PHILOSOPHY OF HUMANISM

(PHL4 C12)

IV SEMESTER

CORE COURSE

M.A. PHILOSOPHY

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UNIT I

THE HUMANISTIC TERM IN GREEK THOUGHT

In rapid understanding, one can apprehend the notion of humanism is human centered philosophy. Define the concept of humanism is a difficult task; it will be considered as an inherent act of humans, which stimulate his natural orient and help to delineate one’s place in society. From the beginning of rationality and progress, humanism or humanists upheld the mode of thought which stood apart from traditional metaphysical thought and analysed humans within their sphere. Through these revolutionary acts, they executed the mode of thought, and bracketed prevailing notions of ontological philosophy. Humanism is related in all aspects of human life. Philosophers define it in their realm as thought which created numerous manners in humanism.

Humanism in the present era signifies an ideological doctrine that places human being, as opposed to God, at the enter of the universe. Although a focus on human nature and human life can be traced back ultimately to ancient Greek thought, humanism in the modern sense, with its anthropocentric belief in the boundless potentiality of unfettered human reason and its secular conviction that human destiny is entirely in human hands, has its roots in the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. This philosophical orientation should not be confused with the intellectual
movement known as Renaissance humanism. Unlike its contemporary namesake, Renaissance humanism was not specifically concerned with promoting and exalting human values. The British pragmatist and humanist thinker F. C. S. Schiller believed that humanism is a tradition that proceeds from Protagoras’ maxim that man is the measure of all things.

A) Man is the measure of all things” – the maxim of Protagoras

Protagoras of Abdera in Thrace, most famous of the Sophists According to Plato, he was the first to declare himself a professional Sophist he produced a theoretical basis for Periclean democracy Protagoras, the ancient Greek philosopher, placed human at the center: “Man is the measure of all things of things that are they are, and of things that are not that they are not” taken to mean that sensory appearances and beliefs are objective truths, not subjective opinions. However, the mode of thinking underlying this claim had already been exposed as self-refuting in antiquity: if all beliefs are true, then the belief that all beliefs are not true is also true

The human species as the measure relies on what is essentially common to humans and allows for considerable agreement on all things; each individual as the measure seems to rely on diversity among humans and allows for possible disagreement about all things subjectivism of human sense perception: the same wind might feel hot to me and feel cold to you; Protagoras’ view implies that the wind is hot to me and is cold to you. so on with all sense-perceptual qualities: each and every one is to a person as it perceptually appears to him.
How they appear to him is the measure of how they are. And one might concede that each person is the ultimate authority and indeed infallible on how a coin looks to him, or how the wind feels to him, or how the food tastes to him – let us call this “individual subjectivism”

Protagoras has an organized response to skepticism about values: we know which things are good or bad, just or unjust, or beautiful or ugly, because each of these qualities is determined or constituted by our own attitudes. He asserted: “As to the gods, I have no means of knowing either that they exist or do not exist. For many are the obstacles that impede knowledge, both the obscurity of the question and the shortness of human life.” Unlike the other Presocratic atheists, Protagoras is not denying the existence of either supernatural powers or polytheistic gods. He is merely providing reasons for suspending judgment. Protagoras observed that things do not exist as such, but “momentarily come into existence” as a result of their relationship with other things. This denial of the “Absolute Being means that things “arise only as a result of the temporary relations of things with one another.”

He shows optimism about human strength and creativity, but has also been interpreted to imply epistemological relativism. Protagoras maintained that all customs are equally arbitrary and, hence, equally valid. He was agnostic about the existence or features of the gods and was an influential teacher of the rhetorical art. He claimed that there are two contradictory logoi or accounts about everything. Cognitive relativism holds that there are no universal truths about the world: the world has no intrinsic
characteristics, there are just different ways of interpreting it. That is, there is no objective truth; the world is for each person as it appears to that person. Of what use, then, are skills? Skilled people can change others’ perceptions in useful ways.

Protagoras taught his students to “make the weaker argument the stronger,” i.e., to alter people’s perceptions about the value of arguments. This is true for ethical judgments, too: laws and customs are simply products of human agreement. But because laws and customs result from experiences of what is most useful, they should be followed rather than nature. No perception or judgment is factual than another, but some are more useful, and those that are more useful should be followed.

One might concede that a coin might indeed look round to me and elliptical to you, but maintain nevertheless that the coin is really round if it can be shown by measurement to be so Protagoras also held that there is no such thing as the coin being round period, or elliptical period; it is round to someone to whom it looks round and it is elliptical to another person to whom it looks elliptical, even at the same time; let us call this “individual relativism”; all properties are relative to individuals (see objective relativism). And there is no contradiction between the coin being round to me and being elliptical to you, and thus neither of us need be making a mistake. Here we have not only individual subjectivism but also individual relativism: not only are all subjects correct in all their judgments and beliefs, but also all properties of all things are relative to individual subjects. It is the combination
of these two views that is the true meaning of each individual person being the measure of all things.

B) Socrates and Plato

Our knowledge about Socrates’ views derives mostly from his beloved student Plato, Plato’s portrait of Socrates is no doubt generally faithful to the moral character of the man as he saw him. But some important information also comes from Aristotle and Xenophon. His thoughts and way of life had a profound impact on many of his contemporaries, and, through Plato’s portrayal of him in his early writings, he became a major source of inspiration and ideas for later generations of philosophers.

Before Socrates, philosophy had mostly focused on questions about the origin and function of the cosmos. It was with Socrates that philosophy became anthropocentric and began to examine questions about human existence and well-being. His philosophical outlook was based on an introspection of oneself with a view to improving one’s soul and getting closer to moral truth, but it also aimed at a more universal consideration of our existence as members of a moral community. In Socrates’ thought, man takes a closer look at both the inner aspects of himself and the way he relates to fellow human beings, thus going deeper into the essence of man’s social existence and establishing the basis of a humanistic philosophy.

Socrates set the tone for questioning everything. He had the annoying, to most, habit of challenging the
conventional thinking of those he encountered. He initiates a new open policy of debate in pursuit of individual self discovery, something that can be achieved only through reasoned thought. The end is to achieve virtue and the human soul, the essence of any personality, he argued, will naturally be drawn to it. It is a question of making the connection.

Socrates, as he appears in Plato’s dialogues. The central theme in his thinking is ‘the question of how we are to conduct our lives as human beings in the best possible way, while we ourselves are required to provide the answer through study and discussion’. A crucial role in this quest for human excellence, virtue, and wisdom is assigned to the use of rational and critical thinking. Socrates not only an educator but also a humanist counsellor avant la lettre, counselling young Athenian men in the agora by systematic questioning. Socratic concern with defining the virtues as the mark of a good life.

Socrates claims directly that he does not know whether there is life after death. Even so, he can see that death is one of two things: nothingness, in which case it is not a harm; or a relocation of the soul from one place to another, in which case it is a positive blessing, Socrates brilliantly expounded typically Humanist maxims such as “Know thyself” and “The good individual in the good society.” While believing in a God himself and having hopes of immortality, he tried to work out an ethical system that would function independently of religious doctrine. A new phase in Western philosophy had begun.
Plato and Aristotle had different views of reality, but they agreed that human beings, if sufficiently rational, could come to know and conceptualize reality, one that did not depend on their coming to do so. These powerful practical implications of the theory of Forms reflect its origin in the Socratic conception of philosophy as a form of life and in the Socratic concern with defining the virtues as the mark of a good life.

It is to Plato that fundamental distinctions, and eventually separations, between mind and matter, thought and being, metaphysics and physics, are generally ascribed. To his school also is credited the glorification of intellect among human qualities, and the enthronement of humankind as superior to all other life forms on the earth. Plato gives no justification for this fateful decision that determines the social order in the state, as well as the nature of the virtues. Human beings are not born alike, but with different abilities that predestine them for different tasks in a well-ordered state. Plato found in a world transcendent to this one where he believed that, through along reasoned search for understanding, the ultimate meaning of ‘Ideas’ such as Virtue, Justice, and Beauty could be found.
UNIT II

POSITIVIST TRENDS IN THE MODERN WEST

A) Compte and Law of three stages

Auguste Comte was a French positivist philosopher. Positivism viewed as either a philosophical system and method or as a philosophy of history. His influence on nineteenth-century thought was strong, He was a pioneer of methodological individualism, the idea that social scientific explanation of collective behavior is ultimately based on the explanation of individual behavior. He criticized metaphysics for ungrounded speculation about such matters; he accused it of not keeping imagination subordinate to observation. Comte’s positive philosophy emerged from his historical study of the progress of the human mind the western European mind. The general spirit of positivism is that philosophy should only be concerned with what is positively given and should avoid any speculative thinking that goes beyond given experience. Accordingly, positivism takes the study of scientific methodology as its major task and presents itself as a kind of philosophy of science.

In order to understand the true value and character of the Positive Philosophy, we must take a brief general view of the progressive course of the human mind. He divided the science into two branches – statics and dynamics dealing respectively with social organization and social development. He advocated a historical method of study for both branches. As a law of social development, he proposed that all societies pass through three intellectual stages, The law is this: that each
of our leading conceptions, each branch of our knowledge, passes successively through three different theoretical conditions: first interpreting phenomena theologically, then metaphysically, and finally, positivistically. The Theological, or fictitious; the Metaphysical, or abstract; and the Scientific, or positive. In other words, the human mind, by its nature, employs in its progress three methods of philosophizing, the character of which is essentially different, and even radically opposed. These general systems of conceptions on the aggregate of phenomena, each of which excludes the others. The first is the necessary point of departure of the human understanding; and the third is its fixed and definitive state. The second is merely a state of transition.

