

Chapter 2

The Imperative of Social Reform: Reading Rammohan Roy

2.1 Exploring the main concerns of Roy's Political Thought

Rammohan Roy has been understood as one of the most enigmatic thinkers of the modern Indian tradition, whose enigma traversed through centuries of opinions being formed of his role in the colonial project and how he utilized the colonial regime to emphasize on changes in society. Such an emphasis on social change did create a huge furore amongst his contemporaries then, in the 17th century, and even amongst many later, for being either more radical or not radical enough.

Roy's projects were multifarious and linked through various systemic travails of his times. He was one of the leading personalities who created a massive impact on the socio-political fabric of the then Bengali societies, with the intent to utilize the prowess acquired in the presence of the colonial rulers, to change the society's attitude towards itself. This attitudinal shift was aimed at putting Bengal on the bandwagon of progress and creating a progressive society of it, that was open to changes. His immense love for liberty for humans, not only limited to India but seamlessly for all, did have a huge impact on the existing as well as the future of rapidly changing societies in India.¹ This earmarked space for him in the annals of modern India's history for his focus on making liberal principles central to the formation of a legitimate moral and political order. Such an attitude that he bore, was processed as a welcome change in the already existing rubble of the old and the traditional that catered to norms detrimental to the very existence of human lives.

The question of human worth and dignity was raised through his vigorous efforts at admonishing the 'social evils' sanctioned by religious traditions and conventions as legitimate and intrinsic to the identity of the community. The nature and practice of religion got thoroughly questioned in Rammohan Roy's works, for confirming and allowing for such evil practices as the ones that could completely depose the basic human values required for survival and existence, let alone existing with dignity. There are multiple instances where Roy's account

of the political is situated in the apologetic stance that he takes in conjunction with the events that have unfolded in Bengali societies which were rooted in the distorted understanding of traditions. This is how the 'traditional' as an attribute also gradually became antithetic to the 'modern' with the former being extremely backward or regressive succeeded by the chance presence of the latter which had to eventually overthrow the former and place the society onto the path towards liberation and freedom.² This was akin to the popular sentiments of the time which provided an apologetic response to the colonial invasion and looked upon the colonial rulers and the rule to cater to the insufficiencies and the injustices that people faced. Rammohan Roy, as mentioned before, had been elusive for many reasons, to make sense of the then societies and the larger public space.

The impression colonial rule had on Roy was tremendous, which also simultaneously was gripped by the pain and the pathos that people suffered in the societies on account of the violent religious practices. Hence, such an environment had a huge impact on the attitude Roy developed towards colonial rule as a potential panacea to the problems from which elimination and liberation would need a mass-scale revolution. Roy's stance was about shifting the legitimacy from such a society that was not well-equipped to decide for the future of a society of free peoples committed to their well-being, to a lesser evil and mostly colonial rule, to be instrumental in bringing about changes. This stance opens up so many questions on the nature of the social, the political, the nature of religion, the purpose of establishing ones' lives amidst such practices, the nature of the state that will now become more legitimate with growing responsibilities assigned to it by the members of the society, and the like.

With the rapid transitions occurring at many levels to the then societies, Bengal, for Roy marked the site of that change, which was more *psychopolitical* than ever. The emphasis, therefore, was to ensure the reigns of the western modern colonial enterprise be made useful for the 'welfare and betterment' of the masses seeped deep within the rut of religious evils. The dichotomous nature of evil and good gets superimposed on tradition and modernity, for Roy. This is the dichotomy that he holds on to, in the search for a displacement of the existing dynamics with that of universal human values, steered by the colonial master, who has rightfully acquired the powers to do so.

A pertinent concern that emerges around this, would be the reasons that led Rammohan Roy to entrust the colonial rule with this legal and political responsibility to steer Bengali societies out of the superstitious and anti-social evils which had seeped into the consciousness of the masses for centuries. His major task was to steer a large-scale reformation throughout the society, that had to be imposed in a legal institutional form. Such an imposition of the colonial rule also meant absolute distrust in the society, to be left for voluntary discipline³ in order to bring about social changes within its religious practices on its own. However, he worked extensively in the site of the society on ensuring that religion be made accessible to people in ways that did not bind them into submission.

Roy's knowledge and understanding of the religious scriptures was very meticulous and comprehensive, which he wished to put to use for the wider public and make accessible for the common man, completely oblivious of religion and seeped in the ignorance of their own worlds dominated by few corrupt 'religious' men. His sense of religiosity was rooted in the well-being and utility religions had in the lives of humans. Religion had a role to play, which was to serve people and make their lives better. Such a conception of religion and the role that he proposed for its practice in society also carved the essence of what religiosity sought to entail in a society that was devoid of a basic sense of conducting lives in a liveable fashion for all members of the community.

The rising patriarchal biases and injunctions on the everyday lives of women, the class distinctions, evil practices of Sati, ill-treatment of the widows, the evil effects of polygamy, worship of multiple Gods and idolatry, the horrendous practice of selling girls in marriage, child marriage and the like.⁴ A linguist that he was, his elaborate readings of various religious texts in different languages such as "The Koran, the works of Sufi mystic poets of Persia, the Arabic translations of the works of Plato and Aristotle, Vedas and the Upanishads in Sanskrit, many texts in Sanskrit of the Advaita-Vedanta School."⁵ His contributions to the then-traditional practitioners of the Hindu religion and culture did radically bring about many changes and one could attribute the elimination of many of these irrational and inhuman practices which had crippled people's minds seeped in fear, irrationality, and corruption of the grotesque kinds that harmed the socio-political fabric of the society and the liberty for people

in society to lead their lives as self-respecting individuals. His presence in time earmarked what historians termed as the rise of a renaissance in Hindu thought as well as in India.⁶

Being anointed as the Father of Modern India by many scholars and thinkers of repute such as Rabindranath Tagore, S. Radhakrishnan, and the like,⁷ was due to his vision towards not only applying the modern rational elements of thinking and living into the religiously-minded masses but also simultaneously defining religiosity in terms of creating a socially comfortable life for all its practitioners. Thus, using religion to define the roles of individuals in society, while also continuing to hold onto it as a legitimate space that could mould people's lives for good, is a distinct feature in Rammohan Roy. This thought reflects in one of the following popular statements by Roy, "All true education, ought to be religious, since the object was not merely to give information but to develop and regulate all the powers of the mind, the emotions of the heart, and the workings of the Conscience."

