

Founded in 1883

Reg. No. RNI 5097/57

The
Indian Messenger

ORGAN OF THE SADHARAN BRAHMO SAMAJ

Mainly Devoted to Religious, Social, Moral and Educational Topics

Vol. 139

KOLKATA, January 7 & 21, 2021

Nos. 1 to 2

Published by:
Sadharan Brahmo Samaj, Kolkata
Phone: 2241-2280
Email: brahmosamaj.sadharan@gmail.com
Web: www.thesadharanbrahmosamaj.org

Online Edition of The Indian Messenger:
im.thesadharanbrahmosamaj.org

Indian Messenger Committee:
Amitananda Das, Editor
Biswajit Roy, Secretary
Sudakshina Kundu Mookerjee, Jt. Editor
Goutam Neogi
Jayati Gupta
Pradyot Basu
Aniruddha Rakshit
Rahul Basu
Sheelbhadra Das
Arnab Nag

Printed & Published By:
Sri Biswajit Roy on behalf of Sadharan
Brahmo Samaj; 211, Bidhan Sarani,
Kolkata - 700006

Editor : Amitananda Das
Jt. Editor: Sudakshina Kundu Mookerjee

Email: theindianmessenger@gmail.com

CONTENTS

	Page No.
INVOCATION	4
Editorial	6
History of the Maghotsava	7
The Global Relevance of Brahmoism - Sujoy Gupta	8
Pandit Sivanath Shastri: Champion of Women's Emancipation – Rita Bhimani	10
Women and Science (Part - 3) - Sudakshina Kundu Mookerjee	14
First Anatomical Dissection in Calcutta Medical College	20
Opinions: A Note for Consideration - Ashit Sarkar	21
Acknowledgement	24

Views of contributors/authors are personal
and The Indian Messenger is not necessarily
in agreement with it.

INVOCATION

He is Ever-present, Good, Intelligent, Infinite, Above all, Formless (one without a Second), All pervading, Ruler of everything, Abode of all, Omnipotent, Almighty, Unchanging, Perfect, Incomparable.

- *Raja Rammohun Roy*

Differences between Religion and Spirituality

- Religion is not just one, there are many.
- Spirituality is one.

- Religion is for those who sleep.
- Spirituality is for those who are awake.

- Religion is for those who need someone to tell them what to do and want to be guided.
- Spirituality is for those who pay attention to their inner voice.

- Religion has a set of dogmatic rules.
- Spirituality invites us to explore within and get attuned to the Universal Rules.

- Religion threatens and frightens.
- Spirituality gives inner peace.

- Religion speaks of sin and guilt.
- Spirituality leads us on the path of emancipation!

- Religion represses everything which it considers false.
- Spirituality transcends everything, it brings us closer to our Truth!

- Religion invents.
- Spirituality helps us to discover.

- Religion does not tolerate any question.
- Spirituality encourages searching questions.

- Religion is human. It is an organization with rules made by men.
- Spirituality is Divine, without human rules. And leads us to the Causeless Cause!

- Religion divides between us and them.
- Spirituality unites.

- Religion follows the concepts of a sacred book.
- Spirituality seeks the sacred in all books.

- Religion feeds on fear.
- Spirituality feeds on trust and faith.

- Religion makes us to live in External Reality.
- Spirituality lives in Inner Consciousness.

- Religion deals with performing rituals.
- Spirituality has to do with the Inner Self.

- Religion feeds on internal ego.
- Spirituality drives to transcend beyond self.

- Religion makes us renounce the world to follow a God.
- Spirituality makes us live in God, without renouncing our existing lives.

- Religion is a cult.
- Spirituality is inner meditation.

- Religion fills us with dreams of glory in paradise.
- Spirituality makes us live the glory and paradise on earth.

- Religion lives in the past and in the future.
- Spirituality lives in the present.

- Religion creates cloisters in our memory.
- Spirituality liberates our Consciousness.

(Collected)

Editorial

We are at the beginning of a New Year, full of hope and expectations. Every year we look forward to the Maghotsava, a very nostalgic moment made sweet with fond memories and a wonderful way to renew our bonds of friendship and love. It brings to our mind the old familiar faces who are no more, generations who have come before us and have instilled the Brahma ideals in us. This is therefore a time to rediscover ourselves, a time to introspect.