Comte’s positivism has a famous Law of the Three Stages, which claims that the human mind has developed historically through stages. The history of the sciences shows that each goes through three stages: the theological, the metaphysical, and the positive. The progress of each field through the three stages is not only inevitable but also irreversible; it is, in addition, asymptotic—that is, we always approach, but never obtain, perfect positive knowledge. Comte had shown that opinion always passes through the same three phases. Men first try to understand their universe in theological terms, then in metaphysical terms, and finally in scientific or, as he called them, positive terms. He had also shown that correlated with these three stages of opinion are types of social organization, which change as opinions change. These three stages offer explanations respectively in terms of gods, abstractions, and observations.

Comte’s view of each of the three stages is as follows: In the theological stage, the human mind, seeking the essential
nature of beings, the first and final causes (the origin and purpose) of all effects, —in short, Absolute knowledge, — supposes all phenomena to be produced by the immediate action of supernatural beings. Man, views everything as animated by a will and a life similar to his own. This general view itself goes through three phases; animism, or fetishism, which views each object as having its own will; polytheism, which believes that many divines will impose themselves on objects; and monotheism, which conceives the will of one God as imposing itself on objects. In the metaphysical state, which is only a modification of the first, the mind supposes, instead of supernatural beings, abstract forces, veritable entities (that is, personified abstractions) inherent in all beings, and capable of producing all phenomena. What is called the explanation of phenomena is, in this stage, a mere reference of each to its proper entity. Metaphysical thought substitutes abstractions for personal will: Causes and forces replace desires, and one great entity, Nature, prevails. Only in the positive stage is the vain search for absolute knowledge a knowledge of a final will or first cause abandoned and the study of laws “of relations of succession and resemblance” seen as the correct object of man’s research. In the final, the positive state, the mind has given over the vain search after Absolute notions, the origin and destination of the universe, and applies itself to the study of their laws, that is, their invariable relations of succession and resemblance. Reasoning and observation, duly combined, are the means of this knowledge. What is now understood when we speak of an explanation of facts is simply the establishment of a connection between single phenomena and some general facts, the number of which continually diminishes with the progress of science.
Each stage not only exhibits a particular form of mental development, but also has a corresponding material development. In the theological state, military life predominates; in the metaphysical state, legal forms achieve dominance; and the positive stage is the stage of industrial society. Comte also initiated a positive sociology, which studied human societies in terms of positive methods, and a positive religion, which sought to replace the worship of God with the worship of Humanity.

B) Marxian Dictum; “Man is the Root of Mankind

Marx's themes of humanism on the one hand and the relation of philosophy and political economy on the other are interconnected in Marx’s status quo. His early writings, exclusively the Paris Manuscripts, are often associated with a conception of humanism very different from the political excesses of Marxism in power. In Marx, “humanism” refers to his anthropological conception of the human being as the basis of an understanding of modern society. His conception of human beings, in a word his vow to philosophical anthropology, underlies and makes possible his view of political economy, hence his view of modern industrial society; and since he is not concerned to break with, but rather to realize. Here he continued his interest in freedom, going so far as to note that freedom is the essence of human beings and that unfreedom is for man precisely equivalent to fear of death. At this point, Marx saw a connection between freedom from censorship and freedom, although he had not yet begun to link meaningful freedom to economic conditions.

"To be radical is to go to the root of the question. Now the root mankind is man." Marx here expresses as an adherent of the generation of Feuerbach and the Young Hegelians,
those who turned against Hegel and his Idea of the state and toward the concrete man, the historical creature of flesh and blood. Marx had begun to read Feuerbach, whose influence on his thinking is obvious. Feuerbach was the author of a remarkable book, The Essence of Christianity (1841) in which, through so-called transformational criticism, he inverted the usual view of the relation between God and human beings. Marx is working with a Hegelian distinction between a false, or illusory, and a correct conception of social reality, then adds, in a famous line, that religion is “the opium of the people” (B 44; III, 175). In rejecting a view of philosophy as neutral, he depicts it as basically devoted to realizing the specifically human good. In the same way as the critique of religion unmask religious alienation, philosophy’s task lies in unmasking the secular form of human self-alienation. Marx again suggests that theoretical tasks can be resolved in practice and that the problem of human self-alienation is amenable to human practice. Once again siding with Feuerbach, in a memorable phrase Marx writes: “To be radical is to grasp things by the root. But for man the root is man himself”. The solution lies in understanding that men have to change the conditions which prevent them from meeting their needs in what they do.

Marx thus proceeded from his postulate of Gemeinwesen to consider the Feuerbachian concept of man as Gattungwesen or 'species-being.' Marx infused this term with new content Man is a species-being in the sense that his self-production is realized under conditions of full sociality—completely free, conscious, and reciprocal relations wherein the primary need is for other humans. Deducing the nature of man as species-being, who takes the needs of the other, and thence of the species, as his own needs, from actual areas of
life, from the real ground of history. He takes over Feuerbach’s concept of species-life as perfected in the political state, as opposed to civil society, where each person is a private person. Marx presumably has in mind the distinction between the rights of man, which are limited to the isolated individual, and those of a citizen. Marx, who adapts the interpretation that man in a state of nature, before modern society, as free, hence presumably happy and suggests that human emancipation requires what he calls the restoration of the human world, supposedly destroyed by modern life, and of human relations as suggested in the idea of species-life.

The attainment of species-being certainly involved radical socio-structural reorganization, but only insofar as this enabled man to produce in freedom from need, or scarcity, and to concentrate upon his self-production as a conscious social being moulding himself through his objectification voluntarily. In this sense, whilst species-being is the ontological state fitted to realise this conscious self-production, the actual content of that self-production is seen as decided by the emancipated man himself. Marx appreciated that human emancipation, understood as autonomy, was a collective project. Individuals could be autonomous in the full sense only in a rational and free society.

Marx is a historicist who sees humans developing throughout history, with distinctive needs and potentialities, but no fixed essence. For Marx, human nature is constantly changing and evolving, in tandem with the development of the forces and relations of production. Marx proposes that as a human product religion offers no more than an illusory realization of the human being. This claim anticipates the view of ideology later elaborated in The German Ideology. Marx,
who is working with a Hegelian distinction between a false, or illusory, and a correct conception of social reality, then adds, in a famous line, that religion is “the opium of the people”. In rejecting a view of philosophy as neutral, he depicts it as basically devoted to realizing the specifically human good. In the same way as the critique of religion unmask religious alienation, philosophy’s task lies in unmasking the secular form of human self-alienation. Marx suggests a distinction between conventional philosophy, which presumably is at best socially irrelevant, and a different kind of philosophy in the service of human beings. The former, which merely preserves the status quo. He believes that alienation is self-imposed, suggests with Feuerbach that the solution to real social problems lies not in religion but in ourselves.

Marx again suggests that theoretical tasks can be resolved in practice and that the problem of human self-alienation is amenable to human practice. Once again siding with Feuerbach, in a memorable phrase Marx writes: “To be radical is to grasp things by the root. But for man the root is man himself”, Marx suggests that the contemporary revolution begins in the brain of a philosopher, that is, himself. Continuing the analogy, he asserts that philosophy, by inference of his position, will shatter the present status quo. Marx is a historicist who sees humans developing throughout history, with distinctive needs and potentialities, but no fixed essence. For Marx, human nature is constantly changing and evolving, in tandem with the development of the forces and relations of production.

For Marx, humans are many-sided beings, who require a wealth of activities and free-conscious self-determination to realize their basic human powers. Since, for Marx, individuals
are social and cooperative, capitalism is in contradiction with human nature, and a new social system is required to emancipate humanity and create a society worthy of human beings. He envisages species life as universal, free, and creative activity that differentiates humans from animals, labor under capitalism for Marx is fragmentary, one-sided, and unnatural... The capitalist labor system enslaves individuals in factories, using up their time, the very medium of life. Marx’s critique of capitalism thus presupposes a concept of human nature and non-alienated labor in which labor is conceptualized as essential life-activity, an enterprise through which one satisfies distinctly human needs and develops human potentials – or fails to develop them. Non-alienated labor for Marx is defined as a free and conscious activity that develops human potentialities and thus enables individuals to realize their “species-being” or humanity.

For Marx, capitalist production is the basis of human alienation, and the dehumanization of human beings requires a revolution to overcome it. He considered the alienation is neither subjective nor an ontological concept, but a sociohistorical normative category that points to a deplorable state of affairs that should be overcome. For Marx, by contrast, humans were primarily social, cooperative, many-sided, and protean, capable of novel historical development and creativity. Marx saw productive activity and labor as the distinctive human trait. under capitalism labor takes the specific form of wage labor in which the individual “alienates” his or herself by selling one’s labor power to the capitalist, thus producing for another and submitting to coercive and unfree activity. humans as free and universal beings who can properly actualize their freedom and universality only through mutual recognition.
Man is a species-being, not only because he practically and theoretically makes the species [Gattung] – both his own and those of other things – his object, but also – and this is simply another way of saying the same thing – because he relates to himself as the present, living species because he relates to himself as a universal [universellen] and therefore free being. (EPM 327/515) 17

Marx suggests that humans are aware of themselves as free because they are aware of themselves as universal. “Species - being” as referring to the awareness of one’s external universality: “Man … is a conscious being, i.e., his own life is an object for him, just because he is a species-being. Only because of that is his activity free activity”. For Marx, “man is a part of nature” and “as a natural, corporeal, sensuous, he speaks of the human essence as something that humans actualize through the establishment of social relationships between themselves, objective being, he is a suffering, conditioned, and limited being, like animals and plants”.

He considered freedom and universality to be characteristics of humans as producers, and how this freedom and universality can be known and actualized is a system of direct mutual production no longer mediated by private property, that is, communism. In both cases this is a medium produced by humans themselves, so for Marx history is “the self-creation of man “For Marx, humans are many-sided beings, who require a wealth of activities and free-conscious self-determination to realize their basic human powers. Since, for Marx, individuals are social and cooperative, capitalism is in contradiction with human nature, and a new social system
is required to emancipate humanity and create a society worthy of human beings.

