

I. Historical Context of *Anandamath*

This research explores the story of liberation reflected in the novel *Anandamath* by Bankim Chandra Chatterji. It is a political novel which depicts a Hindu ascetic sage, fighting against the soldiers of the Muslim Nawab of Murshidabad. The novel also calls for the rise of Hindu nationalism to uproot the foreign Turko-Afghan Muslim rule of Bengal and put forth as an alternative to the British East India Company till Hindus got an opportunity to have self-governance. The novel was also the source of the song *Vande Mataram* (I worship the Motherland as Mother) which, composed in the form of music by Rabindranath Tagore, was taken up by many Indian nationalists, and it was once the national song of India which has been replaced by *Jana Gana Mana*. The novel is loosely based on the time of the sages, however in the actual rebellion, Hindus sages and Muslim Fakirs both rebelled against the British East India Company.

Anandamath, a revolutionary novel written by Bankim Chandra Chatterji, more than a hundred years ago, is regarded as the first political novel written in India. The novel depicts the picture of colonial India in which the Indians are shown suffering from famine and poverty because of the presence of Englishmen, the colonizers in India. After the publication of this book, the consciousness of Indian nationalism germinated in Indian people and revolution started to emerge. Gradually, it contributed India as an independent country. This was not Bankim's first novel, nor by any means his best, but *Anandamath* was significant for many extra-literary reasons, especially for the tremendous impact it had on subsequent nationalist movements in India, in some other parts of Bengal. Therefore, the novel appeared and gained immediate popularity. Some of the translations have appeared as late as the sixties of this century, testifying to the continuing popularity of the novel at a certain

level. It is an attempt to scrutinize Chatterji's *Anandamath*, as a novel of nationalism, translated by Basanta Koomar Roy from original Bangali version to English. Chatterji created a political liberation myth in this novel. In the early phase of Indian anti-colonial nationalism, this novel played a crucial role because of its political and social issues. In this regard the novel accomplished two things: it provided the nationalist movement with a plausible blueprint of a revolution against colonial rule, and it presented a powerful image of the country India as a place of divinity.

The novel is received as a foundational text for the understanding of Indian nationalism. It is incorporated as a text of postcolonial literature to understand the material conditions under which texts are produced, distributed, and consumed. Chatterji has been variously taken as a father of the Indian novelistic tradition and as one of the most important Indian political novelists of the anti-colonial era. Indian novelistic tradition and the anti-colonial movement in India are often associated with Bankim and his novels. This particular novel was the first nationalist imagining of the nation as a mother in Indian fiction. The hymn *Vande Mataram* (Hail Mother) reflected in the novel became the unofficial anthem during the partition of Bengal in 1905 and in the ensuing struggle for independence from British rule. This song and the novelist's construction of the nation as mother again gained prominence as Indian politics took a strong right ward swing from the 1980s. *Hindutva* ideologues recurrently invoke and interpret the novel in significant ways to self-represent themselves as bearing the true spirit of the Indian nationalism.

The novel has crucial significance in shaping a new Hindu identity as well as the ideology of early Hindu nationalism. It shapes the imagination not only of Bengalis agitating for freedom from British colonialist rule, but also of leading nationalist consciousness of the Indian people as well. Its hymn *Vande Mataram*

eventually became the Indian national song. In this stirring tale set in Bengal during the famine of 1770s, a group of Hindu warrior-monks devotees of an avenging Mother Goddess emerged from their monastery in the depths of a huge forest to try to overthrow the oppressors, as they see them, of their homeland. Woven into the narrative are a variety of themes including the political and social role of Muslims in the new India, the rise of modernity in the subcontinent (with special reference to the consequences of British rule), the place of women in Hindu society, the relationship between violence and political agitation, and the kind of historiography that governs the birth of a new nation.

Evidently, the novelist's imagining of a new anti-colonial subject in response to British imperialism continues to provide a foundation for contemporary self-identifications. The aim is not simply to interrogate nationalist history but to show how it gets written and read in varying socio-historical contexts. The novelist like Raja Rao also writes about the issue of nationalism in his writings. Rao's concept of nationalism associated with India aligns with the quite similar belief:

This country is ours, and the soldiers are ours, but the English, they are not ours . . . The day will come when hut after hut will have a light at dusk and flowers will be put on idols, and camphors lit, and as the last red man leaps into his boat and the earth pushes him away, through our thatches will a song rise like a thread of gold and from the lotus navel of India's earth, the Mahatma will speak of love to all men. (166).

Chatterji has made an attempt in the wake of the new awakening in the country, a kind of idealistic romanticized regeneration of the Hindu ethos. It is also equally doubtful in Chatterji's vision of the regenerated Hindu ethos included the whole of India. It is possible to show by quoting passages from Chatterji's non-fictional prose,

especially from the series of essays concerned with the history of Bengal that he was concerned more with the identity of the Bengali people and recovering their forgotten glory, than with the national identity of India. But whatever the writer's intentions might have been, the novel had an appeal to India, partly because this novel fused for the first time which revived Hindu religious fervor with a new found nationalistic zeal. It is said to have inspired young revolutionaries in the early part of twentieth century to carry a copy of the 'Bhagavat Gita' along with their revolver. The incantatory songs incorporated in this novel *Vande Mataram* and the emotive, sonorous and the highly charged language of its narrative motivated, for the participants of freedom fighters. This was the first time the Hindu concept of the mother Goddess with its connotation of *Shakti* (power) was linked with the idea of the country as a political unit, and the symbolic power of this fusion was far-reaching.

The events of the novel take place not in the late nineteenth century when the book was written, but in the late eighteenth century, in 1773 to be exact the year of a dreadful famine in Bengal, and also the year of the *Sanyasi Revolution*. Although the famine and the rebellion are historically recorded facts, the novelist does not emphasize the historicity of the novel to show what had actually happened in 1773, but he goes on to add that he did not want to write a political novel. However the novel is a historical text containing the concept of nationhood as the direct result of our English education. The novel reflects the concerns of the novelist's own time, a period marked by the rise of nationalism. This newly awakened consciousness makes it feel in various historical incidents, of the time including the agitation.

In 1771, Bengal had not yet come under British rule. The British merely collected the tax, but the welfare of the people rested in the hands of the weak and dissipated Nawab. To quote from the opening chapter of the novel:

Cowardly Mirzafar, the heinous traitor, was unable to protect himself, how would he protect the lives and property of the people of Bengal? Mirzafar drugged himself and dozed. The British extorted the revenue and wrote dispatches. The Bengalis merely wept and resigned themselves to their ruin. (5)

The novel is set against the colonial rule, and it is set in the background of countryside which is tormented by famine. Mahendra Singh, a character of the novel is driven out of his village by the prospect of starvation. While travelling through the devastated land, he is separated from his wife and child, and encountered a band of rebel *Sanyasis* who call themselves Saurtatis -the children of the mother. They organized themselves against the oppressors to bring back the pristine glory of the motherland. By gradually sapping the strength of the enemy in guerilla warfare they finally rout the combined forces of the Muslim and the British in an omen confrontation. Since this victory could not be historically authenticated, the novelist in the last chapter of the novel introduces an ascetic with a prophetic vision who dissuades the rebels from going any further. It is necessary, he advises them, to submit to British rule for the time being, until the true religion of the Hindus could be purified from its present degenerate and corrupt state by new imperial and scientific knowledge. Intertwined with this central account, are the several human stories of the conflict between the Suntan's vow of renunciation, and the normal human instincts.

The novelist is in his attitude to be a part of a larger tradition of novel writing in India. When the new genre called the novel came into being in India in the second half of the nineteenth century the novel might have been a new genre in India, but romance was dominant literary genre at that time. Therefore it does not become identical with the western literary novel in structural category. Merely by placing the

events outside contemporary reality, a certain degree of license could be obtained. Three different reasons can be put forward for the necessity of such license at that time. The first is the contact with European literature had suddenly opened out for the educated Indian a whole new world of imagination, humanism and triumph of the self over hierarchical society. But life for the middle class Indian in the nineteenth century was limited, hedged in by social restrictions and politically servile. Therefore the Indian creative writer often turned to a more expansive past where human beings seemed to be of a larger stature, where valour and heroism counted, and where glory and splendor seemed infinite.

The second reason for the popularity of the so-called historical novel was that it was closer to a traditional concept of story-telling than realistic fiction of the western variety. Cycles of legends were mostly translated and adapted from Persian made a true source of the cultural heritage of Bengal at that time. These stories usually dealt with adventure, chivalry, magic and love, and were dominated by heroes of invincible courage. Such stories allowed freedom to the imagination in the fabled description of riches, passion and regal splendor.

