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D)Rajaram Mohan Rai:

Ram Mohan Roy, Ram Mohan also spelled **Rammohun**, **Rammohan**, or **Ram Mohun**, (born May 22, 1772, Radhanagar, Bengal, India—died September 27, 1833, [Bristol](#), Gloucestershire, England), Indian religious, social, and educational reformer who challenged traditional Hindu [culture](#) and indicated lines of progress for Indian society under British rule. He is sometimes called the father of modern [India](#).

Early Life

He was born in British-ruled Bengal to a prosperous family of the [Brahman](#) class (*varna*). Little is known of his early life and [education](#), but he seems to have developed unorthodox religious ideas at an early age. As a youth, he traveled widely outside Bengal and mastered several languages—[Sanskrit](#), [Persian](#), [Arabic](#), and [English](#), in addition to his native [Bengali](#) and [Hindi](#).

Roy supported himself by moneylending, managing his small estates, and speculating in British [East India Company bonds](#). In 1805 he was employed by John Digby, a lower company official who introduced him to Western culture and literature. For the next 10 years Roy drifted in and out of British East India Company service as Digby's assistant.

Roy continued his religious studies throughout that period. In 1803 he composed a tract denouncing what he regarded as India's superstition and its religious divisions, both within [Hinduism](#) and between Hinduism and other religions. As a remedy for those ills, he advocated a [monotheistic](#) Hinduism in which reason guides the adherent to "the Absolute Originator who is the first principle of all religions." He sought a philosophical basis for his religious beliefs in the [Vedas](#) (the sacred scriptures of Hinduism) and the [Upanishads](#) (speculative philosophical texts), translating those ancient Sanskrit [treatises](#) into Bengali, Hindi, and English and writing summaries and treatises on them. The central theme of those texts, for Roy, was the worship of the Supreme God who is beyond human knowledge and who supports the universe. In appreciation of his translations, the French Société Asiatique in 1824 elected him to an honorary membership.

In 1815 Roy founded the short-lived Atmiya-Sabha (Friendly Society) to [propagate](#) his doctrines of monotheistic Hinduism. He became interested in Christianity and learned Hebrew and Greek in order to read the [Old](#) (see [Hebrew Bible](#)) and [New Testaments](#). In 1820 he published the [ethical](#) teachings of Christ, excerpted from the four [Gospels](#), under the title *Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness*.

Social And Political Activism

In 1823, when the British imposed censorship upon the Calcutta (Kolkata) press, Roy, as founder and editor of two of India's earliest weekly newspapers, organized a protest, arguing in favour of [freedom of speech](#) and [religion](#) as natural rights. That protest marked a turning point in Roy's life, away from preoccupation with religious polemic and toward social and political action. In his newspapers, treatises, and books, Roy tirelessly criticized what he saw as the idolatry and superstition of traditional Hinduism. He denounced the [caste](#) system and attacked the custom of [suttee](#) ([ritual](#) burning of widows upon the funeral pyres of their deceased husbands). His writings emboldened the British East India Governing Council to act decisively on the matter, leading to the prohibition of suttee in 1829.

In 1822 Roy founded the Anglo-Hindu School and four years later the Vedanta College in order to teach his Hindu monotheistic doctrines. When the Bengal government proposed a more traditional Sanskrit college, in 1823, Roy protested that classical [Indian literature](#) would not prepare the youth of Bengal for the demands of modern life. He proposed instead a modern Western curriculum of study. Roy also led a protest against the outmoded British legal and revenue administration in India.

In [August](#) 1828 Roy formed the [Brahmo Samaj](#) (Society of Brahma), a Hindu reformist sect that utilized [Unitarian](#) and other liberal Christian elements in its beliefs. The Brahmo Samaj was to play an important part, later in the century, as a Hindu movement of reform.

In 1829 Roy journeyed to [England](#) as the unofficial representative of the titular king of Delhi. The king of Delhi granted him the title of raja, though it was unrecognized by the British. Roy was well received in England, especially by [Unitarians](#) there and by King [William IV](#). Roy died of a fever while in the care of Unitarian friends at Bristol, where he was buried.

