Chapter V

Radical Humanist Phase

Roy developed his philosophy of Radical Humanism, variously known as New Humanism, Scientific Humanism, Integral Humanism, Radicalism etc. in his “Twenty-two Theses” in 1946. In this chapter an attempt is being made to discuss the ideas developed by Roy in his philosophy of Radical Humanism.

Roy argued that Humanism was as old as history. According to him, the common feature of Humanism throughout the ages had been the belief “that there are certain human values which transcend all other considerations, and to develop the human personality is the main purpose of life; political practice and social institutions, economic organisations, educational endeavours, should all serve the basic purpose of life.”

Roy argued that the history of Humanism could be traced in the writings of the philosophers of ancient Greece. He added that we could discover the strands of humanist ideas in Indian history also. He said that all great religions originally were in some sense humanist movements. But they all developed in the contrary direction, simply because their common point of departure was belief in the superhuman. However, Roy argued that since the basic principle of Humanism was the primacy of man, it could not be based on the belief that there was something higher than man. That was, according to him, the defect of the Humanism of the past.

Roy argued that the naturalist Humanism of the Renaissance was certainly an advance on the religious Humanism of the earlier period. It appeared in Europe at the close of the Middle Ages, when the great intellectual
movement known as the European Renaissance raised the banner of the revolt of man. It denied the existence of superhuman or supernatural forces and placed man at the centre of the Universe. Man was the point of departure in all its arguments. But the Humanism of the Renaissance, according to Roy, was also ultimately defective as it failed to explain man himself.4

To quote him, “Revolting against organised religious faith, which had become a spiritual tyranny, the philosophers of the Renaissance declared man to be sovereign. But the defect was that the people who had talked about man as the centre of all things and attached such a high value to the human being, kept the concept of man himself clouded in mystery.”5

Roy argued that the tradition of naturalist yet mystic Humanism found a fresh expression in Feuerbach. According to him, Feuerbach’s critique of Christianity was equally valid for all religions. It revealed how God was a creation of human imagination. However, Roy argued that he left man unexplained.6

Roy said that Marx also began as a Humanist and stood for the freedom of the individual.7 But he added that “a correct rejection of the mystic conception of man led him to a negation of his own ideal.”8 Roy argued that considering man to be a social animal, Marx believed that man could not have his being and becoming in isolation, and regarded social reorganisation to be the condition for the liberation of man. According to Roy, “The perverted utopia of Communism became a new religion; an imaginary collective ego—social interest or social progress—replaced the old God, to be propitiated by the sacrifice of the individual. Man must surrender his freedom as an individual to regain it in a collective existence.”9 Thus Roy believed that there were certain weaknesses in the earlier humanist philosophies.

He argued that the contemporary world was facing a crisis. It was not merely an economic, or a political, or even a cultural crisis. According to him.
it could be more appropriately called a crisis of existence, because the whole of
human existence had been thrown into chaos and confusion. One could observe
disharmony and unreasonableness in all departments of human life. Roy
believed that in such a situation only a proper humanist philosophy could show
the way out. 

For that, Roy argued that it was necessary that “Humanism must be
freed from the defect of its earlier history and the fallacies of the subsequent
periods.” Thus he developed a new philosophy of Humanism which he
claimed was free from the weaknesses of the earlier humanist philosophies.

Roy differentiated his philosophy of Humanism from other old
humanist philosophies by using the qualifying term ‘New’ or ‘Radical’ before
the word ‘Humanism’. He argued that its newness was derived from modern
scientific knowledge. It was “Humanism enriched, reinforced and elaborated by
scientific knowledge and social experience gained during the centuries of
modern civilization.” He argued that since his philosophy was based on
modern scientific knowledge, the more appropriate name for it would be
Scientific Humanism.

He said, “The movement for a humanist revival, starting from the
attempt to explain what is human nature, has been called Scientific or simply
New Humanism as distinct from the older Humanism which took man for
granted as an elementary indefinable.”

Roy argued that New Humanism proclaimed the sovereignty of man on
the authority of modern science, which had dispelled all mystery about the
essence of man. He added, “Radicalism thinks in terms neither of nation nor
of class; its concern is man.”

Roy said that his philosophy of New Humanism was scientific and
integral, because it conceived “human sovereignty not as a differentiation from
the mechanistic processes of nature, but as their highest product.”
He further argued that as the idea of newness was transitory, the more precise term "radical" should be preferred. He said that his philosophy could be called 'Radical Humanism' because it went "to the root of the problem of the origin of the human being." To quote him, "any effort for a reorganisation of society must begin from the unit of society—from the root, so to say. Such an effort to develop a new philosophy of revolution, on the basis of the entire stock of human heritage, and then to elaborate the theory and formulate the principles of the practice of political and economic reconstruction, therefore, can be called Radicalism."

Roy believed the New Humanism or Radical Humanism was not an abstract philosophy, not merely a social philosophy or a political or economic theory. It comprised of a set of principles which had relevance to all branches of man's life and social existence and revealed a way towards their reorganisation.

He added that in so far as it showed a way out of the crisis of our time, Radical Humanism was a social philosophy. But as such it was deduced from a general philosophy of nature, including the world of matter and the world of mind. Talking about the philosophy of Radical Humanism Roy said, "Its metaphysics is physical realist; and its cosmology is mechanistic. Conceptual thought, and sense perceptions are harmonised in its epistemology. It merges psychology into physiology, and relates the latter to physics through chemistry. It bases ethics on rationalism, and traces the roots of reason in the orderliness of nature and the harmony of the physical universe."

Roy argued that Radical Humanism was not a system of contemplative thought. He said, "It has not been developed in the seclusion of the ivory tower. Grown out of the experience of social action, its test will be in the social experience of active human beings."

Roy further said that Radical Humanism was not a closed system. He
asserted that it was based on experience and science and it would further evolve with the growth of experience and science.23

Moreover, he claimed that Radical Humanism was cosmopolitan in nature. It believed that "A cosmopolitan commonwealth of free men and women is a possibility. It will be a spiritual community, not limited by the boundaries of National states—capitalist, fascist, communist or of any other kind—which will gradually disappear under the impact of cosmopolitan Humanism."24

Roy's philosophy of Radical Humanism was based on materialism. He said, "I am a confirmed, unmitigated, materialist, philosophically. I am of the opinion that Materialism is the only philosophy possible; any other philosophy, in the last analysis, takes us outside the physical Universe, into the wilderness of a mystical metaphysics over which presides God."25 However, Roy criticized classical materialism. According to him the greatest defect of classical materialism was that its cosmology did not seem to have any connection with ethics. It further appeared that a materialist historiology could do without a moral philosophy. It was contended that materialism could not have an ethics and that there was no logical relation between a philosophy of nature and a moral philosophy. But Roy believed that, with the recent developments in science, that defect could be removed by building a bridge over the imaginary gulf between physics and psychology. According to him the Cartesian psycho-physical parallelism was no longer valid. And a secular, rationalist system of ethics could be logically deduced from materialist cosmology.26

Roy traced the origin of ideas in the context of pre-human biological evolution. He argued that as the biological evolution itself took place in the context of physical nature, it could be argued that ideas arose out of the background of physical nature. According to him, there was an unbroken chain
connecting the evolutionary indefinables of psychology with physics. It ran through physiology, cytology and chemistry. There was an unbroken chain of evolution from the vibratory mass of electric currents to the highest flights of human intelligence, emotions and imagination.27

Thus Roy tried to solve one of the baffling problems of philosophy, namely the problem of dualism, by arguing that there was no contradiction between the living and the non-living world, and that everything could be reduced to one unitary background. By merging psychology into physiology, Roy bridged the gulf between physics and psychology and thereby reconciled the dynamics of matter with the dynamics of ideas.

He further said that tracing the roots of rationality through the entire process of biological evolution, to reason in nature, human rationality could be regarded as an expression of physical determinism, of the harmony of the Universe. A mechanistic cosmology and a rationalist ethics could thus be integrated in a general philosophy.28

However, it is observed that Roy had certain differences with Marxist materialism. He criticized dialectical materialism as dogmatic and unscientific. He said that the dialectical process did not leave any room for the greatest of revolutionaries, armed with the philosophy of Marxism, to change the world. According to Roy, “The irreconcilable contradiction between dialectical Materialism and the programme of a revolutionary reconstruction of society is the basic fallacy of Marxism.”29 He added, “Dialectic divorces political practice from morality, denies the existence of human values, and makes of revolution a teleologically predetermined outburst of violence and destructive frenzy beyond any control by the will of man.”30

Moreover, Roy argued that Marx found in Hegelian dialectics philosophical support for his theory of revolution. However, he said that dialectics was admittedly an idealistic conception. According to Roy, “The
dialectical Materialism of Marx, therefore, is Materialist only in name; dialectics being its cornerstone, it is essentially an idealistic system."\textsuperscript{31}

Roy further argued that according to Marxism, dialectics was believed to be the spring of all progress. Dialectics was progress by contradiction. Applied to society, dialectics meant that the contradiction between classes was the cause of all social progress. However, Roy argued that after the establishment of Socialism or Communism classes would disappear. Now he raised the question as to what would be the logical corollary to that in terms of dialectics? He argued that dialectics itself would cease to function, and social progress would come to a halt. So, according to Roy, if we were consistent dialecticians, we would have to say that on the attainment of Communism humanity would commit suicide because there would be no further social progress.\textsuperscript{32}

Roy held the view that there was no necessary connection between dialectics and materialism. Therefore, according to him the absurdities of Marxian dialectics did not affect the validity of materialist philosophy.\textsuperscript{33} Thus while rejecting dialectics Roy continued to be a materialist during his Radical Humanist phase.

Roy was of the opinion that Marx’s proposition that consciousness was determined by being placed materialist metaphysics on a sound scientific foundation. However, according to him, in sociology, Marxism vulgarised materialism to the extent of denying that basic moral values transcended space and time. With the impersonal concept of the forces of production, it introduced teleology in history, contradicting its own belief that man was the maker of his destiny.\textsuperscript{34}

He said that the major fallacy of the Marxian social theory of materialist philosophy was the ‘economic interpretation of history’ or ‘economic determinism’. "The climax of this line of thought is to declare that all
ideologies, philosophies, art, cultural values, and ethical systems have no objective existence of their own, but are mere super-structures of economic relations, or to be more precise, connected with the means and modes of production, determined by them and meant to perpetuate them by giving them moral or spiritual sanction."35 Roy argued that by regarding history as a succession of events brought about by the automatic development of the means of production, Marxism eliminated man from the evolutionary process of history.