At a time when the public discourses on Hindu religious practices were solely rooted within its legitimate presence in the *Dharmashastras*, *Vedic* texts and *Upanishads*, Roy's scope of analysis and praxis ranged from within religion to outside the scope of the religious-moral. His sense of moral source that he garnered and worked on, was to confront in the public discourses that took place in the *addas*⁸ and on the revolutionary press briefs in newsletters, newspapers, and journals in the vernacular tongue. In these political confrontations, Roy drew his sources from an extensive and comprehensive reading of the religious texts and application of the modern western liberal principles of the right and the good, on it. This is evident from the reasons he provided for engaging in social reforms, which was, to break the existing hegemonic power structures that sought to mar the moral-political health of the society. This reflects in his following words: "Many learned Brahmins are perfectly aware of the absurdity of idolatry, and are well-informed of the nature of the purer modes of divine worship. But as in the rites, ceremonies, and festivals of idolatry, they find the source of their comforts and fortune, they.... advance and encourage it to the utmost of their power, by keeping the knowledge of their scriptures concealed from the rest of the people."⁹

This nefarious link between the priestly class and the religious culture that people followed mostly out of ignorance and fear; did concern him, which was evident from his writings around the time he was vehemently fighting against Sati in the 17th century. His dextrousness in not only the literature of the Shastras of the Hindu religion but also of the texts of Islamic and Christian theology made him a scholar of unparalleled repute.

“He could and did, single-handed, hold his own against Hindu Pandits, Christian Missionaries and Mahommedan Moulavies in religious discussions. He has justly been called the greatest intellect of our country since Shankaracharya..... the Erasmus of India.”¹⁰

There are instances of his contemporaries writing to him about the deep sense of self-respect and the mental freedom that he harboured as an individual, which translated into admiration from the likes of the then Governor General Lord William Bentick, Interim Governor General Lord Adams, and many other reformers elsewhere located in Britain and India, who appreciated his efforts to radically overthrow some of the aforementioned evil practices despite not receiving support from his domestic front. At once, he was also simultaneously critiqued by both Christian missionaries as well as the Hindu orthodoxies of his time, that he was threatened many a time to be vanquished for the tumultuous and revolutionary activities of changing the nature of the religion, he was engaging in.¹¹ An account of this has been provided with the intent of developing the argument further in the current chapter on the contexts, both psychological, moral, political, and legal that Rammohan Roy was located in, in order to perhaps place the theorization that is being carried out today, with a recontextualization of the position he was occupying then.

2.1.1 Rammohan Roy's Perception of Religion and Modernity

Religion featured in Roy's thought as a major source of knowledge, both moral and political, for the implications its practices carried tremendously in ordering the lives of people. Religion was a potent space for Roy which bolstered the formation of the classes, castes, and sexes in society and defined predominantly the nature of these relations with each other. Amidst corruption, exploitation, and situation of misery, destitution, starvation, and what C.F. Andrews called, “the age of spiritual darkness and social anarchy” in the province governed by the East

India Company, this was the time when the world's most dreaded famine was manufactured which led to millions of deaths, where one-third of the population passed to starvation.¹² The colonial enterprise celebrated for their profits had skyrocketed. Roy's later years placed the subsistence of his works on this quest of ensuring colonial rule to create the sense that traditional inhabitants of the province were not able to witness and adopt in order to change. The key to change lies within the society which had developed the vision to make use of these modern influences to transform the religious and social spaces from turning into ignorant rubble contributing to the already existing miseries of the times.

With the ignominious self that Roy exhibited here and the pangs of disappointment and derision that he developed for the ways in which his fellow mates in society had deteriorated, he decided to ensure the colonial rule was of some 'good' use to the society.¹³ His stance on the goodness of western modernity did provide him enough leverage to critically question the ways in which his people in society lived. It was not very difficult to pit religion against such a modern avalanche for Roy, because most of his narratives were a product of the displeasure, he bore, for the ways in which religion was used.

For Roy, modernity was opposed to the religiosity of the traditional Bengali societies, and hence the dichotomy of religion versus modernity could be suitably located in his thought. His apologetic stance for the ways his society was living, provided enough resources for the transformative and reformatory efforts he went on to undertake. His major concerns, thus, involved putting modernity to use so as to shift the position religious hegemonic structures were holding in society. His association with modernity in this manner and in the aforementioned context happens at a time when there was no conception of an idea of the Self for India, and the position that the Indian subcontinent (read, Bengal province, here) harboured was difficult to grapple with. Amidst such a political arrangement, Roy attributing primacy to human reason became the change that at once appeared too much and too less, for the kind of miseries colonial Bengal was going through.

The question that followed was the how of this project of placing reason at the centre. Roy, like many of his contemporaries who involved his supporters and opponents, did contribute immensely to the public space coming to life around these concerns.¹⁴ The public space was divided into many questions concerning religion. Roy's efforts were meant for the local public

and members of the *bhadralok*, who had the legal and political powers and prowess to bring about proposed changes in the society, made him rapaciously produce pamphlets in the vernacular tongue for anyone to read.¹⁵

Among the many exploits in Rammohan Roy's career, his tryst with Christianity and its presence in colonial India was noteworthy for the theological controversies his exchanges with the British government, the clergy, and the staunch religious Christians created. Detailed documentation of the same has been carried out in the seminal text on Rammohan Roy by Sophia Dobson Collet, titled, *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*. It documents very meticulously the career path of Roy, especially his contributions to the spiritual theistic journey against idolatry and other religious evil practices which he undertook, with the help of the western modern logic of reason and rationality. Some of the pertinent elements of his initial research that he engaged in began with the publication of the *Tuhfat – ul – Muwahiddin: A Gift to Mono-theists*.¹⁶ This has been notably celebrated by most of the serious researchers on Roy for a comprehensive contribution to the establishment of the idea of Unitarianism which later on went on to provide legitimate grounds of the inclusion of modern sense of rationality in making sense of the daily lives people were living by.

