Rammohan Roy’s Views on The Judicial System

by Toshiro YAMAZAKI

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The judicial reform in British India was seriously considered by the Home and local government immediately before the renewal of the East India Company’s Charter in 1833. It was in fact this period when the Indian intellectual class began to protest against new Regulations and to express their political claims through various petitions and newspapers.

Rammohan had, as he himself wrote, a good knowledge of the judicial system in Bengal taken from his personal experience for many years. Besides his civil service experience in some districts in 1803-14, he had been greatly worried by several civil suits against him as well as his elder son’s case of the embezzlement of public money. Therefore he was eager to lay before the English public the operation of the judicial system and his proposals for its reform. After his arrival in London in 1831, he had an opportunity to express his opinions on the judicial and revenue systems, answering the questions of the Board of Control. These were published in the Parliamentary Papers for 1831 (Vol. V) and immediately reprinted in some newspapers and journals in London and Calcutta. In 1832 he himself published them in a book entitled Exposition of the Practical Operation of the Judicial and Revenue Systems of India, etc. This is indeed the first Indian opinion concerning with wide questions of the judicial system of India.

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