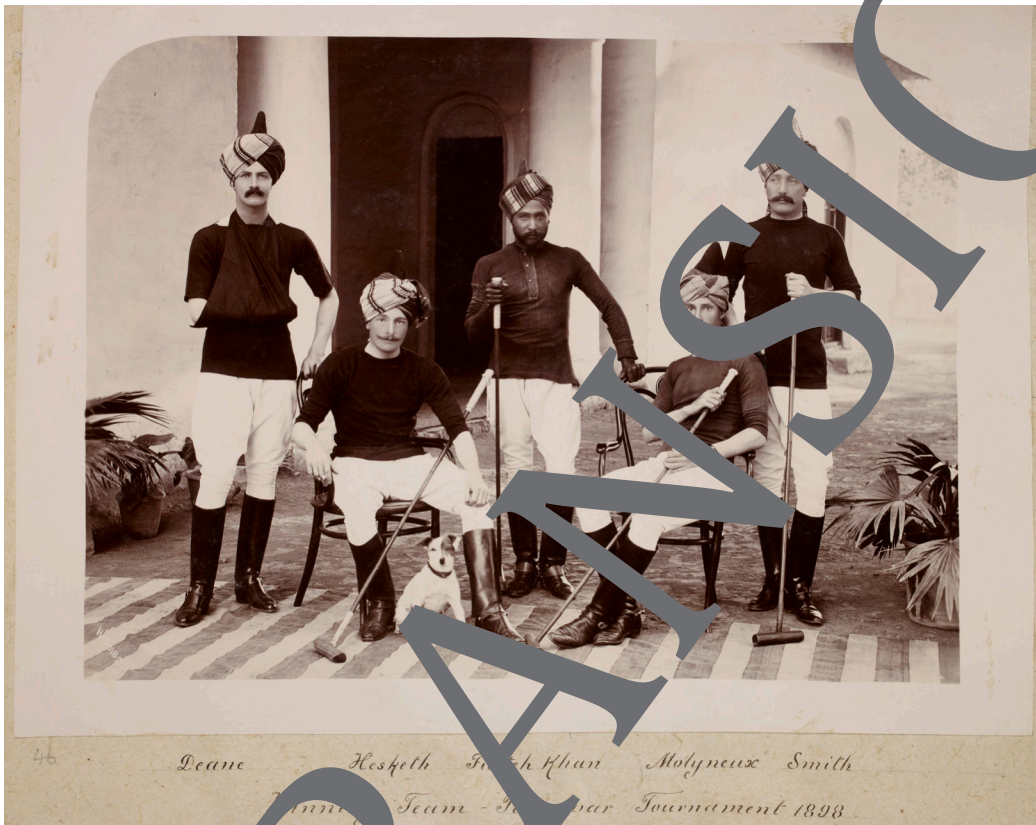


II.G.16

The Other Side of Modernity

The British Empire and the After Effects of Colonialism in British Literature

nach einer Idee von Dr. Ingmar Probst



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Im Mittelpunkt der Unterrichtsreihe steht die Ausbildung interkultureller Kompetenzen mit dem Ziel, den Lernenden soziale und historische Kontexte der anglophonen Welt nahezubringen, sie durch Perspektivwechsel in ihrer Selbst- und Fremdwahrnehmung zu schulen und ihre interkulturelle Handlungsfähigkeit zu erweitern.

