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Indian Messenger Committee:
Sudakshina Kundu Mookerjee, Editor
Biswajit Roy, Secretary
Amit Das, Jt. Editor
Debasis Raychaudhuri
Subrata Kumar Datta
Jayati Gupta
Rajib Ganguly

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Editor : Sudakshina Kundu Mookerjee
Jt. Editor: Amit Das

Email: theindianmessenger@gmail.com

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in agreement with it.

INVOCATION

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.

- Mahatma Gandhi

* * * * *

CALMNESS of mind is one of the beautiful jewels of wisdom. It is the result of long and patient effort in self-control.

- James Allen

* * * * *

In order to lead a meaningful life, you need to cherish others, pay attention to human values and try to cultivate inner peace.

- Dalai Lama

Editorial

Middle of March in the Gregorian calendar is the official onset of spring in Bengal. It also ushers in the last month of the year according to the Bengali calendar or 'Bangabda' and awaits the new year to follow in its heels. While December, cold and barren in the higher altitudes of the Northern hemisphere, draws the curtain on the year according to the Western calendar, in our part of the world, it is indeed 'a season of 'mist and mellow fruitfulness', a time to reap the fruits of our labour. The new year according to the Bengali calendar (since the last several centuries) that starts a few months later, is also a time of harvest. The nature is in full bloom, rejoicing in the colours of spring that precedes the long summer ahead. The barns are full with the grains of toil.

How closely this passage of time reflects our own journey through life! Just like the buds of the new leaves that raise their soft sap-green heads and the flowers that open up their bright red petals, the newborn infants, open their eyes to the wide new world. The leaves mature into deeper shades and flowers bear fruits. Similarly, the child of yesteryears gradually ripens with experience and knowledge of the surroundings. As we undertake our life's journey, we keep on collecting pebbles strewn by the road-side. What we do with our acquisitions and how we use them, turn them either into heavy burdens to be toted along or give us wings to take flight. The minds shape themselves through all the worldly experiences and prepare us to carry on our life's journey. Our actions bear fruit, that we may relish or repent.

How we move into the new year depends very much on how we prepare in the year before for the transition to the next. Similarly, our life's journey in this world prepares us for our smooth transition into the other world. Just as a good harvest of the previous year helps in stepping into the new year with confidence and happiness, so do the fruits of our life's harvest help us in transiting to the world unknown.

We do not know what exists beyond our worldly existence. Many believe in a life after death that is so much like the world they have lived in. In the past centuries, pyramids were built to hold the worldly remains of the royalty and goods of this world were provided for the benefit of the deceased in the after- lives. Through ages graves have guarded worldly possession, which have not benefitted the one interred but have helped posterity to uncover history. Many believers have faith in the Day of Judgement when one would come face to face with the Maker and be judged for the life's deeds. Some believe in living after death with their beloved ones who have preceded them to the other world. But these are all figments of the imagination, which have no evidential support. We do not know what lies

after we end our life's journey. But we are certain that we can end our journey well and with complete sense of fulfilment by undertaking a wonderful expedition.

But, keeping all the articles of faith apart, we must remember that our journey through life is like the progress of a year. We are born as buds, grow into leaves that draw in the sap of life from our surroundings. Just as every year has its share of pleasant climes and devastating thunderstorms, so does our life have its ups and downs that help us to grow stronger to trudge along. The plants learn to withstand the vagaries of nature and raise their heads victoriously after the tempest is blown over. So, must we if we can accept the challenges of life unflinchingly and try to understand the meaning of life's journey as the Maker of this world has designed for us.

Where the unconfirmed assurances of the religious practices of different faiths end, there come the realization of the soul, the equanimity of the mind and the awakening of a spirit of wisdom. Just as a plant bears fruit after surviving a storm, similarly we shall be able to find peace and contentment at the end of our life's journey, with all our desires quenched and with a sense of contentment in this world. We are then fully prepared to transit into the next stage of our life that is eternal in its appeal. Whether the 'self' ends with our bodily presence or gets immersed in the eternal, we do not know. But our mortal soul needs to be at peace at the end of the journey by striving to infuse our minds with the infinite bliss that comes to us through our finite worldly experiences. Tagore, in many of his songs, has extolled the power of the eternal and infinite to inspire the mortal mind to a higher level of spiritual quest through its finite and worldly manifestations.

Sages through ages have therefore tried to uncover the mystery of this universe, through philosophical discourses. In this issue we complete the discussion on 'Advaita – Vedanta Philosophy: Shankaracharya and Rammohun' by Shri Rajiv Gangopadhyay. A serialized life sketch of Raja Rammohun Roy – The Torchbearer of Modern India by Dr. Uma Bhattacharya begins from this issue.

