racism also included a gendered division of peoples. The British saw themselves as masculine,

strong, powerful, rational, and capable of democratic governance. Conversely, the British regarded most Indians as feminine, feeble, non-rational, cowardly, and incapable of democratic self-rule. It was not surprising that Gandhi would later argue that “The British say we are as weak as women, but we will show them that we are as strong as women.”

The land reforms introduced by the British led to a new kind of land tenancy whereby a new class of landlords (Zamindars) grew in power, leading to the impoverishment of peasant farmers. With the introduction of a more money-oriented economy and British property law, millions of Indian peasants were caught in endless legal battles and endured life-long indebtedness to unscrupulous money lenders.

Finally, the British policy of “divide and rule” turned Muslims against Hindus, resulting in two parallel nationalist movements based on religious affiliation. This situation ultimately led to the creation of two new states, Islamic Pakistan and a predominantly Hindu India.

During the nineteenth century, the disparate strands of anti-British sentiment began to coalesce around a genuine nationalist movement. This culminated in the founding of the Indian Nationalist Congress in 1885. As in the case of most other nationalist movements among colonized peoples, some Indian reformers, for example Ram Mohan Roy, wanted to copy certain Western forms and values and cleanse Hinduism of its many rituals and beliefs and move it toward monotheism. Roy also argued that caste, idol worship, and discrimination against women had no real basis in Hinduism. The Brahmo Samaj was one important reform organization that grew out of this tradition. At the same time, other reformers, such as Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883), believed that all truths were contained in the Vedas and that Hindus should return to their basic historic values as a way to combat the intrusions of the British. The Arya Samaj was one important reform religious group that grew out of this tradition.

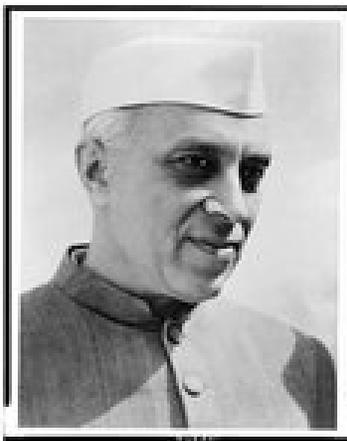
Besides the debates over the proper response of Hinduism to the impact of the West, nationalists argued over the use of violence. Nationalists like Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920) argued for immediate freedom (*swaraj*) and urged the use of violence to achieve it. On the opposite end of the spectrum, reformers like Gokhale wanted to rely on law and a gradual movement toward independence. After 1915, when Gandhi returned to India from South Africa, the Indian National Congress began to reach all areas of the subcontinent and to attract workers and peasants. No longer a club of British-trained lawyers, the new nationalist movement enrolled masses of people.



**Bal Gangadhar Tilak**

Source: [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/58/Bal\\_G.\\_Tilak.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/58/Bal_G._Tilak.jpg)

The nation that the Gandhian wing of the Congress Party imagined was one where the industrialists would hold wealth in stewardship and follow a strict set of ethics in dealing with labor. Gandhi imagined a nation of small villages rather than a nation of large cities. He also imagined one “Mother India” unbroken by partition between Muslims and Hindus. Sadly for his followers, modern India achieved independence in 1947 but that same year broke into two states, the post-partition India, under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru, and Pakistan.



**Jawaharlal Nehru**

Source: Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/92512517>

## Activities

1. Share the introduction about British colonial policies in India. Have students discuss what options the Indians might follow to free themselves from British rule.
2. Assign Student Handout 1.1 (Origins of the Indian Independence Movement). What groups were involved? What were the methods they used? What obstacles did the independence fighters face?
3. Assign Student Handout 1.2 (The Amritsar Massacre). An alternate strategy would be to show the clip of the Amritsar Massacre from the movie “Gandhi.” What does that incident show about British attitudes in India? How do you suppose the Indian people reacted to this incident and the way the British government rewarded General Dyer? What might the mood in India have been at this point?
4. Gandhi soon became the leader of the Indian struggle for independence. Jawaharlal Nehru, who became independent India’s first prime minister, felt that Gandhi’s biggest gift to the nation may well have been to give the people courage. Briefly discuss why Indians might have been afraid to stand up against the British. Then discuss what helps people become brave. Draw on the students’ own experience. Have students read Student

Handout 1.3 (And Then Gandhi Came). Review how Nehru thinks Gandhi helped the Indian people.

5. Two issues, first, the tension between ends and means, and second, non-violence, go to the core of Gandhi's philosophy. Begin with a discussion of ends and means in human action. Ask students if they ever use other people to achieve something they want, such as being nice to a teacher to get a better grade or courting a friend to help in getting elected to a student office. Then open a discussion on violence and non-violence. Are there some instances when violence is justified? How can non-violence be a source of power? Have students share examples of leaders, groups, or individuals who have used non-violent means to achieve certain goals.
6. Have students read Student Handout 1.4 (*Satyagraha* as a Means for Achieving Independence). How did Gandhi turn the values of *satyagraha* into social and political forces? What is the difference between "non-cooperation" and "civil disobedience?" Have students watch the Salt March segment from the movie "Gandhi." How does that March typify *satyagraha*?
7. Student Handouts 1.5-1.7 focus on the use of cloth in the Indian independence struggle. Young people today know that how one dresses and looks conveys meaning. Wearing a cap in school, dyeing one's hair, and putting labels on clothing are just a few examples of contested symbolic language. Students should therefore be able to relate to Gandhi's manipulation of clothing and appearance. The photographs can be used to introduce Gandhi and the Indian fight for self-rule. Have students discuss the power of symbols and how they can influence public opinion. After studying the photographs, you might ask: "Is Gandhi's later clothing more complex or simpler than his earlier clothing?"
8. At this point students should consult their textbook or other sources to see how and when the British left India. As a concluding activity, have students read and discuss Student Handout 1.8 ("Tryst with Destiny"). Using this speech by Jawaharlal Nehru and the other information in this lesson, have students share how they thought the Indian people "imagined" their new nation in 1947.

## Lesson 1

### *Student Handout 1.1—Origins of the Indian Independence Movement*

British colonial policy in the Indian subcontinent evolved gradually over a period of nearly two centuries. At first, the empire in India seemed to grow by accident as the East India Company, chartered to conduct commerce, increasingly took over actual governance of large areas. Despite orders from Parliament not to expand, the company continued to gobble up large chunks of the subcontinent, which caused the British government to establish more control by sending governors-general to India in the later eighteenth century.

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, British Parliament passed many reform measures that were seen as improving a backward people. However, many of the Indian elite saw these reforms as a threat to their traditional culture and, in 1857, led an armed revolt against the British.

After the British defeated the poorly-organized Indian rebels, they abandoned their liberal reforms in favor of direct rule of India based on a belief in “scientific racism.” This ideology asserts the inferiority of all peoples except Anglo-Saxons, who alone are capable of democratic government, rationalism, high morality, and individual responsibility. The new racism claimed that Indians were not ready for self-government and that it would take a very long time for them to evolve to the level of independence.

British rule brought the Indian economy rapidly into the world capitalist trading system and left the largely-agricultural population without the tariff protection enjoyed by other fledgling economies in Europe and the United States. The result was a constant increase in poverty, while industrializing England prospered from cheap Indian raw materials and a captive market for its manufactured products.

The British also used gender categories to place Indians in inferior relationships. They saw Indians as effete, feeble, cowardly, and effeminate. They saw themselves as masculine, strong, brave, and courageous. Later, Gandhi would tell his followers, “The British say we are as weak as women; we will show them that we are as strong as women.”

The Indian nationalist movement was one of the earliest in the colonized world. The movement began as an interaction between historic Indian values, especially the religious traditions of Hinduism and Islam, and Western religions and philosophies. In good Indian style, many of the seemingly-contradictory ideas between India and the West were easily synthesized into a variety of new blends that informed the various threads and subdivisions of the larger nationalist movement.

Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) was one of the first nationalists to attempt to reconcile Hinduism with Western monotheism. He stressed the monistic writings of the Upanishads (the idea that reality is a unified whole), and he argued that caste, image worship, and other Hindu rituals were

additions to true Hinduism. He founded the Brahmo Samaj in Calcutta and attracted many reformers to his cause. About the same time, Dayananda Saraswati (1824-1883) founded the Arya Samaj, which sought to return to the teachings of the Vedas and cleanse Hinduism of many of the beliefs and practices that were not found in the ancient Vedic texts.

By 1885, groups of British-trained lawyers met to form the Indian Nationalist Congress, which included Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, and Christians. Most of the Congress leaders were high caste Hindus and many were products of the newly-rising middle and professional classes ushered in by British colonial policies.

The Congress was largely a peacefully-oriented group that sought reforms rather than independence. The Congress passed resolutions asking for a reduction of military expenses, which took up 50 percent of the total budget. The Congress also attempted to work with the British government, although the viceroy (governor-general of India) paid little attention to its requests.

Gradually, the Congress split into two factions, one led by the gradualist Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915), who stressed law and legislation as the proper route to greater Indian freedom, and Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920), who took a more militant stance demanding *swaraj*, or “freedom now.” Tilak also advocated the use of violence in opposition to Gokhale’s peaceful approach.

As the more militant wing of the Congress Party gained in popularity, the nationalist movement became active in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras. By the turn of the century, it was attracting support throughout the subcontinent.



**Gopal Krishna Gokhale**

Source: [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7c/Gopal\\_krishan\\_gokhale.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/7c/Gopal_krishan_gokhale.jpg)

## Lesson 1

### *Student Handout 1.2—The Amritsar Massacre*

The Amritsar Massacre of April 13, 1919, was one of the turning points in Indian-British relations. During World War I, Indian nationalists had demanded increasing self-government in return for Indian support of the Allies. Indian troops were sent to fight in Europe and West Asia. Yet the British remained fearful of an Indian revolt and, in 1919, passed the Rowlatt Acts, which allowed the government to detain suspected revolutionaries without normal legal protections. To protest this legislation, Gandhi led a series of *hartals* (nation-wide, day-long strikes involving fasting and prayer) throughout India. Hindus and Muslims cooperated peacefully in a *hartal* in Amritsar, the capital of the Punjab and a Sikh holy city, until the British authorities removed their leaders from the city.

Resentment over the humiliating way the British treated Indians led many to support the nationalist cause. This was especially true in Amritsar, where General Reginald Dyer instituted harsh rules. For example:

[General Dyer] ordered that all Indians passing through a certain street, where the English headmistress of a school had been beaten by a mob on April 10, must crawl on all fours. This applied to Indian families who had no other means of reaching their homes. Any Indian in a vehicle had to dismount and crawl; any Indian with a parasol had to furl it and crawl; any Indian was ordered to salute or salaam an English officer in these districts. A whipping post was installed at the spot where the school mistress had been beaten, and this was used for flogging such Indians as disobeyed any of the orders.<sup>1</sup>

The climax came when General Dyer ordered his troops to fire on a peaceful gathering in a park in Amritsar that had no escape route. The following excerpt portrays events at Amritsar and Dyer's response. Note the assumptions about what constitutes heroic action.

[On] April 13<sup>th</sup>, a mass meeting had been announced to take place in Jallianwalla Bagh, an open enclosure in the heart of the city of Amritsar. As it happened, April 13<sup>th</sup> was also the Baisakhi day, which is observed all over India as a day of national festival. Large crowds of country people had gathered in the city on that account. On the morning of the 13<sup>th</sup>, General Dyer, the commanding officer of the city, issued ... an order prohibiting the Jallianwalla Bagh meeting, and notices to that effect were posted in several places in the city. It should be mentioned here that ... there were in Amritsar at the time no universally read daily papers which could convey the Commanding Officer's orders (to the people) in the short interval between its issue and the time of the meeting. Under these circumstances

---

<sup>1</sup>Vincent Sheehan, *Mahatma Gandhi: A Great Life in Brief*, qtd. in Clarke D. Moore and David Eldredge, *India Yesterday and Today* (New York: Bantam, 1970), 191.

General Dyer's ... order could reach only a small fraction of the people in the city.

Now let us come to the scene of the meeting. People began to assemble in Jallianwalla Bagh at three o'clock. There were old men, women who carried babies in their arms, and children who held toys in their hands. They were all dressed in their holiday gala-dresses. While a few had come there to attend the meeting knowingly, the majority had just followed the crowd and drifted (to) the Bagh out of simple curiosity. Whatever may have been its nature otherwise, it is certain that the crowd at the Jallianwalla was not composed of bloody revolutionists. Not one of them carried a walking stick. They had assembled there in the open enclosure peacefully to listen to speeches and perhaps at the end to pass a few resolutions. At four o'clock the meeting was called to order, and the speeches began. No more than forty minutes of this peaceful gathering, and the audience was listening in an attentive and orderly manner to the speaker, ... when General Dyer walked in with his band of thirty soldiers and suddenly opened fire on the crowd without giving them any warning or chance to disperse. ... People began to run toward all sides to save their lives; those who fell down were run over by the rest and crushed under their weight. Others who attempted to escape by leaping over the low wall on the east end were shot dead by the fire from the general's squad. As the crowd centered near the only escape from the unfinished low wall, the general directed his shots there. He aimed where the crowd was the thickest, and inside of the fifteenth minutes during which his ammunition lasted he had killed at least eight hundred men, women, and children and wounded many times that number.

