

# Growth of Nationalism in India

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## Factors Promoting the Growth of Nationalism in India

The rise of nationalism in 19th-century India was shaped by various social, economic, and political factors, contributing to a widespread desire for change and independence from British rule.

### Economic Exploitation

The British exploited India's economy, enriching themselves while impoverishing India:

- **Peasants** suffered from high taxes, worsening their conditions during droughts and famines.
- **Artisans & Craftsmen** were harmed by British policies that destroyed local industries, like textiles, while favoring British goods.
- **Factory Workers** faced poor conditions and low wages under British factory owners.
- **Educated Indians** were excluded from high government posts, fueling frustration and alienation.

### Repressive Colonial Policies

Repressive laws fueled nationalist sentiments:

- **Durbar (1877)**: British extravagance during a famine angered Indians.
- **Vernacular Press Act (1878)**: Censored anti-British newspapers.
- **Arms Act (1878)**: Restricted Indian weapon ownership.
- **Civil Service**: Reduced age limits for exams, hindering Indian competition.
- **Ilbert Bill (1883)**: Proposed Indian judges for Europeans but was withdrawn after opposition.

### Socio-Religious Reform Movements

Reform movements contributed to nationalist consciousness:

- **Western Education** inspired social and political reform.
- **Legislative Reforms**: Abolition of Sati and child marriage, and promotion of widow remarriage.
- **Key Reformers** like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Jyotirao Phule, and Swami Vivekananda advocated for social change and Indian culture.
- **Cultural Pride** was promoted by reformers who urged unity and respect for Indian heritage.

### Rediscovery of India's Past

Rediscovery of India's ancient past fostered national pride:

- **Translations** of Sanskrit texts and archaeological discoveries, like **Harappa**, highlighted India's achievements.

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- **Historical Research** by scholars like **James Princep** and **Alexander Cunningham** revealed India's past greatness.

## Influence of Western Education

Western education introduced democratic ideas, influencing the demand for self-rule:

- **Liberal Ideas:** Exposure to Western ideas on liberty and self-governance encouraged the desire for independence.
- **Demand for Self-Rule:** Educated Indians began to demand political representation and self-rule.

## Role of the Press

The press played a crucial role in spreading nationalist ideas:

- Newspapers like **The Hindu** and **Amrit Bazar Patrika** criticized British policies.
- The press helped unite regional groups by spreading nationalist messages.

## Development of Transport and Communication

The development of railways, postal, and telegraph systems, though for British benefit, also united India:

- **Railways:** Connected regions, fostering unity.
- **Postal and Telegraph Systems:** Allowed for faster communication and coordination of nationalist efforts.

## Growth of Political Associations

Various political associations laid the groundwork for a nationalist movement:

- **The Indian Association (1876):** Led by Surendranath Banerjee, focused on political unity.
- **East India Association (1866):** Founded by Dadabhai Naoroji, represented Indian interests in Britain.
- **Indian National Conference (1883):** A precursor to the Indian National Congress, promoting unity.

## Formation of the Indian National Congress

The Indian National Congress (INC) became the main organization for the nationalist cause:

- **A.O. Hume** founded the INC in 1885, seeking dialogue between Indians and the British government.
- **First Session (1885):** Demanded Indian representation in government and higher posts for Indians.

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- **Early Divisions:** A split between Moderates and Extremists occurred in 1907 but was later reconciled in the 1916 Lucknow Session. The INC shifted from moderate demands to a full call for independence, leading the struggle for freedom from British rule.