Our faith allows us to contemplate about the Supreme Being in our own way and find our personal modes of communication with our Maker. However, when we meet in a congregation our combined prayers and the devotional songs lift our souls and a sense of happy togetherness pervades our minds. If the individual prayer leads us to our spiritual fulfilment, the congregational worship of the One, True Being seals the bond of brotherhood and camaraderie.

Unfortunately, this year we are prevented from meeting freely during the Maghotsava due to the unprecedented situation we are going through since large gatherings are still not permitted. The Maghotsava celebrations are being planned keeping that in mind. But there is light at the end of the tunnel. It has been arranged that a prayer meeting will also be arranged over the virtual platform for those who will not be able to be present at the various prayer halls in person. Every year there are many who cannot reach the Samajes due to old age or infirmity. Fortunately for them this new form of congregational prayer will be a golden opportunity to reconnect and participate.

We hope that 2021 brings a new awakening of our minds. Brahmaism is not just a religion. It is something more - a spiritual quest. This Maghotsava let us resolve to come together to strengthen our beliefs and gather our countrymen around a Common Fountainhead of Faith in One True God whose love pervades our life, irrespective of differences in religion, creed, class and gender. It overflows the mighty humans to the smallest of the beings in this creation.

Let the dreams of our founders be realised in our actions. Much of the ideals of Brahmaism are enshrined in the Constitution of India. Let us also pledge to uphold our Constitution in letter and spirit.

History of the Maghotsava

by

Maharshi Devendranath Tagore

Translated from Bengali

The Brahma Samaj was losing its fervour and energy, reaching a nadir and almost vanishing into oblivion, before it was integrated with the Tattwabodhini Sabha. Its union with the Tattwabodhini Sabha breathed life into the Brahma Samaj. It is not difficult to imagine the unfortunate state it would have reached if these two had not been brought together in Shaka 1763 (1841 CE). Perhaps it would have ceased to exist. We were students in an English School founded by Raja Rammohun Roy. Where is it now? Perhaps the Brahma Sabha would have met with similar fate. At the time of bringing the Tattwabodhini Sabha together with the Brahma Samaj there were serious debates whether they would be amalgamated together or preserve their separate existences. It was then decided that the Brahma Samaj would hold the prayer meetings while the Tattwabodhini Sabha would be the organ for the philosophical discourses. Since then the monthly service of the Tattwabodhini Sabha was replaced by the monthly morning prayers of the Brahma Samaj. Tattwabodhini Sabha used to hold annual celebrations on 21 Ashwin of the Bengali calendar. This was replaced by the annual Maghotsava around 11th Magh of the Bengali calendar that marked the date the first prayer hall of the Brahma Samaj was inaugurated in 1830. The annual celebration of the Brahma Samaj in the Bengali month of Bhadra had been discontinued before I joined Brahma Samaj. Now the annual celebration and the congregational prayer were restored to 11th Magh.

I shall live to work and die working – this is my prayer and may He fulfil it.

- *Sivanath Sastri*

The Global Relevance of Brahmoism

By Sujoy Gupta

Brahmoism is probably the youngest religious creed in the world with an age yet to touch 200 years. No reliable census exists so the headcount is unknown. Having said so, the perception is that in terms of numbers, the populace of adherents can be cogently assumed to comprise a microscopic minority in India.

The history of births of religions is attributed by and large to a prophet's inspirational pronouncements or to collective preaching of men endowed with prophetic wisdom.

Inspiration is generally moulded by the need to eradicate evil socio-political practices that are dominating the lives of fearfully helpless subjugated citizens of the times.

In the third and fourth decades of the 19th century India was a vassal colony of the powerful British Empire over which the sun didn't set because its dominions encircled the globe. Indian subjects were called "natives." Their helplessness stemmed from their total

exclusion from the ways of British imperial rulers.

Thankfully, at humankind's painful period of imperialism, a great intellectual was born in a village in Bengal presidency of British India. His name was Rammohun, surname Roy.

Rammohun's life has seen many biographies. Bengal was British India's most prosperous presidency. It is well known that retrograde practices like suttee, child marriage, taboo on girls' education and rigorous application of 'casteism' were usual. This article now shifts focus from Rammohun's social reforms to the adverse philosophical adversities he overcame.

