

PUBLIC CENTRAL SCHOOL - KHALISPUR  
HANDOUTS ON CHAPTER-1 (HISTORY)  
THE RISE OF NATIONALISM  
IN EUROPE

Part: 2

The Making of Nationalism in Europe

There were no 'nation states' in mid-18th Century Europe as we know them today. Countries like Germany, Italy and Switzerland were divided into kingdoms. Eastern and Central Europe were under monarchs who in turn controlled diverse people. The people of these kingdoms did not share a common identity or common culture. The people often spoke different languages and belonged to different ethnic groups. For eg, Habsburg Empire (Present Central Europe) that ruled over Austria-Hungary was a mixture of different regions and people.

The Aristocracy and the New Middle Class

In the 19th century, the aristocrats (kings/monarchs) were the dominant class in the society. They were numerically small in population, owned large areas in the villages, spoke french to communicate. The majority of population was made up of peasants. As new industries were established



in western and central Europe, new social groups came into being:

- i. A working class population
- ii. Middle classes made of industrialists, businessmen and professionals.

The ideas of national unity, freedom, rights were mainly given by the educated middle class people in Europe.

What did Liberal Nationalism stand for?

The ideas of national unity in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century was mixed with the concept of Liberalism. The term 'Liberalism' has been derived from the Latin word 'Liber' meaning free.

For the new middle class Liberalism stood for:-

- i. Freedom for the individual
- ii. Equality before Law
- iii. Government by consent
- iv. End of monarchy
- v. Constitution and representative government through parliament.



## A NEW CONSERVATISM AFTER 1815

Conservatives: They believed in the preservation of established traditional institutions of state and society like monarchy, church, social hierarchies and private property. Most of the conservatives felt that the modernisation introduced by Napoleon could be used to make state more powerful, effective and strong.

After the defeat of Napoleon in the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 by the combined forces of Britain, Austria, Prussia and Austria a meeting was held in Vienna (Austria) hosted by Duke Metternich in which a treaty was signed which came to be known as Treaty of Vienna.

Its main objectives are as follows:

- i. To undo most of the changes in Europe brought by Napoleonic wars.
- ii. The Bourbon dynasty was restored to power.
- iii. France lost its territories annexed under Napoleon.
- iv. The main intention was to restore monarchy in Europe.