INTRODUCTION

Rabindranath Tagore is a great literary figure who has influenced the whole world not only through his writings but also by his active participations in different activities to promote the welfare of the common humanity. He has written plays poetry, novels and short stories. His imaginative writings are steeped in the colour of nationalism. To work out the concept of nationalism in his novels, it is relevant to explain briefly the meaning of nationalism in general and Tagore's idea of nationalism in particular.

The spirit of nationalism demands for each nationality an autonomous and independent government. Nationalism is based on two psychological factors – gregariousness and exclusiveness. The people who feel that they have their own peculiar social heritage, their own art and literature, they form a corporate entity. Recognising their likeness to one another and their differences from other men, they gather together and aim at a sovereign state
of their own. In this respect nationalism is an instinctive expression of kinship. As aptly said by Hayes:

Men may change their politics, their wives, their religion, their philosophies, they cannot change their grandfathers\(^1\).

But the group must also be conscious of its separateness from others and therefore, it will manifest and exclusiveness. Thus, nationalism is instinctively rooted in man's gregariousness whose psychological expression is kinship. Again, it implies the exclusive right of the people of a distinct group to lead an independent and separate existence. Hence nationalism is a spiritual and psychological feeling of unity having its roots in common past. The concept of liberal basis of nationalism may be understood with the sentence that we should have to do with others, what we expect from them. As within the given community citizens must respect the right of their fellow citizens so that they themselves may enjoy their own rights; similarly each nation having the right and obligation to defend its independent existence, it is expected to acknowledge the
same right to other nations. The liberal concept of nationalism is no doubt beneficial for humanity so far its theoretical merit is concerned but in practice it has degenerated into the rule by the brute.

Nationalism is a force sometimes making for democracy and the rights of man and sometimes leading to revolutionary upheavals. In some cases it has become aggressive and militant and has been responsible for the creation of empires. For nationalism men fight and die, struggle and suffer. So we may say that nationalism is a force which holds a community in a defined territory together for the maintenance of its rights against arbitrary power within the state. From without nationalism, however often leads to expansionism and imperialism.

Nationalism with its various dimensions and approaches remains a much debated topic. Early conceptions of nationalism were marked by an exclusive and particularistic vision represented in a bounding of self, society, state and nation. However, the recent scholarship has disrupted unitary notions of nationalism, emphasizing a
shift from the particular to the universal. This disruption and dispersion is framed by terms such as multiculturalism, interculturalism, cross-culturalism, transnationalism and postnationalism. In moving from the particular to the universal, Andrew Vincent (2002) argues:

Cosmopolitanism represents 'the most critical alternative to the logic of particularity'.

These concepts have brought considerable fluidity to traditional nations of nationalism – a move from exclusiveness to more permeable notions of exchange and interaction. The interplay between these concepts provide interesting theoretical understanding of the socio-political domain. The current debate on nationalism, it focuses on changing perceptions of nationalism, especially from the particular to the universal and seeks to understand how this development contains the seeds of a cosmopolitan vision.

Thinkers and critics often claim that nationalism has no ideology and is just a bundle in incoherent sentiments and there are too many kinds of nationalism to
lead any scholar to a coherent ideology. As characterized by Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983):

> It is difficult to pin-down a clear, coherent 'Nationalism' but it does seem to be howling goals of self-rule, territorial unification and cultural identity, and mostly a clear political and cultural programme for achieving their ends.

Nationalism as an ideology can be religious, secular, conservative, radical imperial – but these all are irregular pursuit of nationhood. Of the diverse range of meanings of nationalism, the most important are:

- a process of formation, or growth, of nations;
- a sentiment or consciousness of belonging to the nation;
- a language and symbolism of the nation;
- a social and political movement on behalf of the nation;
• a doctrine or ideology of the nation, both general and particular.

Various debates and arguments have been advanced regarding nation/nationalism/national identity both at the level of 'theory' and praxis. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism (1983)* argues how modern nations were 'imagined' into existence with the decline of the earlier socio-politico-religious formations.

Anderson further posits that the structure of the modern nations gets replicated in the realist novel and thus nations are collateral to narrations. Anderson's influential thesis have both been appropriated and contested by theorists like Homi Bhabha, Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak and Partha Chatterjee who point out the particularities in the conception and formulation of nationalism and nation in post colonial societies like India. Although, conceptualizations of the Indian nation cannot be said to have been initiated with the coming of postcolonial theory
but cannot be traced back to the nationalist theory of Indian history.

Cultural thinkers like Swami Vivekanand and Sri Aurobindo, political thinkers like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, B.R. Ambedkar and V.D. Savarkar and writer-philosophers like Rabindranath Tagore, owing to the exigencies of the time, have offered their views on the issue of nation and nationalism. All these thinkers sought to assert either a political or cultural unity of the nation in its struggle for independence and this was achieved, in the level of praxis, through the various social and political movements and also through their writings.

To summarise the basic elements of nationalism it is relevant to discuss following points:

• The world is divided into nations, each with its own character, history and destiny.

• The nation is the sole source of political power.

• Loyalty to nation over-rides all other loyalties.

• To be free, every individual must belong to a nation.
• Every nation requires free self-expression and autonomy.

• Global peace and injustice require a world of autonomous nations.