It is important to realise that these impediments exist all over the world today. The tenets defined and used by Rammohun to peacefully and persuasively fulfil his objectives are known today as Brahmoism.

The most challenging impediments overcome at Rammohun's initiative

were MAJORITARIANISM and AUTHORITARIANISM. India was under strong-armed authority of a majority – not in language, social class, religion, political philosophy or any other parameter barring majority power of a foreign conquistador.

Rammohun wanted to change the rules of governance of his motherland. He created a creed that reflected true essence of nobility. It incited no hatred, no battle, no overthrow of ruling regime, no incendiary “We versus They” clash.

Instead along with moral support of friends and admirers of the creed they had named Brahmoism, Rammohun preached a secular philosophy advising compatriots to owe allegiance only to “Brahma,” the one and only invisible formless eternal creator and destroyer of the universe. Natives were not weaklings. All humans possess in equal measure the power of prayer and all are equal. At one stroke, Brahmoism introduced gender equality, equality of opportunity and utter irrelevance of

caste since the one creator created equals.

Rammohun practised his way of thought by writing extremely polite yet firmly argued letters or memoranda to rulers as his weapons. The verdict of history is Rammohun succeeded in defeating both majoritarianism as well as authoritarianism.

In the global scenario of the current age, one example of a figure who overcame these two monstrosities is Nelson Mandela who effectively followed Brahma tenets in pursuit of freedom from racial discrimination.

A final point: Brahmoism is not a proselytizing religion, which explains the absence of pursuit of increasing the number of believers. Brahmos are spread all over the world. Numbers might be few but its global relevance will remain.

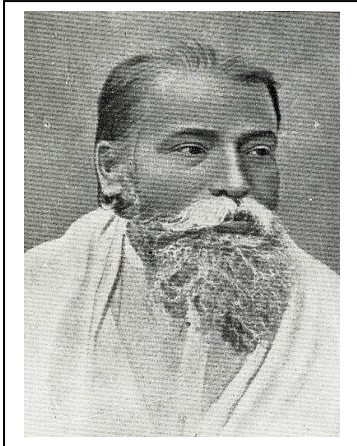
(Sujoy Gupta is a fourth generation Brahma. A historian by profession, he lives in Kolkata.)

Tribute to those who inspire us

Pandit Sivanath Shastri: Champion of Women's Emancipation

Born 31st January, 1847; Died 30th September 1919.

By Rita Bhimani



Well before I was born, my mother was exhorted by Pandit Sivanath Shastri that if she were to have a daughter, she should be called Ritam, meaning honest, divine truth. To have inherited such a name, but in a much broader perspective, to have had the fortune of an inheritance of a man ahead of his time, and to have imbibed it from women -- my mother, Tapati Mookerji and my grandmother Suniti Devi who translated **Atmcharit**, Sivanath Shastri's autobiography, has been a special boon.

My focus here is to take a somewhat feministic approach. The fact that it wasn't sheer chance or happenence that my mother, a writer, her talented sisters, one an artist and the other an educationist, my grandmother Suniti Devi, writer in the intellectual Kallol Jug, or my great-great-grandmother, Hemlata Sarkar, founder of Maharani Girls School, could take the course of their special journeys. There surely was a fountainhead -- in the person of Shastri Mahashay, from where sprang the inspiration and the insights in a symbiotic trickle-down effect.

We talk so blithely about emancipation of women, as if it were a graduation gown that has been wrapped around our "educated" shoulders. Just let's rewind to a time which Sivanath Shastri has talked about in his autobiography, "set in a period of Indian history which witnessed the maturity of reascent India." Edited by Nisith Ranjan Ray, twentieth century historian, social

activist and the founder of the Society for Preservation of the cultural heritage of Kolkata, he mentions that **Atmacarit** is more than an autobiography of a universally respected luminary in the second half of the 19th century. “It is a mirror not only of an individual described by a modern writer as ‘probably the most respected Brahmo in all India’, but of the society in which he lived.”

It was not easy to overcome the deep seated prejudices of that era, as we follow Sivanath Shastri’s grasp of the ideals of Brahmoism, his own formal initiation, following which was the decision to give up the Brahmanical thread that angered his father to the extent of disowning him.

