

Hindu Reform Movements

Brahmo Samaj

- Established in 1828
- The 'Society of God'
- Founded by - Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833)

Raja Rammohan Roy

- RMR was born in an Orthodox Brahmin family in Bengal
- Given title of 'Raja' by Mughal Badshah Akbar Shah II due to his social work
- He knew many languages (polyglot) - Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Arabic, Persian
- In 1815, he established the ATMIYA SABHA.
- Book - 'Tuhfat-ul-Muwahiddin' - A gift to Monotheist
- 1820 -Published the 'Precepts of Jesus' where he analysed moral teachings of Christ
- He extensively studied and analysed all major religious texts and wrote about their teachings
- Translated Vedas in Bengali

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Raja Rammohan Roy

- 1821 - Started a Bengali weekly Newspaper - **Samwad Kaumudi** - The moon of intelligence
 - It was the first newspaper to be published, edited and managed by an Indian.
 - In some places he has been termed as Pioneer of Journalism.
- 1822 - another weekly in Persian - '**Mirat ul Akbar**' - Mirror of intelligence
- 1830 - Went to England to plead for the Mughal emperor Akbar Shah II in the court of King William IV
 - King increased the pension of Emperor on his request.
- Toured Europe for cultural exchange
- Died at Bristol, England in 1833
- First to ask political questions about the country
- '**Father of Indian Nationalism**' - title given by Rabindranath Tagore

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Brahmo Samaj Criticized:

- Caste system
- Polygamy
- Child marriage
- Priests
- Idol Worship
- Polytheism
- Avatar worship
- Sati system
- Sacrifices
- Dogma against going abroad

Brahmo Samaj Emphasized:

- Human dignity for all - Humanism
- Spirituality based on Upanishads
 - Arya Samaj doesn't believe in Upanishads
- Worship of the Eternal, immutable and unsearchable - no image/idol
- Morality
- Women's rights
- Upliftment in conditions of widows
- Widow remarriage

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Debendranath Tagore

- After the death of RRM, Debendranath Tagore (father of Satyendranath and Rabindranath Tagore) took the reins of Brahma Samaj in 1843
- He earlier headed the **Tattvabodhini Sabha** (1839 -a spiritual body). It was merged with Brahma samaj
- He also founded **Shantiniketan**

Keshab Chandra Sen

- Keshab Chandra Sen joined Brahma samaj in 1858 - he expanded the movement outside Bengal
- KCS's teachings and outlook was **too radical** - he brought teachings of other religions in the sabha.
- This led to a split in the Brahma Samaj in 1866
 - **Adi Brahma Samaj** - Debendranath Tagore
 - **Brahma Samaj of India** - Keshab Chandra Sen
- Keshab Chandra Sen's Brahma Samaj of India further split when he married his 13-year-old daughter to the minor **king of Cooch Behar** (near Siliguri) in 1878
 - Disgusted followers founded the '**Sadharan Brahma Samaj**'

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Prarthna Samaj

- Implemented Ideas of Brahmo Samaj in Maharashtra
- 1849 - Paramhansa sabha started
- This Sabha was reorganised as Prarthna Samaj by Dr. Atmaram Pandurang and Keshab Chandra Sen in 1867 at Bombay
- Famous leaders associated with the Samaj -
 - Mahadeo Govind Ranade
 - R.G. Bhandarker
 - N.G. Chandaverker
- Emphasised on 'works' rather than 'faith'
- Believed in 'love and worship of God' lay in service of needy people
- Education and persuasion - not confrontation with orthodox elements - for reforms
- Focus on - caste system, child marriage, widow remarriage and girl's education

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Arya Samaj

- Est. in 1875 at Bombay
- Arya Samaj means 'The Society of Noble people'
- Founder - Swami Dayanand Saraswati
- Later the headquarters and base shifted to Lahore and the society took deep roots in Northern India- Punjab, UP, Bihar, Haryana, Rajasthan.

Dayanand Saraswati

- Original name - Moolshanker
- Born in an orthodox Gujarati Brahmin family
- Age 21 - left home as an ascetic
- Age 36 - Studied Vedas at Mathura and translated them into Hindi
- Books written by him:
 - Satyarth Prakash (Hindi)
 - Ved Bhashya Bhoomika (Sanskrit)
 - Ved Bhashya (Sanskrit)

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Philosophy and Views of Arya Samaj

- Rejected the western ideas of reform
- Accepted Vedas as the ultimate authority.
 - He gave the slogan- "Go Back to Vedas"
- Believed in superiority of Hindu religion and culture
- Creation of a sense of pride in Indian culture and tradition
- Prayers, meetings, and religious lectures were held by Samaj every 8th day
- Believed in welfare of mankind
- Fatherhood of God and Brotherhood of man
- Gender equality
- Love and charity towards all
- 'Shuddhi' campaign for re-conversion
- 'India for Indians' - political slogan
- Arya Samaj did NOT oppose modernisation completely. It embraced modernity and accepted the utilitarian benefits of modern society.

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Arya Samaj Opposed:

- Sati practice
- Child marriage
- Idol worship
- Superstitions
- Priestly class dominance
- Caste system (But accepted 'Varna' system according to Vedas)
- Swami Dayanand believed that any scripture written after the Vedas (Puranas, Upanishads, etc.) were reason for redundant practices in Hinduism, like idol worship and opposed them.

