



THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION (1917) AND IT'S IMPACTS ON INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

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ABSTRACT

Social movements are loosely structured but persistent campaigns that promote social objectives, usually the implementation or avoidance of a change in the structure or values of society. Marxism is a school of thought that was created in the middle of the 19th century by Karl Marx and, to a lesser degree, Friedrich Engels. An political and economic agenda, a philosophy of history, and three connected concepts made up its initial composition. Also included is Marxism as it was interpreted and used by the different socialist groups, notably prior to 1914. Then there is Soviet Marxism, which was developed by Vladimir Lenin and refined by Joseph Stalin. Dubbed Marxism-Leninism, this ideology became the guiding principle of the communist parties founded in the wake of the 1917 Russian Revolution. The article's first portion examines Marxist thought and how it has influenced communist groups across the globe. The second part of the paper discussed Lenin's worldview, the legacy of the Tsars, and the Russian Revolution. The third half of the paper discussed the communist and Marxist influences on the Indian Subcontinent. The paper's conclusion is given in the final section.

Key Words: Russian Revolution, Indian Subcontinents, Marxism, Karl Marx.



INTRODUCTION

The countless peasant uprisings that took place in diverse areas throughout history are primarily responsible for the long history of peasant movements. In feudal and semi-feudal cultures, early peasant movements sometimes led to bloody uprisings. Modern social movements are often significantly less violent and match the parameters of social movements. Their demands are focused on raising agricultural productivity, improving agricultural worker pay and working conditions, and raising pricing for agricultural products. (Pereira, 1997)

Peasant uprisings are those that are led by groups or individuals that are actively engaged in agricultural work for agrarian concerns. Peasants, according to Gough, are "those who participate in agriculture or allied production using rudimentary techniques and who transfer some of their products to landowners, agents, or the state." Engel has a more balanced view of the peasantry. Unless the organized working class mobilizes it, he thinks the peasantry is internally fragmented, disorganized, and politically significant. (Tiwari, 2021)

Marxist Theory is the theory that underpins these movements. Karl Marx, a German philosopher, economist, historian, sociologist, political theorist, and socialist revolutionary, created this theory. He was born in Trier, Germany, on May 5, 1818. He strongly supported socialism and a classless economic society, which means this theory, is totally against any private ownership. Additionally, he supported the idea of destroying private property in society and launching a social revolution to change it. The Communist Manifesto, Das Capital, and Critique of Political Economy are some of Karl Marx's significant writings. (Feuer, McLellan, David, 2022)

The Communist League's platform was the Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it evolved into one of the main programmatic declarations of the socialist and communist parties in Europe. The author's materialistic view of history is embodied in The Communist Manifesto, which states that "The history of every previously existent society is the past of class's battles." Additionally, it includes the historical period from the feudal period to the 19th century, when capitalism was anticipated to be destroyed and regained by a worker's society.

The proletariat would eventually eradicate privately owned property and become the governing class thanks to the communists, who were the forerunners of the working class. The dramatic opening lines of the Communist Manifesto, "A specter is haunting Europe, the specter of communism," concludes. "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workingmen of all countries, unite." (Britannica, 2019)

LENIN PHILOSOPHY AND TSARIST LEGACY



Lenin believed that the First World War had changed not just the economic and political stability of capitalism but also the political awareness of the working class in Western Europe. Lenin was confident that if a social-democratic party were to take power in Russia, it would serve as a catalyst for the proletariat's growing socialist revolution on a global scale; we support the conclusion of the conflict, which will arise via a global revolution and the takeover of state power by the a new class, not the industrialists or the smallest owners, but instead the proletarians and semi-proletarians, rather than by these groups. The socialist revolution in Europe began as a result of the Russian revolution.

The absence of all of this had a significant impact on the future USSR as well as world politics. The absence of a European peasant's revolution has since been a crucial critical event that has afflicted the socialist movement. The post-October Bolshevik dictatorship took power after a society transitioned from feudalism to capitalism and experienced an economic catastrophe due to the First World War. Additionally, civil conflict and foreign interference occurred in Soviet Russia.

