



AN ANTHOLOGY OF WRITING

# Changing India

EDITED BY

RAJA RAO & IQBAL SINGH

FROM RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY TO  
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU



# CHANGING INDIA



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## PREFATORY NOTE

The aim of the anthology is to give a comprehensive idea of the evolution of Indian thought in social, political and philosophical spheres during the past hundred years. It is our belief that this evolution has not been haphazard, but consistent and logical. Its general trend and logic seems to have been determined by an historical event of overwhelming significance—namely, the contact with the Western World. It is possible to discern three distinct phases of development in the course of this process. The first phase was one of bewildered admiration of the Western civilization and a tendency towards imitation of all its elements, regardless of their intrinsic worth. This was naturally followed by a period of hostility and resistance to everything connected with the European culture. The contemporary phase will be seen to have brought a more correct perspective and understanding.

On the intellectual plane, the process of reorientation has been twofold. On the one hand, the Western influence has enlarged the horizon of the Indian mind, opened up fresh channels of thought, and given us a more objective bias. On the other, it has served as a challenge and emphasized the need of reassessing our past and discovering in it those threads which can fruitfully be pursued under the exigencies of our own times. Thus in spite of radical readjustments which have had to be made, a great measure of cultural continuity has been maintained.

The anthology begins with Raja Rammohun Roy, the first of the moderns; it ends with Jawaharlal Nehru who is unquestionably the most significant personality among the younger generation of Indian leaders. We have followed

a chronological sequence in the arrangement of the writings. This is because we feel that the chronological order synchronizes more or less closely with the curve of intellectual development.

R. R. AND I. S.

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R. R. and I. S.



RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY



## RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY

(1772-1833)

Raja Rammohun Roy is the first of our moderns. Though the India of his time was decadent it could still boast of a culture, so that Raja Rammohun Roy was able with dignity to judge and assimilate the new values brought over by the European traders. He was also born at a time when, despite the internal disorders of the country, India was still a nation which could treat the newcomers with a sense of equality, so sadly lacking in the generation after him, and not to be found again till the advent of contemporary India. Raja Rammohun Roy was a great social reformer, responsible for the abolition of the *sutee* and an uncompromising fighter against Hindu idolatry, which led him to establish the *Brahmo Samaj*, that powerful reform movement which has given India some of the greatest of her men. He started our first newspaper, and he was also the first Indian to come over the "dark waters" to England, where he was received with all the honours due to a Prince. The first of our internationalists and progressive politicians, he gave a public dinner in Calcutta when the Spanish people got a constitution, and when on his way to Europe he saw in a port a French ship flying revolutionary flags, he immediately asked to be allowed to visit the ship and honour a people who had established equality and liberty. He has rightly been called the father of Modern India.

"We in India," says Tagore, "have occasion to bitterly blame our destiny. We have reason to deplore our past and despair of our future, but at the same time we have a right to hope for the best when we know that Rammohun has been born to us."

His chief publications are:

*Tuhfatul Muwahhiddin* (in Persian, with an Arabic introduction).

*A Defence of Hindoo Theism.*

*First Conference on the Burning of Widows.*

*Second Conference on the Burning of Widows.*

*Cena, Isha, Mundak and Kathopanishads.*

*Precepts of Jesus.*

*Petition against Press Regulation.*

*Letter on English Education.*

*Divine Worship by means of Gyuttree.*

*Evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons.*

*The English Works of Raja Rammohun Roy, 2 vols.*