The third reason of the novelist to adopt the historical framework was that it afforded the novelist a way to glorify the past. The past, however nebulous, meant the pre-colonial past, and any tale of bravery or heroism vindicated the present servitude. The novelist explores the incidents seriously that of the vast of Bengal to find similar heroic and inspiring stories, but the history of Bengal at the transitional period (the end of Muslim rule and the beginning of British rule) was a history of defeat, surrender and exploitation. Because Bengal lacked the kind of legends that glorified 'the past, the novelist had earlier turned towards Rajasthan; but in Anandamath he wanted to create a new myth of valour for Bengal in order to shake the people out of

their somnolence, and he found in the historical record of the *Sanyasi Rebellion* a convenient point where elements of bravery, religion and patriotism could be made to converge. Thus the novel is a deliberate attempt to create nationalistic enthusiasm.

Bankim Chandra Chatterji was a civil servant under the British -a deputy magistrate who remained at the same position without any promotion throughout his career, except for the few months when he was appointed as the assistant secretary of Bengal Government in September 1881. This post was a temporary one, but when he was reverted from this post, there was a general protest in the newspapers including in the British paper *The Statesman*. Whether there was any connection between this demotion and the fact that *Anandamath* was being serialized in *Banga Darshan* during this period which can not be conclusively proved in the novel. In the novel, both the Muslims and the British are the enemies. The country has to be saved from both of them for true nationalism, but the author sometimes exploits the ambiguity of the words and remembers to comment on the relative superiority of the British as a race. Considering Bankim Chandra Chatterji's official position, it is not easy to decide today how much of his admiration for the British came out of conviction, and how much out of expediency.

Chatterji has been taken as a writer of Hindu religious belief which creates consequent prejudice against Muslims. He himself was aware of this possible allegation by posterity because he added a rather gratuitous and defensive postscript to his novel *Raj Singh* stating that in this book he has by no means tried to indicate the superiority of the Hindus over the Muslims. One can by no means ignore the fact that in *Anandamath* Chatterji's concept of India is a purely Hindu nation where the patriotic ardor could be subsumed into a devotional zeal and the national regeneration

which could be identified with revitalization of Hindu religion. His Hindu religious fervor seems tempered by an understanding of the economic reality of the country.

This dichotomy in Bankim Charidra Chatterji runs through his entire career as well. The writer understood the plight of the exploited peasant and pleaded for the greater good of common people. The loyal civil servant of the British made fun of the English officers in *Anandamath* by depicting them as comic and venal and enabled the Hindus to vanquish them. The Hindu revivalist propagated in the novel a religion that was very different from any form of recognizable Hindu religion. It was a unique synthesis of the something that never got accepted in Hinduism, despite the popularity of the novel. Thus his religious thought here has a certain ethos integrated in the theme of nationalism in a quite fictional strategy employed by the novelist in the novel. It is something like Elleke Boehmer's argument: "Pastoral romance, Hindu myths, and traditional narrative techniques blend with contemporary history in such a way as to create a fabulistic tale of nationalistic struggle" (135)

Yet reading the novel after more than hundred years of its publication one finds that it is more than a simplistic work of Hindu propaganda. There is a complexity and ambiguity contained in its political substratum which tells us more about the pathetic India which is orientalized by Englishmen and the aggravated situation depicted in the novel as well as it is a conscious social documentation in another words nationalist consciousness or a straight forward historical account in Indian Mutiny.

In 1857 AD a widespread but unsuccessful rebellion against British rules in India began by Indian troops (sepoys) in the service of the British East India Company. It began in Meerut and then spread to Delhi, Agra, Cawnpore, and Lucknow. At that time Chatterji was nineteen years old. In 1858 India lost the war.

To regard the rebellion merely as a sepoy mutiny is to underestimate the increasing pace of Westernization after the establishment of British primacy in India in 1818. Hindu society was being affected by the influence of Western ideas. Missionaries were challenging the religious beliefs of the Hindus. In that context, raising nationalistic spirit by using the theme of Hinduism is natural. The humanitarian movement led to reforms that went deeper than the political superstructure. Lord Dalhousie made efforts for the emancipation of women and had introduced a bill to remove all legal obstacles to the remarriage of Hindu widows. There was a widespread belief that the British aimed at breaking down the caste system. The influence of western methods of education was a direct challenge to orthodoxy, both Hindu and Muslim. To these problems may be added the growing discontent of the noble Brahmans, many of whom had been dispossessed of their revenues or had lost lucrative positions. Everywhere the old Indian aristocracy was being replaced by British officials.

The mutiny broke out in the Bengal army because it was only in the military sphere that Indians were organized. The pretext for revolt was the introduction of the new Enfield rifle; to load it the sepoys had to bite off the ends of lubricated cartridges. There appears to be some foundation for the sepoys' belief that the grease used to lubricate the cartridges was a mixture of pigs' and cows' lard; thus, to have oral contact with it was an insult to both Muslims and Hindus. Late in April 1857, sepoy troopers at Meerut refused the cartridges; as punishment, they were given long prison terms, fettered, and put in jail. This punishment incensed their comrades, who rose on May 10, shot their British officers, and marched to Delhi, where there were no European troops. There the local sepoy garrison joined the Meerut men, and by

nightfall the aged pensioner Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah II had been nominally restored to power by a tumultuous soldiery.

The control over of Delhi provided a focus and set the pattern for the whole mutiny, which then spread throughout northern India. With the exception of the Mughal emperor and his sons and Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the deposed Marasthaphesha, none of the important Indian princes joined the mutineers.

From the time of the mutineers' seizure of Delhi, British operations to suppress the mutiny were divided into three parts. First, the desperate struggles at Delhi, Cawnpore, and Lucknow during the summer; then the operations around Lucknow in the winter of 1857–58 directed by Sir Colin Campbell; and finally the “mopping up” campaigns of Sir Hugh Rose in early 1858. Peace was officially declared on July 8, 1858.

A grim feature of the mutiny was the ferocity that accompanied it. The mutineers commonly shot their British officers on rising and were responsible for massacres at Delhi, Cawnpore, and elsewhere. The murder of women and children enraged the British, but in fact some British officers started to take severe measures before they knew that any such murders had occurred. At the end, the reprisals far outweighed the original excesses. Hundreds of sepoys were shot from cannons in a frenzy of British vengeance (though some British officers did protest the bloodshed). The immediate result of the mutiny was a general house cleaning of the Indian administration. The East India Company was abolished in favor of the direct rule of India by the British government. In concrete terms, this did not mean much, but it introduced a more personal note into the government and removed the unimaginative commercialism that had lingered in the Court of Directors. The financial crisis caused

by the mutiny led to a reorganization of the Indian administration's finances on a modern basis. The Indian army was also extensively reorganized.

Another significant result of the mutiny was the beginning of the policy of consultation with Indians. The Legislative Council of 1853 had contained only Europeans and had behaved arrogantly as if it had been a full-fledged parliament. It was widely felt that lack of communication with Indian people had helped to precipitate the crisis. Accordingly, the new council of 1861 was given an Indian-nominated element. The educational and public works programs, roads, railways, telegraphs, and irrigation continued with little interruption; in fact some were stimulated by the thought of their value for the transport of troops in a crisis. But insensitive, British-imposed social measures that affected Hindu society came to abrupt end.

Finally, there was the effect of the mutiny on the people of India. Traditional society had made its protest against the incoming alien influences, and it had failed; the princes and other natural leaders had either held aloof from the mutiny or had proved for the most part incompetent. From this time all serious hope of a revival of the past or an exclusion of the West diminished. The traditional structure of Indian society began to break down and was eventually superseded by a westernized class system, from which emerged a strong middle class with a heightened sense of Indian nationalism.

The mantra that was destined to inspire millions during India's struggle for freedom was born in the novel. Chatterji, through this revolutionary masterpiece, created the fuel and fire for Indian National Movement. The novel extraordinary political fiction is a transcript of the novelist's genius. His creative flux energized the renaissance in Bangali and Indian literature and cultured the multitudes into a

devotional patriotism towards his image of Mother India. It has acquired a new political meaning from its context. It became an integral part of a story woven around the theme of a weak Hindu nation. The song, therefore, cannot be detached from the political context of the novel. A text without context is a fairy tale.

The novel is appropriate to be under postcolonial literature syllabuses both for its unparalleled impact on Indian nationalist movements and for its pertinence today as an important source for understanding and interrogating contemporary militant, masculine, Hindu nationalism in India. Contrary to Hindutva assertions, Chatterji's representational strategies and use of reinvigorated, elite, masculinist Hindu nationalism to fight ideologies of domination needs to be contextualized and evaluated as an individual act of assertion and resistance and not as exemplifying prescriptive practices. The recovery of frozen and silenced literary texts should be part of a conscious political strategy to engage contemporary relations of domination as these have affected Indian society.