In Marxism, the actual and historical man said, is to be the root of mankind, the root of society, and the state. Marx turned his consideration to the social problem, assuming that the only thing in the way of man coming into his full humanity was the capitalist system. In this, he was simply echoing the Enlightenment’s positive assumption that, since man is a rational animal, the only obstacles to his fulfilment must be objective and social ones.

Marx adopts the framework of Feuerbach’s account of religion which illustrates “God is the concept of the species as an individual … he is the species - concept, the species - essence conceived immediately as an existence, a singular being”, and its overcoming, frequently drawing analogies between state, capital, and religion. In human emancipation, “the actual individual man takes back into himself the abstract citizen, and as an individual man … has become a species - being,” who “no longer separates social power from himself in the shape of political power”.

C) Existentialism and Humanism

The term “existentialism” has often been taken to denote the thought of the Danish religious writer Soren Kierkegaard. In its philosophical context, “existentialism” entitles the series of philosophers in the post-Hegelian tradition of European philosophy. Kierkegaard is frequently referred to as the founder of this movement, and the term “existentialism” itself originates from his uses of the words “existence,” “the existential” and their cognates, which he dissimilarities to the abstract or purely theoretical. Other
nineteenth-century philosophers such as Dostoevsky and Nietzsche are frequently counted as forerunners of the existentialist movement, if not as existentialists in their own right. In the twentieth century, existentialism denoted to the German school of phenomenology which was instituted by Edmund Husserl and continued and transformed by Martin Heidegger. Existentialism relished its furthermost popular phase in the French school whose chief exponents were Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Simone de Beauvoir.

Existentialists characteristically deny the validity of supposedly overarching, objective, or pre-existing structures that might offer antecedent meaning to the human experience. That is, to the exclusively self-conscious and self-determining character of human life as it is lived, enjoyed, and suffered in the first person rather than described or explained from an ostensibly neutral third-person perspective. Since methodical moralities and organized religions are viewed by existentialists as the most malicious obstacles in the way of an authentic realization of human freedom, aside from these purely philosophical concerns, several historical factors explain the rise of the set of ethical concerns that existentialism attempts to address. Existentialism is often associated with fundamental questions of the finitude of human existence such as death, alienation, suffering, anxiety, and similar concerns. By contrast, the rapid changes in human life since the nineteenth century, accompanied by the violent upheavals above all in the twentieth century, have made the need to return to these questions much more urgent. For example, it is no accident that French existentialism was born and flourished in the context of the Second World War and the German occupation of France.
Existentialism is also characterized by a focus on the individual, which can be seen as a natural reaction to the rise of mass culture and the anonymity of modern society. The transfer from traditional forms of communal life to modern mass society has in countless ways relegated the individual to a marginal position. Out of this situation, existentialism appears as an attempt to speak for the individual and the power of free self-determination, when everything in the world appears to negate even the very possibility of this. Existentialists usually refute the validity of supposedly overarching, objective, or pre-existing structures that might lend antecedent meaning to the human experience.

Kierkegaard thought about the problem of existence as the problem the individual faces concerning his existence and sees certain possible ways in which this may be conceived and resolved by the individual. The problem of existence Kierkegaard deals with is one faced by the individual concerning his existence. The views on personal, individual responsibility and freedom of choice as well as his consciousness of the absurd, paradoxical nature of existence are fundamental to existential philosophy, and it is extensively acknowledged that Kierkegaard ‘set the stage’ and provided the conceptual tools for much of twentieth-century existentialist thinking, which employs numerous Kierkegaardian themes, though divorced from their original religious setting and used in an atheistic sense. Consequently, in the middle of the last century, he became known as the ‘father of existentialism’

He sticks with Socrates’ perspective of subjective individuality. It was from Socrates ‘critical analyses that Kierkegaard assembled support for his doubts about objective
certainty. He recalled individuals to a sense of their value and the importance of their ethical existence. In his insistent defenses of ethical responsibility and religious faith, Kierkegaard highlighted “the intensification of subjectivity,” the cultivation of “inwardness.

Kierkegaard regards subjective truth as the highest truth obtainable to mankind, and he makes it clear that by ‘subjective truth’ he does not mean that a belief is true simply because one believes it to be true. Instead, he is referring to the subjective experience of being, or living, within truth – of immersing oneself in the subjective, inward activity of experientially exploring and discovering the truth of one’s self in the progression of existing, which is the process of becoming, direct personal involvement in the living moment-by-moment process of an unfolding reality. Unlike subjective truth objective truth cannot deal with human values such as the nature of freedom and moral or spiritual insight. Kierkegaard therefore strongly criticizes all systematic, rational philosophies for their futile attempts to know life via theories and through the assimilation of objective knowledge about reality. Thus, subjective truth is sometimes called existential truth because it is essentially related to one's actual existence.

Kierkegaard points out that “freedom alone can account for a person in his totality.” In Either/Or, the freedom which equally well chooses the good or the evil is nothing but an abrogation of freedom and despair of any explanation of it. Freedom means to be capable; Freedom really is freedom only when, in the same moment, the same second, it rushes with infinite speed to bind itself.
Sartre proposes that the word humanism has two very different meanings. One of these, he says, is the view ‘which upholds man . . . as the supreme value’. Sartre’s second sense of ‘humanism’ focuses on the idea that human beings have no fixed nature but can make of themselves what they choose through their exercise of freedom.

*This is humanism because we remind man that there is no legislator but himself; that he himself, thus abandoned, must decide for himself.*

In *Existentialism and Humanism* Sartre clarifies and partly revises his view of existence and essence. He divides the things that exist into three kinds: human beings, artifacts, and naturally occurring objects. In the case of human being’s *existence precedes essence*. In the case of artifacts *essence precedes existence* and in the case of naturally occurring objects *existence and essence coincide*. In the case of human beings, in contrast with both of these, existence comes before essence. Sartre means there is no predetermined human essence and there is no human nature fixed in advance of human existence. Human beings first of all exist and subsequently make themselves what they are by their actions. When we are born, we have no essence as human beings. Only the totality of choices we make in life makes us the people who we are. In this sense, we are profoundly free.

Sartre sees this version of humanism as presupposing atheism. It is ‘nothing else but an attempt to draw the full conclusions from a consistently atheistic position’. In speaking of man as ‘abandoned’, Sartre means ‘that God does not exist, and that it is necessary to draw the consequences of his absence right to the end. He shares humanism which is a belief
in the ‘human’ in opposition to a belief in a god. Sartre would, however, be more hesitant about Russell’s faith in science. He argues that the appropriate way of understanding human actions is importantly different from a scientific understanding of causally determined events in the natural world. He links his emphasis on human freedom with a sharp contrast between human beings and natural objects. The Sartrean ontology of *Being and Nothingness*, according to which there are two fundamentals asymmetrical “regions of being,” being-in-itself and being-for-itself, the latter having no definable essence and hence, as “nothing” in itself, serving as the ground for freedom, creativity, and action, serves well as a theoretical framework for an existentialist approach to human existence.
UNIT III

HUMANISM IN INDIA

Non-Vedic Systems

The schools of Indian philosophy are divided into two types they are as tika (orthodox) and nāstika (heterodox). The nāstika which means (*na asti* ‘it is not’) those which neither regard the Veda as infallible nor try to establish their own validity on their authority. These names, however, are relative, for what is orthodox to one may be heterodox to another. As applied to the schools of Indian philosophy, ‘orthodox means ‘acceptance of the authority of the Veda’ and ‘heterodox’ indicates ‘non-acceptance of that authority’. Very often the distinction between the orthodox and the heterodox is nominal. Many of the so-called orthodox schools accept the Vedic authority only in name. And, some of those schools which are called heterodox are profoundly influenced by the Upanisads most of which constitute the concluding portions of the Veda. The orthodox systems are usually numbered as six, and the heterodox systems as three Nyaya, Vaisesika, Sankhya, Yoga, Mimamsa, and Vedanta are the orthodox systems, Carvaka, Jainism and Buddhism are the heterodox systems. These are only broad divisions of Indian philosophy, and are by no means exhaustive. Philosophy in India did not begin with these systems. Buddhism, Jainism and Carvaka resembles it in several respects, e.g., in its repudiation of the authority of the Veda, its pessimistic outlook on life and its refusal to believe in a supreme God.
Buddhism

Although Buddha was a man of penetrating intellect, the overall emphasis of his teaching is on the practical matters of morality and conduct leading to the conquest of sufferings, rather than on abstract philosophical inquiries. Buddha was primarily an ethical teacher and not metaphysician. For Buddha, the most urgent task is to lead man out of suffering and illness. So, in Indian tradition Buddha is often described as a ‘great physician’, According to Buddha the duty of a philosopher is not a discussion about the pain of human beings but an attempt to heal the pain.

If the poisoned arrow of suffering is embedded in humanity it would be non-sense for men to preoccupy themselves with such metaphysical questions as; is the world eternal? is it infinite or finite? Is there a God? etc, Inquiry into these questions, says Buddha, is not in the least conducive to solving the immediate and pressing problem of suffering. For Buddha, anyone who indulges in metaphysical inquiry is either blind to the fact of suffering or wasting his time by hoping to cure men of suffering by making them swallow metaphysical medicines.

The path to Nirvana is the Eight-fold path or Astangika marga. The perfect blending of Knowledge and conduct. Followers of this Eight-fold path will attain Nirvana. The Path recommended by Buddha consist of eight steps or rules and is therefore called the eight-fold noble path. The eight-fold noble path this gives in a nutshell the essentials of Buddhist Ethics. This path is open to all, monks as well as laymen.

The Doctrine of Pratitya Samutpada or the theory of Dependent origination is the foundation of all the teachings of
Buddha. It is contained in the second noble truth which gives us the cause of suffering and in the third noble truth which shows the cessation of suffering. Suffering is samsara; cessation of suffering is Nirvana.

