

POST-1857 REFORMS AND POLICIES

The Rise of Nationalism in India (1858-1919)

The period between 1858 and 1919 was crucial in the development of Indian nationalism. The seeds of discontent sown during the Revolt of 1857 gradually grew into a more organized and widespread movement for independence. This period saw the emergence of various leaders, organizations, and events that significantly contributed to the rise of nationalism in India.

1. Political Factors

Formation of the Indian National Congress (1885)

- **Foundation:** The Indian National Congress (INC) was founded in 1885 by Allan Octavian Hume, along with Indian leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, Dinshaw Wacha, and Womesh Chunder Bonnerjee. The Congress aimed to create a platform for civil and political dialogue among educated Indians.
- **Early Objectives:** Initially, the INC focused on moderate demands, such as more representation in government, civil rights, and administrative reforms.

Partition of Bengal (1905)

- **Announcement:** The British Viceroy, Lord Curzon, announced the partition of Bengal in 1905, ostensibly for administrative efficiency.
- **Reaction:** The partition led to widespread protests and was seen as an attempt to divide and rule by creating religious and regional divisions. The Swadeshi Movement and boycott of British goods were launched in response.

2. Economic Factors

Exploitative Economic Policies

- **Drain of Wealth:** Economic exploitation by the British, exemplified by the "Drain of Wealth" theory proposed by Dadabhai Naoroji, highlighted how India's resources were being siphoned off to Britain.
- **Impact on Artisans and Peasants:** Traditional industries were destroyed, and heavy taxation led to widespread poverty and famines. This economic hardship fueled discontent and nationalist sentiments.

3. Social and Cultural Factors

Social Reform Movements

- **Brahmo Samaj and Arya Samaj:** Reform movements like Brahmo Samaj, founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, and Arya Samaj, founded by Swami Dayananda Saraswati,

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sought to reform Indian society and eradicate social evils. They also promoted education and cultural revival, which fostered a sense of national identity.

Influence of Western Education

- **Educated Middle Class:** The British education system inadvertently created an educated middle class that was aware of democratic principles and human rights. This class played a crucial role in articulating nationalist ideas and aspirations.

4. Key Movements and Events

Swadeshi Movement (1905-1911)

- **Boycott of British Goods:** In response to the partition of Bengal, the Swadeshi Movement called for the boycott of British goods and the promotion of indigenous industries.
- **Cultural Revival:** The movement also focused on the revival of Indian art, literature, and culture, fostering a sense of pride and national identity.

Home Rule Movement (1916-1918)

- **Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak:** The Home Rule Movement, led by Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, demanded self-governance for India within the British Empire.
- **Impact:** The movement mobilized a large number of people and intensified the demand for self-rule.

5. Prominent Leaders

Dadabhai Naoroji

- **Economic Critic:** Known as the "Grand Old Man of India," Dadabhai Naoroji was a prominent economic critic of British policies and highlighted the economic exploitation of India through his "Drain of Wealth" theory.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak

- **Militant Nationalism:** Tilak was one of the first leaders to adopt a more militant stance against British rule. His famous slogan, "Swaraj is my birthright, and I shall have it," inspired many Indians to join the nationalist movement.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale

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- **Moderate Leader:** Gokhale was a moderate leader who advocated for gradual reforms and constitutional methods. He was a mentor to Mahatma Gandhi.

Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal, and Aurobindo Ghosh

- **Lal-Bal-Pal Trio:** These leaders, known as the Lal-Bal-Pal trio, were prominent figures in the nationalist movement. They promoted aggressive methods to achieve self-rule and played a significant role in the Swadeshi Movement.

6. Consequences and Impact

Political Awakening

- **Increased Political Awareness:** The rise of nationalism led to a political awakening among Indians. The demand for self-governance became more pronounced, and the INC evolved from a platform of moderate demands to a more assertive body advocating for complete independence.

Cultural and Social Integration

- **National Identity:** The various movements and the participation of people from different regions, religions, and social backgrounds helped in the integration of diverse groups, fostering a sense of national identity and unity.