Following 1917, Soviet policies changed in response to Tsarist Russia's influence. The Communist leadership implemented an industrialization and modernization agenda in response to the backwardness left over from the Tsars and the ongoing conflict with the Western powers. Instead of using markets to structure the economy, there was a plan, centralized control, and direction. The aim was to establish a communist society under the direction of the Communist Party. Instead of an individualist type of personal integration that was expressed in a free civil society, Soviet Russia acquired a collectivist, public version. Along the lines started by the Tsarist administration, state ownership and control were expanded by the Bolshevik dictatorship.

Marxism, which began as a criticism of bourgeois society, evolved into Marxism-Leninism, a theory of development that served as the intellectual foundation for the political and economic actions eventually carried out under Stalin. In between two world wars, state socialism developed into a cogent contrast to the capitalist market and private ownership model of industrialization. (Lane, 2017)

THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION, 1917

The Russian Revolution did occur in 1917, in the middle of World War I's last months. It led to Russia's withdrawal from the war and the creation of the USSR, the world's first communist country, which succeeded Russia's long-standing monarchy. The uprising was executed in stages by two consecutive coups, one in February and one in October. The new administration, led by Vladimir Lenin, wouldn't start to take shape until after the 3 civil conflict, which was ultimately over in 1920. Nicholas was forced to reach agreements following each event since the uprising his new oppressions caused increased. The first Russian constitution and the first Russian parliament



were constituted as a result. These progressive concessions made Nicholas II's power grip more precarious. (Fitzpatrick and Sheila, 2001)

Vladimir Lenin became more prominent and became the most influential person in Russia as Nicholas II became weaker. He had already been residing in self-imposed exile in Europe until 1900 and had just arrived to his own nation in April 1917, thus this well-known person from the Communist Revolution was not in Russia during the February Revolution, yet he nevertheless had a big influence. Whatever the verdict of history, few other Russian communists had the tenacity and clarity of vision that Lenin had for Russia's destiny. Vladimir Ilich Ulyanov was born in Simbirsk, a small provincial village, in 1870. When his elder brother Alexander was executed in 1887 for his part in a plan to murder the tsar, it had a significant impact on the young Lenin. Young adult Vladimir promised he would never partake in the kind of "adventurism" that had taken his brother's life when he joined the resistance organization and adopted the alias Lenin. Nevertheless, he would take some extremely daring steps in the future.

The revolution Lenin led had an influence on practically every statistic used to measure a revolution, including money, social structure, culture, international relations, industrial progress, and more. It was one of the most significant turning moments in Russia's 1,300-year history. The fact that the nation's new leaders were mostly picked from the intellectual, working, and middle classes instead of the aristocracy marked a dramatic transformation in Russia's political atmosphere, even though the incoming administration would prove to be at least as harsh as the one it replaced. (Pipes and Richard, 1995)

The revolution paved the way for comprehensive industrialization in Russia. Prior to 1917, Russia was a mostly rural country with no significant industrial growth. By 1917, Russia's European neighbors had been actively pursuing industrialization for more than 50 years, achieving technical breakthroughs like widespread electrification that Russia had not yet accomplished. Following the revolution, Russia saw a rapid emergence of new urban-industrial zones that contributed significantly to the growth of the nation. Large numbers of people were lured to the cities. Illiteracy saw a significant upsurge in education and was all but eliminated.

Additionally, the Russian Revolution had broad repercussions abroad. The abrupt withdrawal of Russia from World War I by Lenin's regime altered the balance of power among the remaining nations. Several countries, notably the United States, dispatched soldiers to Russia during the subsequent civil war in an effort to prevent the anarchy from extending beyond of Russia's borders. The Soviet Union aggressively supported and helped Communist movements and uprisings across the globe during the next few decades in an attempt to increase its sphere of influence. Additionally, the nation was crucial to the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II.