ADVAITA–VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY: SHANKARACHARYA AND RAMMOHUN (Part – 3)

Rajib Gangopadhyay

Rammohun's another major originality lies in his profound reinterpretation of Mayanism and the philosophy of the material world. As a non-dualist, Rammohun accepted the principle of Maya. But his understanding of it departed strikingly from the orthodox Advaitic standpoint. A modern thinker, shaped by the ideals of the European Renaissance and the spirit of rational humanism, Rammohun could not despise the phenomenal world as mere illusion. For him, the world—full of joy and sorrow, fulfilment and deprivation, conflict and harmony, diversity and complexity—was not a domain to be renounced but rather a vital field of human endeavour. It was, in his vision, as meaningful and indispensable as the quest for the Absolute itself. There is ample reason to believe that he was able to reconcile social progress with Mayanism from the Tantric scriptures. Through his maternal lineage, he was deeply influenced by Hariharananda Tirthaswami, under whose guidance he acquired an exceptional command of the “Kularanv Tantra” and “Mahanirvan Tantra”. His philosophical outlook, therefore, was not purely Vedantic but a creative fusion of Tantric Advaita and Advaita Vedanta.

While both these traditions acknowledge Maya or Maya–Shakti as the primal source of creation, they diverge fundamentally in their conception of its nature. In Advaita Vedanta, Maya is understood as “avidya” (principle of ignorance), the cause of illusion, and ultimately unreal. In contrast, Tantric Advaita, grounded in the “Agam Shastra” (Agamic scriptures), regards Maya–Shakti as “satya” (true), eternal, and an inseparable manifestation of Brohmo itself. It is the dynamic power of the Absolute through which the processes of creation, preservation, and dissolution unfold. Rammohun, inspired by this Tantric affirmation of life and reality, thus replaced the Advaitic tendency toward world-negation with a positive appreciation of Maya as the creative energy of Brohmo. His thought reveals a profound shift from metaphysical pessimism to spiritual humanism. The Tantric emphasis on the vibrant principle of life rather than on renunciation enabled him to reinterpret Maya not as a veil of ignorance but as a divine potency—the living expression of Brohmo's own creativity. In this way, Rammohun Roy established a unique philosophical position that harmonized the transcendental wisdom of non-

dualism with the progressive vision of human and social advancement.

As an Advaita – Vedantist Rammohun has given immense importance to “Brohmopasana”. According to Shankar, the relationship between the Divine and the devotee is based on the “Bhed–gyan” or “knowledge of distinction” (the philosophical understanding that enables one to distinguish between the real and unreal, eternal and temporary, self and non–self). When the individual soul transcends the illusory realm of dualistic knowledge born of Maya and becomes firmly established in the realisation of Advaita Brohmo, the necessity of worship ceases as the distinction between Divine and the devotee has dissolved. Rammohun, while aligning with Shankar in acknowledging moksha (liberation) based in the realisation of non-dual consciousness (Advaita–gyan) as the ultimate end of spiritual pursuit (Sadhana), insists, with notable emphasis, that Brohmopasana, constitutes the sole path to that ultimate freedom. Significantly, in his reading, the act of worship does not terminate with moksha; rather, it retains a perpetual relevance even in the state of spiritual fulfilment. His interpretation of the Brahma Sutra “Aprayaṇat tatrapi dristam” (4.1.12) i.e. “one must persist in self-contemplation (atma-upasana) until liberation, and even upon union with the divine, one should not abandon the

worship of God, since it is prescribed in the Vedas. Rammohun’s most significant uniqueness in “Brohmopasana” lies in the absolute rejection of all forms of symbolism (pratik). Neither Advaita–Vedanta nor Tantric–Advaita discarded conventional idol worship (pratima–puja) entirely. Though the monotheistic Shankar did not attach great importance to such rituals, he did not completely abandon idol worship. Rammohun, however, is more rigorous in his application. For the sake of argument, even if he accepted idol worship prescribed by the Puranas and Tantras as a compulsion for those with lesser spiritual capacity (nimnadhikari), he demonstrated in his discussions that traditional idol worship often leads to devotees attributing all kinds of tamasic (mundane) human qualities to deities. Therefore, both the formless self-worship (nirguna atmopasana) and the saguna Samajik Upasana (social worship) envisioned by Rammohun are inevitably devoid of the association of symbols.