It was already late afternoon when General Dyer, his ammunition having run out, departed to his headquarters without providing any kind of ... medical aid to the wounded who lay bleeding and helpless at the scene of the slaughter. Before the people of the neighborhood recovered from their (horror), it had already begun to get dark. As one of the rules of martial law strictly forbade walking in the streets of Amritsar after dark, it was impossible for anyone ... to bring organized relief to the wounded at Jallianwalla. ...<sup>2</sup>

Here is part of General Dyer's testimony before Lord Hunter's committee that was investigating the Amritsar incident:

Q. When you got into the Bagh what did you do?

Dyer. I opened fire.

Q. At once?

Dyer. Immediately. I had thought about the matter and don't imagine it took me more than thirty seconds to make up my mind as to what my duty was.

Q. How many people were in the crowd?

Dyer. I then estimated them roughly at 5,000. I heard afterwards there were many more.

---

<sup>2</sup> Dalip Singh Saund, *My Mother India* (Stockton, CA: Pacific Coast Khalsa Diwan Society, 1930), 151-3.

Q. On the assumption that there was that risk of people being in the crowd who were not aware of the proclamation, did it not occur to you that it was a proper measure to ask the crowd to disperse before you took that step of actually firing?

Dyer. No, at the time I did not. I merely felt that my orders had not been obeyed, that martial law was (ignored), and that it was my duty to immediately disperse by rifle fire. ...

Q. Did the crowd at once start to disperse as soon as you fired?

Dyer. Immediately.

Q. Did you continue firing?

Dyer. Yes.

Q. What reason had you to suppose that if you ordered the assembly to leave the Bagh, they would not have done so without the necessity of your firing and continuing firing for any length of time?

Dyer. Yes, I think it quite possible that I could have dispersed them perhaps even without firing.

Q. Why did you not recourse to that?

Dyer. They would have all come back and laughed at me, and I should have made what I considered a fool of myself. ... My idea from the military point of view was to make a wide impression.<sup>3</sup>

To the British, the Amritsar incident was so unimportant that it took four months for news of it to reach official London. The horrible details of the massacre were fully disclosed, and General Dyer was retired from the military service on full pension. On his return to England he received ten thousand pounds sterling, which amount had been raised by voluntary subscription by the English people to recompense the general for his heroic work at Jallianwalla Bagh!

---

<sup>3</sup> Saund, *My Mother India*, 155-7.

## Lesson 1

### *Student Handout 1.3—And Then Gandhi Came*

After the Amritsar Massacre, Mohandas K. Gandhi became an increasingly-important nationalist leader. Gandhi helped restore Indian self-confidence. Part of that confidence-building came as a result of Gandhi's ability to challenge the British brand of heroism. Take, for example, Gandhi's reaction to General Dyer's "heroism" at Amritsar. He wrote:

He (General Dyer) has called an unarmed crowd of men and children—mostly holiday-makers—"a rebel army." He believes himself to be the savior of Punjab in that he was able to shoot down like rabbits men who were penned in an enclosure. Such a man is unworthy of being considered a soldier. There was no bravery in his action. He ran no risk. He shot without the slightest opposition and without warning. This is not an "error of judgment." It is a paralysis of it in the face of fancied danger. It is proof of criminal incapacity and heartlessness.<sup>4</sup>

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru offered this assessment of Gandhi's importance to India's independence struggle:

We seemed to be helpless in the grip of some all-powerful monster; our limbs were paralyzed, our minds deadened. The peasantry were servile and fear-ridden; the industrial workers were no better. The middle classes, the intelligentsia, who might have been beacon lights in the enveloping darkness, were themselves submerged in this all-pervading gloom. ...

What could we do? How could we pull India out of this quagmire of poverty and defeatism which sucked her in?

And then Gandhi came. He was like a powerful current of fresh air that made us stretch ourselves and take deep breaths, like a beam of light that pierced the darkness and removed the scales from our eyes, like a whirlwind that upset many things but most of all the working of people's minds. He did not descend from the top; he seemed to emerge from the millions of India, speaking their language and incessantly drawing attention to them and their appalling condition. Get off the backs of these peasants and workers, he told us, all you who live by their exploitation; get rid of the system that produces this poverty and misery.

Political freedom took new shape then and acquired a new content. Much that he said we only partially accepted or sometimes did not accept at all. But all this was secondary. The essence of his teaching was fearlessness and truth and action

---

<sup>4</sup> Saund, *My Mother India*, 158.

allied to these, always keeping the welfare of the masses in view. The greatest gift for an individual or a nation, so we had been told in our ancient books, was *abhaya*, fearlessness, not merely bodily courage but the absence of fear from the mind. . . . at the dawn of our history, [our leaders had said] that it was the function of the leaders of a people to make them fearless. But the dominant impulse in India under British rule was that of fear, pervasive, oppressing, strangling fear, fear of the army, the police, the widespread secret service; fear of the official class; fear of laws meant to suppress, and of prison; fear of the landlord's agent; fear of the moneylender; fear of unemployment and starvation, which were always on the threshold. It was against this all-pervading fear that Gandhi's quiet and determined voice was raised: Be not afraid.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru, *Discovery of India* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, 1959), 274-5.

## Lesson 1

### *Student Handout 1.4—Satyagraha as a Means for Achieving Independence*

Gandhi helped redefine the way Indians thought about courage and potency, about masculinity and femininity, and about British-Indian relations. Some of Gandhi's early experiences gave him insights into different kinds of courage and influenced the development of his idea of *satyagraha*, his philosophy to achieve independence. He grew up in the midst of non-violence and ascetic influences. His mother painstakingly observed the more rigorous demands of her faith. She made strong ascetic demands on herself—"self-suffering," as Gandhi called it when he made it part of his political method. It seems to have been a central virtue in the Gandhi home. Mrs. Gandhi fasted frequently and practiced other austerities.

"Self-suffering" was important in other ways to the family. If one member of the household was angry with another, he would punish him by imposing some penalty on himself. Thus young Gandhi, angry because his family failed to summon to dinner a friend whom he wished to invite—it may have been a Muslim friend, with whom the family could not dine without transgressing the caste ethic—ceased to eat mangoes for the season, though it was his favorite fruit. The family was duly distressed. On another occasion, Gandhi, finding it difficult in confessing a minor theft to his father, wrote him a note. "In this note not only did I confess my guilt, but I asked adequate punishment for it, and closed with a request to him not to punish himself for my offense." It was the father's self-suffering, not punishment, that he claims to have feared most.<sup>6</sup>

The three basic principles of *satyagraha* are truth, non-violence, and self-suffering. Self-suffering differs from violence in that violence consists of doing injury to another. In *satyagraha*, the suffering injury is to one's self, not violence to others.

*Satyagraha* involved both non-cooperation and civil disobedience. Civil disobedience, a term Henry David Thoreau coined, involves purposely breaking any immoral laws in a non-violent manner. The person who breaks the law willingly suffers the punishment. Non-cooperation implies refusing to cooperate with the state that has become corrupt. Non-cooperation is even open to children of understanding and can be safely practiced by everyone. Both non-cooperation and civil disobedience are part of *satyagraha*, which includes all non-violent resistance for the vindication of truth. Gandhi wrote:

What does a son do when he objects to some action of his father? He requests the father to desist from the objectionable course, i.e., presents respectful petitions. If the father does not agree in spite of repeated prayers, he non-co-operates with him to the extent even of leaving the paternal roof. This is pure justice. Where father and son are uncivilized, they quarrel, abuse each other, and often even come to

---

<sup>6</sup> Lloyd I. Rudolph and Susanne Hoeber Rudolph, *Postmodern Gandhi and Other Essays* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006), 187.

blows. An obedient son is ever modest, ever peaceful, and ever loving. It is only his love which on due occasion compels him to non-co-operate.<sup>7</sup>

Gandhi's instruction to those who wanted to become involved in a *satyagraha* campaign:

1. Harbor no anger but suffer the anger of the opponent. Refuse to return the assaults of the opponent.
2. Do not submit to any order given in a anger, even though severe punishment is threatened for disobeying.
3. Refrain from insults and swearing.
4. Protect the opponents from insult or attack, even at the risk of life.
5. Do not resist arrest nor the attachment of property, unless holding property as a trustee.
6. Refuse to surrender any property held in trust at the risk of life.
7. If taken prisoner, behave in an exemplary manner.
8. As a member of a *satyagraha* unit, obey the orders of *satyagraha* leaders, and resign from the unit in the event of serious disagreement.
9. Do not expect guarantees for maintenance of dependents.

The steps Gandhi outlined for a *satyagraha* campaign included:

1. Make every effort to resolve the conflict or redress the grievance through negotiation and arbitration; when that fails,
2. Prepare the group for direct action through exercises in self-discipline and, for Indian *satyagrahis*, purification fasting;
3. Institute an active propaganda campaign together with demonstrations, mass-meetings, parades, and slogan-shouting;
4. Issue an ultimatum such that offers the widest scope for agreement and face-saving and that offers a constructive solution to the problem;
5. Organize an economic boycott and forms of strike; non-cooperation such as non-payment of taxes, boycott of schools and other public institutions, ostracism, or even voluntary exile;
6. Perform civil disobedience by breaking laws that are either central to the grievance or symbolic; and finally,
7. Usurp the functions of the government and form a parallel government.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Mahatma Gandhi, *The Science of Satyagraha*, ed. Anand T. Hingorani, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1962), 135.

<sup>8</sup> Joan Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1988), *passim*.

## Lesson 1

### *Student Handout 1.5—The Fabric of Independence*

Cloth is both the symbol and economic source of much of India's historic prosperity. Cotton was first domesticated in the Indus Valley some 4,500 years ago. From then on, Indian textile craftspeople and traders sent various kinds of cotton all over the world. Prior to the coming of the British, it was often said that "India clothed the world." With the British takeover of much of India after 1757, Indians no longer exported cotton cloth, but were forced to buy British textiles. As a result, India's favorable balance of trade became an unfavorable balance.

Gandhi, who understood the soul of India better than most nationalist leaders, chose cloth as a major symbol of India's protest against British rule. He also reasoned that since India had been de-industrialized and its textile industry wiped out, it would be better for his nation to start over with village industry. Hence, for Gandhi, spinning each morning became a sacred ritual, and he insisted that Congress Party members follow his example.

Gandhi's understanding of the relationship between India's destroyed textile handicraft industry and British colonialism lay at the core of his economic philosophy. The millions of unemployed and underemployed carders, spinners, weavers, and tailors who were driven from the great cities back to their ancestral villages would best be helped, according to Gandhi, by providing employment for them in the rural villages where they now lived.

Furthermore, Gandhi saw in the Industrial Revolution a new form of enslavement for workers. His austere life-style stood against the growing desire for more consumer goods, and he saw no reason to produce more goods than humans actually needed. He understood that "human needs are limited, but not human desires." For these reasons, Gandhi strongly opposed an industrial revolution for India.

Like most leaders of the nationalist movement, Gandhi thought the re-industrialization of India to be of paramount importance but, unlike most of them, he was opposed to mechanized industry, which he viewed as a sin perpetrated on the world by the West. Machines, he reasoned, were labor-saving devices that put thousands of laborers out of work, unthinkable in India where the masses were underemployed. Factory production facilitated the concentration of wealth in the hands of a few big capitalists and transformed workers practically into slaves.

Spinning offered solutions to all these problems. The English had destroyed the greatest cotton producer in the world in order to protect their own industries from competition, to create a source of raw materials not available in the British Isles, and to make a ready market for their finished products. Gandhi sought to restore India's lost supremacy. His reasoning was simple: If Indians returned to the production of their own cloth, there would be work for millions of unemployed, Indian wealth would not be taken to England and Japan, and Indians would be their own masters.

Through spinning, all Indians, rich and poor, educated and illiterate, would be laborers, equal and united through their labor.<sup>9</sup>

To the original objective of providing work and clothing for India's poor, Gandhi added the goal of using *kdahi* (hand-woven cloth) as a means of economic self-sufficiency (*swadeshi*) which, in turn, must inevitably produce self-government (*swaraj*). This progression, *khadi* = *swadeshi* = *swaraj*, was Gandhi's constant message for the rest of his life. He had found a symbol which was at the same time a practical weapon for the liberation of India.

In 1920, as part of the non-cooperation movement, the leaders of the Indian National Congress endorsed hand-spinning and weaving to supply cloth in place of boycotted foreign cloth and to engage average Indians in the nationalist cause. In this they followed Gandhi, but they were by no means in full agreement with him.<sup>10</sup>



**Hand-woven Indian cloth.**

Source: <http://textiles.indianetzone.com/1/weaving.htm>

---

<sup>9</sup> S. S. Bean, "Gandhi and Khadi, the Fabric of Indian Independence," in *Cloth of Human Experience*, ed. A. B. Weaver and J. Schneider (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), 355-76.

<sup>10</sup> Geoffrey Ashe, *Gandhi* (New York: Stein and Day, 1968), 249.

## Lesson 1

### *Student Handout 1.6—Burn the Foreign Cap*

*Swadeshi* (self-sufficiency) involved boycotting and even destroying English-made goods, particularly English textiles. This humorous passage by R. K. Narayan, from his novel *Swami and Friends*, shows how a young Indian boy might have reacted to some of the strategies against the British.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of August 1930, about two thousand citizens of Malgudi assembled on the right bank of Sarayu to protest against the arrest of Gauri Sankar, a prominent political worker of Bombay. An earnest-looking man clad in khaddar stood on a wooden platform and addressed the gathering. In a high, piercing voice, he sketched the life and achievements of Gauri Sankar; and after that passed on to generalities: “We are slaves to-day,” he shrieked, “worse slaves than we have ever been before. Let us remember our heritage. Have we forgotten the glorious periods of Ramayana and Mahabharata? This is the country that has given the world a Kalidasa, a Buddha, a Sankara. Our ships sailed the high seas and we had reached the height of civilization when the Englishman ate raw flesh and wandered in the jungles, nude. But now what are we?” He paused and said on the inspiration of the moment, without troubling to verify the meaning: “We are slaves of slaves.”

