

## CHAPTER VI

### Concluding Remarks

Creative thoughts of every genius is at once a continuity and crisis, and political thought of M.N.Roy is no exception. It is continuity because these thoughts are in a sense continuation and completion of the political thinking of previous thinkers. It is a crisis because it shows a definite break with the past and ushers in new thoughts and novel orientation exhibiting the originality of M.N.Roy as a political thinker of highest order. To understand Roy and his contribution we are to note the different phases that we find in Roy's life. Development of the political thoughts of M.N.Roy can be divided for logical evaluation and appreciation into four stages. However, V.M.Tarkunde mentions three phases of political life of M.N.Roy. He says :

"He passed through three phases of political life. He

started as an ardent nationalist, became an equally ardent communist and ended as a creatively active Radical Humanist. He built up and propounded the philosophy of Radical Humanism which may well become one of the most relevant philosophies of the future"<sup>1</sup>.

Roy called his view Radical Humanism, because he thought that his view could go into the root of the problem. After taking himself away from communism, Roy advocated of 'Radical Humanism'. He depicted the inconsistencies of Marxism and thereby gave birth of a new theory which is known as 'Radical Humanism'.

Though Tarkunde has mentioned of three phases in Roy's life, yet we like to divide these phases into four for the purpose of logical evaluation and appreciation. The four stages are as follows :

- (1) The first stage consists of the thoughts of M.N. Roy as a member of Indian terrorist movement under the leadership of Jatindranath Mukhopadhyaya alias Bagha Jatin. After the death of Bagha Jatin a change came in the mind of Roy. He felt immense urge for freedom.
- (2) The second stage consists of his thoughts and surmises when he left India and went on hiding in Mexico where he came under a Marxist revolutionary and was initiated into the tenets of Marxism.

- (3) The third stage consists of his thoughts when he experienced the Communist Movement in China at first hand and pondered over it and thereafter wrote his assessment of it.
- (4) The fourth stage consists of his thought when he like Jayprakash Narayan joined Indian National Congress as a socialist and was later on ousted from it by the then Congress leadership. And then as the Second World War started he like other Indian Communists supported British stand and British war against the Nazi and Fasists regime of Germany and Italy going even to the length of supporting the man made famine causing death of a million people in Bengal through starvation. After the war he predicted the Great Britain will have to quit India and unless there is a trained and dedicated band for the political organization to take over power, the administration of the entire nation will go to the plutocrats and their lackeys who through political chicanery scramble for and occupy power hoodwinking the illiterate mass. Therefore, a radical organisation for propagation of humanistic ideas among the masses is a must for establishing democracy in the real sense of the term in India.

The first stage of the political thought of M.N.Roy developed in the following way. The British people came

into India for business. But ultimately they defeated the Indian rulers and occupied and ruled the whole country. However, their main motive remained the same, namely, to exploit India as a colony for the economic development of Great Britain. With that end in view they wanted to develop India as a Colonial market for the sale of goods manufactured in Great Britain in a monopolistic manner. For this purpose a vast band of clerks were required for commercial correspondence and transaction. The British ruler with this end in view created schools and colleges in which western system of education were imparted to Indian students so that they can become successful white colour worker. And they were in the main successful in the venture. Nevertheless some of these students read the books written by renaissance writers who preached social contract theory, representative Govt., separation of power, no taxation without representation, etc. They also read history books and came to learn how Germany was unified and freed and how Italy followed in same path. Some of them started to dream of a unified India freed from British and gradually the dream gathered momentum among the young people who used to flock in schools and colleges. Some of the teachers also inspired them to dream through concerted action. Thus terrorists movement sporadically came into existence in different parts of India such as Maharashtra, Bengal and Punjab, Bengal taking the leading role. Different secret organisations sprang up and one of

them is Yugantar Dal in Bengal. One section of Yugantar Dal was led by the Bagha Jatin who tried to import arms and weapons for such enemies of Great Britain as Germany in order to create the mass uprising duly armed for insurgency defeating the British and freeing the country. They thought that if the British could be forced to quit India all our problems would automatically find satisfactory solution. M.N.Roy belonged to the fraction of Yugantar Dal led by Jatin. Their basic contention is that British method of administration dehumanised Indians and as soon as the imperialists administration of Britain be removed the suppressed humanism of Indian people automatically come to full bloom.

M.N.Roy in his Memories said :

"On the outbreak of the First world war in 1914, Indian revolutionaries in exile looked towards Germany as the land of hope, and rushed there full of great expectations. By the end of the year, the news reached us in India that the Indian Revolutionary Committee in Berlin had obtained from the German Government the promise of arms and money required to declare the war of independence. The news spread like wild fire, to affect the Indian Soldiers of the British army also ..."<sup>2</sup>.

Roy made several attempts to collect weapons from German Govt. But he did not get them to be used against the British for independence of India. Roy went to China in search of arms. Lastly, he was disappointed as he could not collect arms.

Further, Roy said, "The plan failed because of the dishonesty of the German promise to help an armed uprising in India"<sup>3</sup>. This, however, shows Roy's attempt and thought to free India from the hands of the British.

