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Home and the World and Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore's (1861-1941) *Ghare Baire* (*Home and the World*), was serialized in the *avant garde* magazine *Chandrabhaga* from January to February 1916. The novel is a path-breaker in Bengali literature at the turn of a new century. While the novel is a critique of Indian nationalism, the work most importantly emboldens the female protagonist with her fractured self, her modern womanhood, modern sensibilities and an unorthodox perspective on other female protagonists of Tagore. She is the first female protagonist. The nationalist historian Tanika Sarkar in her book *Women, and God in The Home and the World* notes that the female protagonist representing woman is not only a newcomer in Bengali literature but a character on the Bengali literary and social landscape. Her status, her self-assertiveness, her intention to challenge the male-dominated society and gender oppression, her role as a protagonist she is quite new in Bengali literature.

Bimala, the very name suggests that she is a woman of the