**Jainism**

The Jains bring the whole universe under the two everlasting categories. The two classes of things are respectively described as Jiva and ajiva, i.e., conscious and unconscious or spirit and on-spirit- the latter including not merely matter but also time and space. The whole universe is brought under the two everlasting, uncreated eternal and co-existing categories which are called jiva and ajiva. Jiva means the conscious spirit and ajiva means the unconscious non spirit is the conception of reality as extremely indeterminate in its nature that is the basis of what is as syadvada- the most conspicuous doctrine of Jainism.

The earliest Indian defenders of atomism may well be the Jainas, with texts defending atomism that date at least as far back as the third century According to Jainism, everything in the world, save for souls and space, is produced from matter, and all matter consists of indivisible atoms (*paramaṇu*), each occupying a single point of space. Matter has two forms: a simple or atomic form and a compound (*skandha*) form. Perceivable material objects are compounds, composed of homogeneous atoms (there are no distinct kinds of atoms corresponding to the four kinds of elements). Impartite atoms are eternal, thought his is obviously not true of the partite compounds.

The Jains metaphysics is a realistic and realistic pluralism. It is called Anekanthavada manyness of reality.
Matter and spirit are regarded as separate and independent realities. There are innumerable material atoms and innumerable individual souls which are all separately and independently real. And each atom and each soul possess innumerable aspects of its own. A thing has got an infinite number of characteristics of its own. Every object possesses innumerable positive and negative characters. It is not possible for us, to know all the qualities of a thing. Is to become omniscient. Human knowledge is necessarily relative and limited and so are all our judgments. According to Jains Right knowledge emergences when all the karmas are destroyed by right conduct. Hence right faith, right conduct and right knowledge all the three together form the path of liberation which is the joint effect of these three. Right faith. Knowledge and conduct are the three jewels of Jainism.

Carvaka

The Charvaks can be called as the first humanist in Indian history. They were the thinkers for whom existence was the first and the foremost duty. There was little beyond human ability and human existence. The word Carvaka generally stands for materialist school. Materialism in India seems to be very old and it had been shown in the early Buddhist literature. Brhaspati is the founder of materialism and he is also known as heretical teacher. The word ‘Carvaka’ is not a proper name but it is a common name given to a materialist school. it signifies a person who believes in enjoyment like- ‘eat, drink, and be merry (the root ‘carv’ means to eat) or a person who eats up his own words, or who eats up all moral and ethical consideration. And also, the person who is ‘sweet-tongued’(caruvak) and therefore whose doctrine in superficially attractive. The teachings of materialism thus Lokayata is the only sastra, perception is the
only authority, earth, water, fire and air are the only elements enjoyment is the only end of human existence, mind is only a product of matter. There is no other world, death means liberation.

The carvaka admits the existence of four elements- earth, water, fire and air only and he rejects the fifth, the ether, because it is not perceived but inferred. Similarly, soul and God and the Hereafter are rejected. Everything which exist, including the mind, is due to a particular combination of these four elements. The elements are eternal, but their combinations undergo production and dissolution. Consciousness is regarded as mere product of matter. Given the four elements and their particular combination, consciousness manifest itself in the living body.

**Jyothybhu Phule**

Jyothybhu Phule formulated the thoughts of natural rights and formed his acts according to according to the concept of equality, freedom and knowledge. The anti-Brahmin movements in Maharashtra were inextricably linked to Phule. He revolted against the injustice of the Brahminic caste system under which millions of people had suffered for centuries. He had the privilege to study in his village school, and later he joined Scottish mission where he learned English. While other so-called social reformists concentrated more on reforming the social institutions of family and marriage with special emphasis on the status and right of women, Jotirao Phule revolted against the unjust caste system under which millions of people had suffered for centuries. In particular, he courageously upheld the cause of the untouchables and took up cudgel for the poorer peasants.
Through his writings and acts, Phule reconstituted the looted history and status of shudra and ati-shudra with a mode in which he clubbed the history along with Indian mythology. *A Ballad of the Raja Chatrapati Shivaji Bhosale*, published in June 1869 in Bombay; *Priestcraft Exposed*, published later in the same year, and *Slavery*, published in 1873 were works that considered highly influenced the masses. In *A Ballad of the Raja Chatrapati Shivaji Bhosale*, he illustrated pre-Brahmin social structure of Maharashtra built upon the notion of Bali, the indigenous Kshatriya King, who was defiled by the Brahmins through immoral means. In this book, he put forward the notions of original Kshatriya identity of the aborigines by using Shivaji’s achievements. *Priestcraft Exposed* conferred those historiographical notions of pre-Aryan social order and Brahmin invasion, describing how the Brahmin succeeded utilising others in the name of superstitions, rituals and mantras. The Book *Slavery* also depicted the Brahmin invasions and looting of society; through this book, he questioned the fundamentals of brahmanical ideology and demolished it.

His book, *Saravajanik Satya Dharma Pustak* published in 1891, epitomized his views on religious and social issues in the form of a dialogue. The book rejected the fundamentals of institutionalized Brahmanical ideology. According to him, there is no scared class of humans in the social order. He explains: “All human beings on our planet are equipped with similar physical and intellectual facilities”. For him, both men and women were entitled to enjoy equal rights, and it was a sin to be discriminating between a human being assuming sex. He stressed the unity of man and envisaged a society based on liberty, equality and fraternity. He describes that; “the human beings is the greatest of all beings. Human beings are of two kind woman and man”
He attacked the Brahmanism and its norms, which deliberately denied the rights like education, and public activity in the name of birth and dharma, to women and other castes. Jotirao refused to regard Vedas sacrosanct, opposed idolatry and denounced chaturvarnya. The Hindu social order generated and sustained on caste, determined the boundaries of dominance and hierarchy in society. The demolition of Hindu order will be possible only through attacking caste, possible only through demolishing Brahmin ideology. Using scientific thoughts Phule questioned the primary concepts of Varna system. He says: “Had Brahma really been the cause or the origin of all humans, they would not have done so. Manu has written about the origin of all the four varnas. If we compare it with the evolution of nature, it is revealed to be completely false.”

He restructured and rejected the core concepts of Hinduism and gave into a pre-Aryan ideology. He refuted the Hindu order of chaturvarnya and replaced it with two varnas Brahmins and shudratisudras. By generating this Varna system, he intended to unite the various untouchable castes into one. Thus, he provided a unity to demolish the centralised Brahmin ideals. He dismissed the Hindu concept of karmavipaka; which decided one’s birth, caste and status. By denying these concepts, Phule demolished the major concept of varnishramadharma of Hindus, which prohibited individuals to improve their traditional job and status. By attacking the avatarakalpana, he rooted out the Indian theological and socio-moral norms. By these denial and restructuring, Phule was able to challenge the sacred concepts of Hinduism or Brahmanism. He stressed the unity of people and envisaged a society based on liberty, equality and fraternity. The first comprehensive reinterpretation of the Aryan migration theory has been traced back to Phule.
“Drawing his inspiration from orientalist canon, Phule presented the Aryan invasion as the destruction of a pure indigenous civilization of which the lower castes were the heirs. For Phule the invaders were brahmins who subjugate the autochthons, reducing them to the rank of lower castes.”

Jyothybhu Phule boldly attacked the stranglehold of the Brahmins, who prevented others from having access to avenues of Knowledge and achievements of life. The Hindu social structure existed according to the Brahmanical ideology, and the sacred texts also manipulated legal system protecting the upper caste interests. Phule points out that

“..they did not want the shudras to ever realise how they had been tricked. So they strictly prohibited education of the shudras and made strict rules about this in their books like Manusamhita. Keeping the shudras illiterate also enables them to male whatever changes in their books they wanted to suit their interest.”

He denounced them as cheats and hypocrites. He urged the masses to resist and demolish the tyranny of the Brahmins. He emphasised the requirement of knowledge and its possibilities, and advocated untouchables and women to acquire the knowledge as a means to regain their consciousness and status in society.

He also criticised British attitude towards the common man, since the British geographical surveys led to centralisation of all kind of land into one authority. These new norms restricted the traditional castes and tribes to enter the forest used by them for years as a raw material stock up. The
new tax reforms of the British became heavy burden for peasants. Phule advocated new means and methods to improve the agriculture area and eradication of the financial exploiters of caste order and wished to regulate the activities of the moneylenders from exploiting the peasants. “Phule felt that it was rather the fault of the administrative machinery that allowed it. The effect of the Act of 1879 had merely been that 'no self-respecting moneylender will now let a cultivator even stand at his door.”

He insisted lower classes to use the opportunity to get educated through the mission schools which are the only institutions open for untouchables at the time. He also took special care to attract untouchables to mission schools. He gave priority to the education of women and the lower castes. Phule opened girls’ school in August 1848; educated upper caste peoples did not co-operate to work with the untouchable students. So, his wife Savitribai became the teacher of school. Jotirao opened two more girl's schools during 1851-52 and in 1855. He opened an evening school for working people. He also opened female school and indigenous mixed school for the lower classes, especially the Mahars and Mangs. According to Phule, the Brahmans had denied the shudras any access to education, and they had also forced them into ‘mental slavery’ through the pernicious fiction of the caste-system. In 1856, Phule opened his water tank for untouchables. Through the revolutionary act, he shook the Hindu social norms of pollution.

Phule asked for reforms in educational sector and submitted a model to government. In it, he expressed the demand for compulsory education up to twelve years, and more government institutions in primary sector. He also requested more trained non-Brahmin teachers in primary
sector. He also demanded for increasing their wages. He recommended 10 rupees to village teachers and 15 to 20 rupees for urban teachers. He writes “I think teacher for primary schools should be trained, as far as possible, out of the cultivating classes, who will be able to mix freely with them and understand their wants and wishes much better than a brahmanic teacher.” He recommended syllabi which included basic knowledge in agriculture, moral duties and sanitation along with the regular subjects. He also requested trained teachers for indigenous schools. He urged the presence of governments in higher education. He considered that widowing will badly affect the progress of common man and requested government presence in higher education sectors.