This activity of applying the ideals of individual authenticity¹⁷ to the practice of religion, with the legitimate backing of the Shastras, as well as with the legitimate appeal to move beyond fear and irrationality that scriptures might impart. These contradictory elements were also present in Roy's thought, which attracted many admirers as well as opponents. It created. In the same vein, his theological revolts continued on paper which again provided the impetus to the journalistic and educational culture of the society.¹⁸ People who had access to resources made use of modern apparatuses such as the press, pamphlets, journals, and newspapers to make their religious and political commentaries, and he inspired many to take up the apparatus to register petitions, claims, and suggestions on various government policies that were being practiced.¹⁹ Some of these exploits involved, starting a Persian newspaper to reach out to the educated classes, named *Mirat Al-Akhbar*, as opposed to his Bengali newspaper such as *Sambad Kaumudi*, which was dominant at the time for the common people. This became a mouthpiece for various social cases of abuse that people faced during his time on account of both religious practices as well as the government's policies on it. One of his many other potent

contributions of Roy catered to his freedom of the press and similar liberal democratic ideals for which he held both the government as well as people responsible. He gave unrelenting support in bold petitions to the government, against their ordinances issuing the end of “unabused freedom” by the well-spoken natives of the land on commenting about various elements of the British rule.²⁰ Modern apparatuses were already taking over the religious spaces of the province and scholars of repute, such as Rammohan Roy made absolute use of such means to imbibe the sense of a rational moral consciousness amongst the masses through relentless theological discussions which were unseen in the regular practices of the time.

2.2 Roy’s Project of Religious Social Reform

“He applied to social reforms, the method he had found fruitful in theological discussions. He appealed from the present to the past and over against the prescription of custom set the authority of antiquity.”²¹

Elaborate exchanges within the commentaries written by Roy suggested his scholarship and the intent he harboured in his ‘Quest for Truth’.²² This quest features, time and again, in his speeches, writings, and responses to people questioning his rebellious stance on the truthfulness of people’s religions.²³ Some of the following events in his struggle to voraciously expose the irrational rules of life and death, and norms of blasphemy, shall be discussed here with the intent to make sense of this project he was committed to, in the light of the *modern religiosity* that he sought to pass onto his fellow beings. His founding of the *Brahmo Samaj* marked his commitment to bringing in the much-needed solidarity across religions and the unitarian connection which unified the essence of all religions. The Institution was a public space meant for open discussions and debates on theological and religious matters. The influence of the context of European constitutional liberalism between 1810 and 1835, strengthened his belief that the Indian public and the public spaces would emerge, empowered by service on juries and the operations of a free press, under the auspices of the British colonial rule.²⁴ Apart from that, he meant to create the social-political spaces to openly discuss matters of religions so common masses were acquainted with the same.

Out of the events that were crucial to his project on social reforms, there was one such instance where he employs a narrative in one of the petitions against the British government. He, along

with some of his contemporaries, had issued a memorial against the press control ordinance passed by the Government. It makes one locate his position in the modern paradigm of the public culture he contributed to, as a lover of freedom of expression and thought.²⁵ His admiration for the Benthamite version of utilitarianism, though, combined and seated predominantly in the space of the religious; does produce a syncretic combination of a rationalist interested in the holistic well-being of the senses which could be drawn immensely from the religious texts.²⁶ His disenchanted self, over the years, converted into relying upon his own scholarship of the theological works he had read in the respective vernacular languages, for want of authentic cultural references in his in-depth analysis of the many religions. It was also hinged on to the existing legal structure that the colonial enterprise had introduced to the famished land of the traditionalists seeped in ignorant religious practices.

For Roy, religion and modernity stood opposed to each other in many instances. His social commentaries on the subject of superstitions and the political petitions he vigorously filed against the practice of Sati substantiated this statement. His exploits, thus, invoked cataclysm of various kinds, for different ideological positions that his contemporaries, both Indians and the British held around that time. In order to make sense of the stance he adopted towards bringing in social reforms we shall explore a few of the issues, of the many, that he undertook; which shall provide to us, a glimpse of how his thinking and actions impacted society for generations, which to many marked the breaking of new modernity in India.²⁷ However, the question that one could ask here, was, if Rammohan Roy engaged in this task with the help of religion or by not granting it the legitimacy to hold people's conscience together amidst growing turmoil of torturous practices, which shall be revisited later in the course of the chapter.

2.2.1 Roy and Sati: The Moral-Political Confrontation

“‘Culture’ is a way of life, a rich and time-worn grammar of human activity, a set of diverse and often conflicting narratives whereby communal (mis)understandings, roles, and responsibilities are negotiated. As such, “‘culture’” is a living, breathing system for the distribution and enactment of agency, power, and privilege among its members and beyond. Rarely are those privileges distributed along a single axis of difference such that, for example, all men are more powerful than all women. Race, class, locality, lineage all accord measures of privilege or stigma to their bearers. However, even those

who are least empowered in a certain setting have some measure of agency in that setting and their agency is bound up with (though not determined by) the cultures, institutions, and practices that gave rise to it.”²⁸

The reason why we mark him out as modern in the history of Indian thought is due to the basis of human nature that he emphasized on as being based on reason. This also goes on to become the reason behind the abolition of Sati. He made cognizance of the corruption within the Hindu societies, which meant bringing down religion to bow to the altar of reason. The reason behind such a proposition made was rooted in the grounds that we are innately reasonable. Roy believed in this as a fundamental truth that defined a human’s existence and wished for it to be so, in the future which should, thus, ideally decide how one lives. Thus, anything we did, had to bow down to reason and be justified on the grounds of reason. The inclusion of such a thought as fundamental to the upper-class, upper-caste, elite Bengali consciousness did not meet with acceptance because of the implications it could have on the existing patriarchal and caste structures in society.²⁹

If humans were not innately rational or reasonable, the following question had to have an explanation, if one to imagine a society in terms of some notion of a good. What constituted me as a human? For Roy, the position of the Self lay in the reasonableness of humans, and not in them being religious. Owing allegiance to the religious meant requiring a reasonable and rational mind as its foundation, else there had to be an alternative understanding distinctly associated with being a human. For Roy, the curious ever-seeking mind of a human is the attribute, that needs to be adhered to especially in the ‘following’ that we do for religion. An elaborate account of the same has been, time and again, written in various treatises, pamphlets, tracts, and newspapers.³⁰ A glimpse of this may be found in the question Roy asks, “Are all religions in the world false, then?” His answer was “When it cannot be admitted that all religions are true, and also that anyone is particularly true, it must be concluded that every one of them is false.”³¹

Categorically speaking, he intended to disarticulate the claims made by many powerful religious leaders of certain sects from asserting the truth about their own religions over the falsity of other religions, and more so, making it on an absurd and irrational basis of an argument. For him, the juxtaposition of reason with religion did not take place in the actual

practice of religion in society, because of leaders who have contrived and plotted to get many adherents and blind massive followers to follow them. They later begin to lose their capacity of rationalizing as well as developing a moral conscience towards fellow mates and legitimize them as acts of great virtue just because of it falling in the realm of the religious. The religious getting blindly equated with the moral, created many problems in society, while also contributing simultaneously to a culture of conformity, weakness, fear, and abomination for those who would not subscribe to one's own legitimate sense of moral order.