To Swaminathan, as to Mani, this part of the speech was incomprehensible. But five minutes later the speaker said something that seemed practicable: “Just think for a while. We are three hundred and thirty-six millions, and our land is as big as Europe minus Russia. England is no bigger than our Madras Presidency and is inhabited by a handful of white rogues and is thousands of miles away. Yet we bow in homage before the Englishman! Why are we become, through no fault of our own, docile and timid? ...”

For the rest of the evening Swaminathan was caught in the lecturer’s eloquence; so was Mani. With the lecturer they wept over the plight of the Indian peasant; resolved to boycott English goods, especially Lancaster and Manchester cloth, as the owners of those mills had cut off the thumbs of the weavers of Dacca muslin, for which India was famous at one time. What muslin it was, a whole piece of forty yards could be folded and kept in a snuff box! The persons who cut off the thumbs of such weavers deserved the worst punishment possible. And Swaminathan was going to mete it out by wearing only khaddar, the rough homespun. ...

The evening’s programme closed with a bonfire of foreign cloth. It was already dark. Suddenly the darkness was lit up by a red glare. A fire was lighted. A couple of boys wearing Gandhi caps went round begging people to burn their foreign cloth. Coats and caps and upper cloth came whizzing through the air and fell with a thud into the fire, which purred and crackled and rose high, thickening the air with smoke and a burnt smell. People moved about like dim shadows in the red glare. Swaminathan was

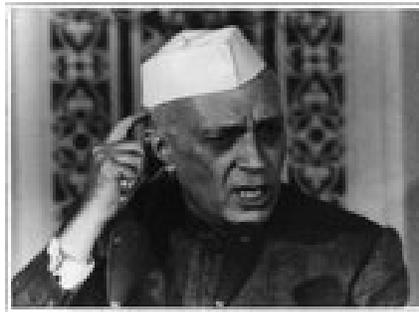
watching the scene with little shivers of joy going down his spine. Somebody asked him: “Young man, do you want our country to remain in eternal slavery?”

“No, no,” Swaminathan replied.

“But you are wearing a foreign cap.”

Swaminathan quailed with shame. “Oh, I didn’t notice,” he said and removing his cap flung it into the fire with a feeling that he was saving the country.

Source: R. K. Narayan, *Swami and Friends, the Bachelor of Arts, the Dark Room, the English Teacher* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 75-7.



**Jawaharlal Nehru wearing a Gandhi cap.**

Source: Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/91790040>

### Lesson 1

#### *Student Handout 1.7–Gandhi’s Changing Clothing Styles, 1898-1942*



1890: As a lawyer in South Africa



1906: In South Africa



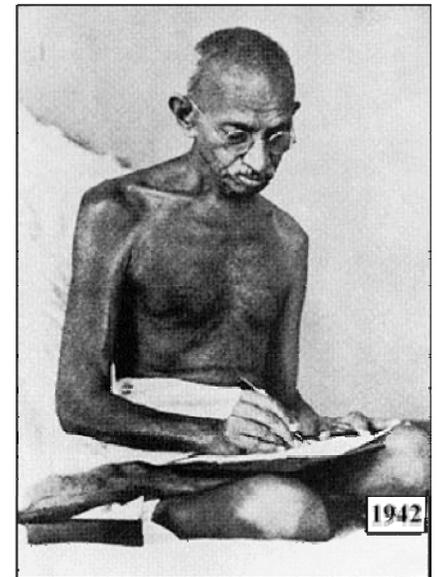
1913: Preparing for a protest in South Africa



1915: Gandhi and Kasturba arriving from South Africa



1940: In traditional Indian loincloth and shawl



1942: In a loincloth

Sources: All photographs courtesy of the Indian Consulate General, New York.

## Lesson 1

### *Student Handout 1.8—“Tryst with Destiny”*

Jawaharlal Nehru made this speech to the Indian Constituent Assembly on August 14, 1947, the eve of India’s independence.

Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity.

At the dawn of history India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her success and her failures. Through good and ill fortune alike she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again. The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?

Freedom and power bring responsibility. The responsibility rests upon this Assembly, a sovereign body representing the sovereign people of India. Before the birth of freedom we have endured all the pains of labor and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrow. Some of those pains continue even now. Nevertheless, the past is over and it is the future that beckons to us now.

That future is not one of ease or resting but of incessant striving so that we may fulfill the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but as long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over.

And so we have to labor and to work, and work hard, to give reality to our dreams. Those dreams are for India, but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for any one of them to imagine that it can live apart. Peace has been said to be indivisible; so is freedom, so is prosperity now, and so also is disaster in this One World that can no longer be split into isolated fragments.

To the people of India, whose representatives we are, we make an appeal to join us with faith and confidence in this great adventure. This is no time for petty and destructive

criticism, no time for ill-will or blaming others. We have to build the noble mansion of free India where all her children may dwell. ...

It is a fateful moment for us in India, for all Asia, and for the world. A new star rises, the star of freedom in the East, a new hope comes into being, a vision long cherished materializes. May the star never set and that hope never be betrayed! ...

We have hard work ahead. There is no resting for any one of us till we redeem our pledge in full, till we make all the people of India what destiny intended them to be. We are citizens of a great country on the verge of bold advance, and we have to live up to that high standard. All of us, to whatever religion we may belong, are equally the children of India with equal rights, privileges, and obligations. We cannot encourage communalism or narrow-mindedness, for no nation can be great whose people are narrow in thought or in action.

To the nations and peoples of the world we send greetings and pledge ourselves to cooperate with them in furthering peace, freedom, and democracy.

And to India, our much-loved motherland, the ancient, the eternal, and the ever-new, we pay our reverent homage and we bind ourselves afresh to her service.

Source: Jawaharlal Nehru, *Independence and After: A Collection of Speeches, 1946-1949* (New York: John Day, 1971), 3-5.

## *Lesson 2*

### *Vietnam Seeks Independence*

#### **Introduction**

##### **Background on French Colonialism**

French ships and several hundred volunteers, encouraged by Jesuit missionaries, helped Nguyen Anh unite the country and proclaim himself emperor Gia-Long of a unified Vietnam in 1802. Gia-Long (1802-1820) and Minh-Mang (1820-1841) modeled their rule on the Qing dynasty in China, and Vietnam was enrolled as a Chinese tributary state. Minh-Mang sponsored a Confucian revival, which included using the examination system. He refused French overtures for trade and diplomatic contact, however, as well as more contact with Christian missionaries.

The return to traditional orthodoxy did not improve the condition of the peasants living in the countryside. The population was growing faster than the production of food. The desperate condition of the majority of the people along with corruption in the government led to increasing unrest.

The Vietnamese emperor Tu-Duc (1847-83), a sincere Confucian, feared that foreign religious influences were fueling the unrest, so he ordered villages destroyed and thousands of Vietnamese Christians killed. These events provided the French with an excuse to intervene. Instead of seeking trading rights, as other colonial powers had done, the French used protecting the missionaries as a means of gaining a foothold in Vietnam. By 1862, French soldiers had forced the Vietnamese to give up three eastern provinces of Cochinchina (southern Vietnam) and open up trade.

Exploration up the Mekong River fueled French desire for a possible Indochinese empire with its accompanying glory and profitable trade, especially with China. By 1882, the French had established a protectorate over “Amman.” After the Sino-French war of 1883-4, France ruled Cochinchina directly as a colony. It indirectly ruled Cambodia, Amman (Central Vietnam), and Tongkin as protectorates.

Believing that French culture and the spiritual claims of Catholic Christianity were innately superior to Vietnamese civilization, the French instituted an “assimilation” policy, training the Vietnamese to adapt French cultural ways and allowing some to become low-level bureaucrats, thus maintaining the façade of traditional government with its emperor and scholar elites.

However, French rule and its policy of assimilation greatly weakened traditional Vietnamese institutions of law, family, and village community and, in effect, it destroyed the Confucian ethic on which Vietnamese society had long been based. In its place landlordism, share-cropping, usury, and inefficient rice-farming emerged. More destructive than the economic exploitation was the resulting depth of humiliation, the loss of self-confidence, and the confused sense of identity that resulted from French control. The emperors had no real power and the French police

controlled travel, mail, and publication. They repressed free assembly, labor organization, and political movements in an effort to smother any indigenous political power. The centralized French government controlled all communications, the police, finance, and military power of the state.

The French promoted French education and offered French citizenship as a goal. In fact, three-fourths of the population were illiterate and only a few thousand had any education beyond primary school. Landlordism and its accompanying share-cropping left the majority of peasants with a very low **standard of living**. Better public health helped the population increase, but there was not enough rice to feed the people. In the countryside, peasants struggled under heavy taxes and high rents. Workers in factories, in coal mines, and on rubber plantations labored in abysmal conditions for low wages. Under French rule both the social order and the standard of living suffered dramatically.

The Vietnamese nationalist movement had several strands of ideology. In the beginning, the intellectual elite chose to follow the Confucian path of piety, moral purity, and tradition. Gradually, under the influence of modernization and the nationalist experience in China, other leaders emerged that championed more democratic participation. However, by the 1930s, Ho Chi Minh was emerging as the dominant figure in the nationalist movement. Ho embraced Marxist socialism and, like Mao Zedong in China, labored to adapt this foreign ideology to the peasant-based economy of Vietnam. In these various imaginings of the Vietnamese people, it was Ho's vision that ultimately prevailed.

Source: Edwin O. Reishauer and John Fairbank, *East Asia: the Great Tradition* (Tokyo: Charles Tuttle, 1970), 451-5.



**Ho Chi Minh giving a speech.**

Source: Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/98501143>

## Preparation

Review with students the early struggle that the Vietnamese had with the Chinese to establish their own independent country. Stress the fact that the Vietnamese had finally achieved nationhood and independence in the early nineteenth century just as the high tide of European colonialism was cresting. Discuss the contradictions posed by the rising Vietnamese sense of nationalism and the French desire for colonies in Asia.

Assign relevant sections of student texts that deal with French colonialism in Southeast Asia.

## Activities

1. Assign all students to read the introduction to this lesson and Student Handout 2.1 (Background on Vietnamese Nationalism). The two readings could also be divided into two sections for a two-day discussion.
2. Hold a class discussion of the readings with the following questions in mind:
  - How did the average peasant's life change after Vietnam's independence from China?
  - What role did Confucianism play in the life of newly-independent Vietnam?
  - What was the French view of the Vietnamese people and how did the French see the relationship of French culture to Vietnamese culture?
  - How did this French attitude shape French colonial policy?
  - What role did Phan Boi Chau play in the early Vietnamese nationalist movement?
  - How did the Chinese revolution under Sun Yat-sen (Sun Zhongshan) influence the Vietnamese Nationalist Movement?
  - What impact did World War I have on Vietnam under the French?
  - What were the goals of the Reformation Society?
  - How many of these goals were they able to achieve?
3. Assign Student Handout 2.2 (Life of Ho Chi Minh) and use the following questions as a discussion guide:
  - How might Ho Chi Minh's early life experiences have shaped his political philosophy and attracted him to Marxism?
  - Like many nationalist leaders, Ho worked with overseas Vietnamese in China. How did this experience shape his approach?
  - What coalitions with various Chinese parties and with the Soviet Union helped Ho gain power for his cause?
4. Assign Student Handout 2.3 (The Vietnamese Declaration of Independence) and use the following questions as a discussion guide.
  - How did World War II help the Vietnamese achieve independence?

- What are the similarities between the first Vietnamese Declaration of Independence and the American Declaration of Independence?
  - What image of Vietnam emerges from this proclamation?
5. Assign Student Handout 2.4 (The First Indochina War and Dien Bien Phu) and use the following questions as a basis for a class discussion:
- How and why were the French able to retake parts of Vietnam after the Declaration of Independence?
  - How did the Viet Minh under Ho Chi Minh defeat the French at Dien Bien Phu?
  - What were the results of the Geneva Accords of 1954?



**Geneva Conference**

Source: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/05/Gen-commons.jpg>

## Lesson 2

### *Student Handout 2.1—Background on Vietnamese Nationalism*

By the end of 1884, there were 16,500 French troops in Vietnam. Although protests against French control by both scholars and peasants were unsuccessful in throwing the French out, the heroes and patriots of these early struggles laid important groundwork for future Vietnamese independence movements.

By the turn of the century, a whole generation of Vietnamese had grown up under French control. The people continued, as in precolonial times, to look to the scholar-gentry class for leadership in opposing French rule. A few scholar officials collaborated with the French, but most did not. Phan Boi Chau, who passed the regional examination with highest honors, was the most important leader of the anti-colonial forces.

In 1904, Phan Boi Chau and about twenty others formed the Reformation Society (Duy Tan Hoi), the first of a number of revolutionary organizations he helped found. The following year, he went to Japan to meet with Japanese and Chinese revolutionaries and to gain financial support for the Vietnamese cause. The movement was split between those, like Chau, who favored retaining the monarchy as a popular symbol and a means of attracting financial support, and others, such as Phan Chu Trinh, who wanted to abolish the monarchy in order to create a new base for national sovereignty.