It is now largely accepted that the idea of nationalism/nation is essentially western in origin, which emerged with the growth of western capitalism and industrialization and was an important component of the project of imperialism. With the collapse of colonialism and the anti-colonial movements gaining grounds in the formerly colonized countries especially after World War II, the whole idea of 'the nation' came to be redefined in Benedict Anderson's book *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism (1983)* as a 'imagined community'; He says,

It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow – members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion (1991;6).
Nationalism in India emerged in peculiar circumstances of foreign subjugation. The British rule provided the outward unity so essential to the growth of nationalist feelings. S.R. Mehrotra has pointed out 'how a common yoke created disabilities and occasioned common grievances. These created common interests and sympathies, and served to unite the heterogeneous population of India in a common hatred of its foreign ruler. Secondly, the western innovations like the press, means of transportation and communication, a centralized administration and common official language contributed towards the unification of the Indian people and engendered a nationalist consciousness among them'.

Nationalism is both inspiration and memory; in India it was fostered by aspirations of political freedom, liberty and rights, by stimulating the latent fundamental forces of unity and oneness inherent in Indian culture and civilization. Nationalism is complex and powerful human phenomenon. To Tagore 'it was a powerful anesthetic under whose
influence the people could carry out a systematic programme of most virulent self-seeking\textsuperscript{15}.

Indian nationalism flourished both upon tradition and modernity; both of these were intermingled into a new blend. Western ideas were integrated with renaissance Hinduism. The Indian leaders imbibed western liberalism but they transmitted western concepts only by presenting them in an Indian garb. The principles of liberty, rights and freedom were translated into emancipation from foreign tyranny and despotism. Aurobindo spoke of nationalism as an \textit{avatar}, or an incarnation of God, which would emancipate humanity from demoniac oppression. Mahatma Gandhi gave the concept of Ram Rajya to explain the state of freedom to the common masses. The national movement in India was an event of immense importance for the country and it transformed the attitude and thinking of the people considerably. It was not merely a political struggle but an all pervasive emotional and ideological experience spread over a much longer period of time than any other
national revolution in world history. Quite naturally it gave a tremendous stimulus to creative writings in India.

Tagore's concept of nationalism is different from the common sway. But nationalism Tagore does not mean national vanity. His nationalism is international in spirit for he was a lover of humanity. He proclaimed his hatred of national vanity. Similarly, his patriotism love for the country, love for the world and lover for man and humanity. Love for the self, national or individual meant nothing more or less than committing suicide. He denounced the ugly aspects of patriotism better known as nationalism. While patriotism is a broader term nationalism is narrow one.

Tagore's concept of patriotism is best illustrated in his novel *Ghane Baire': (The Home and the World – 1916)*. It contains a suggestion of universalism. The whole novel revolves around three main characters, namely, Nikhil, the central figure, Bimala, his wife and Sandip, Nikhil's friend. Nikhil represents Tagore's thought, Sandip represents the revolutionaries of the then Bengal. Tagore portrayed the contrasting characters in such a way so that
the political differences could be revealed explicitly. The novel thus gives a clear idea of the novelist's concept of patriotism and it is an answer to his critics who misunderstood him and criticized that his sense of nationalism was subdued by his passion for internationalism. Tagore set himself through the character of Nikhil to prove that a man, who tyrannizes for the country, tyrannizes over the country.

In every country man has destroyed himself to the extent that he permitted slavery. He further emphasized that a nation which gives itself to immoral aggrandizement is on the road to disintegration, a nation which accepts predatory patriotism deforms its own ideals. This concept of Tagore's patriotism reminds us of Seneca's rebuke to his slave-holding countryman, can you explain that you have been robbed of the liberty which you have yourselves abolished with your own hand?" He could rise above nationalism and communalism and preached the religion of humanity which got the nomenclature 'The Religion of Man'. In fact Tagore was not bewitched by narrow sense of patriotism. Gradually
he could rise above all country and communalism and preached universalism which he termed the religion of man. Tagore unburdened himself through the statement recorded by Nikhil in the novel *Home and the World* thus:

> For the matter of that, I have become unpopular with all my countrymen because I have not joined them in their carousals. They are certain that either I have a longing for some title, or else that I am afraid of the police. The police on their side suspect me of harbouring some hidden design and protesting too much in my mildness.

When I really feel is this, that those who cannot find food for their enthusiasm in a knowledge of their country as it actually is, or those who cannot love men just because they are men, who needs must shout and defy their country in order to keep up their excitement these love excitement more than their country.
To try to give our infatuation a higher place than truth is a sign of inherent slavishness ... so long as we are impervious to truth and have to be moved by some hypnotic stimulus, we must know that we lack the capacity for self government. Whatever may be our condition, we shall either need some imaginary ghost or some actual medicine – man to terrorise over us. They accuse me of being unimaginative that it according to them, I may have oil in my lamp, but no flame. Now this is exactly the accusation which I bring against them. I would say to them. You are dark even as the flints are: You must come to violent conflicts and make a noise in order to produce your sparks. But their disconnected flashes merely assist your pride, and not your clear vision⁶.
Tagore's concept of Nationalism reminds us of the great words of Abraham Lincoln: "With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right – Let us strive on to finish the work we are in."

Tagore was proved to proclaim his hatred of national vanity all through his writings, where love for man has found its utterance. To him nationalism is the training of the whole people for a narrow ideal. Nationalism breeds imperialism leading to intense race antagonism resulting in the universal churning of jealousy, greed hatred and mutual suspicion. Tagore emphasized:

Every people, weak or strong, is constantly indulging in a violent dream of rendering itself thoroughly hurtful to others. In this galloping competition of hurtfulness on the slope of bottomless pit, no nation dares to stop or slow down. A scarlet fever which is raging, temperature has attacked the entire body politic of mankind and political passion has
taken the place of creative personality in all departments of life⁷.

