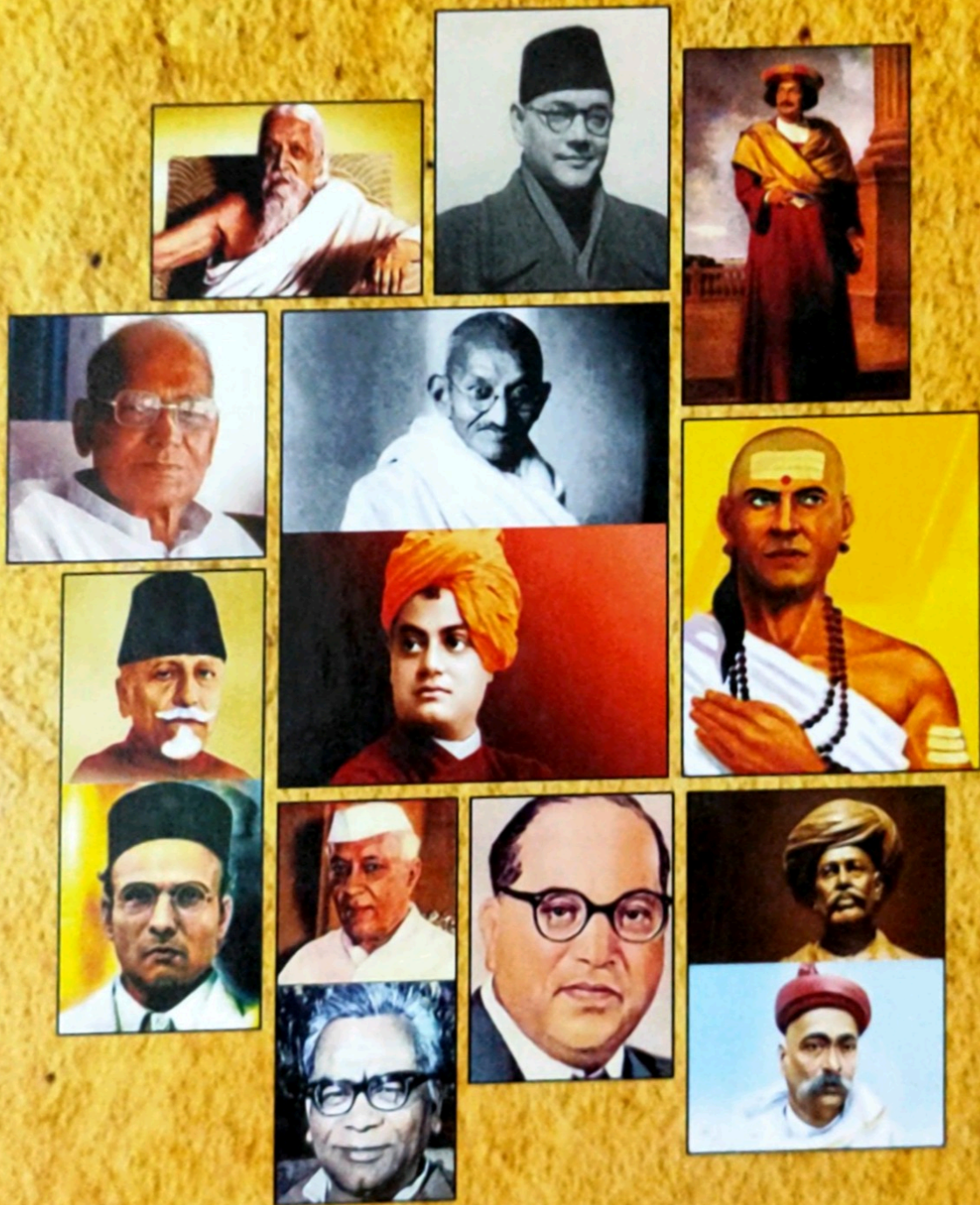


INDIAN POLITICAL THOUGHT SELECTED THINKERS



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Aurobindo Ghosh on Nationalism and Internationalism

Papia Deb

Indian nationalism is a modern phenomenon. It came into being during the British period as a result of the action and inter-action of numerous forces and factors which developed within the Indian society under the conditions of the British rule and the impact of world forces. Indian nationalism has emerged under conditions of political subjection of the Indians by the British. The British Government for its own purpose, had changed the economic structure of the Indian society, established a centralized state and introduced modern education, modern means of communication and other institutions. This resulted in the growth of new social classes and the unleashing of new social forces unique by themselves. Many nationalists like Dadabhai Naroroji, Surendranath Banerjee, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai, Aurobindo Ghosh etc. have provided massive motive powers for the rise and development of Indian nationalism. Among these groups of nationalists, Aurobindo was outstanding due to his role in the early phases of the national movement. He was renowned and important personality in the history of the Indian resurgence and Indian nationalism. Aurobindo had a versatile brilliance. He was a great poet, a thoughtful thinker, a distinguished metaphysician, a great prophet and a passionate patriot. He wrote effective texts that represented the crystallization of the new and rising soul of India and given a spiritual message for human kind.

The theme of Indian nationalism occupied by Aurobindo throughout his life, and he wrote on this subject even when he had left in 1910 from active participation in the political activity on account of his total occupation with the future of India and the world and with the integral yoga that he was developing and perfecting as an aid to the solution of the evolutionary crisis of humanity. This theme was developed by him in four of his books that he wrote during 1914 and 1921, namely, *The Life Divine*, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, *The Ideal of Human Unity* and *The Human Cycle*. In these books, we find illuminating analysis and exposition incomparable in depth and context with any other analysis and exposition of what may be called the philosophical foundations of nationalism and Indian nationalism. These foundations, as we discern them in Aurobindo's writings, are those relating to the philosophy of the individual and the aggregate, philosophy of the national aggregate and national unity, philosophy of nationality and nation-state, and philosophy of nationalism, internationalism, and universality.

Aurobindo explained nation in very clear terms. In his essay entitled "Bhawani Mandir" he wrote, "For what is a nation? What is our mother country? It is not a piece of earth, or a figure of speech for a fiction of mind. It is a mighty 'Shakti', composed of all the 'Shakties' of all the millions of units that make up the nation, just as Gods ascribed in ore mass of force and