The second stage of the political thoughts of M.N. Roy started to take shape when being chased by the British police for terrorist activities he had to leave India and to go to South America under the assumed name of Manabendra Nath Roy in the place of his original name Narendranath Bhattacharya. There in Mexico he came into close contact with a Marxist revolutionary named Borodin. Uptil now the orientation of M.N. Roy's thought was nationalistic and humanistic. That is he believed that his task is to work for the uplift of India as a nation and to develop among the Indian people the idea that every individual man is an end in itself and is never a mere means to any other thing. Both these ideas he inherited from the writings of political thinkers of European renaissance such as John Locke and others. However, under the influence of Borodin he came to believe that the people in every country can be divided into two classes, the exploiter and the exploited. The exploiters owned all the means of production and the exploited have nothing but their labour to sale to the exploiter for earning their livelihood. The exploiter purchased the labour of the exploited at a cheaper rate and cornered all the

profits. Everyone of the exploiter tries to increase his profit by introducing new innovations into the means of production increasing product and decreasing the demand for human labour for the purpose of production and thereby throws the labourers in large number out of employment. This class division cuts across the boundary lines of nations and states. On the one hand, there is community of interests among labourers of the different nations and states of the world. On the other hand, exploiters of different nations and states are united by a similar community of interests. In other words, the clash of interest of the exploiter and exploited class is international in character. And only when the marginal exploiters through competition are reduced to a state of being paupers they will join the exploited class and augment its in number. When the exploited class become sufficiently big and through their enlightened leader become aware of their community of interests and the real character and the aim of their enemy viz. the exploiter class, they will rise in revolt, overthrow the Govt. which is normally an ally of the exploiters, take control of the state apparatus, socialized the means of production and eliminating the exploiter class finish the exploiter and the exploited ushering in a homogeneous society. This revolution is a continuous process and it will come to an end when and only when in all the countries of the world through revolution exploiter class has been eliminated.

After taking himself away from communism Roy advocated "Radical Humanism", Roy called his view "Radical Humanism" because, he thinks that his view can go into the root of the problems. He depicted the inconsistencies of Marxism and gave birth of a new theory which is called "Radical Humanism". The difference between Marxism and Roy is regarding the role of ideas in human history and on the primacy of moral values. He mentioned 22 Theses in "Radical Humanism". Roy gave importance on human beings and he is best known as a humanist. According to Marx, "Man is the root of mankind". Such type of utterance is found in Protagoras, an eminent ancient Greek philosopher. He said that 'man is the measure of all things'. Similarly Roy gave highest position to man. "For Roy the sovereignty of man is sacrosanct and sine qua non of his final liberation, political, social, moral and spiritual"<sup>4</sup>.

However, Roy took socialism as a philosophy of emancipation. But he marked the existence of exploitation and slave system in Russia. Again, Roy was much shocked when he found that Stalin was doing away ethical values and desiring to establish military power in Europe. Blind economic theory makes man's existence as insignificant. Here, it is found that man's liberty and sovereignty are denied. It is the feature of capitalism. According to Roy, it is the main crisis of the present world. Neither Capitalism nor Socialism could be cured of this crisis. Communistic philosophy is defective.

Instead of making a man free, it makes man slave by the order of the leader of the state. So there is need of transcendence of communism and there is need of establishment of new political party which will treat man as man and which will think for liberty of man. Roy went beyond communism. But why? To be clear regarding this issue I like to quote a few lines from Memoirs which are as follows :

"It was during the closing years of the War that Roy's restless and ever-inquisitive mind began to realize the inadequacies of Marxism and Communism. The victory of the democratic forces was by then assured. The danger of Fascism was averted. The fear that Hitler and his Fascist hoards might over run Europe and enslave the world was set at rest. The time had come to think of what might happen after the end of the war. Roy had already prophesied that the world would revolve around two poles, the United States of America and Soviet Russia. It was necessary to avoid conflict between the two poles if peace was to be preserved and if people were to be enabled to advance in the direction of progress and prosperity. Neither Capitalism nor Communism was the answer to the situation. Capitalism had already proved its bankruptcy. Communism had also falsified all hopes. On the other hand, Communism held out the threat of a civil war on the national as well as on the international plane. It was necessary therefore to go beyond Communism and evolve an ideology, a

political structure and social institutions which would ensure freedom as well as equality, security as well as free scope of development. Thinking along these lines Roy arrived at the Philosophy of New Humanism"<sup>5</sup>.

Roy was much anxious as to the revolution of India and for smooth revolutionary work he intended to get help and co-operation from Moscow. After the First world war and revolution in Russia, Roy's attraction towards Russia became immense. But later on many personalities being disheartened left Communist movement. After about ten years of First World War Roy took himself away from Communism. However, Roy arrived at Berlin in 1919. While he was in Berlin there occurred military rising. In the history it is known as Knapp putseh. But the situation was tackled by the workers. This was an instance of capture of power by the workers. While he was in Berlin, Roy was acquainted with Barnstein, Kautsky and Hilfferding. He was also acquainted with and made friendship with Brandlu and August Thalheimer, the German Communists. However, in 1927 Roy went to China to know the situation of it. The Bolshevik's fundamental motto was to remove the imperialist power from China rather than propagation of Communism. It should be kept in mind that Roy went to China as a member of Comintern to give leadership to China revolution. Let us now give a short history of China.