Marxism, according to him, denied freedom to the individual. If the history was determined by the productive forces then hardly any freedom was left to the individual. As he said, "The Marxian theory is also teleological: history is made by the operation of the productive forces; there is little man can do about it; he must recognise necessity and then he is free. Once you realise that you cannot be free, that you are bound hand and foot to some mysterious forces of production, then you are free! The Marxist conception of freedom means slavery for the individual."36

According to Roy, Marx regarded the mode of production as the starting point of social development and, in this mode of production, the forces of production were regarded as the fundamental category because the production relation was supposed to adjust itself with the production forces. Roy argued that it was untenable to regard productive forces as the fundamental category because the productive forces presupposed the working of the human mind.37 Man did not appear on earth. Roy argued, after the creation of the forces of production, he preceded them. Therefore, behind the forces of production, Roy found man with will and brain. He wrote, "Man's ideas, man's thinking process, has something to do with history. Man's brain is also a means of production; it produces ideas, which are the most iconoclastic of commodities."38
Roy said that Marx committed the mistake of confounding physical urge with economic motive. He entirely ignored the entire process of the becoming of man before he entered into social relations. Roy argued, “For a considerable time after the origin of the species, homo sapiens were not moved by any economic motive, but by the biological urge of self-preservation. He earned the means of subsistence, and for the purpose devised primitive tools out of sheer physical necessity. Anthropological research does not draw any economic motive in the human struggle for existence in the earlier stages of social evolution.”

According to Roy, what it did show was that the struggle for physical existence provided stimuli for mental development. Consciousness and other rudiments of mind were a biological heritage antecedent to the appearance of homo sapiens. Thus, further evolution was determined by the physical conditions of the being and becoming of man. Roy argued that Marx did not carry the analysis of mental phenomenon far enough, beyond the dawn of social history. Therefore his materialism was dogmatic and unscientific.

Roy contended that exponents of economic interpretation of history took a superficial, one sided view and ignored the dynamics of ideas. According to him history was too complex to be determined by any single cause and it was an error to conceive the interpretation of history as purely economic. Thus Roy said, “It is an error to conceive Historical Determinism as purely economic. History is determined, but there are more than one determining factor.”

So, Roy discarded the economic interpretation of history as the only way to explain the march of history and progress. He wrote, “A philosophy of history, which ignores other factors of human life than the forces of production, particularly the dynamics of ideas, and disregards moral problems, cannot be a reliable guide for constructive social action.”

He also differentiated between materialism and economic determinism.
According to him materialist philosophy was a cosmological conception, applicable for explaining the entire scheme of nature, including society, whereas economic determinism was applicable only to society and even there it could not explain every aspect of social evolution. He also believed that materialist philosophy did not justify the economic interpretation of history. He contended, “The quintessence of Materialist philosophy is monism. Economic determinism is a dualist conception; therefore it cannot be deduced from Materialism; much less can the two be identified.”

Roy argued that by placing the origin of human activity and the beginning of social life, beyond the point where the process of economic determinism began, materialism could be freed of dogmatism. The origin of ideas could be scientifically explained by tracing it in pre-human biological impulses and thus ideas could be given the proper place in the scheme of materialism.

He said that materialist philosophy must include recognition of the objective reality of ideas, with their own dynamics, if it was not to degenerate into vulgarity. He argued, “Materialist philosophy; as I understand it, does not warrant the contention that ideas do not have an independent existence of their own; we can trace the development of ideas as a logical process from the birth of humanity until our days, without referring it anywhere casually to social movements.” He categorically rejected the view that ethical values, cultural patterns, movements of ideas, were mere ideological super-structures raised to justify established economic relations.

To quote him, “As a comprehensive, logically consistent philosophy, Materialism does not deny the objective reality of ideas, because their origin can be traced in the background of the physical Universe. If ideas are not mere by-products of ever changing economic relations, they must have a history of their own. We call it dynamics of ideas, because throughout history new ideas
are found to inspire actions ushering in a new chapter of history.”

Roy argued that materialism pointed out that ideas were not born by themselves in the air, irrespective of man’s physical existence. On the contrary, it traced ideas to the common denominator of physical existence. But at the same time, intelligent materialism could not go against the recent scientific knowledge by denying an objective reality to ideas or by denying the dynamics of ideas, once they were conceived by man.

He argued that in so far as his philosophy traced the origin of human evolution to the background of the physical Universe, it was materialism. But it differentiated itself from Marxist materialist determinism by recognising the autonomy of the mental world, in the context of physical nature. He added that in building up a social philosophy on the basis of materialism, he did not allot a subsidiary role to ideas.

He said, “priority belongs to the physical being, to matter, if the old-fashioned term may still be used. But once the biologically determined process of ideation is complete, ideas are formed, they continue to have an autonomous existence, an evolutionary process of their own, which runs parallel to the physical process of social evolution.”

Roy proposed to make a synthesis between the history of material progress and the dynamics of ideas and regarded the development of ideas also as a process. He said, “Once ideas are created, they have a logic of their own, and go on serving as incentive for further development, including the dialectics of economic development. These two parallel lines which go throughout history are continually influencing each other, new ideas leading to new material developments, and material developments giving rise to new ideas.”

Thus he argued that what was needed was a restatement of materialism so as to recognise explicitly the decisive importance of the dynamics of ideas in all the processes of human evolution—historical, social, political and cultural.
He preferred the term Physical Realism to materialism. He said, "The latest scientific knowledge undoubtedly calls for the rejection of certain hypotheses and postulates of eighteenth and nineteenth century science. The Materialist philosophy also must be accordingly revised and elaborated as Physical Realism."  

The basic principle of materialism, according to Roy, as corroborated and reinforced by modern scientific research was "that the world, physical as well as biological, exists objectively, is self-contained and self-explained; there is nothing beyond and outside it; its being and becoming are governed by laws inherent in itself; laws are neither mysterious nor metaphysical, nor merely conventional; they are coherent relations of events; consciousness, with its manifestations and derivatives, is a property of that which, in a certain state of organisation, distinguishes existence from non-existence."  

Such a monistic materialist realist philosophy, according to Roy, could lead in the sphere of social theory to a Humanist Radicalism or Radical Humanism. It recognised the dynamics of ideas and the decisive role which the dynamics of ideas had played throughout the entire history of social evolution, and reconciled these with the dialectics of economic and social development.  

... Roy was of the opinion that because of the inadequate knowledge about the origin of life, so far, Humanism could not be placed on a rational foundation. However, the advance of scientific knowledge since the middle of the nineteenth century, which compelled certain revisions of mechanistic cosmology and materialist metaphysics, contributed to the success of rationalist Humanism.  

Life was found to be associated with dead matter in a particular state of organisation. That fact connected man, through the long process of biological evolution, with the background of the physical Universe. According to Roy, "The supreme importance of man results from the fact that in him the physical
process of becoming has reached the highest pitch so far. Humanism thus ceases to be a mystic and poetic view of life. Based on scientific knowledge, it can be integrated in the materialist general philosophy, and the latter, then, can be the foundation of a sociology which makes room for human creativeness and individual liberty... Harmonised with humanism, materialist philosophy can have an ethics whose values require no other sanction than man's innate rationality."

It is observed that though Roy criticized dialectical materialism, economic determinism and various other theoretical presuppositions of Marxism which have been discussed in the previous chapter he also acknowledged the positive aspects of Marx. He said, "Marx being a Humanist, the force of his theory of revolution was its moral appeal... Without a moral fervour of the highest degree, without an intense dislike for injustice, he could not undertake the lone fight to improve the lot of the oppressed and exploited." He added, "Marx talked of Socialism as the kingdom of freedom, where man will be the master of his social environments. One who preached such a humanist doctrine could not be a worshipper at the shrine of an exacting collective ego, even of the proletariat."

Thus he argued that his philosophy of Radical Humanism did not completely break away with Marxism, but incorporated its positive elements. He said, "Freed from the fallacy of economic determinism, the humanist, libertarian, moralist spirit of Marxism will go into the making of a new faith of our time. It is a part of the accumulated store of human heritage, which must be claimed by the builders of the future, who will not belong to any particular class." Again he said, "The positive elements of Marxism, freed from its fallacies and clarified in the light of greater scientific knowledge, are consistent with a more comprehensive philosophy, which can be called Integral or Radical Humanism."
However, it can be argued that Roy misinterpreted Marxism and vulgarized it. Marx did not say that economic factor was the only determining factor of history. Engels made it clear when he said, "According to materialist conception of history the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than that neither Marx nor I have ever asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure . . . also exercise their influence on the course of historical struggle."60

Roy's Radical Humanist philosophy started from an idea of about human nature which strived to revive man's faith in himself. He criticised all existing socio-political philosophies because they were, according to him, based on a wrong notion of human nature. He believed that all evils of their time—political instability, economic insecurity, impoverishment of the masses, rise of totalitarianism, danger of dictatorship, the growing menace of yet another war, could be traced to a single cause, namely wrong notions about human nature. According to him, social philosophies built on the different variations of the wrong notion of human nature ultimately undermined man's faith in himself.61

He argued that ever since the seventeenth century, when the attempt to develop a comprehensive social philosophy began, all pioneers of the movement started from some hypothesis about the nature of man. There were two assumptions with many variations. Firstly, the general idea was that man was selfish by nature and was instinctively concerned only with his own interest. Secondly, it was argued that human nature was to believe in some benevolent super-natural power.62 However, Roy challenged these wrong notions about human nature on the basis of scientific knowledge as well as a
Roy said that according to the traditional view there were certain immutable factors in human nature and therefore it could never change. The contention was that the basic element and inherent characteristic of the supposedly unchangeable human nature was the urge to believe. To believe meant to accept something as given, to take certain things for granted, to admit that there was a limit to human understanding and human knowledge, and that there were things beyond that dividing line which must simply be assumed as established. In other words according to the traditional view belief in something super-natural, superhuman, transcendental, was the foundation of human nature.3

However, Roy claimed to challenge that traditional view of human nature on the basis of modern scientific knowledge. He said that if we started from the assumption, that human nature never changed, the idea of progress would have to be abandoned. He argued, "If there is something immutable in human nature, it means that there is a limit to human progress." He added, "It is a hackneyed saying that human nature never changes. The truth, however, is just the contrary: To change is human nature." 4

He argued that the study of the original relation between man and nature and the investigations of anthropology had revealed that primitive man was not given to blind faith. Throughout history, heretics were the pioneers of human progress. Faith was based on ignorance. If it was the foundation of human nature, knowledge would not be possible, and man would be still living in blissful ignorance. According to Roy it had been explained by historians of culture that what was known as prejudices, superstitions and magic were all primitive expressions of man's innate rationality. In other words, according to Roy, "If there is anything constant in human nature, it is not to believe, but it is man's rationality, his reasoning capacity, which urges him to find reasonable
explanations of everything.” Roy argued that man naturally wanted to know and to explain, and from that point of departure the conclusion could be reached that human nature could evolve, and could be changed. So, according to him, human nature had changed, and would change with increasing knowledge.

