

# Tagore's Nationalism: A Critical Assessment

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## ABSTRACT

Tagore an artist, author, craftsman was not a savant in the exacting feeling of giving reliable digressive talk through his works, aside from his talks on Nationalism. Tagore in his 'Nationalism' briefly puts nationalism as the shortening of basic liberties and subsequently being contradictory to moral all inclusiveness. Tagore's enemy of absolutist and against statist stand is predicated principally on his vision of worldwide harmony and accord; a universe of various people groups and societies joined by friendship and humankind. While this stupendous vision of a state-of-the-art existence is excellent, it is, all things considered, built on misconception and misreading of history and of the part of the country state in the West since its ascent at some point during the late middle age and early current occasions. Tagore sees state as a fake component, for sure a machine that flourishes with pressure, strife, and dread by sabotaging individuals opportunity and culture. His perspectives on 'Nationalism' are along these lines not shut however dispossessed by what has now come to be called his philosophical cosmopolitanism. This paper will endeavor a clarification of the abandonment of nationalism by cosmopolitanism present in Tagore and accordingly a superior comprehension of his perspectives.

**Keywords:** *Nation, Nationalism, Cosmopolitan, Cosmopolitanism, Humanism*

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Tagore was brought into the world in 1861, a period during which the patriot development in India was taking shape and acquiring force. The previously coordinated military uprising by Indian officers against the British Raj happened in 1857, just a short time before the writer was conceived. In 1905, the Swadeshi development broke out close to home, as a reaction to the British arrangement of parceling Bengal. At first, moved by the shameful and silliness of the demonstration, Tagore got effectively engaged with the development, composing devoted tunes with such touchy intensity that Ezra Pound joked, 'Tagore has sung Bengal into a country'. In any case, before long, the development took a vicious turn and he made a turn around, having nothing to do with nationalism once more, but to dispatch a methodical arraignment to 'wreck the subjugation of nationalism'. Indeed, Gandhi's urgings to join the Satyagraha development, which ultimately achieved Indian freedom, after the extended time of pilgrim rule, in 1947, couldn't adjust Tagore's situation on country and nationalism. In a letter to Gandhi, he scrutinized the last's astuteness, when he asked contemptuously, subsequent to clarifying how in the West many 'higher personalities' were attempting to transcend the triviality of nationalism, and would we say we are separated from everyone else to be content with continuing with the erection of Swaraj on an establishment of telling the dabs of nullification, bothering others shortcomings and contentiousness?

Tagore conflates country with country state or, simply state, and seems to utilize an essentialized polarity of enthusiastic local area and judicious local area or common society or state distinguishing the previous with pre-pilgrim India and the last with present day West all in all and Great Britain specifically. Tagore's perspectives on nationalism; seemingly a Western hypothesis and praxis; were predicated on his twin presumption that it is coercive at home and ruthless on the planet. (Mukherjee, 2003) He considered it as "an applied science" and even contrasted it with "a water powered press, whose pressing factor is generic." He favored casual, even coercive yet close to home, government; primitive, monarchical, or royal; and a profound doubt for indifferent and legalistic and organized specialists, anyway productive. In the event that both the individual and the public governments seem coercive, at that point, in assessment, the previous is the handloom worked by human touch, while the last the forces loom; constantly dead and precise and repetitive. These two suspicions, in light of on his experience and disillusionment with the forceful patriot conditions of pre-War

and between War Europe and the radical patriot disturbances in India, brought about a slanted comprehension of the chronicled part of nationalism. Simultaneously, his Romantic sensibilities; on his own confirmation he was profoundly just as stylishly affected by some driving Romantic writers and scholars of England; drove him to figure his thought of what he thought about government by countries, that is, country states.

At that point, Tagore misreads both Indian and English history in his patriot scrutinize. He accepts that India never looked for nationhood, its verifiable mission being assimilative, not ill-disposed. Since the time the settlement of Aryavarta by the Aryan intruders it experienced various different clans throughout the long term: the Hellenistic Greeks, Bactrians, Scythians, Kushanas, Afghans, and the Mughals. Every one of these winners were not 'countries' yet 'human races' who were in the end assimilated in the variety of societies, customs, and people groups of the land. Subsequently pre-British India was a multicultural social life form throbbing with life, social collaboration, participation, and a feeling of resilience. With the British victory, notwithstanding, as Tagore expresses, "we needed to bargain, not with rulers, not human races, but rather with a country; we, who are no country ourselves." We do know, in any case, that as right on time as the third century B.C.E., the Indian legislator and political scholar Kautilya had expounded intricately on *rastra* and *dandaniti*. (Sil, 1989, p.9) The supreme Mauryas and Guptas had developed a huge state mechanical assembly and rule of law. Hindu culture and human advancement flourished under the assurance of and support of the state. In addition, "self-magnification and self-attestation" are not the select conduct of the country conditions of Europe. Kautilya was unequivocal in his underwriting of a *vijigisu* (he who needs to vanquish) who tries to turn into a *chakravarti* (all inclusive ruler) or a *sarvabhauma* (world sovereign) or a *dominum omnium*. (Sil, 1989, p.81)