Prelude to Independence

- **Foundation for Future Struggles:** The period from 1858 to 1919 laid the foundation for future struggles for independence. The experiences and lessons learned during this time were crucial for the more organized and intense phases of the independence movement that followed, especially under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi.

The rise of nationalism in India between 1858 and 1919 was marked by a series of political, economic, social, and cultural developments. These factors collectively contributed to the awakening of national consciousness and set the stage for the subsequent struggle for independence. The period saw the emergence of influential leaders, significant movements, and a growing demand for self-rule, ultimately leading to India's independence in 1947.

Post-1857 Reforms and Policies in British India

The Revolt of 1857, also known as the First War of Indian Independence, marked a significant turning point in British colonial policy in India. In response to the uprising, the British government undertook a series of reforms and policy changes aimed at consolidating their control, appeasing Indian sentiments, and preventing future rebellions. These reforms and policies spanned various aspects of administration, military, economy, and social structure.

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Administrative Reforms

Government of India Act 1858

- **End of East India Company's Rule:** The Government of India Act 1858 led to the dissolution of the British East India Company. The control of India was transferred directly to the British Crown.
- **Establishment of the British Raj:** The act established the British Raj, with the British government assuming direct control over India. The office of the Viceroy of India was created to represent the British Crown.
- **Indian Civil Service:** The act laid the groundwork for the creation of the Indian Civil Service (ICS), which became the principal administrative apparatus of the British government in India.

Administrative Reorganization

- **Provincial Administration:** Provinces were reorganized and placed under the control of British governors or lieutenant governors. Efforts were made to improve administrative efficiency and reduce corruption.
- **Decentralization:** Some administrative powers were decentralized to provincial and local governments to make the administration more responsive to local needs.

Military Reforms

Reorganization of the Army

- **Ratio of British to Indian Soldiers:** The proportion of British soldiers in the Indian army was increased to maintain better control and reduce the likelihood of mutiny. By 1861, the British troops were one-third of the total army strength.
- **Recruitment Policy:** Recruitment policies were altered to include soldiers from different regions, communities, and castes to prevent unity among the Indian soldiers.
- **Disarmament:** Efforts were made to disarm the civilian population to prevent future rebellions.

Economic Policies

Land Revenue Reforms

- **Permanent Settlement:** The Permanent Settlement (introduced in Bengal in 1793) continued to be implemented in some regions, creating a class of loyal zamindars (landlords) who collected revenue on behalf of the British.
- **Ryotwari and Mahalwari Systems:** The Ryotwari system in Madras and Bombay and the Mahalwari system in parts of North India were refined to improve revenue collection and reduce peasant discontent.

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Infrastructure Development

- **Railways and Telegraphs:** Significant investments were made in building railways, telegraph lines, and roads to facilitate better communication and control. This also helped in the economic exploitation of India's resources.
- **Irrigation Projects:** Irrigation projects were undertaken to improve agricultural productivity and prevent famines.

Social and Educational Reforms

Social Reforms

- **Non-Interference Policy:** The British adopted a policy of non-interference in religious and social customs to avoid offending Indian sensibilities. They became more cautious in implementing social reforms.
- **Legislation Against Sati:** The prohibition of Sati (widow immolation) was strictly enforced. Other practices like female infanticide were also discouraged.

Educational Reforms

- **Promotion of Western Education:** The British continued to promote Western education through the establishment of schools, colleges, and universities. The aim was to create a class of educated Indians who could assist in administration.
- **Universities Act of 1857:** Universities were established in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras in 1857 to provide higher education to Indians.

Political Policies

Policy of Divide and Rule

- **Religious and Caste Divisions:** The British increasingly exploited religious, caste, and regional divisions to prevent the rise of a united nationalist movement. They pitted Hindus against Muslims and promoted the interests of various caste groups to create divisions.
- **Princely States:** The British adopted a policy of conciliation towards the princely states, recognizing their autonomy and privileges in return for their loyalty.

Legislative Reforms

- **Indian Councils Act 1861:** This act introduced Indians into the legislative process by allowing them to be nominated to the Viceroy's and Governors' councils. It marked the beginning of legislative reforms in British India.
- **Indian Councils Act 1892:** This act expanded the legislative councils and allowed for indirect elections, giving Indians a limited role in governance.

