

A Comparative study in the view of Indian Social Reforms of Raja Ram Mohan Roy and E.V.Ramasamy

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Abstract

Since the pre-colonial times of rule, the Indian society that was under the grip of traditions, norms and customs could not get rid of them until the 20th century. That is to say; historically, the racial structure, female slavery, reactionary character which were seen in the Indian society where Brahmin society was highly influential had led the then Indian society. It had continued even during the colonial period. Hence, the said fraction of the society considered themselves as elite and the rest of the people had lived in India without rights and humanity. As a result, some agitations and oppositions arose in several parts in India from the educated, rationalists and progressive thinkers against this reactionary attitudes. Even some of the English rulers joined these so-called social reformers and took some initiatives. However, it was a great challenge for them during that period. It is noteworthy to mention here that Raja Ram Mohan Roy from the North India in 19th Century and E.V.Ramasami known as Periyar from South India in the 20th century were two of them who planted the societal reformatory opinions. Even though there were many similarities in many of the social reformatory opinions of them, there was not any direct relationship between them. This study is based on the historical approach of documentary and comparative explanations. Reports and policy declarations were used as primary data and books; newspapers and articles were used as secondary data for this study. The problem statement of this study is that the reformatory opinions and thoughts put forwarded by these reformers have not brought changes during the period of their lives and thereafter. The main objectives of this study are to find out the traditions and superstitions which deeply rooted in the south Indian society in the 19th and 20th century and to study the actions taken by the reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy and E.V.Ramasamy who evolved against these in this period and to study the similarities and differences of their opinions. However, there is no second opinion that the reformatory actions that these two reformers undertook had had impact on the people living there in during that time.

Keywords: social reforms, superstitions, female rights, casteism, untouchability.