
C O N C L U S I O N

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To sum up the political ideas of M. N. Roy the questions that remain to be answered are what kind of man was Roy ? What is his place in history ? What are his contributions to political thought ? and so on. One thing we must remember that, it is very difficult to give a fairly comprehensive and correct estimate of so complex and controversial a personality. He was adventurous, ambitious, proud, resourceful and was intellectually well endowed.

In spite of his remarkable intellectual power, strong personality and almost legendary political career, Roy could not capture the imagination of the Indian people. He remained more or less an isolated and obscure figure working in the periphery of Indian politics. The reasons for this are not far to seek. First, by nature proud and unaccommodating, he could not work with others in a spirit of compromise. Jadu Gopal Mukherjee records that in his early days he tended to antagonise people very often by his peculiar manner.¹ J. T. Murphy, a British Communist, who met Roy at the Second Comintern Congress, describes him as " the most arrogant."²

1. Mukhopadhyaya, Jadu Gopal : Biplabi Jibaner Smriti, p. 619, (In Bengali) Calcutta.
2. Murphy, J. T. : New Horizons, p. 240, London : The Bodley Head, 1941.

Referring to this comment Roy wrote in his Memoirs : " It is true that I have always been rather stiff, if not arrogant. In the earlier days of contact with modern ideas and modern culture, it was the expression of an inferiority complex. But in course of time, experience taught tolerance and modesty.³ Philip Spratt also writes that Roy remained " ineffective because he some how failed to project his very attractive personality beyond a narrow circle of friends." ⁴

Roy was a tragic figure in Indian politics. Endowed with iron determination and inflexible fortitude, fired by the highest idealism, and armed with almost encyclopaedic knowledge, he failed to leave a deep impress upon the political life of India. His intellectual qualities and tenacity of purpose are admitted by all. While in Moscow Jawaharlal Nehru was impressed by his intellectual brilliance.⁵

A notable thing about Roy was his sense of purpose and courage of conviction. His relentless pursuit of the logic of his ideas, unmindful of risking a promising political career, is a testimony to his moral stature.⁶

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3. Roy's Memoirs, May 3, 1953, p. 210.
 4. Spratt, Philip, Blowing up India, p. 76, Calcutta: Prachi Prakashan, 1955
 5. Nehru, Jawaharlal, An Autobiography, p. 154. Allied Publishers India, 1962.
 6. Datta, Sudhindranath, M. N. Roy Philosopher Revolutionary, p. 11.

As to his place in history, we may note that his roles in the Indian National Movement, in Mexican politics, in the Comintern and in Indian politics again in 30's and 40s add up to an impressive record and mark him off as a personality of some historical significance. From Lenin and Sun Yat-sen to Gandhi and Stalin he brushed shoulders with many giants of modern history. In the development of the strategy and tactics of communist revolution in Colonial and dependent countries he will share an honourable place along with stalwarts like Lenin, Stalin and Mao-Tse-tung.

The abiding contributions of Roy in the realm of political thought must be sought in the values of Radical Humanism They are :

- a) The supreme importance of the individual in society.
- b) The reconciliation of Morality with security;
- c) Rational and free thinking of individuals ;
- d) Democracy from below or, what is now called, grass root democracy.

These values are old but the emphasis put on them by the pioneer of the Communist Movement in India gave them an added significance.

In this age of socialism and statism, planning and technology, Roy's stress on the sanctity and dignity of the individual has a great stimulating significance. He understood that individual freedom and democracy depend not primarily upon constitutional safeguards, institutional changes or economic systems but upon the quality of the individual. This explains his emphasis on education. In the present era of power politics, mass movements and pressure groups, Roy's concept of rational politics practised by individuals on their own initiative is a noble attempt to bring the individuals to the centre of society.

As a writer on politics and current affairs he had few peers in India. His encyclopedic mind included in its range very considerable acquaintance with sociology, psychology and anthropology. As an integral system of thought New Humanism is the product of such mind. In the secular rationalist tradition, it is perhaps the most sophisticated system of thought formulated in India. New Humanism represents a distinct system of thought with its distinct philosophical basis, theories of history, man, society and the state. Shri Vinayak Rao Vidyalkar a witty Arya Samaj leader, compared Roy's book 'New Humanism' to Upanishads.⁷ As the founder of New

7. Roy, M. N. Radical Humanist (Journal) Jan. 29, 1950.

Humanism he was an institution. Men of such varied attainments and achievements are rare indeed. To Roy life and thought were so inseparable. A handsome tribute has been paid by H. J. Blackham, " If one looks round amongst declared humanists living today and takes the liberty of naming Bertrand Russel and Julian Huxley and Barbara Wootton and Jean-Paul Sartre and looks back at those recently dead and names Gilbert Murray and M. N. Roy and John Dewey, these are not merely the names of men of great gifts and achievements, they are the names of many sided human beings of more than ordinary candour and public spirit who have lived and spent themselves in the human case. You may find as many faults with them as you like with their thinking, with their judgements, with their lives, they remain grand examples of what it means to be human and to have one's passions and ends and values illumined by humanist thinking."⁸

The intellectual eminence of Roy is beyond dispute. His intellect wandered over many subjects, social sciences as well as natural sciences , and whatever it touched it absorbed quickly. He had, moreover, the ability of reproducing whatever he grasped for the benefit of ordinary readers in a language that they could understand. The books that he wrote on

8. Blackham H. J. (Ed.) *Objections to Humanism.*, p. 28.

a variety of subjects bear evidence to it. Politics and social sciences, were, however, his special subjects. Politics without parties and power, the basic constituent of Radical Humanism propounded by him, may yet show democracy a way out of the recurring crisis which it faces all over the world. If that happens, Roy will have a permanent place in the galaxy of political scientists. Radical Humanism is Roy's abiding contribution to modern thought and to modern man's struggle for freedom.

In the case of a man like Roy ordinary criteria of success or failure do not apply. According to those criteria, his was a life of political position nor did he leave behind any influential political organization to sing his praises. But the wealth of ideas that he has left behind will provide food for thought and inspiration for action to generations to come. Those ideas may in course of time, find greater acceptance and help the growth of a society of freedom and equality. That will be his success and no success would have pleased him more.

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- 8) Spratt, Philip : Blowing Up India, Calcutta :
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