Since I am focusing on the aspects of womanhood which Sivanath Shastri respected and encouraged, I have been quite taken by his tales about his feisty grandmother, and her high spiritedness. Once a thief managed entry into their house and was about to snatch his grandmother, Lakshmi Devi's necklace while she slept. She was so alert, that she caught the thief's hand in a vice-like grip from which he had to struggle hard to escape.

Another time, in an enclosed area where they lived, almost within the Sunderbans, where tigers were known for their nightly visitations, it happened that a tiger had got into their enclosure. Grandfather came face to face with the beast, and cried out in fear.

Grandmother, busy in the kitchen, as she always was, seeing her husband face to face with the beast, quickly snatched a burning log from the kitchen fire and brandished it before the tiger which fled through the back door. What courage and presence of mind! The villagers were truly in awe of her.

There was also a different kind of enlightenment in his regard for women, in the way he handled the saga of his two wives. Prasonomoyee had mothered his children and when Birajmohini came on the scene, (he had protested strongly against this), he told her that he was not going to live with her as man and wife. But he thought of educating her properly, so she could stand on her own feet, when necessary. It was difficult with both in the same house. One of his solutions

came from going and spending the night in the verandah of the Hindu College on a large table. When the wives found out, they were disconsolate!

He did some amazing things personally for widows, getting one of them married to a close friend and presiding over the ceremony of another widow (for the first time in his life as an acharya); and another time “rescuing” Ganeshsundari who had been converted to Christianity, by giving her shelter in his own home with his family, giving her a new name Monomohini and then ultimately having the satisfaction of seeing her married to a respected friend of his.

But let me come to the lives of women nearer home in my family. While Prasannomoyee had been closely attuned to her husband’s thinking – religious or educational or rational thought, or his boundless work in social reform, it was their daughter, Hemlata, my great-great-grandmother, who imbibed these values. At 16 she went to Sunday School established by her father. Mixing with older teachers there

proved to be an upliftment in her own development. These women were to help Sivanath in publishing a children’s magazine called “Mukul” from 1895, of which Sivanath himself was the Editor. My mother’s Bilateral Diary was published in this very magazine many years down the line when she was only 13!

My youngest mashi, Sevati Sarkar, who was the principal of Rani Birla, related to us a beautiful story of how Hemlata met her future husband. Pandit Sivanath Shastri had gone to South India to preach the Brahmo ideals of the Upanishads, but there he became ill and his friends send a young doctor, Bipin Behari Sarkar who had joined the Brahmo Samaj, to the ailing Sivanath. Hemlata had also gone there to look after her father. The doctor was so impressed with her devotion and care, that on returning to Calcutta he approached Sivanath for Hemlata’s hand in marriage. He agreed! They were married in 1893.

And that was the beginning of a most interesting saga. They were called to Nepal to serve, where Hemlata wrote “A Bengali Woman in Nepal”. After a few years, they decided to come to

Darjeeling and settled in its salubrious surroundings. His practice flourished and she started focusing totally on education. Seeing that her daughters could not be admitted to Loreto in those days, she decided to start her own. With help from three women of royal families, she started the Maharani Girls School, in 1908. The school still stands on Hill Cart Road in Darjeeling, with over 450 students.

Hemlata also worked as the first woman Municipal commissioner of Darjeeling. She ably conducted another important bit of work. The ‘mandir’ that was opened for the citizens of Darjeeling by Sivanath Shastri years back, was something where she and her husband succeeded in building a new prayer hall and they enthused the populace to come to prayers every Sunday.

On his 102nd death anniversary, I feel humbled to pen this note on someone whose vast body of writing, his scholarship, his religious reform, but most of all, his championing of the many facets of women’s emancipation, has given us courage to move ahead in forming our careers, our values and our self belief.

[Rita Bhimani has named her PR consultancy Ritam Communications, to respect Sivanath Shastri’s prescient naamkaran. She teaches Media Studies, has authored several books on PR and one on music, and another on Muga, and is a regular columnist for various publications—all of these “talents” she owes to the strong women of earlier eras. She has produced a documentary on Raja Rammohun Roy.]

