

CHAPTER - I

NATIONALISM : MEANING AND CONCEPT

Nationalism is basically a European concept. It is wholly a European export to the rest of the world.

Most of the historians agree that nationalism is of modern origin. Yet many of them have tried to detect it in old times. Their concern with nationalism motivates them to detect it in the old civilization of yore. A strong attachment to the soil where one is born and brought up, to local traditions and to established territorial authority had been prevalent throughout history in varying strength.

According to Hans Khon (1946:3), modern nationalism originated in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the nineteenth century, it became a general European movement and in the twentieth, it has become one of the most explosive political philosophies that rule the world today.

In the course of its development nationalism has taken many forms and expressions and it is impossible to define it in exact words. However, its meaning and the concept can be analysed with reference to the well-known histories of nationalism. Prof. Hans Kohn (1965:9), a well-known authority on nationalism defines the concept as 'a state of mind, in which the supreme loyalty of the individual is felt to be due to the nation state'. Kohn further adds : 'It is living and active corporate will. It is this will which we call nationalism, a state of mind inspiring the large majority of people and claiming to inspire all its members. It asserts that the nation-state is the ideal and the only legitimate form of political organization and that the nationality is the source of all cultural creative energy and economic well-being' (10). The supreme loyalty of man is, therefore due to his nationality, as his own life is supposedly rooted in and made possible by its welfare. Another practitioner, K.R. Minogue (1967:53) depicts nationalism as "a set of ideas.... a form of self expression by which a certain kind of political excitement can be communicated from an elite to masses".

The Cambridge Encyclopedia attempts to define the concept of nationalism as :

A political doctrine which views the nation as the principal unit of political organization. Underlying this is the assumption that human beings hold the characteristic of nationality, with which they identify culturally, economically and politically... Nationalism is thus associated with the attempts by national groupings to secure independence from dominance by other nation-states. It is often associated with the struggle against colonialism (Crystal 1990).

Nationalism is a doctrine which provides a rationale for a group of people to enjoy a government exclusively of their own and exercise full sovereign rights. It presupposes that mankind is divided into national compartments, each of which can be distinguished by certain common characteristics. Patriotism, based on natural attachments to native soil, had always existed in one form or the other from time immemorial. Feeling of personal identification with some political entity too has been known to humanity. Nationalism is fusion of these two very old feelings of emotional attachment. According to Prof. C.J.H. Hayes (1926:5-29), nationalism is 'a modern emotional fusion and exaggeration of two phenomena nationality and patriotism. Nationality is not an inborn characteristic. The individual's feeling that he belongs to a nation is the result of a continuous process of social learning and habit forming. Nationality in this sense need not be a political entity. It is primarily a cultural phenomenon, although it often takes political form (Plamenatz 1976:23-36). Nationality is mainly a matter of psychological feeling. It is a belief on the part of its members that they belong together and have common heritage and common traditions.

Patriotism means love of the land of birth and it was there in some or other local distinct form, even in the earliest times. This love of land was extended to one's village, tribe, nation or nationality. This patriotism or the feeling of loyalty to the place, community or the ruler or the king has long existed in man's mind. The fixation of man's supreme loyalty upon his nation or nationality marked the beginning of the age of nationalism (Kohn 1942:97). And the fusion of nationality and patriotism led to the birth of modern nationalism.

Nationalism may be defined as a sentiment, loyalty or sympathy which binds a group of people together through common institutions and culture, and thus creates a unity among them (Royal Institute 1939: XV-XX). Apart from nationalism as an ideology, it has a concrete meaning. It may be taken to mean some particular way or ways of manifesting national spirit and may be defined as the sum total of social, political and national aspirations of the people. In this sense, the ideas controlling the life and actions of a nation would constitute its nationalism. It is amorphous and, like religion, has diverse forms meaning different things to different persons. It is essentially a state of mind, a strong feeling of personal identification with people around and a consciousness of a common destiny with them, acquired through a long habit of association. Thus, it is not a political doctrine but a human phenomenon, a continuously changing process, both in time and place. It is also understood as the universal urge for 'liberty and progress' (Kohn 1962: 10).

Nationalism comprises several basic elements: common race, language, religion, traditions, history, geography, war, etc.; but none of these factors by itself is enough to create a nation or nationalism. For instance, race is an important factor in the formation of nationalism, but not quite essential. It is not necessarily true that every nationality must have one race. In Canada, for example, the two main races - the English and the French - form one nationality. In India, several races contribute to the Indian nationality.

