

“Strong leadership was essential to the success of independence movements.”

HELEN MORGAN JUN 07, 2020 10:41AM

Yes it was

Gandhi

Believed the best way to fight back was through acts of non-violence.

Sooo..... gained popular support - Hroch taxonomy of independence this helped develop the movement into a mass movement. EG Boycott/Salt March. – HELEN MORGAN

Gandhi

He wanted to unite all the different systems under the hatred of colonial rule.

Gandhi helped to develop the INC into a mass movement

Gandhi

He practiced the resistance of tyranny through Mass non-violent movements and civil disobedience. Had he not have been the leader of the movement it could have erupted into a more violent conflict.

Unable to quell the desire for an uprising against Britain, as can be seen by the INA and Jinnah's later call for direct action – ANONYMOUS

Jinnah

The idea of an independent Pakistan came from him and he convinced the rest of the Muslim League.

Gandhi

Adapted dress and lifestyle of simple peasant and he created an Ashram - a community committed to non-violence, which allowed him to connect to Indian peasants.

Passive resistance / civil disobedience and the abjuring of force were used as moral “weapons” in the freedom struggle and did allow for the mobilisation of large sections of the population. These did put pressure on Britain and world opinion and , as witnessed in the press, was arguably a contributing factor in undermining Britain’s claim to rule.

Gandhi’s contribution could be examined in terms of his ability to unite much (but certainly not all) of the population behind the INC in a mass movement and in terms of his methods (which gained much publicity both in India and world wide).

the League under Jinnah transformed itself into a mass political movement which was able to negotiate, from a position of strength, with both the INC and the colonial government. His push for political power was aided not only by the establishment of a programme based on “religion under threat” but also by his ability to recognise the errors of others and take advantage of them (the policy of the INC during the Second World War for example with its Quit India programme – or the desperation of London by 1946/7 to “Divide and Quit” in the light of the physical, economic and military impact of the Second World War upon Britain).

the skill with which Gandhi turned the call for independence into a cause that resonated across regional, religious and caste boundaries. could mention Gandhi’s success with his call for satyagraha; organizing of the salt marches; publicizing of easily identifiable trademarks such as the homespun dhoti and the spinning wheel that made him instantly recognizable; making the independence movement inclusive and not limited only to the educated classes; willingness to go on hunger strike and to suffer imprisonment

his efforts to bridge the Moslem -Hindu divide and his leadership of the Quit India campaign. These are some of the factors that contributed to the success of the nationalist movement and made it difficult for the British government to oppose non-violence and to consider (even before the Second World War had begun) the inevitability of Indian independence.

Not it wasn't

Gandhi

He had little to no military expertise.

Gandhi

During the Second Boer War in 1899-1902 and Zulu War in 1906, he had raised an Indian ambulance corps, where he served as a sergeant-major, although his expertise was very limited

Britain's role

Indian independence was achieved because of a weak Britain following WWII and was not dependant on the leaders of the independence movement

Ideas of independence

The desire for independence would still remain even if Gandhi was out of the picture because of the mistreatment from the British

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Britain's decision to "Divide and Quit" by 1947 in a hasty departure from its Indian empire. Such factors could be related to the impact of the two world wars which weakened Britain economically

Clement Attlee

Clement Attlee was the post-war prime minister and the labour government realized that their grip on holding on India was declining rapidly (Churchill wanted India to be a dominion in the British Empire). Although Britain achieved ultimate victory in the war, the economic costs were enormous. Six years of prolonged warfare meant that Britain had lost a big chunk of its economy by 1945. In the 1945 general election, just after the end of the war in Europe, the Labour Party led by Clement Attlee was elected with a landslide majority (its first ever outright majority), introducing sweeping reforms of the British economy. (Churchill was voted out of office, so it didn't matter what he thought anymore). Attlee was sympathetic to Indian independence, so he began the process. Attlee orchestrated the independence grant of India & Pakistan in 1947. He became the Labour Party expert on India and by 1934 was committed to granting India the same independent dominion

status that Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa had recently been given. He faced strong resistance from the die-hard Conservative imperialists, led by Churchill, who opposed both independence and efforts led by Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin to set up a system of limited local control by Indians themselves. Attlee and the Labour leadership were sympathetic to the Congress movement led by Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru. During the Second World War, Attlee was in charge of Indian affairs. The Muslim league insisted that it was the only true representative of all of the Muslims of India, and by 1946 Attlee had come to agree with them. No divisions were available; independence was the only option. Given the demands of the Muslim league, independence implied a partition that set off heavily Muslim Pakistan from the main portion of India. The Labour government gave independence to India and Pakistan in an unexpectedly quick move in 1947.

By the time of the Labour government of 1945, the will as well as the desire to hold on to India was declining – along with financial weakness – instrumental in helping decolonisation in India.

Jinnah - ensured a divide in the campaign and was responsible for a divided settlement.

The Soul Force was a group which was uncontrollable to Gandhi and were disobedient to British civil rule.

Gandhi

He resigned from Congress in a protest because he didn't want Muslims to have any autonomy

Gandhi

Not a great politician - round table talks - no real influence. Jinnah was a better politician. Gandu not able to unite the political forces.

Perspectives

hagiographical approach to the role of Gandhi in relation to the gaining of independence in India in 1947.

Cambridge School

The implication that "selfish" motivations drove nationalism in India is important to consider, as it helps elucidate another aspect of the Cambridge school; particularly, their view that nationalist sentiment was both disjointed and fragmented in India. Because

scholars (such as John Gallagher and Gordon Johnson) argue that the nationalist movement reflected the personal desires of politicians, Cambridge historians assert that the movement was neither unified nor cohesive in its overall development since politicians were constantly engaged in competition amongst themselves for both power and authority

Subaltern

1. The "subaltern school", was begun in the 1980s by [Ranjit Guha](#) and [Gyan Prakash](#). It focuses attention away from the elites and politicians to "history from below", looking at the peasants using folklore, poetry, riddles, proverbs, songs, oral history and methods inspired by anthropology. It focuses on the colonial era before 1947 and typically emphasises caste and downplays class, to the annoyance of the Marxist school.

Marxist

1. The Marxists have focused on studies of economic development, landownership, and class conflict in precolonial India and of deindustrialisation during the colonial period. The Marxists portrayed Gandhi's movement as a device of the bourgeois elite to harness popular, potentially revolutionary forces

for its own ends. Again, the Marxists are accused of being "too much" ideologically influenced.

Nationalist

1. The Nationalist school has focused on Congress, Gandhi, Nehru and high level politics. It highlighted the Mutiny of 1857 as a war of liberation, and Gandhi's 'Quit India' begun in 1942, as defining historical events. This school of historiography has received criticism for [Elitism](#).

Revision

More recently, Hindu nationalists have created a version of history to support their demands for "[Hindutva](#)" ("Hinduness") in Indian society. This school of thought is still in the process of development. In March 2012, [Diana L. Eck](#), professor of Comparative Religion and Indian Studies at [Harvard University](#), authored in her book "India: A Sacred Geography", that idea of India dates to a much earlier time than the British or the Mughals and it wasn't just a cluster of regional identities and it wasn't ethnic or racial.
