

## **\*\*Indian Independence and Partition\*\***

### **\*\*Background\*\***

- India gained independence from British rule in August 1947.
- The Indian subcontinent was a patchwork of regional kingdoms with diverse religious and cultural practices.
- European powers colonized India from the 1500s, culminating in the British East India Company's rule.
- The British implemented indirect rule in princely states, allowing them sovereignty but demanding loyalty and tribute.

### **\*\*Divisions\*\***

- In the 19th century, the British categorized Indians by religious identity, exaggerating differences.
- Anti-colonial movements grew in the 20th century, culminating in India's independence in 1947.

### **\*\*Partition\*\***

- Political leaders disagreed on India's future: a united India or a two-nation division (Pakistan).
- The British hastily partitioned India into Hindu-majority India and Muslim-majority Pakistan.
- The boundary committee devised a border based on religious majorities, but also on other factors.
- Princely states chose to join either India or Pakistan, losing their sovereignty.

### **\*\*Migration\*\***

- After partition, millions of Hindus and Sikhs migrated to India, while Muslims migrated to Pakistan.
- Families were divided, and many made temporary moves that became permanent displacements.

### **\*\*Violence\*\***

- Radicalized groups and local militias massacred migrants, particularly in Punjab.
- Women suffered sexual violence and mutilation, with an estimated 100,000 kidnapped and forced into marriages.

### **\*\*Aftermath\*\***

- Partition displaced millions of people and created ongoing border disputes.
- East Pakistan seceded and became Bangladesh in 1971.
- The Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan continues today.
- The legacies of partition persist in the political formations and memories of divided families.