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THE ESSENCE OF *BRAMHO SAMAJ* AND RAJARAM MOHAN ROY IN MODERN TIMES

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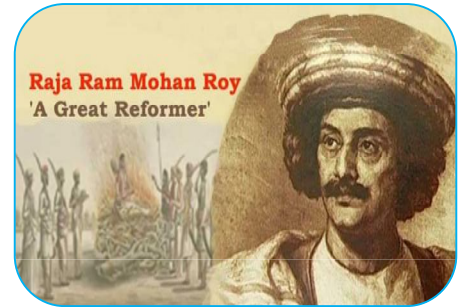
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ABSTRACT :

Raja Ram Mohan Roy is the father of Indian Renaissance. The work which stands the test of time is called classic be it a literary work, cinema, or any other monumental work like reformation also. Another definition of classic is which has the universal value.

The works of Raja stand test of time, be it his literary works or social reforms also. Due to the relevance or essence of the gigantic works of Roy, time and again they call for discussion and debate.

By the time Roy was born, East India Company gained a strong foothold in India. Since he is the first one regarded as father of Modern India, the first Indian writer in English, the first feminist, the first person to be introduced to the British and French kings and the first nationalist there is a great need to discuss and debate the essence of Roy in Modern Times. He is the first science writer writing in Bengali in the newspaper and he is a polyglot also.



KEY WORDS: *social reforms , British and French kings , Indian Renaissance.*

INTRODUCTION:

Roy being Vedantist believed in the Rigveda's "*Anobhadra krutavo-yantu-viswatah*". As a true Vedantist he learnt from all faiths viz., Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism etc.

He is a multifaceted personality i.e., Educationist, Translator, Journalist, Writer & Social Reformer and a person with scientific temperament. His enthusiasm to learn things in original makes him learn Hebrew, Persian, Sanskrit etc. Because of his dynamic personality he established *Bramho Samaj* in 1828 initially called as *Bramha Sabha*. While mentioning about *Bramho Samaj* one should mention Devendranath Tagore, though a conservative and Kesab Chandra Sen, a modernist.

Bramho Samaj believes in *Ekameva Dvitiyam*, meaning one and only God i.e., MONOTHEISM. The *Samaj* believes in doing good deeds, through them one can serve God. In fact it is very close to, "Service of Men is service of God". The *Samaj* believes in promoting, charity, Piety, benevolence, virtue and strengthen the bonds of union among people of all faiths/religions and creed.

To learn the importance and relevance of Roy one may recall the Centenary Celebrations of Roy and who all took part in it and what all the people who attended it spoke of him on the occasion. The Celebrations itself is a lot about Roy, his personality and his contribution to the society.

It was decided that the centenary celebrations should be conducted in Kolkatta only and that too *Gurudev Ravindranath Tagore* should preside over it. The important persons in attendance were P C Roy, Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, Sir C V Raman, Sir Devaprasad Sarvadhikari, Sir

Brijendranath Seal, Smt. Amrita Kaur, Sarojini Devi and all these people spoke eloquently eulogizing *Rajaram Mohan Roy* and his overall contributions to Modern India.

Not only many Indian cities celebrated Roy's centenary celebrations but even some countries like England, France and America also celebrated it in a grand manner.

To pay rich tributes to Roy on the occasion, a commemorative volume by name '*Father of Modern India*' was released by praising his immortal works and reforms. Statues of Roy were erected in many cities in India. It is believed undoubtedly and it is irrefutable fact that this kind of tributes was paid for the first time to none other than Roy.

On this occasion *Rao Saheb Dr. Ramakrishna Rao* from the present Andhra Pradesh had this to say, "The light of the knowledge lit by Roy cannot be put off, it is still illuminating and it continues forever".

Tagore who presided over the Centenary Celebrations said, "When India was plundered by foreigners, all people were in darkness: during the time Roy was born and showed to the people that there is an opportunity for everyone to live with love and friendship".

He further continued "Roy upheld the essence of the Upanishads i.e., 'Monotheism' and without paying much attention to the external difference of a race one should remember the essence of internal unity". Thus, Ram Mohan Roy is the first person to propagate "Unity in Diversity"; this is the reason why he is credited with the title "Father of Modern India".

He was the one who propagated for the integrity of Muslims with other fellow Indians. His wish was to unite people of all faiths in this country and to create a feeling of fraternity among the Indian people. Thus *Roy* was a beacon of light, typical guide to all people belonging to different faiths in all ages to come and that is how he gave a call to the people through his writings and works.

He worked hard to unite all languages, exchanging of cultures among the people of all faiths; for this he tirelessly strived. *Tagore* further pointed out that *Raja* was world Citizen or Cosmopolitan. In the entire human world *Roy* is the only one who completely understood the importance of modern world. *Roy* understood that the ideal of human civilization is not in isolating freedom but it is in mind, working among citizens and mutual fraternity among all the nations. Unity, world fraternity, eternal message was given by *Roy* as the ambassador to the world as he understood international relations also. He also started Modern Age in India as he belonged to the class of SAGES.