Tagore clearly expresses and explains his concept of patriotism, the basis of his love for motherland thus;

When India suffers from injustice, it is right that we should stand against it, and the responsibility is ours to right the wrong, not as Indians but as human beings⁸.

Tagore accepts it that he loves India but his India is an idea not a geographical expression. Therefore Tagore is not a patriot. He had no love for geography, but for mankind. He always fought against the injustice and exploitation of man by man.

In the history of contemporary literature we do not find any one who fought and worked for humanity as Tagore did. His love for man was not confined to geographical boundary, it was universal. Tagore was misunderstood on this standpoint. Critics attacked Tagore by pointing out that his sense of nationalism was subdued by his passion for
internationalism. But critics failed to distinguish the two terms patriotism and nationalism so far as Tagore’s case was concerned. They used them synonymously. He was a true patriot, a patriot among patriots.

His concept of nationalism is different from the common wave of nationalism. Nationalism to him does not mean national vanity. He is proud to proclaim his hatred towards national vanity all through his writings. If patriotism means love for one’s own country, Tagore is definitely a patriot. But if, patriotism means something else, he is not a patriot, he himself confess it. His patriotism means love for the country, love for humanity and love for the world. For love of the self, whether national or individual meant nothing more or less than suicide. He did not believe in naked nationalism. His nationalism was international in outlook for he was the lover of humanity. His ideology may be discussed through his essay *Nationalism (1916)*, when he says;

In finding the solution of our problems we shall have helped to solve the world problem
as well. What India has been, the whole world
is now. The whole world is becoming one
country through scientific facility. And the
moment is arriving when you must also find a
basis of unity which is not political. If India
can offer to the world her solution, it will be a
contribution to humanity. There is only one
history – the history of man. All national
histories are merely chapters in the larger
one. And we are content in India to suffer for
such a great cause.

Each individual has his self-love. Therefore
his brute instinct leads him to fight with
others in the sole pursuit of his self interest.
But man has also his higher instincts of
sympathy and mutual help. The people who
are lacking in this higher moral power and
who therefore cannot combine in fellowship
with one another must perish or live in a
state of degradation. Only those people have
survived and achieved civilization who have this spirit of co-operation strong in them.\(^9\)

He proclaims his hatred of national vanity. He avoids the ugliest side of patriotism, better known as nationalism. To him nationalism is a training of the whole people for a narrow ideal. Nationalism breeds imperialism leading to intense race antagonism resulting in the universal churning of jealousy, greed, hatred and mutual suspicion. If nationalism means love for one's own country and hatred to others, then Tagore was not a nationalist. If nationalism, as Hayes observes, means pure patriotism, Tagore was definitely a nationalist. His love for the country does not debar him from loving other countries equally. If nationalism means a man satisfied with the narrow shell of territorial boundary Tagore is not a nationalist. He corroborated the views of Renan that the principle of the primordial right of race is as narrow and as fraught with danger for their progress.

Tagore is out and out an internationalist. For him the pride of place, should be given to internationalism.
Nationalism according to him harrows the way of thinking and confine him to narrow circle. It makes man selfish. He wants that all human beings should be given equal status in all spheres and so should be with the nations, for the fuller development. His patriotism and love for Mother India as well as ancient Indian culture and civilization is most deep rooted. He regards the world as the habitation of man's spirit and not a mere reservoir of political power. He accepts the ideal of genuine mingling of the heart of all races. According to him only a free and unconstrained development of the individuality of nations could provide the basis for a genuine universality. The close walls of nations have to be demolished and the foundations, he laid for racial synthesis and cultural co-operation. All elements that create barriers between people have to be substituted by the spirit of interdependence and brotherhood.

The law of jungle and the beast is to be replaced by international law and collective security. Men have to transcend suspicion, fear, disgust, lust and national egotism and practice the virtues of amity and national friendship. A
spirit of charity and co-operation is sine-qua-non to internationalism. Fellowship, friendship and humanity are to be achieved in place of creeds of organization, exploitation and aggressiveness. Tagore come forward to advocate internationalism by saying that it abolishes all artificial barriers which have been created in the name of national boundaries. Internationalism will end wars and mutual hostilities which various nations nourish due to their narrowness. Internationalism will synthesise world cultures to create a universal culture and a civilization will emerge which will be most acceptable to the universe as a whole. The people of the world would be wedded to fraternity. One nations concern will be the concern of all nations. There will be no arms-race and money thus saved shall be spent on the development of mankind.

Tagore in his Nationalism (1916), has dealt with the concept of nationalism in the west and Asia represented by Japan and India. He condemns not only aggressive nationalism, an anarchy, an extreme form of economic self-
sufficiency, patriotic snobbery, but also favours humanitarian nationalism.

The history of nationalism has shown the sequence from Humanity to Nationality to Bestiality. To avoid the sequence, Tagore felt the need of the development of an international mind and active internationalism to nationalism so that pride of place should be given to internationalism. Narrow nationalism, narrows the way of thinking and as such stunts exposition of one’s personality consequently, higher side of human nature is developed and hence man becomes selfish and prejudiced.