His requests were rejected; but it revealed his belief in education and its power which he considered as shift which will restructure Indian social order and masses could able to acquire an admirable living. He stood against Brahmanical norms about women, which considered them Sudras or dasa; especially the upper castes women were chained in backyards of households. In the stream of upper castes, the child marriage is liable and at the same time they enforced widowhood, sati and prohibited the widow remarriage. They treated the widows in inhuman manner, restricted to use the ornaments, good clothes and denied them the happiness of normal life. He saw the problem of women as a gender problem and never treated it on the basis of caste. “For him, a brhaman woman was as much shudratishudra as a Dalit woman. In that sense, it was a remarkable modern and gendered view, which saw gender itself, not Varna, as the basis for the oppression that women faced.” He considered the fight for gender equality as a fight against the Brahmanical ideology.
The Hindu practice of polygamy among the men caused to produce large number of widows; many of them were young and not all of them could live in a manner the orthodox people expected them to live. Some of the delinquent widows resorted to abortion or left their illegitimate children to their fate leaving them on the streets. Large number of them turned private or public prostitutes. For sheltering those caste-excluded widows, in 1863, he constructed a home for widows, possibly, the first of such institution founded by a Hindu. Jotirao gave protection to pregnant widows and assured them place to take care of their children. He requested British government to prohibit enforced widowhood, which generated miserable life for Hindu women and he considered it as a wicked act of Aryan intellectuals he says: “There is no doubt that the selfish and wicked law-givers must have added such unjust and nonsensical clauses into their Shastras with malice towards female sex.” He promoted a campaign in 1860 and played a key role in widow remarriage of 1864. He succeeded acquiring support of barbers to stand against the hair cutting of widows.

Phule turned against child marriage and revealed unnoticed evil practices of its surplus valve generated in the houses “he is the first one to draw attention to the fact that the labour of young bride is used as bonded labour (veth-bigar) by the family the girls marries into” He envisage the norms to restricted the child marriage and he advocate the government to do precursory acts and suggested that “government should rule that’s boys under nineteen years of age, and girls under eleven, should not be allowed to marry. In case they do, some reasonable tax may be levied on the parents of the parties married, and the money thus obtained should be used in the education of the middle and lower classes of Hindus.”
On 24, September 1873, Jotirao convened a meeting of his followers and admirers, and it was decided to form the 'SatyaShodhak Samaj' (Society of Seekers of Truth) with Jotirao as its first president and treasurer. Membership was open to all and every member had to take the pledge of loyalty to the British Empire. The main objectives of the organisation were to liberate the Shudras and Ati-Shudras and to prevent their exploitation by the Brahmins. All the members of the SatyaShodhak Samaj were expected to treat all human beings as children of God and to worship the Creator without the help of any mediator. He wished to eradicate all kinds of mediator ship in socio-economic sphere. Samaj was founded on the norm of one God or creator and insisted idol worship. It recommended spiritual worship and advocated to work against social evils. Samaj acquired the participation of about seven hundred families and its ways, encouraged practicing rituals without the Brahmin priests. Through these acts, he ensured freedom to believers from the mediators and washed out the wall between God and the people.

Samaj was founded upon twenty-eight norms. Among them the ninth one contained soul of its thoughts. The ninth, one of the most important, set out the vows that all members of the society were required to take on joining it. These were as follows:

“1) I will not worship anything except our Creator.

2) I will not bring into discredit the pure rights that have been given by our Creator by countenancing either those who, through the arrogant assumptions in their books, behave as though others were inferior, or those who accept such inferiority.
3) I will stop being party to the killing of animals, and will give up alcohol, as far as I can.

4) I will hold firmly to my pride in the truth, will help the old, the lame, and the very young in our society, and will strive to give enough education to all our children that they may understand their rights.”

Samaj advocated its members to spread truth and right-thinking among people along with the notion of real right and duties. It also gave important to spreading knowledge among the children and women and provided help for attaining higher education for youngsters and in curbing harmful activities in society. Brahmins and non-Hindus also worked in the samaj. Quickly, it found a place in sphere of reforms.

Phule’s Aryan theory created pride among the Dalit castes and upheld the consciousness to stand equal to caste Hindus. The new consciousness of dignity influenced number of castes like Mahars, Bhis, Kolis and Mangs to fight back caste discriminations. Phule’s thoughts and acts were not limited to a circle. He took interest on peasant’s problems and proposed the means for its solution. His concerns about the women and Dalits generated hopes. His humanist rational thoughts were the base for these acts. Phule’s thoughts and acts influenced many individuals like Ambedkar against immoral Hinduism. He stood and generated a touchstone for all marginalised.

**Mahadev Randay**

Mahadev Randay was an early member of the Prarthana Samaj which sought to reform the social customs of orthodox Hinduism. He regularly voiced views on social and economic reform at the annual sessions of
the Indian National Social Conference, which he founded in 1887. It was virtually the social reform cell of the Indian National Congress, and attentive on social reform. The Conference promoted inter caste marriages and opposed polygamy. It launched “Pledge Movement” to encourage people to take an oath to prohibit child marriage.

K.C. Sen and Dr. Atmaram Pandurang founded Prarthana Samaj in 1867, which meant community wedded to prayerful worship of ‘One True God’. It believed in the unity of God and denounced idolatry as a special sin. However, it did not abandon Hindu practices nor did it advocate definite exclusion of idolatry or abolition of castes. It was confined to a small group of intellectuals who were advocates of reforms of social system of Hindus.

The Prarthana Samaj was milder and less radical in its principles. It did not practice idolatry, nor did it revere any book as the infallible work of God; they believed that all human beings are children of God, and they refused to observe caste distinction in any form and under any pretext. Of the basic principles of Samaj taken from Brahma Samaj with some modifications theistic worship comes first, followed closely by social reform, the abandonment of caste, widow-remarriage, female education, and the abolition of child-marriage. Their theism was based on ancient Hindu texts. They have practically given up the inspiration of the Vedas and belief in transmigration. It was based on the worship on the devotional poems of the Vitthalas, especially those of Tukaram who criticised caste system, but they did not break its rules.
E.V. Ramaswamy

E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker formed his norms on rationalism and asserted that the one who fell into the dogmas of religions will lose himself in others ideology. “God and faith are the direct enemies of reason. Because anyone enslaved by God and fate has nothing of his own.” On these assumptions, he formed the anti-Brahmin movements in Tamil Nadu. His rationalised readings of religious texts generated qualms and splits out the meaninglessness of Hindu texts and thoughts. He depicted the developments of Hindu religion that “Hinduism began with the Vedic religion and transformed over time as the Aryan religion, the Brahmin religion, and finally as the Hindu religion.” Through experiences, he realised the inhumanity of its ideology and unworthy characteristic of saints and priests. He decided to fight against the irrational brahminism and stood for the untouchables and addressed the problems like land and education.

He took part in national movement through Indian National Congress and became the president of Tamil congress committee. Later he realised the lack of concern of Congress towards the general welfare of the common people. He was isolated within congress committee because of his interest to ensure social equality to all. He took part in Vaikom Satyagraha held in Kerala for attaining the right to walk on public roads and temples roads. In 1924 March 30, Vaikom Satyagraha was started under the leadership of T.K.Madhavan, V.Sankaran and others. As a part of the movement, large number of Pulayas and Ezhavas were arrested every day and prisons were filled with satyagrahis. Soon it became a national movement. He and his colleagues were detained for six months. His norms on untouchables and
others were contradictory to Congress’ stand. In his presidency, he refused to grant funds to sermadevi guru Kula ashram because they intended to practice communal discrimination against untouchables in Vedic form, where non-Brahmin boys were forced to eat apart from the Brahmins.

The philosophical norms of congress and EVR stood opposed to each other. He gave preference for social reforms and upliftment of the marginalized people. Congress, on the other hand, was only interested in acquiring political power. All their actions against the social evils like caste system and untouchability remained in papers and words. Large number of its leaders turned against social reforms and they considered it as an unnecessary act. For them, attaining political power will eradicate these evils and they considered these evil practices as a matter within the groups and castes. Most of them believed that congress is the platform for acquiring political power, not social reform. Dadabhai Naoroji, in his 1886 Calcutta congress, referred that; “we are met together as apolitical body to represent to our rulers our political aspirations, not to discuss social reforms” W.C. Bannerjee also shared the thoughts on Congress attitude towards the social reforms in 1892. “Others more timid still would allow social problems to solve themselves ... the congress commenced and has since remained and will, I sincerely trust, always remain as a purely political organization devoting its energies to political matters and political matters only.”

In 1927, Gandhi expressed his firm belief in Varnashrama dharma and appealed to the non-Brahmins that in their ire against Brahmins, non-Brahmins should not wreck the system of Varnashrama dharma, the bedrock of Hinduism. He publicly declared:
“Varnashrama Dharma is not an unmitigated evil but it is one of the foundations on which Hinduism is built [and it] defines man’s mission on earth. He went on to describe Brahmins as the finest flowers of Hinduism and humanity, for good measure adding will do nothing to wither it, I know that it is well able to take care itself, it has weathered many a storm before now. Only let it not be said of non-Brahmins that they attempted to rob the flower of its fragrance and lustre...”

Gandhi continually argued that Varnashrama dharma is the soul of Hinduism. “Varnashrama is in my opinion inherent in human nature, and Hinduism has simply reduced it to a science it attaches to birth. A man cannot change “Varna” by choice. Not to abide by Varna is to disregard the law of heredity.” He also defended his stand through this. Gandhi honestly supports the Brahmin ideology of caste and its apparatus:

“Gandhi defended social divisions in the sense of varasrama dharma, that is, in the sense that there were certain social functions or duties which were related to one’s order or status in society. So, in the first instance he approved of a society with functional distinctions based on the different abilities of different members as a way of preserving the stability of social life.”

