Part 1: International relations from 1945 to nowadays.

Chapter 1: The United Kingdom and decolonization.

Source 1: The British Empire in 1939

Source 2: Timeline

Changing times: decolonisation
I A lot of movements in favor of decolonization

A. The impact of the WWII

The Second world war weakened old European colonial powers, as the United Kingdom and France. They lost their prestige: France, Belgium, Netherlands knew a humiliating defeat in 1940, then the German occupation. In Asia, the Japanese invited peoples to unite against the white colonizers and appeared as liberators. Altogether, colonies however remained faithful to their metropolis: the United Kingdom was able to count on them militarily and economically, whereas the French Empire joined de Gaulle. At the end of the war, colonies hoped to obtain an improvement of their fate. Having fought against the ideas of the Nazism and for the freedom of peoples of Europe, peoples of colonial empires hope for an improvement of their fate and for a projection towards autonomy, otherwise independence.

However, all the colonizing countries do not react in the same way:
- England agrees to pursue emancipation of its colonies towards the self government => progressive policies of access to independence and an integration in the Commonwealth.
- the Belgians and the Portuguese did not intend to modify their policies in colonies which did not seem to them threatened
- Netherlands set up a sort of partnership with overseas territories but the system remains far different from the English Commonwealth.
France conceives its colonial Empire as a means to take back its rank in the world after WWII. The French positions go to the direction of an intensification of the unitarian links with the metropolis, to face the double challenge of the threats of internationalization of the colonial question and the internal questionings within empire.

B. Development of Nationalists movements

Source 1: When colonized Nations band\(^1\) together:
Whereas the great bulk\(^2\) of the African continent has been carved out arbitrarily to the detriment of the indigenous African peoples by European Imperialists, namely: Britain, France, Belgium, Spain, Italy and Portugal.
(2) Whereas in this process of colonization, two groups of colonial territories have emerged, to wit\(^3\):
(a) Those territories where indigenous Africans are dominated by foreigners who have their seats of authority in foreign lands, for example, French West Africa, French Equatorial Africa, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Belgian Congo, Portuguese Guinea, Basutoland, Swaziland and Bechuanaland.
(b) Those where indigenous Africans are dominated and oppressed by foreigners who have settled permanently in Africa and who regard the position of Africa under their sway\(^4\) as belonging more to them than to the Africa, e.g. Kenya, Union of South Africa, Algeria, Rhodesia, Angola and Mozambique.

[...]
(4) Whereas all African peoples everywhere strongly deplore the economic exploitation of African peoples by imperialist countries thus reducing Africans to poverty in the midst of plenty\(^5\).
(6) Whereas fundamental human rights, freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of movement, freedom of worship, freedom to live a full and abundant life [...], are denied to Africans through the activities of imperialists.[...]

Be it resolved and it is hereby\(^6\) resolved [...]:
1. That the All-African People's Conference vehemently condemns colonialism and imperialism in whatever shape or form these evils are perpetuated.
2. That the political and economic exploitation of Africans by imperialist Europeans should cease forthwith\(^7\).
3. That the use of African manpower in the nefarious\(^8\) game of power politics by imperialists should be a thing of the past.
4. That independent African States should pursue in their international policy principles which will expedite and accelerate the independence and sovereignty of all dependent and colonial African territories.
5. That fundamental human rights be extended to all men and women in Africa and that the rights of indigenous Africans to the fullest use of their lands be respected and preserved.[...]
7. That independent African states ensure that fundamental human rights and universal adult franchise are fully extended to everyone within their states as an example to imperial nations who abuse and ignore the extension of those rights to Africans.[...]
10. That the All-African People's Conference in Accra declares its full support to all fighters for freedom in Africa, to all those who resort to peaceful means of non-violence and civil disobedience, as well as to all those who are compelled to retaliate against violence to attain national independence and freedom for the people. Where such retaliation becomes necessary, the Conference condemns all legislations which consider those who fight for their independence and freedom as ordinary criminals.


Source 2: Quit India - Mahatma Gandhi, August \(^8\)th, 1942

Before you discuss the resolution, let me place before you one or two things, I want you to understand two things very clearly and to consider them from the same point of view from which I am placing them before you. I ask you to consider it from my point of view, because if you approve of it, you will be enjoined to carry out all I say. It will be a great responsibility. [...]