As regards the other assumption, about human nature, that man was selfish by nature and was instinctively concerned only with his own interest, Roy argued that “it is true that his own existence is the primary concern of man; but it is equally true that his selfishness breeds the capacity to outgrow it.” He said that theory of class struggle ignored the fact that co-operation had always been a stronger social factor. Otherwise, society would have fallen to pieces at the dawn of civilisation. He argued, “History, therefore, warrants the view that neither is human nature incorrigibly selfish, nor is it founded on the faith in the super-human.”

The classical liberalism was based upon the concept of the “economic man.” It thought that every man was the best judge of his own economic interest and wanted to promote it to the maximum possible degree and concluded that maximum social welfare would be secured if every individual was allowed to follow his economic interest without any hindrance. The classical Liberals thought that every individual was engaged in a struggle for existence and every individual should work out his destiny without any external aid or control. That would result in the survival of the fittest and thus it would ensure social progress. Social progress, thus, was considered to be the result of a struggle. Karl Marx also adopted much from liberalism, though he gave up the individual in favour of the class. According to the Marxists each class tried to promote its own economic interests and all social progress resulted from the struggle between classes.

According to Roy, “the concept of economic man negativates the
liberating doctrine of individualism. The economic man is bound to be a slave or a slave-holder. That vulgar concept must be replaced by the reality of an instinctively rational being, who is moral because he is rational. Thus Roy replaced the concept of economic man by the concept of moral man. Like Marx, Roy rejected the mystic conception of man. Marx tried to free his man from the religious exaltation of the power of God or Gods. Like Marx, Roy rejected the view that man was the creation of God and that he was endowed with divine gifts and was supposed to be the instrument of God's will. The essential lesson Roy learned from Marxism was that only materialistic humanism could do justice to human autonomy which was the fundamental feature of human existence. Talking about man, Roy said:

Nor is there any ground for the venerable faith in his divine essence. As a biological form, man is a physical entity. The entire process from the fertilisation of an ovum to the birth of the full-grown child, is a physical phenomenon. No extraneous element enters in the process at any point. Whatever distinguishes the human being from the lower animals, the so-called soul, is not a divine spark. Nowhere could the divine spark smuggle itself into the physical process. What is called soul is but the sum total of the diverse manifestations of life, which itself is a physico-chemical phenomenon. Therefore we rule out the doctrine that, man being differentiated from animals by the possession of a divine spark, to believe in the transcendental source of his humanness is the foundation of his nature.

In this respect Roy differed from thinkers like Aurobindo, Gandhi etc. who talked about the divine essence of man. Aurobindo believed that "man is inwardly a soul and a conscious power of the Divine." Similarly Gandhi said, "God is the force. He is the essence of life. He is pure and undefiled consciousness."

Roy argued, "the biological approach to pre-history, the history of early savagery, throws a flood of light on the age-old problem of human nature." He asserted, "Science has abolished the hiatus between inanimate nature and
the organic world. Life grows out of the background of non-living matter. There is a causal connection between the two.\textsuperscript{76}

He said that the appearance of man on earth had no other reason than the origin of a new biological species, therefore the laws of the development of the human race could not be essentially different from the general laws of organic evolution. Human nature, therefore, was determined by those laws.\textsuperscript{77}

He added that the physical Universe was a cosmos and the living nature was a part of that law-governed system. According to him it logically followed that the processes of organic evolution were also determined.\textsuperscript{78} "To quote him, "Taking place in the context of the law-governed physical Universe, biological evolution is also a rational process. Life is neither an inexplicable category called intuition, nor is it a mysteriously purposive urge; it is a determined physical process. In metaphysical terms, it is unfolding of reason in nature."\textsuperscript{79}

Roy believed that rationality was a continuation of the entire determined process of biological evolution, which took place in the background of the law-governed physical Universe. The roots of reason could be traced in the lifeless physical nature, and it was nothing more mysterious than the coherence of physical existence, the consistent coherence of biological and psychological and of the whole of existence. According to him, human rationality was only an expression of reason in nature. He said:

Consciousness is the property of life in the zoological world. It means to be aware of the environments. Simple awareness is presently supplemented by reactions to things of which the organism becomes aware. From that stage of biological evolution, there begins the growth of the nervous system to serve as the means of inter-relations between the organism and the environment. The growth culminates in the formation of the brain which, physiologically, is called the mind. So, mind is the highest expression of the property of life called consciousness and thought, that of reaction to simple awareness. The mind becomes conscious of the environments, the radius of which
gradually expands until the entire nature is embraced. It being consciousness of a law-governed system human mind is necessarily rational in essence. Roy was critical of the Marxian thesis that the essence of man, in reality, was the ensemble of social relations. On the other hand the essence of man according to Roy was reason. Roy rejected the Marxist view (derived from Hegel) that man could realise his nature through a necessary historical process. According to that view of Marx, though rationality was part of the essential nature of man, he could not be fully rational, until after history had done its work. Only in a Communist society could man be fully rational. One, therefore, had to recognize two levels of forms of rational action. Men living in a Communist society, would be spontaneously and fully rational. Whereas men living at any stage in the historical process culminating in a Communist society could only be imperfectly rational and their rationality would consist in their participating in that historical process with the aim of promoting it.

However, according to Roy, human nature including rationality was an innate possession of man. To be sure, as man was rational he could develop and express his potentialities and urges in unforeseeable ways. Human nature was open and not closed. Secondly, rational achievement was always cumulative and cooperative. Men could correct errors, their own or those of others and add to the knowledge which had been gained either by their own efforts or by those of others. In this sense there was history and progress. But history in this sense was a result of human rationality. It was not, as Marx alleged, the necessary medium for achieving rationality.

According to Roy since man was rational, he could also be moral by himself. The desire to be moral was inherent in man, and it was so because that desire resulted from man’s innate rationality. He added, “Morality in the last analysis is the ability to judge what will be the correct response to a given
situation. Judgement is obviously guided by reason. Therefore, a rational man, a man who is consciously rational, who regards reason not as something extraneous, but as part of his biological being, can declare that he is moral because by his rational thinking he behaves in a particular way and not in any other way.\textsuperscript{83}

He said that there were rules of conduct even among higher animals. These rules went into the composition of human instincts. They were part of man's biological heritage—the constant of human nature. In man they pressed themselves as the sense of morality. One knew from experience what was good for him and what was bad for him. Therefrom he generalised that what was bad for him was also bad for all. That was the origin of morality.\textsuperscript{84}

Roy rejected the assumption that man could not be moral by himself. He did not believe that man could be moral only under spiritual or temporal compulsion. He argued that morality was fallaciously linked up with religion. He said, "The still lingering belief that the sense of morality is intimately associated with religion, is not borne out by historical research. The savage, with no notion of God, has a strong sense of good and bad. With him, it is instinctive; that is to say, his sense of morality is not prompted by any inner voice, nor is it dictated by the fear of God."\textsuperscript{85}

According to Roy, morality must be referred back to man's innate rationality. Only then, man could be moral, spontaneously and voluntarily. Reason was the only sanction for morality which was an appeal to conscience, and conscience, in its turn, was the instinctive awareness of, and reaction to, environments. He said "In the last analysis, conscience is nothing mystic or mysterious. It is a biological function, as such mechanistic, on the level of consciousness. The innate rationality of man is the only guarantee of a harmonious order, which will also be a moral order, because morality is a rational function."\textsuperscript{86}
The belief in the possibility of a secular rational morality was an important contribution of Roy. He tried to revive the faith of man in himself by arguing that he could become moral by himself without any compulsion.

According to Roy quest for freedom and search for truth constituted the basic urge of human progress. He gave a concrete meaning to the word ‘freedom’. He defined freedom as the “progressive elimination of all the factors—physical, social, psychological—which obstruct the unfolding of man’s rational, moral and creative potentialities.” Further he said, “Freedom is progressive disappearance of all restrictions on the unfolding of the potentialities of individuals, as human beings, and not as the cogs in the wheels of a mechanical social organism.”

Roy regarded freedom as the supreme value from which all human values were derived. He said, “Freedom is the supreme value because the urge for freedom is the essence of human existence; and it is never in the danger of being mystified because it can be traced all the way down the process of biological evolution; indeed it is coincident, if not actually identical, with life.”

Roy said that quest for freedom could be referred back to man’s struggle for existence. It accounted for the triumph of man over nature, in the course of his efforts to satisfy his basic needs. The environments were continually trying to crush the organism, and the struggle for existence was the striving of the organism to free itself from the tyranny of nature. On the sub-human biological level, that was a very largely mechanical struggle. However, on the human level the struggle for existence was no longer carried on by mechanical adaptation, it was carried on by purposive efforts for the conquest of nature. He said, “When the struggle for existence takes place with purposiveness, on the human level of evolution, we call it quest for freedom.”

According to Roy, all the human progress—social, political cultural,
scientific artistic, etc.—had been motivated by that urge for freedom. However, he added that as man was finite and his environment which was the whole universe was infinite, he would never be able to conquer the whole of universe. Therefore, Roy concluded that man’s urge for freedom was eternal.91

Roy stated that urge for freedom enabled man to acquire knowledge. He was able to conquer his environment by means of knowledge. Truth was the content of knowledge. It was not a metaphysical concept but a matter of human experience, a matter of fact, something in correspondence with objective reality. Truth, according to Roy, “is the content of man’s knowledge. Truth is a value; but it is not deduced from facts; it is a fact, because it is objectively real.”92

According to him, the biological struggle for existence had a blind urge. However, man’s struggle for freedom was guided by his knowledge of nature. The search for truth, therefore, was, intimately related with the quest for freedom. Explaining truth’s relation with freedom, Roy wrote, “In pursuit of the purpose of conquering nature, man develops science, which is a search for truth . . . Discovery of truth is the result of man’s quest for freedom.”93

For Roy, the search for truth was a corollary to quest for freedom. He said, “Quest for freedom, knowledge, truth—that is the hierarchy of humanist axiology.”94 These values were not independent of each other, they were interrelated. Thus Roy maintained that freedom could not be attained by immoral means, nor would an enlightened man be liar.

