
Nikhil and Sandip's argument in *The Home and the World* about ethical conflict leads to extreme ideology

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Article Received: 25/05/2025

Article Accepted: 27/06/2025

Published Online: 29/06/2025

DOI: 10.47311/IJOES.2025.18.06.603

Abstract: This paper examines about an ideological clash between the two central characters, Nikhil and Sandip, in Rabindranath Tagore's novel *The Home and the World*, which is a moral story. In the early twentieth century, during the Swadeshi movement in Bengal, this novel highlights the struggle between the nationalism and the extreme patriotism. While Nikhil demonstrates a values-based, international nationalism that is in harmony with universal human principles, Sandip advocates firmly and persistently for the ideal of embodied nationalist passion". This study draws on postcolonial theory, the political writings of Tagore, and the theoretical thinking of Kwame Anthony Appiah and Kai Nielsen to illustrate how the novel challenges the establishment of extremist views and cautions against sacrificing moral values for political expediency. By examining the literature, historical background, and philosophical reflections of Tagore, the paper suggests that his approach remains a crucial factor in contemporary global politics. *The Home and the World* by Rabindranath Tagore portrays a profound moral conflict between two depictions of Indian nationalism: Nikhil's rational, intelligent humanism and Sandip's violent, aggressive populists. Penned after the 1905, the novel is a philosophical examination of patriotism that is not tied to ethics, and it depicts the partition of Bengal and the Swadeshi movement. Through the lens of deeply rooted cosmopolitanism (Kwame Anthony Appiah), liberal nationalism (Wai Nielsen), and Tagore's political works, particularly Nationalism, this article provides insight into the ideological differences between Nikhil and Sandip. Additionally, While Sandip displays a pragmatic approach, Nikhil's unapologetic globalism highlights how the novel challenges the ethical framework of nationalism to achieve political supremacy.

Nikhil and Sandip are examples of global nationalism that is in harmony with universal human values, whereas Sandip exhibits a more pragmatic approach that he associates with nationalistic passion. Using various sources, including postcolonial theory, Tagore's political writing style, and perspectives from scholars like Kwame Anthony Appiah, Kai Nielsen-Bhaghazi in their analysis of the novel at last confrontation with radical ideology, this examination shows how the struggle against extremism is not about politics but about maintaining principles over seeking power. The main character of this story, Bimala (the heroine), links all these conflicting views by illustrating both the appeal and

dangers of nationalist rhetoric. Her character. Her disillusionment serves as a powerful evaluation of unforced loyalty.' The research employs Bhabha theory of "occult instability" to explicate the cultural and psychological turmoil that arises from political changes.

Keywords: Indian Literature, Swadeshi Movement, Extreme patriotism, Moral Conflict, Globalism, Humanitarianism, Nikhil, Sandip, and Tagore, Nationalism

Introduction: Rather than a political novel, Rabindranath Tagore's *The Home and the World* (1916) is more of an intellectual reflection on the struggle between ethics and nationalism. The Swadeshi movement is responsible for examining the moral concerns raised by individuals during a time when nationalism was experiencing growth in India as retaliation against colonization. Tagore's portrayal of two contrasting ideological positions is illustrated by Nikhil and Sandip: one emphasizes empathy, acceptance, and honesty, while the other emphasized fanaticism, practicality, compassion, or autocracy. The ethical cosmopolitanism of Nikhil mirrors Tagore's philosophical humanism, while Sandip's personal populist radicalism reflects the danger posed by a nationalistic enthusiasm without any moral or ethical backing. In this study, the debate on the ideological differences between these two figures and the ethical implications of their individual beliefs are analysed. The book is based on Tagore's writings in Nationalism (1917), his spiritual ideas in The Religion of Man (1931), and modern philosophical perspectives from Appiah and Nielsen on cosmopolitan nationalism. As per the article, Tagore's perspective is not a rejection of nationalism but merely an invitation to alter its moral framework." India experienced the arrival of powerful nationalist movements that organized political independence and cultural reestablishment during the peak of British colonialism.