Amusingly, the verifiable experience of supreme Britain was practically like that of India. Celtic Britannia, a diverse collection of adversary little realms and chiefdoms, was vanquished, colonized, and Latinized by supreme Rome in the main century. From there on, during the fourth through the 6th hundreds of years, Romano-Celtic Britain was attacked by the mainland Germanic clans, who from the seventh century forward created seven autonomous Anglo-Saxon expresses, the Heptarchy, until these blended in King Alfred's country province of England. Simultaneously, this youngster country coincided with another express, the Danelaw, in the northeastern and the southeastern pieces of England; a state inside a state made by common arrangement between the Vikings and the Anglo-Saxons. This political concurrence brought about social and ethnic blending, a cycle that went through additional racial and social implantation from the Norman Conquest in the late 11th century. The highlight note is that notwithstanding their verifiable odyssey England did in the end arise as a solitary country state from the sixteenth century much like India from seventeenth under the magnificent Mughals, yet with a distinction. The Islamic Mughals would never totally retain the immense Hindu culture to produce a really incorporated country. India's absence of nationhood in this manner was not brought about by any intentionally built enemy of statist belief system or theory yet by the exigencies of history.

Simultaneously we need to review that the ruthless Western expresses, their dictatorial nature and structure in any case, never quelled free reasoning, open analysis of social or political maltreatments, development, and examinations of their people groups. Then again, such amazing social blooming as the Renaissance, Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, or more all, the Enlightenment, flourished under state support constantly, yet the humanists, reformers, researchers, and savants were shielded from the traditionalist, harsh, and severe strict foundations by their administrations. Louis XIV, the absolutist Grand Monarch of France, who is accounted for to have asserted 'I am the State', was a manufacturer, a tireless compulsive worker, and a supporter of expressions and learning; indeed the Enlightenment development was conceived during this time; despite the fact that he disseminated his nation's assets in various military commitment toward the last piece of his long rule. Likewise, the leaders of Mughal India could flaunt an efficient state with a modern organization and an all around prepared and-prepared armed force that supported and belittled a portion of the world's best design accomplishments, a blooming Indo-Persian culture that delivered a refined court language, verse, painting, music, strict and reformist developments, just as exquisite social habits and ethics. Mughal India was a coordinated express that would never be considered as a curious local area of Tagore's creative mind.

Tagore's accentuation on a self-controlled, independent, and populist society of local area and culture makes him a votary of Epicureanism from one perspective, and Anarchism on the other. Epicurus charged evasion of legislative issues, war, and rivalry and an issue free life to get and keep up equipoise with his praised advice: "or what we have but rather what we appreciate establishes our plenitude." (O'Connor, 1993) The nineteenth-century Anarchist Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921) imagined a free society wherein individuals went into free arrangements for their creation and utilization with their conviction that opportunity of each was opportunity for all. Like Kropotkin, Tagore's vision of the ideal society in *Palli Prakriti* (Nature of the Village) is fixated on the unspoiled forestry open country and he mourns the deficiency of the independent provincial republics under the aegis of pilgrim organization. As he composed,

Once the village community was alive, and the vital force of the society used to flow from it. It was the seat of all our education and culture, religion and rituals. The great soul of the country used to find its expansion and nourishment in the villages. (Sen Gupta, 2005, p.42)

His Romantic yearning is elegantly expressed in “Janmantar” (Next Life):

I'm ready to give up enlightened civilization.  
I don't wish to be a leader of modern Bengal.  
I may not visit England nor receive a reward from the king.  
I would like to be a cowherd of Braja in my next life.  
I'll put out the light of civilization in my own home. (Tagore, 2002, p.369)

Yet we note that Rabindranath is neither a starry-eyed indigenist nor a diehard xenophobe. In fact he is an unabashed admirer of the British as cultured and civilized people. He wrote

I have a deep love and a great respect for the British race as human beings. It has produced great-hearted men, thinkers of great thoughts, doers of great deeds....We have felt the greatness of this people as we feel the sun. (Tagore, 1917, p.56)

He additionally conceded with incapacitating realism that Indians endure oppressive social limitations, need creative mind, are exorbitant in their propensities, have been a simple prey to avarice and control. He in this way loaned his unfit help for English schooling that would free the Indians from odd notion and scholarly stagnation.