II. Nationalism as a Counterdiscourse to Colonialism

Nationalism is a collective identity of people which is autonomous, united, and expresses a unified national culture. The desire by a group of people who share the same race, culture, language etc. to form a new country is nationalism. The term *Nationalism* was coined by Johann Gottfried Herder during the late 1770s. It was in the form of *Nationalismus* when he coined it. Precisely where and when nationalism emerged is difficult to pin point, but its development is closely related to that of the modern state and the push for popular sovereignty that came to a head with the French Revolution and the American Revolution in the late eighteenth century. Since that time, nationalism has become one of the most significant political and social forces in history. It was also heavily used during World War I and World War II. In Germany fascism came in practice as a form of authoritarian civic nationalism; which stresses absolute loyalty and obedience to the state, whose purpose is to serve the interests of its nation alone. Before the development of nationalism, people were generally loyal to a particular leader rather than to their nation.

The emergence of the concept of nationalism is often connected with the French Revolution of 1789, when the first “nation-state” is said to have been created. Although states where the boundaries of the state and the country coincide have existed earlier before 1789, states did not use the situation to their advantage to the extent that France was able to. It is here that nationalism entered as such a powerful discourse. For Walter Bagehot “nation-making was the essential content of nineteenth century evolution” (19). Indeed, although most of the European nations were created only in the twentieth century, the seeds for their emergence were sowed in the previous century, during which empires slowly began to crumble. The same century

also saw the first instances of state formation where they clearly defined goal to unify the nation under one state, as in Italy and Germany.

In modern historical context, the movement of nationalism emerges in which the nation-state is regarded as paramount for the realization of social, economic, and cultural aspirations of a people. Nationalism is characterized principally by a feeling of community among people, based on common descent, language, and religion.

Before the 18th century, when nationalism emerged as a distinctive movement, states usually were based on religious or dynastic ties; citizens owed loyalty to their church or ruling classes. Concerned with clan, tribe, village, or province, people rarely extended their interests nationwide.

Nationalism has long been ignored in the discipline of art and literature. Encyclopedia Britannica identifies the movement's genesis with the late-18th century American Revolution and French Revolution; other historians point specifically to the ultra-nationalist party in France during the French revolution (1667). Gellner E. defines the term nationalism with his argument:

Nationalism is generally used to describe two phenomena: (1) the attitude that the members of a nation have when they care about their national identity, and (2) the actions that the members of a nation take when seeking to achieve (or sustain) self-determination. Raises questions about the concept of a nation [...] which is often defined in terms of common origin, ethnicity, or cultural ties, and while an individual's membership in a nation is often regarded as involuntary, it is sometimes regarded as voluntary. It raises questions about whether self-determination must be understood as involving having full

statehood with complete authority over domestic and international affairs, or whether something less is required. (67)

Here Gellner emphasizes on the identity of the people while defining nationalism. His definition evokes a patriotic sentiment to the audience and readers. Benedict Anderson suggests that nationalism should be seen not as “an ideology like ‘liberalism’ but rather as the modern counterpart to kinship, which its own symbolically distinctive elementary forms” (177). But Anderson does not consistently stick with this association.

Seen in historical context, the attitude towards nationalism was fostered by various technological, cultural, political, and economic advances. Communicative advancement extended the knowledge of people beyond their village or province. The spread of education in vernacular tongues to the lower-income groups fostered them the feeling of participation in a common cultural heritage. Through education, people learned their common background and tradition and began to identify themselves with the historical continuity of the nation. The emergence of national constitutions and the struggle for political rights made people aware in helping to determine their fate as a nation and sharing responsibility for the future well-being of that nation. At the same time the growth of trade and industry laid the basis for economic units larger than the traditional cities or provinces. There is almost an inverse relationship between the importance of nationalism in the modern world and the amount of scholarly attention it has received. In fact, nationalism seems explicable at any rate inevitable, or at least the natural, corollary of certain salient and conspicuous traits of modern and modernizing societies.

The characteristic of modern society is politically centralized. There is within it little or no room for private vengeance, for self-help in the maintenance of order.

Why this is so, and to what extent is it so? In itself, there is nothing inherent, universal or necessary about the monopolization of legitimate violence by some political centre. On the contrary, in many, perhaps in most social forms, sub-communities of a given society are also the units of defense and of the maintenance of order. It is of the essence of a feudal domain that it exercises force in defense of itself and in internal enforcement of discipline. The former is also true of a tribal segment. The central authority is often neither able nor willing to take on the onerous task of policing everything. The delegation of at least some of local institutions and communities, which also have other functions, is a natural and very common means of passing some of this excessive buck. But the modern state is seldom inclined or obliged to do the same. For that one can think of various reasons. The most obvious is the precondition of modern economic life. Modern production is a very attractive force, and it has exceedingly high standards. It is a fulltime business. It is difficult for those who take part in it, also, to do anything else to a high standard. They cannot be soldiers as well. It takes them all their time to be adequate machine, tool operators, clerical workers, whatnot. This is quite different from those paradigmatic soldiers, pastoralists, or for overseers of peasants. Those activities riding around flocks, or riding around fields collecting rents seem to leave time for military training; indeed they are a kind of training in assertion and the exercise of authority; but this is not so for modern tasks, even at senior and supervisory levels. Even peasants can raise a militia, though generally not one as good as that of pastoralists; but, revolutionary romanticism apart, urban industrial work and life do not seem good social bases for it. Neither the daily tasks themselves, nor the nature of the preliminary training for them, seem to point that way. Apart from the inclination and free time available to the individual, there are obvious organizational features which militate against it. The mobility of labour, the

separation of workplace and home, of work and social loyalties, all militate against the use of the work community as a defensive and law enforcing one. A clan may work and fight as a unit, but in the modern world, the kibbutz, which significantly doubles as a productive and as a defense unit, is well known to be untypical.

But here, another point may be discussed in order to differentiate between the nationalism that was practiced at the wake of freedom movement and the rise of imperialism in today's South Asian society. Today under an urge for national identity there is a huge cry of the forces, which threaten to eliminate the multicultural base and ethos of South Asian nations. This observation is true of India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. In these countries, the neo-nationalist forces are largely shaped by communal values that nurture hatred not respect towards the cultural difference of another community and region. Therefore they appeal to racial purity, militarism, violence, and religious orthodoxy. Whether it be Jihad of Islam, or ethnic purity of Hindu neo-nationalism both make a demagogic appeal towards intolerance and violence towards the other community. This might manifest in different forms: on a much milder form it threatens to erode the floricultural and democratic base of the South Asian nations or at major level result in genocide and ethnic cleansing. This kind of nationalism unfortunately affirms monoculturalism. This new nationalism is quiet different from that of the nationalism portrayed in the novel. In other words, the latter is a movement of exclusion which used force to eliminate subcultures and minority cultures to forge a dangerous national identity. Therefore, Henry Giroux points out, "national identity like nationalism itself is a social construction that is built upon a series of inclusions and exclusions regarding history, citizenship and national belonging" (42). Hence Benedict Anderson points out, as quoted by H. S. Kmamlesha and Anjali Gera Roy, "nation is and imagined political community that can only be

understood within the intersection dynamics of history, language, ideology, and power” (11).

In fact, the establishment of British military force, with its territorial and even institutional regiments, goes much further in seeming to use communities or associations for military ends. A more significant piece of evidence against the claim that the modern industrial state cannot and does not tolerate private violence is its recent failure to control some urban areas, and the accompanying rise of private security agencies. It is a compliment to the industrial ethos or its organizational sanctions that gangsters turn to legitimize business more often than the other way around.

The emergence of modernity with reference to the modern state has also been raised by Jürgen Habermas. He believes that modernity contributes to the rise of the nation and for the spirit of nationalism.

All of us live today in national societies which owe their identity to the organizational unity of such state. But modern states had existed long before ‘nation’. In the modern sense came about, it was not until long before nations, melted in to the shape of nation-state. Certainly in legal and political context we normally use nation and people as interchangeable terms. Yet besides its straightforward legal and political meaning, the term ‘nation’ carries connotations of a community shaped by common descent, culture and history often by a common language. (289)

An additional point should be made here. Modern nationalism is a phenomenon connected with the emergence of industrial society. Industrial society is always centralized. It replaces, most often, though not always, agrarian societies. Agrarian

societies are usually politically centralized in the feudalism. It should not be assumed that they are always the case. Nor that it is always an advantage for them to be in that form. Some decentralized agrarian societies were more populous and prosperous than their centralized neighbors. But the centralization of industrial society is not optional, and it is far more complete and pervasive, qualitatively and territorially. Modern society is economically specialized to a very high degree.