The period of Chinese history before 1911 is regarded as the period of the "Great Tradition". During the 13th century the Mongols who were extremely powerful conquered China. And from 1368-1644 we find Ming Dynasty in China. This Ming Dynasty came to end by the Manchus (1644-1912). This is known as Ch'ing Dynasty. During this period China came in major contact with the West. However, during this Dynasty the force of European and Japanese imperialists were united and made China Colonial and semi-colonial society. At different times the China people came forward to protest against exploitation and as a result a good number of rebellions occurred such as opium war, the Taiping Rebellion, China-France War, Boxer Rebellion, etc. The Chinese could not win in such wars for want of unification. Revolution in Russia inspired them very much. At the beginning of the 20th century Chinese could make them free from the hands of the foreigners. In 1911 the Chinese overthrew the Manchu and they elected Dr. Sun Yat-Sen as a President of a temporary Government. In 1912 Dr. Sun and his followers established the Kuomintang (Nationalist) party. Yuan Shih-Kai took over control from Dr. Sun in 1912. He tried to establish again an imperial form of Govt. But suicidal success came. In 1921 Chinese Communist <sup>/Party</sup> was founded with an intention to form a Govt. similar to that of the Soviet Union. Here, I like to quote the following :

"With the help of a Comintern agent, Liand ch' en established Communist branches in Peking and Shanghai in 1920, and in July 1921 a meeting was held in Shanghai to found the Chinese Communist Party"<sup>6</sup>. However, Dr. Sun was called back twice to lead China for short times. In 1926 Chiang Kaishek took over the rule. The Nationalists got help from Russia till they accepted Chinese Communists as allies. But in 1927 the Nationalists came in conflict with the Chinese Communist.

It is to be noted that Kuomintang and Communist Party were united against the imperialism of the foreigners. Capitalists, middle class, peasants and workers - these four classes were united for warrior movement. Instruction towards Kuomintang and China Communist Party was given by Comintern. In 1926 unification between two parties, viz., Kuomintang and Chinese Communist Party were broken. Regarding the relation between the two parties, we like to note the view of M.N.Roy who says :

"The policy of imperialism in China at this time is to find a possible modus Vivendi with a section of the Chinese bourgeoisie. If the national bourgeoisie determine the progress and tactics of the revolution it will be sabotaged and weakened as a consequence of this new policy of imperialism. Therefore, it is very clear that when we talk about the united anti-imperialist front we have to keep the big

bourgeoisie out of account . . . . A section of the bourgeoisie has moved further and further away from the revolution, and in proportion as the revolutionary forces (the proletariat, the peasantry, the petty-bourgeoisie) become more and more revolutionary, the upper strata of the bourgeoisie will move more and more away from the revolution to the extent of making a united front with the imperialists against revolutionary China"<sup>7</sup>.

M.N. Roy was deputed to China as a delegate of the Comintern. As per decision of the Comintern the Chinese Communists intended to work with the Kuomintang unitedly. But later on Kuomintang and Chiang Kaishek went against Communists. Roy always disbelieved the bourgeoisie and he was against tie with Kuomintang. However, it is a hurt to Roy that liability of failure of Comintern principle in China came on the shoulder of Roy.

The fourth stage consists of Roy's thought when he like Jay Prakash joined Indian National Congress as a socialist. In this connection, a short discussion on J.P.'s political thought seems to be essential. J.P. dedicated his whole life for the service of the common man of India. From 1948-1951 J.P. worked hard to build the socialist party. He left socialist party in 1957 and joined Sarvodaya movement of Vinoba Bhave. J.P read all writings of M.N.Roy. And he thought that Marxism could solve India's social, political

and economic problems. He was also against the Capitalistic system. He always thought of freedom and human progress. He rejected the theory of Parliamentary democracy and multi-party system. And he advocated the view of partyless democracy. Moreover, he gave importance to local communities. It is also to be noted that he was a great humanist. He rejected parliamentary democracy on the ground that in it the common man becomes non-entity. He was of opinion that only the persons who are economically and politically powerful are getting the benefits. In these regards we find a deep relation between the thought of Roy and J.P. Moreover, J.P. has clearly stated the importance of decentralization of political units like Panchayats, Trust in people, Control over administration by the Panchayats. In this regard too we find similarity between Roy and J.P. because the former admitted the necessity of people's committees. Perhaps both of them were influenced by Gandhi. Gandhi, we find, also admitted the importance of the formation of panchayats. Even today different political parties are giving importance to Panchayat Raj system. This shows far sightedness of Gandhiji and Roy.

Jayprakash Narayan spoke of the concept of 'Total Revolution'. It is found that he was committed to socialism and humanistic ideals. His intention was to create conditions for fulfilment of the basic needs of the masses who are below the poverty line. Thus there is need of 'Total Revolution'.