Women and Science Part - 3

By Sudakshina Kundu Mookerjee

The University of London opened its doors to women in June 1868. Switzerland was the only German speaking country where women were allowed to enrol at the University, way back in 1840s while the rest of the German speaking nations denied University education to women till early twentieth century. When this was the state of education for women even in the so-called advanced nations of the Western world in the mid-nineteenth century, it is no wonder that the women in India were languishing behind barred doors. Ram Mohan Roy questioned this unfair treatment meted out to the fair sex and led a war against all social and religious oppressions against women of India. His life was short as he met with an untimely death in England. But before he left for the foreign shores he had succeeded in leaving behind a legacy and many of his followers who came after him took up this noble task on their shoulders. Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was the champion of

women's education. Keshab Chandra Sen and his firebrand followers were keen on educating the young girls. But such education was perhaps planned to educate the female mind and not sufficient to broaden their horizons beyond the domestic walls. If Indian women have been truly emancipated to spread their wings and become empowered to share the arena equally with their male counterparts, the credits are due to the tireless efforts of stalwarts like Dwarkanath Ganguly (1844 - 1898) of Bengal and Jyotirao Govindrao Phule (1827-1890) of Maharashtra and few others.

Women in India had been living an extremely deprived existence. Most were unlettered as superstitions were widespread that a literate woman was sure to become a widow. Many other repressions had kept all chances of improvement of the mind of the girl child at bay. Where irrational beliefs pervaded how could the scientific spirit be kindled? It is true that the

hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. So it is not surprising that the children brought up by ignorant and superstitious mothers would make the society dogmatic and irrational.

However, amongst such gloom, rays of hope shone. We will now discuss about the first stirring of the rational spirit among the women of India and their endeavour at paving out a way for those who came after them.

Let us begin with the first two women doctors of India - Anadibai Gopal Joshi, the first Indian woman to earn a medical qualification and Kadambini Ganguly, the first practicing doctor of India who earned her medical qualifications a few months after Anandibai Joshi.



Anandibai Gopal Joshi (31 March 1865 – 27 February 1887) was the first woman to earn a two-year medical diploma from Women's Medical College, Pennsylvania in 1886. She was born in a family of

landlords in Maharashtra and was named Yamuna by her parents. She was married at the tender age of nine to Gopal Joshi, a postal clerk, who remained her Anandi. He was so keen to educate his young wife that his enthusiasm often proved a little overbearing for his young bride. After Anandi lost her first born child at the age of fourteen she resolved to become a doctor, an extremely impossible dream in those days. Gopal Rao supported his wife and she won several benefactors who helped her go to the USA at the age of nineteen to study at the Women's Medical College. She earned her diploma after two years but her health suffered greatly. She adhered strictly to her Indian ways of life which affected her physical well being. After returning to India she was diagnosed with tuberculosis and passed away on February 1887 before she could put her training to practice.

If Anandi was a child bride in a conservative family who strove to achieve her dream supported ably by her husband, **Kadambini Ganguly (nee Bose)** born on 18th July 1861, was the daughter of a Brahmo reformer Braja Kishore Basu, and

was fortunate to be born in a more enlightened family. However, that did not make her journey any smoother as she had to fight against the prejudices of a male dominated education system. Her husband Dwarkanath was her pillar of strength and support. He fought a raging battle against the authorities to open the doors of the University of Calcutta to women in 1878. Chandramukhi Basu and Kadambini Basu were the first two women graduates in 1882 and were awarded the degrees in the convocation held in 1883. Kadambini was keen to study medicine but the medical college of Calcutta was not ready to take women as students. It was Dwarkanath's unrelenting struggle that finally yielded the results and Kadambini, by then married to him, was admitted to Calcutta Medical College in 1884. Her teachers were not favourably disposed to the presence of a woman in a male dominated world and she was not allowed to clear a paper for which she could not earn the MB degree. Instead she was awarded the First Licentiate of Medical School (LMS) by the University of Calcutta in 1887. Kadambini had an



indomitable spirit. She travelled to England in 1892 and in record time earned the triple degrees LRCP (Edinburgh), LRCS (Glasgow) and GFPS (Dublin).