A common language would reveal common tradition and similarity of ideas and thus form a strong tie between the communities. Yet, as the French scholar Renan said more than seventy years ago, "language may invite us to unite, but it does not compel us to do so....." (Qtd. Singhal 1961: 9). On the other hand, in Canada and Switzerland, people speaking different tongues have developed a nationhood of their own. Language is not a characteristic of a nation.

Nor does religion offer an adequate foundation for the growth of nationalism. There is hardly a state today that does not contain within its nationality divergent

religious groups. A Hindu is as much an Indian as is Muslim. In fact, religion by its very nature is international in character and outlook.

War also helps to develop nationalism in times of danger. Nationalism usually leads to war if unchecked; and war again leads to nationalism. There are wars of independence, imperialism and so on. War-time propaganda convinces the people that their country is in danger and it is their duty to place themselves at the disposal of the nation as patriots.

With this all-sided analysis of the concept, it would be clear that it is not very easy to define nationalism comprehensively, in all its aspects, in one or two sentences and that it is not fruitful also.

To realize the historical dimension of the concept, it is essential to comment on the origin and the growth of the concept.

Some fundamental traits of nationalism were developed long ago. The roots of nationalism spring from the ancient Hebrews and ancient Greeks. Both peoples had clearly defined consciousness of being different from all other peoples. The idea of nation-state was unknown to them, but they had the strong consciousness of a cultural mission.

Three essential traits of modern nationalism originated with the Hebrews : the idea of the chosen people, the emphasis on the memory of the past and of hopes for the future and finally national messianism.

The Greeks shared with the Hebrews the feeling of cultural and spiritual superiority over all other peoples. In addition the Greeks developed the concept of supreme loyalty to the political community, in their case the city-state. Every citizen had to identify himself completely to the life of the city-state to become thoroughly politicized. Plato in his *Republic* postulated the absolute precedence of the state over the individual and idealized a closed and authoritarian state. Thus the Greeks entertained a sense of loyalty to the city-state.

When the Romans succeeded the Greeks as rulers in Europe and established their empire, they achieved a single unified state with the result that the city-states

and the loyalty of citizens to those city-states disappeared. The stoic philosophy preached the ideal of a world-state; and the Romans based their institutions and law on that philosophy. The greatest poet of the Christian Middle Ages, Dante, also appreciated the idea of 'the universalism of the Roman Empire' (Kohn 1965: 13). There was also another very powerful unifying influence and that was Christianity. The Church created a feeling of universal unity amongst the faithful. In the conflict for power between the Papacy and the Monarchy, people supported the latter, as against the universalism represented by the former. The prolonged conflict between the Church and the temporal power for the supremacy of the State resulted in the rise of royal power after the Reformation producing a new order of despotism. In fact, Reformation contributed to the development of national patriotism. Ambitious and autocratic monarchs in England, France, Spain, Portugal and other countries consolidated their power which led to the creation of national states in definite geographical area, inhabited by population each having its own language, customs and traditions. This was the beginning of modern nationalism. A lonely voice for nationalism was raised by Niccolo Machiaveli (1469-1527). His writing made a stirring appeal for national unity. His writing was full of national patriotism and urged the unification of Italy and her preservation and protection from foreign invasions. To achieve the purpose, he advocated an absolute monarchy as an effective system of government. This movement against the supremacy of the Church precipitated in Europe the building and consolidation of fairly large, homogeneous and independent states ruled by monarchs. The monarchy played a leading role in the building up of national unity and sovereignty.

The first full manifestation of modern nationalism occurred in seventeenth century England. Nationalism in England had its religious matrix and had seldom known conflict between loyalty to the nation and loyalty to religion. English nationalism was inspired by the concept of individual liberty with its roots in the Judeo-Christian, Greco-Roman traditions. This new feeling for liberty found its greatest expression in the writings of John Milton (1608-1674). To Milton nationalism was individual freedom from authority and not from 'alien yoke', it was

the self-assertion of the individual. To Milton, liberty was personal, religious and political. Milton's *Areopagitica* is a fervent call for unlicensed freedom to print.