Now the question arises : what is meant by 'Total Revolution'? J.P.'s 'Total Revolution' is like Gandhian 'Total Revolution'. 'Total Revolution' requires reassessment of cultural values in the light of new knowledge. According to J.P., 'Total Revolution' is a combination of revolution that we find in social, economic, political, cultural, intellectual, educational and spiritual spheres. It is continual revolution. It can be said that 'Total Revolution' is nearer to 'Radical Humanism'. Thus, J.P. is more closely related to Roy rather than Gandhi. Roy was a first active and renowned politician in India who developed the concept of 'Total Revolution'. He advocated of the formation of people's committees at the village level. In this connection, thesis 15 and 16 of Roy are notable. Thesis 15 states :

"The function of a revolutionary and liberating Social Philosophy is to lay emphasis on the basic fact of history that man is the maker of his world - man as a thinking being, and he can be so only as an individual ... . An increasingly large number of men conscious of their creative power, motivated by the indomitable will to remake the world, ... Can create the conditions under which democracy will be possible ?"<sup>3</sup>

Further, the thesis 16 states : " ... social revolution requires in rapidly increasing number men of the new renaissance, and rapidly expanding system of people's

committees, and an organic co-ordination of both. The programme of revolution will similarly be based on the principles of freedom; reason and social harmony"<sup>9</sup>. Roy has admitted the necessity of formation and functioning of people's committees at village level and at ward level in the cities. It is essential for 'Total Revolution'. Thus we find the thought of Mahatma Gandhi, M.N.Roy and J.P. are more or less alike in respect of welfare of the individuals. Roy felt the need of propagation of humanistic ideas among the masses for establishing democracy in the real sense of the term in India.

It is found in the writings of Roy that he was 'radical' during the period 1940-1947. And at the later period he was known as scientific or "New Humanist". In 1947 while he was explaining 'Manifesto of Humanism', Roy told that his humanism is cosmopolitan. He thought of all men, not of a nation or a class. He clearly stated that his radicalism does not say of a nation or of a class, it thinks of all men in general. Marxism emphasized the emancipation of the working class and it does not think of the middle class of people. Further, it is pointed out by Roy that many Marxian concepts are not acceptable to him. While taking up the discussion on "New Humanism" we have already pointed out some defects of Marxism which have been mentioned by Roy. However, at this stage we like to raise some objections against Late M.N.Roy and to judge whether his views can be taken for granted as valid

after scrutiny.

We are acquainted with two types of philosophies, viz. idealistic and materialistic. They differ in respect of their outlook. M.N. Roy was a materialist. He says,

"Matter, as classically conceived is not the ultimate physical reality, but that does not prove that ultimate reality as known today is immaterial or mental or spiritual"<sup>10</sup>.

Thus Roy has abandoned spiritualism and spiritualistic ideas prevalent in India. Legitimately a question comes to our mind : should we denounce or abandon spiritualistic ideas prevalent in India ? Before giving reply to this question it seems that it will be justifiable if we first give the meaning of the concept 'spiritualism'. Be it noted that "spiritualism" has got different meanings rather than one. Let us take up the meaning of the word 'spiritualism' for discussion and then acceptability or non-acceptability of Roy's view will be taken into account.

'Spiritualism' has an important influence on religion and philosophies. It is to be noted that there can be no scientific knowledge of the spirit-world. "Spiritualism" is much older than science. And Science neglects the ideas of spiritualism for absence of Scientific explanation. However, the 'spirit' is conceived as detachable from body. It is capable of wandering about at large while its owner is asleep

or entranced. In both the East and the West we find the admission of the soul, or self or the spirit. In the philosophy of Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibnitz we find admission of spirit. Again, almost all Indian philosophers advocated spiritualism. It is common man's attitude to Indian philosophy that it is non-separable from religious mysticism. But actually it is not so. We often hear that philosophy in India is a spiritual. Spirituality is a metaphysical concept. And spiritualism refers to anything that deals with 'spirits' or disembodied souls including God as the highest soul. This is the religious view. Further, 'spiritualism' is sometimes used to refer to the alleged activity of soul which has become disembodied and which though not perceptible yet take part in and influence the activities of man. The word 'spiritual' according to Sanskrit, means non-material. If precise meaning is given, we may say that 'spiritual' is such that which is "without form".

By 'spiritual' is meant that it puts emphasis on values which are super-natural and other-worldly. Contemporary Indian philosophers do not admit the above meaning of spiritual as it has left out worldly values. They do not disregard the facts of the empirical world. According to these thinkers, for spiritual growth, physical nature is not to be rejected - it must be perfected. So, we find that 'spirituality' is not

delinked from this world. Vivekananda, Rabindranath, Mahatma Gandhi, Aurobinda and the like have advocated 'spiritualism'. While discussing the nature of man, Rabindranath has said that man continues to have biological and physical nature. Moreover, man has within him a spiritual nature which makes him unique and gives him some amount of freedom. Rabindranath has admitted two aspects of the self - the physical and the spiritual. On the other hand, Gandhi has explicitly stated that every individual is a blend of the bodily and the spiritual aspects. Man is not only a physical being - he is spiritual too. Gandhi admits God who is the truth. God is a religious concept. Though Gandhi accepts religious concepts, nevertheless he does not deny morality. He says that true religion and morality are related to each other. Moral values are primarily worldly whereas religious values have a reference to the 'beyond'. Gandhi admits both moral and religious aspects which shows that he goes beyond this empirical world and as such he admits 'spiritualism'.

Roy has denied supernatural powers. According to him, man is not a slave of any supernatural power. He is against any kind of fatalistic theory. He was also against the Vedantic idealism. To him both Sankara and Ramanuja represented mental dogmatism.