In 1907, Phan Boi Chau helped organize the Vietnam Public Offering Society (Viet Nam Cong Hien Hoi) to unite the 100 or so Vietnamese who were studying in Japan. The organization provided a way for the students to think and work together as Vietnamese, rather than as Cochinchinese, Ammanese, or Tonkinese, as the French called them. The following year, however, the Japanese, under pressure from the French, expelled the students, forcing most of them to return home. In March 1909, the Japanese also deported Chau, but his writing continued to influence nationalist activities in Vietnam.

In 1907, the Free School of the Eastern Capital [Hanoi] (Dong Kinh Nghia Thuc) was founded to educate nationalist political activists. Phan Boi Chau's writings were studied and Phan Chu Trinh gave lectures at the school.



**Phan Boi Chau**

Source: <http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/b4/PhanBoiChau.JPG>

Suspecting that Phan Boi Chau was associated with the school, the French closed it in less than a year. The French also blamed Phan Boi Chau for instigating anti-tax demonstrations in 1908. As a symbol of the movement, the demonstrators forcibly cut off men's traditional long hair. An abortive Hanoi uprising and poison plot in June 1908 was also blamed on Phan Boi Chau. In response to the uprising, the French executed thirteen of the participants and began a harsh crackdown on Vietnamese political activists, sending hundreds of scholar patriots, including Phan Chu Trinh, to prison.

Stimulated by the Chinese Revolution led by Sun Yat-sen in 1911, Phan Boi Chau and the other Vietnamese nationalists in exile in Guangzhou formed a new organization in 1912. The main goals of the newly-organized Vietnam Restoration Society (Viet Nam Quang Phuc Hoi) included expulsion of the French, recovery of Vietnamese independence, and establishment of a Vietnamese democratic republic. In order to gain support and financial backing for the new organization, Phan Boi Chau organized a number of terrorist bombings and assassinations in 1913, to which the French responded harshly. By 1914, the counterrevolutionary government of Yuan Shi-kai was in charge in China and, by French request, Phan Boi Chau and other Vietnamese exiles in that country were imprisoned.

World War I began shortly thereafter, and the French sent some 50,000 Vietnamese troops and 50,000 Vietnamese workers to Europe. The Vietnamese also endured additional heavy taxes to help pay for France's war efforts. Numerous anti-colonial revolts broke out in Vietnam during the war, which the French easily suppressed. In May 1916, Duy Tan, the sixteen-year-old king, escaped from his palace in order to take part in an uprising of Vietnamese troops. The French were informed of the plan, and they arrested and executed the leaders. Duy Tan was deposed and exiled.

One of the most effective uprisings during this period took place in the northern Vietnamese province of Thai Nguyen. Some 300 Vietnamese soldiers revolted and released 200 political prisoners, then armed them and several hundred local people. The rebels held the town of Thai Nguyen for several days, hoping for help from Chinese nationalists. None arrived, however, and the French retook the town and hunted down most of the rebels.

In 1917, Phan Boi Chau was released from prison. He spent the next eight years in exile in China, studying and writing but exerting little direct influence on the Vietnamese nationalist movement. In 1925, the French in Shanghai kidnapped him and returned him to Hanoi, where he was tried and sentenced to hard labor for life. The sentence was later changed to house arrest until his death in 1940.

Vietnamese historians view Phan Boi Chau as a genuine nationalist hero and his contributions to eventual independence as highly significant. He advocated force to expel the French, although he was not able actually to apply this philosophy. His greatest weakness, according to many historians, was his failure to involve the Vietnamese peasantry, who composed 80 percent of the population, in the drive for independence. Rather than recruiting support at the village level, he and his followers concentrated on recruiting the elite, in the belief that the peasant masses would

automatically rally around the scholar-gentry. Future Vietnamese independence leaders took inspiration from the efforts of the early nationalists and learned from their mistakes, especially the importance of winning support at the local level.

In the years immediately following World War I, the scholar-led Vietnamese independence movement in Cochinchina went into temporary decline as a result, in part, of tighter French control and increased activity by the French-educated Vietnamese elite. The decrease of both French investments in, and imports to, Vietnam during the war had opened opportunities to entrepreneurial Vietnamese, who began to be active in light industries such as rice milling, printing, and textile weaving. The sale of large tracts of land in the Mekong Delta by the colonial government to speculators at cheap prices resulted in the expansion of the Vietnamese landed aristocracy. These factors, in combination, led to the rise of a wealthy Vietnamese elite in Cochinchina that was pro-French but also frustrated by its own lack of political power and status.

Prominent among this group was Bui Quang Chieu, a French-trained agricultural engineer, who helped organize the Constitutionalist Party in 1917. Founded with the hope that it would be able to exert pressure on the Colonial Council of Cochinchina, the French-dominated governing body of the colony, the party drew its support from Vietnamese who were large landowners, wealthy merchants, industrialists, and senior civil servants. The demands of the party included increased Vietnamese representation on the Colonial Council, higher salaries for Vietnamese officials, replacement of the scholar-official administrative system with a modern bureaucracy, and reform of the naturalization law to make it easier for Vietnamese to become French citizens.

When the party failed to gain acceptance of any of these demands, it turned to its most pressing economic grievance, the ethnic Chinese domination of the Cochinchinese economy. While French investors exercised almost exclusive control over industry and shared control of [agriculture](#) with the Vietnamese, the French sought the ethnic Chinese to act as middlemen. These Chinese came to dominate rice trade and retail business in both urban and rural areas. By the mid-1920s, the Vietnamese entrepreneurial elite and the Constitutionalist Party had grown increasingly critical of the French. However, more progressive groups had displaced them in the Vietnamese nationalist movement.

In 1926, Ho Chi Minh organized the Communist Youth League (Thanh Nien Cong San Doan) within the larger Thanh Nien movement. On December 25, the Vietnam National Party (Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang) was secretly formed in Hanoi as a revolutionary party. The new group's objectives included armed uprising aimed at ending French rule and then establishing a Vietnamese democracy.

In February 1930, Nguyen Thai Hoc led the Yen Bai uprising against the French colonists. This event marked a turning point in Indochina as it became clear that a large proportion of Vietnamese wanted an end to French rule. The French guillotined Nguyen Thai Hoc and twelve of his fellow party members.

Source: Adapted from <http://countrystudies.us/vietnam/17.htm>

## Lesson 2

### *Student Handout 2.2—Life of Ho Chi Minh*

Ho Chi Minh was the son of a poor country scholar, Nguyen Sinh Huy. He had a wretched childhood, but between the ages of 14 and 18 he was able to study at a grammar school in Hue. He is next known to have been a schoolmaster in Phan Thiet and then apprenticed at a technical institute in Saigon.

In 1911, under the name of Ba, he found work as a cook on a French steamer. He was a seaman for more than three years, visiting various African ports and the American cities of Boston and New York. In 1915, he worked as a pastry cook at the Parker House Hotel in Boston. After living in London from 1915 to 1917, he moved to France, where he worked, in turn, as a gardener, sweeper, waiter, photo retoucher, and oven stoker.

During the six years that he spent in France (1917-23), Ho became an active socialist, taking the name Nguyen Ai Quoc (Nguyen the Patriot). He organized a group of Vietnamese living there and, in 1919, addressed an eight-point petition to the representatives of the great powers at the Versailles Peace Conference that concluded World War I. Ho questioned whether President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points only applied to Europe. In the petition, Ho demanded that France grant its subjects in Indochina equal rights. This act brought no response from the peacemakers, but it made him a hero to many politically-conscious Vietnamese. The following year, inspired by the success of the communist revolution in Russia and Vladimir I. Lenin's anti-imperialist doctrine, Ho joined the French Communists when they withdrew from the Socialist Party in December 1920.

In 1923, after his years of militant activity in France, Ho went to Moscow. There, he took an active part in the fifth Congress of the Communist International, and he criticized the French Communist Party for not opposing colonialism more vigorously. His statement contains the first formulation of his belief in the importance of the revolutionary role of oppressed peasants (as opposed to industrial workers). There were few industrial workers in Vietnam. The potential power lay in organizing the peasants.



**Ho Chi Minh**

Source: Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/yan1996001111/PP>

In December 1924, Ho went to Canton, a Communist stronghold, where he recruited the first cadres of the Vietnamese nationalist movement, organizing them into the Vietnamese Revolutionary Youth Association, which became famous under the name Thanh Nien. Almost all of its members had been exiled from Indochina because of their political beliefs and had gathered in Canton in order to participate in the struggle against French rule. Thus, Canton became the first home of Indochinese nationalism.

When Chiang Kai-shek (Jiang Jieshi), then commander of the Chinese army, expelled the Chinese communists from Canton in April 1927, Ho again sought refuge in the Soviet Union. In 1928, he went to Brussels and Paris and then to Thailand, where he spent two years as a representative of the Communist International, the world organization of Communist parties, in Southeast Asia. His followers, however, remained in China.

In February 1930, Ho presided over the founding of the Indochinese Communist Party (PCI). The creation of the PCI coincided with a violent insurrection in Vietnam that the French suppressed brutally. Ho was condemned to death *in absentia* as a revolutionary. He sought refuge in Hong Kong and later escaped to Moscow.

In 1938, Ho returned to China and stayed for a few months with Mao Zedong. When Germany defeated France in 1940, Ho and his two lieutenants, Vo Nguyen Giap and Pham Van Dong, plotted to use this turn of events to advance their own cause. About this time he began to use the name Ho Chi Minh (“He Who Enlightens”).

Crossing over the border into Vietnam in January 1941, the trio and five comrades organized the League for the Independence of Vietnam, or Viet Minh, giving renewed emphasis to a peculiarly Vietnamese nationalism. The new organization was forced to seek help from Chiang Kai-shek’s government. But Chiang distrusted Ho as a communist and had him arrested in China. During his 18 months in prison, he wrote his famed *Notebook from Prison*, a collection of short poems written in classical Chinese, a mixture of melancholy, stoicism, and a call for revolution. His friends obtained his release by an arrangement with a Chinese warlord, agreeing in return to support Chiang’s interests in Indochina against the French.

Ho Chi Minh had to build a multi-class coalition because the urban working class was so small in Vietnam. So he envisioned two steps: first a “bourgeois-democratic” struggle of all revolutionary classes to achieve independence, and then the “proletarian revolution” that would lead to a socialist state.

Source: Adapted from “Ho Chi Minh,” <http://members.fortunecity.com/stalinmao/Vietnam/Minh/Minh.html>

## Lesson 2

### *Student Handout 2.3—The Vietnamese Declaration of Independence*

In 1941-42, Japanese forces seized and occupied much of Southeast Asia. In Vietnam and several other countries, people traded European colonial rulers for Japanese masters. In 1945, two events occurred that helped empower the Vietnamese revolutionaries. First, the Japanese completely overran Indochina and imprisoned or executed all French officials. Six months later, the United States dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, and the Japanese surrendered, ending World War II. Ho Chi Minh's two strongest adversaries, the French and the Japanese, were eliminated. Ho seized his opportunity. Within a few months he contacted U.S. forces and began to collaborate with the Office of Strategic Services (the predecessor to the CIA) against the Japanese. In the spring of 1945, Vietnamese commandos, under Ho's direction, advanced on Hanoi, the Vietnamese capital. They entered the city on September 7, 1945. Before an enormous crowd, Ho Chi Minh declared Vietnam's independence.

“All men are created equal. They are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.”

This immortal statement was made in the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America in 1776. In a broader sense, this means: All the peoples on the earth are equal from birth, all the peoples have a right to live, to be happy and free.

The Declaration of the French Revolution made in 1791 on the Rights of Man and the Citizen also states: “All men are born free and with equal rights, and must always remain free and have equal rights.” Those are undeniable truths.

Nevertheless, for more than eighty years, the French imperialists, abusing the standard of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, have violated our Fatherland and oppressed our fellow-citizens. They have acted contrary to the ideals of humanity and justice. In the field of politics, they have deprived our people of every democratic liberty.

They have enforced inhuman laws; they have set up three distinct political regimes in the North, the Center, and the South of Vietnam in order to wreck our national unity and prevent our people from being united.

They have built more prisons than schools. They have mercilessly slain our patriots, they have drowned our uprisings in rivers of blood. ...

They have invented numerous unjustifiable taxes and reduced our people, especially our peasantry, to a state of extreme poverty.

They have hampered the prospering of our national **bourgeoisie**; they have mercilessly exploited our workers.

In the autumn of 1940, when the Japanese Fascists violated Indochina's territory to establish new bases in their fight against the Allies, the French imperialists went down on their bended knees and handed over our country to them.

Thus, from that date, our people were subjected to the double yoke of the French and the Japanese. Their sufferings and miseries increased. ...

Notwithstanding all this, our fellow-citizens have always manifested toward the French a tolerant and humane attitude. Even after the Japanese putsch of March 1945, the Vietminh League helped many Frenchmen to cross the frontier, rescued some of them from Japanese jails, and protected French lives and property. ...

After the Japanese had surrendered to the Allies, our whole people rose to regain our national sovereignty and to found the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. ...

For these reasons, we, members of the Provisional Government, representing the whole Vietnamese people, declare that from now on we break off all relations of a colonial character with France; we repeal all the international obligation that France has so far subscribed to on behalf of Vietnam and we abolish all the special rights the French have unlawfully acquired in our Fatherland. ...

A people who have courageously opposed French domination for more than eighty years, a people who have fought side by side with the Allies against **the Fascists** during these last years, such a people must be free and independent.