English nationalism and the English trading middle-class rose almost simultaneously in the seventeenth century and both found their most forceful expressions in the political philosophy of John Locke (1632-1704). Locke upheld two fundamental principles that the individual, his liberty, dignity and happiness are the basic elements of all national life and that the government of a nation is a moral trust based on the free consent of the governed. His philosophy also performed a great service to the new middle classes by its emphasis upon property and the new justification for property, based not upon conquest but upon man's labour and toil.

English influence upon France, strengthened by Voltaire's visit to England in 1726 to 1729 and his reports on English life and liberty, was significant for France. The English ideas of personal liberty and national organization became known abroad through the intermediary of French thinkers. French had become the universal language of the educated circles everywhere. Thereby the national and historical liberties of Englishmen gained universal importance. They became a model for the awakening liberal thought of the age. They exercised little immediate influence on French social, political and religious realities before 1789 but they were potent factor in the birth of American nationalism in 1775.

The English idea of the liberty of man has further extended by Rousseau. In France, Rousseau, who lived as an unhappy exile, saw the evils of government ruled by a prince and a court. He wished to replace it by a rational government, where man would will the social order out of his own free will and obey laws because he prescribed them for himself. To this end Rousseau wrote the *Social Contract* (1762); in it he created an ideal community out of the patriotic virtues of the ancient city-states, Geneva's Calvinist tradition of being a saintly nation, and the proud feeling of independence of the rural Swiss republics. Rousseau was convinced that the true political community could be based only on the virtue of its citizens and their ardent love of the fatherland. Rousseau's ideals influenced the western world. The political and cultural leadership which France had exercised in the Western

world under the absolute monarchy of the 17th century was on decline. The glory of the French arms was dimmed, great parts of the French Empire were lost, French public finances were at the brink of bankruptcy, the economic and intellectual life of the nation was shackled by outworn traditional institutions and laws. This resulted into the French Revolution.

The French Revolution was inspired by the English model of constitutional liberty and limited government. The absolute sovereignty of the King was replaced, as revolution progressed, by the absolute sovereignty of the people. French Revolution respected the privacy of the individual. The nation-state was regarded as a protective shell for the free interplay of individual forces. The nationalism of the French Revolution stressed that the duty and the dignity of the citizen lay in political activity and his fulfillment lay in complete union with his nation-state. The year 1789 witnessed the birth of the French nation in a sudden burst of enthusiasm. All distinction between the privileged and the common people was swept away; the French-speaking people were incorporated into a nation-state infused with national spirit which encouraged state-supported national education, military training of all able-bodied citizens and national-journalism. The passions generated by this new nationalism threatened to break to dikes set up by 18th century respect for the individual and his sphere of liberty. For the elites and for the masses, nationalism became the foremost medium for organization and self-expression. From the time of the French Revolution, social and economic questions played an important part, wherever nationalism penetrated.

French democratic nationalism took quite a different turn under Napoleon who led the armies of France in the conquest nations. He put the finishing touch to the centralized nation-state with its unified system of law, bureaucracy and education; but he did it in the spirit of the eighteenth century enlightened despots. Napoleon's ambition was not the nation-state, not even the expanded nation-state, but the renewal of Caesar's empire. Napoleon fell a victim not only to his own inordinate ambitions, but also to the new force of nationalism which his wars provoked in different countries of Europe. Nationalism of Germany, Italy, Spain,

Russia and other countries threatened by Napoleonic expansionism did not learn from the French Revolution of 1789 its spirit; they were provoked to learn the lesson of war. In order to defend themselves against Napoleonic onslaughts, they relied on the adoration of the collective power and not on nationalism as an expression of individual liberty.

After Napoleonic wars, nationalism penetrated to other lands - Central and Eastern Europe or to Spain and Ireland. It came to lands which were, in political ideas and social structure, less advanced than the modern West. Thus, nationalism became there first a cultural movement, the dream and hope of scholars and poets. Thus, the new nationalism looked, for its justification and differentiation from the West, to the heritage of its past. Rousseau's disciple, Herder (1744-1803) developed the theory of the folk-soul and its roots in the long chain of national tradition from hoary primitive times on. To him, nationality was not a political or biological concept, but a spiritual and a moral concept.

