

The Rise of Nationalism in Europe

The French Revolution and the Idea of the Nation

- The modern idea of nationalism first emerged during the **French Revolution**. Before this, people were loyal to kings and empires, not to a nation.
- The revolution transferred power from the monarchy to the people (citizens). It introduced the idea that a nation is made up of citizens who share equal rights.

Special Features:

- Introduction of a **constitution**
- Equality before law
- Abolition of feudal privileges
- Promotion of national symbols like flag, anthem, and language
- Example:

French people began to identify themselves as part of one nation rather than subjects of a king.

Role of Napoleon Bonaparte

- **Napoleon Bonaparte** spread the ideas of the French Revolution across Europe.
- Though he became an emperor, he introduced many reforms that modernized Europe.

Napoleonic Code (1804):

- Equality before law
- End of privileges based on birth
- Right to property

Impact:

- Spread nationalism in Europe
- People started demanding freedom and unity
- Example:

In countries like Italy and Germany, people began opposing foreign rule and wanted self-government.

Aristocracy and the New Middle Class

- In Europe, the **aristocracy** (landed nobles) was the most powerful class, but they were few in number. Most people were peasants.
- With the growth of trade and industry, a new **middle class** emerged:

- ❖ Industrialists
- ❖ Businessmen
- ❖ Professionals

Importance:

- ❖ They were educated and supported ideas of nationalism and liberalism.
- ❖ They opposed aristocratic privileges.
- ❖ Example:

Middle-class people led movements demanding equality, rights, and national unity.

Meaning of Liberal Nationalism

- Liberalism comes from the word **liber** meaning freedom.

Political Ideas:

- ❖ Freedom of individuals
- ❖ Equality before law
- ❖ Government by consent (democracy)
- ❖ Constitution and parliament

Economic Ideas:

- Free markets
- Removal of trade restrictions
- Example:

People demanded elected governments instead of monarchies.

A New Conservatism after 1815

- After Napoleon's defeat, European powers met at the **Congress of Vienna**.

Aim:

- ❖ Restore old monarchies
- ❖ Maintain traditional institutions like monarchy, church, and aristocracy

Features:

- ❖ Suppression of liberal and nationalist movements
- ❖ Establishment of autocratic governments
- ❖ Example:

Kings were restored in many countries, and revolutionary activities were banned.

Giuseppe Mazzini – The Revolutionary

Giuseppe Mazzini was a strong supporter of Italian unity.

➤ His Contributions:

- ❖ Founded secret societies: Young Italy and Young Europe
- ❖ Promoted the idea of a united, democratic Italy
- ❖ Importance:

- Inspired young people and revolutionaries
- Spread nationalist ideas across Europe
- Example:

Many Italians joined movements for unification due to his influence.

The Age of Revolutions (1830–1848)

1830 Revolution:

- France became a constitutional monarchy

Greek War of Independence:

- Greece gained independence in 1832

1848 Revolutions:

- France became a republic
- Revolutions occurred in Germany and other regions

Frankfurt Parliament:

- Tried to unify Germany
- Failed when the king rejected the constitution
- Example:

Although many revolutions failed, they spread nationalism widely.

Unification of Germany

Germany was earlier divided into many small states.

Leader:

Otto von Bismarck

Policy:

Blood and Iron (wars and diplomacy)

Wars fought:

- Against Denmark
- Against Austria
- Against France

Result:

- Germany was unified in 1871
- **William I** became the emperor
- Example:

Prussia led the unification process successfully.

Unification of Italy

Italy was divided into seven states.

Key Leaders:

- **Giuseppe Mazzini** – Ideology
- **Count Camillo di Cavour** – Diplomacy
- **Giuseppe Garibaldi** – Military

Process:

- Cavour defeated Austria
- Garibaldi united southern Italy
- Final unification in 1861

Result:

- **Victor Emmanuel II** became king

Britain – Formation of Nation State

Britain was formed through political unions.

Key Events:

- **Glorious Revolution:** Parliament gained power
- **Act of Union (1707):** England + Scotland
- **1801:** Ireland joined

Features:

- Strong parliamentary system
- English culture dominated
- Example:

A unified British nation was formed through political integration.

Visualising the Nation

Nations were represented as female figures (symbols or allegories).

Examples:

- ❖ France: Marianne (symbol of liberty)
- ❖ Germany: Germania (symbol of unity and strength)

Importance:

- ❖ Created emotional attachment among people
- ❖ Helped spread nationalism visually

Nationalism and Imperialism

By the late 19th century, nationalism became aggressive and competitive.

In the Balkans:

- Countries fought against the Ottoman Empire
- Many nations gained independence

Problems:

- Rivalry among Balkan states
- Conflicts among big European powers

Result:

- Led to the **World War I**

Conclusion

Nationalism in Europe started as a movement for freedom, equality, and unity. Over time, it led to the formation of nation-states like Germany and Italy. However, later it became aggressive and contributed to conflicts and wars.