He was a born shining star in India with a new view for future India. He is a great soul in uniting human world. He applied humanity by neglecting old and odd practices, faith and views in literature. Revival of learning (Renaissance) started with him in India. *Tagore* strongly felt that it is our bounden duty to convey to the world about *Roy's* contributions; in other words, his contributions are unfathomable. For propagating his *dharma* (Faith), *Roy* became a victim in his lifetime and paid a heavy price. He was branded as British agent and his own kin filed a case against him. He led a struggling life as remonstrance is life for him.

He has always been progressive: he is a traveller in his entire life for a cause in search of truth and fraternity of the world path. His was such a gigantic strength so it was possible for him to invite foreign culture, civilization and was able to unite them with Indian culture. These are some of important points of *Tagore's* presidential address of the centenary celebrations of *Roy*.

During this time rich tributes were paid to *Roy* by the prominent personalities not only from India but also from foreign nationals namely; M K Gandhi, Sir C P Ray, Rev.C.F.Andrews, Prof. Liwi from Paris University, Devapriya Valisimha, Secretary Suranatha Mahabodhi Sangha, D A Dhanacharya, Akhila Bharata Bouddha Jana Sangha, Premachandra Nahat,Jain Sangh, Pundit Dev Sharma, Kangiya Cultural University, Dr. Veni Madhav Barna, Bouddha Sangha, Surendranath Banerjee, Bhakta Siromani Swamy Adyananda, Belur Math, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Madam Blavatsky, Founder Theosophical Society,Girish Chandra Nag, Bengal Civil Service Officer, T L Vaswani, Founder of Vaswani Mission, F C Southworth, USA, Romain Rolland, France Saint and Litterateur, Prof. Max Muller, Nicholas Roerich and

Oxford University arranged a special lecture in Roy's honour. One can observe here people from all walks of life gathered here to pay rich tributes to Roy.

He is the first Indian in all spheres/fields mentioned herein viz., Political, Religious, International level to have worked relentlessly.

Apart from the above fields Roy is the first person to recognise the establishment of International Court and also urged the people all over the world to eradicate SERFDOM.

He had scholarship in multiple languages viz., Hindi, French, Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, English, Persian and Bengali. He undertook a lot of reforms in the fields of Education, Religion and Women Empowerment and so on.

He worked in the field of Press & Education: In this direction he started papers like *Bramhapatrika*, *Samachara Darpan*, *Samvada Koumudi* (Bengali), *Meerut- Ul- Akbari* (Persian). He started Veda Vidyalaya and English School. He also opined that starting of Sanskrit college is a retrograde step. He wrote works like, *the Essence of Vedas*, *Manduka Upanishad*, *A Gift of Monotheist*, *the Guide*, and *the Precept of God*.

He also worked in women's Progress such as widow remarriage, abolition of Sati System and Child Marriage, Women's inheritance Right and fighting against polygamy.

Apart from the above he was also the first person to get an honour from Unitarian Church of England. He was the first Indian to be introduced to England and French kings, the first person to propagate to study all the faiths and to find the commonalities from them and for the welfare of all people. Thus he emerged as *Vishwa Manav*, the world citizen.

He is a typical rationalist, father of Nationalism, fighter for freedom of speech and a proponent of English Education. He was a polyglot and supported Three Language Formula in India.

How is Bramho Samaj of Rajaram Mohan Roy relevant for Modern Times?

It is time for social reforms through education. Reforms are also required in different fields such as Socio, Economic, politico, gender Equality.

Is it possible for us to give enlightened education system which is unbiased?

To make it realization of Enlightened Education System we need to do the following:

We need to promote social harmony and equality through value based education and it is the need of the hour. How can this be achieved? It is possible through the study of life history of great socio, economic, religion, academic, politico leaders like Rajaram Mohan Roy who should be compulsorily studied at least in schools. Consequently, social discrimination can be eliminated through education.

Role of Ethics in society or Ethical Values: We have to follow ideologies of Buddha, Basava, Kabir, Shishunala Sharif, Jyotiba Phule, Ambedkar, Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela along with Rajaram Mohan Roy as these are BRAMHANS or Knowledgeable persons.

We can recall Roy's enthusiasm to read the Bible in original made him to learn *Hebrew* so also he learnt *Sanskrit* to read the *Vedas* in original and he translated them and *Gayatri Mantram* to Bengali to make common people read them in their language.

Quest for learning or Knowledge along with quest for Excellence: only people like Roy will bring in a paradigm shift in the society as he already showed to the world during his life time.

It can be safely concluded that *Ram Mohan Roy* did "*Hamsa Ksheera Nyayam*" as far as Indian scenario is concerned during his time by eliminating evil practices in Hinduism and accepted valuable things from Western World.

NCRB data of 2019 showed that 17000 dowry deaths took place in India: really we do not know what the first feminist Roy would have said by looking at this data. One can safely conclude that *Rajaram Mohan Roy* is the *panacea* for all our socio-religious ills in India.

What William Wordsworth had said about the importance of Milton, "Milton thou shouldst be living at this hour....." and the same thing can now be said of Roy as, "Roy thou shouldst be living at this time.....".

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