

**Q.1) "The early phase of the national movement laid the foundation of Indian nationalism, but failed to mobilise the masses." Discuss. (150 words, 10Marks)**

### Introduction

The early nationalists believed in constitutional methods and elite-led reform. As Bipan Chandra notes, "they were pioneers who sowed the seeds of Indian nationalism." Yet, their influence remained limited among the broader masses.

### Body

#### Laying the Foundation of Indian Nationalism

- 1. Articulation of Indian interests:** Voiced economic and political grievances.  
Example: Dadabhai Naoroji highlighted the drain of wealth theory.
- 2. Formation of political platforms:** INC (1885) offered an all-India forum.  
Example: Moderates petitioned for civil rights and representation.
- 3. Development of political consciousness:** Spread of nationalist thought among educated Indians.  
Example: Political associations in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras increased.
- 4. Promotion of secular politics:** Leaders sought unity across religion and region.  
Example: Surendranath Banerjee's appeals cut across communal lines.
- 5. Economic critique of colonialism:** Fostering anti-colonial understanding.  
Example: R.C. Dutt's writings exposed British exploitation.

#### Limited Mass Mobilisation

- 1. Urban and elite focus:** Movement remained confined to educated elites.  
Example: Few links with rural, tribal, or working-class communities.
- 2. Lack of vernacular reach:** Use of English limited appeal to common masses.  
Example: Speeches and resolutions were inaccessible to most Indians.
- 3. Faith in British justice:** Reliance on petitions and constitutional methods.  
Example: Demands were framed within loyalty to the British Crown.
- 4. Absence of agitational politics:** No attempts at mass-based civil disobedience.  
Example: Avoidance of strikes, protests, or direct confrontation.
- 5. Neglect of peasant and worker issues:** Agrarian distress overlooked.  
Example: No organized effort to address rural debt or tenant rights.

### Conclusion

The early nationalists created the intellectual and organizational groundwork for the independence struggle, but mass mobilisation awaited the assertive and inclusive politics of the 20th century. As Judith Brown observed, *"It was Gandhi who took nationalism to the villages."*

**Q.2) "The Swadeshi Movement marked a significant evolution in the methods and ideology of India's freedom struggle." Examine. (150 words, 10Marks)**

### Introduction

The Swadeshi Movement, emerging in response to the 1905 Bengal partition, represented a turning point in nationalist strategy. As Sumit Sarkar notes, it combined economic action with cultural resurgence.

### Body

#### Evolution in Methods

1. **Boycott of foreign goods:** Asserted economic nationalism as political protest.  
Example: British cloth and salt were publicly burned.
2. **Promotion of indigenous industries:** Encouraged self-reliance through swadeshi products.  
Example: Nationalist entrepreneurs established textile mills and soap factories.
3. **Mass mobilisation and street politics:** Extended the movement to wider society.  
Example: Students, women, and artisans joined processions and protests.
4. **Use of cultural revivalism:** Tapped into traditional symbols and festivals.  
Example: Ganesh Utsav and Shivaji Jayanti were politicised in Maharashtra.
5. **Creation of parallel institutions:** Set up national schools and arbitration courts.  
Example: Bengal National College under Aurobindo Ghosh.

#### Evolution in Ideology

1. **Assertive nationalism:** Marked shift from petition to protest.  
Example: Bal Gangadhar Tilak's advocacy for Swaraj as birthright.
2. **Emphasis on self-sacrifice:** Nationalism became a moral and spiritual mission.  
Example: Volunteers vowed poverty and service to the cause.
3. **Critique of Westernisation:** Advocated cultural decolonisation.  
Example: Promotion of khadi and traditional Indian knowledge.
4. **Growth of regional identity within nationalism:** Regional pride aligned with national aims.  
Example: Bengali literature and art flourished as tools of resistance.
5. **Rise of militant nationalism:** Inspired early revolutionary activities.  
Example: Anushilan Samiti's armed wing emerged in Bengal.