Tagore criticizes the western concept of nationalism in his book *Nationalism (1916)* 

….. the spirit of conflict and conquest is at the origin and in the centre of the western nationalism its basis is not social co-operation. It has evolved a perfect organization of power, but not spiritual idealism. It is like the pack of predatory creatures that must have its victims. With all
its heart, it cannot bear to see its hunting-
grounds converted into cultivated fields. In
fact, these nations are fighting among
themselves for the extension of their victims
and their reserve forests. Therefore the
western nations acts like a dam to check the
free flow of western civilization into the
country of the No-Nation. Because this
civilization is the civilization of power,
therefore it is exclusive; it is naturally
unwilling to open it is exclusive; it is naturally
unwilling to open its sources of power to those
whom it has selected for its purposes of
exploitation.\textsuperscript{10}

He has exposed the barrenness of the Western
nationalism. He is of the opinion that India has her own
ideals and it would be unwise to imitate the west, the west
gives the state all powerful position and, therefore
nationalism of the west centres round political state put
India all through her history has given society the priority
position and as such application of western nationalism would do more harm than good to India. He is definitely in favour of awakening national consciousness but was against importance and imitation of the western nationalism in our society-based civilization.

The tendency of the people of India imitate the western concept of nation, it provoked Tagore to take up a deeper study and analysis of nation and nationalism. He went through the books of European philosophers including Earnest Renon, a French philosopher on the subject. But he could not be and as such he took up the discussion of nation as he understood by the term. According to Renon, two things go to make up the sentiment of nationality, one of these lies in the past and the other in the present. The one is the possession in common of a rich heritage of memories, and the other is actual agreement, the desire to live together and the will to continue to make the most of the joint inheritance. They share the glories of the past and by common will in the present to have done great deeds together and to desire to do more – these are the essential
conditions of the people's being. According to Renon – 'To have suffered, rejoiced and hoped together makes a people nation.

Tagore is of the opinion that India is a country of divergent races, religion and language. She never sought for nationhood in the western concept of the term. Her mission has been to provide proper accommodation to numerous quests. The political history of India records invasion, conquest and subjugation of India by the foreigners but the social history of India is not concerned with those invasions and conquests but embracing all in her social fold. They came, lived and ultimately merged into one body. The assimilative potentiality of the old Indian civilization and social system was so immense that the earlier invaders like the Greeks, the Sakas and the Huns were absorbed within the fold of her population and completely lost their identity.

Therefore social history of India was more concerned with man, he be a Greek, or a Saka or a Hun or a Moghul or a Pathan. According to him:
To India has been her problem from the beginning of history – it is the race problem. Races, ethnologically different, have in this country came into close contact. This fact has been and still continues to be the most important one in our history\textsuperscript{11}.

The social history of India thus put an emphasis on man instead of the rulers. The Britishers came to India as a ruling body of men, as warriors and with the concept of 'nation'. They kept their separate identity. Tagore defined nation as a political and economic union of a people organized for a mechanical purpose. Nationalism is generally directed to a narrow channel affect adversely the interest of other countries. If love of one's country is taken to imply hatred for other countries. Such nationalism, according to Tagore, is bound to stand in the way of human development. It was the prevalence of such feelings among the French and Germans that resulted in war between the two countries. Every child in France was taught to hate the
Germans and vice-versa. Such feelings are not conducive to the maintenance of peace in the world.

Secondly, every nation tries to add its glory and prestige by conquering territories which is called imperialism. According to Tagore nationalism is an organized self-interest of the whole people and the organization of politics and commerce for selfish ends and an organized power for exploitation. It admits that individual citizens of one's nationality are always right whereas others are always wrong. It is prejudiced, and inhuman. He was critical of western nationalism. He believed that nationalism is the training of whole people for narrow ideal. It forks separation and hence against the ideal of the spiritual fellowship of man. He believed that Nationalism is a great menace. It breeds imperialism. It is an organized gregariousness and mechanical gluttony. It does not represent any principle of social co-operation or spiritual idealism. It is a political and economic organization oriented to exploit other races particularly of Asia and Africa.
Tagore advised the nations of the west to come out of their narrow shell and build a world community on the plane of harmony and co-operation. Only then the world can live in peace and durable peace can be guaranteed. It can never be attained by an organization like the league of nations or the United Nations Organisation, purely based on political edifice and to safeguard the interest of the 'Great Powers'. So he felt that there should be a meeting point between the East and the West to properly understand each other. The East with the creative ideal and the West with the magnificence of science can build a world where humanity can live prosper and develop in equal terms. Tagore's nationalism denotes love for one's own country devoid of hatred of other countries, it implies separation but not isolation, it recognizes the necessity of collaboration between nations but opposes the elimination of differences, free development and freedom to others to develop their virtues.

Nationalism has bright side also. Nationalism has released one from the shackles of feudalism. It has emancipated men from the tyranny of autocratic
imperialisms. None can deny it as a source of emotional sublimation. It enables man to transcend the bounds of the caste, the tribe and locality. We cannot ignore the merit of nationalism and they have given to the world their immortal works. Nationalism can check the tide of imperialism. Nationalism demands freedom and independence. Once independent people are prepared to make any sacrifice to maintain their independence. It is the growth of nationalism in Asia and Africa which demanded and still demanded that ending of imperialism on the continents.

Nationalism as a political concept, is not free from evils of modern nationalism received the attention of Rabindranath Tagore. Now, turning to Tagore's conception of nation and nationalism it may be pointed out that his book 'Nationalism' which is a compilation of his lectures on nationalism delivered in Japan and America in 1916 contains his views. His concept of nationalism is an elaborate explanation of his lecture on Race conflict, his lecture on January 30, 1913. The book on 'Nationalism' consists of three articles namely, (1) *Nationalism in the*
West, (2) Nationalism in Japan, (3) Nationalism in India. In these three articles Tagore has vividly discussed the three different forms of nationalism and showed how it led to the ruin of Europe. In the second article, Tagore expressed the idea that Japan under the umbrella of nationhood marched towards imperialism and in the last article 'Nationalism in India' he advocates that unlike the West, India sought unity in diversity.

