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## **Tagore's Notion of Nationalism and Nation State: A Potential Solution to Fundamentalist Nationalism in Post-Independence India?**

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*“...Where the world has not been broken up into fragments  
By narrow domestic walls...  
...Into that heaven of freedom, My Father, let my country awake.”*

*-Tagore Rabindranath, Song Offerings, 1912*

### **Abstract**

*Early in January 2015, India saw renowned Tamil writer Perumal Murugal declare the demise of his own authorial self following his forced submission to caste group protests against one of his recent novels. The administration, both in the state and in the centre kept themselves mute in spite of the massive protests that emerged, giving rise to perhaps the most popular political debate India has seen since her independence—the intolerance debate. The murder of Prof. Kalburgi on August 30 by Hindu activists, the Dadri incident of a Muslim family being attacked by a Hindu crowd in late September, followed by beef activism and beef ban in BJP ruled states like Maharashtra clearly brought forth 2015 as what The Indian Express termed as 'The year India discovered intolerance'. However, it has to be understood that the massive media coverage of one instance of religious intolerance in Dadri does not make India more intolerant than it had been before, at least in the post-independent era. Starting with tribal human rights issues just after independence to the governmental policies of “divide and please” with Operation Bluestar, the Shah Bano case and the verdicts on the Ram-Janmabhoomi dispute, India has undoubtedly, always been a place for racial and religious infighting – both implicit and explicit.*

*The genius of Tagore had effectively foreseen this predicament back in the 1890s. In his words, “Her [India's] problem was the problem of the world in miniature. India is too vast in its area and too diverse in its races. It is many countries packed in one geographical receptacle”. Tagore understood the perils that the development of nationalism in such a predicament posed to what he called the Indian samaj. Post 1917, following the publication of his book Nationalism, Tagore emerged as a critique of the modern nation-state. So were Romain Rolland from France and Albert Einstein from Germany. Furthermore, his three novels—Ghore Baire, Char Odhyay and Gora brings out his disregard about nationalism*

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and his affinity towards higher non-sectarian humanist politics. This paper brings into bold relief how Tagore's concepts of nationalism and nation, merged with his notion of multiculturalism and samaj provides a ground for the elimination of the predicament of identity based modern nationalism in the Indian scenario. In attempting to do so, it will look into the Tagore's notion of nation, nation-state and nationalism as is presented in his lectures on nationalism in Japan and in the USA (May to September, 1916), and two of his novels which is very much built around these concepts as a political tool—Ghore Baire (*The Home and The World*) and *Gora*. The paper then elucidates on an alternative construct as was proposed by Tagore—the Samaj. Finally, the conclusion leads us to an analysis of whether the alternative construct of the Samaj would be an effective solution to the growing identity based militant nationalism in the sub-continent.

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**1. Introduction:** The multifaceted genius of Tagore ended the last day of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by penning down the poem *The Sunset of the Century* – a poem in which he effectively launched a fierce attack on the notion of nationalism. Born into an era of increasing tensions among the superpowers of Europe, and the ever - growing nationalist movement in India, Tagore, in an attempt to directly attack the modern institution of the nation state, wrote -

*“The last sun of the century sets amidst the blood red clouds of the West and the whirlwind of hatred.*

*The naked passion of self-love of Nations, in its drunken delirium of greed is dancing to the clash of steel and the howling verses of vengeance.*

*The hungry self of the Nation shall burst in a violence of fury from its own shameless feeding.*

*For it has made the world its food,*

*And licking it, crunching it, and swallowing it in big morsels,*

*It swells and swells*

*Till in the midst of its unholy feast descends the sudden heaven piercing its heart of grossness.”*

An anti-nationalitarian tendency is very evident from these words. The sentiment of nationalism being the root cause of war, aggression and death remains at the core of Tagore's teachings. Yet, he is referred to as the greatest nationalist figure of the Bengali renaissance. Indeed, Tagore's greatest legacy lies in the fact that three nation-states of the world today—namely, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, owe their national anthems to this anti-nationalitarian genius. And this poses a serious conundrum in the study of Tagore's ideas on nation and nationalism.

