

Chapter 14 Section 3 Notes

I. The Sepoy Mutiny (pages 448–449)

A. During the eighteenth century British power in India increased as the power of the Mogul rulers declined (see Chapter 15). To rule India, the British East India Company had its own soldiers and forts. It also hired Indian soldiers, called **sepoys**, to protect the company's interests.

B. In 1857 Indians revolted against the British. This was known as the Sepoy Mutiny, or Great Rebellion, to the British, and as the First War of Independence to the Indians. The immediate cause was the rumor that the British were passing out bullets greased with cow and pig fat. The cow is sacred to the Hindus, and the pig is taboo to Muslims. Thus a group of sepoys refused to use the bullets. The British arrested the offenders, causing the sepoys to go on a rampage and kill 50 European men, women, and children.

C. The revolt spread quickly, but it was crushed within a year. The Indians were vastly outnumbered and rivalries between Muslims and Hindus hurt cooperation among their forces. Atrocities were terrible on both sides. At **Kanpur**, Indians with swords and knives massacred two hundred defenseless women and children. When they recaptured Kanpur, the British took their revenge.

D. As a result of the Sepoy uprising, the British Parliament transferred the powers of the British East India Company to the British government. In 1876 **Queen Victoria** acquired the title of Empress of India.

II. Colonial Rule (pages 449–451)

A. The British government ruled India directly through a British official known as a **viceroy**—a governor who rules as a representative of a monarch. The viceroy was assisted by a British civil service staff of about 3,500 people, who ruled 300 million.

B. British rule had both benefits and costs for India.

C. One benefit was Britain brought order to a society wracked by civil war. It also led to a fairly honest government. Lord Thomas Macaulay set up a new school system. The goal of the new system was to train Indian children to work in the colonial administrative system and the army. The new system served only upper-class Indians; 90 percent of the country remained illiterate. Britain also introduced infrastructure like the telegraph and railroads.

D. Perhaps the greatest cost to the Indians of British rule was economic. British rule brought severe hardships to most of the population. British manufactured goods destroyed local industries, for example. In rural areas the zamindars collected taxes from the peasants. Many zamindars took advantage of their authority, increasing taxes and forcing many peasants to become tenants or lose their land entirely.

E. The British also persuaded many farmers to switch from growing food to growing cotton. Food supplies could not keep up with the population, therefore. Between 1800 and 1900 thirty million Indians starved to death.

F. British rule was degrading to the educated, upper-class Indians as well. Top jobs were reserved for the British, and the rulers believed they were superior to the Indians, as the views of Lord Kitchener show. The British showed disrespect for Indian culture. For example, they used the Taj Mahal as a place of weddings and parties, even chipping off pieces of it to take as souvenirs.

G. British racial attitudes led to the Indian nationalist movement.

III. An Indian Nationalist Movement (pages 451–452)

A. The first Indian nationalists were upper-class, English-educated people who preferred reform over revolution. Many came from urban areas such as **Mumbai** (then called Bombay) and Calcutta.

B. The slow pace of reform convinced most Indian nationalists they had to do more. In 1885 a small group of Indians formed the **Indian National Congress (INC)**. At first it called only for a share in the governing process, not full independence.

C. A split between Hindus and Muslims plagued the INC. Muslims began to call for a separate league to better represent the interests of India's millions of Muslims.

D. In 1915 the return of a young lawyer gave new life to the independence movement. **Mohandas Gandhi** was born in Gujarat and educated in England. While working at a law firm in South Africa serving the interests of Indian workers there, Gandhi became aware of racial exploitation.

E. Using his experiences in South Africa, Gandhi turned the Indian independence movement into one of nonviolent resistance. The aim was to win aid for the poor and independence. Gandhi's movement would indeed lead to independence.

IV. Colonial Indian Culture (page 452)

A. India experienced a cultural revival in the early 1800s. A British college opened in Calcutta and a local publishing house issued textbooks on subjects including Sanskrit.

B. The work of writers such as the illustrious Indian author Rabindranath Tagore tried to promote pride in a national Indian consciousness in the face of British domination. Tagore's life work was to promote human dignity and world peace. His interest was ideas, and he set up a school that became a national university.