Tagore's concept of nation and nationalism reveals some important trends which are important not only for India but for humanity as a whole. He exposed the barbaric character of modern nationalism in spite of the fact it has released man from the shackles of feudalism, provided people living in certain country to have an independent existence, contributed their distinctive share to the world civilization and literature, inculcated desire in the subject people to free themselves from the shackles of foreign rule, and promoted international harmony and co-operation. In practice it has not been so.
Nationalism has not only bred disharmony between the nation states, it has led to international discord, bitterness and strife. The spirit of exclusiveness and intolerance are the results of nationalism. Above all under the influence of narrow nationalism, love of one's own country has led to hatred for the other. This political nationalism, whose other name is patriotism is condemned by Tagore.

Tagore is influenced by Bankimchandra Chatterjee (1834-84) the greatest Indian novelist of 19th century. Bankimchandra is brave enough to go against the orthodoxy which believed in the security of tombstones and in that finality which can only belong to the lifeless. Tagore is influenced by the ideals of Bankimchandra, namely education for rationality, humanism and co-operation. One of the greatest ideals of Bankimchandra's philosophy is the sense of patriotism. Tagore took patriotism as a method of uplifting the society. Bankim is initially impressed by the freedom movement in Italy and America and the French
Revolution which was based on the triple object of liberty, equality and fraternity.

Bankim is also impressed by the patriotism, Chivalry, intellect, science and civilization of Europe but later on his impression changed into contempt. To him western concept of patriotism become brutal in the sense that it enriched their own society at the cost of others. Tagore also criticized the western concept of patriotism in which the society enriched at the cost of others. Tagore says about western civilization in his famous book *Nationalism* (1916):

> Of all things in western civilization, those which this Western Nation has given us in a most generous measure are law and order. While the small feeding-battle of our education is nearly dry, and sanitation sucks its own thumb in despair, the military organization, the magisterial offices the police, the Criminal Investigation Department, the secret spy system, attain to an abnormal
mirth in their waists occupying every inch of our country. This is to maintain order. But is not this order merely a negative good? Is it not for giving people's life greater opportunities of the freedom of development? Its perfection is the perfection of an egg-shell, whose true value lies in the security it affords to the chick and sits nourishment and not in the convenience it offers to the person at the break fast table. Mere-administration is unproductive; it is not creative, not being a living thing. It is a stream-roller, formidable in its weight and power, having its uses, but it does not help the soil to become fertile. When after its boon of peace we can but murmur under our breath that 'peace is good, but not more than life, which is God's own great boon'.

Not only Tagore but also Lokmanya Tilak and others were influenced by Bankimchandra's concept of
patriotism. His patriotism separated from politics helped the political movement of the country. Tagore, like Bankimchandra, always wanted to keep politics out of the orbit of patriotism. His patriotism aimed at achieving national integration, precisely, unity.

The main characteristics of Bankimchandra's genius is that he could feel the diversity of all existence; nevertheless, he tried to discuss them in its totality. He tried to create full manhood or character by which different problems of life could be solved and for the discovery of that manhood and character by which different problems of life could be solved. And for the discovery of that manhood and character references and helps were taken from Upanishads, Purans, Tantras, from natural sciences, utilitarianism, positivism etc. By assimilating all Bankimchandra tried to give shape of that totality of man. After Bankimchandra, Swami Vivekananda visualized that totality of life. Rabindranath also tried to keep that trend and outlook but he did not take Bankimchandra's philosophy in its entirety. Tagore's basis of his philosophy is
to rouse humanity and in the different aspects of his philosophy he had reference too, although he did not discuss it elaborately.

Bankimchandra devoted himself in creative service based on Aitreya Brahmana, the cult of the Charaivati. Rabindranath was inspired in this respect by Bankimchandra's novels. But Tagore goes for beyond the limits set by Bankimchandra in the matter of taste and ethics. Pantha Chatterjee argues that 'Bankim's choice of Hindu religion was governed by the fact that the majority of the people of India practiced some or the other form of Hinduism. But since the 'Hindu' religion become enmeshed nationalism, the national culture project included a necessity to define a distinct cultural identity for the nation to assert its claim to modernity. It was also to find a viable cultural basis for the convergence of the national and the popular, Hinduism, was therefore seen as the religion that could provide Indian nationalism with viable cultural foundation of nationhood'\textsuperscript{13}. 
Bankimchandra Chatterjee construction of Hindu nation was determined on the basis of two primary reasons. First, the large popular basis that Hinduism provided, and second, the spiritual qualities of Hinduism highlighted by the orientalists, which became the essential markers of cultural identify of India. According to Pantha Chatterjee Bankim's nationalist thought was,

born out of the encounter of a patriotic consciousness with the framework of knowledge imposed upon it by colonialism. It leads inevitably to an elitism of the intelligentsia, rooted in the vision of a radical regeneration of national culture\textsuperscript{14}.

Bankim quite likely draws on Bengal's cultural and religious practices of worshipping the goddess as mother. Just as goddess Durga and Goddess Kali are worshipped, Bankimchandra analogically creates the image of Mother India in his novel \textit{Anandamath} as well as creates the song 'Bande Mataram' deifying her. The figure of mother was made to stand for the geographical entity, India. It is
perhaps for the first time the association of the mother with birth land is made. This idea become popular in Bengal's emerging nationalist movements, it gradually came to be extended to the whole of India.