KOMPETENZBEFELD

Klassenstufe: 10–12

Dauer: 11 Unterrichtsstunden

Inhaltliche Kompetenzen: Erschließung des gesellschaftlichen und historischen Kontextes der gesamten anglophonen Welt der Gegenwart, Auseinandersetzung mit Texten des Themenkomplex „British Empire“

Thematische Bereiche: Contemporary History/ „Landeskunde“

Auf einen Blick

1./2. Stunde

Thema: Images of The British Empire

- M 1 A map of the British Empire / visueller Einstieg in das Thema
- M 2a A short history of the British Empire – The First British Empire/ arbeitsteilige Gruppenarbeit, Erkennen historischer Entwicklungen; Schaffung von Basiswissen
- M 2b A short history of the British Empire – The Second British Empire / arbeitsteilige Gruppenarbeit, Erkennen historischer Entwicklungen; Schaffung von Basiswissen
- M 2c A short history of the British Empire – From Empire to Commonwealth / arbeitsteilige Gruppenarbeit, Erkennen historischer Entwicklungen; Schaffung von Basiswissen
- M 2d A short history of the British Empire – The Commonwealth today / arbeitsteilige Gruppenarbeit, Erkennen historischer Entwicklungen; Schaffung von Basiswissen
- M 3 A short history of the British Empire – Summary / Zusammenfassung in Gruppenarbeit

3./4. Stunde

Thema: The rise of the British Empire – First encounters

- M 4 Theodore de Bry, *The Landings of Columbus, 1492* / Einstieg in die Thematik, Bildanalyse
- M 5 Daniel Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* / Erarbeiten einer europäisch-kolonisierenden Perspektive erster Begegnungen
- M 6 Chinua Achebe, *Coming of Age Missionaries* / Erarbeiten einer außereuropäisch-kolonisierenden Perspektive erster Kontakte

5./6. Stunde

Thema: The rise of the Empire – Implementation of the English language

- M 1 Different views on the importance of the English language / Diskussion unterschiedlicher Ansichten zur Durchsetzung der englischen Sprache in Kolonien; Herausarbeiten möglicher interkultureller Schwierigkeiten

7./8. Stunde

Thema: The fall of the Empire – Cross-cultural experiences

M 8 **George Orwell, Shooting an Elephant, 1936** / Erarbeitung und Diskussion des Textes

M 9 **British rule in India (The Raj) – Bus stop activity** / Gruppenarbeit und Erarbeitung der britischen Herrschaft in Indien

9./10. Stunde

Thema: The fall of the Empire – Decolonization

M 10 **A role play to discuss *The Raj*** / Vorbereitung eines Rollenspiels / Präsentation von Diskussionsrunden