The authorities of many Western countries saw Communism as a growing menace and attempted to assuage it by isolating the Soviet Union as far as they could, feeling threatened by the



potential of uprisings in their own countries. The conflict between the USSR and the United States gained prominence after World War II and the start of the nuclear era. The two nations emerged as superpowers as this Cold War began, while a significant portion of rest of the globe lagging behind either one or the other. Up to the Soviet Union's eventual fall in 1991, the US and the Soviet Union were engaged in a lengthy nuclear weapons race. (Trotsky and Leon, 1959)

RUSSIAN REVOLUTION AND COMMUNIST THOUGHTS INFLUENCE ON INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

The impacts of communist ideology and movements reached the Indian subcontinent that inspired the lower classes of the subcontinent and emerged as a new power and threat to the capitalist system of the countries. They were been called as rebellions and state authorities was being used to repressed such classes to overthrow the concept of the rule of proletariat. Some of the communist movements are discussed below:

THE KHILAFAT AND HIJRAT MOVEMENT IN INDIA 1920-24

The result of British India's Muslims' pan-Islamic attraction was the Indian Khilafat campaign (1918–1924). Its stated goal was to prevent the Ottomans from being split up after the First Great War. Pan-Islamism had merged with nationalism in India, however, and the Khilafatists chanted swaraj (self-government) for India in response to Turkey's old status quo bellum shout. In order to exert force on the British Government, Hindus joined Muslims in this effort, and together they started the non-cooperation experiment.

Even yet, this reconciliation was fleeting. The difference between these two populations had resurfaced by 1922. Even the Khilafat Committee was embroiled in scandals and factionalism. The Turks did away with the Khilafat in March of 1924. It was an odd institution in a patriotic state. The movement persisted for several years on the side issue of releasing the Arab region of Jazirat al-'Azirat (Arabia, which includes Iraq, Palestine, Transjordan, Syria, and notably the Hijaz) from the non-Muslim rule. Nevertheless, it had lost both its bite and its purpose. (Qureshi, 1979)

Hundreds of British Indian Muslims under intense emotional strain started to travel to the nearby Muslim nation of Afghanistan in the summer of 1920, during the height of the Khilafat movement (1918-24). In the summer of 1920, a group of pan-Islamist British Indians left for Afghanistan in the hopes of obtaining foreign military assistance to free them from British control and rescue the imperiled Caliph in far-off Istanbul. They were so appalled when neither occurred, however, that they fled Afghanistan, sought safety with Bolsheviks, and then turned around to accept Marxism as their last safety net. It would be helpful to understand how the transition from one extreme to the other occurred, what effects it had on that teenage muhajirin specifically, and how it affected the sociopolitical climate in British India.



The idea of hijrat under Islamic shari'at, for which these pan-Islamists have predicated their departure from India, is a safety valve of sorts that gives Muslims legal permission to tactically depart from an unfavorable and hostile circumstance (daru'l-harb) and enter a haven (daru'l-Islam). The plan is to locate a haven, regain strength, and reclaim the lost area. As a result, committing to jihad is a requirement of the hijrat. The Muslim muhajirin of India believed that they were imitating the Messenger of Islam (salaam), who had relocated from Mecca to Medina in AD 622 and, upon acquiring authority and followers, had around ten years later retaken the land of his birth.

There are many instances like this in history, but in the context of British India, Shah Muhammad Ishaq (1778–1846), an Alim of the Delhi-based Waliullah family, is the first one that comes to mind. He immigrated to the Hejaz in the mid-1800s and began advocating for the Ottoman cause. The next occurrence occurred during the 1857 Uprising when uncertainty over India's shari'at status and fear of retaliation led numerous Ulama to seek refuge in the Hejaz. Some even traveled far beyond Turkey, where the Sultan-Caliph individually recognized them.

Pan-Islamists left India and sought refuge in neighboring Afghanistan before dispersing to various Middle Eastern states, Central Southeast, Europe, and the American continent as a result of the uncertain future of Turkey, with which Indian Muslims used to have historical and religious ties. This happened both prior to and after the First World War. They were assisted in this attempt by their revolutionary friends Barakatullah Maulavi (1859-1927), Obaidullah Sindhi (1872-1944), and Raja Mahendra Pratap (1886-1979), who established a "provisional administration of India" in Kabul.