Such a superimposition of religion and modernity on the narratives of regression versus progress did put Roy on the map of a new change that he wished for society to experience, without any further damage than the ones he had witnessed for long. Apart from the first-hand instance in his family; with his sister-in-law committing the act of Sati over his brother's passing, the experiences of his mother³² and his exchanges with her over the issue of social norms may be associated with him taking a tough stance on the question of Sati.³³ His exchanges with his mother showed his vehement opposition to the idolatrous practices that were followed in the family and his mother acknowledging that he is right, towards the end, and her inability to give up on the old observances that were a comfort to her.³⁴

As a result of the growing acrimonious nature of the powerful clergy and the priestly class in society and their hold on the legitimate identity that religion had attributed people with, he decided to make sure that there was some form of continuity in the conduct of the society from the regressive old to the progressive new that he envisioned. He voraciously wrote in the *Sambad Kaumudi* against the Sati since the year 1819, which, to the disappointment of many of his colleagues led to them quitting the editorship and management of the Bengali newspaper, and starting other newspapers in vernacular languages to counter-argue the propositions made by Roy.³⁵ As part of these attempts his tract titled, "Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of females according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance", which was published around 1822, stated reasons behind the legitimation of Sati practice in the deprivation of property rights to women.

Amidst the chaos and divided opinions³⁶ within the British judicial system over the abrogation of the practice of Sati as an illegal one for the Hindu societies across the provinces, Roy produces this tract to address related concerns that bolstered the practice of Sati in many forms.

In the proceedings of the *Nizamat Adaulat* (the court), the judgement suggestions made by the judges on Sati were varied in nature and content. While some vouched for the complete or total abolition of the practice, others vouched for partial experimental abolition in certain regions such as *Dacca, Moorshedabad, Bareilly, Allahabad, Fatehpur, Bundelcund*, and *Calpee*, where the practice was not as prominent.

While there was another suggestion that called for the immediate abolition of the same in one of the major centers of the Sati practice, the Hooghly district. Warren Hastings issued a tentative order that accepted neither of the above suggestions and he is supposed to have said, “the more educated natives gradually become disposed to abandon the practice”.³⁷ In response to this, Roy’s writings on property rights rightfully substantiated Hastings’ hope for the ‘natives’ to awaken and enlighten the masses of the turmoil and create a demand for abolition, which he set out to do, by exploring the causes of deprivation of property rights and polygamy in the society. “He had pointed out that on the basis of the opinion of ancient lawgivers, in the property left by the husband, the mother was entitled to a share equal to that of her son, so that they could spend remaining life happily and independently. To establish that Raja Rammohan Roy had mentioned passages of *Yagnuvalkyu, Vishnoo, and Brihaspati*. He showed that in those passages of ancient lawgivers, mother was entitled to an equal share of her husband’s property with her sons.”³⁸ As a result of such a practice the male members of the family, who indulged in polygamy were left with all property rights and the destitute mothers’ lives were at the mercy of her sons/daughters-in-law.³⁹

He insisted on basing his predilection for reason on the activity of constantly applying it to the realm of religion. He writes,

“The doctors of different persuasions, relying on the faith of their followers, have made the idea of *Tawatur* (traditions proved by a continuous chain of reports) a means of providing such things. There is a deal of difference between the true idea of a *Tawatur* which produces positive belief and a *Tawatur* assumed by the followers of religions.... According to the followers of religion, *Tawatur* is a report coming down from a certain class of people to whom falsehood cannot be imputed.”⁴⁰

Such copious amounts of time provided to the generation of literature on the rules and regulations permitted by reason for an application to understanding not only religious practices but also the essence of religion is commendable in Roy. Just as he presents his Anglicized remonstrations on the goodness of the European ways of living, he also puts forth the defiance of the goodness in religious ways of living, especially of the Unitarian kind.⁴¹ One of the episodes where the Head English master from Madras Government College wrote a letter in the *Madras Courier*, controverting Roy's monotheistic claims, and "pleading the worship of Divine attributes as virtual deities."⁴² Roy was defiant in his response titled, "A Defence of Hindu Theism", in which he not only provided religious references to his position but also exposed the downfall of the divisive and vicious nature of some theological scholars, suggesting "how mischievous must be the effects of regarding such narratives as sacred records."⁴³

2.2.2 Legitimizing Religion versus Educational Reformation and Resistance to Orthodoxy

Roy's contribution on the religious front is laden with a fascinating set of accounts, especially on the role it played in the definition of the society he envisioned where religion was both the source of misery as well as importance. His resistance against evil social practices did not jettison him away from the religious. There are innumerable instances of the same that may be found in the efforts he took towards bringing in educational reforms, where this aforementioned inconsistency and contradictory stances of Roy is visible. However, to place him in the context, the responses he made towards this end, were to different sections of society. At times he spoke to the orthodox Christian missionaries who wanted to spread their Trinitarianism that he had entirely rejected through his Unitarian arguments. While, at other times, he spoke to the classical orthodox Hindu conformists of the time who found Roy's arguments extremely radical and blasphemous and as threatening the identity of the Hindus and their position in society. To the latter, Roy's defiance was rooted in reinterpreting religion for them on the grounds of reason and defending the necessity of experiencing European ways of living, which would emancipate them from the existing turmoil and "thick clouds of ignorance and hostility" that the society was seeped in.⁴⁴

While he defended the Vedanta philosophy against the Christian missionaries through his writings in the Brahminical magazine, which was usually published every month regularly, he

also questioned its efficacy for the betterment of practicing religious members of the society, as they were far from the religious essence it denoted. Over and above that, he saw no advantage in the young men spending their best years in the study of the philological niceties.⁴⁵ For him, a Sanskrit College's establishment through the Government's funds, would be like imparting "such knowledge as is already current in India" and "would only load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of little or no practical use."⁴⁶ He goes on to write that the Sanskrit language did restrict the flow of information and accessibility to knowledge for a long time, owing to its difficulty. In his *Letter on English Education* to Lord Amherst, he conveyed his assurance that "the Sanskrit system of education would be the best calculated to keep the country in darkness."⁴⁷ This placed him more towards the side of the Anglicists who opposed the Oriental claims to have an institution of their own for the conduct of exclusive studies in their own tongue and related to their cultures.