In a bid to effectively understand and solve this conundrum, it has to be understood that Tagore was opposed to the concept of nationalism in its military or aggressive sense—what could, truly be referred to as hyper nationalism. He was an ardent believer of an interactive world, a world of dialogue among civilizations and societies. The principle of universality would be the base of such a world, where nations would not be guided solely by self-love and self-gratification, but be a part of a higher enlightened community of societies. Tagore

also envisioned an inter-civilizational alliance – a synthesis of the East and the West, and a symbiosis of all world civilization in the larger context. Indeed, he was unhappy with the “moral cannibalism” that the colonial powers were resorting to in their colonies in the pursuit of their own political and economic interests. And yet, he fervently hoped for the day when the two would meet. In a letter to Foss Westcott, he wrote, “Believe me, nothing would give me greater happiness than to see the people of the West and the East march in a common crusade against all that robs the human spirit of its significance”.

**2. Tagore's 'dis-ease' with the Nation State and Nationalism:** Benedict Anderson defined nation as an “imagined community”. Most social scientists maintain that the notion of nation is “notoriously difficult to define, let alone to analyze”. However, in spite of such complexity in defining the institution of nation in the literature of political studies, Tagore was explicitly and excessively clear about his idea of nation. In spite of being a poet and heavily resorting to similes and imageries in most of his text on nation and nationalism, Tagore is rather straight and amazingly vivid when it comes to question of the nation. A nation, Tagore emphasized, is 'a political and economic union of people' and 'is that aspect which a whole population assumes when organized for a mechanical purpose'. For Tagore, the institution of the nation is essentially modern and western. The 'mechanical purpose' of the nation state implies an instrumental rationality in its political form. This nation has a purpose—the purpose of self-determination and enforcement in the human civilization and fulfillment of its political and economic interests – and this is ensured by the institution of the State. Tagore's nation is, thus, essentially a nation state. Tagore's conceptualization of nationalism is very similar to that of Earnest Gellner, who emphasizes on an ideology of nationalism which creates nations rather than pre-existing nations developing nationalism.

Tagore further goes on to emphasize that when “this organization of politics and commerce, whose other name is the Nation, becomes all powerful at the cost of the higher social life, then it is an evil day for humanity”. Tagore contrasts the dehumanized and mechanical Western civilization and the nation that developed out of it to the indigenous societal groups in India. His is a clarion call to the East, a warning, to not be mesmerized by the lure of this glittering institution of the Nation. He calls upon the world “not merely the subject races, but you who live under the delusion that you are free, are everyday sacrificing your freedom and humanity to this fetish of nationalism, living in the dense poisonous atmosphere of world wide suspicion and greed and panic...”

Partha Chatterjee in his article *Rabindrik Nation Ki*, which can be translated as ‘What is Tagore’s nation?’ points out that Tagore had predicted the impermanence of nations and the emergence of a union of nations and that, as creations of history, nations would come and go. From his writings and utterances on nationalism we see an anti-national Tagore, one who disengages himself from power structures and power struggles and one whose distaste for the ‘nation’ arises from the belief that it would crush individual freedom. Tagore rejects the political notion of commercial and aggressive nationalism followed by militarily stronger societies of the West in its entirety. He rather looks forward to a neo-national universal world order where societies would not be divided up or ranked in an order of

hierarchy by such nationalism that brought into life Thucydides' ancient maxim of "large nations do what they wish, while small nations accept what they must". In his article "Imagining One World: Rabindranath Tagore's Critique of Nationalism", Mohamed A. Quayum stated -

*"India's myriad-minded poet, Rabindranath Tagore—whom Bertrand Russell considered "worthy of the highest honour", and Ezra Pound deemed "greater than any of us" as a poet—shared not an iota of positive sentiment towards the ideology. His foremost objection came from its very nature and purpose as an institution. The very fact that it is a social institution, a mechanical organization, modeled on certain utilitarian objectives in mind, made it unpalatable to Tagore, who was a champion of creation over construction, imagination over reason and the natural over the artificial and the man-made: "Construction is for a purpose, it expresses our wants; but creation is for itself, it expresses our very beings" ("Construction versus Creation," Soares 59)."*

Tagore's portrait of nationalism automatically flows from his portrayal of the institution of nation-state. Tagore was of the opinion that nationalism is only an "organization of politics and commerce", that brings "harvests of wealth" by "spreading tentacles of greed, selfishness, power and prosperity". Nationalism, according to Tagore, is not "a spontaneous self-expression of man as social being," where human relationships are naturally regulated, "so that men can develop ideals of life in co-operation with one another", but rather a political and commercial union of a group of people, in which they congregate to maximize their profit, progress and power. It is "the organized self-interest of a people, where it is least human and least spiritual". Tagore saw nationalism as a recurrent threat to humanity, because with its propensity for the material and the rational, it trampled over the human spirit, human morality and human emotion, "obscuring his human side under the shadow of soul-less organization".