Bankim is \textit{Anandmath}, portrays an aggressive assertion of one's patriotism, valorizes the spirit of militancy, and justifies the use of violence for national regeneration. The slogan 'Bande Mataram' becomes a battle cry. He espouses the need to develop the physical abilities and establishes the protection of oneself one's family and one's country as the duty (dharma) of every individual. Bankim promotes ascetic masculine behaviour and martial valour but balances it with values of justice. The exemplar is his reconstructed Lord Krishna, who embodies martial valour with compassion and forgiveness.

Thus, he prescribes disciplined martial conduct for the nation as an ethical category. When we consider Bankim's account of Bengali people as largely effeminate, his emphasis on a very masculinist militant nationalism stand justified. Partha Chatterjee argues that 'on the one
hand where Bankim was drawn towards the rationality, historicity and scientific temper of European Enlightenment, on the other hand, he surrendered to emotionalism and was bent on accepting the imaginary authenticity of a glorious Hindu past. However Bankim's conservatism was not to make a return to the past, but to prepare an ideology of a rational and modern religion suitable for the nation. His stance at once addressed the crucial issue of power in the historical project of nationalism.\textsuperscript{15}

It was Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay who had first made an emblem of the country as mother in the song \textit{Vande Mataram}. The song which was originally written to fill out a gap in his journal \textit{Bangadarshan}, the song found its political context in his protonationalist novel \textit{Anandmath}. The novel with its apparently collaborationist tag became the parable of the militant nationalism. The emphasis on the crisis-ridden social order provides the fitting context for the rhetoric invoked by Bankim in a mixture of Sanskrit and Bengali. The invention of tradition is so successful that it became the slogan of all militant nationalism.
The song *Vande Mataram*, is however, merely an item in the far more consistent effort of Bankim-Chandra to politicise the mother goddess image. We begin to notice a new domain emerging. In their intense search for what may be considered their own, Bengali writers often turned to that intensely Bengali festival of the autumnal worship of Durga. Bankim attempts a concentrated building up of the religious sphere of Shakti worship into a political domain.

Bankim has tried to historicise this metaphor of the mother goddess as the motherland. In a very early piece published in 1873 in his own journal *Bangadarshan*, Bankim interprets the ten forms of the mother goddess as *Dasamahavidya* and sees the evolution of the Indian society in the ten successive forms, right from the past when the Indian society will be prosperous and bountiful. One may say that, this is a very early prefiguration of the famous series of Mother images mentioned in *Anandamath*, the fiction that gave a shape and form to militant nationalism. This is the novel in which the full span of the condition of India's question is to be found in the three successive
images of the mother goddess, corresponding to past, present and the future of Indian history.

In his presentation of the present misery Bankimchandra criticizes Muslim as well as British rule and thus creates one of the most powerful icons of nationalist struggle. The description of the three images, "mother that was, mother that is, mother that will be", deserves to be quoted in full. This occurs in the eleventh chapter of the first part of the novel *Anandamath*. Bankim's contribution to Indian nationalism and the history of national iconography is significant. His conflating of the idea of the birth land with the mother, goddess at once had a popular appeal for it, drew on the vocabulary of religious cultures. The service to the nation was seen as service to the mother goddess where the individual/citizen becomes a devotee or a worshiper. At the same time his elevation of the nation to the level of a goddess also extends the Hindu pantheon. Bankim's brand of religious nationalism helped in laying the foundation of nationhood and crystallizing a sense of
national identity in India. Bankim's concept of nation and nationalism however, did not go uncontested.

Although Rabindranath Tagore is an admirer of Bankim, critiqued his idea of militant nationalism. For Tagore such a seductive and emotionally appealing nationalism could not be without its pitfalls. And this is what he undertakes to unravel in his novels *Gora, Ghare Baire* and *Char Adhyay*.

In the novel *Gora*, the narrative is in the form of debates, arguments and discussion among the characters Gora, Binay Sucharita and Ponesh Babu. For Tagore the 'nationalism creates love for the country, spirit of fellow-feeling, preservation of the diversities of the national cultures and healthy spirit of national rivalry'\(^{16}\).

The differences in opinion and attitude between Tagore and Gandhi are well-known to we people. Tagore has condemned the non-cooperation movement of Mahatma Gandhi in his letter to Gandhi that the movement is as asceticism and 'orgy of frightfulness' which found a disinterested delight in unmeaning devastation, a struggle to
alienate our heart and mind from those of the west. This Non-Cooperation Movement is 'an attempt as spiritual suicide', it has been quoted often enough at clinching evidence of their very basic disagreement regarding the road to a better future for India'.

Tagore and Gandhi both were in many ways, typical products of nineteenth century India. Central to the intellectual and moral concerns of that time was the attempt to grapple with the colonial experience.

Gandhi has purified and spiritualized politics and imparted to it a religious fervour. He gave a new dimension to the age old concept of non-violence and tried it as a successful moral force against injustice. His Satyagraha (Satya + Agraha) insisted on truth, based on non-violence and love force or truth force. Gandhi’s chief contribution was to free the Indian psyche from the shackles of slave mentality and infusing it with self respect and human dignity.

The basic Gandhian objective was Sarvodaya (welfare of all). The Gandhian movements were directed
against the British rule as well as against the evils of the Indian society like untouchability, child marriage, subordination of women etc. Gandhi believed in the purity of means, he rejected the theory that end justifies the means. He believed in the change of heart theory. He held that self-suffering, by non-violent satyagrahis could bring out the good in every man.