However, soon after the construction of the Hindu College and the Sanskrit College, in 1824, Roy went on to establish the Vedant College two years after, which almost confused everyone about the position he occupied regarding the concerns he had previously raised against the Vedanta. As an explanation of this, there is an account of Roy which states that the ways in which Vedanta are taught in 'ordinary Hindu schools', were untrustworthy and were devoid of the essence of Vedantic philosophy, aimed at garnering material comforts for the privileged in the society. "At the same time, he saw Vedanta rightly handled and rightly divided, a means for leading his countrymen out of their prevailing superstitions and idolatry into a pure and elevated Theism."⁴⁸ The founding of the Vedant college also quashed the disparaging remarks of the Christian missionaries; however, it did not alleviate tensions amongst the Hindu side of his opponents on his commitment to Hindu culture and tradition. This portrays a trend of his resistance against conservatives on both sides, for an uncritical acceptance of the propagating and sustaining of the scriptural knowledge without any social function committed to changing the plight of people whose life was at stake in the name of religious practices of the time. Sophia Dobson Collett remarks that through the Vedanta, he served to connect the historic past of India with that of the 'progressive future'.⁴⁹ His letters to the colonial government on funding English education and imparting knowledge of the language bore testimony to the idea of progressivity that Roy endorsed for the society. The new-found legitimacy in modern sciences, and other natural sciences, and such disciplines with training in the English language suggested

his vision for the future; the connecting link being religion, which was essentially understood by only a few, like him.

He went on to suggest the distinction in the meanings of what was ethical from what was legal and used the latter to subscribe to the meanings laid out on the former by religious texts. These texts and scriptures formed an essential basis of his thought; however, he applied the instrument of logic and rationality to it, in order to make sense of the essence that all religions carried, which he propounded, was the same. Even though he subscribed ultimately to changing the legal spaces, he relied upon the fabric of the moral as carved out by the religious which in turn had to be put through the test of reason. An instance verifying this may be found in the following response Roy gave on the question of social evils people practiced in society. He went on to say, “To permit the sale of intoxicating drugs and spirits, so injurious to health, and even sometimes destructive of life, on the payment of duties publicly levied, is an act highly *irreligious* and *immoral*. Is the taxation to be, therefore, rendered invalid and the payment stopped.”⁵⁰ The reasons provided are rooted in the sanctions granted by religion, which is filtered through reason and rationality. Therefore, those that were not reasonable had to be eliminated from the space of what was considered ‘moral’; and those that pass the test of reason had to transform into the space of the legal, so that it became legally and morally legitimate.

2.3 Locating Violence in the Imperative of Social Reform

“The exercise of man’s intellectual faculties is in discriminating truth from error; this is the rationalistic attitude of the mind. The exercise of the intuitive faculty is of discriminating good from evil; this is the natural inspiration from God, which is opposed to invented revelation. The union of hearts with mutual love and affection of all fellow creatures is pure devotion acceptable to God and nature. This is the religion of the free thinker.”⁵¹

Such is the nature of religion that Roy carved out for the new progressive reformed society that he hoped to create with the help of the colonial rule. However, it becomes important to place Roy in the context, which offers quite a few possibilities to conceptualize and make sense of Roy in the light of the nature of religion and state and their relation that he proposed through his engagements with the colonial rule. The context in which Roy operated made it peculiarly

important to make sense of the context in which he operated and the essence of what he intended to carry forward through his emphasis on continuity through change.

Human reason for Rammohan Roy forms the grounds for this transformation in religion, which he holds on to till the very end as one of the most important legitimate sources that guides and ought to ideally guide a society. Religion was out through the test of reason, and reformation as a continuous deliberative process suggested the presence and use of reason in the idea of the good society that Roy had for his society.

His deep criticality of the submissive and uncritical nature of society in accepting what self-proclaimed and delusional religious leaders said, in order to gather public support, gave rise to social unrest which attracted a lot of attention from both sides of society, from that of the colonizer and the colonized. His quest for Truth and his rootedness in religiosity led him to read, re-read and interpret religious texts for people, knowing fully aware of the popularity and the legitimacy religion held in society.

Having been anointed as one of the first modern rationalist thinkers and scholars of his time, his modernity was rooted in the connections and validity he held onto the religion. To him religion of the true kind, if it ever existed, did not require humans to continue to exist in ways they were existing and then seeped within irrational and harmful activities, by exploiting and capitalizing on people's ignorance. When explored in the light of colonial rule, he positioned himself as the Other, (the informed other) that was morally and socially in a space that did not have the awareness of the distinction of the good from the evil. He was, however, the Self, the rich, upper-caste Zamindar, in relation to the other members of the society that was deeply class-ridden and caste-based. The deeply unequal society, socially and economically, continued to exist within the narrow worlds of sectarian differences and divisiveness that only caused hatred and more ignorance. The anatomy of the society had no place for reason, which he attributed to colonial rule, for having created the consciousness within *more informed natives* as him.

This, according to Roy was symptomatic of a significant lack in the society which also was the reason behind intolerance towards its own members which people carried out for the sake of and in the name of religion. However, the manner in which he responded provided immense

legitimacy, without much political churning, on the project of colonization, while ironically resisting forms, structures, and patterns of human relations that restrained freedom on unreasonable grounds. Such an ironical manner of responding to the colonial rule put colonization as a process as a socially and culturally advancing phenomenon and which their perpetrators called, the work of the Divine God. His contribution was rooted in introducing the Baconian philosophy of revamping the educational structure in India, as it happened in Britain with its implementation. The latter changed the space of the societies in Britain and provided new light to them to exist amidst the world seeped in esoteric philological concerns.⁵² The location of violence in his thought exposes the looming absence of political investment in the risks that could have caused to future societies, especially in the sustenance of cultural hierarchies on the grounds of knowledge of the English language and the European culture.