Tagore saw his greatest example of the perverted Nation in the British colonialism in India. The British colonialism found its moral justification on the grounds of nationalism. The colonizers justified their colonial adventures and exploits as the white man's burden to spread civilization to the rest of the world. However the developing countries were only turned into 'hunting grounds' for mere self-interests of the colonizing nation. Tagore opines that all the problems in colonial India as rooted in one simple fact—that is the "abstract being, the Nation [the English nation] is ruling India".

Nationalism, thus, as Tagore notes, "is a great menace, it is the particular thing which for years had been at the bottom of India's troubles". Britain was sent "the gorgeous temptation of wealth [by God]. She has accepted it and her civilization of humanity has lost its path in the wilderness of machinery... This commercialism with all its barbarity of ugly decorations is a terrible menace to all humanity".

### 3. Nationalism in India: A social problem?

Tagore was indeed very much opposed to the notion of a nation state, but he was even more opposed to India as a society joining this league of nations and bandwagon of nationalism.

*“We, in India, must make up our minds that we cannot borrow other people’s history, and that if we stifle our own we are committing suicide. When you borrow things that do not belong to your life, they only serve to crush your life. . . I believe that it does India no good to compete with Western civilization in its own field. . . India is no beggar of the West.”*

“Our real problem in India is not political. It is social”. Thus started Tagore's essay on modern day nationalism and its prospects in India, written in 1916. He believes that the West has seen exclusive domination of politics on social ideals – and this is what India is, very wrongly trying to imitate. The very foundations of civilizations in the West and in India was based on completely different circumstances, challenged and supported by completely different and myriad factors. Civilizations in the West, or Europe to be precise, were founded under circumstances of racial unity and scarce natural resources. In this regard, communities within the Western civilization very naturally resorted to what Tagore termed as “political and commercial aggressiveness” - uniting amongst themselves on the basis of their common identity to secure resources that were deemed essential for quotidian survival. And this spirit continues down to the colonial period—where nation-states organize and go about exploiting the whole world.

The Indian civilization, on the other hand, came into being under entirely opposite circumstances. She had the massive problem of race that was constantly posed to her throughout different epochs in her history. This does not, however, imply that India was the only nation to witness the problem of race. America too had witnessed it, where it had turned into a history of systematic exterminations of natives like the Red Indians. The problem of race that had been posed before India has never been dealt with a violent extermination of minorities. It is precisely because of this reason that India tends to lack unity when it tries to project itself as a political entity.

According to Tagore, “India has never had a real sense of nationalism”. Indians educated in Western history and ideals are trying to borrow this history of nationalism as it had developed in the west. This would do no good to the Indian civilization. Indians must understand that the history of Man is the history of both the East and the West. India must not consider herself merely as a 'beggar of the West' – she too has her own contribution to make in the history of civilizations. And this contribution is the attempt to bring into its fold all races by acknowledging the real differences that exist between these social groups, and at the same time seek some basis of unity. Tagore believes that this basis of unity in India has come forth through the saints like Kabir, Nanak and Chaitanya, who preached one God to all races in the subcontinent...

In a bid to go back to the root reason as to why commercial and aggressive nationalism as it developed in the West would be fatal for India to borrow, Tagore emphasized on the geographical vastness of the country and the social diversity that is present in it - "it is many countries packed in one geographical receptacle. This was just in contrary to what Europe really is - "one country made into many". Tagore believed that India never had a violent answer to the race problem that was posed before her. The challenge before her was to try and evolve a framework of "social unity within which all the peoples could be held together, yet fully enjoying the freedom of maintaining their own differences. Tagore saw the caste system as a result of such an evolution. Aggressive militant nationalism, Tagore feels, would politically break up the already socially divided country.