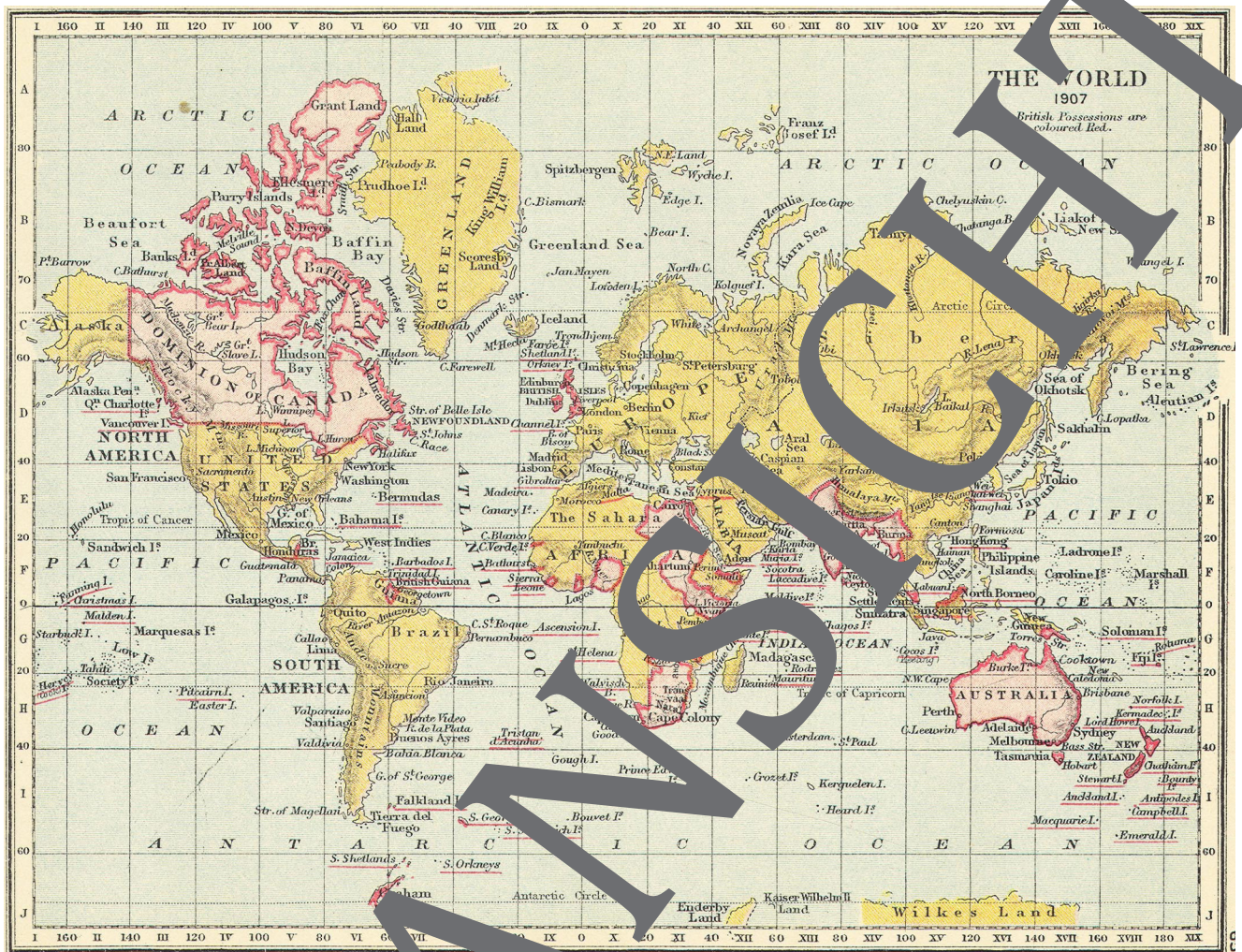
11. Stunde

Thema: The legacy of the Empire – Postcolonial literature

M 10 **Increasing cultural awareness as reflected in postcolonial literature** / Erläuterung der Konzepte des „Postkolonialismus“

A map of the British Empire, 1907

M1



Source: <http://www.britishempire.co.uk/>

Tasks

1. Describe the map and summarize the information about the extent of the British Empire at the beginning of the 20th century.
2. Name any facts about the British Empire which you remember from earlier English – and history – lessons.

M 2a

A short history of the British Empire – The First British Empire



Read the following text and find out about the establishment and ending of the First British Empire.

The First British Empire

After the American continent had been discovered, a struggle for commercial and naval supremacy began between Spain, Portugal, Holland, France and England. By the end of the 17th century, England had outdone its rivals and became the most important colonizing country. Its main aim was economic independence and self-sufficiency. Colonies were established in regions which could provide the European homeland with raw materials, natural resources and markets where Britain could sell manufactured products. British possessions included many islands in the Caribbean, e.g. Jamaica and the Bahamas, and parts of India and Northern Canada.

Most important, however, were the North American colonies on the Atlantic coast, which stretched from Newfoundland all the way south to Georgia. Here roughly two million colonists lived in politically disunited territories which were centred around Boston, known as the New England Colonies, around New York and the Middle Colonies, and in Virginia, the Southern Colonies.

New England was predominantly populated by strict Protestants from England. The Middle Colonies practised religious and political freedom and attracted all kinds of European immigrants. The aristocratic South was mainly settled by English noblemen and merchants who implemented the system of slave labour.

During the French and Indian War (1754–1763), which spread to Europe where it became known as the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), France lost all its possessions in North America to England and Spain. The war had caused great debts, which England attempted to pay off by taxing the colonies. However, the English colonists in North America were no longer prepared to accept their lack of representation in Parliament.