### Conclusion

The Swadeshi Movement was a crucible where nationalist thought and mass politics fused. It laid the groundwork for future civil disobedience and revolutionary fervour, becoming a reference point for Gandhi and others.

**Q.3) "Gandhiji introduced a new moral and strategic dimension to the freedom struggle after 1915." Elaborate. (150 words, 10Marks)**

### Introduction

Gandhiji's return from South Africa in 1915 transformed Indian politics. Judith Brown notes, "He moralised Indian nationalism and made it mass-based."

## Body

### Moral Transformation

1. **Ahimsa and Satyagraha:** Ethical resistance became political strategy.  
Example: Champaran Satyagraha used non-violence to win peasant rights.
2. **Elevating suffering as power:** Dignified sacrifice over violent confrontation.  
Example: Non-cooperation involved jail bhara and social ostracism.
3. **Moral appeal to British conscience:** Shamed the oppressor rather than attacking.  
Example: Gandhi's letters to the Viceroy during Salt March.
4. **Social reform as political duty:** Fought untouchability and promoted Hindu-Muslim unity.  
Example: Harijan Sevak Sangh and Khilafat collaboration.
5. **Self-restraint and ethical leadership:** Personal example over populist rhetoric.  
Example: Gandhi's austere lifestyle and celibacy.

### Strategic Transformation

1. **Mass mobilisation from below:** Took politics to villages and towns.  
Example: Bardoli Satyagraha saw peasant participation under Patel.
2. **Boycott and constructive programmes:** Combined resistance with rebuilding.  
Example: Spinning khadi, promoting panchayats, and national education.
3. **Innovative protest techniques:** Salt March, Dandi walk, and hartals were symbolic and direct.  
Example: Dandi March garnered international attention.
4. **Timing and control of agitation:** Calibrated campaigns to sustain pressure.  
Example: Gandhi called off Non-Cooperation after Chauri Chaura violence.
5. **Appeal across classes and castes:** Built broad coalitions through inclusive messaging.  
Example: Support from peasants, workers, students, and business class.

## Conclusion

Gandhi's leadership brought ethical power and tactical depth to Indian nationalism. His fusion of morality and politics made him the architect of India's mass-based freedom movement.

**Q.4) "The 1940s witnessed unprecedented political turbulence, mass upheaval, and shifting colonial responses — all of which hastened the end of British rule." Analyse. (250 words, 15Marks)**

## Introduction

The 1940s were the most intense decade of British rule. As Percival Spear notes, "Events moved with the speed and inevitability of a tragedy." The empire was shaken by war, revolt, and negotiation.

## Body

### Political Turbulence

1. **Failure of constitutional talks:** Cripps Mission and Cabinet Mission failed to gain consensus.  
Example: Congress rejected Cripps' limited dominion proposal.
2. **Rise of communalism:** Muslim League's Pakistan demand gained traction.  
Example: Lahore Resolution (1940) formally demanded a separate nation.
3. **Changing leadership dynamics:** Internal shifts within Congress and League.  
Example: Subhas Bose left Congress to form INA; Jinnah emerged stronger.
4. **British political fatigue:** War and economy weakened imperial will.  
Example: Labour Party's rise and decolonisation sentiment in Britain.
5. **Polarisation post-war:** No shared vision for independent India.  
Example: Gandhi's call for unity versus League's Direct Action Day.

#### Mass Upheaval

1. **Quit India Movement (1942):** Mass civil resistance despite brutal repression.  
Example: Parallel governments formed in Satara and Tamluk.
2. **Indian National Army's offensive:** Symbolic impact despite military failure.  
Example: INA trials galvanised public opinion in 1945-46.
3. **Naval mutiny and strikes:** Discontent within British Indian forces.  
Example: 1946 Royal Indian Navy revolt shook British confidence.
4. **Famine and socio-economic crisis:** Bengal famine exposed colonial apathy.  
Example: Over 3 million deaths due to mismanagement and policy.
5. **Peasant and worker unrest:** Agrarian revolts in Telangana and Tebhaga.  
Example: Telangana movement combined class and anti-feudal struggle.

