

**SOCIALIST THOUGHT IN INDIA**  
**WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO**  
**THE CONTRIBUTION OF LOHIA**

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF POONA  
FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN ECONOMICS

BY  
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GOKHALE INSTITUTE OF POLITICS AND ECONOMICS  
POONA

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PREFACE

The objective of this study is to trace the "formation of the Indian Socialist point of view" and to substantiate the distinctive ideas of Indian Socialism to characterize it as a system of thought. Lohia's contribution to the Doctrinal Foundation of Indian Socialism and his Approach to the Socialist Strategy of Development constitute the mainstay of the materials presented in support of the argument.

The conceptual frame underlying the approach to the problem may be briefly noted in the following terms :

Socialist doctrine in its origin is substantively a translation of the capitalist development with the mediation of the political developments following the French Revolution and the rise of Working Class in Europe.

The Indian economic history has been one of under-development and also connected with the development of British Capitalism. The political movement here was prima facie the struggle for national independence.

European Socialism after Lenin had a large appeal to the Indian national movement in so far as it was an overt call for an alignment between the European class movement and the national struggle in India against the Capitalist-Imperialist West. The disenchantment with the European ideology, consequent upon the manifest divergence in

political goals in the context of "1942", ushered in a new doctrinal foundation of Indian Socialism.

The mainspring of the expository analysis of Indian Socialism as stated in this thesis consists in the Socialist appraisal of Gandhi. In this regard the account pertaining to Gandhi-Lohia communication (see pp. 76-90) is crucial. This, it may be stressed, sets the prelude for the discussion on doctrine and policy formulation as contributed by Lohia.

I owe my interest in the subject to my brother Sri M. Renganathan, Tirunelveli. He got into the political stream around 1943 and took an active part in the Socialist movement after Independence. I could 'blot up' some of his perceptions and personal experiences. This furnished me the necessary motivation as well as logical perspectives divested of ephemeral intricacies.

The research on this problem was worked out under the guidance of Dr. M.V. Namjoshi. The work got started with his inspiring words: "I am delighted to hear your choice!" I am obliged to him for the active interest and encouragement advanced throughout the progress of this work. I am especially grateful to him for he also maintained a meticulous care for academic freedom.

I must also acknowledge my debt to Dr. C. T. Kurien, Madras and Prof. H.K. Paranjape, New Delhi for having kindly gone through an earlier version of the thesis

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entitled, "Socialist Economic Thought in India". Hence, I have had the benefit of availing of the critical observations and positive remarks placed in their comments while finalising the study in its present form.

I am obliged, for this opportunity, to the authorities of the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona. I am particularly grateful to Prof. V.M.Dandekar for his kind consideration of my request, for a job in the Institute on completion of the pre-Ph.D. Methodology Training in 1965-66. This sustained me for the long period I had to spend on this work.

I must acknowledge with thanks the help and courtesy extended by the staff of the Institute's Library.

Gokhale Institute of  
Politics and Economics,  
Poona-4.

July 29, 1974.

M. Arumugam

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