It is observed that during the Radical Humanist phase, Roy attached great importance to the individual and his freedom. He believed that “political practice must be concerned with the requirements of man, instead of the fraudulent concept of the nation or a class.”95 Roy agreed with Protagoras that “man is the measure of everything” and with Marx that, “man is the root of mankind.”96 He said that the political philosophy must start with the basic idea
that freedom to be real must be enjoyed by individuals. He said that there could be only one measure of the degree of freedom enjoyed by any class or country, and that measure was the actual amount of freedom enjoyed by the individuals comprising that country or class. He argued “No political philosophy nor scheme of social reconstruction can have more than a limited revolutionary significance if it dismisses the concept of individual freedom as an empty abstraction.97

In a rational system, according to Roy, social responsibility was not antagonistic to individual freedom. He said, “If human beings become conscious of their essential rationality, the harmony of social responsibility, that is to say of respect for others’ urge for freedom, with the freedom of each citizen would be automatically established.”98

Roy gave importance to economic freedom. He stated, “Economic liberation of the masses is an essential condition for their advancing towards the goal of freedom.”99 He said that in the present world the vast majority of the people could not satisfy the elementary needs of their physical existence. However, he believed that unless adequate physical existence was granted to every individual, there was no use talking of developing their potentialities.100

Roy believed that political and economic freedom were interrelated 01 and argued that “Economic democracy is no more possible in the absence of political democracy than the latter is in the absence of the former.”102

He further argued that, “In modern society, an individual to be free must not only be able to enjoy economic sufficiency and security, but also live in a psychological atmosphere, free from cultural regimentation helpful to the development of his intellectual and other human potentialities.”103 He emphasised the importance of mental freedom or spiritual freedom. According to him it meant to cast off the faith in a supernatural power or providential will. He argued that the spirit of not taking anything on trust was the hallmark of
spiritual liberation. Roy contended that it was striving to feel that man was a free agent, that he could act according to his judgement, and was capable of discriminating good from evil and right from wrong without being haunted by the preoccupation that he was helplessly at the mercy of some capricious superhuman power. He regarded the spiritual or mental freedom as the condition for social and political liberation.

Here it would be relevant to compare Roy’s views on spiritual freedom with those held by the majority of other Indian thinkers. Talking about spiritual freedom as moksha or mukti, many Indian thinkers regarded this world as “a prison and they regarded it essential to obtain salvation from its clutches and fetters.” However, Roy believed that “Spiritual liberation must be attained in this material world, unless it is to be a vain dream, a time-honoured deception.”

It is observed that Roy’s main contribution was in emphasising strongly the importance of the individual personality and individual freedom and trying to revive the faith of man in himself. Many of his ideas could be taken to support the individual’s freedom in the present society, which was in the danger of losing it by completely subordinating the individual to the collectivity.

However, his views on human nature were not free from defects. Roy argued that man was by nature rational. It is true that rationality is an important characteristic of human nature. But then there are also other traits in human nature which cannot be ignored. The fact is that human nature is a mixture of reason and emotions. It has been observed that emotions and irrationality also play an important role in determining human behaviour. So it can be argued that Roy took one-sided view of human nature.

Similarly it is not easy to agree with Roy’s views on morality. Roy based morality on rationality. However, it can be argued that reason and knowledge may not necessarily persuade man to control his selfishness and
lead his life in accordance with ethical principles. Rational pursuit of self-interest may not be incompatible with the practice of deceit and dishonesty.

After examining Roy's views on human nature, an attempt would be made to discuss his views on society. It is observed that Roy criticised Marx for his conception of the nature of society. He held that Marx ignored the fact that society is an association of individuals. Marx, according to him, took society as simply given and regarded social relations as the ultimate reality. However, Roy asserted that social relations resulted from the activities of individuals constituting the society. Being human creations, they could be altered by man. He argued that human will and human action were the primary factors of social existence.

Roy said that there were two views about the relationship between the individual and society. One view was to take “Society as given and then to find out the ways and means for adjusting the individual's relation to society. Society is given; the individual is a part of society; he lives in it. Therefore, to have a harmonious life, the individual must adjust himself to society.” According to him, that point of view assumed an ultimately supernatural origin of society.

Roy argued that the second view about the relationship between the individual and society was just reverse of the first view. He said, “it regards the individual as the primary factor and society as the creation of man. Man created society for his purpose, and the logical corollary of this view is that social relations (political, economic, ethical, all the various kinds of social relations) must be adjusted so as to promote the purpose of the life of the individual.”

Roy agreed with this theory that society was the creation of man. According to him this view was based on scientific theory about the descent of man. He also rejected the theory of social contract and adopted an evolutionary view of society. He said, “Just as the human species itself, social organisation
also came into being in the early stages of the rise of man, perhaps by accidental circumstances, and in course of time evolved into more and more purposive and complex forms.\textsuperscript{112}

Roy contended that as soon as the human species came into existence, it felt the need for corporate life. In order to combat the forces of nature and defend themselves against various adversaries, primitive man felt the need to cooperate in a form of organisation. That was how society was created.\textsuperscript{113}

Roy argued that when the primitive human being was sufficiently differentiated from his animal ancestry to develop distinctive habits of diet, acquisition of food for subsistence could no longer be carried on by individual efforts as in the case of lower animals. Hunting and fishing and later on agriculture had to be carried out with cooperative efforts. "The negative necessity to assist each other against the attack of wild animals, and the positive necessity to ensure their livelihood, formed the basic urge which induced human beings to evolve the original civil society."\textsuperscript{114} Society, according to Roy, originated with the purpose of enabling the human being to conduct the struggle for existence with greater efficiency. As human being developed, the original need for procuring food and the instinct of reproduction were supplemented by various other more complicated instincts and desires. Human life developed consciousness, will and intelligence, and the requirements and purposes of the human beings became more and more divergent. Ultimately, the biological urge for existence developed into the conscious need of a human being to evolve his personality.

Roy argued that "Society is a creation of man—in quest of freedom. Cooperative social relationships were established originally with the purpose of reinforcing the struggle for existence, which the primitive man had undertaken as individual. The quest for freedom is the continuation of the primitive man's struggle for existence. As such, it is the basic urge of all social
advancement."^{115}

He believed that the function of all social relationships should be to secure for its individuals, the maximum measure of freedom. According to him, a social organisation which hindered the possibility of free development of human personality was opposed to the original purpose with which human society was created.\(^{116}\) He argued that "the sum total of the quanta of freedom actually enjoyed by its members individually is the measure of the liberating or progressive significance of any social order."\(^{117}\) Thus Roy asserted that there should be no contradiction between the fullest freedom of the individual and a harmonious social order.\(^{118}\)

Writing about the functions to be performed by society, Roy argued that the first purpose of any social organisation was to guarantee every member, the prerequisites of physical existence which covered the economic aspect of society. The other purpose of social organisation was to fulfil intellectual needs of man and thus the society performed cultural and educational functions also.\(^{119}\)

Roy further said that a harmonious relation between the individual and society consistent with freedom was possible only when one started from the hypothesis, deduced from biological knowledge, that every individual was capable of rational judgement and that the purpose of social order was to allow every individual to develop that capacity. He said that a society should be organised so as to guarantee to each of its members what he required for the development of his personality, as an individual.\(^{120}\)

He argued that a good society could be created only by good men. A rational and moral society could only be created by rational and moral men. He contended that those who wanted to solve the problems of individual's relation with society should apply themselves to the task of making more and more individuals conscious of their potentialities, convincing them that by birth they
were capable of rational judgement, and therefore of being free. A society composed of significant number of such men would be a rational and moral society.\(^{121}\)

With such a conception of man as a rational and moral being and of society as cooperative relations of human beings, Roy was opposed to social philosophies which postulated an unavoidable contradiction or antithesis between the individual and society.

From the preceding discussion, it is observed that according to Roy the individual was antecedent to society, he was prior to society. The society was not something over and above the human beings comprising it. It was simply a creation of man, and was a means for the unfolding of his potentialities in continuation of the process of pre-human biological evolution. The individual, who was the end, according to Roy, should not be sacrificed for the means. The freedom and progress of the individual was the measure of social progress.

However, Roy ignored the fact that man was not only the creator but also a product of society. Man not only created society but society also created him. The form and content of individual consciousness depended largely on social environment.

Talking about the origin of state, Roy said, "Primitive communities organised themselves politically much later than their original formation, primarily with the purpose of self-defence and struggle for existence. In the intervening period, progressive economic development added to the original functions of society, which was departmentalised according to vocations and professions. Eventually, the state rose to co-ordinate and harmonise the diverse departments of social activities so that the individuals could live in peace and order to promote the welfare of all living in the community."\(^{122}\)

State, according to him, was not superimposed on society, nor was it
given any totalistic significance. It developed as one of the several other social institutions, all equally autonomous in their spheres—economic, educational, cultural, political.  

According to Roy, the primitive state was founded neither as the result of a social contract nor as a deliberately created instrument for the domination of society by some individuals or particular classes. "It was a spontaneous process promoted, almost mechanically, by the common realisation of the necessity of cooperation for the security of all concerned and for the administration of public affairs."  

He said that the state was created as the instrument of public administration, to maintain law and order, to make laws and to supervise their being observed, so that the diverse forms of social activities could be carried on harmoniously.  

Roy defined state as "the political organisation of society." He argued that when a large number of people lived together, the development of human beings being unequal, there was always the possibility of conflict, which might develop violent forms. Hence political organisation became necessary.  

Talking about the relationship between the individual and the state, Roy said, "The state being the political organisation of a human community, its relation with the individual is a continuation of the relation between man and society." He argued that like society, the state was also a creation of man, therefore it had no right to demand the subordination of the individual. On the other hand, he argued that the state "should be controlled by its citizens so as to serve the purpose of protecting individual liberty and promoting general welfare."  

It is observed that in his Marxist phase, Roy criticised the state as an
instrument of coercion in the hands of the dominant class and believed that it could not promote the interest of all the people of the society. However, now he realised that the state was indispensable. He said "Society cannot do without a political organisation. The state must be there." He criticized Marxist notion of stateless society and said that Marx "evaded the political issue by setting up the utopia of the State withering away."