For these reasons, we, members of the Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, solemnly declare to the world that Vietnam has the right to be a free and independent country and in fact it is so already. The entire Vietnamese people are determined to mobilize all their physical and mental strength, to sacrifice their lives and property in order to safeguard their independence and liberty.

Source: Ho Chi Minh, "Vietnamese Declaration of Independence," Internet Modern History Sourcebook, © Paul Halsall, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1945vietnam.html>

## Lesson 2

### *Student Handout 2.4—The First Indochina War and Dien Bien Phu*

Once Japanese forces withdrew from Vietnam, France refused to accept an independent Vietnam and regained control of the southern part of the country within three months. Ho Chi Minh had to choose between continuing to fight and negotiating. He chose negotiations but not without preparing for eventual war. Ho's strategy was to get the French to make the Chinese in the north withdraw and then work for a treaty with France that recognized Vietnam's independence and reunification. Negotiations began in late October 1945, but the French refused to speak of independence.

In an attempt to gain wider support for his demands, Ho allowed parties other than the Viet Minh to be included in the new government. He signed an agreement with the French that recognized Vietnam as a "free state with its own government, army, and finances," but that would be integrated into a French Union in which the French government continued to play the key role.

Extremists on both sides found the agreement unsatisfactory, and Ho went to France for a series of conferences in 1946. There, he concluded a second agreement. But the peace was broken in November by an incident at the harbor city of Haiphong. A French cruiser opened fire on the town after a clash between French and Vietnamese soldiers. Almost 6,000 Vietnamese were killed, and hope for an amicable settlement ended. Sick and disillusioned, Ho did not oppose demands for retaliation by his more militant followers, and the First Indochina War consequently broke out in December.

The Viet Minh army, commanded by General Giap, fought the French with guerrilla tactics and terrorism and, by the end of 1953, most of the countryside was under Viet Minh control. The larger cities were under virtual siege. Victory came when Viet Minh forces surrounded and defeated French units at Dien Bien Phu on May 7, 1954. France then had no choice but to negotiate. From May to July 1954, representatives of eight countries—with Vietnam represented by two delegations, one from the north composed of supporters of Ho Chi Minh, the other from the south headed by supporters of the restored Vietnamese monarch Bao Dai—met in Geneva to find a solution. The conclusion, called the Geneva Accords, divided Vietnam at the 17<sup>th</sup> parallel until elections, scheduled for 1956, were to be held to establish a unified government.



**Vo Nguyen Giap**

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Vo\\_Nguyen\\_Giap\\_2008.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Vo_Nguyen_Giap_2008.jpg)

The surprising moderation the Viet Minh exhibited in accepting a partition of the country and in accepting control of less territory than they had conquered during the war follows the pattern established by Ho when he signed the 1946 agreements with France. But this flexibility, which was also a response to Russian and Chinese pressure, did not achieve the goals the Viet Minh sought. Hanoi lost out because the United States and South Vietnam indefinitely postponed the elections that were to guarantee the country's reunification.

North Vietnam, where Ho and his associates were established, was a poor country, cut off from the vast agricultural areas of the south. Its leaders were forced to ask for assistance from China and the Soviet Union, their Communist allies. Ho Chi Minh proceeded to install a centralized, authoritarian regime founded on Marxist-Leninist doctrine. In the south, the United States replaced France as the patron of a government led by Prime Minister Ngo Dinh Diem. This regime took a staunchly anti-communist position but also favored the interests of the elite landowning class and became repressive and rigidly totalitarian. The scene was being set for the Second Indochina War, that is, the Vietnam War which, by the late 1960s, brought more than 500,000 U.S. soldiers to that country.

Source: Adapted from <http://all-history.org/427.html>



**Ngo Dinh Diem**

Source: Library of Congress, <http://loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a44016/>

## *Lesson 3*

### *Korean Independence*

#### **Preparation**

Review earlier Korean history, especially relations with China and the influence of Confucianism and Buddhism in Korean history. Assign relevant sections of the class textbook or other materials that deal with Korea under Japanese occupation

#### **Introduction**

With the rise of European, American, and Japanese imperialism in the nineteenth century, the world's major powers sought trading concessions in China and then Korea. That kingdom's independence in the late nineteenth century grew increasingly precarious as Japan, Russia, and the United States competed for commercial and political influence there. Within the Korean government, pro-American, pro-Russian, and pro-Japanese ministers added to the confusion.

In the 1840s, the British humiliated the once-mighty imperial China in the so-called Opium War. Subsequently, eastern China was gradually carved into spheres of influence of various European powers, plus Japan and the U.S. China remained a sovereign state, but that sovereignty was deeply compromised.

In the face of these developments, in Asia, a group of young samurai in Japan overthrew the helpless Shogunate government in 1867 and reestablished the power of the emperor. This was the Meiji Restoration. In the name of the emperor, the new leaders opened Japan wide to everything Western. They said, "We don't like the Westerners, nor do we like their values, but we like their guns, their ships; we'll learn everything we can from the West about their science and technology."

In the meantime, Korea lagged in science and technology farther behind both the West and Japan. In 1894, Japan, which had been furiously modernizing itself for 30 years since the Meiji Restoration, challenged China for control of Korea. China had always believed that Korea was its concern, its interest, not Japan's. But Japan's new leaders believed that their future lay in control of East and Southeast Asia and its products and markets. Japan won a brief war against China in 1894-95 (Sino-Japanese War). This greatly enhanced Japan's influence over Korea.

Russia, which had always been interested in Korea because of its warm water ports, felt threatened by Japan's encroachments on the continent and complained. So Japan challenged Russia militarily, again over Korea. Japan won the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05. In 1910, Japan dissolved the Korean army and, in August 1910, forced Emperor Sunjong to renounce both his throne and his country. The result was the beginning of Japan's colonial rule over Korea, formalized in a Treaty of Annexation.

## Preparation

Assign students relevant sections of textbooks or other materials on Korea in the twentieth century. Review with students the background of Korean history and the important place of Buddhism and Confucianism in Korean culture. Classes may refer to the World History for Us All Closeup Teaching Unit 3.2.5 (Korea: From Calm to Conflict).

## Activities

1. Share the information in the introduction with the students in order to situate the Japanese control over Korea in the wider world context, particularly the Sino-Japanese and the Russo-Japanese wars. You may also want to share information about Korea or have students review highlights about Korea that they have already studied. Emphasize that the Japanese were the only genuine Asian colonial power.
2. Assign Student Handout 3.1 (Japan's Initial Colonial Policies) for homework or in class. Ask students to be ready to discuss what the reactions of Koreans to these policies might have been. For example, how would peasants, students, industrial laborers, or government employees have felt?
3. Have students share their conclusions. Discuss what possible actions the Koreans might have taken. What options were open to them? Would violence have been effective? If not, what kind of non-violent protests might have been effective? What group might have taken the lead in agitating for independence?
4. Explain that students were the ones who took the lead in protesting Japanese control. Ask the class to discuss what those students might have done. Then assign or read in class Student Handout 3.2 (The March 1<sup>st</sup> Independence Movement). Why did the protest spread so quickly throughout Korea? What was the immediate result of the movement? If you were Korean, how might you have reacted to this "cultural national" initiative?
5. For homework or as group work in class, have students imagine that the U.S. had been occupied by another country and that country wanted to suppress all of American culture and eliminate the teaching or use of English. What might the occupying power ban? What would they try to change about life in the U.S.?
6. Explain that the Japanese policy of banning all evidence of Korean culture was initiated in Korea after 1931. Assign Student Handout 3.3 (Japan and Korea: One Body). What kind of Korean nation would have resulted from these policies? How might that nation have been different from the one most Koreans imagined?
7. Assign Student Handout 3.4 (Comfort Women) and discuss the issue of the Japanese use of Koreans as "comfort women." If this topic is too sensitive for your grade level, simply skip this lesson. The excerpt is sufficiently emotionally charged that prompting a discussion should be very easy. Compare the call for apologies and reparations to

situations such as the internment of Japanese-Americans or slavery and racial prejudice in the U.S.

8. Assign Student Handout 3.5 (Partitioning Korea). Hold a class discussion on the traumas that Koreans felt upon having their nation partitioned at independence. Discuss the Korean expression that their small nation has been “a shrimp among sharks.” Discuss how Korea’s history has been greatly affected by larger powers’ intervention in their internal affairs. Stress the legacy of Japanese colonialism and how that experience has shaped Korean hostility to Japan and the Korean struggle to have Japanese textbooks acknowledge the cruelty of the Japanese occupation of the country.



**Syngman Rhee with General Douglas MacArthur.**

Source: Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004678762>

## Lesson 3

### *Student Handout 3.1—Japan’s Initial Colonial Policies*

Korea had declared that it was neutral during the Russo-Japanese War (1904-05). But in an effort to secure the safety of the royal family, the Koreans agreed to let Japanese troops be stationed in Korea and said they could move freely around the country. In 1904, Korea also agreed to consult Japan about its own foreign affairs. In 1885, Britain had agreed to be ready to fight to ensure Korea’s independence but, by 1905, Britain felt it needed Japan to preserve its position in East Asia, so it gave Japan a free hand in Korea.

Korea and Japan signed the Japanese-Korean treaty of protection in 1905, which amounted to Japan taking control of Korea. Although no foreign power objected, the Koreans did. Uprisings spread through the Korean Peninsula. “Righteous armies” formed throughout the countryside. In 1908 alone there were 1,451 clashes involving 70,000 protesters.

The Japanese instituted oppressive measures to quell the protests. They reasoned, however, that trouble would continue as long as there was a separate Korea so, in 1910, the Japanese government issued the Treaty of Annexation. Koreans refer to the period from 1910 to 1919 as the “Dark Period,” because of the almost complete suppression of Korean identity and the repression of any real Korean political or cultural life. Actions the Japanese took included:

1. A Japanese military leader ruled Korea as governor-general. He was the chief executive and commander-in-chief. He could issue decrees and appoint judges and provincial governors. He was answerable only to the Japanese emperor.
2. All senior posts in the government went to Japanese. Koreans were given the lowest-ranked jobs. Korean officials got lower salaries than the Japanese officials.
3. The Japanese banned all Korean political organizations.
4. The police force was expanded. Policemen, the majority of whom were Japanese by 1918, could “flog or fine” people for minor offenses.
5. The Japanese imposed a private ownership of land policy that transferred most land to a new class of owners. As a result, many Korean farmers lost their land and became tenants, often on their own land.
6. The destitution facing Korean farmers before the summer harvest of barley periodically drove them to the verge of starvation. Consequently, about 19 percent of farmers emigrated to Manchuria, Siberia, or Japan.
7. Korean rice was exported to Japan. Korean rice consumption decreased, leaving many to starve.
8. Communication facilities were built to improve contact between Korea and Japan, but not communication within Korea.
9. The Japanese tightened their control over schools, which had to use Japanese-approved textbooks and curricula. Between 1910 and 1922, the number of schools in Korea fell from more than 2,000 to about 600.

10. Korean children who did go to school were taught practical skills so they would become “economically useful.” School years were shorted for Korean students and attendance was not enforced.
11. Industry increased, and many Koreans were forced to work in factories.
12. The Japanese attempted to annihilate Korean national consciousness.
13. The Japanese banned all vernacular newspapers.
14. In 1910, the Japanese confiscated and burned as many as 300,000 books, including Korean readers, biographies of national heroes, and Korean translations of foreign books relating to independence, the birth of the nation, and revolution.

### Lesson 3

#### *Student Handout 3.2—The March 1<sup>st</sup> Independence Movement*

Much of the original agitation for independence came from students. Louise Yim recalls her experience as a teenager in a secondary school after she and her classmates had learned about ancient Korean history, which they had studied in spite of the Japanese colonial administration's ban on it.

One afternoon, Oh Ja Huan (a fellow student) asked, "Would it not be wonderful if we could do as these great people of history and free Korea?" ...

I replied, "I think we can if we have the courage, if we do not feel inferior because we are girls."

On Soon-a put down her needle and looked across the room. "Perhaps we can accomplish great things just because we *are* girls. Who would suspect us?"

"We can do anything and no one, not even our own countrymen, would think that a girl was involved."

We talked all afternoon and if anyone had listened to our conversation that day in 1915 he would have thought us mad. Yes, it was mad, romantic, insane. And yet we finally did the things we talked about.

"If the Japanese catch us, they will kill us. Or do even worse."

The entire room became silent as I spoke. I waited for someone to answer.

Oh Ja Huan said slowly, "Would you give your life, Young-Sin?"

My quick answer had all the bravado and proud rhetoric of youth. "If Korea needs my life, so will it be!"

"Then," she replied, "My life must not belong to me either."

In one enthusiastic surge, each eager to be foremost in self-consecration, we pledged our lives to Korea. In a final dramatic act, we decided to call ourselves "The Suicide Squad." At this distance, the name we chose appears slightly adolescent, but it was not. The task we were about to undertake was dangerous. The penalty for patriotism had been announced by the Japanese ... It was death.<sup>11</sup>

Small groups such as this local "Suicide Squad" could not accomplish very much against the Japanese, and it was difficult for Koreans to organize large-scale protests. Outside countries were concentrating on their own foreign policy concerns and paid little attention to Korea's plight.

That outlook changed after President Wilson announced his Fourteen Points on January 8, 1918. They included the doctrine of self-determination. Although the Japanese did their best to prevent Koreans from hearing about what the U.S. president had said, Koreans living overseas were overjoyed at the news. Korean nationals in the United States, who had organized the Korean National Association (KNA), were the first to respond. They planned to send a petition to the

---

<sup>11</sup> Louise Yim, *My Forty-Year Fight for Korea* (New York: A. A. Wyn, 1951), 65-6.