He made it clear that there was no contradiction between one's loyalty to the nation and to one's religion. One could be nationalist as well as a loyal to Islam. He did not believe in narrow nationalism like Tagore and held that it was impossible for one to be international without being a nationalist.

The affinities between Tagore and Gandhi can be traced to a large extent to the shared concerns of the 19th century Indian intelligentsiya, trying to work out world-views and agenda in the context of their colonial experience. Gandhi delineated his ideas in 'Hind Swaraj' in detail. He held in this tract that India was not conquered by sword but she chose to deliver herself into the hands of the foreigners.
No power on the earth can rule against the will of the people; if Indians withdraw their cooperation, they (Britishers) will have to go. He further held that India would not be really free, unless it completely rejected the western civilization and revived its own ancient system of society, economy and polity.

The western civilization was corrupting and demoralizing India. In order to recover its soul, Gandhi warned that it was necessary to reject the modern civilization totally, its techniques, machinery, materialist oriented education, irreligious culture, its parliamentary form of government. But at this juncture Tagore objects to Gandhi that we can learn a lot to from the western civilization like science, technology, modern machinery and lot of new things which provides facilities to our life style.

Gandhi’s first elaborate comment on the Indian problems in his *Hind Swaraj*, identified one basic evil, modern civilization. It was threat to all that was worthwhile in human values, not only in India but the world over. The British, as the victims of this pandemic, were to be pitied,
not hated. It was not any race or nation but modern civilization itself and the Indian infatuation with it that oppressed India. At the heart of that evil civilization was the perception of man as a creature of desires and capitalism had a vested interest in wheeling these desires. Multiplications of wants hence become the \textit{sine qua non} of the entire system which dehumanized man, illegitimized violence against nature and deprived life fall meaning and purpose beyond the endless fulfilment of desires.

The end result of such soul-destroying pursuits were loss of all autonomy, mutual suspicion and violence and the exploitation of man by man. Man both as worker and consumer, had become slave to machines. Imperialism and racism were of highly dubious nature. Modern medicine produced patterns of dependence which were highly unnatural and modern transport, far from making life easier, actually helped spread diseases. Wisdom has been reduced to knowledge in quest of power and morality, equated with enlightened self-interest, had become a form of prudence. In the words of Gandhi the much-vaunted
dynamism of the west was little-more than mindless activism.

Only on two points 'Gandhi was willing to concede some moral merits to modern civilization. He admired its spirit of scientific enquiry far he saw it a genuine quest for truth. He also found much to learn in the organizational aspect of Western life; the civil virtues were informed by the moral qualities of discipline and co-operation'.

Despite his great admiration for many features of Western life, Tagore was essentially in agreement with Gandhi's judgement. Gandhi described Indian infatuation with the west as *maha*, the high road to cultural suicide. Tagore compared the Western impact with disease. He did add by way of apology and explanation:

Everything is far the good in its own place;

but even what is good becomes dangerous

rubbish in an inappropriate setting.

His multifaceted critique of the west focused on certain basic themes which recur again in his writings.
Gandhi wrote that money was their God. Tagore states the same idea in a more elaborate language:

Every feature of Western civilization is an item commanding very high price. Everything from pleasure to warfare costs a great deal of money. Money has become a great power as a result and the worship of money now surpasses all other forms of worship. Everything is therefore difficult to achieve or attain, everything is shrouded in complexity. This is the greatest weakness of western civilization\(^20\).

Gandhi had condemned its mindless activism. He saw in its excessive effort a sign of inherent weakness, an unnecessary over-expenditure of energy for which there was always a price to pay. In Europe there were always signs that nature was calling for repayment.

The excess of activism generates a poison of discontent. The monstrous factories engulfed in black smoke deprive men of their life protecting cover of solitude-
of space, time and own company. Hence at every opportunity they try desperately to escape from themselves through drink and reckless guest for pleasure. The affluent hedonists are not much better off. They are fagged out by the endless pursuit of fresh excitement.

They whirl themselves around like dry leaves in a storm of parties, horse race, hunting and travel. In the midst of such whirlwind, they fail to see clearly either themselves or the world around them; everything appears obscure and indistinct. If the continuous cycle of pleasure stops for a moment, they find even that momentary encounter with self, the experience of unity with a wider world intolerable in the extreme\textsuperscript{21}.

Tagore was equivocal in his rejection of this material civilization. He did not believe in it, he wrote to Gandhi, as he did not believe in it, 'physical body to be the highest truth in man'\textsuperscript{22}. If Gandhi condemned the totality of modern civilization as evil to Tagore its supreme evil
consisted in nationalism, which separated man from man and led to destructive conflict. Gadhi, the leader of India's non-violent nationalism, provided in his writings, indirect support for such views. He saw Europe's greed for territories as a function of her aggressive nationalism. The nationalism, he prescribed for India was one which would not ignore the interest of other nations, nor make even one's own community its primary concern. It is stated by Tagore in his book *Greater India*:

> Our relationships extended to the most distant connections, continued unrelaxed with children even when grown up, and included neighbours and villagers irrespective of race or caste. The householder was bound by family ties to preceptor and teacher, guest and wayfarer, landlord and tenant, - not ties prescribed by religion or law, but of the heart. Some were as fathers, others as sons, some as brothers, others as intimates. Whomsoever we came into contact with me drew into the circle
of relationship. So we never got into the habit of looking on man as a machine, or a tool, for the furtherance of some interest\textsuperscript{23}.

