

1. The Haitian Revolution

<https://www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/haitian-revolution-1791-1804/>

In the 18th century, Saint Dominigue, as Haiti was then known, became France's wealthiest overseas colony, largely because of its production of sugar, coffee, indigo, and cotton generated by an enslaved labor force. When the French Revolution broke out in 1789 there were five distinct sets of interest groups in the colony. There were white planters—who owned the plantations and the slaves—and *petit blancs*, who were artisans, [shop keepers](#) and [teachers](#). Some of them also owned a few slaves. Together they numbered 40,000 of the colony's residents. Despite their calls for independence, both the planters and *petit blancs* remained committed to the institution of slavery.

The three remaining groups were of African descent: those who were free, those who were slaves, and those who had run away. There were about 30,000 free black people in 1789. Half of them were mulatto and often they were wealthier than the *petit blancs*. The slave population was close to 500,000. The runaway slaves were called maroons; they had retreated deep into the mountains of Saint Dominigue and lived off subsistence farming. Haiti had a history of slave rebellions; the slaves were never willing to submit to their status and with their strength in numbers (10 to 1) colonial officials and planters did all that was possible to control them.

Inspired by events in France, a number of Haitian-born revolutionary movements emerged simultaneously. They used as their inspiration the French Revolution's "Declaration of the Rights of Man." The General Assembly in Paris responded by enacting legislation which gave the various colonies some autonomy at the local level. This legislation, promulgated in Paris to keep Saint Dominigue in the colonial empire, instead generated a three-sided civil war between the planters, free blacks and the *petit blancs*. However, all three groups would be challenged by the enslaved black majority which was also influenced and inspired by events in France.

Led by former slave [Toussaint l'Overture](#), the enslaved would act first, rebelling against the planters on August 21, 1791. By 1792 they controlled a third of the island. Despite reinforcements from France, the area of the colony held by the rebels grew as did the violence on both sides. Before the fighting ended 100,000 of the 500,000 blacks and 24,000 of the 40,000 whites were killed. Nonetheless the former slaves managed to stave off both the French forces and the British who arrived in 1793 to conquer the colony, and who withdrew in 1798 after a series of defeats by l'Overture's forces. By 1801 l'Overture expanded the revolution beyond Haiti, conquering the neighboring [Spanish](#) colony of Santo Domingo (present-day [Dominican Republic](#)). He abolished slavery in the Spanish-speaking colony and declared himself Governor-General for life over the entire island of Hispaniola.

Napoleon Bonaparte, now the ruler of France, dispatched 43,000 French troops to capture l'Overture and restore both French rule and slavery. l'Overture was taken and sent to France where he died in prison in 1803. [Jean-Jacques Dessalines](#), one of l'Overture's generals and himself a former slave, led the revolutionaries at the Battle of Vertieres on November 18, 1803 where the French forces were defeated. On January 1, 1804, Dessalines declared the nation independent and renamed it Haiti.

2. Indian Rebellion of 1857

The **Indian Rebellion of 1857** was a major, but ultimately unsuccessful, uprising in India in 1857–58 against [the rule](#) of the [British East India Company](#), which functioned as a sovereign power on behalf of the [British Crown](#).^{[4][5]} The rebellion began on 10 May 1857 in the form of a [mutiny](#) of [sepoys](#) of the Company's army in the [garrison town](#) of [Meerut](#), 40 mi (64 km) northeast of Delhi. It then erupted into other mutinies and civilian rebellions chiefly in the [upper Gangetic plain](#) and [central India](#),^{[a][6][b][7]} though incidents of revolt also occurred farther north and east.^{[c][8]} The rebellion posed a considerable threat to British power in that region,^{[d][9]} and was contained only with the rebels' defeat in [Gwalior](#) on 20 June 1858.^[10] Its [name is contested](#), and it is variously described as the **Sepoy Mutiny**, the **Indian Mutiny**, the **Great Rebellion**, the **Revolt of 1857**, the **Indian Insurrection**, and the **First War of Independence**.^{[e][11]}

The Indian rebellion was fed by resentments born of diverse perceptions, including invasive British-style social reforms, harsh land taxes, summary treatment of some rich landowners and princes,^{[12][13]} as well as scepticism about the improvements brought about by British rule.^{[f][14]} Many Indians rose against the British; however, many also fought for the British, and the majority remained seemingly compliant to British rule.^{[g][14]} Violence, which sometimes betrayed exceptional cruelty, was inflicted on both sides, on British officers, and civilians, including women and children, by the rebels, and on the rebels, and their supporters, including sometimes entire villages, by British reprisals; the cities of Delhi and [Lucknow](#) were laid waste in the fighting and the British retaliation.^{[h][14]}