Peace Conference following World War I and also to appeal directly to President Wilson to support Korea's independence. However, the U.S. government would not give passports to Korean delegates to the conference, so the KNA could only send petitions to President Wilson.

Korean students in Seoul organized to proclaim a declaration of Korean independence. The initial plans were limited to students and other educated groups. But when the Korean emperor died (January 1919), rumors spread that the Japanese had poisoned him. His funeral was set for March 3<sup>rd</sup> and, in the weeks leading up to his funeral, people began to congregate in public, ostensibly to mourn him. The leaders of the independence movement planned a massive demonstration for March 1<sup>st</sup>. Demonstrations throughout the country were to be peaceful. Korean Christians and Buddhists insisted that the movement be non-violent and, anyway, the Koreans had almost no guns.

On March 1<sup>st</sup>, the students in Seoul sent a representation to carry the Declaration of Independence to the Japanese governor-general. At the same time, they read the declaration aloud in a park in central Seoul. In hundreds of cities, marchers paraded through streets shouting "Long live an independent Korea." Their actions ignited a nation-wide movement.

The Declaration was addressed to the Korean people, to the Japanese government, and to other foreign powers. The dramatic opening lines were:

We hereby proclaim the independence of Korea and the liberty of the Korean people. We announce this to the nations of the world in order to manifest the principle of the equality of man, and we pass it onto our posterity in order to preserve forever our people's just right to self-preservation as their inherent right. ...<sup>12</sup>

The March 1<sup>st</sup> demonstrations caught the Japanese by surprise. They had no idea that Koreans were capable of such planning and courage. Reacting in haste, the Japanese brutally suppressed the movement. In the following months, a nation-wide movement sprang up. Merchants joined the protest. All the shops and businesses in Seoul and other cities, no matter how large or how small, closed their doors. Their protest dramatically demonstrated the people's anger. In retaliation, the Japanese beat thousands and arrested thousands more and forced the merchants to reopen their shops. The Koreans who were arrested by the Japanese and brought to trial came from all occupations and educational levels. The Japanese also carried out large-scale atrocities, such as burning entire villages. Japanese police forces killed about 7,500 unarmed Koreans and wounded nearly 16,000.

The March 1<sup>st</sup> movement failed to bring about Korea's independence. This outburst of nationalist sentiment failed to move any of the great powers to act. But the demonstrations showed the world how unhappy the Korean people were, and the Japanese learned that their government's

---

<sup>12</sup> Andrew C. Nahm, *Korea, Tradition and Transformation: A History of the Korean People* (Elizabeth, NJ: Holly International, 1988), 262-4.

attempts to make the Koreans believe that Japanese rule was legitimate were not successful. Consequently, the Japanese eased up on some of their cultural restrictions for several years and instead instituted a policy of “cultural nationalism.” Koreans were allowed to form numerous cultural, religious, academic, and other voluntary organizations. These associations focused on “enlightenment projects, such as self-improvement, education, and social welfare.” Additionally, dozens of new magazines and newspapers permitted a small degree of journalistic freedom. Finally, during this era, Koreans produced a large number of novels, dramas, paintings, and films.

### Lesson 3

#### *Student Handout 3.3—“Japan and Korea as One Body”*

In September 1931, the Japanese army took control of Manchuria, that is, the part of China north and northwest of Korea. The new Japanese governor-general of Korea put an end to the cultural nationalist movement. The new Japanese policy sought once again to transform Koreans into cultural Japanese by removing all evidence of a separate Korean culture. Only Japanese could serve in public offices. The Japanese outlawed the use of *hangul*, the Korean alphabet, and required that all documents be written in Japanese.

ㄱ ㄴ ㄷ ㄹ ㅁ ㅂ ㅅ  
ㅇ ㅈ ㅊ ㅋ ㅌ ㅍ ㅎ

#### **Vowels of the Korean alphabet**

The Japanese promoted education but forced schools to teach in Japanese and to emphasize Japanese culture and ethics. Only Japanese history was permitted, and the Japanese burned many historical documents. By 1935, Korean students were required to worship the Japanese emperor instead of observing their traditional Confucian rituals. Traditional Korean dances were outlawed, particularly because folk dance dramas often mocked authority. Perhaps most infuriating, all Koreans were required in 1940 to give up their family names and take Japanese last names. Children could not go to school and adults could not get jobs unless they changed their names. The slogan was “Japan and Korea as one body.” The goal was to turn Koreans into good Japanese in heart and mind.

## Lesson 3

### *Student Handout 3.4—Comfort Women*

Among the most tragic of the many Japanese colonial practices was the forced transfer of millions of Korean workers to serve the Japanese imperial goals during World War II. These laborers worked in Japanese-occupied Manchuria and Indonesia and also in Japan. The first atomic bombs used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki killed 50,000 innocent Korean slave-workers. The Japanese also forced thousands of young women into the “Comfort Corps” to serve the sexual desires of Japanese soldiers at the front. The “comfort women” were terribly abused, and the Japanese armed forces treated them as mere slaves.

The following is a brief description of comfort women’s experience.

Comfort women were the young females of various ethnic and national backgrounds and social circumstances whom the Japanese Imperial Army forced into sexual slavery before and during the Second World War. “Comfort women,” which is a translation of the Japanese euphemism *jugun ianfu* (military comfort women), refers to women who became sexual laborers for the Japanese troops before and during the Second World War. Countless women had to labor as comfort women in the military brothels found throughout the vast Asia Pacific region the Japanese forces occupied. There is no way to determine precisely how many women were forced to serve as comfort women. The estimate ranges between 80,000 and 200,000, about 80 percent of whom, it is believed, were Korean. Japanese women and women of other territories the Japanese occupied, such as Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Burma, and the Pacific islands, were also used as comfort women.

During the day, comfort women were forced to launder the soldiers’ clothes, clean the barracks, and do some heavy labor such as carrying ammunition; at night they had to be the soldiers’ plaything. As one woman reported: “There were days when I was made to serve scores of men, beginning in the morning. When I resisted—even just a little—I was beaten by the supervisor, pulled by my hair, and dragged around half-naked. It was a subhuman life.”

The Japanese rationale for the comfort system was to enhance the morale of the military by providing amenities for sex. The authorities believed such amenities would help prevent soldiers from committing random sexual violence toward women of occupied territories, which became a real concern after the infamous Nanjing Massacre in China in 1937. The military authorities were also concerned with the health of the troops, which prompted the close supervision of the hygienic conditions in the comfort stations in order to help keep sexually-transmitted diseases under control.

After the war ended, the Japanese government's repeated denial of any governmental involvement in the recruitment of comfort women spurred the formation, in November 1990, of the Korean Council for the Women Drafted for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan (hereafter referred to as the Korean Council). The Korean Council sent an open letter to Japanese Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki, which listed the following six demands:

1. That the Japanese government admit the forced draft of Korean women as comfort women.
2. That a public apology be made for this.
3. That all barbarities be fully disclosed.
4. That a memorial be raised for the victims.
5. That the survivors or their bereaved families be compensated.
6. That these facts be continuously related in historical education so that such misdeeds are not repeated.

The Japanese response to the six demands was that there was no evidence of the forced draft of Korean women. Therefore, no public apology, disclosure, nor memorial needed to be forthcoming. It was not until August 1993 that the Japanese government admitted deception, coercion, and official involvement in the recruitment of comfort women. These women and their families, however, have never been compensated.

Source: Yoshiko Nozaki, "The 'Comfort Women' Controversy: History, Testimony, Restitution," in *From History Conflict to Trust-Building* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), 19-33.

## Lesson 3

### *Student Handout 3.5—Partitioning Korea*

China, Great Britain, and the United States stated their first real commitment to a free and independent Korea at the Cairo Conference in December 1943. At the February 1945 Yalta Conference, President Roosevelt suggested to Stalin, without consulting the Koreans, that Korea should be placed under joint trusteeship following the war before being granted its independence. But at the Potsdam Conference in July and August 1945, the Allies reaffirmed their adherence to the Cairo declaration. When the Soviets declared war on Japan on August 8, 1945, they also announced adherence to the Potsdam declaration.

When Japan surrendered on August 14, an emergency partition of Korea was made in order to be able to accept the surrender of Japanese troops there. The American Joint Chiefs of Staff proposed that Soviet Union troops, who were already entering Korea, should demobilize Japanese forces in the north and U.S. forces should demobilize them in the south. Three days earlier, Truman had ordered his War Department to choose a dividing line for Korea. Dean Rusk and Charles H. Bonesteel, two young colonels, chose the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel, that is, line of latitude. That decision divided Korea into zones of military occupation, assigning Seoul and 70 percent of the population to the southern zone and 30 percent of the population and 55 percent of the land area of the peninsula to the north. The Soviets accepted this plan. The U.S. occupation force for the area south of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel began arriving in Korea in early September.

The U.S. forces, however, shunned the Korean People's Republic, preferring to support conservative politicians representing the traditional land-owning elite. The U.S. helped in founding the conservative Korean Democratic Party (KDP) and brought Syngman Rhee to Korea to lead the new party. Rhee had received a Ph.D. from Princeton in 1910 and had lived in the United States for more than forty years. He detested the Japanese occupation of his native country, but he hated the communists even more. Just before Rhee arrived, long-time resistance fighter Kim Il Sung returned from exile to take over leadership in the Russian-occupied north. As a guerrilla leader, Kim had been fighting the Japanese in China and Korea since the early 1930s.



**Kim Il Sung**

Source: [http://www.wordiq.com/definition/Kim\\_Il\\_Sung](http://www.wordiq.com/definition/Kim_Il_Sung)

The foreign minister meeting in Moscow in December 1945 decided to establish a Joint American-Soviet Commission whose primary duty was to assist the formation of a provisional Korean government. This joint commission was never able to find solutions that both the U.S. and the Soviet Union could accept. Barring a resort to war, reunification was possible only after an international diplomatic or domestic political agreement had paved the way for a negotiated settlement. No such settlement was ever reached, and the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel has become a fortified boundary dividing the “two Koreas.”

Source: Max Hermansen, *United States Military Logistics in the First Part of the Korean War*, Dissertation in History, University of Oslo, 2000, [http://vlib.iue.it/carrie/texts/carrie\\_books/hermansen](http://vlib.iue.it/carrie/texts/carrie_books/hermansen)

## *Lesson 4*

### *Kenya and the Mau Mau*

#### **Preparation**

Review with students the work they have already done on nationalism in the nineteenth century. Review the issues that fueled the various independence movements they have studied to date. Using Student Handout 4.1 (Map of Kenya), briefly introduce or review the geography of Kenya. Briefly have students discuss how and why the presence of many language groups in Kenya might have helped or hindered efforts to achieve political independence. How might it affect the images Kenyans were developing of their nation?

#### **Introduction**

Starting around 1900, white settlers began to come into the area that the British, one of the European powers engaged in the “scramble” for land in Africa, claimed as a protectorate. Initially, the British were keen to get control over the source of the Nile. They felt that the most effective means to do this would be to build a railroad across the vast area between ports on the East African coast of the Indian Ocean, such as Mombasa, and the Kenyan highlands in the interior. As they started to construct the railroad, they assumed that few Africans lived on the land they wanted to take for the line.

Building that railroad was an expensive proposition, and the British government was reluctant to incur large debt for it. The authorities determined that bringing in white settlers to “develop” the land and traders to encourage commerce would be the way to make the area productive, even though African farmers and herders had made it productive for millennia. Toward that end, British officials began to regard the protectorate as “practically an estate belonging to His Majesty’s Government.”<sup>13</sup> They encouraged white settlers to come to Kenya, promising them rich land. They also allowed Asian merchants, particularly Indians, to settle in the towns and develop commercial enterprises. To make this plan economically productive, the white settlers needed both land and labor. This lesson focuses on the British government’s strategies and how the Kikuyu and other ethnic groups reacted to these strategies. It concludes with the development and role of the Mau Mau rebellion as part of Kenya’s independence struggle.

The Kikuyu, the dominant ethno-linguistic group in the area that is now Kenya, imagined themselves as a community identical to the nation. Other groups, such as the Masai, also saw themselves as a people. Imagining a Kenyan nation was more challenging than identifying with ethnic loyalties. Some saw their identity as Africans as a desirable dream, while others, perhaps the majority, imagined their basic identity as members of their ethno-linguistic group.

---

<sup>13</sup> George Bennett, *Kenya: A Political History: The Colonial Period* (London: Oxford UP, 1963), 11.

## Activities

1. Assign as homework or read together in class Student Handout 4.2 (Getting Land and Laborers). Be sure students understand the concept of “alienation of the land” and why the white settlers wanted both land and laborers and what policies they used to acquire them.
2. Have students write and/or discuss answers to the following question: How do you think the Kikuyu people might have reacted to the British policies? Have small groups of students briefly share their answers with each other and then with the class as a whole.
3. Remind students that in Kenya, like many areas in Africa, ethnic groups often spoke different languages and might even have fought one another at one time or another. Have students brainstorm what might make these different groups join together to oppose colonial rule. What might prevent them from working together?
4. Distribute Student Handout 4.3 (Why did United Action Begin?). Briefly discuss the factors that encouraged united action. What do they suggest about the people’s vision of the future?
5. Distribute Student Handout 4.4 (Protests over Time). Ask students to imagine they are part of the colonial government in Kenya. How might they have reacted to these protests? What would have been the best policy for the colonialists to follow? Should the government use a show of force or try to negotiate with the protesters? Would they advocate outlawing the Kikuyu Central Association? Why or why not?
6. Distribute Student Handout 4.5 (Origins and Goals of the Mau Mau Rebellion). How should the government have responded to the Mau Mau movement and its increasing violence? What would have been the best course of action? What actions should they have tried to avoid?
7. Have students read Student Handout 4.6 (Mau Mau Oath). What does it tell about the Mau Mau movement?
8. Distribute Student Handout 4.7 (Suppression of the Mau Mau). Discuss what broke the will of the members of the Mau Mau movement. Assess the role and significance of this movement. Was the violence that occurred necessary? In what ways did the movement contribute to Kenya’s independence?
9. After independence was achieved, in what different ways might groups in Kenya have imagined their nation? What role or influences might such factors as [tribe](#) and religion

have played? Why might they have identified with a pan-African vision? Why might they have rejected that image and identified with their local groups?