\(^1\) Grouper, faire une bande
\(^2\) masse
\(^3\) to wit = à savoir
\(^4\) emprise
\(^5\) in the midst of = in the middle of
\(^6\) par la présente
\(^7\) immediatly
\(^8\) infâme
Let me, however, hasten to assure that I am the same Gandhi as I was in 1920. I have not changed in any fundamental respect. I attach the same importance to non-violence that I did then. If at all, my emphasis on it has grown stronger. There is no real contradiction between the present resolution and my previous writings and utterances.[…]

Let me explain my position clearly. God has vouchsafed to me a priceless gift in the weapon of Ahimsa. I and my Ahimsa are on our trail today. If in the present crisis, when the earth is being scorched by the flames of Himsa and crying for deliverance, I failed to make use of the God given talent, God will not forgive me and I shall be judged un-wrongly of the great gift. I must act now. I may not hesitate and merely look on, when Russia and China are threatened.

Ours is not a drive for power, but purely a non-violent fight for India's independence. In a violent struggle, a successful general has been often known to effect a military coup and to set up a dictatorship. But under the Congress scheme of things, essentially non-violent as it is, there can be no room for dictatorship. A non-violent soldier of freedom will covet nothing for himself, he fights only for the freedom of his country. […] The power, when it comes, will belong to the people of India, and it will be for them to decide to whom it placed in the entrusted. […]

I believe that in the history of the world, there has not been a more genuinely democratic struggle for freedom than ours. […] In the democracy which I have envisaged, a democracy established by non-violence, there will be equal freedom for all. Everybody will be his own master. It is to join a struggle for such democracy that I invite you today. Once you realize this you will forget the differences between the Hindus and Muslims, and think of yourselves as Indians only, engaged in the common struggle for independence.

Then, there is the question of your attitude towards the British. I have noticed that there is hatred towards the British among the people. The people say they are disgusted with their behaviour. The people make no distinction between British imperialism and the British people. To them, the two are one. This hatred would even make them welcome the Japanese. It is most dangerous. It means that they will exchange one slavery for another. We must get rid of this feeling. Our quarrel is not with the British people, we fight their imperialism. The proposal for the withdrawal of British power did not come out of anger. It came to enable India to play its due part at the present critical juncture. It is not a happy position for a big country like India to be merely helping with money and material obtained willy-nilly from her while the United Nations are conducting the war. We cannot evoke the true spirit of sacrifice and velour, so long as we are not free. I know the British Government will not be able to withhold freedom from us, when we have made enough self-sacrifice. We must, therefore, purge ourselves of hatred. […] At a time when I may have to launch the biggest struggle of my life, I may not harbour hatred against anybody.

Questions:
1. Which are the criticisms made by these men against colonial system?
2. Of Which principles do they claim implementation? What ca you deduce about their education?
3. How do you name these groups (try to give a definition)?

C. International pressure

There are two countries: the USA and the USSR and an organization: the UN that refuse colonization and that make pressure on colonialist countries in order to give their independence to their colonies.

The USA:
- considered themselves as the first decolonized country and thus they should be an example for all the colonized country
- Roosevelt was a very fierce opponent to colonization
- Implementation of an American plan which imposes the entry in the independence of States entering the following categories:
  - The mandates which existed previously in the society of nations
  - The territories won to the enemy following the present war (the Italian colonies and territories annexed by Japan). In this, we find French Indochina, some part of India.
  - All others territories which would be voluntarily confided to the international administration

It was perceived by colonized peoples as the recognition of the "dependent" peoples to have self-determination.

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9 movement which consists in refraining from causing pain to any living creature.
10 has ordinarily been understood in India as harm done to others. However, it refers primarily to injuring oneself
11 application
12 farouche
The USSR condemns colonialism for ideological reasons: it is a form of dominion of the capitalist system, the system rejected by the communist USSR. It also expects from decolonization for a decline of the western camp and for a membership in communism of the peoples freed.

The UN, in his charter of creation in 1945, confirms the principle of the right of peoples to obtain their independence and to have self-determination notably by this sentence of their charter: "all the nations possessing a colonial domain will have to cooperate with peoples of these regions to make them able of receiving the status of national independence ". Dominated by both superpower, the UN supports emancipation of the dependent peoples by organizing the end of hostilities and transfers of sovereignty in countries wishing to reach the independence.

II Accession to independence :

A. The Indian case.


1. On the 15th March last, just before the despatch of the Cabinet Mission to India, Mr. Attlee, the British Prime Minister, used these words: “My colleagues are going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her to attain her freedom as speedily and fully as possible. What form of Government is to replace the present regime is for India to decide; but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith the machinery for making that decision . . . .I hope that the Indian people may elect to remain within the British Commonwealth. I am certain that she will find great advantages in doing so . . . .But if she does so elect, it must be by her own free will. The British Commonwealth and Empire is not bound together by chains of external compulsion. It is a free association of free peoples. If, on the other hand, she elects for independence, in our view she has a right to do so. It will be for us to help to make the transition as smooth and easy as possible.”

