Preface

As a student and teacher of international politics, I was attracted by the area of 'International Thought' and felt interested in international thought of Indian thinkers. While reading Nehru and Sri Aurobindo, I noticed two things. Firstly, they were not in favour of unbridled nationalism but favoured nationalism tempered by internationalism. Secondly, this orientation could be seen before India had become even a nation-state. I wondered whether these two belonged to a group which had similar views or they had similarities but differed significantly. Tagore was known to be internationalist even during non-cooperation movement and was even criticized for his internationalist outlook. Although a poet, he was compelled to take interest in politics and expressed his views fearlessly. Therefore, I decided to make a comparative study of internationalism of these three thinkers.

But first of all, proper meaning or meanings of internationalism had to be ascertained, as it was a vague concept. Then only one could talk of internationalism of Nehru, Tagore and Sri Aurobindo.

A review of literature on internationalism revealed that internationalism was not conceived by Western thinkers in the same way. There were certain traditions. Therefore a point of inquiry was, how did their concept of internationalism differ from the Western concepts.
The study of original and interpretative sources for the thesis involved visits to Delhi and Pondicherry. Nehru Memorial and Museum library proved to be a rich source of information in several ways. It had a good collection of books on Tagore also. I visited Sapru House library as well as J.N.U. library. I discussed the issues relating to concept of internationalism with few scholars in Delhi. At Pondicherry, I visited various libraries of Sri Aurobindo Ashram, the Roman Rolland library and Sri Aurobindo Archives. I discussed the topic of Sri Aurobindo's internationalism with scholars like Dr. Maheshwari, Dr. Ghosh, Dr. M.P. Pandit and Sri Aurobindo's close associates like Dr. Sethna and Shri Nirodbaran. All these discussions proved to be constructive. In case of Tagore, I took help of friends to get translation of Nepal Majumdar's work on Tagore's nationalism and internationalism.

Chapter I introduces the subject and II includes a review of literature. Nehru's concept of internationalism is analysed and discussed in chapter III. Sri Aurobindo's books 'Human Cycle' 'Ideal of Human Unity' and 'War and Self-Determination' and other books deal directly with problems of internationalism and provide ample literature, hence his concept of internationalism is discussed next in chapter IV. In case of Tagore, he does not deal directly with the theme of internationalism but his criticism of 'nationalism' particularly of Western Nation-State System and his general philosophy helped me develop Tagore's concept of internationalism. His lectures on his various visits abroad and reactions of Asians towards him as discussed in Hay's book proved to be very useful. Danilchuk's book
on 'Tagore, soviet Union and India' brings out very well Tagore's perception of Soviet internationalism which is discussed in chapter V. Chapter VI brings out a comparative study of three thinkers and compares our Indian thinkers and Western thinkers as well. The concluding chapter discusses the factors behind the internationalism of Nehru, Tagore and Sri Aurobindo and even sees hope for an Indian theory of internationalism which could be deciphered from modern Indian political thought. The thinkers of the Indian Renaissance period had a difficult task as it was a period of development of political nationalism in India. This nationalism had to be harmoniously blended with internationalism due to several reasons discussed in the Thesis.

At Personal level my guide and my colleague Mr. Pravin N. Seth, encouraged me with the idea of thesis and discussed with me, the 'fine points' of the thesis at various stages, despite his various occupations. He was considerate, humane, warm which was comforting in periods of my ill health. I express my thanks to him.


Signature of the student

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