

M. N. Roy

Q. Ideational journey of M. N. Roy.

As a thinker we see transformation in M. N. Roy's views. M. N. Roy's political philosophy show a connection of events of his life. He begins his career as a revolutionary nationalist. He was a member of Yugantar society. He was jailed in Hawrah conspiracy case. He went to Mexico where he got influenced by communism. He came to be acknowledged as important authority on communism as colonial issues. He was invited by communist international by Lenin to outline communist international strategy with respect to issue of colonialism. He projected himself as orthodox Marxist and developed differences with Lenin as colonial question. He was from communist international. After this incident M.N. Roy critically examined principles of Marxism. When M. N. Roy was stanchd Marxist he was a critic of Gandhi. He considered Gandhi as a weak and watery nationalist and supporter of bourgoisse. Later on he changed his view with respect to Gandhi. From critic of Gandhi he became the admirer of Gandhi. M.N. Roy's position in Indian politics got marginalized and ultimately he gave the theory of radical humanism. Thus M. N. Roy's ideational journey begins as admirer of Karl Marx and critic of Gandhi then he becomes critic of Marx and admirer of Gandhi and ultimately gave his own philosophy of radical humanism. His ideational journey can be discussed with following heads.

- i) M. N. Roy's position on Marxism.
- ii) M. N. Roy's position on Gandhism.
- iii) M. N. Roy's radical humanism.

First phase of M. N. Roy

M. N. Roy come to be known as acknowledged authority on colonial issues on Marxist point of view. He was invited by Lenin to end congress of communist international. Lenin wanted to outline the strategies for colonies.

View of Lenin

Lenin gave his theory of imperialism. In this theory he established that communist revolution in advanced countries is a remote possibility. Capitalism has become a world system. Revolution against capitalism will start from its weakest link. Capitalism has got well entrenched in west.

Views of M. N. Roy

M. N. Roy also held the similar views. He also expected that world revolution against capitalism will start from colonies.

Difference between Lenin & M. N. Roy

Two disagree with respect to strategy to be adopted by communist international.

View of Lenin

Lenin thought that communist international should support ongoing struggle in colonies.

Reason given by Lenin

Lenin thought that communist movement is not well established in colonies. So communist can enter into a temporary alliance with national bourgeoisie along with maintaining the distinct identity of communist ideology.

Views of M. N. Roy

M. N. Roy maintained orthodox communist position. He said that communist should not support bourgeoisie struggle. He applied the example of German bourgeoisie in Indian context. He said that bourgeoisie class and their political organisation will compromise with the imperialists in the last. They will betray the goal of ultimate freedom. Sudipto Kaviraj says that he committed a guilt of heteronomy. Heteronomy means tendency to see events through the eyes of European history in Indian context.

M. N. Roy's strategy

Revolution can be brought by the narrow proletariat class and not by proletariat bourgeoisie combined. Communist international should support the

emerging social forces in colonies i.e. proletariat. He overestimated strength of Indian proletariat and underestimated nationalism of Indian bourgeoisie class. His judgment with respect to congress proved wrong.

Result of debate

Overall position of M. N. Roy was accepted initially but later on he was expelled from communist international quite paradoxical he was blamed as right wing intellectual.

M. N. Roy's views

M. N. Roy condemned Abni Mukherji for giving incomplete statistics which was the main cause of his misjudgement about position and strength of Indian proletariat class.

Second Phase of M. N. Roy's thoughts

1. M. N. Roy's views on Marxism
2. M. N. Roy's views on Gandhism

Views on Marxism

M. N. Roy's views on Karl Marx can be studied from his books like "Scientific Politics" and "beyond communism to humanism". M. N. Roy had great praise for Karl Marx. He considered him as greatest lover of freedom and humanity. M. N. Roy maintained himself as Marxist. He aimed at revision of Marxism. He wanted to save Marxism crude economic determinism and to bring forward humanist aspect of Karl Marx. The greatest problem in Karl Marx is neglecting the aspect of human freedom.