Being a humanist, Roy visualised like Marx, a humane social order, without classes, without subjugation and exploitation of man by man, a truly democratic social order, where every man had the fullest possible freedom. But he was critical of the anarchic denial of the very necessity of the state and held that the ideal of stateless society was obviously an utopia. He argued that even in an ideal society when all conflicting interests including class exploitation would disappear, the state would continue to exist.

He talked about the tendency of increase in the power of the modern state. The state, according to him, whether liberal democratic or frankly dictatorial, either of the left or the right had become the dreaded 'Leviathan'. Roy said that as a result, "it is not an exaggeration to say that the State has become an engine of coercion." Roy observed that though man created the state for his benefit, in due course of time he had been overshadowed by it. He wrote, "it was completely forgotten that, from the time primitive society was formed, all institutions had been created by man as so many instruments to serve the purpose of his being and becoming. Ultimately, it came to be believed that the creation was of greater importance than the creator, to the extent that it was entitled to claim the creator for its first victim."

Roy argued that "the eclipse of the individual at the cost of growing emphasis on the state, first under theocracy, later in monarchies, yet later in parliamentary democracies, not to mention the modern dictatorships, is one of the outstanding features of history."
However, Roy argued that we could think of a time when the state could again cease to be the Leviathan which it had become today. He suggested that the state should be reshaped on the basis of the principles of pluralism, decentralisation and democracy. He argued, “A pluralistic modern society can be built up doing away with centralisation of power in politics and economics.”

He suggested the building of a pluralistic modern society consisting of autonomous associations, the state being one of them, with no other functions than to regulate and coordinate their diverse activities. He said that “Ways and means must be sought to reduce the functions of the State to the minimum, to confine it to its native function of the instrument for public administration, to co-ordinate the various functions of other autonomous social institutions.”

He pleaded for the decentralisation of the power of the state. Advocating diffusion of power, Roy warned, “When power is concentrated in the hands of any minority or any section, it necessarily becomes an instrument of coercion, and democracy becomes impossible.”

He added that in fact, democracy would be possible and practicable in proportion as the state would become coterminous with society. He believed that, so long as the state would not be coterminous with society, it would remain an instrument of power in the hands of some section of society. He admitted that state and society were not identical. But he argued that if the state was to be regarded as the political organisation of society, as it should be, then there was no reason why the state should not be coterminous with society. He added that if the state could be coterminous with society, the conflict between man and the state, would be no more difficult of solution than the apparent contradiction between the individual and society.

It is observed that Roy’s views on state were opposed to the views advocated by the organic theorists of the state. The organic theorists of state,
subordinated the individual to the state, and regarded the state as an end in itself. On the other hand, Roy regarded the state as a means to promote the interest of the individual. It can be argued that Roy resembled the classical liberals in advocating minimum functions of the state.

However, it is found that Roy was not consistent in the use of the term ‘state’. On the one hand he used the term state to signify society proper, when he expected the state to become coterminous with society. But on the other hand he regarded the state as just one of the social institutions, whose role was to co-ordinate the functioning of the various institutions of the society. This has resulted in vagueness in his views.

Roy was suspicious of the increase of the power of the state. He wanted the state to perform limited functions. However, he ignored the fact that a state could also play a positive role in promoting the freedom of the individuals by its welfare schemes.

Roy strongly felt that politics should not be divorced from ethics. He said, “The crying need of the time is to harmonise ethics with a social philosophy and political practice.” To achieve that, according to him, it was necessary to conceive of politics without the incentive of power. He argued that when power became the sole concern of political practice every means were adopted to capture power thinking that the end justified the means, and consequently there was no morality in politics.

He believed that the very term power-politics suggested that there might be other kinds of politics and that politics need not necessarily be associated with power. To quote him, “I say that politics without the ambition of power is possible. Otherwise, politics can never be rational and moral, will always remain a pursuit without scruple, without principle, without honesty, everyone trying to cut the others’ throat.”
Roy conceived the possibility of politics without power which according to him presupposed the elimination of parties from political arena. He talked of ending party-politics, which he considered as the basis of power-politics. He believed that politics could be practised without a party organisation. He said, “Those who cannot conceive of politics without the incentive of power, and therefore without a party, are not the best doctors for the maladies of our time. They themselves need to be cured.”

He held that the abolition of party system, would enable politics to operate without the incentive of power. According to him, “In the absence of that corrupting agency, morality in political practice becomes possible.”

Criticising party system Roy said that with the rise of the party system, the idea of popular sovereignty became a constitutional fiction. According to him, “Sovereignty of the individual is the basic principle of democracy. Sovereignty is inalienable. But parties professing to be democratic take it away from the people and thus destroy the foundation of democracy.”

Roy said that party politics implied the denial of democracy. It implied that people could not do anything by themselves. According to him, “A party is organised...with the ostensibly plausible argument that some people know just how society should be organised, and therefore the voters must vote for them so that they come to power and impose the blessings they have in mind from above on the people, who would otherwise never even think of those blessings, much less achieve them on their own.” Thus according to him, party politics was a denial of the potential, intelligence and creativity of all men and of the sovereignty of the people.

Roy argued that as a result of party system, the individual completely disappeared from politics whether as a candidate for election or as an elector. The individual man and his judgement, his discretion and will were nowhere in picture. The political parties played on the emotions of the people. False or
imaginary issues were created to cloud the judgment of the people in order to create mass hysteria, and to create either hatred for one or bias in favor of some other party. In the hysterical atmosphere created by election campaigns, even otherwise intelligent citizens were swayed to vote in a way which they would not do if they were allowed to think rationally. Roy argued, “Therefore, to confuse, deceive and mislead the sovereign people, is a necessity of the party system; the practice may vary in degrees, but is essentially the same everywhere.”

On the other hand, he argued that, once a man was elected as a result of popular vote, he became responsible to the party machinery which had ensured his election by supplying the money and the brass-band rather than to the people who voted for him. There was no personal relation between the voters and their representatives, thus the responsibility or representativeness of a government became a mere formality.

According to Roy, until now, there had been no case of a party capturing power on behalf of the people, administering it actually under the control of the people. Any majority party could establish a dictatorial regime. According to Roy, “Under such circumstances, the sovereignty of the individual becomes meaningless; democracy demands that the sovereign individual must merge himself in a party, be a subservient part of an impersonal party machine.”

Moreover, with rise of the party system. Roy argued, politics became a scramble for power. The immediate object of all parties was to capture power. Different parties approached the people with the claim to represent them more faithfully than others and therefore asked for the vote of the people. Under the best of circumstances these parties alternated in power and divided the government between themselves.

Roy said, “All try to get the greater number of votes; the usual method
is to lure voters by promises. Caught in the whirlpool, even the most honest politician loses his sense of proportion and makes promises which he knows cannot be fulfilled. Thus, democracy degenerates into demagogy."\textsuperscript{153} He added that to compete with demagogues in a system, which put premium on dishonesty, a politician had to come down to that level if he wanted to succeed. Thus, practically nobody in politics, as it was practised, under party system, could remain entirely untouched by its corrupt atmosphere.

Roy further said that it was through the instrumentality of political parties that power was concentrated in the hands of minorities, to be abused on false pretences. In the absence of a party, the practice of delegation of power disappeared and also the constitutional sanction for concentration of power. He argued, "The end of the party system is the condition for purifying politics. Because, in the absence of parties scrambling for power, politics can be immune to corruption and evil practices."\textsuperscript{154}

However, according to Roy, there was no reason to assume that party system with its tendency to concentration of power was indispensable and eternal. He argued, "Those who identify democracy with the party system overlook or ignore the fact that political parties are relatively recent institutions ....Political parties as we know them today are a development only of the nineteenth century, when the doctrine of representative government replaced the earlier idea of democracy."\textsuperscript{155} He said there were times when there was no party system, yet large states were governed in a better manner than that which existed at present. Moreover, he was optimistic that a system could be invented which would be better than the party system.\textsuperscript{156}

Roy suggested the replacement of party politics by humanist politics which emphasised the human element and morality in public affairs and gave the individual a more prominent place in political theory and practice. He said, "humanist politics starts with the eschewing of the whole game of fighting for
political power according to the old rules of the game.”

He added that humanist politics would not be a politics of power but a politics of freedom. Its object would be to attain freedom, and power would be regarded as the means to that end. In it power would remain vested in the people. According to him, “The object of such a political practice will be to give the sovereign people the opportunity of exercising its sovereignty.” Thus he said, “Radicalism does not evade this question of power, but places it in the proper context.”

It is observed that the most baffling problem of the present society is corruption. There is corruption in each and every aspect of society. In such conditions Roy’s stress on moral values and moralisation of politics appears to be quite relevant.

It is noticed that during the Radical Humanist phase Roy’s views came quite close to those of Gandhi in certain respects. Now Roy like Gandhi felt that politics should be based on moral considerations. Like Gandhi, he argued that the end could not justify means. Moreover, Roy also resembled Gandhi in arguing that politics should be purified by keeping it out of struggle for power.

Both Roy and Gandhi believed that parties led to party politics which was very harmful for democracy. That is why Roy dissolved the Radical Democratic Party in December 1948 and launched a movement called Radical Humanist Movement. Gandhi also suggested the dissolution of Congress in post-independence period and wanted Congressmen to serve the country without indulging in party politics. His ‘Last Will’ dealt with this matter.

Roy acknowledged the moral and humanist essence of Gandhi’s philosophy. He insisted that Gandhi wanted politics to be guided by moral considerations, and his endeavour to introduce morality into political practice was the positive core of Gandhism. He said, “The implication of the doctrine of non-violence is the moral dictum that the end does not justify the means. That is the core of the Mahatma’s message—which is not compatible with power-
politics. The Mahatma wanted to purify politics; that can be done only by raising political practice above the vulgar level of a scramble for power."\(^{162}\)

After a full year of Gandhi’s death, Roy wrote, “Practice of the precept of purifying politics with truth and non-violence alone will immoralise the memory of the Mahatma. Monuments of mortar and marble will perish, but the light of the sublime message of truth and non-violence will shine for ever.”\(^{163}\) Thus it is observed that now Roy began to realise the positive content of Gandhi’s philosophy.

Roy believed that the promises of the democratic political philosophy did not materialise because, in practice, it was forgotten that the units of the democratic state were human beings. He argued, “A return to the humanist approach to the fundamental problem of political philosophy, indeed a revival of the humanist view of life as a whole, therefore, is the condition for the rehabilitation of the concept of democracy, and for making it a reality in practice.”\(^{164}\)

He argued that democracy must reorientate itself and revert to the humanist tradition of Liberalism.\(^{165}\) He said that he desired to save the positive values of Liberalism.\(^{166}\) However, he wanted to replace the political practice of Liberalism (parliamentary democracy) by actual democratic practice.