In some regions, most notably in Awadh, the rebellion took on the attributes of a patriotic revolt against British oppression.^{[i][6]} However, the rebel leaders proclaimed no articles of faith that presaged a new [political system](#).^{[k][17]} Even so, the rebellion proved to be an important watershed in [Indian](#) and [British Empire](#) history.^{[l][11][18]} It led to the dissolution of the East India Company, and forced the British to reorganize the army, the financial system, and the administration in India, through passage of the [Government of India Act 1858](#).^[19] India was thereafter administered directly by the British government in the new [British Raj](#).^[15] On 1 November 1858, [Queen Victoria](#) issued a proclamation to Indians, which while lacking the authority of a constitutional provision,^{[m][20]} promised rights similar to those of other British subjects.^{[n][o][21]} In the following decades, when admission to these rights was not always forthcoming, Indians were pointedly refer to the Queen's proclamation in growing avowals of a new nationalism.^{[p] [q][23]}

3. 1929 Women's War (Nigeria)

<https://www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/aba-womens-riots-november-december-1929/>

The “riots” or the war, led by women in the provinces of Calabar and Owerri in southeastern [Nigeria](#) in November and December of 1929, became known as the “Aba Women’s Riots of 1929” in [British](#) colonial history, or as the “Women’s War” in Igbo history. Thousands of Igbo women organized a massive [revolt](#) against the policies imposed by British colonial administrators in southeastern Nigeria, touching off the most serious challenge to British rule in the history of the colony. The “Women’s War” took months for the government to suppress and became a historic example of feminist and anti-colonial protest.

The roots of the riots evolved from January 1, 1914, when the first Nigerian colonial governor, Lord Lugard, instituted the system of indirect rule in Southern Nigeria. Under this plan British administrators would rule locally through “warrant chiefs,” essentially Igbo individuals appointed by the governor. Traditionally Igbo chiefs had been elected.

Within a few years the appointed warrant chiefs became increasingly oppressive. They seized property, imposed draconian local regulations, and began imprisoning anyone who openly criticized them. Although much of the anger was directed against the warrant chiefs, most Nigerians knew the source of their power, British colonial administrators. Colonial administrators added to the local sense of grievance when they announced plans to impose special taxes on the Igbo market women. These women were responsible for supplying the food to the growing urban populations in Calabar, Owerri, and other Nigerian cities. They feared the taxes would drive many of the market women out of business and seriously disrupt the supply of food and non-perishable goods available to the populace.

In November of 1929, thousands of Igbo women congregated at the Native Administration centers in Calabar and Owerri as well as smaller towns to protest both the warrant chiefs and the taxes on the market women. Using the traditional practice of censoring men through all night song and dance ridicule (often called “sitting on a man”), the women chanted and danced, and in some locations forced warrant chiefs to resign their positions. The women also attacked [European](#) owned stores and Barclays Bank and broke into prisons and released prisoners. They also attacked Native Courts run by colonial officials, burning many of them to the ground. Colonial Police and troops were called in. They fired into the crowds that had gathered at Calabar and Owerri, killing more than 50 women and wounding over 50 others. During the two month “war” at least 25,000 Igbo women were involved in protests against British officials.

The Aba Women’s war prompted colonial authorities to drop their plans to impose a tax on the market women, and to curb the power of the warrant chiefs. The women’s uprising is seen as the first major challenge to British authority in Nigeria and West [Africa](#) during the colonial period.

4. Djamilah Bouhired, Member of the Algerian FLN

<https://sheroesofhistory.wordpress.com/2014/10/30/djamila-bouhired/>

Djamila was born in Al-Qasaba neighbourhood in colonial Algeria in 1935 to an Algerian father and a Tunisian mother. Her family was a middle-class family and she was the only daughter amongst seven sons.

Djamila started her national struggle against the French colonisation from a very young age. She went to a French school where they were forced to sing the anthem 'France is our Mother' whereas Djamila would say instead 'Algeria is our Mother', which ended up in her getting punished.

Aged twenty Djamila joined the [Algerian National Liberation Front](#) (FLN) when the revolution broke in 1954, and she was the first to volunteer to plant bombs in roads used by French military occupation. Algerian women played a major role in fighting against the French colonial regime; women were either involved in providing support for the fighters or fought in armed operations.

Djamila was involved in the battle for Algiers which occurred in 1957. Unfortunately, on April 9, 1957 she was arrested by the French occupation. The French militants brutally tortured her hoping that she would reveal information about FLN leader Yasif Saadi, but she did not and for that reason she was sentenced to death.