This paper deals with the complicated ideological clash between these two personalities. Their philosophies reflect not only non-convergent political ideologies but also the contradicting point of views on truth, justice or civic authority. Similarly, Nikhil's virtuous uprightness and comprehensiveness are in line with Tagore's spiritual humanism. It is this, because it goes both ways. Sandip's nationalism is identified by both devotion and moral bravery, with an attention on performance rather than significant features. During the early twentieth century, in politically pursuits of Bengal, not only was *The Home and the World* written but it also acted as a rational work that investigates the moral suggestions of nationalism. This place was full of political activism, crafted after the 1905. In the novel, Tagore uses the home life as a metaphor for national rebellion and partition of Bengal. Tagore's central question is how can a nation balance its desire for freedom with its obligations, and why do some people believe that Nikhil and Sandip are more than just ideological adversaries in their fight against each other. Despite his belief in spiritual humanism and moral universalism, Tagore had both opposing views on militant nationalism. Unlike many of his peers, he did not approve of the promotion of political violence or unwavering loyalty to the homeland." His view of nationalism was that it had the ability to

free or corrupt, depending on whether it was based on moral obligation. The moral boundary in Nikhil is a true representation of this immorality, while Sandip represents unrestricted yearning, concealed by nationalistic enthusiasm. In this paper, Nikhil and Sandip are examined as a personal feud rather than simply the confrontation between two opposing forces: one based on morality and individual conviction, while the other is motivated by celebrity status through attraction or competition.

Rabindranath Tagore's book *The Home and the World* (1916) is based on a time when nationalism in India was becoming progressively political and potentially ethical. Constructed after the 1905 season. In this, the novel establishes a philosophical debate between two ideological camps: Nikhil liberal humanism and his brother Sandip's passionate nationalism, while also creating an atmosphere of defiance from Swadeshi influences. The novel portrays a small-scale country where individuals are at odds with each other in their personal lives, often experiencing both spiritual obligation and political turmoil. Nikhil, a modern property owner who is cognizant of the concept of dharma and human equality, represents moral and spiritual nationalism'. In his views, moral cosmopolitanism is the preferred path for both religious tolerance and political violence. Contrastingly, Sandip is the charming but deceitful revolutionary who claims divine approval for his political vision. Bimala, trapped between conflicting beliefs and his loyal partner, becomes a vocalist of the nationalist movement before retreating, disillusioned, to spiritual enlightenment (Tagore 129). Tagore asserts in Nationalism that to worship my country as a god is equivalent to casting ill-will on it. (29)

Literature Review: David Atkinson and other scholars regard *The Home and the World* as a call for establishing orthodox international order, acknowledging Tagore's critique of nationalist activism and its preference for spiritual humanism. Additionally, Mondal (2021) regards the novel as a representation of "contesting modernities," where internal debates on nationalism and ethical governance create intricate East-West dichotomies.

In his writings, Tagore's position is more definite. The phrase "I will never let patriotism reign supreme over humanity" in Nationalism is a fitting analogy for Nikhil's frequently quoted statement: "My devotion to the Right is greater than my country." According to Festino, Bimala's attraction to Sandip's charm embodies not only one act of self-deception but also serves as a metaphor for the nation's vulnerability and how insubstantial political discourse can impact individuals. Such interpretations confirm that the novel serves both as a historical examination and an ethical discourse.

Many scholars have studied the contrast between Tagore's humanism and nationalism. David Atkinson characterizes the novel as a call for establishing 'an alternative global order founded on ethical individualism' and cautions against prevailing collective psychology and intense ideology. By embracing the notion of cosmopolitan nationalism, Tanushree Mitra and other scholars establish Tagore as an early advocate of global political ethics while also acknowledging regional connections. Nikhil and Sandip are depicted as

different Indian reactions to modernity and colonial influences in the novel, which is explored by Dibaranjan Mondal. The coercive and performative nature of Swadeshi politics is exemplified by Sandip, as Ranjan points out.

There are multiple perspectives that academics have employed to analyze the ideological conflict in the novel. David Atkinson characterizes *The Home and the World* as an appeal for a new global system, in which Tagore warns of the hazards of excessive nationalism and political enthusiasm (Atkinson 95). The ethical restraint that Atkinson advocates is in line with Tagore's spiritual critique of political extremism. In her work, Umme Salma posits that the cultural hybridity of Nikhil and Sandip hinders Bimala's autonomy through the shared yet unstable beliefs of both him and his wife. In the "sublime period" of the Swadeshi movement, she notes, the characters are in a state of ethical and cultural confusion, leading to their loss of individual identities (Salma 86). Through Salma's viewpoint, we can comprehend how ideological seduction is a form of cultural aggression. Betrayal is a central theme in the novel by Mayur Solanki. [p]. According to him, Bimala's infidelity towards Nikhil is not only emotional but also a symbol of Bengal's strong nationalist ideology. Solanki 2 highlights the use of radical politics in appropriating spiritual and emotional aspects, as seen in Sandip's takeover of Bimala. According to Cielo Festino, the novel serves as a metaphor for nationalism due to its gender-based nature. Bimala is metaphorically portrayed as Durg, the goddess and country of Durgas, who in her turn shifts from an idealism-based ethicist tradition to one of ethical realization.

