

Nationalism among the Novels of Rabindernath Tagore

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Abstract

Rabindranath Tagore occupies a distinctive position in Indian English and Bengali literature, particularly for his critical engagement with nationalism, colonialism, identity, and humanism. His novels provide a nuanced representation of the social and political conditions of colonial India and explore the complex relationship between individual freedom, national identity, community, and universal humanity. This paper examines the theme of nationalism in selected novels of Rabindranath Tagore, with particular reference to *The Home and the World*, *Gora*, and *Four Chapters*. Tagore's treatment of nationalism moves beyond political resistance and examines its psychological, social, cultural, and ethical dimensions. In *The Home and the World*, the Swadeshi movement becomes a context for exploring competing ideas of patriotism, political activism, gender, and individual morality. *Gora* engages with questions of religious identity, caste, cultural belonging, and the meaning of being Indian, while *Four Chapters* presents the tensions between revolutionary nationalism and individual relationships. The paper argues that Tagore's literary representation of nationalism is complex rather than narrowly political. He recognizes the importance of cultural and national consciousness while simultaneously questioning forms of nationalism that suppress individual freedom, human dignity, or universal values. His vision ultimately places humanism and ethical responsibility alongside national identity. Through a textual and critical analysis of the selected novels, the study highlights Tagore's contribution to debates surrounding Indian nationalism and demonstrates the continuing relevance of his ideas in understanding nation, identity, freedom, and humanity.

Keywords: Rabindranath Tagore, Nationalism, Indian Literature, Colonialism, Humanism, National Identity, Swadeshi Movement, *Gora*, *The Home and the World*, *Four Chapters*