EVR opposed the practice of Varnashrama dharma; he considered that it included the relegation of all the non-Brahmin caste Hindus to the position of Shudras in the Tamil region. A majority of non-Brahmin were denied access to economic and political power remained in the backyards of social hierarchy. For restoring their socio-political status, he suggested communal representation. His resolution for equal educational opportunities and enhancement for the depressed
communities was defeated by Brahmin majority in Congress committee.

He considered that Brahmins were in the national organisation only to further their own political interests rather than to strive for the independence of the country. He expressed that true freedom for India would be achieved only with the destruction of Indian National Congress, Hinduism and Brahmanism. All his points show that the Brahmins are the center of Hinduism. He emphasized that the conceptual Tamil words like swargam, Jati kannniga dhanam were the contribution of alien language Sanskrit, considered scared by Brahmins. By these thoughts, he established that the notion of caste and its order have come across from the northern hemisphere to south as a part of invasion.

For him, the value and status of social order were accounted through their literatures. He emphasised that Sanskrit language failed to generate any impression on him because it’s Puranas, Shastra’s and mantras were crammed with immoral thoughts. He asserted that: “language is constitutive of social relations through ideas inscribed in vocabulary: The greatness of a language depends on the ideas it conveys. It is possible to understand a particular people’s civilization and knowledge only through the spoken language of those people.” Quoting lord Krishna’s words from Gita, he strengthened his notion which depicted immoral aspects of Varnashrama Dharma as a soul of Hindu social order: “I created the four varnas. I created the dharmas to be carried out by respective castes. If anyone does not follow his duty, I will put him in hell.”

In 1928, he remarked: “Hinduism is a fake fortress built upon the false principle of granting heaven to one after
death. Congress is fake fortress built on the false principle of granting freedom when one lives.” He quitted Congress for disagreement on the notion of untouchable upliftment and social status. In 1952, he formed the Suyamariyatiiyakkam or self-respect movement aimed to promote rational thinking, self-respect and self-confidence of the untouchables and to enable them to enjoy social and political freedom. He replaced religion with reason and tried to uplift Dravidian dignity. He denied mythology of Hinduism and recommended for the destruction of Brahmanical cultural heritage and dominance over the society. He advocated destruction of the time old institutions such caste, religion, princely order, zamindari system, evils of untouchability, inequality, and distinctions based upon status and sex. He advocated demolition of Aryan and Hindi imperialism of politics, education and other important aspects of life and stood for equal opportunities for all.

He recommended inter-communal marriage and self-respect marriage without Brahmin priests and rituals. Self-Respect Movement had targeted religion in general and particularly the Brahmanical tradition and symbols. He focused on criticising scared books of Hindus—Manusmriti, Ramayana and Bhagavad Gita. Manusmriti laid the foundations of Varnashrama dharma in Indian social order. He asserted that “if there is no Varnashrama dharma there is no ground to talk about Hindu religion.” On a number of occasions, the Manusmriti was burned, certain characters in the Puranas were changed. For instance, Ravana in the Valmiki's Ramayana was considered the hero and an ideal of Dravidian conduct. Rama was seen as a wicked and unjust Aryan.
E.V.R and his fellows organised demonstrations and plays in large scale to eradicate the practice of untouchability and caste system. He recommended destruction of the Vedic sacred texts, epics and other sacred Hindu texts. For him, it was the way for demolition of untouchability. To stand against the Hindu propaganda apparatus like temples, Puranas, stories, ballades and educational texts, he used publications in local language like *kudi Arasu* and *Revolt*. He and his sister were detained for propagating communism. He replaced the name of journal and continued his criticism. He delivered large number of speeches in local language. He conveyed his thoughts to the illiterate mass who were marginalised in the Hindu society. The use of common language and violation of the upholding structure of speech and writing slammed by the middle and upper class were considered vulgar by the upper classes. They always worried about its influence on the masses. Despite any other movement, large number of untouchables and women took part in it. He also agreed that there were grammatical imperfections of his speeches and writings, but it secured its ends.

For obliterating the fundamental superstitions of Hinduism, he conducted mass campaigns where he rationally questioned the religious notions of superstitions. In 1927, it passed number of resolutions which were considered revolutionary. One asked the members to refuse money for the construction of temples or for the employment of priests or intermediaries. Another condemned Varnashrama dharma and arbitrary division of society and the other one secured the rights of women in society. Through publications like *Kudiyarasu* and *Puratchi*, he spread his messages against degradation of the Dravidians. He realised the importance of politicalisation of the notions and joined janata party and become its president. In 1944 he restructured it into
Dravidakazhagam with the slogan for separate Dravidanadu. His movements generated new awakening of untouchables it gained large number followers in every sphere.

His speeches created effects on the masses. They stopped visiting temples, stopped using namam on forehead, and gave up all fasts and rituals. A large number of people turn to be atheists and demolished their household idols and engaged in marriages without priests and thali. Despite all other movements, women participated in self-respect act in large scale. The new method scaled down marriage expenditure; instead of rituals, they usually sing and transform a place for interactions among members.

As the result of these movements, Brahmins lost their supremacy and positions in Tamil public sphere. Large number of people came out from the dogmatic chamber of spirituality to reality and demarks the dogmas and rites of Brahmanism. Legislation enacted the welfare of the depressed class and self-respect marriage became legal in 1967 which provided equal status for women in society and minimised the expenditure of marriage. The party stood for renovating Dravidian culture, values, and forms of life. It pushed out the Brahmins from political sphere and Dravidians captured the commanding heights of politics.

**Guru Nanak**

Guru Nanak, fought for the safeguarding of Human Rights and was contrary to communal hatred, unevenness, strict restraint, tyranny of women and disgrace of human characteristics. The strict, organizational environments governing in those times were an absurd attack on Human Privileges. The prevailing public was ended up being
adolescent, fanatic and antagonistic. Mankind was being crumpled and there was not any end to it. Unevenness, injustice, trickiness, confusion and abuse were obscenities which broke down the reason of society. In such a horrendous, unforgiving and awful condition it was difficult to think of the rights of human. Guru Nanak expected to reveal the entire community the method for recovery and stimulate them against any type of physical and social harassment and mistreatment.

He came forward and explicitly sustained the Rights for individuals. According to Nanak's thinking, all the human beings should enjoy Human rights because they are Human. But the exiting social order do not award these rights, yet they guarantee the exploitation of their rights. It was very difficult to fight for Human Rights in such a critical situation where there was only exploitation and violation of rights. The Guru criticized the viciousness of the leaders of that period. He endured against the ruler with no fright and reluctance. He condemned the injustice initiated by the leaders of his time.

Guru Nanak’s philosophy expresses out that corruption is the key driver for the demolition of Individual Privileges. Guru Nanak prompted the general population to carry on with a genuine life and secure living by fair approaches. He advised his supporters to fight for their rights and for the rights of others. He furthermore cautioned them the perilous impacts of corruption. He eagerly contended that standards should be set down to protect their rights, no matter what, even at a mind-blowing expense and at any cost one should fight till the end. He even stated that the rulers should rule with graciousness, equity, graciousness and empathy.
He also emphasized on Right to Religion Freedom. He was also liberal in the idea about the adoption of any religion. Freedom of religion infers each individual is qualified for opportunity of soul and the privilege to uninhibitedly uphold practice and broadcast any religion or confidence according to his own sweet will and choice. He himself is the decision maker in this task. Nobody else has a right to force anybody to adopt a particular religion.

He advocates the community that one should not believe in caste, colour, creed or religion, but we all are one and we should respect humanity. Guru gave importance to culture, traditions and verbal medium of communication. He considered that liberty gives satisfaction and comfort zone to an individual. The lifestyle of one’s life should be decided by an individual himself. Nobody else can interfere in one’s own decision.

Ambedkar

Ambedkar constructed his thoughts in the realm of enlightenment humanist democratic thoughts, the ideals which wrecked the tyrant of Europe. It builds a society which ensured the natural rights to masses without discriminations of color, class and gender. Through the tyrannous philosophy of Manu, the Hindu philosophy dominated Indian social sphere and continued parasitizing the labourers. Despite the political power shifting, the social order residues accorded Hindu ideology.

Apart from other traditions and philosophy, the Indian mode of life is structured around caste system which divided the people into various groups or castes. Caste is a rigid social system in which social hierarchy is maintained as hereditary.
The philosophy ruled out the opportunity of mobility and space in popular culture. For Ambedkar, caste was an institution peculiar to Indians. The racial, social and occupational divisions of classes exist elsewhere, but fundamentally they differ from the peculiar social structure of India. Caste is not merely a principle of social division, but a comprehensive system of life, occupation, and dealing with food, marriage, education, association and worship. It became a social order, rather than a religious custom; the system divided society into four castes called chaturvarna.

The Indian socio-political sphere is shared within the four classes. The labourer in Indian economy did not find any place in these four groups. Persons belonging to those castes were considered impure by their very touch; even their shadow is considered to cause pollution. Meanwhile, they remained a necessary part of the village economy; they engaged in jobs spurned by all others and kept away from common sphere. Ambedkar observed social order thoroughly and analysed the uniqueness of caste system which demolished the social sphere of freedom and equality into hellish atmosphere. His description of caste system envisaged new modes of understanding to caste and its assignments.

The traditional intellectuals of Hinduism praised and moralized the practice of caste system and endogamy in public spheres. Among them, Manu, the law-giver of Hinduism, inspired others to execute Hindu morals. Even in this enduring time, the intellectuals influenced the society. Ambedkar considered Caste as an enclosed class founded by Brahmins, the dominant class of Indian society. Apart from class, the Indian caste contains certain unique peculiarities within it. In this social order caste status replicates individual’s positions. So individual knowledge and capability does not influence or
change social status, it persisted him until death. The social positions and freedom mobility turns as hereditary attribute. In Indian social sphere, the notion of class is contained in the notion of caste which turned fundamental that it determines one’s class as well. The caste category defined one’s role and status in society, which is fixed and remained at the end.