Her imprisonment drew a lot of regional and international media attention. Many people marched the streets chanting for her release, and presidents such as [Jamal Abed Al Nasser](#) called for her freedom. Following that pressure on the colonial French regime, her sentence was reduced to life imprisonment. She was released in 1962 and then married her French lawyer Jacques Vergès, in 1965, and had two children Lias and Maryam. They both worked together on a magazine called *Revolution Africaine*, which focused on African nationalist movements

Djamila Bouhired was an important part in the struggle for the freedom of Algeria, and is still a very significant figure that calls for protests to improve legal, social, political and economic situations of women.

Check out the film *Battle of Algiers*.

5. Ho Chi Minh, leader of the Vietnamese nationalist movement

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/ho_chi_minh.shtml

Ho Chi Minh led the Vietnamese nationalist movement for more than three decades, fighting first against the Japanese, then the French colonial power and then the US-backed South Vietnamese. He was President of North Vietnam from 1954 until his death.

Ho Chi Minh (originally Nguyen That Thanh) was born on 19 May 1890 in Hoang Tru in central Vietnam. Vietnam was then a French colony, known as French Indo-China, but under the nominal rule of an emperor. Ho's father worked at the imperial court but was dismissed for criticising the French colonial power.

In 1911, Ho took a job on a French ship and travelled widely. He lived in London and Paris, and was a founding member of the French communist party. In 1923, he visited Moscow for training at Comintern, an organisation created by Lenin to promote worldwide revolution. He travelled to southern China to organise a revolutionary movement among Vietnamese exiles, and in 1930 founded the Indo-Chinese Communist Party (ICP). He spent the 1930s in the Soviet Union and China.

After the Japanese invasion of Indo-China in 1941, Ho returned home and founded the Viet Minh, a communist-dominated independence movement, to fight the Japanese. He adopted the name Ho Chi Minh, meaning 'Bringer of Light'.

At the end of World War Two the Viet Minh announced Vietnamese independence. The French refused to relinquish their colony and in 1946, war broke out. After eight years of war, the French were forced to agree to peace talks in Geneva. The country was split into a communist north and non-communist south and Ho became president of North Vietnam. He was determined to reunite Vietnam under communist rule.

By the early 1960s, North Vietnamese-backed guerrillas, the Vietcong, were attacking the South Vietnamese government. Fearing the spread of communism, the United States provided increasing levels of support to South Vietnam. By 1965, large numbers of American troops were arriving and the fighting escalated into a major conflict.

Ho Chi Minh was in poor health from the mid-1960s and died on 2 September 1969. When the Communists took the South Vietnamese capital Saigon in 1975 they renamed it Ho Chi Minh City in his honour.

6.

<https://www.inc.in/en/leadership/past-party-president/mrs-sarojini-naidu>

A poet, women's rights activist and a freedom fighter, Sarojini Naidu is recognised and remembered for her multi-faceted contribution to Indian society and the freedom movement. She was born on 13 February 1879 in Hyderabad. She studied initially in the University of Madras and completed her higher studies from Kings College London and Girton College, Cambridge.

Sarojini Naidu joined the Indian National Movement in the wake of the 1905 partition of Bengal. Her interactions with stalwarts of the Indian Independence Movement like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi inspired her to actively work towards the cause of freedom and social development. Between 1915 and 18, she delivered lectures on social welfare, women's empowerment and nationalism in various parts of the country. She helped to establish the Women's Indian Association in 1917. The same year, along with Annie Besant she went to London to represent the case for women's franchise before the Joint Select Committee. As a part of her struggle to free India from British rule, she went to London in 1919 as a part of the All India Home Rule League. In 1920, she returned to join Gandhi ji's Satyagraha Movement amidst the growing national movement.

Her increasing political prominence along with her vocal opinions on the colonial government and active involvement in the freedom movement led to her arrest on several occasions. Sarojini Naidu was jailed in 1930 first for her participation in the Salt Satyagraha where the protesters were subjected to the brutal repression by the British. In 1931, she participated in the round-table conference with Gandhi and Madan Mohan Malaviya. She was later arrested again in 1932 and 1942 when she spent 21 months in jail.

Sarojini Naidu was elected as the President of the Indian National Congress Party in 1925, the first ever woman to assume that position. In an expression of hope and courage, she said, "In the battle for liberty, fear is one unforgivable treachery and despair, the one unforgivable sin". She believed in the Gandhian philosophy of non-violence and was instrumental in disseminating Gandhian principles to the rest of the world. She was appointed the governor of Uttar Pradesh after India achieved independence in 1947. She was India's first woman governor and remained in that position till her death in 1949.