The above attempt to assess Rammohun as a Vedantist probably proves that he stands simultaneously as the final exponent of the classical Vedantic tradition in India and the foremost pioneer of its modern revitalisation. Through his solitary yet unbendable struggle against the stiff conservatism of his time, he transformed the declining

current of Vedantic review into a vibrant intellectual force. While he accepted the Advaitic conception of Brohmo as the ultimate reality, he remained acutely aware that such metaphysical abstraction was insufficient to foster social progress within the confines of traditional education. Consequently, in 1826, he founded the Vedanta School with the vision of reinterpreting Vedanta through a synthesis of **Indian spiritual philosophy with Western ways of thinking about knowledge, reason, and scientific inquiry and**, thereby inaugurating a new era in the evolution of Indian philosophical thought.

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[Author: Shri Rajiv Gangopadhyay is the Editor of Tattwakoumudi.]

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Raja Rammohun Roy: The Torchbearer of Modern India

(Part – 1)

Uma Bhattacharyya

(Translated from a Bengali article)

Introduction:

India in the eighteenth century was a land lost in the darkness of ignorance and superstitions. The Hindu faith had eroded giving rise to caste differences and



corrupt religious practices. The divisive forces had torn the society asunder. The underprivileged were subjected to agonizing exploitations and women were cruelly suppressed. Deceptive interpretations of religious practices and distorted societal norms had plunged the country into stagnation, stifling all creativity or openness of thought. Men had lost their natural inquisitiveness, all scientific temper and reasoning power. The ability to accept new ideas had died making the country a decaying entity. India at the

time stood on the threshold of decrepitude and the glory of the ancient civilization was lost to the world. According to Rabindranath Tagore – “the country was not moving forward but going in circle around an old and decaying world. Whatever remained of the intellect, was used to follow, not enquire.” But if we cast our eyes towards the West, the lands had been rejuvenated by a new awakening. Modern ideas had enlightened philosophical thoughts, enlivened the spheres of education, culture, revitalizing core areas of knowledge like science and medicine. The darkness that engulfed our country could be dispersed only through an active interaction between the Occident and the Orient.

Raja Rammohun Roy was born at this crucial moment to light the beacon of



enlightenment in India and disperse the gloom that had overwhelmed his country.

Birth and Influence of His Family:

Raja Rammohun Roy was born on 22nd of May of the year 1772 (alternately 1774) in Radhanagar, a village in the district of Hooghly, Bengal. His father was Ramkanta Roy and mother was Tarini Devi. Both sides belonged to high caste Brahmin families of distinction. His paternal ancestors opted out of their caste specific professions and chose a different course that could help them in amassing wealth. His maternal grand-parent performed his priestly duties with great reverence. Influences of both the sides shaped Rammohun to the person he was to become. India was under Muslim rule at the time. Proficiency in both Arabic



and Farsi (Persian) languages was necessary to secure a position in the administrative circles. His father therefore sent him to Patna in 1782 to learn Arabic and Persian. Rammohun by sheer dint of his extraordinary intellect mastered both the languages. He read the philosophical treatises of Euclid and Aristotle in Arabic, which inspired him

to become a rationalist and monotheist. He studied the religious texts of the Muslim faith. Under the influence of his maternal grandfather, Rammohun went to Benares in 1885 to learn Sanskrit and study the literature and Hindu Shastras. He discovered that the Hindu philosophical treaties, especially the Vedanta and the Upanishads regarded God as One and only. He realized that this truth lies at the core of both Hinduism and Islam.

Awakening of Religious Consciousness:

Rammohun returned home in 1887. At the age of sixteen he composed a book criticizing the current practices of Hinduism and idolatry entitled 'The Idolatrous Practices in Hinduism'. This antagonized the contemporary Hindu society and displeased his father as a result of which he left his paternal home. He travelled far and wide to learn about the different religions, both inside his homeland and outside. He reached Tibet, the seat of Buddhism. To his utter disappointment he found the Buddhists were misguided to worship the Dalai Lama as an incarnation of God under. When he criticized the practice, his life was at risk. After some of the kind-hearted Tibetan ladies saved him from the wrath of their fellow-men, Rammohun returned home.

He learnt Latin, Greek and Hebrew in order to study the Bible in the original.