According to Roy, Buddhism was a revolutionary force which revolted against Brahmanical ecclesiasticism, parasitic

/goodness of

luxury and the caste system. Moreover, Roy did not recognise / the spiritualism in India. Spiritualistic thought was manifested in Vivekananda, Aurobinda and Gandhi etc. But /belief in this has been denounced by Roy. Indians are proud of their / spiritualistic aspect which is eternal and unchangeable.

M.N. Roy intended to change this belief. The spiritual mission of India, according to Roy, arose basically from the attachment to the pre-Capitalistic conditions. Thus from the discussion it is palpable that though some eminent thinkers and religious persons admit spiritualism nevertheless Roy went against it and he gave more importance on individual rather than super-natural Being or Spirit.

Now, the question may be raised : what is the harm if we admit spiritualism or a supernatural Being or Power in addition to individual ? The concept of spirit or Supernatural Being or God is a religious concept. Are all religious concepts futile concepts ? or, is religion totally useless ? We do not deny that there are many religious concepts which are not adequate and which are exploiting the common people. As Roy was at a particular stage a follower of Marxism, he was influenced by Marxist view of religion which says that religion is the 'opium of the people'. Moreover, a real intellectual giant like Roy who was associated with International politics, could not be familiar with the majority of the people of the world. But

Mahatma Gandhi captured the heart of the people of the world in general and India in particular. That may be the cause why Roy protested against Gandhi vehemently. In a particular sense at least (i.e. religion brings bond among men) religion cannot be denied.

For scientific outlook Roy denied spiritualism and supernaturalism. He denied religion and religious concepts. Can we explain each and everything of the world by science? We cannot. Can knowledge imparted by science always be infallible? Certainly not. Now our next question is: Can science deny all religious concepts? No decisive answer is available. In this connection, I am quoting from John Hick where he was taking up the concept of 'challenge of modern science' regarding the non-existence of God. To quote him: "... There it appeared that we cannot decisively prove the existence of God; here it appears that neither can we decisively disprove his existence"<sup>11</sup>.

Suppose, we admit the view of Roy and announce that there is no supernatural Being or God, or Allah or Deity. Will this announcement keep the situation in India healthy or normal? This may create new issue like Ram Mandir and Babri Masjid problem prevailing in India. No scientific explanation could solve the problem. We think that non-acceptance of the traditional faith all of a sudden will not keep the atmosphere normal. Blind faith and superstition

of the people can be removed gradually through education. Here, we like to note another point that psychologists admit three aspects of mind, viz. cognitive, conative, and affective. It seems that Roy has put emphasis on cognition aspect without giving due importance to conative aspect of mind of human beings. But this aspect, truly speaking, has also its importance. This cannot be denied. But Roy has done so.

We have already pointed out that almost Indians believe in spiritualism. But Roy has revolted against spiritualism. How far it is possible and practicable to remove this spiritualistic idea, is a vital question. We cannot deny the importance of social and cultural milieu. Denying of this faith will bring a bad consequence which as a moral and rational being man should not <sup>/suffer from.</sup> But it is a fact that through the spread of education, superstition and blind faith can be removed. In this respect we must admit the importance of education enunciated by Roy. But it requires long time, and if that time comes, dream of Roy will be fulfilled. So change can be brought by evolution not by revolution. From this discussion it can be said that we cannot deny spiritualism at this stage at least. If it be so, Roy's view is not acceptable. In the next paragraphs we shall raise another question against M.N. Roy for evaluation.

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Secondly, Roy has said of the partyless politics. At once a question comes in our mind : Is it possible in reality particularly in modern democracy ? Roy was a great humanist.

His novel thought for freedom of individual will make him ever living in the heart of the people who know him and his writings. He is also known as a materialist. But a critical study will reveal that there <sup>exists</sup> an idealistic bias in Roy. As an instance of idealistic bias we can mention his view of partyless politics. In this regard we find similarity between Gandhi and Roy. Gandhi also advocated partyless democracy. We have found in our previous discussion that Roy has given much emphasis on man. He <sup>recommended</sup> partyless politics. We know that politics is deeply associated with parties and these political parties have specific programme to make it effective for the beneficence of the citizens. But Roy thinks that these political parties cannot do good for the individuals. The motto of political parties, Roy said, was capture of power and retaining of it by any means. Further, Roy did not admit the necessity of political parties because these parties always think for the betterment of the minority. However, it is to be noted that at the time of the French Revolution there were no political parties. Parties as we find today began only in the 19th century. Why did people form the party? Definitely they felt immense necessity for its formation. Today in India we find multi-party system and each party is trying to be elected by the electorates.

In the outlook of Roy the role of political parties are secondary. To him in the party system democratic ideals

must be self-contradictory. He felt that in the tradition of party politics the free thinking of the members are neglected for the interest of the ideals of the party. Ignorance of the people is only the capital of the party. Roy pointed out that party's outlook was basically collective and as such the individual became insignificant. In politics his novel thought was of partyless politics. But his idealistic thought cannot be admitted when we find importance of political parties in democratic states. Let us see the function and importance of political parties.

