

Today I will be discussing the course DSC 105 with the course

Title Indian National Movement, 1857 to 1947.

The module name is Socio Religious Reform Movements

in the 19th century, which will include the Brahmo samaj, the

Arya Samaj and the Satyashodhak Samaj..

I am Ms. Vrishali Prabhugaunkar, Associate Professor

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today, we're going to briefly deal with the introduction to

this reform movements and their contributions, and then individually we

will go into their details.

The entire study aims at certain learning

outcomes, retains that the students will be able to describe the

social religious conditions in

India in the 19th century . The students will comprehend the

objectives and activities of the Brahmo Samaj ,The Arya Samaj and the Satyashodhak Samaj.

They can also understand the contributions made by the Brahmo Samaj and the others. We begin with

the introduction to these reform movements. The 18th century was

a century of decay and stagnation.

We also see the arrival of the British in India and trading with the East India Company.

The 19th century, however, saw the rise of.

numerous social religious reform movements and India witnessed an

awakening or renaissance. It has been described also as beginning of a new age.

Here we analyze the causes or the factors that were responsible for the rise of the social religious reform movements. We briefly discuss how the British who came as traders humiliated the conquered i.e the Indians.

There was constant criticism of the culture and social customs, the religious aspects of the Indians. This produced discontentment among the Indian populace. We also have the introduction of Western education in the country whereby the Indians came across great thinkers and their writings.

They felt that India should also see the introduction of equality in this society so that the lower sections are not oppressed. So Western education, with its medium of instruction English became a turning point in bringing the reformers together and leading to the establishment of various Samaj's in the country.

The British also provided administrative unity, peace and communication system in the country.

The Subcontinent was under the

control of the British and they established an administrative system which included uniform system of laws, currency, taxation, etc. With the rule of law that came into existence, there was peace.

They also introduced different means of communication, like the railways, the telegraph, the Postal system, etc. Now all this was important in bringing the Indians together. The educated minds came together for discussions.

There was dissemination of ideas and therefore we see, the establishment of various samaj's in the country.

A big role was also played by the indologists or the scholars who devoted their time to study of Indian history and heritage.

The indologists were able to highlight the greatness of Indian culture and as a result the Indians feel quite proud about their heritage. The Christian missionaries too played a very important role as they constantly criticized the Indian customs and some of the

religious practices. So this was another reason why a need was felt to bring about reforms in this society. Then the role

played by the press was equally important. The vernacular press helped in spreading ideas among the lower classes. The enlightened

minds could also come together and discuss various ideas. So in this manner we have the stage set for the discussion and for the establishment of various religious and social reform movements in the country that contributed to Renaissance or awakening.

We take up now the study of Brahmo Samaj and its founder to begin with. The founder of this samaj was Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Rammohan Roy was his name while Raja was a title that was bestowed on him. Raja Ram Mohan Roy is also referred to as the father of Indian Renaissance.

He came from a Bengali zamindar family.

Right from the childhood, he was very much interested in Social aspects .

He published 'A Gift to the Monotheist', and through this he explained that the rituals and superstitions in the religions had to be done away with. In 1815, the 'Atmiya Sabha', the Society of friends was established in Calcutta. Now this is where the enlightened minds came together and held discussions, and there would be sermons and readings.

And it is said that it is from this group of friends that the idea of establishment of the Brahmo Samaj emerged .With regard to the Anglicist and the Orientalist controversy that emerged at this time Raja Ram Mohan Roy clearly supported the Anglicists. He was for the introduction of Western education and English language in the country. It was not that he was against Sanskrit, but to him, the Indians had to know the progress that was taking place in the West and the best way of knowing this was through the introduction of Western education in the country.

He felt that when the East India Company was ready to spend money it should be spent on on the Western education in India. He also published The Brahmanical magazine and through this he proved that he was Hindu and he was willing to defend Hinduism from attacks from various sections.

Through his various studies, he came to the conclusion of the belief in God or the existence of One theism. He said that Hindu,or Islam theism, or the Christian theism were all historical varieties. He strongly stood for eradication of social evils like Sati, child marriage , polygamy. It was through his efforts that Lord

William Bentick was able to abolish Sati in 1829 .With regard to politics, he had ideas that were very liberal in nature. He was a staunch Liberal Democrat. He believed that the East India Company should associate Indians in the administration. He advocated freedom of press and wanted a very responsible press in the country. He stood greatly, for aspects which would lead to the upliftment of certain sections that face taxes. He strongly condemned the drain of wealth that happened in the country and the salt monopoly that the British enjoyed. In 1831 he decided to defy the ban on foreign travel or the overseas travel and decided to visit England, in order to, request the British government to increase the allowance of the nominal Moghul, Emperor Akbar II. Therefore Akbar II conferred on him, the title of Raja. He visited England and was able to witness the happenings in the House of Commons when the Charter act of 1833 was being passed. However he passed away in England itself on 27 September 1833. Thus Raja Ram Mohan. Roy has contributed to the emancipation of the lower classes and fought for the emancipation of women too.