Nationalism is essentially the transfer of the focus of man's identity to a culture which is mediated by different factors like literacy and formal educational system. They help to raise an awareness of nationalistic consciousness. It is not the mother tongue that matters in raising the consciousness of nationalism. It is precisely when kinship and paternity come to matter less as sources of one's identity that the idiom of nationalism misleadingly comes to make a fuss of them. It is a mistake to take the rhetoric of nationalism too seriously, as some are inclined to do. Language seems to them almost a biological inheritance, and its association with ethnic paternity strikes them as frequently powerful. Universal literacy on the other hand carries the potential of nationalism. The connection between industrialization and nationalism has of course been stressed before. But the problem is to clarify the nexus between these two things. Why has intra policy of diversity, especially when coupled with visible inequality, connected systematically with ethnic groups, become so intolerable, when in the past mankind lived with it with comparative equanimity? Modern societies can range along the whole gamut from mild to extreme socialism. Economic liberalism simply is not an available option.

Economic factor is also a significant factor in the discourse of nationalism. In economically conservative society the consciousness of nationalism is quite less and ineffective as well. And even if a laissez-faire puritan of iron will and resolve, one

endowed with a secure political power base, succeeded in restraining his own hand that would still be a decision, an endorsement of the past course and its effects. Over and above this crucial logical compulsion, there are also powerful political constraints. In other words, rulers cannot generally indulge their puritan or other principles of fantasies, but have to act in a manner such that they remain in power. They must attempt to please or placate those interests within society whose discontent might otherwise unseat them.

In modern society the government is not taken as the shadow of God on earth. Then any effective government is legitimate simply by virtue of being effective. So it does not depend on faith anymore. In practice, this spirit desires an authority which effectively keeps the peace, and which for the rest, is not too arbitrary, too extortionate, or religiously scandalous. This spirit is still positively expressed and commended in the crucial terminal into the context of nationalism--the only criterion capable of public defense is whether the new rulers are less corrupt and grasping, or more just and merciful. In fact, this set of value is not open to men in modern conditions. When government had neither the means nor the will to interfere much in the economy, other than maximizing its own rake-off, this attitude makes some sense. When, on the other hand, one is dealing with an intricate modern industrial system which inevitably possesses a central steering mechanism, those whose economic rates of growth depend on how the steering is handled cannot content themselves with simply wishing that the ruler be merciful and not too grasping. But it shows that one can put forward a theory of the emergence of the nation state as the typical and compelling form of political organization, and as the natural-seeming recipient of human loyalties, without necessarily needing to invoke those factors which have been

so prominent, either inside nationalist ideologies themselves, or in the explanations offered by some of the enemies or critics of nationalism.

The real conflict is along the class line, where classes are defined in terms of the relationship to the means of production. Other conflicts, the existence of which can scarcely be denied, must then be superficial or somehow camouflaged or distorted versions of the real conflict. As the existence of other conflicts, at least at the surface level, cannot be denied at the same time it is also hard to deny bitter though it also is to admit the occasional. The Marxist view of the conflicts within the classes does not exist in the theory of nationalism at all. In that sense it unifies the different ideologies holding people together. But there is a conceptual way as well when it comes into the context of colonizer and colonized for example in India and America. Such conflict is not merely the key explanatory notion in history but is also, as is well known, a moral imperative.

It isn't even true to say, as often is said, that "nationalism is strong". Of all the available potential nationalisms, most are ineffectual, and of the ineffectual ones, the majority goes down without even a form of protest. Those that go down, or those that never raise their head, are objectively just as legitimate as the effective ones, by criteria of territoriality, cultural identity and shared roots. A historical or an ethnographic atlas will give you, in any part of the globe, umpteen possible nationalities and nationalisms; but only a few are chosen. They then do indeed generally become very strong. That nationalism should become strong to consist of culturally homogeneous people. It is also a sociological necessity; but just which emerges into existence in the historical context.

So Marxism needs to be rooted in a materiality. National struggle is not class struggle at all which has failed to reach consciousness in all. Class struggle is merely

a potential national irredentism which fails to take off for lack of good diacritical marks. Nationalism is not a class conflict which has failed to reach true consciousness. Class conflict is a national one which has failed to take off, for lack of deep cultural, symbolic differentiae. Nationalism as the emotion or the doctrine, according to which, human egotism and its passions are expanded so as to become identical with the nations state. Benedict Andersons in his *Imagined Communities: Reflection of the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, defines:

Nationalism as a particular form of ideological system which, like kinship and religion, often represents itself to itself as a natural, spontaneously generated and fully developed world view uninfluenced by the history, economics and politics. Anderson contends that a sense of nationality has often been expressed through the idioms of “kinship” or ‘home’ and that “both idioms denote something to which one is naturally tied. (143)

So it would be more accurate to argue that, identity and position by means of culture also develop the sense of nationalism, and generates love in the national citizens. A nation is not simply ‘there’. The geographic borders that are united by ties of blood, language, and culture all of which are believed to be spontaneous expressions of some national essence limit it. Anderson further says that the concept of “nation” in the contemporary world designates a number of controversial issues. In *What is Nation?* By Ernest Reman, defines nation in terms of spiritual consciousness as he argues:

A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle. Only two things actually constitute this or this spiritual Principle. One lies in the past, one is the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present day consent, the desire to live together

[...]. The nation, like the individual, is the culmination of a long past of endeavors, sacrifice, and devotion of all cults, that of ancestors is the most legitimate, for the ancestors have made us what we are; a heroic past, great men, glory [...] this is the social capital upon which one bases a national idea. (19)

Most of the modern nations have developed gradually on the basis of common ties of descent, religion, and language. Many exceptions exist, among them Switzerland, the United States, Israel, and India. Switzerland is a nation in which no common religion or language was ever established. The Swiss include many adherents to both the Roman Catholic and Protestant religions; they have no linguistic unity, for German, French, and Italian are spoken in distinct regions of the country. Swiss nationalism was hence fostered primarily by isolation in a mountain region, the determination to maintain political independence, and rivalry among imperial powers, which kept each from aggression against Switzerland. Similarly, the United States was formed largely by British immigrants with disparate religious ties and was developed to a great extent by other immigrants having little in common except a yearning for religious, economic, and political freedom. American nationalism was based primarily on a dedication to the concept of individual liberty and representative government derived from British traditions. What was considered in Great Britain the birthright of Britons became in the U.S., under the influence of 18th-century Enlightenment, the natural right of every person. The Declaration of Independence marked the consummation of this libertarian ethos. Likewise, Israel was formed almost entirely from the immigration of diverse national groups of Jews who shared a common ideal based on religious nationalism. The traditional aspirations of Jews for a national revival in Palestine had remained unfulfilled for almost 2000 years. As a result of genocide

perpetrated by the National Socialist rulers of Germany before and during World War II, Jewish national aspirations suddenly achieved dynamic force. More than a million refugees from many different countries immigrated to Palestine. They learned Hebrew, the re-created national language, and established a new state with Judaism as the state religion. Among world Jewry, however, the Jews of Israel are a minority; most Jews continue to live as minority religious groups in their native countries.

The great turning point in the history of nationalism in Europe was the French Revolution. National feeling in France until then had centered in the monarch. As a result of the revolution, loyalty to the king was replaced by loyalty to the *patrie* (fatherland). Thus “La Marseillaise,” the anthem of the French Revolution that later became the national anthem, begins with the words *Allons enfants de la patrie* (March on, children of the fatherland). When in 1789 the medieval French Estates-General, consisting of separate bodies representing the clergy, the aristocracy, and the common people, was transformed into a National Assembly, France achieved a truly representative system of government. Regional divisions, with their separate traditions and rights, were abolished, and France became a uniform and united national territory, with common laws and institutions. French armies spread the new spirit of nationalism in other lands.

The rise of nationalism coincided generally with the spread of the Industrial Revolution, which promoted national economic development, the growth of a middle class, and popular demand for representative government. National literatures arose to express common traditions and the common spirit of the people. New emphasis was given to nationalist symbols of all kinds; for example, new holidays were introduced to commemorate various events in national history.

