



SALTORA NETAJI CENTENARY COLLEGE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

SEMESTER –IV

COURSE CODE: AHHST 403 C-10

COURSE TITLE: HISTORY OF INDIA (1757-1885)

TOPIC: DAWN OF NATIONALISM IN INDIA

PRESENTED BY

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Introduction

Indian nationalism is to a large extent the foster child of western education. Macaulay in advocating the adoption of the English language as the vehicle of higher education in India had a premonition of the revolutionary potentialities of the experiment. He declared that the Indians “having become instructed in European knowledge may, in some future age, demand European institutions”. That day, he declared, would be the proudest day for the English. After the Mutiny, English education made rapid progress, especially in Bengal and the Indian intelligentsia began to draw upon the storehouse of Western culture.



English education

The latter half of the nineteenth century was the golden age of liberalism in Europe, particularly in England. The study of the political classics of English literature from Milton to Mill planted in the minds of English-educated Indians seeds of Liberalism in its twin aspects – nationalism and democracy. Thus the educated Indians gradually became politically minded and expected much from the Britishers who had taken the lead in the world in supporting the cause of liberalism.



Political unity under British rule

Besides English education, the consolidation of British rule in India created conditions favourable to the growth of nationalism. The different parts of the country have been linked up by a network of railways which provided new facilities for contact and communication. The unification of the country under a centralized political system and the imposition of a common rule of law gave rise to common problems and common grievances. All these factors, coupled with the new political aspiration aroused by the English education, formed the starting point of Indian nationalism.



Revival of interest in India's past culture

In the middle of the nineteenth century, the impact of western culture at first produced something like intellectual anarchy, specially in Bengal. It had an unsettling effect in people's mind. Educated young men of Bengal showed their zeal for Westernism by crying down the civilization of their own country. The more they admired everything Western, the more vehemently did they denounce every thing Eastern. But this attitude was gradually corrected by the recovery of India's past culture and history.



Work of the Asiatic Society

In this recovery, the name of Sir William Jones who held a high post under the Company, occupied an honoured place. He founded the “Asiatic Society of Bengal” for carrying on researches into the past history and antiquities of this country. The result was that the lost story of India’s greatness began to be reconstructed by the patient labours of European scholars. The people began to realise that their ancestors had great achievements to their credit, and theirs was not a race to be despised and kept down, unveiled the treasures of Indian literature to the world. Thus was started the cultural renaissance of India which gave an impetus to the dawning sense of nationalism.

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THANK YOU