Both Kadambini and Anandibai were remarkable women who dared to be unconventional. They dreamed of achieving something that was not easily accessible, in fact all opportunities to prove themselves were denied to them in a male dominated world and profession. However they fought against all social odds to achieve their ends by overcoming the insurmountable adversities. We must acknowledge the support they received from their respective husbands, who were outstanding for their determination and fortitude. Dwarkanath Ganguly fought tirelessly for his wife's higher education and that opened the doors

of the University of Calcutta and the Calcutta Medical College for the women in future. Gopal Rao relocated himself to Bengal in order to draw attention to his wife and find out people to support her dreams of studying in the United States. It needs the joint effort of both men and women to revolutionise the way we think. This had a great impact on society at large. It not only paved the road for others to tread but also improved female healthcare in India where the 'purdah system' kept the women to see gentlemen doctors.



The women left their marks in Science by beginning as medical practitioners. **Rukhma Bai** (26th November 1864 to 25th September 1955) was the third woman in India to

earn her medical degree. She became Doctor in Medicine from the London School of Medicine for Women, United Kingdom, in 1894. Rukhma was born in a Marathi family to Janardhan Pandurang and Jayantibai. Her father having passed away at an early age, Rukhmabai's mother remarried. Her step-father Dr. Sakharam Arjun, an eminent Physician and a social activist, encouraged her to study. She was married to Dadaji Bhikaji, one of Sakhram's cousins, at eleven years of age with an understanding that he would study and emerge as a worthy person before he could take up the responsibilities of a married man. However, Bhikaji refused to study and took to indolence and waywardness. Rukhmabai herself was keen to study and refused to live with a delinquent husband. Sakharam supported her in this regard. Her step-father associated with the social and religious reformers of Western India and she often visited the Prarthana Samaj with her mother. She was influenced by liberal ideas and strongly opposed her husband's efforts for restoring his conjugal rights. She preferred imprisonment to

living with her husband. Her long legal battle for freedom from her husband that was supported by many of the liberal social activists, including Dr. Sakharam, resulted in a landmark case involving child marriage and raised important social debates between 1884-1888. This ultimately resulted in passing the Age of Consent Act in 1891.

Participation of women in Science began with medicine but gradually it started spreading in other branches. We will find that it did not stop at only acquiring degrees in science or working in scientific institutions, it was a breakthrough in the way the world viewed the participation of women in Science. These women left their marks in other social spaces. Kadambini Ganguly was at the forefront of the movement for improving the work conditions of women coal miners in Eastern India. She was the first ever female delegation of the Indian national Congress. Rukhma Bai's fight for women's right to live with or leave her husband left a milestone in the history of legal battles. In this connection let us remember Lady Abala Basu, who joined Madras

Medical College in the early 1880s but could not complete the course due to failing health. But the training in science had not gone to waste as she was the supporting partner of her world famous scientist husband Sir J. C. Bose, whom she ably assisted and supported in his scientific quests. Her scientific temper taught her to be an able educationist.

It was too early to say that all prejudices and misgivings were completely eradicated. But with more women getting involved in studying and then teaching science, the scientific spirit and the spirit of enquiry slowly started taking their roots in society. In the next part we will learn more about the women who pioneered in other scientific disciplines and even in technological advancements.

References:

1. *"The First Women at University: Remembering 'the London Nine'"* by Philip Carter, January 28, 2018, timeshighereducation.or/blog
2. *The Phenomenal Story of Kadambini: One of India's*

- First Women Graduates and Doctors by Jovita Aranha, August 31, 2017, thebetterindia.com*
3. *Anandibai Joshi: All about the first Indian female doctor with a degree in western medicine India Today Web Desk, New Delhi, March 11, 2020*
4. *Rukhmabai: From Child Bride to India's First Practicing Doctor by Shivani Bahukhandi, August 22, 2017, Feminism in India*
-

Interested readers may subscribe for our English / Bengali Journal "The Indian Messenger" / "Tattvakaumudi" (তত্ত্ব-কৌমুদী). Subscription form is provided in this issue in the last page. The said form is also available in the website of the Sadharan Brahma Samaj at www.thesadharanbrahmosamaj.org or subscribe online at <https://goo.gl/MFzdxY>

Memorable Day

First Anatomical Dissection in Calcutta Medical College

10th January 1836

India stepped into a new epoch of the history of medical science on January 10, 1836, when the first dissection of human body was done by Dr. Madhusudan Gupta in Medical College, Calcutta.