Therefore, England's attempt to impose taxation on paper products and tea were met with protest and outright refusal. "No taxation without representation" became a slogan, and eventually the protest led to the Declaration and War of American Independence. With the acknowledgement of the independence of the newly-formed United States of America in 1783, the First British Empire came to an end.

Tasks

1. Sum up your text and write down all the information you consider to be important in regard to your own historical knowledge about the British Empire. Use your own words.
2. Within your group, prepare a transparency to use for a presentation.
3. Take down new vocabulary and write the new words on the transparency as well.

M 2c

A short history of the British Empire – From Empire to Commonwealth



Read the following text and find out about the developments which led to the transformation of the British Empire into a multinational organization.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, developments in the colonies caused the decline of the British Empire. In Canada, Australia and New Zealand, where most Europeans had settled, the change to independent status was achieved peacefully. Elsewhere, however, especially in colonies with a large indigenous population, conflict and rebellion accompanied the quest for autonomy.

Dissatisfaction with British rule, demands for self-government, growing nationalism and racial tensions caused the Empire to disintegrate and led to growing sovereignty of the colonies. Originally, all British possessions were governed by the Colonial Office in London, a department of the Foreign Office. It appointed a Governor who administered the colony together with an executive council. Gradually, local governments were set up, parties were admitted, and legislation as well as responsibility were handed over to native institutions. However, defence and foreign affairs were still reserved for the mother country.

During this process, former “crown colonies” developed into “self-governing colonies” – they enjoyed self-government, but Great Britain was still responsible for defence and foreign affairs – and later into “dominions”, i.e. a free nation that owes loyalty to the British Crown alone. Dominion status was first granted to colonies of settlement, i.e. Canada (1867), Australia (1901) and South Africa (1910). In 1931, the Statute of Westminster became the charter of the dominions and replaced the term “Empire” with “The British Commonwealth of Nations”.

In colonies with a non-European population, developments were slower because of imperialist thinking. Because the natives had only slowly been educated and included in British systems of government, local leadership was sufficiently well trained to take over. Large-scale decolonization started only after the Second World War with India (1947) and Ghana (1957). It often took place quickly and caused some colonies to become independent without the necessary social and economic progress needed to provide stability for the future.

Today the remains of the British Empire consist of 15 so-called “dependencies”, such as the Bermuda, Falkland Islands and Gibraltar.

Did you know that in 1914 Britain declared war on Germany on behalf of the whole of the British Empire, but following the war in 1919 the Dominions were able to sign the Treaty of Versailles themselves?

Tasks

1. Sum up your text and write down all the information you consider to be important in regard to general historical knowledge about the British Empire. Use your own words.
2. Within your group, prepare a transparency to use for a presentation.
3. Take down new vocabulary and write the new words on the transparency as well.

A short history of the British Empire – The Commonwealth today

M 2d

“The British Commonwealth of Nations” was formed by the Statute of Westminster in 1931. It defined the autonomy of the dominions regarding foreign affairs and defence. Instead of the Colonial Office in London, and later the British Parliament there, the Crown now became the unifying force of the different members. Later, the organization’s name was changed to “Commonwealth of Nations” (1951) and eventually countries joined that did not recognize the British monarch as Head of State, but as the Commonwealth’s symbolic head. The member states have strong economic ties which are particularly emphasized by preferential tariffs for the exchange of goods between the organization’s member states.



Today, the Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 53 independent countries, with a combined population of almost a third of the world’s total. The most important members include Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa, Bangladesh, Kenya, Pakistan (whose membership was suspended in 2007 because of the undemocratic way in which the country was ruled) and the United Kingdom.

In 1991, the “Harare Commonwealth Declaration” laid down the institutional principles which include: a) democracy based on the British parliamentary system; b) the rule of law based on English Common Law; c) good government based on transparency and public service; d) human rights and social justice; e) economic ties, including aid for developing countries; f) common language, culture and traditions; g) sporting links such as the Commonwealth Games.