He favoured a direct democracy and said, “If we want Democracy, then this system must be changed and replaced by the system of an increasingly direct democracy, that is a system in which every individual citizen would have the opportunity of understanding and influencing the affairs of society and participate in them.”\(^{167}\)

Holding the view that concentration of power led to dictatorship and democratic political practice could be meaningful only if based on decentralisation, Roy advocated Radical Democracy or Organised Democracy
which was based on decentralisation of power and elimination of political parties.\textsuperscript{168}

In his Organised Democracy, the individual would not remain a helpless spectator, but would be in a position to actively participate in the affairs of the State. Expressing his views on Organised Democracy Roy said, "An organised democracy, in a position to wield standing control of the State, should be the political foundation of the new social order."\textsuperscript{169}

He believed that "unless the Democratic State is based on the foundation, not of helpless atomised individuals, but on the foundation of a network of locally organised democracies, democracy will never be real."\textsuperscript{170} He was of the view that people could have a hand in the government only when a pyramidal structure of State would be raised on a foundation of organised local democracies or People's Committees.\textsuperscript{171} According to him, "The parliament should be the apex of a pyramidal structure of the State reared on the base of an organised democracy composed of a countrywide network of People's Committees."\textsuperscript{172}

Roy argued that the primary function of the organised local democracies (People's Committees) would be "to make individual citizens fully conscious of their sovereign rights and enable them to exercise the same intelligently and conscientiously."\textsuperscript{173} The People's Committees would be the schools for the political and civic education of the citizens. Thus according to Roy the broad basis of the State, coinciding with the entire society, would be composed of a network of local political schools.\textsuperscript{174}

Roy believed that a growing network of such organised local democracies (People's Committees) would be the instruments through which the electorate would assert its influence from day to day, and ultimately exercise a standing control over the State as a whole.\textsuperscript{175} He added that the right of recall and referendum would enable organised local democracies (People's
Committees) to wield a direct and effective control on the entire state machinery. According to him the People’s Committees would alone have the right to nominate candidates for election to various legislative bodies.176

Roy believed that on that basis a complete constitutional scheme could be visualised. People’s Committees endowed with specific constitutional rights would become integral units of the State. Instead of atomised, helpless individuals enjoying an illusory sovereignty, groups of individual citizens would be discussing and planning the affairs of their localities in the framework of similar neighbouring localities, together constituting the country for whose administration they would feel themselves responsible.177

Roy argued that the People’s Committees would be the standing bodies with wide powers and direct influence on similar Committees for larger areas, and through them the citizens will actually be always in possession of power. The result would be a far-reaching decentralisation of the State. He added, “The State will become no more than a clearing house of information, an advisory and administrative machinery to co-ordinate and supervise policies framed directly by the people as a whole operating through local People’s Committees. That is how the State will become identical with society, its function confined to an over-all co-ordination and harmonisation of social life in a country as a whole.”178

According to Roy, the State would not then be able to become an all-powerful Leviathan, because State power would be decentralised, being largely vested in the local republics or the People’s Committees. In other words, the State would in this way become coterminous with society. Every citizen would be informed and consulted for his opinion about the affairs of the State.179 He added, “Then the time will come when a centralised Leviathan can no longer pose as a democracy, but a democratic state composed of a number of local democratic republics will rise in which direct democracy is a reality.”180
In Roy’s organised democracy there would be no place for political parties. He said that to ensure that elections reflect an intelligent public opinion, there had to be an intelligent public opinion first. Then only elections could become an instrument of democracy. However, according to him, such an alternative approach to elections could begin when people in their localities would meet in local and regional conferences for serious discussions. Through such informal regular meetings an intelligent public opinion could be created. After understanding political questions and economic problems for themselves, the people would see that they need not vote for a particular party, but that they could judge independently and elect candidates of their own choice, from amongst themselves.¹⁸¹

Roy added that the person who would be thus elected would go to the parliament. He would not be responsible to any existing political party machinery. But would remain responsible to his local democracy, of which he himself was a part. Thus he would be directly responsible to the people who sent him to the Parliament. Roy further said that he would have to report to and inform his fellow-citizens in his constituency about all his actions, and take his mandate from them alone in all matters and act according to his best ability and conscience.¹⁸²

Thus Roy believed that the electorate would gradually become critical and discriminating, and the time would come when the voters of a locality would tell candidates of all parties to leave them alone. They would now find men amongst themselves who would remain responsible to them between the two elections. Roy argued that once that would happen, the end of the party system would begin and with the parties the main cause for concentration of power would also disappear.¹⁸³ He added:

In the process, we shall already have laid down the foundation of a decentralized State of local republics, which will combine all functions of the State as they affect the local life. National culture, national
economy and national political institutions will be cast on the pattern of the functions of these local republics, power will remain with them, to be wielded directly by the individual members of the small communities. Being thus reared upon a broad foundation of direct democracies, the State will be really democratic. Usurpation of power will be out of the question. Thus, a pluralistic modern society can be build up, at the same time doing away with centralization of power in politics and economics.\textsuperscript{184}

According to Roy to make democracy a reality it was necessary that man's faith in himself should be restored.\textsuperscript{185} For that he highlighted the importance of education. He was impressed by Plato's view that education was the condition for the success of democracy.\textsuperscript{186} However, Roy argued that education as a precondition of democracy was not just primary education. It was not even the conventional higher or scientific education. He said that education for democracy did not consist in teaching just reading and writing. The purpose of education according to Roy, should be to make, "the individuals of a community conscious of their potentialities, help them to think rationally and judge for themselves, and promote their critical faculties by applying it to all problems confronting them."\textsuperscript{187}

He argued that with such an education, the individuals would be able to overcome their helplessness and would be able to create local democracies of their own. He argued that once individuals would be educated in that sense, scramble for power would no longer be the purpose of politics. Political parties desiring to capture power would no longer be able to sway the people.\textsuperscript{188} To quote him, "Humanist democratic education will not only create a discriminating electorate, but also teach people to live a cooperative life, to transform their local community into a small cooperative commonwealth, a local democratic republic."\textsuperscript{189}

However, Roy believed that it would take some time to develop
Organised Democracy as visualised by him. He believed that in the transition period, Parliamentary Democracy, with all its manifest failures and inadequacies, would be obviously preferable to a dictatorship.¹⁹⁰

However, he argued that during the transition period a democratic constitution should provide for creative genius, intellectual detachment, and moral integrity occupying a high place in the state, so as to advise, guide and influence the operation of executive power.¹⁹¹

According to him in the transition period, democracy must be elective as well as selective. He said, “Until the intellectual and moral level of the entire community is raised considerably, election alone cannot possibly bring its best elements to the fore-front, and unless the available intellectual detachment and moral integrity are brought to bear upon the situation, democracy cannot come to her own.”¹⁹²

He believed that during the transition period, residuary power should be vested in a Council of State representing men of science, intelligence, integrity, wisdom and moral excellence. He added that the Council of State would consist of such men, who as a rule kept aloof from the game of politics and therefore were not to be found among professional politicians. These men, according to him, would be recommended by the various professional groups—of engineers, economists, scientists, medical men, jurists, historians and others engaged in intellectual literary, artistic and any other creative avocation. They would be nominated by the head of the state, who would also have the prerogative to nominate some other persons equally qualified, though not formally attached to any particular group.¹⁹³

Roy said that the power of planning the development of society in all branches (economic, health, education, culture) and also to guide and supervise the execution of the plans would be vested in the Council of State.¹⁹⁴ He believed that the society should make use of the best available leadership.
which alone could guide it towards the democratic freedom.

He believed the ideal of Radical Democracy would be attained through the collective efforts of spiritually free men and women, united with the determination of creating a new order of freedom. These persons, Roy argued, would function as the guides, friends and philosophers of the people rather than as their would-be rulers. Their political practice would be rational and ethical and consistent with the goal of freedom. He added that their efforts would be reinforced by the growth of the people's will to be free. Ultimately, the Radical Democratic state would rise with the support of the enlightened public opinion as well as intelligent action of the people.¹⁹⁵

According to Roy these spiritually free men (Radical Humanists) would not capture power. They would just help democracy organise itself in People's Committees, which would eventually become the organs of democratic power. Thus Roy argued that the Radical Democratic state would become coterminous with the entire society, and would cease to be an instrument of coercion. At last, democracy—government of the people and by the people—would be possible.¹⁹⁶

Roy also talked about an economic reorganisation of society, so as to eliminate the possibility of exploitation of man by man. He believed that progressive satisfaction of material necessities was the precondition for the individual members of society unfolding their intellectual and other finer human attributes. He said, “An economic reorganisation such as will guarantee a progressively rising standard of living will be the foundation of the Radical Democratic State.”¹⁹⁷

One of the new ideas developed by Roy during his Radical Humanist phase was the concept of Cooperative Economy. In a Cooperative Economy, according to him, the means of production would not belong either to the capitalist class or to the state. They would belong to the workers themselves.
Roy was of the view that Cooperative Economy was superior to both Capitalism and state ownership.¹⁹⁸

Roy believed that the economy of the new social order would be based on the principle production for use and distribution with reference to human needs.¹⁹⁹ He did not rule out the idea of planned economy in the new society but argued that “it will be planning with the freedom of the individual as its main objective.”²⁰⁰ It would, on the one hand, eliminate production for profit and on the other hand, avoid unnecessary concentration of control. It would not allow individual freedom to be jeopardised by considerations of technical efficiency. According to him, it would consist of a network of consumers’ and producers’ co-operatives, and the economic activities of the society would be conducted and co-ordinated by the people through these institutions. He said that the Co-operative Economy would take full advantage of modern science and technology and create equitable distribution of social surplus through universal social utility services.²⁰¹

According to Roy the co-operative communities, however would not be completely independent. As the constituent units of national economy, they would be inter-dependent, integrated in a larger co-operative community.²⁰²

He argued that all the attention and assistance of the government should be given to the building up the co-operative system from the bottom. He further said that once a solid foundation would be laid, by agriculture and allied industries developed on the basis of regional co-operative societies, the surplus of those would be pooled to finance the growth of industries producing on a large scale certain articles required everywhere, but which could not be manufactured locally.²⁰³

He said that built on the basis of a co-operative agriculture and locally developed industries, the super-structure of the large-scale production of certain specified articles or exploitation of natural resources, such as mining, would
also be cooperative. They would be owned by local cooperative societies—the new source of capital formation. He argued that representing the money value of the surplus produced by co-operative labour at the base of national economy throughout the country, newly formed capital would not be the means of exploitation. It would perform the social function of stimulating production for the use of the community and for raising the general standard of living.\textsuperscript{204}

Roy further argued, “A co-operative system embracing the entire national economy will by its very structure eliminate exploitation of labour for private profit; but at the same time, nobody will be expropriated or otherwise injured.”\textsuperscript{205} He said that the privately owned industries, which had grown previous to the development of the new system would remain during the transition period.