Methodology: The research employs a qualitative methodology that incorporates:

- A thorough analysis of the character interactions, dialogues, and changes in narration is provided.
- Appiah and Nielsen concentrate on Comparative Political Philosophy, emphasizing Tagore's works as contemporary cosmopolitan theories.
- The study of nationalism, morality, and treachery through literary and philosophical perspectives.
- Using postcolonial theory to analyse national identity and moral sovereignty.
- Exploring important themes such as fire, mirrors, and religious imagery through narrative and symbolic examination to illustrate ideological shifts and ethical implications.
- Evaluating deontological (Kantian) ethics in contrast to utilitarian ethics to depict the philosophical conflict between Nikhil and Sandip through ethical examination.
- The historical context of the novel, including Swadeshi movements, communal conflicts, and socio-political changes after 1905, is examined through political contextualization.
- Utilizing Nielsen's and Appiah's tenets of ethical nationalism, Nikhil's "deep cosmopolitanism" is evaluated in opposition to Sandip's militant nativism through a Comparative Theoretical Framework.

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- Utilizing colonial and postcolonial critiques to comprehend the evolving attitudes and beliefs of characters.... in Reception History, volume 1.

The aim is not merely to compare two characters but also to evaluate their respective perspectives as symbols of opposing political beliefs during colonial India. It is a multi-disciplinary approach, drawing on ethical philosophy, postcolonial theory and symbolic interpretation. Both Kwame Anthony Appiah's concept of rooted cosmopolitanism and Kai Nielsen' liberal nationalism form the ethical cornerstone. In terms of interpreting the fluidity of political identities, Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity and hidden instability provides a postcolonial perspective.

Analysis:

1. Nikhil: The Psychology of Morality. Cosmopolitanism: In Nikhil's view, nationalism is based on ethical universalism. He advocates for a kind of civic pride that acknowledges culture without taking into account justice or compassion. "He shows a moderate support for the Swadeshi movement by emphasizing his commitment to Justice while serving his country (Tagore 26). Through his endorsement of Panchu, a victim of Swadeshi's rule, the moral obligation is highlighted rather than political representation." Through Nikhil, Tagore highlights a nationalism that reflects Appiah's "rooted cosmopolitanism," which is enrooted in confined culture but delicate to global ethics deeply. But Nikhil's denial to throw out Miss Gilby on the basis of the fact that she is an Englishman, which shows that he thinks about justice for all, rather than nationalist aspiration.

The personality of Nikhil reflects a sense of nationalism that merges local allegiance with global responsibility. In his view, it is a principle of equity, discretionary practices, and individual autonomy. "To oppress in the name of our country is to oppress that country", states the author, suggesting such actions cannot be justified by morally questionable patriotism. His support for Swadeshi is positive, as he supports local industries and social change while rejecting the idea of uniformity or exclusion. Additionally, by not letting go Miss Gilby, an English governess, and by endorsing Panchu, a vendor who was jailed for selling foreign fabric, Nikhil is more concerned with justice than politics. Based on practical principles, Nikhil embodies the grounded global perspective of Appiah. He has developed a nationalism that is conversational, open-minded and reflective; it's not about pressure but rather collaboration.

2. Sandip: The Politics of Emotion and Practicality: An extreme form of nationalism is advocated by Sandip in a fiercely critical manner. According to him, the sovereignty of the country is more valuable than any ethical grade. His words are attractive, often mixing nationalism with spiritual purity. Despite his actions, he is accused of lying by stockpiling foreign products. This is evident from both incidents.

3. Symbolism of the Moral Divide: Symbols are used by Tagore to effectively express this gap. Sandip regards Shakti as a sacred energy, while Nikhil advocates for dharma (moral

obligation). The act of Bimala stealing money from Nikhil to finance Sandip is an example of moral perverseness and ideological attraction. Sandip's deceit has left Amulya dead, highlighting the irreversible impact of uncontrolled idealism on society. Is it possible for a nation to achieve success without violating its moral principles, as Tagore suggests. Symbolism is employed by Tagore to effectively communicate this ideological conflict. The burning of foreign material, Bimala's theft, and Amulya dying are symbolic gestures that challenge political radicalism. These acts act as emblematic figures. Amulya's death exemplifies the cost of unfounded nationalism exploited by unethical rulers. The disillusionment of Bimala signifies the country's liberation from misleading enticement. The passing of Nikhil signifies the loss of moral leadership in the midst of a populist wave. The repercussions of nationalism lacking a moral foundation are the unfortunate events.