Political thinkers have admitted the merit of political parties in democracy. It has been pointed out that party acts as major political medium of opinions and ideas. MacIver says, "It is the agency by which public opinion is translated into public policy"<sup>12</sup>.

The other function of political party is to educate the public. They also gave importance on education. Thus in this respect we cannot deny the importance of political party. Again, party system makes the Govt. responsible to the public. Furthermore, parliamentary government is impossible if there is no party. Still further, opposition can become possible due to political parties. The importance of opposition party can hardly be denied. A strong opposition party compels the ruling party to take programmes for majority's welfare. But we, the Indians, are ashamed of saying that till now we do

not find strong opposition against the ruling party. India's development could be possible if there were strong oppositions. Thus there is importance of the party which has been denied by Roy. In this respect too his stand is also not acceptable. We are of opinion that there cannot be democracy without party-politics. But Roy has admitted the former part and denied the later part.

Now, our third objection comes against Roy when he denies parliamentary democracy. Our task is to judge how far Roy's view regarding this issue is acceptable. Roy was a revolutionary and an intellectual. He was against western democracy. He did not believe in parliamentary democracy. In democracy mere counting of hands gets importance. In it people have got no freedom. Here, intelligence, integrity, wisdom, moral excellence are not given <sup>due</sup> importance. Success of democracy depends on moral conscience. The present democracy which is based on Universal Suffrages is only a formality. Here, I like to quote Shib Narayan Roy who observes : "parliamentary democracy by its bureaucratic method of political administration and by its support to private monopolies in finance, industry and land, had sapped the very source of democratic initiative among the people"<sup>13</sup>. Parliamentary democracy, according to Roy, is a 'benevolent <sup>M.N.</sup> despotism'. In thesis no.12 <sup>✓</sup> Roy has pointed out that parliamentary democracy is defective. Further, according

to Roy, the alternative to Parliamentary democracy is not dictatorship. He says of organised democracy, "The parliament should be the apex of a pyramidal structure of the state reared on the base of an organised democracy composed of a country-wide network of people's committees"<sup>14</sup>.

Roy has given stress on reformation of the traditional democracy. Parliamentary democracy says big and in it those who are not moral, get highest position. According to Roy, there is nothing which is superior to morality. Certainty of parliamentary democracy does not depend on law. It depends on the conscience of the members of the party which has got majority.

Roy in politics, power and parties has said that 'modern parliamentary democracy has degenerated into a scramble for power among party machineries'. Moreover, Roy says, "Government of the people and by the people is completely forgotten and has been replaced by government for the people; in other words it is not a really democratic form of government"<sup>15</sup>. Roy has clearly pointed out the criticism against formal democracy as put forward by the socialists. According to the socialists, "... it is only an instrument for one particular class to establish its dictatorship"<sup>16</sup>.

Roy has said that in parliamentary democracy freedom of the individual becomes impossible. Further, he has told

that in order to restore democracy to its original meaning there is necessity of creating two conditions : (a) democratic state must be decentralized and (b) restoration of man's faith. Today's clear picture is that primary importance is given on institutions rather than man. It is said by Roy that we must give supremacy to the individual which is the foundation of modern democratic theory. He has clearly stated that democracy must be direct and Government must be under the direct control of the people. In this respect it seems that Roy was much influenced by the city state of Plato. But it is a problem at least to the political philosophers. How is it possible ? Say, India, for an instance. India is a vast country and there are 84 crores of people. Can direct democracy be applicable to India ? Our answer is negative. It seems that besides parliamentary democracy or Presidential form of Govt. there is no other suitable alternative in our hand. But Roy denounced parliamentary democracy. And he stood for decentralization and partyless democracy.

Being influenced by Plato, Roy laid much emphasis on education, Plato thought that education is the pre-condition in democracy. Similarly Roy said that without education democracy was impossible. Education, to Roy, does not mean bookish knowledge but it must be manifestation of thinking and reasoning. When the citizens will be educated then

their helplessness will be removed. They will be able to form people's committee and through people's committee direct democracy will be organised. And education will enable men to elect appropriate persons who will admit <sup>and</sup> allegiance to the electorate/not to the party.

In ancient Greece direct form of democracy was possible for area of ruling was not vast. Moreover, traditional thought and method have been eliminated through the change of time and for the technological development. More complexity in life has arisen. Administration of the country or state is not possible in the traditional manner. Man has become more conscious. We admit Roy's view regarding the value of education. Education will make man more and more conscious. But that does not mean that parliamentary democracy is useless for ruling the country. We admit that there are some drawbacks of parliamentary democracy. Despite of that we can not denounce it as we have no other alternative. So we can say that Roy's view against parliamentary democracy does not stand in the perspective of today's politics. Instead of giving supremacy to the parliamentary democracy, Roy has given supremacy to the local committees. We admit that local committees can know local problems and take immediate arrangement for solution of the problems in many respects. Moreover, individuals are given due importance and honour.