However, it would be violent to decontextualize his contributions to the removal of ignorant and irrational practices, even though he replaces them with reason, which then again becomes a new source of the moral. This reason is spatially located in religion. The contextual demands outlived the importance any of the thinkers who existed could have granted to the activity of the mind getting colonized. This also was one of the primary reasons behind M.K. Gandhi scathingly criticizing Roy for officially introducing the culture located in the idea of supremacy of the English language and associating higher prospects with it, as opposed to getting educated in the vernacular languages.⁵³

However, I claim, the space of violence was not so much in the stance Roy took, as much as it was in the absence of awareness that structural and cultural hegemony of the colonial enterprise brought with it, in the guise of ‘secularizing’ the traditional spaces of Bengal and other provinces by introducing the Christian trinitarian logic of truth.⁵⁴ Rabindranath Tagore’s defense in support of Roy against Gandhi marked an important feature that his critics gave less importance to, which is that of his syncretic religious stance. As Peter Van der Veer rightly mentioned about Roy, this only confirmed the presence of religiosity in his ‘reasonable arguments’ as well as in the phenomenon of the colonial rule that made the state stronger on grounds of it being the ‘secular’ and the ‘progressive’.⁵⁵ Thus, Roy’s apologetic stance influenced the privileged classes to mark their position higher in society because of their proximity to the English and their dextrousness of the English tongue.

This mentality goes on to today influence the majority of the masses in deciding and defining success, progress, and paragons of the same in this historical advancement, thus, giving colonialism historical legitimacy. Roy functioned on this legitimacy that he built and located within the annals of history and went on to define his society on the grounds of the changes that took place in accordance with the norms laid out of the infusion and practice of this progressive culture. This sanctioned in many ways, the continuation of the colonial mentality of considering one's own culture as either extremely advanced on the grounds of the *new rational norms* and then marking and recording changes as a legitimate entry into the bandwagon of history.⁵⁶

2.4 Some Concluding Remarks

Rammohan Roy and his path-breaking contributions set the stage for serious deliberations for his contemporaries into how people in society lived. It also continues to steer the consciousness of the people today, in making sense, in hindsight, of the ways in which narratives were built in the conceptualization of the moral-political that were produced during the 18th-19th century colonial India, under a period when the concept of sovereignty for the country was unimaginable and unquestioned by many, as a consolidated identity capable of managing its own Self. There was an absence of an idea of the Self, which set predominantly the backdrop of Roy's politics. His politics catered to, therefore, the concerns that other thinkers within the canon of Indian thought did replicate in new instances of the political. However, a fundamental distinction in Roy and others would primarily be in the adherence to the social reformation of the intense kind as a plausible response to not only the colonial rule but also the religions sustaining the colonial rule.

Even though Roy did not delve as much into the political nexus that religions created with the entire civilizing mission of the colonial rule; he did delve into the theological aspects of the practice of religion which, when rethought, formed formidable grounds for a response that was devoid of a sense of an identity that we popularly associate with a nation or a nation-state. His response was formidable in the sense that it was the first of its kind that created new meanings of secularity in the historical formations of the societies of Bengal and other parts of India, such as the South of India. For instance, there were multiple instances during the 1820s and the 1830s that led to social movements in a society where religion and its nature were constantly

getting redefined in the light of its relationship with the colonial state that sought to impose its religious and cultural attributes to the society, through the process of missionization.⁵⁷ In this light, Frykenberg stated once, “This dialectic of aggressive missionization and Hindu resistance created a public sphere in South India in the nineteenth century that does not at all evoke the image of a “secular atmosphere”.⁵⁸ Thus, the Anti-Hindu rhetoric of the opponents of the governmental policy was capable of creating this consciousness amongst Hindus that their religion was under attack.⁵⁹

As part of this resistance from the Hindus, there was a peculiar demand largely made across the resistance that developed in various parts of the southern side of India, namely, state separation from the affairs of the religious. Such secular dimensions were worked out in the responses that emerged in society, which were fundamentally rooted in the ‘protecting the religiosity’ of society. Secularity, thus, had to serve the purpose of maintaining religious sanctity and purity.⁶⁰ This also influenced the relationship the religion of the Hindus had with that of Christianity and the intermingling exchanges that simultaneously continued to augment the legitimacy of religion in the public space, but far away from the state’s interference. The practice of secularity here was not so secular in content.

I claim that Roy’s endeavours of seeking legitimacy in the theological spiritual content of the religious texts, to harness an environment of consensus amongst people in the inefficacy and the irrationality of evil traditions as Sati and idolatry; was a manifestation of the deep-rooted religiosity and the dominance of religion in legitimizing ways of living and life, more than anything, keeping in line with the aforementioned arguments. Even though Roy’s contributions may have been attributed to have conceptualized a unique kind of secular relation between the state and society, it was perhaps of the kind where the state had to allow the informed natives of the land to continue to speak for a just practice of religion and legislate upon matters concerning the life and freedom of the individual. For the latter, the state had to support, interfere and legislate, if needed. However, the state could not mingle with the rationality and wisdom that religions used.

For Roy, there was a convenient placement of adherence to religiosity with that of the legal interventions from the state, when deemed necessary, especially with respect to introducing reforms in the society that would eliminate social and political evils. His *politicality* invariably

was thus channelized towards admiration for the colonial rule as it was able to bring about the long-pending changes the societies had to carry out. Even though the trends in 19th-century societies in India suggested a growing obstinance of the society toward recognizing the vacuous claims of the colonial master in the endeavour to bring about religious reformation.⁶¹ Reformatory steps of such kind were only met with immense criticisms and widespread opposition as, religion now, had become stronger than ever on both sides. The masquerade of religion operating under the guise of colonial interventions was recognized, especially against the projects of the Evangelicals and the Utilitarians.⁶²

Rammohan Roy's position in creating a culture of its own kind has, thus, been attributed to that of the Anglicized western kind which engaged in the interpretations of the religions from the lens of the written word, which in turn was brought under the narratives of civilization and progress centered around the western European kind.⁶³ This has also been made evident in the descriptive compilation of the corpus of Rammohan Roy's writings made by Brajendranath Seal, where he attributes Roy with being "The Nationalist Reformer, a constructive practical, social legislator, The Renovator of National Scriptures and revelations..... and the Founder, in a very real sense of the term, of the Science of Comparative Religion"⁶⁴ This, no doubt converted the nature of Hinduism into becoming a modern kind that had to rely upon the text. Potent observations of such kind, attribute to the *westernized native* man that Roy had become.⁶⁵ However, his rootedness in religion, or rather, as mentioned above, of the modern religious kind, perhaps led to the growing concerns that were in store for the future of societies in India. However, placing him in the context where this form of syncretism that he developed for himself and for the societies in the future, created a culture that could have ever-growing psychopolitical repercussions.