The World War I fulfilled the national aspirations of the Central European people. When the U.S. entered the war, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the principle of national self-determination as one of the major issues of the conflict. As a result of the war, the rule of the dynasties in Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire was ended, and in central and eastern Europe a number of new nation-states arose, notably Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (later renamed Yugoslavia). Others such as Romania were greatly enlarged. Nevertheless, nationalist problems continued to disturb central and eastern Europe. Many of the new nation-states contained national minorities who demanded independence or changes in frontiers. The conflicting claims of German and Polish nationalism became the immediate cause of the outbreak of World War II. The inflammation of nationalist passions during and after World War I led also to the rise of fascism and National Socialism. Fascism in Italy and Socialism in Germany adopted the totalitarian system introduced earlier in the Soviet Union with communism. This system served as a means of destroying opposition and of integrating all the resources of the nation for the realization of a program of national aggrandizement. Because such a program were in conflict with the vital interests and even the survival of other nations, a general war in Europe became inevitable. The Soviet Union, although it had been established by means of a movement proclaiming international ideals, resorted to national aggrandizement in 1940s. The anthem of international communism was replaced by a new Soviet national anthem, and the USSR sought to make the Communist parties of all nations serve the Soviet national interests. These were the different form of nationalism in the context of the western societies during World War I.

Similarly, far-reaching effect of World War I was the rise of nationalism in Asia and Africa under the influence of Western ideas and industrialism. Asian nationalism was also inspired by the sentiment of the Japanese people. The first East Asian country to take on its own initiative in the form of a modern nation and to win, in 1905, a war against a Western power, was the Russo-Japanese War. After World War I the Turks, under the national leader Mustafa Kemal (later Atatürk), defeated (1922-1923) the Western allies and modernized their state in the spirit of nationalism following the European model. During the same period the leader of the Indian National Congress, Mohandas Gandhi, deeply stirred the aspirations of the Indian masses for national independence. In China, the leader of the Kuomintang, or Nationalist People's Party, Sun Yat-sen, inspired a successful national revolution. Because all these movements were directed against the Western European powers, they were supported by Soviet communism.

The penetration of nationalism into colonial countries during World War II is also another context to understand the discourse of nationalism. The British, French, and Dutch empires in Eastern Asia were overrun by the Japanese, who widely disseminated the nationalistic slogan "Asia for the Asians." The colonial powers were weakened further by the military and economic consequences of the war and by the expansion of Soviet power. In its propaganda, the Soviet Union emphasized mainly the right of the colonial countries to national self-determination and independence. Britain, influenced by the liberal tradition in politics, willingly granted independence to India, Pakistan, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), Burma (now known as Myanmar), Malaya (now part of Malaysia), and the Gold Coast (now Ghana). In all of them the consciousness of nationalism played the most vital role. Similarly, the U.S. granted independence to the Philippines. Netherlands relinquished control of the Netherlands

Indies, which became the Republic of Indonesia. France lost possession of its colonial empire in Indo-China. By 1957 nationalism had asserted itself throughout Asia, and the colonial empires there, with the exception of that of the Soviet Union, ceased to exist. So nationalism also functions as anti-colonial sentiments.

In the postwar period nationalist movements developed and got success as well, particularly in Africa and in the Middle East. By 1958 newly established nation-states in those regions included Israel, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, the Sudan, Ghana, the United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria), and Iraq. In the 1960s and '70s the Algerians, Libyans, and many formerly British, French, or Belgian colonies in black Africa became independent. As the 1990s began, nationalism remained a potent force in world affairs. Competing Jewish, Arab, and Palestinian nationalist aspirations continued to generate political instability in the Middle East. In Eastern Europe, where nationalist passions had largely been held in check since World War II, the decline of Communist rule unleashed separatist forces that contributed to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia and threatened the integrity of other countries.

Indian Nationalism

India is a nation in which the Hindu religion served as the cohesive traditional element in unifying people of various races, religions, and languages. India achieved national unity in the context of struggle against British rule under the banner of anti-colonial movement. The significance of the study of the rise and growth of Indian nationalism, from the standpoint of a general study of nationalism, is great. Dr. A. R. Desai points out that "Indian nationalism is modern phenomenon. It came into being during the British period as a result of the action and inter-action of numerous subjective and objective forces and factors which developed within the Indian society

under the conditions of British rule and impact of world forces” (5). Another view is that nationalism was always a phenomenon of Indian life. Kohn Hans maintains that “a truer basis of unity than modern national sentiments was to be found in common intellectual heritage persisting through an unbroken tradition and molding and permeating India’s whole social life to the minutest detail, and in the peculiar contemplative piety which lies at the root of all the various forms of Hinduism” (349). However, Percival Griffiths points out that “the advent of the Muslims introduced in India the divergences of race, religion, language and social traditions and these in turn, greatly marred the growth of Indian nationality” (67).

Basically, nationalism in India arose to meet the challenge of foreign domination. The very existence of a foreign rule helped the growth of a national sentiment among the people. And then there was clash between the British interests in India and the anti-colonial interests of Indian people. The British had conquered India a promote their own interests and they ruled over her primarily with that realization brought bitterness against foreign rule and that was responsible for the growth of the nationalist movement to drive out the foreigners from the country. All classes of people in India joined at once stage or the other the nationalist movement in the country. The intelligentsia in India the artisans and the workers all played their part in the holy struggle. While talking about the nationalist concern of the Indian people Michael Lowy and Robert Sayre share the view with Marxist critic Luxemburg:

From this standpoint, the European colonization of Third World peoples struck Luxemburg as a fundamentally inhuman and socially destructive enterprise. The English occupation of India revenged and shattered the traditional communist agrarian structures, with tragic consequences for the peasantry. Rosa Luxemburg shared Marx’s

conviction that imperialism begins economic progress to colonize nations, even if it does so. (102)

Colonizer's basic concern within the colonized country always use to be is to grasp the emotion of common people in their own favor. For that they just handle the productivity and economic sectors in the name of helping them but behind this there is a motif of domination.

The eighteenth century was the era of nationalism. A nation is a soul in the discourse of nationalism, a spiritual principle. Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute this soul or spiritual principle. One lies in the past one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage. In the essay "Whose Imagined Community?" Pratia Chatterjee's discusses nationalism and says

In the 1950s and 1960s, nationalism was still regarded as a feature of the victorious anti-colonial struggles in Asia and Africa. But simultaneously as the new institutional practices of economy and polity in the postcolonial states were disciplined and normalized under the conceptual rubrics of 'development' and 'modernization', nationalism was already being relegated to the particular histories of this or that colonial empire. (214)

In India, for stance, any standard nationalism history will tell us that nationalism mostly begin in 1885 with the formation of the Indian National Congress. It might also tell us that the decade preceding there was a period of preparation, when several provincial political associations were formed. Prior to that, from the 1820s to the 1870s, was the period of 'social reform', when colonial enlightenment was beginning

to ‘modernize’ the customs and institutions of a traditional society and the political spirit was still very much that of collaboration.

The national subject splits in the ethnographic perspective of culture’s contemporaneity and provides both a theoretical position and a narrative authority for marginal voices of minority discourse. They no longer need an address their strategies of opposition to a horizon of ‘hegemony’ that is envisaged as horizontal and homogeneous. In the context of postcoloniality, the significant signpost happens to be that of nationalism. It raises a question of should postcoloniality be expressed through nationalism or should it be antinationalistic? Is antinationalism the same thing as postcolonialism? The process seems difficult to avoid since the immediate history of these nations happens to be western and there are no easy ways available to reclaim a pure and uncontaminated history prior to the revenges of colonialism. Even if such recovery were possible, it would serve only to render the postcolonial nation hopelessly out of sync with the ‘international’ present of modernity. How inevitable is this scenario? Is modernism, then ‘always ready’ corrupt and defective in its agency? Whatever the answer may be in the long run, Partha Chatterjee reminds us that it is crucial for the postcolonial subject to produce a critical and deconstructive knowledge about nationalism. Only such a critical knowledge will help us identify and elaborate the complicity of nationalist project with that of the enlightened European subject. It is on the basis of such knowledge that postcolonial subjects can produce a genuinely subaltern history about them and not merely replicate, in one form or another.

Chatterjee argues:

[...] the split between two domains of politics—one a politics of the elite and the other, politics of subaltern classes—was rejected in the spare of nature nationalist thought by an explicit recognition of the

split between a domain of rationality and a domain of unreason, a domain of science and a domain of faith, a domain of organization and a domain of spontaneity. But it was a rational understanding which, by the very fact of its recognition of the other, also affected the other.

(200)

In real sense, then the subject of nationalism does not exist. Conceived within this chronic duality, the nationalist subject is doomed to demonstrate the impossibility of its own claim to subjecthood. With the inner and the outer in mutual disarray, the nationalist subject makes the space of a constitutive representational debacle.