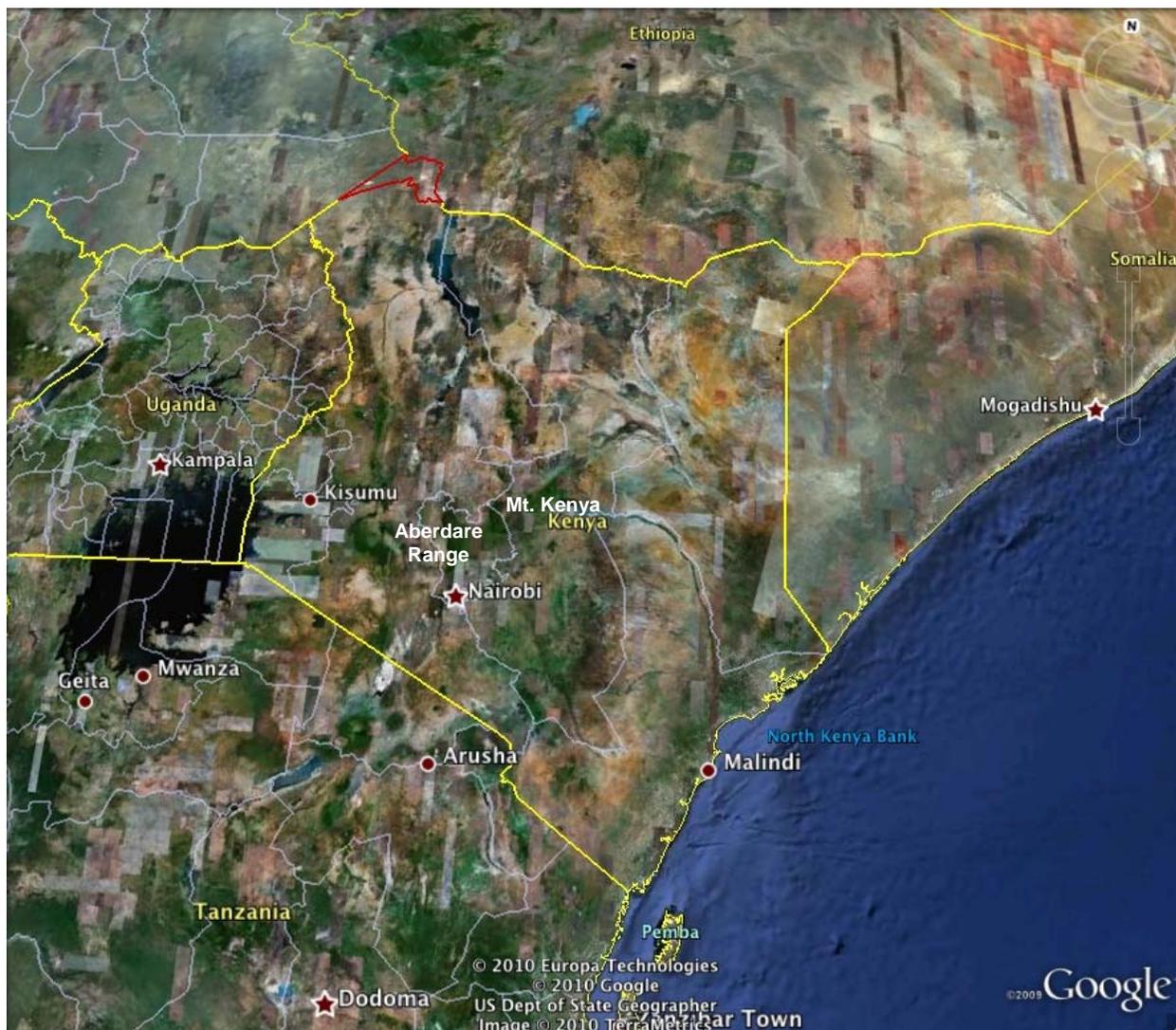


**Jomo Kenyatta**

Source: Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/95503606>

### Lesson 4

#### *Student Handout 4.1—Map of Kenya*



## Lesson 4

### *Student Handout 4.2—Getting Land and Laborers*

To acquire the land in Kenya, the British government instituted a system called “alienation.” Alienation of the land meant the government could claim so-called “vacant” or “unoccupied” land and make grants of this land to European settlers. The government reasoned that because, as far as they could see, the land was “vacant,” it belonged to the British Crown. Under the Crown Lands Ordinance of 1915, Africans became “tenants at the will of the Crown.” The government designated certain areas tribal lands, but it would not issue title deeds for land to Africans. It also reserved the authority to alienate any African land and award it to settlers

The Masai were **pastoral nomads** who moved around their territory seeking grazing land for their cattle. Without land, their way of life would be destroyed. The British attitude toward that possibility is summed up in the following communication from Sir George Eliot, Commissioner:

[The government] has opened this Protectorate to white immigration and colonization. ... There can be no doubt that the Masai and many other tribes must go under. It is a prospect which I view with equanimity and a clear conscience. ... [Masaidom] is a beastly, bloody system founded on raiding and immorality.<sup>14</sup>

Besides the Masai, the Kikuyu were the most immediately and deeply affected by European settlement. They lived in the rich highlands to the east and south of the Aberdare Range. The British claimed much of the densely-populated Kikuyu land, leaving many of the Kikuyu landless and homeless. To ensure that African farmers, mainly Kikuyu, who did have small parcels of land, would not be able to compete with the white settlers, the Europeans forbade the African farmers from cultivating certain profitable **cash crops**, such as *Arabica* coffee and sisal (a plant fiber).

The white settlers also needed laborers to work on the land. To ensure they would have Africans working for them, the settlers forced many Africans off their land, restricted what they could grow, or left them with very poor land. They also imposed a “hut tax” and “poll tax” that had to be paid in cash, not in produce they could grow on their land. In order to get money to pay the tax, Africans were forced to work for wages. That meant they had to leave their land and seek jobs in urban areas or work for cash on settlers’ land. This was a calculated policy, as this editorial in a settler newspaper in 1913 reveals:

We consider that taxation is the only possible method of compelling the native to leave the reserve for the purpose of seeking work. ... To raise the rate of wages would not increase but would diminish the supply of labor. A rise in the rate of

---

<sup>14</sup> Bennett, *Kenya: A Political History*, 14.

wages would enable the hut and poll tax of a family, sub-tribe, or tribe to be earned by fewer external workers.<sup>15</sup>

The government continued to evict Kikuyu groups and alienate their land for settler benefit. In addition, it doubled the hut and poll tax from 5 to 10 rupees, and in 1921 it reduced African wages by one-third. In 1924, it instituted the *kipande*, a labor registration system requiring all African males over sixteen to be fingerprinted and to carry a combined identification and employment card.



**Jomo Kenyatta (left) with U.S. Justice Thurgood Marshall.**

Source: Library of Congress, <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/94512266>

---

<sup>15</sup> *East African Standard*, February 4, 1913.

## Lesson 4

### *Student Handout 4.3—Why did United Action Begin?*

As white settlers took over Kikuyu land, the Kikuyu people were forced onto reservations. By 1934, in some Kikuyu districts the population density averaged 283 people per square mile. The land Africans controlled was split up into smaller and smaller portions, contributing to increased soil erosion. In addition, farmers could not afford to leave the land fallow so it could renew itself, which had been their usual policy. Instead, they had to keep the land under continuous cultivation, so it got poorer and produced less. As a result, even more peasants had no option but to leave the land and seek jobs on European estates or in the cities.

Several factors helped Kikuyu and other ethno-linguistic groups begin to work together to protest British policies. These factors included:

- Landlessness: The peasants' keen desire to get their land back from the white settlers.
- Insecurity: People who had some land feared the white settlers would alienate it and take all their land.
- Sacredness of the land: Kikuyu considered the land sacred, and the areas that had been alienated remained in their memory.
- The white settlers were not using much of the land they claimed.
- Organizational effort: Many of the peasants who went seeking work in the towns joined with others from different districts to form trade unions and political associations. More groups of people, who might otherwise have been hostile to one another, began to unite.
- A common ideology began to form: A number of political, religious, educational, and trade union groups formed, and these groups developed an ideology and objectives.

## Lesson 4

### *Student Handout 4.4—Protests over Time*

**1921:** Formation of the Young Kikuyu Association. Through mass meetings and petitions, it protested against:

- Crown Lands Ordinance of 1915 that made all Africans “tenants at the will of the Crown.”
- Continuous eviction of Kikuyu sub-clans and alienation of their land for European occupation.
- Doubling of the hut and poll tax from 5 to 10 rupees.
- The one-third reduction in African wages imposed in 1921.
- The *kipande*, the combined identification and employment cards.

**1922:** Harry Thuku organized the East African Association, which:

- accused the government of stealing Kikuyu land.
- attacked the missionaries for opposing African traditions and preaching the word of the devil.
- expressed the hope that Europeans would leave Kikuyu land.
- urged people not to work for Europeans.
- encouraged all Africans to throw their *kipandes* on the lawn of the Government House in Nairobi.

**1923:** When the government jailed Harry Thuku, Africans staged a protest outside the jail and held a spontaneous general strike. In 1923, the East African Association called for:

- the release of Thuku.
- the missionaries to stop interfering with traditional practices such as polygamy, female circumcision, traditional songs and dances.
- hearing of, and taking seriously, African views.

Africans started independent schools, associations, and separatist churches that tried to give their own interpretation to the Bible. For example, people in the Old Testament practiced polygamy, and the Africans pointed out that nowhere does the Bible prohibit female circumcision.

**1924:** The Kikuyu Central Association (KCA) was formed. By 1926, its members were taking oaths to ensure allegiance. It opened a Teachers Training College in Githuguri, which welcomed students from all ethnic groups. By 1939, the KCA had 7,000 members.

Female circumcision was one of the main issues. The white settlers considered it “barbaric,” but it was central to the Kikuyu traditional sense of identity. They considered that circumcision

turned both males and females from children to adults. “The highly emotional topic of circumcision radicalized the Kikuyu youth and provided KCA, for the first time, with mass support.”<sup>16</sup>

**1940:** the Government declared that the KCA was an illegal society and imprisoned twenty of its leaders. As a result, the KCA went underground. During the war it had only a select membership.

**1944:** the Kenya African Union was formed. Its aims included:

- to unite the African people of Kenya.
- to prepare the way for the introduction of democracy in Kenya.
- to defend and protect the interests of the African people by organizing, educating, and leading them in the struggle for better working conditions, housing, and other services.
- to fight for equal rights for all Africans and to break down racial barriers.
- to strive for the extension to all African adults of the right to vote and be elected to the East African Central Assembly, Kenya Legislative Council, local government, and other representative bodies.
- to publish a political newspaper.
- to fight for freedom of assembly, press, and movement.

---

<sup>16</sup> Keith Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya* (New York: St. Martin's Press, in association with the Institute of Contemporary British History, 1999), 31-2.

## Lesson 4

### *Student Handout 4.5—Origins and Goals of the Mau Mau Rebellion*

The Kikuyu Central Association, which had been banned, was a radical group. By the mid-1950s, this movement began to enlarge its membership. As the months passed, its members became increasingly convinced that they could never achieve their goals through peaceful, constitutional means. They also feared that the settlers, many of whom were streaming in from South Africa, would use their political power to turn Kenya into an autonomous or “independent,” white-dominated Kenya, like Southern Rhodesia. As a result, they were prepared to use force, if necessary, to prevent these outcomes.

Because the movement had been banned, activities had to be conducted in secret and a person’s commitment had to be total. To symbolize that total commitment, members were required to take an oath. Once you knew about the movement, its members reasoned, you either had to join by taking the oath or be killed. Otherwise, you might be tempted to expose the whole movement. Oath-taking was part of Kikuyu life, and the oaths that developed reflected aspects of traditional Kikuyu society. However, taking the oath served as an initiation ceremony. By taking the oath, one was reborn into this new “tribe.”

After a few acts of violence, the government became increasingly concerned about what it feared was the growing strength of the resistance. White settlers clamored for the government to act to control violence. The government reacted in October 1952 by declaring a state of emergency, resulting in arrests, repressive measures against the Kikuyu, and white violence against any African suspected of being sympathetic with the movement.

Under the state of emergency, the government arrested Jomo Kenyatta and 200 other prominent organizers of the African movement, which left it without leadership. The government increased the military and police presence and imposed curfews, fines, and punishments in the Kikuyu areas. It required Kikuyu peasants to pay for the extra police. In addition, it introduced “native” registration and pass laws and stated that the police could arrest any “native” without having to show a warrant. Almost 100,000 “squatters,” workers who had been laborers in the Rift Valley, were sent back to the already-crowded African Reserve, along with unemployed workers from Nairobi, creating tense overcrowding in the Reserve. White settlers also reacted cruelly against Africans, beating them, robbing their stock, food, and clothing, and even killing them.

