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Growth of Political Consciousness or Concept of Nationalism: Its Political, Economic and Social Aspects or Background

Prior to the revolt of 1857, the British treated India as one country and one nation because it suited their Imperial designs. At that time, they were attempting to conquer India and therefore, they pleaded that the conquest of this entire subcontinent would alone provide administrative and political unity to this country and nation which would be useful for the people. Thus, the conquest of India was justified on the ground of benefitting the Indian people. But, after the revolt of 1857, they reversed their stand. They abandoned the policy of annexation because the existence of native states became useful to them. Besides, they pursued the policy of divide and rule in India after the revolt. India, of course, had remained divided politically and efforts to bring about its unity always failed, but culturally India has always remained united. Vedic religion, Sanskrit language,

Hindu customs, places of pilgrimage which are spread all over India, value of life, etc., have always provided unity to India. The Indians, therefore, have always felt they belong to one country. Thus, following factors contributed to the emergence of political consciousness or concept of Indian nationalism:

- 1- The revolt of 1857
- 2- Political and Administrative Unity
- 3- Developed means of communication and Transport
- 4- Revival of the glory of India
- 5- English language, Western education and western Ideas
- 6- Impacts of International events
- 7- ~~Radical~~ Racial arrogance of the British
- 8- Tradition of Armed Revolts
- 9- The Social and Religious Movements of the 19th century
- 10- Debarring the Indians from Higher services
- 11- National Literature
- 12- Press
- 13- Neo-Social Classes
- 14- The Administration of Lord Lytton, Lord Rippon, and Lord Curzon
- 15- Dissatisfaction arising out of Economic exploitation by the British
- 16- The founding of All-India Congress in 1855