Then there was Maulana Mahmud Hasan (1851–1920) and his Deobandi companions, who immigrated to Makkah intending to ultimately join the Kabul group to launch anti-British actions from the Tribal region. In addition, there was a cadre of revolutionaries who supported the Bolsheviks. They included Dr. Abdul Hafeez (1889–1964) of Lahore, Trimul Acharya of a South Indian village, and Abdur Rab Burk of Peshawar. They were all busy plotting to topple the British in India. Several Muslim college students from Lahore, including Zafar, Hasan Aybek (1895–1899), Abdul Majid (1901–1980), Khushi Muhammad, and Rehmat Ali Zakrya (1896–), went to Afghanistan with common objectives throughout the war after being affected by the Ottoman Turkey's tragedies.

They subsequently took a significant role in anti-British plots. Additionally, there were young men, notably Muhammad Shafiq, a resident of Akora Khattak who moved to Afghanistan in May 1919 due to the Rowlatt movement and joined the Sindhi group. Muhammad Shafiq was twenty years old. The most fantastic wave of hijrat, however, was the one that arose in 1920 underneath the Khilafat movement (1918–1924) and was founded on a fatwa approved by Abdul Kalam Azad (1888–1958), a well known anti-British religious leader who claimed that India was under the British rule and was now daru'l-harb because the Allied powers and British were



intimately involved in tearing apart the Ottoman Empire. Amir Amanullah Khan (1892–1961) from Afghanistan, attempting to cause problems for the British, had encouraged this. Amir's appeal and the Ulama's fatwa served as inspiration, and as a result, about 60,000 Indian Muslims turned to the Islamic teachings that call for hijrat or jihad.

The idea, however, failed after the first flurry, primarily due to poor planning, poor organization, and a disregard for both economic and political realities. It was against the intentions of the movement's central leadership and had been prepared outside of its core objective. However, the Afghans delivered the death blow since they could not handle the flood of so many refugees. As a consequence, around 75% of muhajirin went back to India. While others departed for Central Asia, Turkey, and Russia, others remained in Afghanistan. Many others died from sickness and weariness. (Qureshi, 2015)

COMMUNIST MOVEMENTS IN INDIAN SUBCONTINENT THE PRIOR YEARS

The communists in India aimed for greater autonomy from British colonial control and the establishment of a society in which laborers could choose their fate. They saw the Soviet Union as live evidence that this goal was attainable. By the late 1920s, the union movement had become stronger in metropolitan areas because of its intensive organizing activity. Working-class strikes peaked in the nation in 1928 and 1929, with the textile factory workers in Bombay and the railway workers in Bengal both engaging in lengthy battles.

Indian National Congress, which was in charge of the Indian mass movement, was compelled to take a more strident posture against British rule due to the appearance of Marxists in the anti-colonial fight, a change from the passive resistance it faced had previously used. Two communists, Swami Kumaranand and Maulana Hasrat Mohani submitted a resolution for total independence from British control at the Indian National Congress' Ahmadabad session in 1921. Despite the motion being rejected by Congress, it was brought up during the conference and treated seriously, demonstrating how communist ideologies had started to influence the anti-imperialist movement.

The British started a number of conspiracy prosecutions against the earlier communists because they were concerned about the growth of communist ideals in India and what it may mean for their empire. Seven crucial communist figures were apprehended and imprisoned between 1921 and 1933. Of them, the Conspiracy Case of Meerut was the most well-known (1929-1933). The lawsuit was brought even though the communist movement was being repressed, and it gave the communists a great platform to spread Marxist philosophy. With the support of these procedures' intense interest among the Indian people, they took advantage of the chance by zealously defending and explaining Marxism in the courtroom. Of the thirty-three defendants, twenty-seven were found guilty and received jail or transportation sentences. The Communist



Party and groups linked with it were declared illegal by the British government in 1934, making membership a crime. The communists persisted in their covert revolutionary work while expanding the scope and membership of the Party.

The Soviet Union's success, even during the Great Recession, which wreaked havoc on the capitalist world, drew many individuals all over the globe to communism and Marxism. India was no different. Despite the Communist Party's prohibition, communists continued to operate in several Indian national movement groups, notably the Indian National Congress. They conducted their party operations covertly and attracted several young people to the Communist Party. Many individuals who were this way attracted to the communist cause went on to become well-known leaders. Congress Socialist Party (CSP), a left-wing faction inside the Indian National Congress, was one of these platforms that communists used to mobilize large segments of the population into different classes and mass organizations of peasants, laborers, students, and writers.