Roy's importance in modern Indian history rests partly upon the broad scope of his social vision and the striking modernity of his thought. He was a tireless social reformer, yet he also revived interest in the ethical principles of the [Vedanta](#) school as a counterpoise to the Western assault on Indian culture. In his textbooks and treatises he contributed to the popularization of the [Bengali language](#), while at the same time he was the first Indian to apply to the Indian [environment](#) the fundamental social and political ideas of the [French](#) and [American](#) revolutions.

[The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica](#) This article was most recently revised and updated by [Adam Augustyn](#), Managing Editor, Reference Content.

2)Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (26 September 1820 – 29 July 1891),born **Ishwar Chandra Bandyopadhyay**, was an Indian [educator](#) and [social reformer](#).^[2] His efforts to simplify and modernise [Bengali](#) prose were significant. He also rationalised and simplified the Bengali alphabet and type, which had remained unchanged since [Charles Wilkins](#) and [Panchanan Karmakar](#) had cut the first (wooden) Bengali [type](#) in 1780. He is considered the "father of Bengali prose".^[3]

He was the most prominent campaigner for Hindu widow remarriage and petitioned Legislative council despite severe opposition and a counter petition against the proposal with nearly four times more signatures by [Radhakanta Deb](#) and the [Dharma Sabha](#).^{[4][5]} But [Lord Dalhousie](#) personally finalised the bill despite the opposition and it being considered a flagrant breach of Hindu customs as prevalent then and the Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act, 1856 was passed.^[6]

He received the title "*Vidyasagar*" (in [Sanskrit](#) *Vidya* means knowledge and *Sagar* means ocean, i.e., Ocean of Knowledge) from [Sanskrit College](#), Calcutta (from where he graduated), due to his excellent performance in Sanskrit studies and philosophy. Noted [Cambridge](#) mathematician [Anil Kumar Gain](#) founded [Vidyasagar University](#), named in his honour.^[8]

Widow remarriage

Main article: [Widow Remarriage Act](#)

Vidyasagar championed the upliftment of the status of women in India, particularly in his native [Bengal](#). Unlike some other reformers who sought to set up alternative societies or systems, he sought to transform society from within.^[15]

Unable to tolerate the ill-treatment, many of these girls would run away and turn to prostitution to support themselves. Ironically, the economic prosperity and lavish lifestyles of the city made it possible for many of them to have successful careers once they stepped out of the sanction of society and into the demi-monde. In 1853 it was estimated that Calcutta had a population of 12,700 prostitutes and public women. Many widows had to shave their heads and don white saris, supposedly to discourage attention from men. They led a deplorable life, something Vidyasagar thought was unfair and sought to change.^[16]

Spread of Education beyond Higher Classes

The [Wood's despatch of 1854](#)—considered the [Magna Carta](#) of Indian education—adopted a new policy towards 'mass education'. Hitherto the official focus was on the upper classes of population for education. Dubbed the 'Downward Filtration Theory', this implied that education always filters down from the upper classes of the society to the common masses.

In 1859, the government's education policy reiterated "the spread of vernacular elementary instruction among the lower orders".^[17] Upon this, Vidyasagar addressed a letter, dated 29 September 1859, to [John Peter Grant](#), the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, underlining his perception:

An impression appears to have gained ground, both here and in England, that enough has been done for the education of the higher classes and that attention should now be directed towards the education of the masses... An enquiry into the matter will, however, show a very different state of things. As the best, if not the only

practicable means of promoting education in Bengal, the Government should, in my humble opinion, confine itself to the education of the higher classes on a comprehensive scale.^{[18][19][20]}

The words "higher classes" in Bengali parlance do not entail anything but caste which bestows or withdraws the privilege of education on a person by birth. Thus, Vidyasagar explicitly advocated for confining education to "higher classes".^{[19][20]}

