

Difference Between Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore on Nationalism

Gandhi and Tagore shared a great deal of respect for one another, but they also disagreed widely on a wide range of issues, including nationalism, patriotism, the importance of reason and science, and the nature of economic and social growth. Let us discuss the key difference between Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore on Nationalism.

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Mahatma Gandhi	Rabindranath Tagore
Mahatma Gandhi wished to develop a more India-centric approach to Nationalism.	Tagore was a believer in Nationalism only till WW1.
Mahatma Gandhi wanted to build the concept of Nationalism around conflicting definitions of individualism/collectivism and regionalism/nationalism/internationalism.	Tagore was more of a humanist than a nationalist. He believed nationalism evoked political extremism and destroyed peace and harmony.
Gandhi supported that lingua Franca (common language between speakers whose native languages are different) will play a crucial role in fostering nationalism.	Rabindranath Tagore thought that contemporary nationalism will ultimately take a violent form.
It was founded on complete self-sufficiency.	According to him, nationalism was built on the social compassion and love that existed between individuals. He supported internationalism as well.

The nationalism that is favored by liberation warriors worldwide, according to Mahatma Gandhi, is too aggressive in form and approach, and it would only result in more conflicts in the future.

According to Rabindranath Tagore, violence-fueled nationalism would lead to the end of civilization. In addition, he disagreed with non-violent nationalism, such as that embodied by Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement, which he believed promoted a restricted perspective of India.

Who is Mahatma Gandhi?

Mahatma Gandhi is known as the Father of our Nation. Gandhiji's conception of nationalism was different from post-Westphalian peace treaties in Europe. He believed that nationalism was a broad, inclusive idea that did not view anyone as an enemy.

According to him, people shouldn't sacrifice themselves for the country and should instead cultivate social friendliness and shared brotherhood in order to coexist peacefully and improve their quality of life. It wasn't founded on imperialist principles. He thought that the people ought to serve the nation.

- His full name was Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.
- He was an Indian lawyer who led major non-violence resistance and led India's struggle for independence.
- Mahatma Gandhi's birthday on 2 October is commemorated as Gandhi Jayanti in India, a national holiday.

Mahatma Gandhi on Nationalism

Gandhi believed that lingua franca (an adopted common language between speakers of the various language) would play a major role in fostering the feeling of Nationalism in the country.

- Gandhi wished to develop an India-centric concept of Nationalism. One which is more rooted in Indian traditions and values rather than being influenced by the west
- He wanted to build harmony between conflicting binaries like individualism/collectivism and regionalism/nationalism/internationalism.
- He believed it is not the idea of Nationalism that is evil but other things that are associated with it like selfishness, exclusiveness, westernism, etc.
- As he mentioned in his book 'Hind Swaraj' the idea of Nationalism should ideally relate to 'Hind' or 'India'

Who is Rabindranath Tagore?

The Cult of the Charkha, written by Rabindranath Tagore, one of the greatest poets of all time, forcefully rejects Gandhiji's nationalism during the Non-Cooperation Movement. He claimed that nationalism was a Maya or illusion idea. We shouldn't pursue it adamantly.

We ought to practice spiritualism instead. Swaraj was never his idea of our goal. He had the opinion that a nation that has a narrow perspective of its own country will lag behind and be unable to live in harmony with more advanced nations. Gandhi's idea of nationalism, in his opinion, was quarrelsome.

- Rabindranath Tagore was a Bengali poet, playwright, painter, philosopher, and social reformer.
- He played a big role in reshaping Bengali literature and music in the late 19th and early 20th.
- He won the Nobel Prize in literature in 1913.

Rabindranath Tagore on Nationalism

Rabindranath Tagore believed imperialism was an external expression of Nationalism. Tagore believed in Nationalism till WW1 in 1914-18. His belief in it started to waiver during the final phase of the Swadeshi Movement when people started associating Nationalism with political extremism.

- He believed the whole movement during that time began to develop as revolutionary terrorism.
- He supported Internationalism and ardently believed that Nationalism could do no good other than destroy harmony and love.

Similarities Between Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore

While Gandhi promoted the idea that nationalism should be built on self-sufficiency at all levels of society, Tagore saw imperialism as an outward representation of nationalism. Apart from the difference between Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore on Nationalism, the following similarities were observed.

- Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi both have strong nationalistic feelings.
- Although Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi approached their opponents in different ways, they shared the same goals and ideologies.
- Gandhi created the Civil Disobedience Movement and other activities to demonstrate that Indians supported this oppression while engaging in nonviolent conflict with the British. In the meantime, Tagore turned to

literature to instill nationalist ideas in the minds of children. He also gave up his knighthood in support of the Indian freedom movement.