While representation of the nation heavily depends on familial motifs, the figure of the nation as an imagined kinship structure, as suggested earlier, is in fact not compatible with the book's focus on religious community. It is important to remember that, despite the melancholic tone of introduction, Benedict Anderson has an almost uniformly positive view of nationalism, maintaining that it is political love and solidarity which sustain it, not hate and invidious comparison to the enemy. In contrast the narrower affinities of kinship seem too dependent on rigid genealogical motifs to ground so generous a conception of the nation. The political community is one of those communities whose action includes, at least under normal circumstances coercion jeopardy of life and freedom of movement. The individual is expected ultimately to face death in the group interest. This gives to the political community its particular pathos and raises its enduring economical foundations. The community of political destiny i.e. above all of common political struggle of life and death, has given rise to groups with joint memories which have often had a deeper impact than the ties of merely cultural, linguistic or ethnical community. It is this 'community of

memories' which constitutes the ultimately decisive element of national consciousness.

Therefore nationalism is a discourse that raises the consciousness associated with nation. It tends to form a homogenous culture by reducing the different typical aspects of the culture and counters the influence of another culture.

III. Exploration of Nationalistic Consciousness in *Anandamath*

After the publication of this book the consciousness of Indian Nationalism germinated in the heart of Indian people and the spirit of revolution emerged which helped to make India an independent country. In this regard Bankim Chandra Chatterji is legitimately regarded as the father of Indian Nationalism. His novel *Anandamath* preached the message of an armed revolt against the British Raj. The central figure, a monk called Satya, led the revolt and guided his followers to take up arms against the British colonizers in India. The plan was kept secret and was hatched in a monastery. The song *Vande Mataram* inspired many Indians to come together to stand against the Raj. Chatterji's literary works greatly inspired Sree Aurobindo, yet another great revolutionary of the early nationalist revolution in India. In Sree Aurobindo's vision homeland or motherland emerged as one's own mother. He was a true follower of Chatterji. His books also call for an armed resistance against the British colonizers which turned out to be extremely popular in Bengal as well.

This discourse can be connected with the situation in which Chatterji was put to defend his plot of *Anandamath*. To the first, he was greatly impressed by the Resistance Movement that took place in various parts of India between the periods of the anti colonial concern. The way he had to revise his stand in every edition of *Anandamath* indicates the fact that he was either having a desire for resistance in his mind or he was suspected of making a plot of the resistance to describe the arm struggle of *Santa*. It was a protest not against the Muslim rule of Bengal but against the looting of Bengal by Britain.

Anandamath was not proscribed by the then British government. But government tried to stop the channels through which the message of *Anandamath* was spreading across Bengal and India as whole. The message was a clear "yes" to an

armed revolt against the British Raj. There is a view that Chatterji wrote *Anandamath* taking the plot of the Sanyasi Revolt of Bengal in such historical background. This argument may sound eligible on the basis of the fact that from where he quoted the story of Sanyasi revolt of Bengal. But was not in this an act of defence to cover up the real plot?

Now, why *Anandamath* became politically so fiery? The answer is simple: the gusts for secret societies emanated from the literatures like *Anandamath*. Bengal entered a path of extremism. The story of success or failure of these actions does not concern much. What concerns is the common ideological platform from which the people of Bengal and the people of India as a whole operated. The concept of *Mukti* (Nirvana to express in the Buddhist term) greatly occupied the revolutionaries. Earlier it is mentioned that the *Mantra* of the armed revolt came from Chatterji's *Anandamath*. Equally significant appears to me to note here that was also his contribution to this particular school of Indian nationalism.

The Revolt of 1857 was a period of uprising in the northern and central India against British rule in 1857–58, which was the result of a combination of several factors. The conditions of service in the East India Company's army and cantonments increasingly came into conflict with religious beliefs and prejudices of the sepoys. The predominance of members from the upper castes in the army, loss of caste due to overseas travel, and rumours of secret designs of the Government to convert them to Christianity led to deep discontentment among the sepoys. The sepoys were also disillusioned by their low salaries and racial discrimination vis-a-vis British officers in matters of promotion and privileges. The indifference of the British towards Indian rulers the Mughals was political factors triggering dissent amongst Indians.

Revolts broke out in places like Meerut, Jhansi, Kanpur, Lucknow etc. The Britishers were slow to respond, but eventually responded with brute force. British regiments moved from the Crimean War and diverted the European regiments headed for China to India. The Britishers fought against the main army of the rebels near Delhi and drove them back to Delhi before laying siege on the city. After a week of street fighting, they again captured the city. The last significant battle was fought in Gwalior in 1858.

The significance of this revolt came in the year of 15 August 1947, with continuous struggle and regular participation of people of India the day after the partition of the nation as Pakistan and Hindustan. It is here mentionable that the nation cannot become an independent till the people of the nation do not get the sovereignty fully in their hand. The novel in that sense provokes the nationalist sentiment in the nascent form of anti-colonialism which is another form nationalism.

The novel begins at an apocalyptic moment. There is a famine in Bengal. Mahendra Singh, his wife Kalyani, and their little daughter Sukumari, live in their ancestral home in Padachina to tread the broad road to Calcutta. Though Mahendra is a rich landlord the neighbours are in starvation. Everywhere men, women, children and cattle die of hunger. Famished and angry, the impoverished villagers have taken to dacoit. Yet the tax collectors of the Government are unrelenting. Clearly, the British rule has reduced India to beggary. Mahendra gets separated from his wife and daughter. Mahatma Satya, the master of Anandamath rescues Kalyani and Sukumari from a group of robbers. Anandamath is put in deep forest. Bhavan, on Mahatma's behest, brings Mahendra to the forest. Here Bhavan Brusts into the famous song 'Vande Mataram'

“Mother Hail!

Thou with sweet springs flowing,
 Thou fair fruits bestowing,
 Cool with zephyrs blowing,
 Green with corn-crops growing,
 Mother, hail!
 Thou of the shivering-joyous moon-blanced night,
 Thou with fair groups of flowering tree-clumps bright,
 Sweetly smiling
 Speech beguiling
 Pouring bliss and blessing,
 Mother hail!
 Though now three hundred million voices through
 Thy mouth sonorous shout,
 Though twice three hundred million hands hold thy
 Trenchant sword blades out,
 Yet with all this power now,
 Mother, wherefore powerless thou?
 Holder thou of myriad might,
 I salute thee, saviour bright,
 Thou who dost all foes afright,
 Mother, hail! (38)

Mahendra astonishes to hear such a song, and wandering. He expresses his sentiment as: “This refers to a country and not to a mortal mother” (49). This song is composed to inspire people of India. From the deeper meaning of the song India receives a philosophy of New Nationalism. When India was going under a national movement

this kind of songs used to be sung to get people ready for fight against British's direct rule in India

Songs have always been rooted in the social and political context. Its power to affect, disturb, rouse and subdue have been used for great effect by monarchies, armies and governments in history. Songs at once define and reinforce the disposition of power within those spaces and the authority represented by that space. The ability of rhythm to carry ideologically explicit meaning yet remains open to various interpretations has made it a potent political force in the figuration of national geographies.

Song or music combined a belief in the sovereign authority of the composer and the universality of musical forms with a faith in the power of music to refer directly to everyday experience. The imitation of natural sounds, the quotation of folk songs and dances, and references to localities and regions could rhetorically tie music to the rhythmical structures of land, landscape and language composition became a form of national service. The issues of musical universality and nationality raised here and in the preceding section have been most famously addressed by Chaterji. It seems for him art could show the liberating power of human creativity.

The story of the novel unfolds in four parts over a period of four years with the famine stricken state of Bangal under the tyranny of the British rule as its background. All the wealth of the rich landlords is rendered worthless as it cannot buy them anything to eat; the poor die anyway. The extent of the famine can be judged by the fact that villagers turned into cannibals in search of food. They would kill travellers and eat their flesh. At the same time, however, a group of *Sanyasis* have decided to take on the British. They are led by an old and very learned *Sanyasi*, Mahatma Satya.

In such scenario, Mahendra, a young landlord in the village of Padachina, sets out for Calcutta with his wife and new born girl. From there the story gets unfold. The group of ascetics is forms army; Mahendra joins the children in army after being separated from his family. Then there's another important character, Jiban. The real protagonist of the novel is Jiban. But this becomes clear only in the latter parts. Though the story begins with Mahendra the focus shifts to the life of Jiban and his wife, Shanti. It is important to note here that men who join the children are supposed to stay away from their families, failing this, death in the battlefield is the only punishment. Therefore, Shanti becomes even more important in the story.

The novel portrays ascetics who, rather than denying reality or attempting to transcend the everyday, are crafting it. The self-sacrificing British officer engaged in selfless work in the colonies in colonialist narratives is countered with the image of the male ascetic nationalist who sacrifices his family and home for the liberation of the nation. The *suntans* (Children) must renounce everything for the sake of Mother India and take a vow never to meet their wives or children until the goal of liberation is reached. As a *santan* tells Mahendra: "When we have mastered all techniques and attained our goal, we shall return to our homes for our duties as householders" (41). To become *santans*, the protagonists Jiban, Bhavan, and Mahendra pass through a process of initiation, of which the central vow is self-conquest or the conquest of desire. Liberating the nation from foreigners is further projected as a moral endeavour, similar to the British "civilizing mission" in the colonies.