The centre of coordination and communication is the Commonwealth Secretariat in London, which prepares the biannual meetings of the member states, is financed by them, and administers Commonwealth funds.

The Commonwealth has supported former British colonies on their way to independence and is actively involved in promoting social equality. At the same time, however, its intervention in civil-war-like conflicts such as the India-Pakistan wars (1947), the Biafra War in Nigeria (1967) and the partition of Cyprus (1965) was largely ineffective.

Tasks

1. Sum up what you have learned and write down all the information you consider to be important in regard to general historical knowledge about the British Empire. Use your own words.
2. Within your group, prepare a transparency to use for a presentation.
3. Take down new vocabulary and write the new words on the transparency as well.

M 3

A short history of the British Empire – a summary

Historical facts	Aspects of the rise of the Empire
Aspects of the fall of the Empire	Aspects of the Empire's legacy

The British Empire



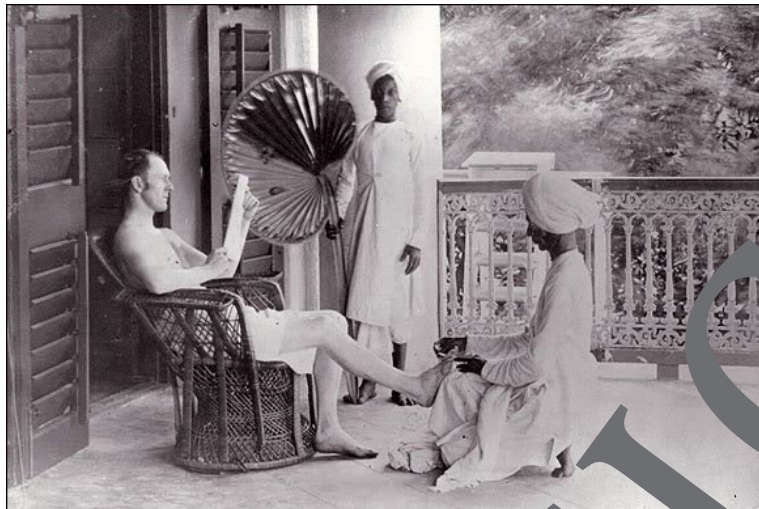
Task

Fill in the information which you consider to be most important from what you learnt in your group and exchange your information with the other groups.

M 9

British rule in India (*The Raj*) – Bus stop activity

Bus stop 1: A British man gets a pedicure, ca. 1880



A British officer in India receives a pedicure from an Indian servant.

Bus stop 2: Winning [Polo] Team, Peshawar Tournament, 1898



© akg images

Bus stop 3: The partition of British India, 1947



India and Pakistan won independence in August 1947, following a nationalist struggle lasting nearly three decades. It set a vital¹ precedent for the negotiated winding up³ of European empires elsewhere. Unfortunately, it was accompanied by the largest mass migration in human history of some 10 million people. As many as one million civilians died in the accompanying riots and local-level fighting, particularly in the western region of Punjab – stretching from Delhi to Lahore – which was cut in two by the border.

The agreement to divide colonial India into two separate states – one with a Muslim majority (Pakistan) and the other with a Hindu majority (India) is commonly seen as the outcome of conflict between the nations' elites. This explanation, however, renders the mass violence that accompanied partition difficult to explain.

One explanation for the chaotic manner in which the two independent nations came into being is the hurried nature of the British withdrawal, amid the realisation that the British state, devastated by war, could not afford to hold on to its over-extended empire.

1 vital: fundamental, precedent: a model case – 3 to wind up: to end sth. in several phases

Go from bus stop to bus stop. At every station, analyse the pictures and accompanying textual information. Take down all information which you can give to the class concerning both

- a) an acceptance of cultures, and
- b) a clash of cultures.

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