Tagore's scholarly suspicions and feelings, most importantly, his writer's job or kabi-swadharna, hued his Weltanschauung. His perspectives on human existence on this planet are decisively arranged in his vision of a glorified reality where all inconsistencies, clashes, and contrasts are settled and break down into an enormous awareness of solidarity maintaining and undergirding the life of the universe of creatures. These others conscious viewpoint prompts the artist to admit,

I have arrived as a pilgrim on this great planet (mahatirtha) where the Deity of humanity (Naradebata sometimes referred to as Paramatman (Supersoul) or the Innermost Overman) presides over the history of all places and races. I sit under His throne to perform the uphill task of shedding my ego and all sense of discrimination. (Poddar, p.35)

As he proclaims in a poem titled Prabasi (Nonresident)

Sob thain mor ghar ache, ami sei ghar mari khunjiya.  
Deshe deshe mor desh ache, ami sei desh labo jujhiya.  
I search for my home that exists everywhere.

I'll struggle to get to my country that exists in all countries. (Sanchaita)

For Tagore, a genuine and solid person is never the referee of his predetermination. His life stays unfulfilled and blemished until he can communicate the Universal Man in him in idea and activity. Notwithstanding, this deepest being (Innermost Overman) stays covered up, open just to a man of equipoise (samahita) who has gone through a thorough routine of parsimonious good exercise and examination. The objective of human existence's excursion can't be found in genuine individuals with their genuine sufferings, strivings, battles, wins, and misfortunes. It dwells in the theoretical universe of soul. Tragically, the immaculateness and genuineness of a particularly grand vision (that has a revered artifact in India's scholarly history) in any case, it can't clarify why people, apparently honored with their inward fortune and strength, and notwithstanding their being joined by general tie, have not had the option to remake or reorder their general public. He in this way honors the Lord God of the universe, who Brought such countless outsiders close to Him and gave them cover in such countless homes charming so numerous removed others.

According to Arabinda Poddar,

Rabindranath placed an unquestioning reliance on the Upanisadic philosophy without bothering to examine critically its usefulness for the ongoing problems of life or the evolving newer thoughts. He was perhaps unconscious of any need for this. (Poddar, 33)

For Poddar, herein lies Tagore's philosophical failure.

Despite the fact that Tagore gave an overall thought of his mentality to a communitarian rustic life in Palli Prakriti, he didn't give a diagram to his favored nation like a Thales who arranged a confederation for the Ionian urban areas, or a Plato who composed the Republic, or a Rousseau (1712-78) who composed *Le contract social* (1762) and a constitution for the Polish-Lithuanian state, *Considerations sur le gouvernement de Pologne*. Surely his optimal *Gemeinschaft*, moved by agreement among illuminated and free lively residents, was really a Utopia, a "No place." But as Sibnarayan Ray notices, "the individuals who imagine any perfect world and need to run after its acknowledgment in the public arena... contradict settled in foundation, personal stakes and set up propensities and mores." While these issues do look straight at the visionary reformers, they don't invalidate the importance of their dreams. Then again, closes Ray, the issues comprise "difficulties to our good and innovative creativity, however the utopias offer us significant bearing towards commendable elective way of life." (Ray, 2006, p.79) indeed Tagore himself was very mindful of the optimistic element of his scrutinize of nationalism. In the finish of his talk "Nationalism in India" at the University of Illinois, Urbana on December 30, 1916, he conceded,

I am not an economist. I am willing to acknowledge that there is a law of demand and supply and an infatuation of man for more things than are good for him. And yet I will persist in believing that there is such a thing as the harmony of completeness in humanity, where poverty does not take away his riches, where defeat may lead him to victory, death to immortality, and where in the compensation of Eternal Justice those who are the last may yet have their insult transmuted into a golden triumph. (Tagore, p.99)

Tagore's so-called Utopia thus becomes, what Seyla Benhabib has called a practical-moral imperative.

Unmistakably Tagore's own scholarly and otherworldly make up provoked him to argue for an ideal universe of ecstasy and bonhomie, and for a gift mindset that thoroughly enjoys giving as opposed to get-together. A particularly human home, suggestive of the Augustinian City of God, can't be introduced the automated, coordinated, directed, controlled, and remuneration conditional universe of country expresses that looks like, to refer to St. Augustine's terms by and by, the City of Man. In spite of the fact that Tagore neglected to work out a palatable option perspective from the prevailing worldview of the Enlightenment thought of progress, force, and success by means of a dream of the changed express that conduces singular opportunity and even nearby self-governance, at the end of the day, a suitable vote based system, his vision of a communitarian Utopia, adumbrated in *Swadeshi Samaj* (1902), can't be effectively excused as an assortment of powerful garbage. Despite what might be expected, we should recognize the benefits of the huge region of Tagore's way of thinking that rouses us to endeavor to look for available resources to accomplish our actual opportunity. The rich collection of his contemplations constrains us to break out of our individual boxes; our narrow minded sense of self; and continues moving looking for something more noteworthy, more heavenly, and eventually more significant. Along these lines Tagore's respectable and wonderful humanistic vision, regardless of its clear hopeful dominance, guides us to the chance of cutting down the grand and superb Empyrean into the world that he saw seeping to death. To restore and mend it, he turned his face against pointless nationalism and its concern kid the country state.

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