



Science, a Metaphor of Nationalism: Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray and Postcoloniality

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Abstract

The scientific and intellectual Renaissance of Bengal in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century had acted as a major force in the triumph of independence of India and its progress towards a modern civilization. In the history of this new scientific awakening Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray (1861-1944) occupies a significant position who realized the importance of science as integral to nationalist consciousness and nation building. Ray envisioned science to be a common concern of all humankind which was to be integrated with the development of a public use of reason and the emergence of Indian Nationalism through the establishment of national industry. In this paper my endeavour will be to locate Acharya Prafulla Chandra not only as a scientist but also as an industrialist, a social thinker, an educationist and a cultural theorist who played a significant role in the social reformation, moral regeneration, economic development and political emancipation of India. In scrutinizing the corpus of Ray's writings on science, industry and society, I shall try to trace a consistent postcolonial strain in Ray that used the tools of mimicry and imitation to challenge the colonial apparatus.

Keywords: Nationalism, Postcoloniality, Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray.