

GANDHI and Indian Independence



Gandhi was the leader of the movement against British rule in India. He believed non-violent protest was a **powerful** way to make changes. He inspired many other civil rights leaders, such as Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela.

Mohandas Gandhi was born in India in 1869. When he was 19, he went to London to study Law, and then he worked as a lawyer in South Africa for 20 years. He saw discrimination against Indian immigrants in South Africa and he

worked to get basic civil rights for them.

When Gandhi returned to India in 1914, he became a political activist and **led** the movement for India's independence from the British Empire. He organised non-violent protests and he became very popular with the Indian people - they called him 'Bapu', which means 'father'.

The **Salt March** in 1930 was one of Gandhi's most successful protests. The British put a tax on salt, so

Gandhi walked three hundred kilometres to the sea to make his own salt and thousands of people joined him.

In 1947, Britain proposed the formation of two new independent countries: India and Pakistan. The plan to divide India was very unpopular and there were violent protests. Gandhi didn't agree with the plan but he tried to bring peace. A Hindu nationalist assassinated him in Delhi on 30th January 1948.



Gandhi's Views On Nonviolence

I am not a visionary. I claim to be practical idealist. The religion of nonviolence is not meant merely for saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Nonviolence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law-to the strength of the spirit. I have therefore ventured¹ to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For satyagraha and its off-shoots, non-co-operation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. The rishis², who discovered the law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. They were themselves greater warriors than Wellington. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness and taught a weary³ world that its salvation lay not through violence but through nonviolence.

Young India, 11-8-1920

Vocabulary

ventured: azzardato.

rishis: i compositori degli antichi libri Veda.

weary: stanco.