Local problems vary from place to place. The vital problem is this that majority of the people of India are illiterate. So it is next to impossibility that these people will be able to be acquainted with all problems and will be able to take proper measure for the welfare of the state and people. Lack of education has become the barrier to form local committees for running the country. Here, Roy has admitted the importance of education. He says : "Education as a pre-condition of democracy is not just primary education; ... It is the process of raising the intellectual and cultural level of a people"<sup>17</sup>. Again, he says, "Education means to help them to think, to apply their reason"<sup>18</sup>. Here, by the word "them" we mean the individuals. Political power, according to Roy, should reside in the primary organisations of the people such as people's committees. Further, he said that most electorates are illiterates and as such politics was bound to become unprincipled scramble for power. Here, we find a contradiction. People's committees are also formed by illiterates, like the M.L.As and M.P.S, they are also elected by illiterates. <sup>/in</sup> If one case there will not be unprincipled scramble for power and in other case there will be unprincipled scramble for power, we can not admit this division.

Further, if education manifests thinking, the elected persons may not scramble for power. We think that modern vast state like India can not be run without the parliamentary

democracy. But it is to be kept in mind that a strong opposition is a must so that the Govt. cannot be unprincipled and corrupted. So Roy's organised democracy in the perspective of today's politics is not at all acceptable.

Our fourth question is : did Roy not put much emphasis on morality ? Can a state be organised or run on the basis of morality alone ?

'New Humanism' has given primary importance to man. And the society is the creation of man. So individual is prior to society. Individual freedom, according to Roy, has got priority over social organisation. He says that neither capitalists nor Parliamentary democracy can solve the problem of freedom of the individual. Man is a thinking being and as such he is different from animals. Man creates society. Good society is created by the good people. A rational and moral society is created by rational and moral individuals. Roy has said that ethics must be given high place in social philosophy. He says that moral philosophy must be related to science.

We have found that Roy has denied spiritualism. He has discarded religion. But he has given high place to ethics and morality. According to him, without a sounder ethical view, no revolutionary philosophy is possible. Man is a rational being. Reason is the sanction <sup>behind</sup> morality.

Moreover, Roy has said that freedom cannot be attained without morality. 'New Humanism' says of sovereignty of man. According to it, rational and moral society is possible as man is rational and moral. Thus in Roy's philosophy it is palpable that man has got a prominent place.

We do not deny importance of ethics and morality in social life. It is said that 'morality is the social enterprise'. But we are of opinion that Roy has given over emphasis on morality and ethics. If our actions are moral or ethical, then there will exist calm and quiet atmosphere in the society or state. A better life will be led by the individuals. Hence, there is importance of morality. But we are of opinion that morality is not only the necessary element for better society. And it is not always essential.

There are diverse opinions regarding the relation between ethics and politics. First, according to Machiavelli and his followers, politics has no connection with ethics. Machiavelli says that religion and morality are not masters of the state. He says that the state rests on force. And aim of the state is material prosperity. The ordinary rules of morality do not apply in the case of state-craft. Secondly, Hobbes, Bain and some others hold the view that ethics is a branch of politics, and political law is the moral law. Finally, Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza and Hegel hold that politics is a branch of ethics. So there are many views regarding the

relation between politics and ethics. Our business is to see whether M.N. Roy's view is acceptable or not. In normal cases we do not disagree with Roy's view as to the supremacy of morality. But we do not agree to Roy's view when he says that there is <sup>/support</sup>no/superior to moral support.

<sup>/forth</sup>Moral development brings/social development. In spite of that we cannot always follow moral laws in ruling the country. Let us take an example. 'We should not tell a lie', --- this is a moral judgement. Can a welfare state abide by this moral law all times. A state has to suppress many things, e.g., 'information regarding the number of chemical weapons lying with the country'. If we are to be moral always, this information cannot remain unnoticeable. But in reality it does not happen. So moral laws are not always to be abided by. It seems that Roy was influenced by Kantian ethics so he went away from reality and as such he had become imaginal.

Our next question is : Is ethics based on religion ? Malinowski states : "all the morality of primitives is derived from religious belief"<sup>19</sup>. Again to Popper : "historically, all ethics undoubtedly begins with religion"<sup>20</sup>.

If ethics is based on religion, then Roy's view is not acceptable, because, he has abandoned religion. And we are of opinion that all religious views are not useless. If Roy

admits ethics, he is to admit religion. Thus he is to welcome a contradiction.

Now our next question is : did M.N. Roy bring 'Total Revolution' ? It is said that Roy tried to develop the concept of 'Total Revolution'. His writings reveal novel concepts and thoughts. He is a renowned humanist. His love for man took him in different paths at different times. This we find when we observe different phases in his life. During the first phase of his life he tried to remove the distress of the Indians who were dehumanized by the British. At the second phase he was associated with Marxism and was impressed by it. Here too we find his love towards men.

His love towards individual took him away from Marxism to 'New Humanism'. He criticized Marxism and Leninism which are being criticized now by Russian President, Gorbachev today. This shows his farsightedness of his thought. Roy denounced parliamentary democracy, importance of political party, and spiritualism. Positively we can say that Roy advocated the formation of the people's committees. These show that he is a revolutionary thinker. Naturally a question peeps in our mind : did Roy bring <sup>a</sup>revolution in thought. In this connection, we like to make a distinction between 'evolution' and 'revolution'. 'Evolution' means gradual change whereas 'revolution' means complete break with the past. The political thinkers have given different meanings

of the term 'revolution'. However, it may be noted that there are some points of similarity in different meanings of the term 'revolution'. First, revolution brings social change. Secondly, it involves the use of violence in civil social relations. Thirdly and finally, revolution attacks the constitution of society.