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Consequences of the Reforms

Consolidation of British Control

- The administrative, military, and economic reforms helped the British consolidate their control over India. Improved infrastructure and communication facilitated better governance and economic exploitation.

Rise of Indian Nationalism

- The promotion of Western education and the introduction of legislative councils led to the emergence of an educated Indian middle class. This class became increasingly aware of democratic principles and began to demand greater political rights and self-governance.
- The policy of divide and rule, while effective in the short term, sowed the seeds of communal divisions that would later pose significant challenges to Indian unity.

Social and Cultural Impact

- The British social reforms, though limited, helped in the gradual modernization of Indian society. However, the non-interference policy also meant that many social evils persisted.
- The establishment of educational institutions and the promotion of Western education contributed to a cultural renaissance in India, leading to the rise of social reform movements.

British Crown's Direct Rule: Government of India Act 1858

The Government of India Act 1858 was a landmark piece of legislation passed by the British Parliament that marked the transition of power from the British East India Company to the British Crown. This act was a direct consequence of the Revolt of 1857 and sought to reorganize the governance structure of India to ensure more effective and direct control by the British government.

Background

The Revolt of 1857 exposed significant weaknesses in the administration of India under the British East India Company. The revolt, which was partly fueled by widespread dissatisfaction with Company rule, underscored the need for a new governance framework. The British government decided to abolish the East India Company and take direct control of Indian administration.

Key Provisions of the Government of India Act 1858

Abolition of the East India Company

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- **Transfer of Power:** The act abolished the East India Company, transferring all its powers, territories, and revenues to the British Crown.
- **End of Company Rule:** The company's role in the administration of India ended, and its directors and shareholders ceased to have any say in Indian governance.

Establishment of the Office of the Secretary of State for India

- **New Position:** The act created the office of the Secretary of State for India, a British cabinet minister responsible for Indian affairs.
- **Council of India:** The Secretary of State was assisted by a Council of India, which consisted of 15 members, most of whom were experienced in Indian affairs. This council was designed to provide expert advice and assist in the administration.

Creation of the Office of the Viceroy

- **Viceroy of India:** The act replaced the Governor-General of India with the Viceroy of India. The Viceroy acted as the representative of the British Crown in India and was vested with extensive powers.
- **First Viceroy:** Lord Canning, the then Governor-General, became the first Viceroy of India.

Centralization of Authority

- **Centralized Administration:** The act centralized administrative control, with the Viceroy and his council having significant authority over provincial administrations.
- **Executive Council:** The Viceroy was assisted by an Executive Council, which included high-ranking officials responsible for various departments such as finance, law, and military affairs.

Administrative Reforms

- **Reorganization:** The administrative structure was reorganized to improve efficiency and responsiveness. This included reforms in revenue collection, judicial administration, and law enforcement.
- **Provincial Governors:** Provinces were governed by British officials, known as Governors or Lieutenant Governors, who reported directly to the Viceroy.

Impact and Consequences

Strengthening of British Control

- **Enhanced Control:** The act ensured direct and enhanced control over Indian administration by the British government, reducing the chances of future rebellions.
- **Centralized Power:** Centralizing power in the hands of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India allowed for more coordinated and consistent governance.

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Policy of Non-Interference

- **Respect for Indian Traditions:** To prevent further discontent, the British adopted a policy of non-interference in religious and social customs. This was intended to respect Indian traditions and avoid provoking sentiments similar to those that had contributed to the 1857 revolt.

Economic and Infrastructure Development

- **Investment in Infrastructure:** The British invested in infrastructure development, including railways, telegraph lines, and roads, to facilitate better administration and economic exploitation.
- **Revenue Reforms:** Efforts were made to streamline revenue collection and reduce corruption, which had been rampant under Company rule.

Social and Educational Policies

- **Promotion of Education:** The British continued to promote Western education in India, establishing universities and colleges to create an educated class that could assist in administration.
- **Social Reforms:** While maintaining a policy of non-interference, the British continued to enforce laws against practices like Sati and supported social reforms aimed at modernizing Indian society.