The relationship between nationalism and tradition received its strongest expression in German Romanticism. Romanticism as an aesthetic revolution was a European movement, which produced a poetry richer in emotional depth. The German Romanticists developed the opposite longing for a true, harmonious community, an organic folk community, which would immerse the individual in the unbroken chain of tradition. The German Romanticists edited and praised the medieval sagas and poetry, folk songs and fairy tales. The nationalist writer, Friedrich Schlegel (1772-1829), glorified the love of fatherland, its history and character in his writing. The great German philosopher, George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), understood State as the Divine Idea as it exists on earth. Romanticism influenced the character of the German nationalism during the anti-Napoleonic wars. The philosopher, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) was a representative of the liberal, individuals and cosmopolitan enlightenment. The two greatest German poets, Goethe (1749-1832) and Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), turned not to the folk community of the Middle Ages but to the individualism of Greek antiquity as a source of regeneration. Goethe, throughout his life and during

the wars against Napoleon, expressed his deep admiration for the French and French civilization. His contemporary, the German nationalist, Ernst Moritz Arndt (1769-1860) also advocated that the Germans by having preserved their racial purity and by speaking the purest language were superior to people in all other nations. This led to conflict between the Germans and the French. Another philosopher Friedrich Schlegel (1778-1852) glorified the originality of the German folk as a divine creative force. On this development Hans Kohn commented that there had been little in common with the Western concepts of individual liberty and the idea of racial superiority of German Nationalism.

Like German, British Romanticism was also influenced by the philosophy of French Revolution which changed the fabric of poetry in cultural regenerations and poetry further integrated the rustic life as a part of national life.

The philosophy of John Locke, Rousseau, Kant and the ideals of French Revolution were the shaping influence of British Romanticism. The basic elements of national life: the individual, his liberty, dignity and happiness, devotion to organised state, to master every unsocial instinct, the right of man and the glory of nature influenced the character of British Romantic poetry. National sentiment of this type was a direct stimulus to the study of the national past and it was the source of the Romantic revival.

The first poet of this category is William Wordsworth (1770-1850) who gave importance to dignity of man in himself and the moral and intellectual strength which comes to him in communion with nature. The first was the possession of the revolutionary period, the second he shared with Rousseau. Both in Nature and in man he saw the 'hiding places of infinite power'. Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* is the fine example of the expression of the folk and rustic community which would immerse the individual in the unbroken chain of tradition. In the preface to this collection he tells, the theme of poetry is 'incidents and situations of humble life' and therefore, quite naturally he also intended to use "a selection of language really used by men". Thus he brought local life on national level. The spirit of national Romanticism is quite strong in Wordsworth. He addressed his countrymen to

follow the tongue of Shakespeare and Milton. 'By the soul only the nations shall be great and free' is the conviction which lies at the root of his politics, illustrated in two portrayals of the ideal statesman – the Bonaparte sonnet (1802) and The Happy Warrior (1805). The spirit of liberty and patriotism in his poetry is because of Wordsworth's whole-hearted support to French movement. But the Revolution failed to produce expected result. This frustration is reflected in the poem "The Prelude".

Like Wordsworth, S. T. Coleridge (1772-1874) was also great romantic poet. Romantic fervour in his poetry is influenced by French revolution and the philosophy of Godwin. Emotional depth, the interest in the remote past and the supernatural aspect of nature play important role in his poetry. The world of the poetic experience constitutes : oriental romance, legends and visionary music. It is evident in "The Ancient Mariner", "Christabel" and "Kubla Khan". Thus Coleridge recreated beautiful English landscapes, legends and mystic atmosphere and thereby generated the spirit of 'national' romanticism. P.B. Shelley (1792-1822) in his significant works set forth the beau ideal of French Revolution. Revolt was for Shelley a first principle. The England which Shelley observed as he came of age in the shadow of French Revolution clearly needed reform. In "Queen Mab" the attack on religion is relentless and central to the poem. It was organised religion as a prop of tyranny and the tendency of religious doctrine to harden into blind dogma that he really attacked. His revolutionary zeal was directed against the tyrannical nature of religion. The vision of glorious future is emphasised in "Queen Mab". "The Revolt of Islam" narrates the story of Cythna, a heroic lady who dreams of the liberation of mankind and works in that direction. Shelley defined the idea of revolution in "Prometheus Unbound". It must occur within the mind of man, perhaps within the mind of everyman before the true change can be expressed in nature and society. The poem is a political allegory where Prometheus represents modern intellectual man who is eager to get free from the tyranny of the ruling aristocracy. Shelley was totally fed up with the political, religious and social conditions of his days and naturally his revolutionary zeal was directed to set up

new society where there is liberty of man and every human being free from exploitation. Thus Shelley's fiery revolutionary attitude promotes the spirit of nationalism.