In the ensuing confusion and fear compounded by their lack of leadership, Kikuyu and other peasants, particularly young men and women, went into the forests of Mt Kenya and the Aberdare Range. Disorganized and confused, these peasants feared the government’s repressive measures and sought somewhere to go for safety. Many from the Kikuyu Reserve were facing starvation, and the state of emergency made them increasingly fearful of what might happen to them. The forest seemed to offer protection.

Some of the young men were filled with anger and wanted to fight back. They began organizing themselves into fighting groups that would achieve their political and economic aims through force. Most of them probably thought they would be in the forests for only a few months while they “waited out” the repression. Gradually solidifying was a sense of mission and devotion to the movement which Europeans came to call Mau Mau.

The open revolt started in February 1953. Those in the forest had to get food and ammunition from the settled areas in order to survive and carry on their guerrilla activities. During the day, they were either hiding in the forest or doing their usual duties for settlers. During the night, they carried out Mau Mau orders: administering oaths, carrying supplies, providing safety for one another, getting or stealing food and ammunition and taking it back into the forest, eliminating pro-government forces, burning homes, and attacking settlers.

The Mau Mau ideology included religious, African national, and Kikuyu ethnic aspects. Demands included higher wages, increased educational opportunities, removal of the color bar, return of alienated lands, and African self-determination.



**Some members of the Mau Mau movement.**

Source: <http://kenyatembo.giving.officelive.com/default.aspx>

**Lesson 4*****Student Handout 4.6—Mau Mau Oath*****The Warrior Oath**

I swear before God and before the people who are here that

I have today become a soldier of Gikuyu and Mumbi and I will from now onwards fight the real fight for the land and freedom of our country till we get it or till my last drop of blood. Today I have set my first step (stepping over a line of a goat's small intestine) as a warrior and I will never retreat.

And if I ever retreat

May this soil and all its products be a curse upon me!

If ever I am called to accompany a raid or bring in the head of an enemy, I shall obey and never give lame excuses. ...

I will never spy or inform on my people, and if ever sent to spy on our enemies I will always report the truth. ...

I will never reveal a raid or crime committed to any person who has not taken the Ngero Oath (Oath of Violence or crime) and will steal firearms wherever possible. ...

I will never leave a member in difficulty without trying to help him. ...

I will obey the orders of my leaders at all times without any argument or complaint and will never fail to give them any money or goods taken in a raid and will never hide any pillages or take them for myself. ...

I will never sell land to any white man.

And if I sell:

May this soil and all its products be a curse upon me!

Source: Donald L. Barnett and Karari Njama, *Mau Mau from Within* (New York: Modern Reader, 1966), 131-2.

## Lesson 4

### *Student Handout 4.7—Suppression of the Mau Mau*

In April 1953, the government tried Jomo Kenyatta for leading the Mau Mau. Africans considered his trial a mockery of justice. He was sentenced to seven years in prison with hard labor. He was allowed to return to his home only in 1961. In June 1953, the government deployed up to 50,000 soldiers and police against the Mau Mau. It continued curfews, instituted more restrictions on the African movement, made new pass requirements, collected fines and punishments, and engaged in torture. It also introduced a communal or forced labor scheme whereby Africans had to repair damaged roads and bridges and build guard and police posts. In addition, to prevent the Mau Mau from getting food or other supplies, they burned huts and granaries, evicted peasants, and slashed crops.

Even with all these measures, after a year and a half of continued hostilities, a government assessment stated:

It is our view based upon all the evidence available to us, ... that the influence of the Mau Mau in the Kikuyu area, except in certain localities, has not declined; it has, on the contrary, increased; in this respect the situation has deteriorated and the danger of infection outside the Kikuyu area is not greater, not less, than it was at the beginning of the State of Emergency. ... There is also a passive resistance amongst Africans, an example of which is a "bus boycott" under which Africans have for several months boycotted European-owned buses.<sup>17</sup>

In April 1954, in an increased effort to isolate forest guerrillas from their sources of food and supplies in the reserves and Nairobi, the government deployed 25,000 soldiers in Operation Anvil. They moved the entire African population of Nairobi of 100,000 into a huge field. They isolated the 70,000 Kikuyus and sent 50,000 young men to detention camps. The government also instituted "villagization," that entailed rounding up Kikuyu peasants and forcing them into guarded, prison-like villages. They ordered these people to dig a wide trench, fenced with barbed wire and land mines, around the forest fringe that separated the Aberdare Range and Mt Kenya from Kikuyu reserves.

These actions made it very difficult for Mau Mau forces to get supplies. They had to use whatever ammunition they had just to get food and protect themselves, and soon they were left with no arms and diminishing food supplies. In addition, the groups in the forest were increasingly isolated and less united, and there was open conflict among various African leaders.

The government's Operation Hammer, in December 1954, further isolated groups in the forest and, by early 1955, the guerrillas were feeling increasingly hopeless. Although few

---

<sup>17</sup> Report of the Colonial Office Parliamentary Delegation to Kenya, January 1954, qtd. in Bennett and Njama, *Mau Mau from Within*, 331.

responded to the government's offer of amnesty, that offer further demoralized the fighters. By that time,

the Kikuyu peasantry had for the most part lost both the means and the will to resist. The villagization and communal labor schemes combined with bad harvests to produce widespread hunger and a mounting toll of death from starvation among children and the aged. Cut off from the fighters in the forest and seeing no chance of winning, a growing number of Kikuyu peasants, therefore, yearned only for an end to the struggle.<sup>18</sup>

By the beginning of 1956, the Mau Mau insurgency had come to an end. Though defeated militarily, Kenya's independence in 1963 was "unquestionably the culmination of political forces set in motion by the 1953-1956 peasant revolution called Mau Mau."<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Bennett and Njama, *Mau Mau from Within*, 426-7.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 492.

**Assessment**

When the class has completed a study of the readings and questions in this entire unit, whether studying each country separately or following the jigsaw option, students should write an essay (or make a visual/written presentation) that evaluates the importance of one or more of the following issues in the twentieth-century independence movements:

1. complaints against colonial rule
2. the various groups involved in the movements for independence
3. the role of violence and protest
4. the role and importance of individual leaders
5. the prevailing ideology of the movements and what “imagined community” finally emerged.

All papers or presentation should end with a brief summary that compares how independence was achieved in two or more of the countries included in this unit.

## This unit and the Three Essential Questions

---

	<p>“Who controls the land?” Why has this question been so important in many nationalist movements for independence in the twentieth century? (The question refers not to the state or nation but to land that produces crops or pasture.)</p>
	<p>Research the impact of World War II on colonized societies in Africa and Asia in terms of social, economic, and cultural change. Which territories in Africa and Asia were directly involved in the war? How might the war have affected societies not directly involved?</p>
	<p>Hold a hypothetical debate between a group of American Founding Fathers of the late eighteenth century and a group of African nationalists of the late 1940s on the question: “Why do we want independence from Britain?”</p>

## This unit and the Seven Key Themes

---

This unit emphasizes:

Key Theme 3: Uses and Abuses of Power

Key Theme 4: Haves and Have-Nots

Key Theme 5: Expressing Identity

## This unit and the Standards in Historical Thinking

---

Historical Thinking Standard 1: Chronological Thinking

The student is able to (F) reconstruct patterns of historical succession and duration in which historical developments have unfolded, and apply them to explain historical continuity and change.

Historical Thinking Standard 2: Historical Comprehension

The student is able to (F) appreciate historical perspectives, describing the past on its own terms, through the eyes and experiences of those who were there, as revealed through their literature, diaries, letters, debates, arts, artifacts, and the like.

**Historical Thinking Standard 3: Historical Analysis and Interpretation**

The student is able to (B) consider multiple perspectives of various peoples in the past by demonstrating their differing motives, beliefs, interests, hopes, and fears.

**Historical Thinking Standard 4: Historical Research Capabilities**

The student is able to (C) interrogate historical data by uncovering the social, political, and economic context in which it was created.

**Historical Thinking Standard 5: Historical Issues-Analysis and Decision-Making**

The student is able to (F) evaluate the implementation of a decision by analyzing the interests it served; estimating the position, power, and priority of each player involved; assessing the ethical dimensions of the decision; and evaluating its costs and benefits from a variety of perspectives.

---

**Resources*****Resources for teachers***

Barnett, Donald L. and Karari Njama. *Mau Mau from Within: An Analysis of Kenya's Peasant Revolt*. New York: Modern Reader, 1966.

Bondurant, Joan. *Conquest of Violence: The Gandhian Philosophy of Conflict*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1988.

Buzo, Adrian. *The Making of Modern Korea*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: Routledge, 2007.

Cumings, Bruce. *Korea's Place in the Sun: A Modern History*. New York: Norton, 1997.

Duiker, William J. *The Rise of Nationalism in Vietnam, 1900-1941*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1976.

Gandhi, Mohandas. *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1957.

Gordon, David F. *Decolonization and the State in Kenya*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986.

Lawrence, Mark Atwood. *The Vietnam War: A Concise International History*. New York: Oxford UP, 2008.

Lockard, Craig. *Southeast Asia in World History*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009.

Maloba, Wunyabari O. *Mau Mau and Kenya: An Analysis of a Peasant Revolt*. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1993.

Metcalf, Barbara D. and Thomas R. Metcalf. *A Concise History of Modern India*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006.

Presley, Cora Ann. *Kikuyu Women: The Mau Mau Rebellion and Social Change in Kenya*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992.

### ***Resources for Students***

Johnson, Donald and Jean. *Mao and Gandhi: Alternate Paths to National Independence and Social Change*. Los Angeles: National Center for History in the Schools, 1999.

Cantu, D. Anthony and Sandy Cantu. *The Vietnam War: A National Dilemma*. Los Angeles: National Center for History in the Schools.

## **Correlations to National and State Standards**

---

### ***National Standards for World History***

Era 8: A Half-Century of Crisis and Achievement, 1900-1945. 1B: The student understands the causes and consequences of important resistance and revolutionary movements of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century; 3B: The student understands economic, social, and political transformations in Africa, Asia, and Latin America in the 1920s and 1930s.

### ***Michigan High School Content Expectations***

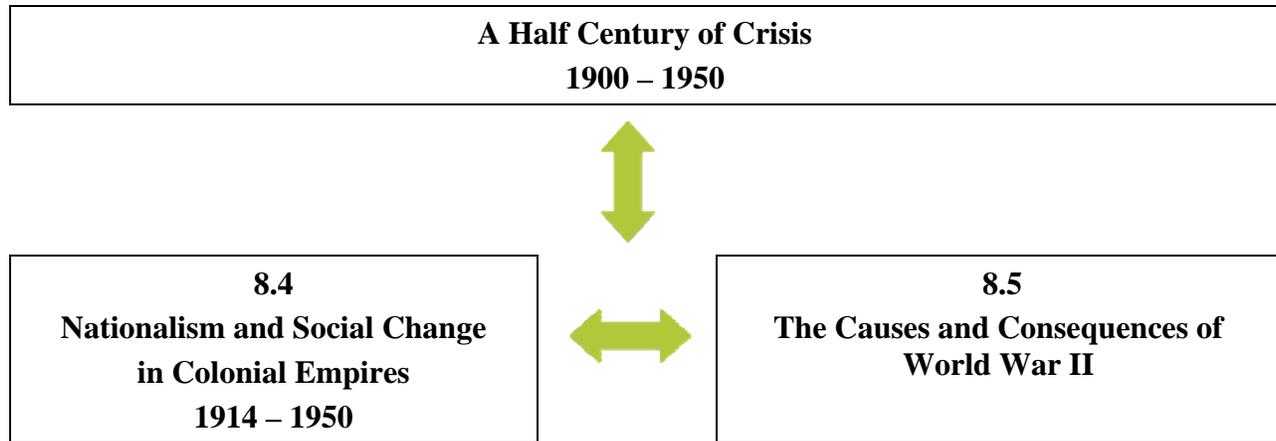
World History and Geography. WHG Era 7 – Global Crisis and Achievement: 1900 – 1945. 7.3.3: Asia – Analyze the political, economic, and social transformations that occurred in this era, including Indian independence struggle. WHG Era 8 – The Cold War and its Aftermath: The 20<sup>th</sup> Century since 1945. 8.2.2: Independence, Decolonization, and Democratization Movements.

### ***Virginia History and Social Science Standards of Learning***

WHII.13. The student will demonstrate knowledge of political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of independence movements and development efforts by a) describing the struggles for self-rule, including Gandhi’s leadership in India; b) describing Africa’s achievement of independence, including Kenyatta’s leadership of Kenya.

## Conceptual links to other teaching units

---



This unit has shown how nationalist independence movements gathered momentum in Asia and Africa in the period between the two world wars. World War II, the subject of Landscape Teaching Unit 8.5, had an immense impact on those movements. The economies of many colonial dependencies changed significantly because of involvement in the fighting or stepped up wartime production of export goods. These economic changes had deep effects on society, heightened dissatisfaction with colonial governments, and drew many more men and women to nationalist movements. Also, many inhabitants of the colonized territories of the European powers, the United States, and Japan served in the war as soldiers, laborers, and resistance fighters. This experience left them less willing than ever to return to subordinate social, economic, or racial status once they went back home. Many ex-soldiers joined nationalist parties.