THE MOVEMENT OF TEBHAGA

The All India Kissan Sabha served as the front organization for the enormous peasant protest known as the Tebhaga movement, which took place in Bengal between 1946 and 1950. About half of the product from the property had been allocated to sharecroppers, with the remaining yield belonging to the landowners. The Tebhaga movement asked that rents be lowered and that the proportion of sharecroppers is raised to two-thirds. Tebhaga, which translates to "three shares," refers to the requirement that the harvest is split into three portions, with the sharecroppers receiving two of the three shares.

The movement started as a result of racial unrest in the eastern Bengali cities of Calcutta and Noakhali. Nevertheless, the Tebhaga movement served as a shining example of Hindu-Muslim solidarity based on social struggle, and communal riots were absent from the regions in which the Kisan Sabha had power. 73 people, including Muslims, Hindus, and both men and women from ethnic tribes, were killed by the officers during the battle. Despite the strong repression by the Muslim League government in Bengal, the fight resulted in the creation of sharecropper's rights, as supported by the Tebhaga movement, in numerous locations.

ARMED STRUGGLE OF TELANGANA

The most major communist-led revolt to ever occur in India was the Telangana armed struggle. Telangana, a Telugu-speaking area that was once a part of Hyderabad, was the setting from 1946 to 1951. India had hundreds of areas under indirect British authority throughout the time of British colonial rule, and these areas permitted vassal governments to maintain a subordinate affiliation with the British. However, one princely state was Hyderabad, which was controlled by the *Nizam*, a title given to the ruler. The Communist Party spearheaded the Telangana uprising against the *Nizam's* dictatorial government and landowners' feudal exploitation. Demands



to end unfair taxation and vetti and give title documents for peasantry who were farming fields marked the beginning of the conflict.

As the communist campaign became more significant, the *Razakars* (the *Nizam's* foot soldiers) and the policemen increased their persecution, brutality, and killings of communists, sparking armed resistance. At its height, the movement held absolute authority over 3,000 communities with a combined population of more than three million. About Four lakh hectares of land were given to the peasants in response to this dispute. In addition to raising employees' daily wages and enforcing the minimum wage, forced labor was banned. Through self-organized committees, the residents of these villages managed the organization of services like education, health care, and others.

On September 13, 1948, the Congress administration started police action in an effort to quell the communist-led uprising and compel the *Nizam* to ally with India. Following the *Nizam's* capitulation, India and Hyderabad state proclaimed their unification. Hyderabad could not, however, be captured. The Indian army immediately entered the villages to end the peasant uprising. In order to return the estates to the landowners, both the Indian army and police went back to the regions with the landowners and the previous regional *Nizam* authorities. However, the populace successfully resisted in several locations. During the revolt and response, up to 4,000 leftists and peasant activists were slain, while more than 10,000 others were arrested and imprisoned for three to five years. (Tricontinental, 2020)

NAXALBARI MOVEMENT

In India, the Naxalite movement was founded in the far-flung West Bengal hamlet of Naxalbari in 1967. A court ruling allowing a tribal boy called Bimal Kissan to plow his property was secured. The local landowners assaulted him with the aid of their thugs and musclemen. The tribal community violently retaliated to reclaim their lands due to this incident, which incensed the local tribal people. The events at Naxalbari evolved into a large-scale uprising that attracted attention and support across states like Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, and portions of Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. In 1967, a violent insurrection was organized by a faction of CPI (M) under the direction of C. Majumdar and Kanu Sanyal. They made an effort to create a "oppositional revolution" against the CPI (M) leadership. The "Naxalbari Uprising" began when Marxist comrades of the CPI (M) counterattacked the landlord. Mr. Majumdar was the instigator of the revolt.

Similarly, Chandra Pulla Reddy led a peasant revolt in Srikakulam, a part of Andhra Pradesh's Telangana state. The United Front government, headed by the CPI (M), cracked down on the uprising severely using a variety of repressive tactics. Both occurrences were violent and took their cue from the victory of the Communist revolutions in China and Russia. In May 1968, the "revolutionaries," who were raging with rage, established the All India Coordination



Committee of Communist Revolutionaries (AICCCR).