2. Charged in these historic words, we-the Cabinet Ministers and the Viceroy-have done our utmost to assist the two main political parties to reach agreement upon the fundamental issue of the unity or division of India. […]

3. […]We have endeavoured […] to recommend a solution which will lead to a practicable way of governing the India of the future, and will give a sound basis for defence and a good opportunity for progress in the social, political and economic field. […]


Source 2 : Map of the partition of India 1947 :

Source 3: External pressure

Information: In the foreground: Gandhi, behind him Sir Stafford Cripps, member of the Cabinet Mission sent to India by the British Government.

Source 4: Speeches before Indian Independence

a) Speech from Prime Minister Clement Attlee on February 20th 1947.

It has long been the policy of successive British Governments to work toward the realization of self-governement in India. In pursuance of this policy an increasing measure of responsibility has been devolved on Indians and today the civil administration and the Indian Armed Forces rely to a very large extent on Indian civilians and officers. [...] His Majesty's government wish to make it clear that it is their definite intention to take the necessary steps to effect the transference of power into Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948.

SOURCE: *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates* [House of Commons], 5th Series, Vol. 433, cols. 1395-1398

b) Speech from Winston Churchill, former primer minister on March 6th 1947.

[...] This afternoon we begin a new chapter in our relations across the floor of the House in regard to the Indian problem. We on this side of the House have, for some time, made it clear that the sole responsibility for the control of India’s affairs rests, of course, with His Majesty's government. We have criticized their actions in various ways but this is the first time we have felt it our duty as the official Opposition to express our dissent by a formal vote. [...]  

SOURCE: *Hansard’s Parliamentary Debates* [House of Commons], 5th Series, Vol. 434, cols. 663-678

c) Speech from Jawaharlal Nehru India’s first Prime minister midnight on August 14th 1947.

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. [...] Freedom and power bring responsibility. That responsibility rests upon this Assembly, a sovereign body representing the sovereign people of India. [...]  

Source 5: Timeline

1919-Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms (implemented in 1921). A step to self-government in India within the Empire.
1920-Gandhi launches a non-violent, non-cooperation movement, or Satyagraha, against the British for a free India.
1922- Gandhi suspends non-cooperation movement and is imprisoned.
1929-Congress calls for full independence.
1930-Dr. Allama Iqbal, a poet-politician, calls for a separate homeland for the Muslims at the Allahabad session of the Muslim League. Gandhi starts Civil Disobedience Movement against the Salt Laws by which the British had a monopoly over production and sale of salt.
1930-31-The Round Table conferences, set up to consider Dominion status for India. They fail because of non-attendance by the Congress and because Gandhi, who does attend, claims he is the only representative of all of India.
1940-Jinnah calls for establishment of Pakistan in an independent and partitioned India.
1942-Cripps Mission to India, to conduct negotiations between all political parties and to set up a cabinet government. Congress adopts Quit India Resolution, to rid India of British rule. Congress leaders arrested for obstructing war effort.
1944-Gandhi released from prison. Unsuccessful Gandhi-Jinnah talks, but Muslims see this as an acknowledgment that Jinnah represents all Indian Muslims.
1945-The new Labour Government in Britain decides India is strategically indefensible and begins to prepare for Indian independence. Direct Action Day riots convince British that Partition is inevitable.
1946-Muslim League participates in Interim Government that is set up according to the Cabinet Mission Plan.
1947-Announcement of Lord Mountbatten's plan for partition of India, 3 June. Partition of India and Pakistan, 15 August. Radcliffe Award of boundaries of the nations, 16 August.

Recommendation: you must know the timeline.
1. Which are the actions led by the Indian nationalists to obtain the independence? Quote three symbolic figures biographies (you will learn them).
2. On which mode is made the independence of India? How do the British react?
3. Which are the political, economic and social consequences of the independence of the Indian Empire?
4. Find other examples of negotiated independence in the British empire. Are there examples of war in colonies?

B. The role of the Commonwealth of Nations.
Source 2: The commonwealth, a link with former colonies:
Two major organizations helped ease the transition to the post-colonial world: the British Commonwealth and the French Union. Both were intended to provide a permanent bond between the former metropolitan power and its ex-colonies. [...] The Commonwealth has been defined as “a voluntary association of extremely diverse, fully sovereign states, which are internationally equal but which have in common a historical background with a period of British rule and a political evolution which led up to responsible government.” [...] The modern Commonwealth produced any specifically defined purpose. [...] It was a looser association of nation states in which each had other commitments and involvements. But the essential point was that the Commonwealth survived because it was no longer British.

Extract from Stephen J. Lee, Aspects of British political history 1914-1995, chapter 20: British Empire and Commonwealth

Question: Explain the functioning of the British Commonwealth and its role. (recommendation: you should know the map)