Earlier in 1854, Vidyasagar had scoffed at the admission of a wealthy man from the goldsmith caste of Bengal in the [Sanskrit College, Calcutta](#). His argument was that "in the scale of castes, the class (goldsmith or [Subarnabanik](#)) stands very low".^{[19][20]} Notably, [Sanjib Chattopadhyay](#), a biographer of Vidyasagar, revealed that Ishwar Chandra started his primary education in a school established and maintained by [Shibcharan Mallick](#), a rich man of goldsmith caste in Calcutta.^[21]

Vidyasagar in Santal Pargana

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's long association with [Karmatar](#), a sleepy hamlet about 20 km from the district headquarters of [Jamtara](#), seems to have been forgotten by the people of the [state](#).

Vidyasagar came to Karmatar in 1873 and spent more than 18 years of his life here. He had set up a girls' school and a night school for adults on the premises of his house, which he called Nandan Kanan. He also opened a free homeopathy clinic to provide some medical care to these unprivileged tribal people.

After his death the Nandan Kanan, the abode of Vidyasagar was sold by his son to Mallick family of [Kolkata](#). Before Nandan Kanan could be dismantled Bengali Association [Bihar](#) on 29 March 1974 purchased it by money collected by house to house contribution of one rupee each. The Girls School has been restarted, named after Vidyasagar. The Free Homeopathic Clinic is serving local population. The house of Vidyasagar has been maintained in the original shape. The most prized property is the 141 year old 'Palanquin' used by Vidyasagar himself.^[22]

The [Government of Jharkhand](#) on 26 September 2019 named [Jamtara district's Karmatand block](#) as Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar Block as a mark of respect on the birth anniversary of the great social reformer.

An official release quote of Jharkhand's former Chief Minister [Raghubar Das](#):

"Jamtara's Karmatand prakhand (block) was the 'karma bhumi' (workplace) of social reformer and strong supporter of women's education Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar. Now the block will be known as Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar prakhand"

3)Vallalar:

Arutprakasa Vallalār Chidambaram Ramalingam (5 October 1823 – 30 January 1874), whose pre-monastic name was **Rāmalingam**, commonly known in India and across the world^[1] as **Vallalār**, also known as **Ramalinga Swamigal** and **Ramalinga Adigal**, was one of the most famous [Tamil](#) Saints and also one of the greatest Tamil poets of the 19th century^[2] and belongs to a line of [Tamil](#) saints known as "[gnana siddhars](#)" (gnana means higher [wisdom](#)).

The *Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathiya Sangam*^[3] was spread and passed on by him not only in [theory](#) but mainly in practice by his own way of living which by itself is an inspiration for his followers. Through the notion of *Suddha Sanmarga Sangam*, the saint endeavored to eliminate the [caste system](#).^[4] According to Suddha Sanmarga, the prime aspects of human life should be love connected with charity and divine practice leading to achievement of pure [knowledge](#).

Ramalinga advocated the concept of worshipping the flame of a lighted lamp as a symbol of the eternal Power.¹

Teachings:

At the age of 35 he left Chennai during the year 1858. First he went to [Chidambaram](#) where he had a debate with Kodakanallur Sundara Swāmigal. At the request of one Rāmākrishna Reddiyar he went to his house at [Karunguzhi](#) and stayed there for 9 years. He was very much against the [caste system](#) because of the adverse impacts it had on society. Towards that end, he started the "Samarasa Vedha Sanmarga Sangam" in 1865. In 1872 it was renamed "Samarasa Suddha Sanmarga Sathya Sangam",^[3] meaning "Society for pure truth in universal self-hood".

In 1867, he established a facility serving free food named "The Sathya Dharma Salai"^[9] in [Vadalur](#). There all people are served free food without any caste distinctions. The land for the facility was donated by kind, generous people and those registered documents are available for seeing by the visitors. The free facility

continues its service till the present time. Rāmalinga disliked people eating [non-vegetarian](#) foods, about which he said:

When I see men feeding on the coarse and vicious food of meat, it is an ever-recurring grief to me.