Rise of Indian Nationalism

- **Emergence of Nationalism:** The administrative and social changes, coupled with the continued economic exploitation, contributed to the rise of Indian nationalism. An educated middle class emerged, increasingly aware of democratic principles and human rights, leading to the growth of nationalist sentiments.
- **Foundation for Future Movements:** The reforms set the stage for future movements and demands for self-governance, as Indians began to organize and articulate their aspirations for independence.

Administrative Reforms Post-1857

In response to the Revolt of 1857, the British government implemented significant administrative reforms to consolidate its control over India. Key aspects of these reforms included the establishment and restructuring of the Indian Civil Service (ICS), as well as judicial and police reforms to ensure efficient governance and law enforcement.

Indian Civil Service (ICS)

Establishment and Structure

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- **Foundation:** The Indian Civil Service (ICS) was established to create a professional and meritocratic administrative service. Initially, the ICS was staffed primarily by British officers.
- **Recruitment:** Entry into the ICS was through competitive examinations held in London. This system favored British candidates due to geographical and educational advantages.

Reforms and Changes

- **Statutory Civil Service:** In 1861, the Statutory Civil Service was introduced, allowing for a limited number of Indians to enter the ICS through nominations rather than competitive exams.
- **Open Competition:** In 1870, the competitive exams were also conducted in India, albeit with limited seats, allowing more Indians to join the ICS.
- **Inclusion of Indians:** Despite the changes, the number of Indians in the ICS remained low. It wasn't until the 20th century that a significant number of Indians were able to join the service.

Role and Responsibilities

- **Administrative Backbone:** The ICS officers were responsible for the administration of districts, including revenue collection, law and order, and implementing government policies.
- **Judicial Functions:** Many ICS officers also served as magistrates, overseeing judicial functions at the district level.

Judicial Reforms

Reorganization of the Judicial System

- **High Courts Act 1861:** The High Courts Act 1861 established High Courts in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, merging the Supreme Courts and Sadar Adalats (appellate courts). These High Courts had original and appellate jurisdiction.
- **Uniform Legal System:** The British aimed to create a more uniform legal system by codifying laws and procedures, replacing diverse local practices with a standardized legal framework.

Legal Codes

- **Indian Penal Code (IPC):** The IPC, drafted by Thomas Babington Macaulay and enacted in 1860, provided a comprehensive code of criminal law.
- **Civil and Criminal Procedure Codes:** The Civil Procedure Code (CPC) of 1859 and the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) of 1861 standardized legal procedures across the country.
- **Indian Evidence Act 1872:** This act established rules for the admissibility of evidence in courts, further unifying the legal process.

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Establishment of New Courts

- **District Courts:** Each district had a district court presided over by a district judge, who was often an ICS officer. These courts handled both civil and criminal cases.
- **Subordinate Courts:** Below the district courts were subordinate courts, including Munsiff courts (for civil cases) and magistrate courts (for criminal cases).

Police Reforms

Reorganization and Modernization

- **Police Act of 1861:** The Police Act of 1861 reorganized the police system in India. It aimed to create a professional, efficient, and centrally controlled police force.
- **District Superintendent of Police:** Each district was placed under a District Superintendent of Police (SP), who was responsible for maintaining law and order and reporting to the district magistrate.

Structure and Hierarchy

- **Police Ranks:** The police force was structured with a clear hierarchy, including positions such as constables, head constables, sub-inspectors, and inspectors, up to the SP.
- **Training and Discipline:** Emphasis was placed on training and discipline to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the police force.

Responsibilities and Functions

- **Law and Order:** The primary responsibility of the police was to maintain law and order, prevent and investigate crimes, and ensure public safety.
- **Intelligence Gathering:** The police were also tasked with gathering intelligence to preempt potential rebellions and political dissent.

Challenges and Criticisms

- **Corruption and Brutality:** Despite reforms, the police force often faced criticism for corruption, brutality, and inefficiency. The relationship between the police and the local population was often strained.
- **Limited Trust:** The police were viewed as an instrument of colonial control rather than a service for public welfare, leading to limited trust and cooperation from the local communities.