The reason why M.K. Gandhi criticized Rammohan Roy scathingly was in connection with the repercussions of the imitative culture and the apologetic culture that was prevalent in his times. However, this was completely opposed to, by Rabindranath Tagore, who, in his letter to C.F. Andrews, did chastise Gandhi for the remarks and called it a misinterpretation of the grotesque kinds where adherence to modern ways of living need not be considered as being equivalent to worshipping the culture of the British; but was just an extension of the accommodative culture akin to Nanak and Kabir.⁶⁶ I claim to state, here, based on a recontextualized understanding of

Roy within the trope of the violent imperative of reformations and syncretic outlook he harboured; that it would be a decontextualization of some kind to not provide the contextual benefits of analysis to studying Roy as he was, in his times; as opposed to today.

In case of the spatial scenario of the now symptomatic of contemporary times, the critical concerns shared above by thinkers like Gandhi and contemporary scholars later, stand legitimate in the face of the violence of the contrite nature of the self that Roy harboured about the situation the societies in India were in. What one could, thus, understand is the looming absence of political alternatives he provided, amidst an emphasis on the syncretic religious and the legal-rational spaces, that successfully delegitimized superstitious and harmful practices of his time; without, however, addressing the cause and sustenance of the same in society or a political panacea in some alternative that could prevent the reforms from slipping into cultural degradation of another kind.

Notes

¹ See Thomas Pantham and Kenneth L. Deutsch (eds.), *Political Thought in Modern India*, V.R. Mehta, *Foundations of Indian Political Thought*

² Peter Van der Veer talks about this idea of civilization as a blessing. Social revolution steered by the British was regarded as the ‘unconscious tool of history’ and looked up to colonialism as a blessing that could usher in civilization into the colonies. Read “Bengal Renaissance: A Study in Social Contradictions” by Pulak Narayan Dhar, 1987 for details on the Renaissance and the contrasting trends of acceptance and resistance that emerged in response to it.

³ This was Talal Asad’s critical comment on Charles Taylor’s claim for authentic self located in a community. The latter’s claims were rejected for relying so much upon the authenticity of the selves in society over a legal imposition from a legitimate source as the state since the selves could not be trusted with the reigns of the society. Rammohan Roy did subscribe to such a notion where the colonial state ended up being the sole solace that could uproot people from their miseries in the context in which Bengal was situated in the 18th century and before.

⁴ R.C. Majumdar, *On Rammohan Roy*, pp. 1- 3; Aisharya De, *Social and Educational contributions of Raja Rammohan Roy - A pathfinder*, p. 49. The document may be accessed here, <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/163971>

⁵ Thomas Pantham, “The Socio-Religious and Political Thought of Rammohun Roy”, Thomas Pantham and Kenneth L. Deutsch (eds.), *Political Thought in Modern India*, pp. 33 – 34

⁶ C.F. Andrews, “The New Reformation”, *The Renaissance in India: Its Missionary Aspect*, pp. 110 – 115

⁷ See Rabindranath Tagore, “Inaugurator of the Modern Age in India”, Satish Chandra Chakravarti (ed.), *The Father of Modern India, Commemoration Volume of the Rammohan Roy Centenary Celebrations – 1933*

⁸ *Addas* were semi-public spaces where people from the *bhadralok* (privileged class) of different ideologies and points of view could come and discuss contemporary public issues of import. This was one such space that one could hardly locate as operating within either public or private. These spaces/ *samajs* connected their sensibilities either in conformation or in confrontation; both temporally as well as spatially. Aritra Majumdar, “Rammohun and the Debate on Sati: Locating the Public Sphere in Early Colonial India”, *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Vol 78 (2017)*, pp. 629 – 630

⁹ *English Works of Rammohan Roy, Vol. 2*, p. 44; Cited in Thomas Pantham, “The Socio-Religious and Political Thought of Rammohun Roy”, Thomas Pantham and Kenneth L. Deutsch, (eds.), *Political Thought in Modern India*, pp. 33 – 34

¹⁰ Sophia Dobson Collett, “Introduction”, *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, p. Ixx

¹¹ *Ibid*, pp. Ixxvi – Ixxvii

¹² C.F. Andrews, “The New Reformation”, *The Renaissance in India: Its Missionary Aspect*, p. 107

¹³ The need to put to use the advent of modernity in transforming spaces around him suggested his deep displeasure for the society he was an occupant of.

¹⁴ See Aritra Majumdar, “Rammohun and the Debate on Sati: Locating the Public Sphere in Early Colonial India”, *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Vol 78 (2017)*, pp. 627 – 634

¹⁵ See Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Modern India*; Aritra Majumdar, “Rammohun and the Debate on Sati: Locating the Public Sphere in Early Colonial India”, *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, Vol 78 (2017)*, pp. 627 – 634

¹⁶ See Raja Rammohan Roy, *Tuhfat – ul – Muwahiddin: A Gift to Mono-theists* (Translated by Pal Memorial Trust)

¹⁷ I have applied Charles Taylor's use of the authentic self and the trust in the authentic self here, to understand and make sense of Rammohan Roy's responses to the colonial context. However, this did not move beyond his own self. There was, however, a deep distrust he harboured for society even though his efforts were towards 'introducing rationality' into their minds. He, however, ends up relying on the State and the legal apparatuses for a long-term cure.