Tagore and Gandhi were indeed in favourable terms—it is Tagore who addressed Gandhi as the Mahatma for the first time, and in reciprocation, Gandhi conferred Tagore with the title of Gurudev. But their ideologies, both political and social, were far from being similar. Tagore never believed in Gandhi's nationalist movement against the British – he said, "I am not for thrusting off Western civilization and becoming segregated in our independence. Let us have a deep association". "What India most needed was constructive work coming from within herself," he argued, like eradicating the caste system, fostering religious unity through education and social empowerment.

It has to be understood in this context that Tagore's conception of nationalism stems out from the times in which he lived. Born in 1861, he lived in the times of enormous upheaval in India's socio - political realm, with the nationalist movement becoming increasingly popular. The finest and the most vivid example of Tagore's idea of nationalism can be derived from his participation in Bengal's swadeshi movement. Although Tagore was apolitical, he saw no harm in the Swadeshi movement following the partition of Bengal in 1905. In fact, the movement started from the threshold of the Tagore house with Tagore singing his song—*Ogo maa tomai dekhe dekhe ankhi na fiire* [trnsd: My eyes are never satisfied enough beholding your sight, my motherland!!!]. Tagore actively participated in the Swadeshi movement of 1905 by delivering lectures and composing patriotic songs, so much so that Ezra Pound commented "Tagore has sung Bengal into a nation". But soon after, the champion of non-violence and ahimsa could not condone the violence perpetrated by the activists on civilians who did not support their cause, especially the Muslims. The burning of foreign cloth seemed insane to him—the poor of Bengal could not afford the more expensive home-made products. He was further disappointed seeing the rise of extremist groups in Bengal like the Anusilan Samiti, who hoped to liberate their motherland from the clutches of foreign exploitation by resorting to violence. Finally in 1908, with Khudiram Bose hurled a bomb killing two innocent British civilians, Tagore called himself off the Swadeshi movement.

This sudden withdrawal on the part of Tagore was seen by many nationalists as an act of betrayal. But nothing could deter Tagore from doing so. In a bid to respond to his critics in this regard, he wrote the novels *Ghore Baire* [The Home and The World] and *Gora*, both of which elucidates on how exploitation, violence and killing become ritual acts when the

individual sacrifices his/her self to an abstraction, and nationalism is put on a pedestal, sacrificing righteousness and conscience. It would be fitting to elucidate on nationalism as Tagore conceived it to be in these two novels.

**4. Gora: Nationalism as Civilizational Universalism:** Gora (1909-1910) is widely considered “One of the most important novels ever written in British India, for it is an allegory of Indian nationalism, representing largely Tagore’s own view of it whereby religious division is replaced by worship of India’s natural and cultural diversity.” A novel steeped in the colonial experience which highlights the resultant crisis of personal identity, Gora brings out this crisis of identity as a result of the East – West encounter.

The novel is set in the backdrop of the period after the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857, a period of rising discontent against oppressive British rule. It was the “stirrings of national consciousness towards the end of the last century” that “created the historical and social setting for Gora.” The idea of the modern nation-state entered Indian society in the second half of the nineteenth century, but Tagore was ambivalent towards the western notion of the nation, particularly the “idea of a mono-cultural nation-state, and towards nationalism itself.” Thus in Gora, Tagore dwells on the civilizational aspects of nationalism, one that is needed in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious country like India. The idea of Bharatvarsha is a key concept in Gora. It is not merely a geographical area; it is identified with faith, religion, tradition, customs and the indigenous values of the subcontinent. Bharatvarsha is a mystical ‘entity’ that encompasses time itself, appropriating “the distant past and the even farther future, while weaving a particular thread in a particular pattern in the vast destiny of mankind.”

For Gora, Hinduism was synonymous with India—he grows up to become a militant Hindu. Gora finds his culture threatened by British colonialism, missionaries and non-Hindu Indians. His aggressive nationalism is directed particularly against the Brahmo Movement. However, the central paradox is Gora’s birth which is hidden from him but not from the readers. And therein lays the inherent irony of Gora’s speech and actions. The revelation that he is white, a *mlechha*, comes to him at the end of the novel - the news that he is Irish-born, and not a Brahmin. He is at once lost and found. He loses his caste but finds himself as an Indian, above caste, creed and religion, forging new bonds of love and mutual respect.