On 25 January 1872, Rāmalingam opened the "[Sathya Gnana Sabha](#)" (Hall of True Knowledge) at [Vadalur](#). One of the primary teachings of Valallar is "[Service to Living Beings](#) is the path of [Liberation/Moksha](#)". He declared that death is not natural that our life's first priority should be to fight death. He declared religion in itself a darkness. He laid a very great emphasis on being vegetarian. He said God is "Arul Perum Jothi" who is personification of Grace or mercy and knowledge. He said the path of compassion and mercy are the only path to God.

In 1867 he established a center for feeding the poor people. On the inaugural day he lit the fire of the stone stove, with a declaration that the fire be ever alive and the needy shall be fed forever. Around 1872 he established the "[Sathya Gnana Sabai](#)", hall of True Wisdom Forum and ensuring it was entirely secular. This place is not a [temple](#); fruits, flowers are not offered, and no blessings were given. It was open to people of all castes except those who ate meat, who were only allowed to worship from the outside. He wrote in detail about the *pooja* to be performed in Gnāna sabai. Those who are below 12 years or those who are above 72 years alone were expected to enter Gnāna sabai and do *poojas*. The oil lamp lit by him is kept perpetually burning. He said that [souls](#) are blinded by seven veils.^[11]

There are seven cotton fabric screens, representing the seven factors that prevent a soul from realizing its true nature. The entire complex is bound by a chain with 21,600 links, said to represent *21,600 inhalations*^[12] by a normal human being. He said the intelligence we possess is [Maya](#) intelligence which is not true and final intelligence. The path of final intelligence is *Jeeva Karunyam*. He advocated a [casteless society](#). Vallalār was opposed to [superstitions](#) and rituals. He forbade killing animals for the sake of food. He advocated feeding the poor as the highest form of worship. He condemned inequality based on birth. Today there are spiritual groups spread out all over the world who practice the teachings of Rāmalingam and follow the path of Arul Perum Jothi.

4)Subramania Bharathi (11 December 1882 – 11 September 1921), was a [Tamil](#) writer, poet, journalist, [Indian independence activist](#), social reformer and [polyglot](#). Popularly known as "Mahakavi Bharathi" ("Great Poet Bharathi"), he was a pioneer of modern Tamil poetry and is considered one of the greatest Tamil literary figures of all time. His numerous works included fiery songs kindling patriotism during the [Indian Independence movement](#).^{[1][2]}

Born in [Ettayapuram](#) of [Tirunelveli district](#) (present day [Thoothukudi](#)) in 1882, Bharathi had his early education in [Tirunelveli](#) and [Varanasi](#) and worked as a journalist with many newspapers, including [The Hindu](#), Bala Bharata, Vijaya, Chakravarthini, the *Swadesamitran* and *India*. In 1908, an arrest warrant was issued against Bharati by the government of [British India](#) lived until 1918.^[3]

Bharathi's influence on Tamil literature is phenomenal. Although it is said that he was proficient in around 14, including 3 non-Indian foreign languages. His favorite language was Tamil. He was prolific in his output. He covered political, social and spiritual themes. The songs and poems composed by Bharati are very often used in [Tamil cinema](#) and have become staples in the literary and musical repertoire of Tamil artistes throughout the world. He paved the way for modern blank verse. He wrote many books and poems on how Tamil is beautiful in nature

Works:

Bharati is considered as one of the pioneers of modern Tamil literature.^[10] Bharati used simple words and rhythms, unlike his previous century works in Tamil, which had complex vocabulary. He also employed novel ideas and techniques in his devotional poems.^[1] He used a metre called *Nondi Chindu* in most of his works, which was earlier used by Gopalakrishna Bharathiar.^[11]