He saw an essential balance, an element of unity between the various aspects of their existence in the life of the peasants in rural India. Like Gandhi, he too was extremely suspicious of centralized state power. Only, he went further to reject the need for nationhood which raised barriers between man and man led to vicious conflict. He agenda for national reconstruction, like Gandhi’s, emphasized the rural unit rather than the grand edifice of the state.

Tagore’s conception of \textit{Kalyan} uniting the entire society bear close resemblance to Gandhi’s idea of \textit{Sarvodaya}. Tagore’s efforts were not limited to prescription. He did set up an organization to implement his programmes and his Sri-niketan was something more than the craft school. Its purpose was rural reconstruction through training in productive crafts suitable for rural society. And while Santiniketan embodied the ideal of universal man,
with its emphasis on simple living, joyous education and unity with nature.

Gandhian thought and movements provided immense creative impetus to contemporary literature. His mass movement aroused an all India consciousness and surpassed all regional, communal and religious boundaries. The result of his efforts was the emergence of a definite national identity. Tagore rejected what he believed to be the negative implications of Non-cooperation movement in terms of his values. These were not very different from what Gandhi stood for. Only Gandhi did not see Non-cooperation as a threat to his universal values. He too, like Tagore saw the movement as a step towards the moral liberation of all men. Gandhi’s nationalism is not exclusive nor is it aggressive. It is inclusive and comprehensive. So he gives us not only an all India outlook but a human outlook which transferred the geographical limitation of a country.

The concept of nationalism of Gandhi, Bankim and Tagore, is seen clearly in the novels *Gora (1909), Home and the World (1916), and Char Adhyay (1934)*, Bankim's
militant nationalism is represented through the characters like Sandip of *Home and the World*, and Indranath of *Char Adhyay* whereas Bimala, of *Home and the World* is representative of matter India (motherland) like Ela of Char Adhyay. Non-cooperation movement of Gandhi has been criticized by Tagore in the novel *Home and the World*, by the representation of the band of nationalists who burned the goods of the small traders. Similarly, the revolutionaries, headed by Indranath the national cause is also a critique of militant nationalism of Bankim and non-cooperation movement of Gandhi by Tagore. The boycott of foreign goods, and burning of foreign clothes by the Sandip's group of revolutionaries, is a critique of Gandhian Non-cooperation movement by Tagore.

The followers of Indranath in *Char Adhyay* has robbed the government property for the help of nationalist movement is condemned by Tagore because such revolutionaries robbed the petty-traders in the nature of national movement. Nikhil of *Home and the World* is the true representative of Tagore's concept of nationalism. Nikhil
is the victim of militant nationalism (Bankim's brand of nationalism), headed by Sandip. Nikhil is murdered in a communal riot by the group of revolutionaries headed by Sandip, to whom Nikhil supports financially all the time in the name of the Swadshi movement.

Atindra or Atin of Char Adhyay is another victim of militant nationalism of Bankimchandra. The love of Atn and Ela is crushed out in the name of sacrifice for the nation. In this way Tagore has criticised Bankim's brand of nationalism through the characters like Bimala, Sandip, Indranath, Gora and Krishnadayal. He shows how this kind of nationalism is a threat to the welfare of the common men. Gandhi's non-cooperation movement is also criticized by Tagore through the novel *Home and the World*, *Gora* and *Char Adhyay*. It is presented through the revolutionaries, who has burned the goods of the petty-traders, robbed a poor widow to collect money for the movement and jobbed the government property for the nation.

Today when the world is groping in crisis, when the nations of the world are busy in national egotism,
exploitation and aggressiveness, when the cold war has every potentiality of conflagration. Tagore's message of unity, harmony, cooperation, fellowship, friendship and fraternity and human relationship can save the world from going back to the law of the jungle. To a world which is wild with the delirium of hatred conflicts and greed, Tagore's message of unity in diversity harmony and cooperation will be a heroic remedy of that desperate evil.

The world to him is the habitation of man's spirit and not a mere reservoir of political power. Here lies the genius of poet, novelist and political prophet Rabindranath Tagore. In his writings Tagore sought unity of mankind. He condemned all forms of partisanism, parochialism, narrowness and self-centeredness. Therefore, Tagore sought for unity of mankind for a prosperous peaceful world. And he was prepared to walk alone to his Goal. He was not prepared to wait for tomorrow since tomorrow dies in the womb of today.

Tagore's idea of nationalism differs considerably from that of Bankim's idea of nationalism. He in fact has
severely critiqued Bankim’s variety of militant nationalism. Rabindranath Tagore offers a humanist idea of the nation that is all inclusive and tolerant based on the idea of a plural society as encoded in Hindu civilization.

Tagore emphasizes the idea of a cultural nation as against the political nation, which he feels is mechanized in its organization and serves only its-self-interest. He stresses that individuals belonging to the nation should bear moral and spiritual authority and should not be bound by some ulterior motives. He has adopted the autobiographical mode for the three prominent characters of his novel, Nikhil, Sandip and Bimala in *The Home and the World*. This is arranged in a dialogic fashion and it is appropriate to his conceptualization of the nation and nationalism.

To work out Tagore's concept of nationalism it is relevant to discuss it with the reference to his major novels in which nationalism has been discussed at length. His concept of nationalism will be worked out in detail in the further chapters of the thesis like – (1) Nationalism and
Gora, (2) Nationalism and Home and the world, and (3) Four chapters and other Novels.
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