This is an attempt to place Rabindranath in his historical context. I have tried to correlate his literary work with the historical aspect. Rabindranath has been judged from a rational point of view keeping in mind the chronological progression of his ideas; (a list of salient events in his life and work is appended to this preface). I have tried to elucidate his contribution in regard to social values with the society of his times and the morrow.

For the materials that I required to complete my thesis, I worked and took help from the National Library, Calcutta, Ramkrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta, the Library of the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta, Kharagpur IIT Library, Burdwan University Library and the Rabindra-Bhavan Library, Santiniketan. I am grateful to the librarians and the library staff of all these libraries for the co-operation that I have received from them. I am particularly grateful to Smt. Uma Das Gupta, who had assisted me to read in the Rabindra-Bhavan Library during my stay at Santiniketan in 1932. I am also grateful to Sri Sanat Bagchi, Curator of the Archives, Rabindra-Bhavan who had helped me a lot to go through the unpublished papers and letters of Rabindranath Tagore.

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Salient Events of Rabindranath's Career:

1861 Birth.

1873 First visit to Santiniketan; Visit to Himalayas with his father Devendranath Tagore.

1873-74 His early education — Normal School.

1875 Poem 'Hindumelar Upahar' read at the ninth session of the Hindu Mela.

1878-80 First visit to Europe.

1881-83 Composition of several works — Europe Pravasir Patra, Balmiki-Pratibha, Bhagnahridoy, Sandhyasangeet, Bouthakuranir Hat, Prabhat sangeet, Kalmrigova.

1884 Became the editor of the Adi Brahmo Samaj.

1885 Marriage with Mrinalini Devi. Foundation of the Indian National Congress.

1886 Composition of the song 'Amra milechi ai mayer dake' for the second session of the Indian National Congress.

1885-1900 Composition of different literary works like Kali O Komal, Manashi, Raja O Rani, Mantri-Abhisek, Sonar Tari, Some short stories, Chitra, Chaitali, Khanika, Chirakumar Sabha.

1900-1906 Meeting with Jagadish Chandra Bose — dedication of 'Khoya' to Jagadish Chandra Bose. Composition of Naivedya.
1901 Plan of establishing a Brahmovidyalaya — New realisation about religion.

1905 Partition of Bengal and the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal. Editor of 'Bhandar' Patrika. Composition of a series of Swadeshi songs like 'Amar Sonar Banga Ami Tomay Bhalabashi' or 'O Amar Desher Mati Tomar Pare Thekai Matha'. National Education Scheme — Speech at National Education Council — Co-operative ventures with other stalwarts of the time.

1907-1910 Another series of literary products — Gora, Geetanjali, Raja, Jivansmriti, Achalayatan, Dakghar.


1918 Visit to America. Composition of Nationalism and Personality. Visvabharati Scheme and the foundation of the Visvabharati.

1922-1923 Visits for fund-raising to Northern, Southern and Western regions of India.

1923-1924 The beginning of Sriniketan programme. Visit to China and also to Japan for one month. Visit to South America and Argentina.
1926-1927 Visits to Italy, Switzerland (Meeting with Rolland) and other countries of Europe. Visits to South-East Asia.

1928-1929 Some well-known literary products in this period — Mahua, Jogajog, Sesher Kabita, Tapati.

1930- Last visit to Europe — Germany and Geneva. Visit to USSR. Visits America also for the last time and art-exhibition in Euro-American countries. The slaughter of internees at Hijli and Rabindranath's reaction to it. The Civil Disobedience Movement by Mahatma Gandhi and the Poona Pact. Meeting with Einstein.

1933 Some well-known dance dramas were composed in this year — Chitrangada, Chandalika, Sapmochan etc.

1935 Sloyd training began at Sriniketan — Swedish ladies came to Santiniketan by the initiative of Lakshmiswar Singha.

1936 Address at the Convocation of the Calcutta University. Foundation of the Hindi Bhavan at Santiniketan.

1939 Effort to make Subhas Chandra Bose the Congress President. His correspondence with Subhas Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru. Subhas Bose's visit to Santiniketan.

1940 Composition of Navajatok and Sanai. The death of C. F. Andrews. His last visit to Santiniketan.

1941 The death of Rabindranath.