At the end of the novel Gora asks to be taught the mantra of “that deity who belongs to all—Hindu, Muslim, Khrishtan, Brahmo—the doors of whose temple are never closed to any person of any caste or race – the deity not only of the Hindus but of Bharatvarsha.” The novel thus is not just a search for self-identity but for secularism that is “inclusive and indigenous at the same time.”

Gora’s movement from a Hindu militant to inclusiveness echoes Tagore’s critique of militant Swadeshi, Hindutva and Nationalism. Gora is a call to “Form yourself into a nation and resist this encroachment of the ‘Nation’.” Like Gandhi, Tagore looks at the traditions and values of Indian civilization, to work with difference and seek unity in diversity. A

nationalism circumscribed by a moral universe brings Gora closer to his mother, and by implication, his motherland. Gora, who is both centre and circumference of the novel, is the oppositional voice which resolves tensions and conflicts and brings about the unity of the novel.

**5. Ghore Baire: An explicit response to Tagore's "nationalist" critics:** In colonial Bengal, if there was any consensus regarding the viewpoint of the subjugated people, it was that the west was materially superior while the east was spiritually superior. The aim was to create a cultural ideal and ambience in which the sciences of the West can be emulated while retaining the spirituality of Eastern culture. Social scientists like Partha Chatterjee have argued that the "domain of culture" was split up into "two spheres—the material and the spiritual" and into "*ghar and bahir*, the home and the world." Tagore's *Ghare Baire* (Home and the World) is a product of the modernization and self-identity crisis of that time.

Prolonged colonial rule bred a sense of inferiority among the Bengali malefolk. Coupled with this subject status was a desire for freedom from the colonial yoke. This produced an unstable relationship not only between ruler and ruled, but among the subjects themselves. Not only did caste, class and religious groups set out to acquire new identities but also produced a volatile ideological context in which the man-woman relationship had to be redefined. The modernization programme of the British was supported by the elite and the growing middle class who saw western education and industrialization as a means to move up socially and secure economic benefits. The introduction of women's education and social reform movements brought colonial rule into households. The desire for political and social autonomy clearly percolated down to familial relationships.

Bimala was a product of the age—a modern woman. Both Nikhilesh and Sandip try to fashion her according to their world views. Nikhilesh wishes to emancipate her from the *antapur* – the bounds of the home and stepping out into the world yet with one foot in the home. Sandip projects his wishes on to her by making her an icon of the nation—a representation of *Bharatvarsha*. Yet Bimala becomes neither. She first moves away from her husband and flirts with nationalism of the Swadeshi variety only to realize that it is physical intimacy with a passionate and ruthless man that she actually craves.

Bimala's failure to redefine her role within the liberated space of her home is symbolic of Tagore's apprehension about the new power equations between the sexes in a modernizing world. She internalizes the myth that woman is either *Lakshmi*, the goddess of good fortune or the incarnation of the powerful *Shakti*. She tries to play these roles within her household. At the same time western ways have impacted her in superficial ways such as in her attire, hair style and accessories. Sandip too was taken enormously by western ideals - Sandip's brand of narrow chauvinistic nationalism was the dreaded shadow of the West on the East. While Nikhilesh too is a product of western education, Tagore makes him the representative of a combination of all that is good in both east and west. He combines a love of freedom, rational thought and restrained behavior. As landlord, he is trustee of family property as well as that of his tenants. He is benevolent and lenient to a fault.



Nikhilesh is believed to be a portrayal of Tagore's ego. Both were zamindars, subservient to the British government, yet both were genuine swadeshis. Both had tried their best to promote indigenous industry long before the upsurge of Swadeshi hit the country. Both had to face hostility and were much misunderstood. Clearly, through Nikhilesh's character, Tagore attempted to bring forth his take on Swadeshi in a very direct and explicit manner. In *Home and the World* Tagore, through the political dynamics created, articulates a nationalism that is humane and in which all Indians could participate as equals, where men and women would be tied together by trust, truth and love.

**6. Samaj: Tagore's alternative construct to the Nation-State:** Tagore's extensive discourse on nationalism and his critique of the nation-state underlines an attempt to propose a societal fabric that is best suited to the Indian scenario. While he criticizes the nation-state as “an economic or political union of a people...which a whole population assumes when organized for a mechanical purpose”, he sees the notion of *samaj* [society] as having “no ulterior purpose”.