#### Colonial Responses

1. **Repression and conciliation:** Alternated between crackdown and dialogue.  
Example: Arrest of leaders in 1942 and Cabinet Mission in 1946.
2. **Plans for transfer of power:** Wavell Plan and Mountbatten's timetable.  
Example: June 3 Plan proposed partition and independence by August 1947.
3. **Partition and communal riots:** Breakdown of order hastened withdrawal.  
Example: Punjab and Bengal saw mass killings and displacement.
4. **Legislative and legal exit:** Indian Independence Act, 1947 formalised departure.  
Example: Dominion status granted; princely states left to accede.
5. **Loss of moral legitimacy:** Empire seen as morally bankrupt.  
Example: Atlee admitted in Parliament that India was ungovernable.

#### Conclusion

The 1940s were the final blow to British rule. Political deadlock, popular unrest, and changing geopolitics left Britain with no viable option but withdrawal. As Nehru wrote, "India was in revolt in every part."

**Q.5) "The Civil Disobedience Movement marked a qualitative shift in India's freedom struggle in terms of its strategy, social base, and British response." Critically analyse. (250 words, 15Marks)**

### Introduction

Launched in 1930 with the Salt March, the Civil Disobedience Movement signalled a new phase of mass struggle. Historian Judith Brown calls it "Gandhi's most complete campaign."

### Body

#### Strategic Shift

- 1. Symbolic defiance of unjust law:** Salt challenged the moral basis of colonial rule.  
Example: Dandi March inspired illegal salt production nationwide.
- 2. Decentralised participation:** Local actions amplified national message.  
Example: Salt satyagrahas in Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, and Orissa.
- 3. Boycott of institutions:** Refusal to pay taxes or attend courts.  
Example: Revenue refusals in UP and Bengal disrupted administration.
- 4. Parallel civil institutions:** Growth of indigenous governance mechanisms.  
Example: Congress committees took over dispute resolution in villages.
- 5. Negotiated truce strategy:** Gandhi-Irwin Pact showed readiness to compromise.  
Example: Truce secured release of political prisoners.

#### Social Base Expansion

- 1. Wider peasant participation:** Rural poor engaged with nationalist politics.  
Example: No-tax campaigns gained traction in Bihar and Andhra.
- 2. Women's visible role:** Joined marches, picketed shops, and made salt.  
Example: Sarojini Naidu led coastal protests with local women.
- 3. Business support:** Merchants endorsed boycott of British goods.  
Example: Indian chambers promoted swadeshi production.
- 4. Youth and students' involvement:** Educational boycott linked to activism.  
Example: Students joined protests, formed youth leagues.
- 5. Muslim participation varied:** Initial support but later withdrawal.  
Example: Jinnah distanced League; Khilafat spirit had faded.

#### British Response and Critique

- 1. Severe repression:** Lathi charges, jailings, censorship intensified.  
Example: Gandhi and Nehru imprisoned; Congress declared illegal.
- 2. Divide and negotiate tactic:** Strategy to fragment nationalist unity.  
Example: Communal Award divided electorate; Round Table Conferences stalled.
- 3. Limited constitutional concessions:** Offer of provincial autonomy in 1935.  
Example: Government of India Act gave indirect franchise but retained British control.
- 4. Critique of elitism:** Movement remained under Congress leadership.  
Example: Dalit voices like Ambedkar remained sceptical of Congress.
- 5. Inability to sustain momentum:** Movement faded post-1932 due to repression and internal differences.  
Example: Withdrawal after Gandhi-Irwin Pact faced criticism from radicals.

### Conclusion

The Civil Disobedience Movement deepened nationalism's roots and reshaped anti-colonial tactics. While limited in immediate gains, it transformed the movement's scale and tone. As *Pattabhi Sitaramayya* noted, "*Salt turned the tide.*"

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