Till the early eighteenth century only Ayurvedic or Unani methods were available in India for treating various ailments. Lord Bentinck, the Governor General of India (1828-35 CE), was convinced by the likes of Mr. David Hare that there was need for introducing the modern methods of western (allopathic) treatment in India. As per the findings of the committee appointed by Lord Bentinck, which was headed by Dr. John Grant and had Mr. J. C. C. Sutherland, Mr. C.E. Trevelyan, Mr. Thomas Spens, Babu Ram Comul Sen and Mr.M.J.Bramley as members, the Native Medical institution established in 1822 clearly fell below the established standards of medical education, examination system and lacked opportunities of

practical training in anatomy. So Lord Bentinck closed down the institute and founded the Medical College of Calcutta, alternatively known as Calcutta Medical College.

However, there was clearly lack of teachers and trainers at the time, especially among the Indians. There was no one to conduct the anatomy practical lessons as the conservative society was up in arms against dissection of human corpse. Dr. Madhusudan Gupta was called upon to undertake this difficult task.

Madhusudan Gupta was born in a family of Vaidyas (old school doctors) and his grand-father was the court physician of the Nawabs of Bengal. Madhusudan started his career as a student of Ayurveda in Sanskrit College in 1826 and was keen to study modern medical science. He not only read the medical books in English but translated them in Arabic and Sanskrit. While still a student he was appointed as an Assistant-teacher in his college. He

joined the Medical College in 1835 as a student as well as an Assistant-teacher at the same time.

In 1836 he was called up on to start the anatomical dissection against great odds. He had to face the wrath of contemporary conservative society and was threatened to be socially ostracised. But no amount of societal pressure could deter him as he cited

the example of the ancient physician Shusruta who used to undertake dissection in his time.

On January 10, 1836, a new leaf was added to the book of history of medical studies in India. Dr. Madhusudan Gupta and his team undertook the first dissection of human body in Calcutta.

Opinions

A Note for Consideration

By

Ashit Sarkar

I have attempted to analyze the SWOT (Strengths Weaknesses, Opportunities Threats) of the current situation of the Brahmo movement. My analyses may be reviewed, modified, increased or corrected.

Strengths:

- Very non-controversial and logical belief that respects all religions and faiths.
- Possibly the only faith that permits accepting changes with altering environment.
- It attempts to result in leading to very good ways for life/value systems without demanding anything in return.
- Present virtual gatherings/discussions provide easier participation by masses.

Weaknesses:

- Severe lack of financial strength, other than possibly in Kolkata.

- Lack of leadership in structured hierarchy for all the Samajes to plan compositely to take continued action that gets the results for achievement of goals.
- Disunity amongst Brahmos, and factionalism.
- Lack of long-term commitment, dedication and hard work, poor organization and non-involvement of youth.
- Many leaders concentrate on high-flown philosophy in purer language during prayer meetings rather than in common everyday understandable language. As a result the orations are not accepted or understood by the younger generation - who often consider it boring and a waste of time.
- Unlike other faiths demanding their next generation to observe and follow the religion fairly successfully, Brahmos are often unable to get the involvement of the next generation.
- Limitations of the present working leaders due to other work priorities. Very limited ability to propagate the faith to the masses as a part time activity.
- Consequently, there are no exclusive full time Brahmo leaders who can devote all their energies towards propagating the excellent faith.
- Like the Unitarian Church, failure to encourage non-brahmo's to participate & contribute.
- We lack external communication of the Brahmo faith for general public awareness.

Opportunities:

- Revival of Brahmo Samajes and extending them to more locations.
- Involvement in education & in social causes to spread the Brahmo faith.
- Use spiritual messages for self-realization to work for the greater societal cause.
- Increased holding of visible non-serious functions specially to attract the youth.
- Using digital technology to help increase in participation and communication at low cost.

- Develop new leaders from the younger generation – vital for long-term growth of the Brahmo movement.

Threats:

- Unlike the past, today's youth have so many other alternatives that interest them in comparison to religion, or philosophic pursuits.

To start with, I feel that firstly, we severely lack sufficient resources to carry out major activities with vigour and consistency and secondly, the kind of structured organisation with quality and effective leadership essential to meet the decided goals for long term. The lack of centralized planning and funding hampers the activities at different locations. We lack any CEO for the Brahmo organization for managing activities (other than prayers). For this:

- We must develop the structure of the entire organisation with laid down lines of authority and responsibility.
- We have to find ways and means to increase the funds situation.
- There must be concerted effort to unify the different branches and Samajes (although minor differences may remain)

The above will be difficult and will require all Samajes to co-ordinate and participate. The opportunities provide planning to overcome some of the weaknesses and make the Samajes more effective by interactive co-operation. The digital technology has made it easier and less expensive to do so in much greater scale than in the past.