Caste is not division of labour but it is division among labourers, where men is compartmentalised according to his traditional jobs. Value and status are determined according to hierarchical order of Varnashrama dharma, which placed priesthood on the top and degraded others. The structure of caste order denied freedom of choice of people to opt adequate jobs. They were bound to traditional jobs and status. “Caste System is not merely a division of labourers which is quite different from division of labour—it is an hierarchy in which the divisions of labourers are graded one above the other. In no other country is the division of labour accompanied by this gradation of labourers.”

It created an anti-social attitude in Indian social sphere, which denied the overall growth of society and dragged people to restricted sphere intended to protect caste interests. The compartmentalisation of people killed the possibilities of social interactions and created pseudo consciousness among the castes. Due to the hyper real consciousness, the castes considered others as opponents and engaged in degrading each other. This led to anti-social spirit of life.

The Indian communal order excluded the social characteristics of spontaneity and freedom of mankind. Instead of upholding the emerging rational thoughts, Hindu intellectuals and institutions implemented metaphysical ideals of śāstra’s and Vedas as the fundamentals. By declining the
space of spontaneity, the Hindu social order succeeded constraining emerging revolutionary ideals within the stocks. It denied all social relations to public relations such as interdining, intermarriage and sharing of happiness and sorrows. It imposed impatient life order for the masses. For Ambedkar, fraternity and liberty are cohesive within equality. Through denying these, Hinduism killed all basic aspects of humanity and ruined individuality.

The philosophy of caste and purity plundered the social consciousness into cluster of ignorance and rooted out the chances of rationality. Apart from other societies, Indian caste system divided the people into isolated chambers of hatred and ignorance. Ambedkar describes the demolishing aspects of caste as: “(1) Caste divides Labourers (2) Caste disassociates work from interest (3) Caste disconnects intelligence from manual labour (4) Caste devitalises by denying to him the right to cultivate vital interest and (5) Caste prevents mobilisation.” He considered that caste system and the code of Manu slaughtered spontaneous mobility of the society along with tolerance and froze the real human spirit. He advocated reforms in religion, which will prevail as social status for all and provide equal chances in life. To attain his aim, he urged for a reform in all sectors of life.

Ambedkar’s thoughts and acts gave prominence to deliver social security to depressed class. His philosophy targeted the brahmanical ideals of Varna and caste system. He urged for a reform in pure sense which will root out the pillars of inequality from social sphere. For him, the reforms which occurred in society failed to address the real causes of social backwardness. The Hindu reform movements restricted their interest in peripheral hitches like sati, widowhood and child marriage.
He evaluates that Indian social sphere lacked leaders like Martin Luther who succeeded generating a religious reformation, primed the society for a social reform and created new mode of thought which cracked down the dogmatisms of religious upper hands. Even the political organisations absconded from social problems and dared address the root cause of social inequality. They professed themselves as political organisations without social obligation. Dadabhai Naoroji pointed out in Calcutta Congress in 1886, that Congress wants to acquire political power. He describes that, “we are met together as a political body to represent to our rulers our political aspirations, not to discuss social reforms.”

He also disproved the socialist ideals of economic interpretations about Indian social sphere. For them, social status and power are attributes of economics, so they instigated for an economic reform rather than socio-political reforms in Indian society. But in Indian society the religious ideology is deep-rooted. The religious hierarchy determines the power; “religion is the source of power is illustrated by the history of India where the priest holds a sway over the common man often greater than the magistrate and where everything, even such things as strikes and elections, so easily take a religious turn and can so easily be given a religious twist.”

For Ambedkar, the social revolution will be possible only through a social unity among the people. In Indian socio-political sphere the union will occur only through annihilating the castes and hierarchical powers. So, he reflected that the unity of people is possible through the social reforms and advocated for a vigorous one in Indian hemisphere, which will eradicate the evil aspects of castes from the common sphere and trigger a spirit of equality.
He emancipated the depressed class from dogmatic Hindu culture and reconstructed the social order which upheld notions of liberty, equality and justice. He considered that power and knowledge are the crucial elements for social progress. So, he ensured knowledge and power to the depressed. He put forward the motto ‘educate agitate and organize’. Through fulfilling these aspects of life, depressed castes and others can get rid of social degradation and attain means for worthy life.

Ambedkar aspired to breakdown the existing social order, restructured merging humanistic ideals and protected people’s interest. He realized that the social reform in its full meaning does not emerge from the prevailing society because it was ruled by high caste tyrants. They never wished to shake their own states in society. For him, true social reform will be possible by unifying the depressed against the ruling ideology. Ambedkar intended to reform the social structure of Hindutva with the ideals of equality, liberty and fraternity. To attain these goals, he organized the depressed in one identity and began agitations for social equality. He raised the slogan ‘agitate and organize’

He considered education as means for liberation for accomplishing the educational dreams of the depressed, he created certain organizations. In 1924, Ambedkar formed Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha (Association for the Welfare of the Depressed Classes) which took mediator-ship between governments and untouchables. Sabha placed the socio-political problems of untouchables before the government. It contained the members of all class and caste. Large number of caste Hindus and Parsis joined in. With formation of Sabha, Ambedkar wished to form a broad platform within the fabric of Hindu social order and worked effectively for the causes of
the untouchable. It also focused on promoting education and familiarizing the new ideals among depressed classes.

Ambedkar emphasized the need for abolishing caste system and placed overhauling Varna system as the goal. He asserted the rights for drinking water and temple entry for untouchables. He emphasized that the one class, which can bring social changes in Indian social order is depressed classes. One cannot anticipate the Brahmins class to give-up their privileges of birth. The non-Brahmins would not commit to any principles and are weak in their aspiration for social reform. For him it is the responsibility of the depressed castes to create a castless society in India. He said that: “let me tell those who oppose us that we did not perish because we could not drink water from this Chowder Tank. We now want to go to the Tank only to prove that, like others, we are human beings.”

They condemned *Manusmriti* for depicting the lower castes as deprived and ruling out the basic rights of the masses in the sense of propagating rivalry among the people. He emphasised rejuvenating the Hindu religion based on equality, without caste order. As a lethal step towards deconstructing the Hindu social order, they burn downed the Hindu sacred text *Manusmriti* publicly and proclaimed a new beginning for social renovation. Ambedkar considered these events as equal to Bastille fall of the French revolution. By demolishing their scared text, the untouchables questioned the grounds of Hindu philosophy.

He considered that the Hindu society took double stand in reforming the socio-political positions. They adopted colonial education, sciences, technological skills and medical sciences into their sphere. But they neglected the
transformation of the age-old fundamentals like caste, untouchability and other social taboos. So, he advocated depressed classes to embrace other religions which will prevail a social status to them.

For him, a religion is a necessity that integrates people into social life. The religion should be constituted on rationality. Thus, it generates a morality to govern the society. He insisted to stipulate religious morality with liberty, equality and fraternity- the fundamentals of social order. He points out that; “It is not enough for religion to consist of moral code, but its code must recognize the fundamentals tents of liberty equality and fraternity. Unless a religion recognizes these fundamental principles of social life, religion will be doomed.”

He also ruled out the presence of super naturals in religion. For him, it created opportunities for the priests to exploit the mass and drag the society towards poverty and ignorance. He emphasised freedom of thoughts in the religious sphere; “If man is free, then every event must be the result of man's action or of an act of Nature. There cannot be any event which is supernatural in its origin.” For him, the religion should be run upon principles; not on rules or laws.

On this account, he observes that Hindu religion is nothing more than mix-up of rules and restrictions. He considered that the ideal one should adhere the positive spirits of humanistic principle of equality. Ambedkar concedes Buddhist ideology desirable for the depressed classes, because Buddha’s philosophy bracketed the metaphysical irrationality of Hindu ideal of God, soul etc. that rejected the ideals of hierarchal social structure and other illogical aspects of Hinduism.
Ambedkar realised the necessity of attaining political will and power— the tools which will provide an ideal status for depressed ones in social sphere. He considered that by attaining political power, depressed ones can reshuffle the immoral society to a better one, which persisted the fundamental rights to people. Apart from the prevailing order of governance, he emphasized nationalism based on democracy which will rule out existing structure of caste system and provide adequate share in policy spheres.

The Ambedkarism creates a strong foundation for a parallel philosophy to challenge the monolithic norms of Hindu intellects. His life experiences as an untouchable in India, the experienced freedom of American and British social sphere and the attained knowledge humanistic values and other historical fights backs of the downtrodden of other nations help him to analyses the Indian social sphere in a different manner. His published paper *Caste in India* shows his uniqueness in analyzing the Indian caste system, and considered it as the root for the India social backwardness. So, he advocates propagating the humanistic notions of equality and fraternity among the masses to eradicate the practice from the Indian premises.

Through philosophising the problem of Indian masses in a realistic way Ambedkar ruled out the metaphysical jester of the Indian Brahmins ideology. His humanistic attitude and the slogans and agitations for social equality generates anew spirits in Indian working class to a whole. By raising the slogan agitate, educate and organise and organizations he derivate new means for the Indian depressed classes. With his philosophical notions he envisaged constitutional rights for social equality providing hope and determinations to the downtrodden to fights backs the continuing atrocities.
Narayana Guru

The general philosophy of Narayana guru was formed from Vedas and Upanishads. He gave importance to spiritual illumination. *Bhagavad gita* and saivaism influenced his thoughts. He generated his teachings on the basis of dynamism, mobility, harmony and conscious. Natraja guru illustrated that “in the guru Narayana, the same advaita vedanta is treated with a freshness of then startlingly unique and simple taking into its scope and purview, more consciously and wakefully, not only subjective idealistic varieties, but also all those secondary implications that Vedanta has, or can have, bearing on such human topics as equality and justice.”