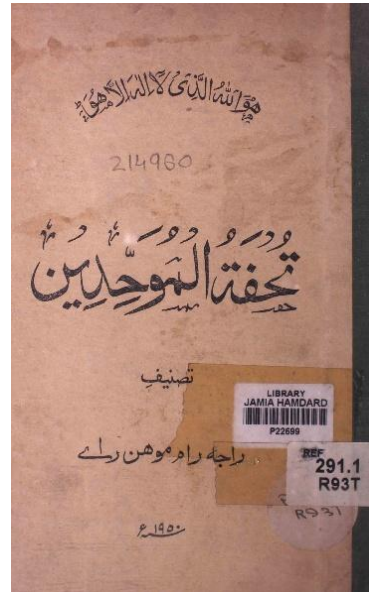
He arrived to the conclusion that the moral precepts of Jesus were the true teachings of the Bible, not the stories of the miracles. This brought him in confrontation with the Christian Missionaries. We find that slowly and steadily he becomes convinced of the unequivocal truth embedded in every faith, and he increasingly becomes conscious of the universal and humanitarian principles that are at the core of all religions. He believed that the search for the Eternal Being is not confined to miracles or rituals, but enshrined in the realization that all are the children of God. When everyone started having faith in One God who was also the father of mankind, then the world would become as perfect as heaven.

Professional Life:

Inheriting his father’s property in 1896, Rammohun shifted to his house at Jorashanko. He earned his livelihood by trading shares and lending money to the English. This made him quite prosperous.

His interaction with the British helped him to learn the English language. Due to his talent in mastering languages, he soon

became proficient in the English



language. In 1903 he was appointed as Dewan of Dacca-Jamalpur under Mr. Woodford. While serving as the Dewan, he published the book ‘Tuhfat-ul-Muahidin’ (In Search of Knowledge), which was written in Persian with an introduction in Arabic. In this book he established Monotheism with logic. In 1814 he permanently shifted to Calcutta and settled down after buying houses at Chowringhee and Manicktala.

[Author: Dr. Uma Bhattacharyya, Retired Professor, IISER]

Brahmo Samaj

Foundation Day Celebration of Sadhanashram

The Sadhanashram or Brahmo Workers' Shelter was founded by Pt. Sivanath Sastri on 1st February 1892. Its aim was to bring together dedicated Brahmo workers and train them for mission work. These workers of *pracharaks* would agree to live on the faith principle, entirely depending on the voluntary contributions of friends and sympathisers.

This year the foundation day was celebrated with due fervour and solemnity. The service was conducted by Mrs. Sutapa Roychowdhury, who in her service extolled the work of the early missionaries and how they worked together in serving the people in the name of God. They were a dedicated band of pracharaks, who aimed at propagating the faith of the Brahmo Samaj far and wide. The hymns were performed by Kaushik De, Subrata Pal, Bratati De, Tania Poddar, Doyel Chakraborty and Kalyan Chatterjee. The inmates of Mahila Bhavan also joined in the singing.

The congregation was treated to lunch after the service.

**Name of the Office Bearers of Sadharan Brahma Samaj Elected for the year
2025-2026**

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Biswajit Roy	Secretary
Subrata Kumar Datta	Treasurer
Amit Das	Asst. Secretary
Madhulika Ghosh	Asst. Secretary
Tania Ghosh	Asst. Secretary

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4	Ayantika Samaddar	24	Raka Barman
5	Debashis Roy	25	Rana Datta
6	Debashish Raychaudhuri	26	Rohini Raychaudhuri
7	Dhritabrata Bose	27	Samik Sen Gupta
8	Dipika Datta	28	Sangeeta De
9	Jayasree Das	29	Sheelbhadra Das
10	Jayati Das (Mitra)	30	Snigdha Pain
11	Ketaki Bagchi	31	Soumitra Bose
12	Koninika De	32	Sourav Chatterji
13	Konkotee De	33	Sova Roy
14	Koushik De	34	Subhankar Samaddar
15	Krishanu De	35	Suddhabrata Bose
16	Mitaly Ganguly	36	Sudipta Das
17	Mousumi Chatterjee	37	Suprovo Ghosh
18	Pradyot Basu	38	Surupa Datta
19	Prasun Ganguly	39	Sutapa Roychowdhury
20	Premomoy Das	40	Tamali Bose

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5	Koushik De
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7	Prasun Ganguly
8	Raka Barman
9	Sourav Chatterji
10	Surupa Datta
11	Sutapa Roychowdhury
12	Tamali Bose

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GL - 1310	Sukalpita Rao	In memory of Ananda Mohan Das	General Fund	1500
GL - 1311	Samita Das		Maghotsava Fund 2026	1561
GL - 1315	Piyali Sen		Maghotsava Fund 2026	1000
GL - 1316	Sumit Saha		Maghotsava Fund 2026	2000
GL - 1317	Jayati Gupta		Maghotsava Fund 2026	500
GL - 1320	Arup Kumar Das		Maghotsava Fund 2026	3000
GL - 1322	Mohi Ranjan Haldar		General Fund	5000
GL - 1323	Surachita Bose		Maghotsava Fund 2026	1000
GL - 1324	Sandipan Das		Maghotsava Fund 2026	1500
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