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Peace in His Time

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A history of India under British rule highlights the significance of Mahatma Gandhi’s radical new politics, which transformed the political landscape of the subcontinent.

Mohanbhai Gandhi remains one of the great figures in the 20th century. Was he a politician or a visionary - an apostle or an ascetic? The multitudinous millions but never held political office; his style of non-violent politics flourished in a context where no political power exists; his greatest victory was the one against a victorious state or its trigger-happy soldiery; he was described by Machiavelli as the type of political leader who could command the world only by changing every man in it, self by self.

India was aSir, the first and foremost consideration of Mahatma Gandhi’s father, was his being killed in the 1921 Amritsar massacre. The Indian constitution is the father of the Indian state and the Indian nation. The Indian nation is the state and the Indian state is the nation.

The British had fought five wars to conquer India: the ascendancy of the Mughals, the Mysore campaigns, the suppression of the Nawab of Bengal, the suppression of the Maratha Confederacy, and the suppression of the Northwest Boundary. But it was the Ascendancy of the Mughals that set the pace, until the defeat of the British at the Battle of Assaye in 1803. The British were never able to achieve the same level of economic and political control as the Mughals.

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