According to Roy these privately owned industries would have the freedom to exist, further develop and compete with the new system. They would also have the option of being integrated into the co-operative system, if their owners would be prepared to accept the principle of production for use. Roy said that the choice of the former course would mean progressive isolation from national economy, in proportion as the latter would come under the integrated co-operative system. He said, “There would be no coercion; an archaic system will break down because of the impossibility to compete with a non-profit-making economy sustained by the co-operative efforts of practically the entire society.”\textsuperscript{206}

Roy believed that it would be a really socialised economy without the evils of regimentation and bureaucratisation. According to him financial assistance by the state in the beginning should not mean state control or state interference. He was opposed to state-planning. He said, “It is an unfounded assumption that State-planning necessarily leads to economic democracy and social justice... planning has resulted in economic regimentation and eclipse of
According to Roy state-ownership of means of production, called nationalisation, meant concentration of power and ruled out the possibility of democratic freedom. On the other hand an autonomous cooperative economic organisation of society would prevent political power from becoming totalitarian. "Democratisation of the economic life will make a reality of political democracy, at the same time, the evils of collectivism—negation of individual freedom, regimentation and bureaucratic control—will be avoided." 

It is observed that Roy took the idea of People's Committees from Russian Soviets. However, Roy's ideas were also influenced by his observation of the failure of the Soviets in Communist Russia. He observed that after the successful consummation of the revolution, the Communist Party arrogated to itself all state powers and sent the Soviets into cold storage. This led Roy to distrust political parties. In order to rule out that eventuality in India, Roy suggested the structure of partyless democacy through the mechanism of People's Committees.

It is argued that Roy's notion of partyless democracy and politics without power emerged as a result of his experiences in life. The tragic experience of Russian Revolution, "was possibly a potent factor leading to the rise of his concept of politics without party."

His experiences in Indian politics also developed in him a negative attitude towards parties and power politics. Roy left the Congress after he felt frustrated in his attempts to radicalise it in a way so ardently desired by him. Then he formed, his Radical Democratic Party. However, it was completely defeated in elections in 1945. The Indian electorate could not be swayed by his assertion that the Radical Democratic Party was an organisation of the down trodden. Moreover, the party of Roy became so insignificant in the country that
after independence it had little chances of developing into a great force.

It is therefore, argued that when power was actually transferred to the Indian National Congress by the British Government, Roy realised that in the field of power politics his future was sealed. Out of frustration, therefore, he is said to have developed the theory of partyless democracy and politics without power.\textsuperscript{212}

Roy's organised democracy appears to be very attractive because in it every individual has the opportunity of participating and influencing the affairs of the state. But a closer analysis reveals that it is not devoid of defects.

It is difficult to agree with Roy's notion of partyless democracy. The vastness of the modern states and the complexity of the forces in operation make the existence of political parties more or less indispensable. Roy ignored the fact that democracy after all was a system of management of power, and if there would be no political parties, there would be some other competing groups. In that case caste groups, religious and sectarian groups would proliferate. It would not only make democracy unworkable but also divide the society into conflicting groups of narrow selfish loyalties. Moreover, political parties play an important role in the political education of the masses. Thus, parties are looked upon as necessary evils because they discharge certain essential functions in a modern democracy, which no other agency is capable of discharging.

No doubt there are certain shortcomings in the party-system and Roy was not wrong in highlighting those defects. But it can be argued that the solution lies not in the abolition of party system, but in removing or decreasing its defects. For the success of democracy based on party system what is needed is the existence of an electorate which is conscious of its rights, privileges and responsibilities and at the same time we must have political parties in the country which have commitment to distinctive socio-economic policies and

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programmes. Roy did not take into account the possibility of internal democratisation of parties which can certainly bring about an improvement in the system. Thus Roy dealt with the problem of political parties in a superficial manner.

Roy’s organised democracy was based on decentralisation of power. There is no doubt that to make democracy safe the trend of centralisation of power must be arrested. But too much of decentralisation would not be desirable either. If the autonomy of the local units of government would be pressed too far, it would lead to the tyranny of local government.

It has been observed that political decentralisation has hardly been in keeping with the tradition and political ethos of India. For example, in the Panchayati system sufficient powers have been given to the local bodies, but the actual functioning of the Panchayati system has revealed that their functioning is not satisfactory. Roy did not pay attention to the possible risks of decentralisation. Although he talked about recall as an effective check on elected representatives but he did not develop the idea and technique to its logical extent.

In fact, a degree of centralisation is a concomitant of the modern society. There are a number of matters which cannot be effectively controlled locally. Similarly some degree of centralisation is necessary to maintain efficiency in society. Though efficiency cannot be an end in itself, beyond certain limit its claim can be neglected only at the cost of freedom. Modern technology has made freedom a more intricate problem for the vast majority of people. Under such circumstances concentration of power, to some extent, becomes inevitable to enable the state to deliver the goods.

Roy believed that Organised Democracy would be achieved through the collective efforts of spiritually free men and women. He argued that the political practice of these persons would be rational and moral. Here, it is
observed that he was influenced by Plato’s notion of Philosopher king. However, the main problem is how to find such moral and rational spiritually free men? Moreover, what is the guarantee that these persons will not be swayed by the considerations of self-interest?

Roy’s idea of Cooperative Economy also appears to be very impressive. It aimed at raising standard of living for all the members of the community and was supposed to end exploitation of man by man, without the use of violence or coercion.

But in this case also certain difficulties are involved. The scheme of Cooperative Economy as envisaged by Roy was quite hazy. Roy failed to give a detailed picture of the economic system visualized by him and many important questions had been left unanswered. For example, it had not been clarified as to how the state would be capable of performing the functions of supervision and co-ordination without interfering in the sphere of co-operative societies? On the one hand Roy argued that the state should provide assistance for the development of the co-operative system but on the other hand he believed that there should not be any interference of the state in the sphere of co-operative societies. It is not clear as to how the state would be able to provide assistance without interfering in the functioning of the co-operatives? It is observed that for the success of Cooperative Economy, the state would have to play a more positive role than was envisaged for it by Roy. Moreover, the existence of Cooperative Economy side by side with private industry is likely to prove fatal to the Cooperative Economy.

Roy had rightly remarked that education was necessary for the successful functioning of democracy. In this respect he resembled Montesquieu and Rousseau. Similarly Gandhi, Aurobindo and Jayaprakash Narayan too had intense belief in education for the success of democracy.

However one cannot fully agree with Roy’s conception of education.
Education, according to Roy, amounted to the training of the rational part of human nature. It can therefore be argued that his scheme of education was somewhat narrow and one-sided in so far as adequate attention was not paid to the feelings and emotions. Such a system of education would not be able to achieve all that was necessary for human happiness and complete development of man. Moreover, Roy failed to clarify the details of the system of education which he considered necessary for the success of democracy.

It is observed that while propounding his theory of Organised Democracy, Roy's views came quite close to those of Gandhi. Gandhi advocated a democracy in which individuals would not remain passive spectators but would be active about the affairs of the state. He said, "real swaraj will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when abused."

Similarly Roy also wanted his individuals to actively participate in the affairs of the state.

Gandhi was opposed to centralisation of power. He said, "I look upon an increase of the power of the State with the greatest fear." He advocated decentralisation of power and argued that true democracy could not be worked by twenty men sitting at the centre. It had to be worked from below by the people of every village.

To quote Gandhi, "Independence must begin at the bottom. Thus every village will be a republic or Panchayat having full powers. It follows, therefore, that every village has to be self-sustained and capable of managing its affairs to the extent of defending itself against the whole world . . . Thus, ultimately, it is the individual who is the unit ... Such a society is necessarily highly cultured in which every man and woman knows what he or she wants and, what is more, knows that no one should want anything that others cannot have with equal labour."

Similarly Roy talked of decentralization and advocated democracy from
below. It is observed that despite the variation in organizational framework. Roy’s scheme of ‘People’s Committees’ was not very different, at least in its essence, from what Gandhi conceived in his system of ‘Panchayati Raj’. Like Gandhi, Roy held that democracy could be most effective in small units where people could carry on dialogue and interact with one another. Gandhi’s ‘Village Panchayats’ and Roy’s ‘People’s Committees’ were to be organised in such a way that they gave maximum freedom to the individual to administer his affairs.

Gandhi regarded proper education to be necessary for the functioning of democracy. He said, “Swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.”\textsuperscript{218} He argued, “what is really needed to make democracy function is not knowledge of facts, but right education.”\textsuperscript{219} Similarly we have observed in our discussion on Roy that he also regarded proper education as a pre-requisite of democracy. Thus it can be argued that Roy’s views on real democracy were not very different form those of Gandhi.

It is found that there was also much similarity between Roy’s views on Organised democracy and Jayaprakash Narayan’s views on Communitarian democracy. Like Roy, J.P. criticized Party system in modern Democracy and recommended partyless Democracy. Jayaprakash Narayan also resembled Roy, in advocating decentralisation, individual freedom and popular participation. Again like Roy, he argued that education of individual was of seminal importance for the success of democracy.