Economic Exploitation: Development of Railways and Telegraph

The British colonial administration in India embarked on the development of extensive infrastructure, including railways and telegraph networks, primarily to facilitate economic

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exploitation and consolidate their control over the vast Indian subcontinent. These developments were designed to enhance administrative efficiency, boost trade and commerce, and ensure quick military mobilization.

Development of Railways

Objectives of Railway Construction

1. **Economic Exploitation:** The primary motive behind the construction of railways was to facilitate the extraction and transportation of raw materials from the interior regions of India to ports for export to Britain. Conversely, manufactured goods from Britain were distributed throughout India via the railway network.
2. **Administrative Control:** Railways enabled the British to maintain effective administrative control over India. Quick movement of officials and resources across the country ensured better governance and reduced the response time to any disturbances.
3. **Military Mobilization:** The railways were crucial for the rapid deployment of British troops to quell any uprisings or rebellions, thereby maintaining colonial order and security.

Key Features and Development

1. **Initial Construction:** The first railway line in India was opened in 1853, connecting Bombay (Mumbai) to Thane. This marked the beginning of a vast railway network.
2. **Expansion:** By the end of the 19th century, India had one of the largest railway networks in the world. Major cities, ports, and resource-rich areas were interconnected, facilitating smooth economic activities.
3. **Funding and Management:** The construction and operation of railways were primarily financed by British capital. Private British companies were granted lucrative contracts, often with guaranteed returns on investment, ensuring minimal financial risk for British investors.
4. **Employment and Social Impact:** The railways provided employment to thousands of Indians, but often under harsh conditions. The introduction of railways also led to significant social changes, breaking down regional isolation and promoting a sense of national unity among Indians.

Economic Impact

1. **Resource Extraction:** The railways enabled the efficient extraction and transportation of raw materials such as cotton, jute, tea, and minerals to ports for export.
2. **Market Expansion:** Railways helped in expanding markets for British manufactured goods, effectively integrating the Indian economy into the global capitalist system dominated by Britain.
3. **Agricultural Impact:** While the railways facilitated the transport of agricultural produce, they also led to increased commercialization of agriculture, often to the detriment of local

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food security. Famines became more severe as food grains were transported to export markets or other regions, leading to shortages in famine-affected areas.

Development of Telegraph

Objectives of Telegraph Construction

1. **Administrative Efficiency:** The telegraph was a vital tool for the British administration, allowing for quick and reliable communication between different parts of India and between India and Britain. This improved administrative efficiency and coordination.
2. **Military Communication:** The telegraph network was essential for military communication, enabling swift transmission of orders and intelligence, thereby enhancing the British ability to respond to threats and maintain control.
3. **Economic Integration:** The telegraph facilitated the smooth operation of the railways and other commercial activities by ensuring timely communication and coordination.

Key Features and Development

1. **Initial Implementation:** The first telegraph line in India was established in 1851, connecting Calcutta (Kolkata) and Diamond Harbour. By 1854, a more extensive network was in place, linking key cities such as Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras.
2. **Network Expansion:** By the late 19th century, the telegraph network had expanded to cover most of India, connecting administrative centers, military outposts, and major commercial hubs.
3. **Management and Operation:** The telegraph services were initially managed by the East India Company and later by the British government. British engineers and administrators played a crucial role in its operation and expansion.

Economic Impact

1. **Commercial Efficiency:** The telegraph enhanced commercial efficiency by allowing businesses to communicate swiftly, make timely decisions, and coordinate activities across different regions.
2. **Market Integration:** Like the railways, the telegraph helped integrate regional markets into a national and global economy, facilitating the flow of information about prices, demand, and supply.
3. **Investment and Trade:** The telegraph network attracted British investment in India and facilitated trade by providing reliable communication channels between Indian producers and British markets.

The development of railways and telegraph networks in colonial India was a double-edged sword. While it brought about significant infrastructural advancements and contributed to India's modernization, the primary motives behind these developments were to serve British economic interests and maintain colonial control. The efficient extraction and transportation of raw materials, along with the integration of Indian markets into the global economy, greatly benefited

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British industries. However, these infrastructural projects also laid the groundwork for India's industrial and economic progress in the post-colonial era, despite their initial exploitative intentions.