Later, Mahatma of the novel, Satya, first shows Mahendra a gigantic, imposing, resplendent image of ancient India. Then he takes him to a second image, where map of India is in tags and tears, and says, 'this is our Mother India is Today.' A sword hangs over this image, which Mahatma says represents that British rule with

a sword, and hence India can be freed only by a sword. Lastly he shows him ‘a golden India-bright, beautiful, full of glory and dignity, “this is the mother as she is destined to be” (48).

Mahendra refuses to take the vow of utter devotion to Mother India, which meant renouncing his wife and child. His wife refusing to be a weakening factor in her husband’s discharge of duties poisons herself. Before Mahendra could cremate his wife, he and Mahatma are arrested by the Englishmen. Jiban, Mahindra’s right hand man, finds Sukumari and entrusts her to the loving care of his sister. In the process, he meets his wife Shanti, who he had vowed not to see before his duty is done and to the atonement of both sins. Bhavan saves the life of Kalyani and becomes attracted to her beauty. Mahendra thinks that wife is dead, and eventually gets initiated into the order of Sanyasis. Children rescue Mahatma and Mahendra from jail, but are defeated by British forces in a pitched battle, where appears and sword f analysis lose to cannons and guns of Englishmen. Shanti, Jiban’s wife, was a woman with a difference. She dressed like boys throughout her childhood, and had travelled far and wide with a group of sanyasis. She was both mentally and physically strong and possessed charming features. She too enters the order, dressed as man to be christened Navin. But Soon after Mahatma finds out her real identity, she convinces with her physical strength and demeanour that she would not hamper her husband on his discharge of duties. Mahindra is sent to Padachina, entrusted with task of building a fort there. Mahatma planned that the fort to act as treasury and factory of manufacturing arms. Shanti is allowed to stay in Anandamath. Her new role both surprises and pleases Jiban and she keeps him away and alert of his duties.

The famine ends, but in absence of living population, dense forests replace the erstwhile villages. Children are able to entice many hundred followers into their order.

The children slowly start to gain strength, and defeat British forces in many minor clashes, looting their arms and treasuries. Bhavan falls in love with Kalyani, and he is willing to break all his vows to make her his wife. Kalyani shows him away and he realises that death was his only atonement.

The British, under the command of Captain Thomas, attacks the Children, after a hard-pitched battle, the children bumble the British. The British were about to win, when seventeen cannons from Padachina arrive well in time at the battlefield turning the tide in favour of Children. Bhavan dies in his battle. Kalyani, Sukumari and Mahendra, Jiban and Shanti all happily reunite at the fort of Padachina. The British once humbled; now re-launched a strategic offensive against the children under the command of Major Edwards. The British are again defeated; Jiban fights like a superhero, fighting alone, when his compatriots desert him, a mysterious Mahatma heals him and disappears. Jiban's role to serve mother ends with this sacrifice. A revived Jiban and Shanti walk away hand in hand. Vande Mataram, they soon disappear out of sight.

On the other hand, Bankim, constructs a new, manly Bengali vernacular identity in order to create a new masculine subject. His fictional and non-fictional works redefine the colonized subject and interrogate Western hegemonic myths of supremacy, facilitating the formulation of national identities. Although sharing a similar regional bias and writing during the same era Chatterji disavows nationalism. He suggests that nation building endeavor itself can be understood as a colonial activity. In *Nationalism*, a collection of essays, and in the novels *Gora* and *Ghare Baire*, Tagore expresses his dissatisfaction with the ideology of nationalism because it erases local cultures and promotes a homogeneous national culture. He demonstrates violent consequences of Chatterji's gendered, upper-caste, Hindu nationalist

formulations. Thus, reading Chatterji and Tagore together in a course can allow students to see that the historical moment that produced hegemonic nationalist imaginings and from which the contemporary Hindu Right draws sustenance was already divided and already self-critical.

The novel helps to delineate the changing historical configurations of the Indian nation and highlight the new conceptualization of the metropolis in contemporary times. Colonized Bengali subjects in the novel, Chatterji responds to the colonial encounter with Britain through literary representations and imaginings that establishes anti-colonial subject as different. Their perception of cultural decline and of the security of "traditional" identities resulted in efforts to create a "national" culture. In the process, they constructed and modernized traditions and created new identities.

Postcolonial scholars demonstrate interest in migrant writings that unequivocally link the First and the Third World. However, Chatterji reveals that the experience and identity of "India" have been for a long time bound up with the "West" and vice versa. Teaching indigenous-language texts in translation along with diasporic texts in English will foreground the necessity of dialogue in the sharing and reworking of cultural identities. It enables us to see the links between colonial and anti-colonial discourse in the very inception of the Indian nation as well as recognize its continued relevance in the present. Thus, revised postcolonial courses will represent the heterogeneity of cultural margins without allowing the needs of the metropolis to construct the margins.

Colonialism created a new English-educated middle class in nineteenth-century India that drew its sustenance from and collaborated with the British colonizers. This very same class also led the struggle against colonialism. Chatterji is

a representative of this class: English-educated, employee of the East India Company, and a key ideologue of the anti-colonial movement in Bengal. Concerned about the absence or loss of history and historical consciousness, Chatterji sought recourse in imagination. The novel echoes the disavowal of native Bengali/Indian history represented in colonialist historiography.

They point to the ideological imperatives and mythification involved in the writing of colonial history. The novel skillfully appropriates the potential of "imagined communities" as developed by Anderson, not to assert the truth but to choose a particular history. His invention of a usable past to suit the anti-colonial agenda of the time shows how the creation of national identification must essentially proceed through the imaginary rather than through essentialized 'natural' affiliations. The contemporary situation, however, requires a careful and thorough backward look beyond the historical and political archive to the fictional imaginings of the nation that contributed to and further determined the conventions of national identity. The novel is exemplary in this regard. It played a decisive role in the political history of the province of Bengal and continues to inflect nationalist imagination in contemporary India.

The nationalist elites renewed their claims to a separate and distinctive cultural identity through a complex interactive process of appropriation and contestation of orientalist perceptions of "India." The pre-colonial Indian past was constructed through orientalist discoveries, excavations, and translations.

The novel also identifies society's ailment as a lack of potent male power. The novel demonstrates the causes and consequences of the loss of masculinity and the possibilities of reparation — primarily through a drive for physical regeneration, militancy for the nation, celibacy, and devotion to a gendered nation. The plot of the

novel revolves around the male protagonist Mahendra, a prosperous landowner who converts to the cause of Indian liberation after meeting ascetic nationalists or *santans* and Satya, their leader. Through Mahendra, Chatterji depicts the establishment of the new nationalist male subject.

The novel also depicts events that show Bengali valor in past confrontations with the alien invaders (Muslim and British). It attempts to remind the supposedly emasculated Bengalis that in the long history of subjection there are great episodes of resistance. It counters allegations of the Bengali male as helpless, timid, and accustomed to crouch under oppression and proves. It engages in the power/knowledge nexus in the colonial domain by presenting the Bengalis, and by extension Hindus, with their supposedly forgotten military heritage. This presence of physical prowess in the past is then established as constitutive of Bengali/Hindu masculinity.

However, Chatterji's imagining is metaphorical, strategic, and selective. His search for martial Bengalis/Hindus/Indians converges on the Hindu warrior ascetics of the past. He taps into the populist appeal of the monastic orders and the historical existence of warrior monks to create the trope of the Hindu ascetic nationalist in his novel. He merges two contradictory figures from colonialist narratives: the popular, wandering, alms-seeking ascetic described in colonialist narratives as "idlers" and "frauds," and the revenue-collecting, warrior ascetics portrayed as "bandits," "murderers," and "villains."

The novel portrays ascetics who, rather than denying reality or attempting to transcend the everyday, are crafting it. The self-sacrificing British officer engaged in selfless work in the colonies in colonialist narratives is countered with the image of the male ascetic nationalist who sacrifices his family and home for the liberation of

the "nation." The *santans* must renounce everything for the sake of Mother India and take a vow never to meet their wives or children until the goal of liberation is reached. As a *santan* tells Mahendra: "When we have mastered all techniques and attained our goal, we shall return to our homes for our duties as householders" (41). To become *santans*, the protagonists Jiban, Bhavan, and Mahendra pass through a process of initiation, of which the central vow is self-conquest or the conquest of desire. Liberating the "nation" from foreigners is further projected as a moral endeavor, similar to the British civilizing mission in the colonies. Thus, Chatterji recasts the "white man's burden," to use Rudyard Kipling's popular phrase, as the brown male's burden.