Bharati's poetry expressed a progressive, reformist ideal. His imagery and the vigour of his verse were a forerunner to modern Tamil poetry in different aspects. He was the forerunner of a forceful kind of poetry that combined classical and contemporary elements. He had a prodigious output penning thousands of verses on diverse topics like Indian Nationalism, love songs, children's songs, songs of nature, glory of the [Tamil language](#), and odes to prominent freedom fighters of India like [Tilak](#), [Gandhi](#) and [Lajpat Rai](#). He even penned an ode to New Russia and [Belgium](#). His poetry not only includes works on Hindu deities like Shakti, Kali, Vinayagar, Murugan, Sivan, Kannan(Krishna), but also on other religious gods like [Allah](#) and Jesus. His

insightful similes have been read by millions of [Tamil](#) readers. He was well-versed in various languages and translated speeches of Indian National reform leaders like [Aurobindo](#), [Bal Gangadhar Tilak](#) and [Swami Vivekananda](#).^[7]

5) Kanagasabai Subburathnam (29 April 1891–21 April 1964) popularly called **Bharathidasan**, was a 20th-century [Tamil](#) poet and writer [rationalist](#) whose literary works handled mostly socio-political issues. He was deeply influenced by the Tamil poet [Subramania Bharati](#) and named himself as Bharathidasan.^[1] His writings served as a catalyst for the growth of the [Dravidian movement](#) in [Tamil Nadu](#).^[citation needed] In addition to poetry, his views found expression in other forms such as plays, film scripts, short stories and essays. The Government of [Puducherry](#) union territory has adopted the song of Invocation to Mother Tamil, written by Bharathidasan as the state song of Puducherry.

Awards and recognitions

- Bharathidasan was conferred with the title of "Puratchi Kavingyar" (meaning the "Revolutionary Poet") by [C. N. Annadurai](#). He won the Golden Parrot Prize in 1946 for his play *Amaithi-Oomai* (Peace and Dumbness). He was given the [Sahitya Academy Award](#), posthumously in 1970 for his play *Pisiranthaiyar*. He died in 1964 but he got this award after he died (1970)
- On 9 October 2001, a commemorative stamp of Bharathidasan was released by the Postal Department in Chennai.
- [Tamil Nadu](#)'s state government gives the **Bharathidasan Award** annually to a Tamil poet.
- The Government of [Puducherry](#) union territory has adopted Bharathidasan's song of Invocation to Mother Tamil as the state song of Puducherry.
- A state university named [Bharathidasan University](#) was established in [Tiruchirappalli](#).
- [Bharathidasan institute of management](#), one of India's top B-schools, was established in [Tiruchirappalli](#).

6) Erode Venkatappa Ramasamy^[1] (17 September 1879 – 24 December 1973), commonly known as **Periyar**, also referred to as **Thanthai Periyar**, was an Indian [social activist](#) and politician who started the [Self-Respect Movement](#) and [Dravidar Kazhagam](#). He is known as the 'Father of the [Dravidian movement](#)'.^[2] He did notable work against Brahminical dominance and gender and caste inequality in [Tamil Nadu](#).^{[3][4][5]}

E.V. Ramasamy joined the [Indian National Congress](#) in 1919, but resigned in 1925 when he felt that the party was only serving the interests of [Brahmins](#). He questioned the subjugation of non-Brahmin Dravidians as Brahmins enjoyed gifts and donations from non-Brahmins but opposed and discriminated against non-Brahmins in cultural and religious matters.^{[6][7]} In 1924, E.V. Ramasamy participated in non-violent agitation ([satyagraha](#)) in [Vaikom](#), [Travancore](#). From 1929 to 1932 Ramasamy made a tour of [British Malaya](#), [Europe](#), and [Soviet Union](#) which influenced him.^{[8][9][10]} In 1939, E.V. Ramasamy became the head of the [Justice Party](#).^[11] and in 1944, he changed its name to *Dravidar Kazhagam*.^[12] The party later split with one group led by [C. N. Annadurai](#) forming the [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam](#) (DMK) in 1949.^[12] While continuing the Self-Respect Movement, he advocated for an independent [Dravida Nadu](#) (*land of the Dravidians*).^[13]

E.V. Ramasamy promoted the principles of [rationalism](#), [self-respect](#), [women's rights](#) and eradication of [caste](#). He opposed the [exploitation](#) and [marginalisation](#) of the non-Brahmin Dravidian people of [South India](#) and the imposition of what he considered [Indo-Aryan](#) India.