Byron (1788-1824), along with Shelley and Keats belongs to the second generation of the Romantic poets. By his satiric bent he seems closer to Dryden and Pope, rather than Wordsworth and Shelley. He belongs to his age. "Don Juan" is an effective satire of the English language. 'Don Juan' the protagonist, undertakes a number of wanderings and records his impression and observation. Through them Byron satirically reviews the social, political, religious and economic conditions of the European countries. The poem "The prisoner of Chillon" shows Byron's love of liberty. Thus Byron's satirical tone is against the antisocial elements and evils in the contemporary society. He also emphasised the liberty and dignity of man.

John Keats (1795-1821) was neither reformer nor a revolutionary like Shelley. He was much influenced by medieval themes but at the same time it was ancient Greece that haunted his imagination most. He conceived his imagination as divining Nature. He was fascinated by nature and beauty. He loved sensuousness. By exploring the alien culture, Keats awakened the British minds for their own cultural heritage. "To A Nightingale", "Ode To Autumn" recreates British landscape. His poems on Greek mythology "Endymion", "Hyperion" and "Ode To The Grecian Urn" enriches the spirit of romanticism.

The spirit of national romanticism is also reflected through prose writing. Charles Lamb (1775-1834) in his essays of Elia (1820-23) and *Last Essays Elia* (1833) show his interest in curious persons and places, his relish of colour and variety of London life and characters. His portrayal of English life with their socio-cultural past and present recreates the spirit of romanticism and nationalism. William Hazlitt (1778-1830) shared Lamb's interest in the description of English characters. He wrote on English landscape, on "Coffee-House Politicians" Thomas De Quincey through his essays recreates highly imaginative historical scenes or incidents.

In Germany, in France the conception of the continuity of history gave a powerful impulse to historical writing. The study of national past was one of the sources of the Romantic revival of history. The same impulse is seen in British romanticism. Chateaubriand and Scott founded the 'historical novel'. Henry Fielding, the father of the English Novel, in *Tom Jones* portrays the life of the time realistically and this makes his novel of great value as social document. The romantic sentiments are quite clear in Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*. The idealised pictures of English Village life are depicted in the novel.

Thus the British Romanticism shows its interest in the past and follows the ideals of French Revolution. So it is nationalistic in spirit. Moreover, it is democratic nationalism predominant in British Romanticist.

The impetus of the French Revolution did not create full-fledged uprisings in Italy, Germany and Poland. They failed miserably, because they were nowhere supported by the people. In Central and Eastern Europe, the uprisings were quickly suppressed. On this scene, we notice the rise of Mazzini (1805-1872). Faced by the inertia of the people, Mazzini called for the energetic leadership of Young Italy. He called upon the youth and the people to sacrifice everything to the attainment of a united, centralized strong nation. Mazzini was convinced that only the Italians could bring a positive message for the new age and establish that unity which Rome had brought.

The century between 1815 and 1918 witnessed the struggle for national independence on the part of different nationalities. By 1918 the Russian, Austrian, Prussian and Ottoman dynasties had lost their power. But throughout this territory, the creation of independent and nation-states after the Western model encountered almost insuperable difficulties. In most cases, it was impossible to draw clear-cut ethnic frontiers. Each nationality claimed the frontiers as they existed at the time of its greatest historical expansion. Many territories had formed part of different national spheres and were now claimed by each of the nationalities. Thus nationalism did not lead, as Mazzini and Young Europe had expected to a fraternal association of neighbouring peoples and to international peace. The awakening of

the peoples released collective passions which became potent factor in arousing hatreds and wars. In Switzerland after a brief civil war, democratic federalism provided the framework for the peaceful development in liberty of populations speaking German, French and Italian, having highly diversified traditions and religious backgrounds. Outside Switzerland, German, French and Italian speaking populations fought bitter wars against each other in the last one hundred years and sacrificed liberty to the demands of nationality. This danger was felt more acutely in Central-Eastern Europe.