Sree Narayana Guru emerged from the Ezhavas in Kerala; they were considered untouchables in the early society of Kerala and were outlawed from civil society. They were not allowed to attend schools with high-caste children; they were also not allowed to work in government sector and were denied entry to Hindu temples. Guru got proper education in Malayalam and Sanskrit and he mastered Ramayana and *Mahabharata*. He also learnt Tamil. His uncle sent him to Karunagappally for higher education. He mastered grammar, logic and Vedantha philosophy. In 1881, he set a village school in his native place and got married. However, really interested in the spirituality of the life, he says that “every man born in this world has been sent to fulfill a certain definite purpose. So I must fulfill my purpose for which I was born.”

The relationship he created with Chattampi Sami, the senior fellow of the educational center, generated interest in Tamil literature and Saivite philosophy which formed Dravidian concept in his thoughts. They learned yoga from
Thaikkattu Ayyau. He instigated to practice meditation. He spends six years in Maruthwa Mala. There he practiced mediation and he attained spiritual tranquility and new mode of living.

He settled at Aruvippuram, on the banks of Neyyar. His knowledge in medicines attracted people to his place. He relied on the importance of religion and education. He considered them as means to attain worthy life without caste and religious distinctions. He lived with the people and became the part of their life. Through the Aruvippuram pratishta of 1888, he ruled out brahmanical ideology of worship and its ritual practices. He also builds a school for poor, where teach philosophy and tantric practice in preparation for taking up priesthood were taught. The temple wall contained his words:

“Without differences of caste,
Nor enmities of creed
All live like brothers at heart
Here in this ideal place.”

He found number of temples in Kerala. They also became schools. He exhorted that “education to be free organize to be strong, and thrive through industry.” In temples, non- Brahmins learned the teachings of Sanskrit language and Vedic texts. They became center for intellect, brotherliness and harmony. He discarded the practice of animal sacrifice and obligations towards the norms of superstitious powers and stressed the superiority of prayers and dignified norms of worships. Dr. Palpu emphasised the importance of the temples that, “Temples and mutts have been of great help for the
progress of this (Thiya) community. Such institutions have not only catered to the religious needs of the people, but they also have enthused them in many kinds of good deeds.”

He was interested in social upliftment, education and religious reforms of his own community and others. By installing idols, instituting monasteries and generating priestess from Thiya caste, he reformed Hindu religious notions of purity and rights. He also reshuffled the traditional concept of temple which subsisted as a place for exploitations to the center for education and harmony. He did not encourage image worship and advaita notion of self as Brahman influence. He replaced images with other structures like mirror and oil lamp, “in 1922 he built a temple at Murkkunpuzha and consecrated a plain stone with the inscription of ‘truth, charity, love and mercy’.”

He criticized and demanded reforms in traditional customs like mock marriage, puberty festival etc. These non-productive festivals destabilize the economics of the household. He always worked against the evil practice of intoxication. Ezhavas were traditionally engaged in the profession of toddy tapping and its consumption destabilized the family atmosphere and economic stability of the people. So he attacked the habit and condemned the act on his sixty fourth birthday in 1921 that “Liquor is poison. It should not be manufactured, should not be given to others or used by oneself. The tappers body stinks, his cloth stink, his house stinks, and whatever he touches stinks.” He was interested in economic upliftment of his community and urged the people to engage in various jobs and industries.

He stood against Hindu caste order which divided people into castes and sub-castes The Hindu ideology imposed
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social discriminations on the so-called untouchables; He said that “All men belong to one race and one caste. There is only one religion and one God.” Guru opposed the act of discrimination on the base of caste and he advocated inter-marriage and interdining. His message revealed that; “Whatever be the differences in the form of worship, dress habits or language of man, as they are of the same species (caste), there is no harm in inter-marriage or interdining.” Guru also stood with social reforms movements like Vaikom Satyagraha set up by his disciple T.K.Madhavam where the Pulayars, Ezhavas and others joined hands for the rights to walk on the temple roads. He supported the Satyagraha but he did not consider it as ideal mode for the protest.

He realised the importance of education in the progress of the society and urged people to make use the opportunities. He said that; “Nowadays any caste can be uplifted by means if good education. If we have any plan of improving the condition of the down trodden masses we must educate our children.” He also advocated equal opportunity for women and began number of schools all over Kerala.

Guru’s notion of one religion is inherent in his poems: “The gist of his concept of one religion is found in the Matamimamsa or the so-called critique of religion.” He considered all religions to have the capacity to fulfil the desire and essentially contain goal of happiness in them. But it appears the very perspective in society and each individual have the right to choose the appropriate one. He said that “whichever the religion, it suffices if it makes a better man.”

Guru’s philosophy generated great influence on the marginalised people. The thoughts discharged energy, which shifted the roots of the existing social order, marginalised
stand against the dominant ideology and ruled out its prohibitions. The Ezhavas acquired achievements in educational sector and enhanced strength in the civil society. Through Ezhava Memorial they secured place in government sector, which dramatically restructured the lifestyle of the people. These achievements encouraged others towards education. They were eager to reform their plight. They demanded better lifestyle and education. In the realm of the Kerala social reforms, his thoughts generated change which positively shaped masses towards freedom.

M.N. Roy

Manabendra Nath Roy was one of the most controversial figures of modern India. His role in the field of political philosophy and political practice occupies an important place. Whatever he thought and whatever he did, drew the attention of the serious thinkers. His place is not confined within India alone; his contributions can be traced in the political development in many countries—both in the East and West, He was basically different in his approach and outlook.

He delved deep into the philosophy of Karl Marx and rubbed shoulders with some of the greatest Marxist of contemporary history. He founded the communist party in Mexico in 1918. He remained a member of the Presidium and secretariat of the communist International. In 1928 he developed serious difference with the communist International and breaking off his relations he reached India. From that time onward he developed a new social philosophy known as Radical Humanism or New Humanism.
M.N. Roy's Radicalism or New Humanism is a great contribution to the history of political philosophy. The way in which he took the problems of the individual and freedom should place him as one of the top-ranking original thinkers. He will remain as one of the very few whose emotion was scientific, ideas were rational, thinking was humanistic, actions were radical and views were both magnificent and magnanimous. Lenin described M.N. Roy as "the symbol of revolution in the East.

He realized the dangers of Marxism on one side and the deficiencies of parliamentary democracy on the other. To meet the situation, he formulated the philosophy of Radical Humanism or New Humanism. Roy made a transition from Marxism to Radicalism and from Radicalism to new integral scientific Humanism. In the book “India in Transition”, Roy condemned the contemporary schools of political thought in India. His view was that Indian nationalism was fundamentally a bourgeois movement. According to him, the Extremists like Tilak had perverted socio-political philosophy. They were not extremists in fact but revivalists or reactionaries in character. He criticized the Gandhian school of thought. According to him, Gandhiji was a bundle of contradiction

Roy said with confidence, "Man has created something great, he is destined to create something still greater. That is our hope." With this faith and confidence Roy developed New Humanism for social reconstruction. Roy found many defects in the existing Humanism. The view of Roy was that unless chains of religion and superstition were broken, there was no chance for real humanism. Religion of any type, with God or without God, was against the very spirit of humanism Religion represents attitude of surrender which is undesirable for a
happy growth of humanism. Each and every religion by necessity must assume some super human existence. Humanism which primarily assumes and emphasizes on the primacy of man cannot be based on the notion that there is something or someone higher than man himself. Humanism must be an ethical philosophy. It must insist that man alone is responsible for what he is. Human values in the last analysis must be human

Democracy was the base, while rationalism its centre and sovereignty of man its apex. Roy thus gave a philosophy of life. He wanted a political theory and social philosophy which would really help in reorganization of social life with maximum freedom of individual development. Thus, this new political philosophy is deduced from a complete reorientation of entire philosophy of life. The fundamental principal on which New Humanism stands are sovereignty of man and freedom of man. It does not pre-suppose any authority over man

New humanism makes man conscious about himself. It tries to go into the genesis of man and to examine the background out of which man emerges in nature. The study of science establishes that there is nothing extra natural in man. Nowhere in its evolution does anything extraneous to his own nature enter into the process. Whatever we call human nature, man's attributes and potentiality can be strictly deduced from the background of the evolving physical universe.

M.N. Roy made it more clear by saying "Protoplasm being a physical substance, there cannot be any unbridgeable gulf between inanimate physical nature and the living world. All the manifestations of life-consciousness, intelligence, will can be traced down to a common origin, which is a physical
substance. The soul is a sum total of the intellectual and emotional attributes of the human being. Scientific knowledge of the biological phenomenon, man, thus, rounds up the monistic philosophy of Physical Realism. Applied to the problems of social existence, it can be called New Humanism. Roy accepts that scientific knowledge liberates man from the time-honoured prejudices about the essence of his being and the purpose of life. It reveals that truth about human nature. Man is essentially a rational being

New Humanism lays emphasis on the basic facts of history that man is the maker of his world-man as a thinking being, and he can be so only as an individual. The brain is the instrument of thought: and it is individually owned. It cannot be possessed collectively. Revolutions are heralded by iconoclastic ideas conceived by gifted individuals. New Humanism holds that, for creating a new world of liberty and social justice, revolution must go beyond an economic reorganization of the society.

The urge for freedom being the basic incentive of life, the purpose of all rational human endeavour must be to strive for removal of social conditions which restrict the unfolding of the potentialities of man. The success of this striving is the measure of freedom attained. The position of the individual is the indicator of the progressive and liberating significance of any collective effort or social system. New Humanism is pledged to the ideal of commonwealth and fraternity of free man. In Roy's words; "New Humanism is cosmopolitan. A cosmopolitan commonwealth of spiritually free men will not be limited by the boundaries of national sates, - capitalist, fascist, socialist, communist, or of any other kind- which will gradually disappear under the impact of twentieth century Renaissance of man.
New Humanism pleaded for a scientific outlook and maintained that there can be rational understanding and harmony in the life of individual and social organizations through knowledge, education and a spirit of co-operative living. New Humanism emerges as a philosophy of the modern man without any bondage.

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