In the introduction to his pamphlet \textit{Swaraj for People}, J.P. Narayan acknowledged that he was influenced by the ideas of M.N. Roy. He wrote “Those among them, who are acquainted with me . . . know well the influence of Roy on the evolution of my thought and the high regard, in which I have always held him.”\textsuperscript{220}
Expressing his views on revolution, Roy argued that ideas were the urge for all human activity and human progress. According to him, every great social or political movement was heralded by new ideas, which operated as the motive force of the movement. When those ideas exhausted all their possibilities and could no longer move men to great and heroic actions, the period of social and political development heralded by them came to an end, and humanity began to look out for newer ideas, new inspirations, new ideals and a new faith, in order to to begin a new surge ahead.221

Thus, according to Roy, every revolution was based on new ideas. He said, “the ideas and theories of the bourgeois revolution were developed by men long before the bourgeois revolution, long before the bourgeoisie had become a dominant social force.”222 Roy believed that the idea and ideals of a new social order had to be conceived first; then only efforts for building it could begin. To quote him, “You cannot build a house without having an idea in your head. What sort of house do you want to build? A house requires a material foundation composed of bricks and stones and mortar, and it also requires an ideal picture in the brain of the architect. And that brain does not follow the foundation of the house.”223 Thus Roy believed that there could be no political revolution without a philosophical revolution.224 He believed that to bring about a change in society it was necessary to change the outlook and mentality of the people. According to Roy the lever of revolution was not class struggle but philosophy. He wrote, “Now if you find any dynamics of social revolution, that is not to be found in class- struggle.”225

Roy no longer believed that revolution meant a sudden break from the past. Expressing his views on the new way of revolution he said, “Gradually by a process of critical thinking we were led to doubt the very notion of revolution which maintains that history is not continuous process, but that there must be a break. We re-examined that generally accepted theory of history and discovered
that it was not true. History has not been marked by periods of cataclysm. There has been a zig-zig downward and upward movement but nowhere has there been such a thing that an entire old order had been abolished and something entirely new had come into its place."226

He emphasised that we should give up the idea that there could be no change unless whatever existed was first destroyed. He argued that in the most adverse circumstances it was possible to create something good in the midst of an established order.227 Roy was of the view that the old order must be kept if it was not bad and new good things could be added to that. He wrote, “good will eventually go into the making of a new world which will incorporate all the good things of the old world and the good that we want to add, and much of the evil things of the old order will fall off like empty shells."228 This attitude of Roy made him a reformist rather than a revolutionary though he had been an advocate of radical change.

Roy further argued that the cataclysmic way of revolution was not the only way of evolution because according to him that way had compelled people too often to use those bad means that did not lead to good ends.229

Roy ruled out the use of violent methods for revolutionary purposes. He said. “Revolution and counter-revolution are both on the order of the day. If force is the deciding factor, then the dice are loaded against revolution.”230 He added, “Bloodshed for no purpose is insane, and when that is advocated, even after the futility has become evident, it is criminal. We have simply learned from world experience that revolutions no longer take place in the old way.”231

Roy argued that the modern weapons and the modern technique of military operations had rendered the old technique of revolution—seizure of power through insurrection—impossible. The armed forces of the state had grown into such a formidable factor that they could not be overwhelmed by a mass insurrection. Therefore, he argued that if a radical reconstruction of
society still remained a historical necessity, some new way of revolution had to be discovered.232

He gave importance to peaceful and moral means to bring about revolution during this period. He said, “Politics cannot be divorced from ethics without jeopardising the cherished ideal of freedom. It is an empirical truth that immoral means necessarily corrupt the end.”233 He added, “for humanists, means and end are not so differentiated. The means are also part of the end.”234 Now, Roy advocated a new way of revolution--revolution by consent or persuasion.

Roy’s concept of revolution underwent a change. It was so longer economic in content. It had a moral sanction. Roy argued that the success of the revolution was “conditional upon the ability of its votaries to act as the personification of the high ideals cherished by humanity, since the dawn of civilisation, as the defenders of imperishable human values.”235

Now, Roy believed that for establishing a revolutionary society it was not necessary to capture power of the state. He argued, “Until now, we have put the cart before the horse, and said that we must have a good society in order to have good men. That led to the theory that in order to reconstruct society, we must capture power first, and that this end justifies all means. At that point all ‘goodness’ goes by the board. To make a good society even bad means are justified. But bad means spoil good men. In the process, good men become bad. And bad men cannot make a good society.”236

According to him, morality in public life, therefore, presupposed a political theory which would not make capture of power the precondition for any necessary social change. He added that, a new political theory must be deduced from a social philosophy which restored man in the place of primacy and sovereignty.237
Roy argued that according to the philosophy of Radical Humanism man was the maker of history and the history did not make man. So any reconstruction of society could only be possible when man was reconstructed. He said, “any democratic change in society can be brought about only by the basic individual constituents of society and unless these have the conscious desire to bring about that change, it cannot be brought about”\textsuperscript{238}

He criticized the traditional revolutionaries who wanted to change the socio-economic set up instead of changing man who was at the root of that. He argued that to start social engineering from changes in institutions and laws was to approach the whole thing from a wrong angle. As man was the basis of society, if he was changed the whole society would change automatically. According to him, without moral men there could be no moral society. He said, “Until now, all the architects and engineers of a new society have reversed the order. They all postulated an ideal order as the condition for the free growth of human personalities.” \textsuperscript{239}

Roy believed that as man was essentially rational, all appeals to social progress or political revolution had to be addressed to the reasoning capacity of man. Thus, Roy argued that the primary object of revolution was to enable man to become rational, moral and freedom-loving so that he could change the institutions in which he lived.

He said, “Human beings being essentially rational, if we persistently appeal to their reason, and not place premiums on unreason, they will ultimately respond to the appeal to their reason rather than to any other appeal, because it is only through the application of their reason that they can ever establish a government of themselves and by themselves, and make a success of such a government. It appears so obvious and so simple, and yet this will be truly a revolution, that philosophical revolution without which no social change in the direction of greater freedom is possible.”\textsuperscript{240}
Thus, Roy highlighted the importance of a philosophical revolution to bring about consciousness in the society. He said, "Radical Humanism is a new way of revolution—a philosophical revolution, a revolution in the brain, the ideas, the consciousness of man, which will be more effective, if less spectacular than the violent revolutions of the past." According to him throughout history, any profound political and social change was preceded by a philosophical revolution. To quote him, "Any significant change in the institutional structure of society has been preceded by a change in the thinking processes of men. Every political revolution has been preceded by a philosophical revolution."

He believed that the philosophical revolution, which was heralded by gifted men, had given birth to other revolutions. He wrote, "Revolutions are heralded by iconoclastic ideas conceived by gifted individuals. A brotherhood of men attracted by the adventure of ideas, keenly conscious of the urge for freedom fired with the vision of a free society of free men and motivated by the will to remake the world . . . will show the way out of the contemporary crisis." He believed that the philosophical revolution would be initiated by spiritually free persons and gradually it would spread to the entire society.

Roy argued that while concrete steps for social transformation would differ from place to place in accordance with the prevailing conditions, the movement for freedom, if it was to succeed, must out-grow its sectarian class-character and be inspired by the humanist spirit and cosmopolitan outlook. It must, further take the initiative of organising the people into democratic bodies to provide the basis of the post-revolutionary order.

Roy suggested the method of education and persuasion for social change. He favoured a gradual replacement of the old by the new social order. He suggested that the propagators of new philosophy would organise the study clubs or humanist groups to create a democratic atmosphere in society. These
groups would impart education to the people. Gradually, a democratic outlook and co-operative spirit would develop among the members. Thus they will begin to solve their local problems themselves. Roy stated, “After all people in a small place can organise their own schools, their producers and consumers co-operatives. They can take the initiative in digging wells, building roads, improving public sanitation etc. They can do it here and now, without waiting, either for government to do it, or for revolution to happen ... If people in their democratic local units will begin doing these things themselves, they will find out that they have themselves created the revolutions.” These study clubs would be converted into people’s committees, and thus Parliamentary Democracy might be, gradually and peacefully, converted into Radical Democracy and the Party Government into a People’s Government.

It is observed that Roy’s views on revolution were quite different from those of Marx. Roy no longer believed that revolution was the result of class struggle. Now he argued that it was not necessary to capture the power of the state for establishing a new society. He advocated peaceful and moral means to bring about revolution. Roy also opposed the cataclysmic way of revolution and believed in gradual change in society. All these views were not in accordance with the Marxist notion of revolution.

However, there were certain weaknesses in Roy’s views on revolution. According to him revolutionary change in society depended on appeal to reason of man. He believed that the primary object of revolution was to enable man to become rational. But as pointed out earlier, we cannot rule out the influence of emotions and passions on human behaviour. And if that is so, Roy’s views on revolution become untenable.

Moreover, Roy believed that by changing man we could change society. He argued that man must be changed first and society would be changed automatically. But this view of Roy cannot be accepted. It is argued that not
only does man make society, but society also makes man. The nature of man’s moral convictions, his behaviour, his cultural outlook etc., depend on the environment in which he lives. In fact, society itself is composed of a number of groups often having conflicting interests and man’s alignment with these groups also determines his nature and behaviour. Thus if we want to change the nature of man we would also have to remake the society.

It is observed that Roy’s views on revolution resembled those of Gandhi in certain respects. Both Roy and Gandhi conceived of a gradual social change in the society. They advocated moral means to change the old social order. Both of them were hopeful that a free and moral society could be achieved by human efforts. They strived to restore the faith of man in himself and to rehabilitate the moral values which were forgotten. They believed that the society could only be changed by changing man and argued that unless man was changed institutions could not help. They asserted that man could create a moral society by himself becoming moral.

On the basis of the preceding discussion, it can be argued that during the Radical Humanist phase, Roy’s ideas on many aspects converged towards Gandhism. But still there remained significant differences between Gandhism and Radical Humanism. Whereas Gandhi was an idealist, Roy was a materialist. Gandhi’s philosophy was based on religion, on the other hand Roy’s philosophy was based on recent discoveries of science. The ideal society conceived by Gandhi was to be a stateless society. But Roy admitted the necessity of the state. Gandhi was opposed to industrialization and modern technology. However, Roy welcomed them.

Roy claimed that he had incorporated the positive elements of Marxism in his philosophy of Radical Humanism. However, after examining his philosophy of Radical Humanism, it is observed that it was quite different from Marxism. During this phase, Roy differed from Marxism in his views on
materialism, man, society, state and revolution.

Most of his views, during this period, were the liberal and individualistic doctrines of the classical Liberalism. He denounced all brands of collectivism and state authoritarianism in favour of the freedom of the individual. His advocacy of the primacy and sovereignty of individual, his views on the relationship between individual, society and state all revealed the influence of liberal values. No doubt he cherished liberal values but the practice of Liberalism disappointed him. Therefore, he tried to replace it by a new set of institutions (direct, partyless democracy and cooperative economy) which he believed would safeguard liberal values.
Notes and References


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18Ibid.


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48Ibid., p. 37.

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142 Ibid., p. 110.
143 Ibid., p. 86.
144 Ibid., p. 67.
147M.N. Roy, Radical Humanism, p. 35.
149Ibid., p. 70.
150Ibid., p. 53.
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