This success was prepared by the cultural efforts of scholars and poets. Under the influence of Herder, they concentrated on writing literature in the vernacular language and in exploring the folk traditions. Irrespective of classical language, the young generation concentrated on native languages. They set out to compile dictionaries of their native tongues, to collect folk-songs, to explore national antiquities, to do research in historical chronicles. All that was done was not for its own sake, but to enhance the glory of one's own nation.

The Napoleonic wars aroused nationalist activities in Czechs, Croats, Rummians and Ukrainians. In 1848, we notice nationalist revolution started in Central Europe. On February, 24, the second French Republic was proclaimed. In the following month, revolutions broke out in Berlin and Vienna, in Milan and Venice. German, Italian, Slav and Magyar nationalists in central Europe greeted the dawn of a new day. 1848 was welcomed as the fulfillment of 1789. The new nationalism stressed collective power and unity far above individual liberty; it tended to mean independence from outside rather than freedom within.

Nationalism changed in the middle of the nineteenth century from liberal humanitarianism to aggressive exclusivism, from the emphasis on the dignity of the individual to that on the power of the nation. In France, the republic was overthrown not by the old monarchists but by Napoleon. In free elections, he received the support of the people. The majority voted for him, as he was spokesman of nationalism and social progress. France was a nation since 1789; but no national problems were to be solved in 1848. In Central Europe, the year 1848,

meant the awakening of the nationalities and their first bitter clash. But as the revolution progressed it became clear that it meant in Central Europe less a fraternal longing for human liberty than a divisive nationalism. The revolutionary fervor was directed towards national goals rather than liberal ones.

Looking back at the events of 1848, the English philosopher John Stuart Mill, diagnosed the situation. He characterised the new feelings of exclusive nationalism and remarked that “in the backward parts of Europe and even in Germany, the sentiment of nationality outweighed the love of liberty and the people are willing to abet their rulers in crushing the liberty and independence of any people, not of their race or language” (Khon 1965: 51-52).

This change of the character of nationalism in the middle of the nineteenth century occurred not only among the Germans but also among all the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe. The new spirit of violence, of the glorification of heroic deeds, of the revival of a dim past and of its use as an inspirational source was first noticeable in 1848. But the revolutions of 1848 all over Central Europe failed to strengthen the cause of liberty, in spite of the sincere idealism of many of its participants. The idealism of 1848 failed largely because it aroused nationalist passions and lacked the wisdom of patience and compromise. By 1852, the second French Republic was dead, and no visible progress had been achieved on the road to Italian and German unification. After 1848, nationalism entered the age of *Machtpolitik* and *Realpolitik*, a policy based on power and self-interest and not on humanitarian declarations.

The years between 1852 and 1878 marked a decisive step forward in the realization of national goals in Central Europe. The ideology of nationalism was now supported more and more by economic factors. Capitalism, Industrialism and the growing importance of middle-class changed the social structure and the rhythm of life all over Central Europe. Friedrich List (1789-1846), a German immigrant to the United States who was deeply impressed by American nationalism and economic progress, returned to Germany as United States' Consul and opposed the dominant eighteenth century cosmopolitan theory of political economy, which then

celebrated its triumph in the free trade movement in England. List wished to replace it by his new theory of the 'national system of economy. All this contributed to the rise of economic nationalism.

After the World War I, nationalism had to contend with the new ideologies of Communism, Fascism and National Socialism.

The inter-war period saw the rapid rise in Europe of another form of nationalism, namely, integral nationalism which contained certain elements of Fascism, Communism and National Socialism. This nationalism had its roots in Pan-movements like : Pan-Slavism, Pan-Germanism and Pan-Asianism. All this Pan-movements completely broke with the Western liberal tradition and turned to totalitarianism.

The latter part of the nineteenth century saw the rapidly growing prestige of the biological sciences. The Western concept of nationality was a political concept based upon free individuality was now revived . It based nationality, and man's political and spiritual allegiance upon ancestry or "blood". This form of nationalism has also been described as Biological Nationalism. The theory of Biological Nationalism was enunciated by Arthur de Gobineau (1816-1882). It based nationalism on rule of blood in contrast to the original concept of nationality as a political union of individuals united together by certain common bonds. According to this theory, racial blood created superior and inferior human races, and it claimed that it was only the superior race that had a right to govern the inferior races. This racial theory was responsible for the wave of anti-semitism in Europe, particularly in Germany and the consequential rise of Jewish nationalism as a strong reaction to that anti-semitism. The anti-semites regarded the Jews as 'alien' in their European homelands.