Criticism of theory of class struggle

- Marx says that human history is the product of class struggle. History is not simply class struggle but also product of class cohesion.
- Marx has neglect the creative role of man in creating human history.
- Dialectical materialism is itself is idealism. Movement of history in the form of dialectics if matter is nothing but logical argumentation.
- Dialectical materialism is materialistic interpretation of history is inadequate. Marx gives minimum role to mental activity is shaping history. Both idea and

matter create history. For M. N. Roy ideas have physiological origin. Ideas are also objective reality.

- Karl Marx neglects the role of anthropology in shaping of history. Materialism is not simply economic. Materialism can have different criteria like powers and physiological criteria.
- Marx has neglected ethics. In Marx human nature changes with change in mode of production. There are no universal values.
- Marx talks about disappearance of middle class but middle class grows in number.
- In Hegel individual is overshadowed by state. In Marx individual is overshadowed by class.
- Marxism is a cult irrationalism and is responsible for totalitarianism.
- Romanticism plays an important role in revolution. Revolution occurs when collective emotions reach to a peak level.

Karl Marx has following contributions also.

- (i) He said that even ideas come from matter
- (ii) All human knowledge come from physical substructure
- (iii) Action can be successful if it is based on well thought of plan.

(Manavendra Nath Roy)

Critical exaltation of M.N. Roy

His criticism of Marxism is not in depth. It is limited to criticism of dialectical of historical materialism. He does not enter into technicalities of Karl Marx like Marxist theory of accumulation of capital and surplus value.

M. N. Roy's views on Gandhi

We see transition Roy's works with respect to Gandhi. His view on Gandhi can be understood from his works like "India in transition" and "India's problems and its solutions." "One year of non-co-operation". His views with respect to Gandhi changed from 1931 onwards. Initially he was great critic of Gandhi then he

become sympathetic to Gandhi and after Gandhi's death he praised Gandhi as greatest Martyr.

Views in First Phase:

- not a mass leader, betrayal of masses as in MCM rejection of Gandhism -- new social

Lenin considered Gandhi as a revolutionary inspirer and leader of masses. M. N. Roy believed Gandhi as reactionary with medieval outlook. Far from being leader of masses he betrayed masses. Gandhi discouraged mass actions. He reminded Lenin that there can't be any revolution without revolutionary ideology. Gandhi is revivalist. Gandhi is reviving cultural and religious traditions of past. He said Gandhism is in crisis in India. He will be swept aside by mass movement. Indian society is in stage of transition. New social forces are emerging and are struggling to establish the new social order. Gandhi's non-co-operation is an ideology of middle class having no revolutionary programme. There are following short comings in Gandhism:

- Non violence ultimately supports violence. Non-violence is a mask for hiding true exploitation and inhibiting revolution.
- If non-violence is practiced capitalism will never go.
- Gandhi inhibits real progress because of his medievalism and cultural backwardness.
- Metaphysics of Gandhi i.e. issue of consciousness is unfortunate for politics.
- His economics of charkha is reactionary.
- Gandhi has no economic programme to win mass support.
- Gandhi is trying to unite exploiters with exploited through his trusteeship theory.
- Gandhi is not revolutionary but weak and watery man seeking interview with viceroy.

Changes in M. N. Roy view (IInd phase)

From 1930 onwards we see change in M. N. Roy's views for following reasons. He was condemned by communist international under Stalin.

- His political influence in Indian politics got marginalized.
- His radical democratic party could not gain roots among masses. This was proved by defeat of his party in 1946.
- He observe striking change in his attitude towards Gandhi after Gandhi's assassination. In his article certifies as death of Gandhi in April 1948 titled "Message of Martyr and homage to Martyr" he says.
- Gandhi was a humanist.
- Gandhi had a cosmopolitan appeal.
- Gandhi aimed at purification of politics.
- Gandhi elevated politics above vulgar level of scramble for power.
- Gandhi used mass action for political purpose.
- Gandhi consolidated Indian national congress.
- Gandhi liberated national forces from government repression through non-violence.
- Revivalism is not the only great element of Gandhism but there are other greater elements on Gandhism.

Radical Humanism

- meaning of humanism.
- depth of radical humanism according M. N. Roy.
- purpose of his theory of radical humanism.
- his major work dealing with radical humanism.
- sources of influence on humanism in M. N. Roy.
- three components of radical humanism – freedom, reason, ethics.
- other features of radical humanism.
- views of state and concept of radical democracy.