The AICCCR was founded on a commitment to armed resistance and non-participation in elections. The radicals saw the situation in India as being comparable to China before 1949 and described it as fundamentally semi-colonial and semi-feudal. The revolutionaries came to the conclusion that the "People's Democratic Revolution" must be started in India by immediately engaging in an armed fight along Chinese lines based on that reasoning. (Awashti and Mishra, 2018)

HASHTNAGAR PEASANT MOVEMENT IN NORTHWESTERN PAKISTAN

A large number of towns and villages with a traditional house design can be found in northern Hashtnagar. This region is known for its opulent greenery and agricultural areas, which support the economy by producing a variety of essential and common commodities. Most of the locals are tillers or *Kissans* as they are known in their native tongue. For many generations, they farmed the land that belonged to the feudal lords (*Khawaneen*). Over time, a terrible circumstance that ruined the working relationships between the two classes occurred, and the lower class continued to protest about the upper class's exploitative attitude.

This circumstance forced them to have a negative opinion of their bosses, which planted the germ of unrest. As a result, on April 19, 1970, the MKP launched the *Kissan* Movement in Northern Hashtnagar with the verdict that they must (i) ensure that the land that *Kissans* originally belonged to them, (ii) create the *Kissan Raj* (governing by *Kissans*) at the expense of any sacrifice, (iii) thwart any attempt to drive them off their land, (iv) occupy land that they cultivate, and (v) refrain from voting until their rights are recognized.

The feudal rulers were overthrown when this movement gained traction in Northern Hashtnagar, which resulted in carnage on both sides. Such movements also occurred in Pakistan, initially in Sindh province under the leadership of the Sind Hari Committee, then in several locations in the NWFP, now KP, thanks to the work of MKP. The *Kissan* Movement's battles for significant economic changes in the position of its members were further boosted by agricultural reforms announced under the administration of then-prime minister (late) Z.A. Bhutto.

MKP has established organizations like *Tanzeem-e-Naujawan* (a youth organization), *Janbaz* Force (a militants force), and Children Institution to further its objectives. Most *Kissans* ousted their landlords, and they now have exclusive rights to the areas they farm. In certain instances, owners received a little leasing payment. *Kissans* have prospered as a result of this insurrection. (Muhammad and Askar, 2009)

While Bhutto's PPP was controlled at the capital and in Punjab and Sindh, a coalition government headed by NAP, Wali Khan, and an Islamist party, the Jamiat-e-Ulama-e-Islam, was



in charge of NWFP starting in 1972. The NAP-JU administration outlawed the MKP while assisting the landowners. At Mandani in July 1971, one of the most dramatic conflicts between the peasants and the state took place. One thousand five hundred highly armed police officers battled with a smaller group of MKP cadres, the underprivileged and landless peasants. Another conflict took place in the Hashtnagar region of the NWFP when about 8000 policemen and militia members engaged MKP militants and local peasants. This conflict resulted in the liberation of an area of around 200 square miles. (Ahmad, 2010)

CONCLUSION

After the aforementioned debate, experts came to the conclusion that the Marxist theory is the only thing that motivates these sorts of movements, demonstrations, uprisings, and revolts. This worldview opposes the interests of capitalist-occupied nations because it advocates for a classless society, equality, and proletarian rule. Through propaganda, the political meddling of strong capitalist powers, religious cards, and current repression by the state apparatus, Marxism's reputation has been ruined in all capitalist nations. Because the Russian Revolution was the first successful application of Karl Marx's ideas, it has a major place in the history of communism. Following then, communist influence spread around the globe, notably in Middle Eastern and Asian nations. Due to the *Hijrat* movement from the Indian subcontinent to Russia to oppose British Imperialism, the Indian subcontinent is becoming more and more affected by communism. These uprisings sometimes later descended into bloodshed, drawing the backing of civil organizations, pressure groups, and the general populace. Marxist and progressive ideas were repressed after class battles by the governmental apparatus in capitalist nations.



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