The Totalitarian Nationalism had well developed in Europe during the inter-war period and was practised in Soviet Russia in the form the Communism and in Italy and Germany in the form of Fascism. Under the leadership of Lenin, the first totalitarian state directed against Western democracy. He was a follower of the

internationalism of Karl Marx. Under Lenin's leadership, the Russian Empire was transformed into the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, which it was hoped would expand to include the entire globe. Within the Soviet Union the various nationalities received territorial autonomy and the right to use and develop their own language. But within a totalitarian state, national liberty was as unthinkable as individual liberty: all persons and all groups had absolutely to conform to the one uniform pattern imposed by the Communist Party and doctrine.

Whereas Communism, the first and most extreme totalitarian movement, was in its original ideology not connected with nationalism, Fascism, was from the beginning an inflammation of nationalism. It came first to power in Italy under the leadership of Mussolini. Mussolini called the Italian people to its mission of restoring Rome's ancient glories, and he stimulated the cult of Roman imperial past in every possible way. Fascism absolutized nationalism. The absolute devotion to the nation became the guiding principle of all Fascist education. Fascist principles had been accepted by some governments in Europe and also in Latin America and Asia. In realization of the dream of Fascism, Mussolini had adopted the policy of aggression and conquest of other countries. But this dream could not be materialised, as Italy's Fascism had to compete with the National Socialism of Germany under Adolf Hitler, which was also another form of Fascism based on Racism, Militarism and Authoritarianism. In the World War II, Fascism in Italy, Germany and Japan was completely destroyed but the Russian Totalitarian Nationalism survived with the aid of Western Democratic Nationalism.

The biggest and mightiest political force in the post-World War II period was nationalism. As a matter of fact, the World War II unleashed this driving political force in Asia. Asia entered an epoch of great revolutionary change. At the root of this revolution lay the awakened national consciousness of the people, which was dormant before. In India, British policy and methods first aroused the desire for individual liberty and self-government formerly unknown in the Orient. In 1835, the English historian, Thomas Macaulay, as Chairman of the Committee of Public Instruction in India, proposed to base Indian education upon the study of the natural

sciences and of the growth of liberty from ancient Greece to modern England. Exactly fifty years after, at the end of 1885, the first Indian National Congress met in Bombay for the establishment of India as a nation-state. For the first time in Asia, the Congress created a public platform for voicing political aspirations representing the nation as a whole above all differences of race and caste. In Asia, British Empire governed many countries as their colonies. The Freedom Movement in these colonies was an attempt of nationalism. After the World War II, India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma became independent.

The twentieth century since 1945 has become the first period in history in which the whole of mankind has accepted one and the same political attitude, that of nationalism. Its rise everywhere implied an activation of the people and the demand for a new ordering of society. But everywhere, nationalism differs in character according to the specific historic conditions and the peculiar social structure of each country.

These are some phases of nationalism that History has witnessed in the course of time.

European Nationalism, thus, means love of common soil, race, religion or language, pride in cultural past, desire for political independence, individual liberty, peace, a fanatic belief in the inherent supremacy of one's own nation, race and its destiny to dominate others. These are recognisable elements of nationalism. Nationalism is firmly implanted in the popular principle of nationality and in the powerful political organization of the modern state. It cannot therefore be rooted out and is bound to continue in some form or other.

The great Rabindranath Tagore (1950: 57) spoke of nationalism as "... the most powerful anesthetics that man has invented." He adds further: "Under the influence of its fumes the whole people can carry out its systematic programme of the most virulent self-seeking without being in the least aware of its moral perversion."

In the light of European Nationalism, it is interesting to study the development of Indian Nationalism and its identity as such.

Encyclopedia on Social Science elaborates the concept of Indian Nationalism as :

... India is a nation in which the Hindu religion served as a cohesive traditional element in uniting peoples of various races, religions and languages. India achieved national unity through the influence of Western ideas, notably those of British origin and in struggle against British rule (Wagnall and Funk 1990: Vol. 17).

With this background, it is interesting to study the growth of Indian nationalism and its aspects reflected in the text of Indian English poetry.