¹⁸ An elaborate account of this is present in Sophia Dobson Collett, "Introduction", *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, pp. xxxvii – lxxx

¹⁹ Ibid, pp. 93 - 120

²⁰ Ibid, pp. 101 – 105

²¹ Ibid, p. 114

²² D.N. Pal, "Foreword", Raja Rammohan Roy, *Tuhfat – ul – Muwahiddin: A Gift to Monotheists* (Translated by Pal Memorial Trust), p. xiv

²³ Sophia Dobson Collett, "Searching for Truth" and "Throwing down the Gauntlet", *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, pp. 1 – 9

²⁴ See C.A. Bayly, "Rammohan Roy and the advent of Constitutional Liberalism in India, 1800-30"

²⁵ Sophia Dobson Collett, *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, pp. 100 – 104

²⁶ See Thomas Pantham, "The Socio-Religious and Political Thought of Rammohun Roy", Thomas Pantham and Kenneth L. Deutsch (eds.), *Political Thought in Modern India*

²⁷ I choose to not write about Western modernity because though his engagements with the modern western modes of living and thinking, influenced him, he did not desire to blindly adhere to it and contextually attributed meanings of progress and regress to the meaning of customs and ritualized practices people were following in India. He did create his own version of the modern consciousness, how much ever inspired he was of the West. To bracket him into categories such as rationalist or a cosmopolite, would make it rather convenient. The efforts here are not to do that, but to make sense of the *politicality* in Roy and his thought. As D.L. Sheth says, one must evolve one's idea of rootedness and connect one's actions to how one thought of oneself as, which is very experiential. Thus, one should not ask Roy, JS Mill's questions, but one must ask him, his questions. The questions in this work, thus, are not just restricted to whether Roy adopted the western kind of liberal democratic consciousness here or not; but also whether he developed one of his kind. That, to my understanding, makes it a contextual question allowing us to rethink and conceptualize Roy for our contemporary times.

²⁸ Yolande Jansen, “Laïcité, or the Politics of Republican Secularism”, Hent de Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan, (eds.), *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, p. 492; This is a quote by Susan Moller Okin on how even culture plays a huge role in ensuring that women continue to remain oppressed.

²⁹ See Thomas Pantham and Kenneth L. Deutsch (eds.), *Political Thought in Modern India*, V.R. Mehta, *Foundations of Indian Political Thought*

³⁰ Rights of Hindus over Ancestral Property according to the Law of Bengal, 1813 (based on *Mitakshra* and *Dayabhaga*’s treatises) *Different Modes of Worship* in Sanskrit, 1825; *Sambad Kaumudi* in Bengali, 1821, *Mirat – ul – Akhbar* in Persian, 1822, *Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of females according to the Hindu Law of Inheritance* in English, 1822, *The Universal Religion*, 1829, and the like are some of the many platforms through which he ensured that issues such as educational reforms, unitarian thought, the campaign against Sati, freedom of the press from the unwarranted British control and the like.

³¹ D.N. Pal, “Foreword”, Raja Rammohan Roy, *Tuhfat – ul – Muwahiddin: A Gift to Monotheists* (Translated by Pal Memorial Trust), p. xli

³² Sophia Dobson Collett, “Introduction”, *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, pp. Ixx – Ixxi

³³ Ramachandra Guha, “The First Liberal: Rammohan Roy”, *Makers of Modern India*, p. 27

³⁴ Sophia Dobson Collett, “Introduction”, *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, p. Ixxi

³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 95

³⁶ *Ibid*, p.113

³⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 113 – 114

³⁸ Aisharya De, *Social and Educational contributions of Raja Rammohan Roy - A pathfinder*, p.138. The document may be accessed here, <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/163971>

³⁹ Sophia Dobson Collett, “Journalistic and Educational Pioneer Work”, *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, p. 114

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, pp. I - li

⁴¹ *Ibid*, pp. 38, 39, 90 – 92

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 38

⁴³ *Ibid*, pp. 38 – 39

⁴⁴ Cited in Thomas Pantham, “The Socio-Religious and Political Thought of Rammohan Roy”, Thomas Pantham and Kenneth L. Deutsch (eds.), *Political Thought in Modern India*, p. 35

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 106 – 112

⁴⁶ Sophia Dobson Collett, “Letter to Lord Amherst”, *The Life and Letters of Raja Rammohun Roy*, p. 107

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 108

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 110

⁴⁹ Ibid, p. 112

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 157

⁵¹ D.N. Pal, “Positive side of Tuhfat”, Raja Rammohan Roy, *Tuhfat – ul – Muwahiddin: A Gift to Mono-theists* (Translated by Pal Memorial Trust), p. Iviii

⁵² Ramachandra Guha, “The First Liberal: Rammohan Roy”, *Makers of Modern India*, p. 45

⁵³ Ramachandra Guha, “The Rise and Fall of the Bilingual Intellectual”, *Patriots and Partisans*, p. 186

⁵⁴ The usage of the term secularizing, here, is carried out to make a contemporary attribution of the term to the context of Roy’s society, in order to provide an insight into the repercussions of a hegemonic kind, that went on to assign legitimacy to the colonial rule even before the colonizer decided to.

⁵⁵ Peter Van der Veer, “Secularity and Religion”, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain*, pp. 19 – 22

⁵⁶ See T.N. Madan, “The Case of India”, “Religion and Social Change in India: Some Conceptual Issues”. Also see, “The Crisis of Indian Secularism”, *Modern Myths, Locked Minds: Secularism and Fundamentalism in India*

⁵⁷ Peter Van der Veer, “Secularity and Religion”, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain*, pp. 20 – 22

⁵⁸ Robert E. Frykenberg, “The Emergence of Modern Hinduism”, Gunther Sonthheimer and Hermann Kulke, (eds.), *Hinduism Reconsidered*, p. 90; Cited in Peter Van der Veer, “Secularity and Religion”, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain*, p. 21

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 21

⁶⁰ An elaborate account of this is explained in Peter Van der Veer’s text *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain*.

⁶¹ Ibid, pp. 41 – 52

⁶² Ibid, p. 42

⁶³ Ibid, pp. 20 – 22

⁶⁴ Brajendranath Seal, “A Critical Study and Estimate of Rammohun Roy’s Works” in Raja Rammohan Roy, *Tuhfat – ul – Muwahiddin: A Gift to Mono-theists* (Translated by Pal Memorial Trust), pp. ix - xvii

⁶⁵ Ashis Nandy, “An Anti-Secularist Manifesto”, *The Romance of the State and the Fate of Dissent in the Tropics*, p. 44

⁶⁶ Ramachandra Guha, “The Rise and Fall of the Bilingual Intellectual”, *Patriots and Partisans*, p. 186