Now we take up the study of Brahmo Samaj which was originally set up as Brahmo Sabha. It was established in 1828 at Calcutta. Within two years time in 1830, land was acquired and a House of prayers or the Brammo Church was set up.

They also signed a trust deed which would look into the administration of this sabha and the management of this church.

That Trust clearly announced or elucidated the principles that were to be followed by the members. It was strictly to be worship of one God that would be followed.

There would not be any idols that would be worshipped here.

There will be no images or rituals that would be performed and it would be open to members or persons following all other religions. The members of this samaj had to respect all religions and also appreciate the Brotherhood of all men. After the

death of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the Brahmo Samaj began to slowly decline. It was revitalized by the Devendranath Tagore

the father of Rabindranath Tagore. He attached his own society to this samaj and it

emerged as a missionary

organization. Subsequently, the Brahmo Samaj was also joined by

Keshab Chandra Sen in 1857, who also believed in bringing about

great social reforms. Together, they succeeded in revitalizing the Brahmo Samaj. Gradually, however, there were differences, and a split occurred in 1866. Thus we see Brahmo Samaj, splitting up into Brahmo Samaj of India, and the Adi Brahmo Samaj and the universal or Sadharan Brahmo Samaj.

The Samaj made an impact on the cultural life of Bengal. It brought about a renaissance in Bengal. It could not make a great impact on the masses since all its Members belonged to the upper class or the wealthy and the rich. Anyway, it managed to influence the foundation of the Prarthana Samaj which emerged in Maharashtra.

We now move on to the Arya Samaj, which is also known as the Society of nobles. Its founder was Swami Dayananda Saraswati. Swami Dayananda Saraswati was originally known as Mul (Moola) Shankar. He was born in Morvi, Gujarat in a Brahmin family. Right from his childhood he was very keen on becoming an ascetic and therefore at the age of 16 he left his home and wandered throughout the country. Gradually in search of truth he came across a number of heads of various monasteries and mutts, and then finally understood that



the Vedas contain all the truth. So his Motto became very

clear that it was all ' back to the Vedas' or to the

richness of India and its past glory and

heritage. He felt that truth could be found in the vedas. So

the study of the Vedas became extremely important.

Under his guidance on 10th April 1875, the Arya Samaj was

established in Bombay with branches all over the country.

It focused on social reforms very vigorously, like

emancipation of women, working for the betterment of the

working classes and the downtrodden. Swami Dayananda Saraswati constantly used the three words swadharma, Swaraj and Swabhasha.

Swaraj meant self government or our government.

Swabhasha our language and Swadharma our religion.

He wrote the book Satyarth Prakash, the light of truth,

Shuddhi became associated with this movement and the

Samaj became a proselytising body. It believed in Prevention

of conversions to other religions, reconversions of converted

Hindus into the Hindu society and also conversions of people

of other creeds to Hinduism.

Arya Samaj contributed tremendously to the

educational activities since it wanted to bring about

improvement in the conditions of the youth. So DAV, institutions were set up in northern India. It also inspired the political struggle or the struggle for freedom because we have Ramprasad Bismil ,Bhagat Singh and Lala Lajpat Rai, the members of this samaj contributing to the freedom struggle.

We now move to the Satyashodhak Samaj, the Society of seekers of Truth .Its founder was Mahatma Jyotiba Phule.

On 24th September 1873, it was established in Pune. Its objective was to liberate the Shudras and the untouchables from oppression by the upper classes. It opposed idolatry- worship of idols in any form and caste system. He was specially opposed to the Brahmin priestly class.

They refuse to regard the Vedas as sacred . His wife Savitribai Phule was the head of the section of women which comprised of about 90 members. The Samaj published two Journals - Dinbandhu and Dinmitra.Through this medium the views and ideas on various social issues were expressed. In 1848,Mahatma Jyotiba started a School for Girls.He also established a home for newborn infants and the upper class widows, and it strongly championed widow remarriage .This

Samaj was patronized by Shahu Maharaj, the ruler of Kolhapur financially and morally. The Samaj worked in collaboration with Pandita Ramabai, Tarabai Shinde and Muktabai. The Samaj, has made tremendous contributions in Maharashtra. It did make a tremendous impact.

Now, in conclusion, I would just like to say that.

In the 19th century we have rise of different reform movements.

Some of them like Brahmo Samaj, took inspiration from the West.

Others, like Arya Samaj, believed in taking inspiration from India's past glory.

While Ramkrishna Mission became a synthesis of the East and the West.

Thank you.