Though Chatterji's notion of ascetic nationalism is an ideology that promises citizenship and the nation-state to the colonized, it also emphasizes on celibate dedication. As Satya explains:

Children are of two classes — those that are initiated and those that are not. Those that are not initiated are either house-holders or beggars. They present themselves only at time of warfare. They receive a certain portion of the spoils or are otherwise rewarded; and they retire. But those who are initiated have renounced all they hold dear and near to their hearts. They are the leaders of the Order. (76)

Thus, *brahmacharya* (self dedication) becomes a crucial marker of difference within society, and by extension the nation. The ritual of initiation legitimizes a hierarchy within the indigenous males, and further defines the trajectory that they are to follow. In other words, only those with certain behavioral characteristics, who have made certain kinds of sacrifices for the nation, can claim legitimate authority to be its leaders. Jiban is forced to choose between the valorized ideal of manly self-control

and his desire for his wife, Shanti. He must deny himself any sexual gratification in order to establish his masculinity and his honor. On the other hand, Bhavan, who falls in love with Mahendra's wife, Kalyani, chooses to die in the battlefield as atonement for breaking his vow. Thus, the novel acknowledges the fallibility of the indigenous Hindu male, but portrays male ascetic nationalists as holding their vow of chastity in the highest regard. As a *Santan* remarks, "We do not pretend to be above all attachment. We simply observe the sanctity of our vows" (41). This successfully refutes the derogatory construction of the Bengalis/Hindus as morally bankrupt and lacking in self-control and Chatterji 's protagonists emerge as agents in the production of a new self, the ascetic nationalist subject.

The creation of a new male subject also results in the reinterpretation and reconstruction of Hinduism. The nineteenth-century focus on Hinduism has been variously described as neo-Hinduism or Hindu revivalism. However, it is argued that the emerging Hindu nationalist discourse was not a revival of a glorious past but a construction to suit the needs of the time. The re-interpretation of Hinduism was an effort at self-legitimation, but also a way to consolidate the power and privileges of the Hindu elite. So the novel shows how "national" culture is often invented in relation to a number of internal colonialisms. For instance, Chatterji 's iconography of the mother-as-land is based on a search for origins that legitimizes certain class, gender, and religious groups. A *santan* asserts,

We recognize no other mother ... The Motherland is our only mother.
Our Motherland is higher than heaven. Mother India is our mother. We
have no other mother. We have no father, no brother, no sister, no
wife, no children, no home, no hearth — all we have is the Mother ...

(38)

Here, the linking of Mother and Nation rejects living women and the bonds of family life that they represent for a completely symbolic woman-as-nation. It signifies essentially a passionate appeal to filial duty. The notion of combat also plays a central role in the construction of nationalist masculinity in the novel. At the initiation ceremony Mahendra has to take the vow to fight using arms, followed by the vow to never flee away from the battlefield. Thus women and non-combatants are successfully excluded from the imagined nation.

The importance of Chatterji 's nationalist imaginings in the novel, providing the epistemological methodology for the present Hindu Right's construction of a nationalist imaginary cannot be overstated. Chatterji's formulation of a certain kind of elite, masculinist, Hindu nationalist ideology, although a product of a particular historical moment, is now, subject to reconstitution, being recruited to many different agendas. In the RSS's exercise regiment, in militancy for the Hindu people, and in the endowing of leadership on saffron-clad males we see the resurgence of nationalist militancy as portrayed in the novel.

What is glossed over in drawing a direct lineage between anti-colonialism, nationalism, and *Hindutva* are the selections and exclusions that are essential to the creation of this lineage. In "Dharmatattva" for instance, Chatterji espouses the need to develop physical abilities and establishes the protection of oneself, one's family, and one's country as the duty (*dharma*) of every individual. He undoubtedly promotes ascetic masculine behavior and martial valor, but balances it with values of justice. The exemplar is his reconstructed Krishna, who embodies martial valor with compassion and forgiveness (50). Thus he establishes disciplined life for the nation as an ethical category, which is distinct from public violence and aggression against religious minorities.

Chatterji 's works in order to make issues of history and politics seem to be part of the common sense of the "national" as the Hindu Right in India continues to use older texts that provide nationalist myths and histories to build upon and strengthen its discourse of homogenous nationalism, endeavors must be made to bring to peoples' attention the nature of their construction. Despite the power of the Mother India and the ascetic nationalist tropes, one historically-engaged response to the Hindu Right's appropriations of the novel is to remind readers that it was a fiction, the invention of a cultural moment that continues to displace and obscure the material conditions under which the text emerged. It is necessary to highlight how subjects were constituted in earlier anti-colonial and nationalist literary texts and situate literary texts as representations of specific historical movements in which individual authors engaged in a discursive struggle over the interpretation of their identities. The reading of literary texts as plural, conflicted, and multivalent in which representations of class, caste, gender, and religion overlap and intersect in myriad ways can bring about a problematization of what is being offered as historical common sense. The theoretical challenge is to recognize the power of writing and the crucial role of representation in narratives of the past as well as in the narratives we produce as we read or write about them. Therefore, along with a conscious engagement with the politics in anti-colonial texts such as the novel, one has to also engage in the politics of whether we do or do not include them in University course lists, and in how we read and write about them.

Expanding postcolonial course lists in Indian literature to include translations of older non-English language texts can make visible the ideological processes by which meaning in culture is produced and naturalized. The novel is a good exemplar for showing how representation is constructed and authorized within specific socio-

cultural contexts and patronages and it leads us to question the contemporary privilege given to migrant writing. Postcolonial criticism cannot simply document the processes by which colonial narratives became dominant or replace those dominant narratives with diasporic postcolonial narratives published in the West. Postcolonial texts in the curriculum should reveal the difference that colonialism represents as well as engage with contemporary figurations of past forms of ideological hegemony.

The novel is in historical context on Indian nationalist movements and for its pertinence today as an important source for understanding and interrogating contemporary militant, masculine, Hindu nationalism in India. Contrary to *Hindutva* assertions, Chatterji 's representational strategies and use of reinvigorated, elite, Hindu nationalism to fight ideologies of domination needs to be contextualized and evaluated as an individual act of assertion and resistance and not as exemplifying prescriptive practices. Situating this text within critical academic discussions can illustrate the politics of canonization (exclusion, selection, and appropriation) engaged in by scholars of the Hindu Right; and fresh critical insights can effectively resist similar attempts to appropriate other nationalist texts, tropes, and personalities. The recovery of frozen and silenced literary texts should be part of a conscious political strategy to engage contemporary relations of domination as these have affected Indian society.

IV. Conclusion

This novel *Anandamath* has crucial significance in shaping a new Hindu identity as well as the ideology of early Hindu nationalism. After the publication of the novel consciousness of Indian Nationalism germinated in the heart of the Indian people and revolution become possible, this made India an independent nation. The book portrays ascetics who, rather than denying reality or attempting to transcend the everyday, are crafting it. The self-sacrificing British officer engaged in selfless work in the colonies in colonialist narratives is countered with the image of the male ascetic nationalist who sacrifices his family and home for the liberation of the nation. Satya, leads the revolution and guides his followers to take up arms against the British.

Nationalism is essentially the transfer of the focus of man's identity to a culture which is mediated by literacy and an extensive, formal educational system. It is not the mother tongue that matters. It is precisely when kinship and paternity come to matter less as sources of one's identity that the idiom of nationalism misleadingly comes to make a fuss of them. It is a mistake to take the rhetoric of nationalism too seriously, as some are inclined to do. Language seems to them almost a biological inheritance, and its association with ethnic paternity strikes them as frequently powerful. Chatterji has made an attempt in the wake of the new awakening in the country, a kind of idealistic romanticized regeneration of the Hindu ethos. The plan was kept secret and was hatched in a monastery. The song *Vande Mataram* inspired hundreds of Indians to come together to stand against the Raj. It is doubtful that Chatterji's vision of the regenerated Hindu ethos included the whole of India.

Evidently, national traditions are invented as nations are imagined, but there can be several contested inventions and imaginations. The cultural material used for such strategic inventions and imaginations is also historically produced. Yet,

Chatterji's imagined constructions of national community in the novel have in contemporary times reified into structures of epistemological orthodoxy. The Hindu Right invokes Chatterji 's fictional imaginings to unify historical memory and to secure consent in the present, urging Indians to forget that they were inventions of a historical moment. Selective appeal to older literary imaginings makes the fusion of the land, the people, and national history and the consciousness of Indian people and revolution became possible which made India an independent nation. Therefore, the novelist's projection of nationalism in the novel contributes to raise the consciousness of nationalism in the local people at the same time for independent country.

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