

# Raja Ram Mohan Roy

In addition to being a learned man of Sanskrit, Persian, and English, Raja Ram Mohan Roy was also well-versed in Arabic, Latin, and Greek. The Shastri profession was prepared for him by one parent, while the worldly advantages required to begin a career in the laukik, or worldly field of public administration, were obtained for him by the other.

Ram Mohan spent the remainder of his life vacillating between these different parental values after being torn between them since he was a little child. Ram Mohan Roy saw his sister-in-law die via Sati while he was a little boy. Ram Mohan Roy saw the terrified 17-year-old girl as she was being led toward the fire. However, his protests were ineffective. Some key facts about him have been listed below;

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy was born into a traditional Bengali Hindu family in Radhanagar of the Hooghly District, Bengal Presidency in May 1772.
- Ram Mohan's education included Persian and Arabic study at Patna, where he was moved for further instruction. He read the Qur'an, the Arabic translation of Plato and Aristotle's writings, and the poetry of Sufi mystics. He had mastered Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic, and Bangla by the age of 15. He was also proficient in Hindi and English.
- He travelled to Varanasi and absorbed a great deal of Hindu philosophy, the Upanishads, and the Vedas. Along with Islam, he also studied Christianity.
- He published an intelligent condemnation of Hindu idol worship when he was sixteen years old.
- He worked for the East India Company's Revenue Department from 1809 to 1814. He also served as Woodforde and Digby's personal Diwan during that time.
- He began devoting his career to religious, social, and political reforms in 1814.
- As the "Inaugurator of the Modern Age in India," he said in his speech. Ram Mohan was described by Tagore as "a luminous star in the firmament of Indian history."
- As an emissary for the Mughal king Akbar Shah II (the father of Bahadur Shah), he travelled to England, where he succumbed to illness. In Bristol, England, in September 1833, he passed away.
- The Mughal Emperor of Delhi, Akbar II, bestowed upon him the title "Raja," and it is he who brings his problems before the British king.

## Raja Ram Mohan Roy as a Social Reformer

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a visionary who was fuelled by the personal tragedy of losing his sister to the practice of Sati. He was a revolutionery who changed the society in more ways than we can ever list. However, we have compiled a comprehensive list of all the efforts made by him.

### Political and Economic Contributions by Raja Ram Mohan Roy

- The civic liberties provided to citizens under the British System of Constitutional Government impressed and inspired Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He wished to make the Indian people eligible for the advantages of that form of governance.
- He proposed reformation of taxing systems –
  - He denounced Bengali zamindars' repressive methods.
  - He requested that minimum rents be fixed.

- He advocated for the elimination of tariffs on tax-free territories and the decrease of export taxes on commodities made in India.
- He shouted out in support of eliminating the trading privileges of the East India Company.
- He spoke out against the British government's unfair policies, particularly its limitations on press freedom. He contributed to the fight for free press in India by his writings and other endeavours.
  - After Lord Hastings lifted press restrictions in 1819, Ram Mohan founded three publications: the Bengali weekly Samvad Kaumudi (1821), The Brahmanical Magazine (1821), and the Persian weekly Mirat-ul-Akbar (1821).
- He advocated that Europeans and Indians be treated equally. He favoured the independence of the executive and judicial branches of government and the Indianization of superior services.

### **Social Reforms by Raja Ram Mohan Roy**

- He saw reforming religious organisations as tools for social and political change.
- He founded the Calcutta Unitarian Association in 1821, the Atmiya Sabha in 1814, and the Brahmo Sabha or Brahmo Samaj in 1828.
- He advocated for women's rights, such as the freedom to own property and the ability for widows to remarry.
- Due to his efforts, polygamy was outlawed and Sati was abolished in 1829 by Lord William Bentinck, the Indian governor-general at the time.
- Raja Ram Mohan Roy ran an anti-caste, anti-untouchability, anti-superstition, anti-alcohol campaign.
- He denounced child marriage, women's illiteracy, polygamy, and the inferior treatment of widows.
- He placed emphasis on rationalism and the application of modern science
- He campaigned against the perceived flaws of his era's Hindu society.
- He founded the Bengali weekly journal Sambad Kaumudi, which frequently attacked Sati as being barbaric and opposed to Hinduism's core principles.

### **Educational Reforms by Raja Ram Mohan Roy**

- He established numerous schools to impart English-language Western scientific knowledge to Indians.
- He thought that the conventional Indian educational system was inferior to schooling in the English language.
- In 1817, he helped David Hare establish the Hindu College while Roy's English school offered classes in mechanics and Voltaire's philosophy.
- He established a school with an English-based curriculum in 1822.
- He founded Vedanta College in 1825, where he offered studies in both Indian learning and Western physical and social sciences.

### **Religious Reforms by Raja Ram Mohan Roy**

- In 1803 Raja Ram Mohan Roy released his first book, Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhiddin (a gift to deists), which highlighted illogical religious ideas.
- He condemned Hindu idolatry and immoral activities such as their faith in revelations, prophets, miracles, and other such things.

- He objected to Hinduism's alleged polytheism. He promoted monotheism as it is described in the Bible.
- In order to combat idolatry, needless rituals, oppressive caste structures, and other societal issues, he founded the Atmiya Sabha in Calcutta in 1814.
- He disapproved of Christianity's ritualism and denied Christ as God in the flesh. Precepts of Jesus (1820), which he praised, he made an effort to separate the miracle stories from the philosophical and moral lessons of the New Testament.
- He rendered into Bengali the Vedas and five Upanishads.

## Brahmo Samaj

The social aspect of Brahmoism, which emerged as a reformist monotheistic movement of Hinduism during the Bengal Renaissance, is called the Brahmo Samaj.

- It was one of India's most powerful religious movements and significantly influenced the development of modern India.
- It was started in Calcutta on August 20, 1828, by Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Dwarkanath Tagore as a reform of the then-prevailing Brahmanism prevalent in that time (particularly Kulin practises).
- It marked the beginning of the Bengal Renaissance of the 19th century, which pioneered all religious, social, and educational advancement of the Hindu community.
- A Trust Deed was created in 1830 to formally establish it, and the first house of worship, known colloquially as the Adi Brahmo Samaj, was officially and publicly dedicated in January 1830.
- The newest officially recognised religion in India and Bangladesh, Brahmoism, which has its roots in reformed spiritual Hinduism and incorporates significant components of Judeo-Islamic doctrine and practise, is a product of the Brahmo Samaj.

## Short Note on Raja Ram Mohan Roy and its Contribution

Ram Mohan Roy's resurrection of the ethical and pure Vedanta school of philosophy's teachings from the Upanishads had a significant influence on contemporary Indian history. He shared his message of the oneness of God, contributed to the first English translations of Vedic texts, co-founded the Calcutta Unitarian Society, and established the Brahma Samaj. He waged a successful effort to end the burning of widows, or sati. He aimed to combine the greatest aspects of his own customs with Western civilization. In order to popularise a contemporary educational system in India—one that effectively replaced Sanskrit-based schooling with English-based schooling founded a number of institutions. He advocated for a logical, moral, non-authoritarian, earthly, and socially progressive type of Hinduism. His works also piqued the curiosity of American and British Unitarians.