External awareness of the Brahmo faith is extremely low and we should try to advertise or communicate it to the larger public in some positive way.

The above considerations must be kept in mind in order to make a holistic planning for the revival of the Brahmo movement under the present scenario of our country and the world.

**Acknowledgement
For the month of December, 2020**

Donation

DN/GL No.	Donor's Name	Occasion	Purpose	Amount Rs.
DN/a - 1078	Biswajit Roy		Library Fund	200/-
DN/a - 1079	Rita Banerjee	On the occasion of Addya Sradha ceremony of Kritish Ranjan Banerjee	Mahila Bhavan Fund	10,000/-
DN/a - 1081	Biswajit Roy		Library Fund	1,344/-
GL - 1457	Madhulika Ghosh	Donation for Education Fund	Education Fund	1,000/-
GL - 1458	Pallavi Bhattacharya		Publication Fund	500/-
GL - 1467	Nilanjan Gupta	On the occasion of birth centenary of Soumendra Nath Dasgupta	I.B.F. Fund	10,000/-
GL - 1468	Dipanjan Sengupta	- Do -	I.B.F. Fund	10,000/-
GL - 1472	Biswajit Roy		Publication Fund	335/-

Trust Fund – (New)

T.F. No.	Donor's Name	Name of T.F.	Purpose	Amount Rs.
T.F - 1092	Soumitra Bose	Soumitra Bose T.F.	D.O. A/c Fund	400/-
T.F - 1093	Keka Bose	Keka Bose T.F.	D.O. A/c Fund	400/-

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

I/We wish to subscribe “The Indian Messenger” / “তত্ত্ব-কৌমুদী” and agree to abide by your rules and regulations.

Name of the subscriber: _____

Type of membership : Individual () / Institutional ()

Subscription period : One Year () / Two Years ()

Type of Media : Print Copy () / Digital Copy ()

Name of organization (For Institution): _____

Address: _____

Pin Code: _____ **District:** _____

State: _____ **Country:** _____

Email: _____ **Mobile/Phone:** _____

Amount: (in figures) _____ **(in words)** _____

DD/Cheque No. _____ **Date:** _____

Bank Name: _____

DD/Cheque in favor of “Sadharan Brahmo Samaj” Payable at Kolkata

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____ **Seal**

(For Institutions): _____

----- Cut Here -----

Membership	One year (12 issues)		Two years (24 issues)	
	Print Copy	Digital Copy	Print Copy	Digital Copy
Individual	Rs. 200/- & 10 US\$	Rs. 100/- & 5 US\$	Rs. 360/- & 20 US\$	Rs. 180/- & 8 US\$
Institutional	Rs. 240/- & 10 US\$	Rs. 100/- & 5 US\$	Rs. 440/- & 20 US\$	Rs. 180/- & 8 US\$

Kindly correspond to

The Editor, The Indian Messenger / Tattvakaumudi
Sadharan Brahmo Samaj
211, Bidhan Sarani,
Kolkata – 700006, India
Telephone: (+91) (33) 22412280
Email: brahmosamaj.sadharan@gmail.com

Please Note the above Subscriptions include the postal charges.
For Institutional Subscribers 2 copies will be send to the same address.
Digital copies will be sent to the registered email ID in PDF format.

Dear Friend,

We are updating member records and wish to add authenticated email id and mobile no. for each member for faster and frequent communication process in near future.

Many members have already sent the updated forms, those who haven't received it or couldn't send it kindly update the details below and send us the filled up form through any of the following means:

- a) By post
or
- b) Send a scanned copy of the filled-up form through e-mail at
brahmosamaj.sadharan@gmail.com

We look forward for your continuing co-operation and support.

Yours truly,

Secretary

Member Details:

Name:	
Present Address:	
Date of Birth: (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Email Id: *	
Mobile No.: *	
Signature with date:	

* You may also mention your family member's Email-id and Mobile No. if you do not have your own email id or mobile

* Kindly attach a self-attested copy of any of your latest photo ids