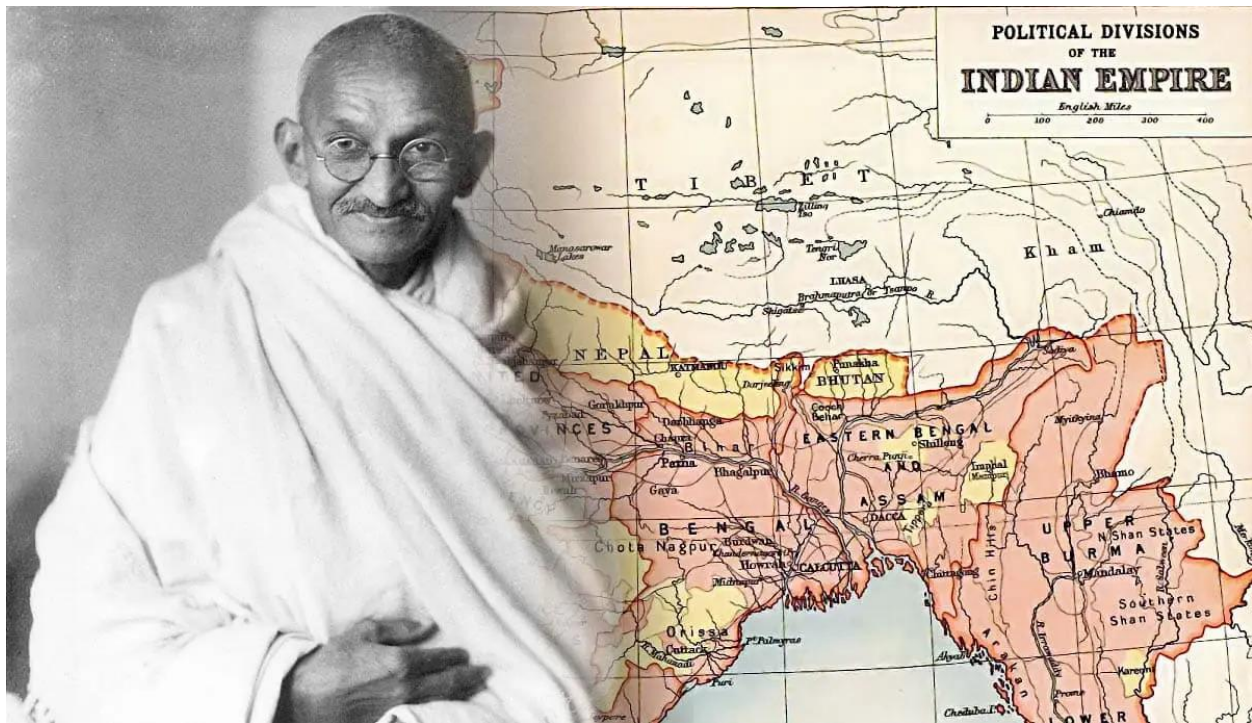


Gandhi-Sikh Relationship - 1



Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (M.K. Gandhi, aka Mahatma Gandhi) has long been dead. Because of that many Sikhs find any news or talks about him frivolous. Sikhs often tell why waste time discussing about a dead man. In some sense these Sikhs have a valid point.

On another front, Sikhs often fail to understand the relevance of history in general and of Gandhi's history in particular, especially when in fact that buried history had direct negative impacts upon the Sikhs.

Sikh Heritage Education (Sikhheritageeducation.com) has undertaken an extensive project to examine this history carefully as to what transpired when M.K. Gandhi (1869-1948) encountered the Sikhs; what pathological forces he unleashed into the Sikh population; how he hoodwinked the Sikh leaders; and their tragic consequences which didn't die out upon his assassination in 1948. Regrettably they still show up their ugly effects to this day in November 2023.

As part of this extensive inquiry, Sikh Heritage Education plans to print series of commentaries on this topic—this commentary being its first (Commentary #1).

It's important to bear in mind some of Gandhi's lengthy chronology:

1869 birth in Gujarat; 400 years after Guru Nanak's birthyear

1888--1891 attends Law school in UK

1891—1893 in India

1893—1914 sojourn in South Africa

1915—1948 in India, extensive saintly politicking

1947—August 14-15 partitioning of the British Indian Colony
into Pakistan and India

1948—January 30 assassination

There is no record in place that Gandhi had met Sikh(s) before he departed for South Africa in 1893. Having said that there is a real possibility he must have come across Sikhs in London when he was studying law there. Also, he might have come across Sikh(s) while growing up in Gujarat before embarking on to UK in 1888.

Before closing this commentary #1, let's share this photo of Gandhi taken in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, in 1915. Take a closer look at Gandhi who at that time was 46 years old, seated on the floor in the center of the photo. He wears a white colored turban and dresses up in his native ethnic clothing. He looks like a native villager giving one an impression as if he is barely educated at best and well versed in this native Gujarati culture. This simplistic outlook of a man who has just returned from South Africa is striking. The word is already out that this man had dedicated his life in safeguarding the rights of Indians in

South Africa against the oppressive British colonials. Moreover, at this juncture, he has been called “Mahatma,” a great soul.

Just imagine: What would be your impression of this man if you meet this simple-minded, simple-looking person today?

However, in 1915, several educated people in British-India came across Gandhi and were scratching their heads—for different reasons. We are not sure if any Sikh(s) met Gandhi in 1915. Or let’s say there is no written record of it. One thing is quite clear: Given our village-based Sikh-inspired simple culture, our people would not be alarmed or cautious at meeting Gandhi in his native outfit with a turban over his head. In fact, rank and file Sikh persons would consider themselves at ease and lucky enough in the company of Mahatma Gandhi. Wouldn’t you agree?