Member of Congress Party (1919–1925)

E.V. Ramasamy joined the [Indian National Congress](#) in 1919 after quitting his business and resigning from public posts. He held the chairmanship of Erode Municipality and wholeheartedly undertook constructive programs spreading the use of [Khadi](#), picketing toddy shops, boycotting shops selling foreign cloth, and eradicating [untouchability](#). In 1921, Periyar courted imprisonment for picketing toddy shops in Erode. When his wife as well as his sister joined the agitation, it gained momentum, and the administration was forced to come to a compromise. He was again arrested during the [Non-Cooperation movement](#) and the [Temperance movement](#).^[6] In 1922, Periyar was elected the President of the [Madras Presidency](#) Congress Committee during the [Tirupur](#) session, where he advocated strongly for reservation in government jobs and education. His attempts

were defeated in the Congress party due to discrimination and [indifference](#), which led to his leaving the party in 1925.^[7]

Vaikom Satyagraha (1924–1925)

Main article: [Vaikom Satyagraha](#)

According to the prevalent caste system in Kerala and the rest of India, low-caste Hindus were denied entry into temples. In Kerala, they were denied permission to walk on the roads that led to the temples also. (Kerala state was formed in 1956; earlier it was broadly divided into Malabar (North Kerala), Cochin and Travancore kingdoms).

In the Kakinada meet of the Congress Party in 1923, T K Madhavan presented a report citing the discrimination faced by the depressed castes in Kerala. That session decided to promote movements against untouchability.

In Kerala, a committee was formed comprising people of different castes to fight untouchability in the region. The committee was chaired by K Kelappan; the rest of the members were T K Madhavan, Velayudha Menon, Kurur Neelakantan Namboodiripad and T R Krishnaswami Iyer. In early 1924, they decided to launch a 'Keralaparyatanam' to gain temple entry and also the right to use public roads for every Hindu irrespective of caste or creed.

The movement gained all-India prominence and support came from far and wide. The Akalis of Punjab lend their support by setting up kitchens to provide food to the Satyagrahis. Even Christian and Muslim leaders came forward for support. This was shunned by Gandhiji who wanted the movement to be an intra-Hindu affair. On advice from Gandhiji, the movement was withdrawn temporarily in April 1924. After the talks with caste-Hindus failed, the leaders resumed the movement. Leaders T K Madhavan and K P Kesava Menon were arrested. E V Ramaswamy (Periyar) came from Tamil Nadu to give his support. He was arrested.

On 1 October 1924, a group of savarnas (forward castes) marched in a procession and submitted a petition to the Regent Maharani Sethulakshmi Bai of Travancore with about 25000 signatures for temple entry to everyone. Gandhiji also met with the Regent Maharani. This procession of savarnas was led by Mannath Padmanabhan Nair. Starting with about 500 people at Vaikom, the number increased to about 5000 when the procession reached Thiruvananthapuram in November 1924.

In February 1924, they decided to launch a 'Keralaparyatanam' to gain temple entry and also the right to use public roads for every Hindu irrespective of caste or creed.

In Vaikom, a small town in Kerala state, then [Travancore](#), there were strict laws of [untouchability](#) in and around the temple area. *Dalits*, also known as [Harijans](#), were not allowed into the close streets around and leading to the temple, let alone inside it. Anti-caste feelings were growing and in 1924 Vaikom was chosen as a suitable place for an organised [Satyagraha](#). Under his guidance a movement had already begun with the aim of giving all castes the right to enter the temples. Thus, agitations and demonstrations took place. On 14 April, Periyar and his wife Nagamma arrived in Vaikom. They were immediately arrested and imprisoned for participation. In spite of Gandhi's objection to non-Keralites and non-Hindus taking part, Periyar and his followers continued to give support to the movement until it was withdrawn. He received the title *Vaikom Veeran*, given by his followers who participated in the [Satyagraha](#).^{[36][37][38]}