Works in Field of Education:

- Gurukuls opened by Arya Samaj to spread Vedic knowledge in children
- Dayanand Anglo Vedic (DAV) school was established at Lahore in 1886 by Lala Hansraj and Lala Lajpat Rai (Liberal Faction)
- Gurukul University at Haridwar established in 1902 by Lala Munshiram (Orthodox faction)

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Ramakrishna Mission

- Established at Belur, Bengal in 1897
 - Today a Belur Math is there in Belur.
- By **Swami Vivekananda** (Narendranath Dutt)
- Named after his guru - **Ramakrishna Paramhansa**, a priest in Calcutta temple

Objective:

- It is a social service and charitable society.
- Providing humanitarian relief and social work through the establishment of schools, colleges, hospitals and orphanages.
- Swami Dayanand believed that any scripture written after the Vedas (Puranas, Upanishads, etc.) were reason for redundant practices in Hinduism, like idol worship and opposed them.

Views and Philosophy

- Teachings and philosophy rooted in Bhakti and Yoga traditions
- Krishna, Hari, Ram, Allah are all names of one god
- Did not reject image worship but laid stress on the worship of essential spirit and not the image

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Views and Philosophy

- Did not reject image worship but laid stress on the worship of essential spirit and not the image
- Selfless devotion to God - Bhakti movement
- The teachings of Ramakrishna Paramhansa appealed to the common man of Bengal.
 - Whereas, the Brahma samaj appealed to elite, intellectual and educated class, since social evil was prevalent in upper class.
- Swami Vivekananda preached these philosophies of Ramakrishna Paramhansa in simple language
 - He attended the Parliament of World Religions at Chicago in 1893 and gave a famous speech on Hinduism.
 - He asked the Blend of Materialism of the west with the spiritualism of the east
- He said that, 'It is an insult to teach religion to a starving man'.
- Opposed caste system and untouchability
- Asked Youths to build Moral and physical strength
- He stressed on upliftment of the poor, the weak and the hungry by inspiring youth of the society

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Theosophical Society

- Did not reject image worship but laid stress on the worship of essential spirit and not the image
- Theosophy- Teaching about God and the world based on mystical insight
- **Madam H.P. Blavatsky** - a Russo- German woman by birth laid the foundations of the society in 1875 at New York, USA. Later **Col. M.S. Olcott** joined her.
- Headquarters shifted to **ADYAR**, near Madras in 1882. Since, they wanted to do research of Indian religion.

Views and Philosophy:

- Belief in Reincarnation, Karma
- Inspiration from Upanishads and Samkhya, Yoga, Vedanta school of philosophy
- Universal brotherhood of humanity
- No difference based on caste, creed, race, sex or colour of skin
- Investigate the unexplained laws of nature and latent powers of man
- Theosophy became a movement of Hindu Revival

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Annie Besant

- An Irish woman, was elected its president after death of Col. Olcott in 1907
 - She had come to India to work for the society in 1892.
- She became a Hindu in her views, dress, food and social manners
- Translated Bhagvat Gita (Not the 1st to do so)
 - Charles Wilkins of the Asiatic Society 1st translated Bhagvat Gita to English in 1785.
- She made the movement popular in India
- She later became a prominent national leader and even the 1st woman president of Congress
- She established Home Rule League movement with support of Bal Gangadhar Tilak
- Annie Besant laid foundation of Central Hindu College in Benares in 1898 where Hindu religion + western science was taught together
 - It became BHU -1916 - Madan Mohan Malviya

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Young Bengal Movement

- **Henry Vivian Derozio** was the founder of the Young Bengal Movement (~1826)
- He was born in Calcutta in 1809 and taught in the Hindu College (est. RMR and David Hare). He died of cholera in 1833.
- His followers were known as the **Derozians** and their movement the Young Bengal Movement.
- They attacked old traditions and decadent customs.
- They also advocated women's rights and their education.
- They founded associations and organized debates against idol worship, casteism and superstitions
- This movement gave quick start to Social Reform movement in Bengal.
 - Later, these Derozians joined other societies like, Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj etc.

Depressed Classes Mission

- Maharshi Vitthal Ramji Shinde

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Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar

- A great educator, humanist and social reformer
- He was born in 1820 in a village in Midnapur, Bengal.
- He rose to be the Head Pandit of the Bengali Department of Fort William College.
- Vidyasagar founded many schools for girls
- He helped J.D. Bethune to establish the Bethune School.
- He founded the Metropolitan Institution in Calcutta
- He protested against child marriage and favoured widow Remarriage which was legalised by the Widow Remarriage Act (1856).
- It was due to his great support for the spread of education that he was given the title of Vidyasagar.

Deccan Education Society

- Vishnushastri Chiplunkar and Bal Gangadhar Tilak
- Established the Fergusson College, Pune in 1885

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Dayal Singh Majithia

- Dayal Singh College, Lahore (1902)
- Punjab National Bank

Year	Movement Name	Founder
1815	Atmiya Sabha	Raja Ram Mohan Roy
1828	Brahmo Samaj	Raja Ram Mohan Roy
1839	Tattvabodhini Sabha	Debendranath Tagore
1866	Adi Brahmo Samaj	Debendranath Tagore
1866	Brahmo Samaj of India	Keshab Chandra Sen
1878	Sadharan Brahmo Samaj	Followers of KCS
1867	Prarthna Samaj	Keshab Chandra Sen Dr. Atmaram Pandurang
1875	Arya Samaj	Swami Dayanand Saraswati
1897	Ramkrishna Mission	Swami Vivekanand
1875	Theosophical Society	Madam H.P. Blavatsky Col. M.S. Olcott
1826	Young Bengal Movement	Henery Vivian Derozio