



Research Paper

## Contribution of Raja Rammohan Roy in the Field Of Journalism and Literature: A Critical Analysis

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**ABSTRACT:** In this paper I'll try to explore the situation of 18th-19th century's orthodox Hindu Society and the journalistic contributions of "Pioneer of Indian Journalism" Raja Rammohan Roy. Raja Rammohan Roy was a great champion of freedom of the Press. The unfolding of Hindu acculturative movements began with the career of Rammohan Roy (1772-1833). He was also one of the founder of Brahmo Sabha, the precursor of Bramho Samaj. He was given the title of 'Raja' by Akbar II, the Mughal emperor. He was the first to realize the value of newspaper as an instrument for diffusing intellectual light. Besides being a great social reformer Rammohan also made a valuable contribution to Bengali Literature and he is regarded as the Father of Bengali Prose. This paper is devoted to trace the journalistic and literary contribution of Raja Rammohan Roy.  
**KEYWORDS :** Raja Rammohan Roy; journalism; pioneer of Indian journalism

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**OBJECTIVES :** a. to know the value of newspaper as an instrument in the Hindu orthodox society.  
b. to explain the contribution of Rammohan Roy in journalistic and literary field.  
c. Rammohan Roy's role as a journalist.

**HYPOTHESIS:** -to study the growth of literature and journalism in India.

-to study the holistic perspective of Rammohan Roy's journalistic contribution.

**METHODOLOGIES:** In this article I have used qualitative approach and it is descriptive and analytical methodology of research. This article is based on the primary and secondary sources collected from newspapers, magazines, research articles, books of various authors.

**RAJA RAMMOHAN ROY AS SOCIAL REFORMER:** "The superstitious practices which deform the Hindu Religion have nothing to do with the Pure spirit of its Dictates"- quoted by the "father of the Indian Renaissance" Raja Rammohan Roy. He was born on August 14, 1774 to Ramakanta Roy and Tarini Devi in Radhanagar village of Hooghly District Bengal Presidency. He made reforms in the 18th and 19th century India. Two centuries back, in the Hindu society, especially in Bengal, there was an inhuman practice -" SATI PRATHA" or "SAHAMORON", where women were forcefully thrown with their husband's funeral pyre. Rammohan abolished this brutal torture on women with the help of Lord William Bentick. His efforts were also instrumental in eradicating the PURDAH SYSTEM, CHILD MARRIAGE (GOURIDAAN), POLYGAMY.

**RAJA RAMMOHAN ROY AS A JOURNALIST:** Rammohan Roy was a supporter of free speech and expression. He fought for the rights of the vernacular press. In 1828 Rammohan Roy founded 'Bramhmo Samaj' in Calcutta, theistic movement within Hinduism. Rammohan Roy's journalistic contributions are:

**SAMBAD KAUMUDI (1821-1836):** In November 1821, he published Sambad Kaumudi in English and Bengal. Although he was the owner, it was actually published in the name of Bhabani Charan Bandyopadhyay. Sambad Kaumudi's rival newspaper was 'Samachar Chandrika', which became an organ of orthodox Hinduism. The first issue of Sambad Kaumudi appeared on December 4, 1821. It contained an 'Appeal to the Bengal Public' in which it proclaimed that the primary objective of its publication was to promote the 'public good'. After Bhabani Charan, Harihar Dutta was the editor for some time, followed by Gobinda Chandra Kongar. Due to lack of sufficient patronage Kaumudi had to stop publication in October, 1822. In April, 1823, a license was granted under the new Press Regulation to Gobinda Chandra Kongar to publish and Ananda Gopal Mukherjee to edit the newspaper.

**MIRAT-UL-AKHBAR:** In April 1822, Rammohan started Persian Weekly named Mirat-ul-Akhbar (Mirror of

News). Through this paper he tried to communicate his political and social views to the educated elite according to their needs. It was first journal in Persian language to be published in India. His close friend and admirer, James Silk Buckingham, an English journalist, helped him in this endeavour. It was published on weekly basis on Fridays. During 1821-24, he published in the paper several articles on scientific subjects like 'Echo in Acoustics', 'Properties of the Magnet', 'Behaviour of Fishes', 'Description of a balloon' etc.

**BRAHMINICAL MAGAZINE:** It was an English magazine set up by Indian reformer Rammohan Roy. It was first published in 1821. It attempted to avoid the effects of the missionaries' propaganda. During its existence the magazine produced a total of 12 issues.

**RAMMOHAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO BENGALI LITERATURE:** He also made a valuable contribution to Bengali literature and he is regarded as the father of Bengali prose. His earliest books on Bengali prose were - 'VEDANTA-GRANTHA', 'VEDANTA-SAAR' which were published in 1815 and 1816 respectively. Gaudiya Vyakaran, 1833 is the last work of Rammohan. Before this he wrote a book of English grammar 'Bengali grammar in the English language'. Gaudiya Vyakaran was written by him for school book society. Its language was simple and modern. He was conversant with many languages and prominent among them were- Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Hindustani, Bengali, English, Hebrew, Greek, Latin and French.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Rammohan Roy however, was not in support of absolute Freedom of Press, but he wanted reasonable restrictions on it. He set up the Vedanta College to spread his teachings of Hindu monotheism. He promoted the pure ethical Vedanta School of Philosophy. Coming at a time when the Government had opened Sanskrit Schools, his step was also aimed at promoting subjects like Mathematics, Geography, Latin etc. Gopal Krishna Gokhale called Roy "the Father of Modern India". He pioneered the cause for western education in India. He died in 1833. He had a charismatic personality and became a model for several generations of social reformers and modernizers all over India. He knew that the ideal and human civilization does not lie in isolation of independence of individuals as well as nations. His English biographer truly remarks that Raja Rammohan Roy "presents a most instructive and inspiring study for the new India of which he is the type and pioneer...He embodies the new spirit

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