Aristotle held the view that revolutions could occur due to mal-distribution of wealth in the society, power seeking by the leaders of the society, strong desire to achieve of a radically different social order. In recent time it is pointed out that revolutions are caused by many factors. Economic depression, alienation of intellectuals etc. <sup>can</sup> bring revolution.

We have said earlier that Roy denied parliamentary democracy. He said that power in democracy should reside in primary organisations of the people such as people's committee. Moreover, Roy developed the concept of 'co-operative economy'. He said that in a co-operative economy production would not be in the hands of capitalists class, and even it must not remain within the control of the state. According to him, production should belong to the workers. These thoughts of Roy are not new. In these regards either he has been influenced by Mahatma Gandhi or by Marx. But his concepts are modified forms of previous thoughts of the Indian thinkers. He was also influenced by Greek thinker.

viz., Plato. Time is changing like tide. Social, political, economic, technological changes and the like are going on. Roy was a scientific-minded and intellectual person. So he could reconcile different views. He has said of ushering in 'Total Revolution'.

But in practice he could not. Even today his thoughts are retained in his books and not implemented. It seems that there was evolutionary thought in Roy but no revolutionary thought is traceable in him because he could not break <sup>with</sup> the past totally. Humanism was always at the back of Roy's mind i.e. from the first phase to last phase of his life. Lastly, it may please be noted that the use of term of 'Total Revolution' is not appropriate. If 'Revolution' means complete break with the past, then the use of the word 'Total' becomes redundant. So the development of the concept 'Total Revolution' is <sup>a</sup> misnomer. It is better to say that Roy has brought <sup>radical</sup> evolution in different concepts such, social, political, cultural etc.

In the 1st Thesis of New Humanism Roy has stated; "... the development of the individual is the measure of social progress"<sup>21</sup>. Again, in Beyond Communism Roy has pointed out, "The individual comes first; he is prior to society; society is the means for attaining an end, which is freedom and progress of the individual"<sup>22</sup>. Man is the unit of the society. And Roy has given much importance to

man. This reminds us that there is similarity between existentialism and 'New Humanism'. According to naturalism, man is a natural event and it puts less emphasis on human values. On the other hand, Absolutism places divine personality over and above everything in the world. Human life, according to it, is determined by the 'divine spirit'. Moreover, it denies separate existence of man. Sartre, an existential thinker, opines that man's existence is his alone and is not determined by God. Sartre makes a distinction between 'existence' and 'essence'. By 'existence' he means 'human existence'. And he says that 'existence precedes essence'. Thus Sartre gives primary importance to man and in this respect parity <sup>of thought</sup> between Roy and Sartre is found. Here, it seems that the position of Roy is superior to Sartre. We know that existentialism is a revolt against modern society. It is also a protest against the concept of 'reason' and 'nature'. Moreover, it is a revolt against the impersonal nature of the modern industrial age, against scientism. But Roy had scientific outlook. Though he gave primary importance to man yet he did not deny the importance of technological development. Moreover, he gave importance to reason and morality of the individual. Denial of rational aspect of man will certainly dehumanize man. In this regard Roy undoubtedly deserves <sup>a status of</sup> superiority in thought to the existential thinkers.

Roy spoke of the freedom of the individual. Does it mean freedom of the 'I' or 'ego' ? If it means freedom of 'I', Roy will be an egoist. But "New Humanism advocates a social reconstruction of the world as a commonwealth and fraternity of free men, by the cooperative endeavour of spiritually emancipated moral men"<sup>23</sup>.

Moreover, "New Humanism is cosmopolitan". So it can be said that Roy had broadness in mind. He thought of freedom of all individuals irrespective of class, creed and nation. Thus it is observed that he passed from the freedom of individual to the freedom of individuals. Whether it involves any logical fallacy or not that is a different issue but his love towards individuals is beyond any question.

Prof. Debi Chatterjee says, "Roy's emphasis on the role of the peasantry in the revolutionary struggle, presenting a notable departure from traditional Marxism, remains valuable for the strategy of a rural based revolution and reminds us not of the scepticism of Marx in relation to this particular class, but rather the optimism of Mao"<sup>24</sup>.

We do not deny the originality of thinking of Roy. But many concepts such as partyless politics, abolition of parliamentary democracy, over emphasis on formation of the people's committee etc. are not acceptable to us for the reasons discussed elsewhere of this work. These made him

imaginational. But his thinking on the importance of education is an undeniable fact. If the Indians are educated properly, many problems will be automatically solved and they will understand the significance of the concepts of Roy and their importance. Then a new atmosphere will prevail in India and what today Indians think as dream will come to be real. Let us see and wait for that day to verify whether Roy's thoughts were chimerical or not. However, despite some defects of some concepts of Roy, his concepts are not futile. So at end of my discussion I like to quote J.B.H. Wadia : " ... if Gurudev Tagore was the artistic conscience of India and Gandhiji its spiritual conscience, M.N.Roy was certainly the intellectual conscience of India"<sup>25</sup>.

Further, I agree with Wadia when he says, " ... Roy the humanist par excellence will receive the recognition and honour due to him from his countrymen"<sup>26</sup>.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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