The way in which the *Vaikom Satyagraha* events have been recorded provides a clue to the image of the respective organisers. In an article entitled *Gandhi and Ambedkar, A Study in Leadership*, [Eleanor Zelliot](#) relates the 'Vaikom Satyagraha', including Gandhi's negotiations with the temple authorities in relation to the event. Furthermore, the editor of E.V. Ramasamy's *Thoughts* states that Brahmins purposely suppressed news about E.V. Ramasamy's participation. A leading Congress magazine, *Young India*, in its extensive reports on Vaikom never mentions E.V. Ramasamy.^[34]

In Kerala, a committee was formed comprising people of different castes to fight untouchability in the region. The committee chaired by K Kelappan, composed of T K Madhavan, Velayudha Menon, Kurur Neelakantan Namboodiripad and T R Krishnaswami Iyer. In February 1924, they decided to launch a 'Keralaparyatanam' to gain temple entry and also the right to use public roads for every Hindu irrespective of caste or creed.

Self-Respect Movement

Periyar and his followers campaigned constantly to influence and pressure the government to take measures to remove social inequality, (abolish untouchability, manual scavenging system etc) even while other nationalist forerunners focused on the struggle for political independence. The Self-Respect Movement was described from the beginning as "dedicated to the goal of giving non-Brahmins a sense of pride based on their Dravidian past".^[39]

In 1952, the Periyar *Self-Respect Movement Institution* was registered with a list of objectives of the institution from which may be quoted as

for the diffusion of useful knowledge of [political education](#); to allow people to live a life of freedom from slavery to anything against reason and [self respect](#); to do away with needless customs, meaningless ceremonies, and blind [superstitious beliefs](#) in society; to put an end to the present social system in which [caste](#), religion, community and traditional occupations based on the accident of birth, have chained the mass of the people and created "superior" and "inferior" classes... and to give people equal rights; to completely eradicate untouchability and to establish a united society based on [brother/sisterhood](#); to give [equal rights](#) to women; to prevent [child marriages](#) and marriages based on law favourable to one sect, to conduct and encourage love marriages, widow marriages, inter caste and inter-religious marriages and to have the marriages registered under the [Civil Law](#); and to establish and maintain [homes for orphans](#) and widows and to run educational institutions.^[34]

[Propagation](#) of the philosophy of *self respect* became the full-time activity of Periyar since 1925. A Tamil weekly *Kudi Arasu* started in 1925, while the English journal *Revolt* started in 1928 carried on the propaganda among the English educated people.^[40] The *Self-Respect Movement* began to grow fast and received the sympathy of the heads of the Justice Party from the beginning. In May 1929, a conference of Self-Respect Volunteers was held at Pattukkotai under the [presidency](#) of S. Guruswami. K.V. Alagiriswami took charge as the head of the volunteer band. Conferences followed in succession throughout the [Tamil districts](#) of the former Madras Presidency. A training school in Self-Respect was opened at Erode, the home town of Periyar. The object was not just to introduce social reform but to bring about a [social revolution](#) to foster a new spirit and build a new society

7) Sri Narayana Guru (28 August 1855 – 20 September 1928) was a philosopher, spiritual leader and social reformer in India. He was born into a family that belonged to the [Ezhava](#) caste. He led a [reform movement](#) against the injustice in the [caste-ridden](#) society of [Kerala](#) in order to promote spiritual enlightenment and [social equality](#)

Narayana Guru, né Nanu, was born on 28 August 1855^[*dubious – discuss*] to a family of the Ezhava caste, Madan Asan and his wife Kuttiamma, in the village of [Chempazhanthy](#) near [Thiruvananthapuram](#), in the erstwhile state of [Travancore](#), in [British India](#).^[*citation needed*] His early education was in the [gurukula](#) way under Chempazhanthi Mootha Pillai during which time his mother died when he was 15. At the age of 21, he went to central Travancore to learn from Raman Pillai Asan, a [Sanskrit](#) scholar who taught him Vedas, Upanishads and the literature and logical rhetoric of Sanskrit. He returned to his village in 1881 when his father was seriously ill, and started a village school where he taught local children which earned him the name *Nanu Asan*.^[*citation needed*] A year later, he married Kaliaamma but soon disassociated himself from the marriage to commence his public life as a social reformer.¹