*“It [the institution of society] is a spontaneous self-expression of man as a social being. It is a natural regulation of human relationships, so that men can develop ideals of life in co-operation with one another. It has also a political side, but this is only for a special purpose. It is for self-preservation.”*

*-Tagore Rabindranath, Nationalism in the West, Macmillan, 1917*

Tagore, hence, clearly advocates a natural form of society for India, devoid of the Western institution of nation-state and the notion of political nationalism. The absence of the psychological feeling of nationalism would ensure the absence of extremist identity based nationalism. The Indian society would fare better if it remained merely an Indian *society*, with all its indigenous traditions, value systems and way of life, as it had been for the hundreds of years before the British imported within India the notion of a nation-state.

**7. Conclusion: The case of India's Identity based Nationalism:** In all his works, Tagore persistently emphasizes on racial and religious unity. In a beautiful hymn to India, entitled *Bharat Tirtha* (“The Indian Pilgrimage”), he urges all Indians to unite across race, class and religion, shedding their difference, and standing above the whirlwind of dusty politics, to unite in the constructive progress of their motherland:

*“Come, O Aryans, come, non-Aryans, Hindus and Mussulmans—  
Come today, O Englishmen, come, Oh come, Christians!  
Come, O Brahmin, cleansing your minds  
Join hands with all—  
Come, O Downtrodden, let the burden of  
every insult be forever dispelled.  
Make haste and come to Mother's coronation, the vessel auspicious  
Is yet to be filled  
With sacred water sanctified by the touch of all*

*-Tagore Rabindranath, Bharat Tirtha [The Indian Pilgrimage]*

Tagore maintained that India's immediate problems were social and cultural and not political. India is the world in miniature, this is where the races and the religions have met; therefore she must constantly strive to resolve her "burden of heterogeneity," by evolving out of these warring contradictions, a great synthesis. In doing so, India must, first of all, address the caste issue. The caste system has become too rigid and taken a hypnotic hold on the minds of the people; what was once meant to introduce a social order by accommodating the various racial groups in India, has now become a gigantic system of cold-blooded repression. India ought to come out of this social stagnation by educating the people; only when the immovable walls of society were removed, or made flexible, will India regain her vitality and dynamism as a society and find true freedom. What is the purpose of political freedom when the elites in society are exploiting the lower classes, especially the untouchables so ruthlessly?

Tagore was of the view that such unity and plurality of consciousness could be achieved only through proper education of the people, eradication of poverty through modernization and cultivation of freedom of thought and imagination; "Freedom of mind is needed for the reception of truth" he said. It was education, and not the spinning of the charka that Gandhi suggested which could liberate India from the tyranny of the British colonialism. Tagore was constant envisioning a free India—free from the fetters of materialism, nationalism as well as religious and racial orthodoxy—actively seeking a common destiny with the rest of mankind and constantly evolving towards a global society.

Tagore could perhaps be criticized of impracticality. Yet the on-going violence in the subcontinent justifies his position that joining the bandwagon of nationalism would be fatal for India. India has since been broken up into three countries: India, Pakistan and Bangladesh; ten million people were made homeless in the aftermath of the independence of India and Pakistan in 1947, one million of which also lost their lives in inter-religious riots; two major wars have been fought in the subcontinent, with border skirmishes and threats of further wars, including a nuclear war, several riots have also broken out between the Hindus and the Muslims, claiming thousands of lives. India still remains a poor country, with political corruption rife, and plights of the downtrodden a daily reality. Tagore's prediction that joining the bandwagon of nationalism would make India a beggar of the West has also come true. Although India is a free country now, the appropriation of nationalist ideology has erased the sense of India's difference as a society, capable of standing on its own; forging of links with the West on unequal terms (since India has merely copied the Western thoughts and has nothing to offer of her own) has allowed neo-colonialist controls to operate over the country both explicitly and implicitly, spelling political and cultural doom for its people. Finally, the recent upsurge of extremist identity based nationalism in the subcontinent leaves us with no other alternative but place an inevitable trust on his model of nation, nationalism and society. It would be fitting to

conclude the paper with a piece of Tagore's work that effectively sums up the entire question at stake—

*“Where the mind is without fear and the head is held  
high; where knowledge is free;  
Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic  
walls; where words come from the depth of truth;  
Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;  
Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of  
dead habit;  
Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever widening thought and  
action— into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.”*

*-Tagore Rabindranath, Song Offerings, 1912*

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