Discussion: The disagreement between Nikhil and Sandip illustrates broader philosophical conflicts that go beyond the colonial setting. Tagore's worry regarding nationalism importance with today's global fears worrying populism, majoritarianism, and ideological radicalism. In a time, when identity politics frequently supplant ethical discussion, Tagore's human-centered nationalism offers a crucial supplement. Nikhil's cosmopolitanism embodies moral responsibility rather than an elitist disconnection. In comparison, Sandip's nationalism, although dramatically engaging, results in moral and societal fragmentation. Tagore's ideological struggle between Nikhil and Sandip anticipates contemporary political dilemmas: populism, demagoguery, and the emergence of ultra-nationalist movements. The caution in *The Home and the World* is unnervingly foresighted — that when nationalism turns into doctrine, it may result in moral decay and societal division. Nikhil's nationalism is complex peace making but reasoned contradiction. He signifies that authentic patriotism is found not in bitterness or barring but in empathy, togetherness, learning, and change. In contrast, Sandip's nationalism mirrors today's populists: charming, polarizing, and indifferent with moral values. Tagore therefore promotes not the dismissal of nationalism but its transformation — one based on humanity, diversity, and fairness. The dispute between Nikhil and Sandip illustrates Tagore's fundamental concern: that nationalism, divorced from ethical principles, becomes akin to oppression. Sandip's fascinating speeches, presented as divine motivation, closely reflects current populist discourse that utilise cultural nostalgia to rationalize violence and barring. He is not a historical figure but a timeless symbol of rebel. Conversely, Nikhil's misfortune resides in the nuance of his principles — understated leadership frequently lacks the prominence and drama essential in large-scale movements. It is this tranquility, his unwillingness to control or command, that establishes him as Tagore's ethical ideal.

Tagore's analysis of nationalism foresees the risks associated with contemporary populism. Sandip's emotional exploitation, symbolic language, and theatrical activism reflect modern leaders who stir nationalism to conceal authoritarian goals. His employment of phrases such as *Bande Mataram* is akin to how political movements utilize emblems to foster shared excitement while suppressing opposition. Tagore states in *Nationalism*, "The fundamental issue is not political, but spiritual" (Tagore, *Nationalism* 23). The conclusion of

the novel—Nikhil hurt, Sandip escaping, and Bimala spiritually broken—implies that nationalism lacking moral principles results in both individual and communal destruction. However, it is also an optimistic conclusion, where ethical consciousness starts again from the remnants of disappointment.

Conclusion: Tagore's *The Home and the World* is a lasting examination of nationalism' morality. "The novel's aim is to explore the ethical implications of political beliefs by contrasting the characters of Nikhil and Sandip. Tagore doesn't condemn the love for one's country but warns against ossifying it to the detriment of humanity." The novel serves as both a warning and philosophic tool for encouraging ethical patriotism that involves compassion, justice, and moderation in the face of renewed nationalism.

The Home and the World remain a lasting political and moral symbol. The works of Tagore in Nikhil and Sandip portray a struggle between ethical globalism and violent nationalism. It cautions that nationalism, lacking morals, transforms into hidden oppression. The book is worth noting this fact. In Tagore's novel, the use of characters, symbolism, and storytelling successfully opposes political radicalization and put a concept of moral nationhood. More to Tagore's legacy, Nikhil also personifies his vision of a grounded cosmopolitanism that highlights the interdependence of one's nation and all humanity. Despite the increasing divide among political movements across the globe, Tagore's viewpoint remains a crucial moral guide.

Tagore's *The Home and the World* concludes with symbolic devastation. Nikhil is hurt, Amulya is gone and Sandip escapes — just as Bimala has been emotionally consumed by the ideological fallout. Why? In the midst of this ruin, Tagore's unchanging realization that ethical nationalism is essential and preferable remains. It's not that Nikhil lost, but rather the morality of his fight against populist attacks.

This moral perspective transforms nationalism into an inclusive justice system that does not exclude individuals. This requires a level of condolence, mirroring in oneself, and kindness in an age that is increasingly consumed by display and dissent. Tagore's ethical proclamations are noteworthy in a time when political discourse is full of with contradictions. In *The Home and the World*, "we don't reject nationalism but rather a radical revision of it" (Tagore 135) The ideological clash between Nikhil and Sandip, as well as Bimala's shifting direction, highlights Tagore moral appeal for a nationalism grounded in ethics, pluralism, and spiritual compassion.

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