Fight against casteism

[Casteism](#) was practised in Kerala during the 19th and early 20th centuries and the lower caste people such as Ezhavas and the [untouchable](#) castes like [Paraiyars](#), [tribals](#) and [Pulayars](#) had to suffer discrimination from the upper caste people such as Brahmins.^[11] It was against this discrimination that Guru performed his first major public act,^[*citation needed*] the consecration of Siva idol at Aruvippuram in 1888. Overall, he consecrated forty five temples across Kerala and Tamil Nadu.^[*citation needed*] His consecrations were not necessarily conventional deities; a slab inscribed with the words, *Truth, Ethics, Compassion, Love*,^[12] a vegetarian Shiva, a mirror and a sculpture by an Italian sculptor were among the various consecrations made by him.^[13] He propagated the ideals of compassion and religious tolerance and one of his noted works, *Anukampadasakam*, extols various religious figures such as [Krishna](#), [The Buddha](#), [Adi Shankara](#), [Jesus](#)

Vaikom Satyagraha

The social protest of [Vaikom Satyagraha](#) was an agitation by the lower caste against untouchability in Hindu society of Travancore.^[15] It was reported that the trigger for the protest was an incident when Narayana Guru was stopped from passing through a road leading to [Vaikom Temple](#) by an upper caste person. It prompted [Kumaran Asan](#) and [Muloor S.Padmanabha Panicker](#), both disciples of Guru, to compose poems in protest of the incident. T. K. Madhavan, another disciple, petitioned the [Sree Moolam Popular Assembly](#) in 1918 for rights to enter the temple and worship, regardless of the caste.^[16] A host of people including K.

Kelappan and K. P. Kesava Menon, formed a committee and announced *Kerala Paryatanam movement* and with the support of Mahatma Gandhi, the agitation developed into a mass movement which resulted in the opening of the temple as well as three roads leading to it to people of all castes.^{[16][17]} The protest also influenced the Temple Entry Proclamation of 1936.^{[18][19]}

Sivagiri pilgrimage

Sivagiri pilgrimage was conceived by three of the disciples of Guru viz. Vallabhasseri Govindan Vaidyar, T. K. Kittan Writer and Muloor S. Padmanabha Panicker which Guru approved in 1928, with his own recommendations.^[citation needed] He suggested that the goals of the pilgrimage should be the promotion of education, cleanliness, devotion to God, organization, agriculture, trade, handicrafts, and technical training and advised Vaidyar and Writer to organise a series of lectures on these themes to stress the need for the practice of these ideals, stating this to be the core purpose of Sivagiri pilgrimage. However, his death soon after delayed the project until 1932 when the first pilgrimage was undertaken from Elavumthitta in Pathanamthitta District.^[20]

Writings and philosophy

Guru published 45 works in Malayalam, Sanskrit and Tamil languages which include *Atmopadesa Śatakam*, a hundred-verse spiritual poem^[21] and *Daiva Dasakam*, a universal prayer in ten verses.^[22] He also translated three major texts, *Thirukural* of Valluvar, *Ishavasya Upanishad* and *Ozhivil Odukkam* of Kannudaiya Vallalaar.^[23] It was he who propagated the motto, *One Caste, One Religion, One God for All* (Oru Jathi, Oru Matham, Oru Daivam, Manushyanu) which has become popular as a saying in Kerala.^[24] He furthered the non-dualistic philosophy of *Adi Sankara* by bringing it into practice by adding the concepts of social equality and universal brotherhood.^[24]

All Religions' Conference

Guru organized an *All Region Conference* in 1923 at *Alwaye Advaita Ashram*, which was reported to be first such event in India.