

# Debendranath Tagore

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## About Debendranath Tagore

- Born May 15, 1817, Calcutta , India–died January 19, 1905, Calcutta).
- Born into a wealthy landowning family.
- Born in Shilaidaha, his father was the industrialist Dwarkanath Tagore; he himself had 14 children, many of whom, including Nobel-prize winning poet Rabindranath Tagore, made significant artistic or literary contributions to society.
- He was the founder in 1848 of the Brahmo religion, which today is synonymous with Brahmoism.
- Tagore began his formal education at the age of nine; he was taught Sanskrit, Persian, English, and Western philosophy.
- He became a close friend of his younger fellow reformer Keshab Chunder Sen.
- Tagore spoke out vehemently against sati (self-immolation of a widow on her husband's funeral pyre), a practice that was especially prevalent in Bengal.
- Unlike Sen, however, Tagore remained a more conservative Hindu, while Sen drifted toward Christianity. This philosophical break between the two men eventually resulted in a schism within the Brahmo Samaj in 1866.
- Tagore, in his zeal to erase from Hinduism the abuses of the lower castes as well as the worship of gods through their images (murtis), finally rejected the whole of the Vedas, the ancient Hindu scriptures, claiming that no set of writings, however venerable, could furnish complete and satisfying guidelines to human activity.
- In 1863 he founded Shantiniketan ("Abode of Peace"), a retreat in rural Bengal later made famous by his poet son Rabindranath Tagore, whose educational centre there

became an international university.

- Until his death Debendranath Tagore bore the title Maharishi (“Great Sage”).
- Tagore wrote voluminously in his native Bengali.
- His Brahma-Dharma (1854; “The Religion of God”) is a commentary on the Sanskrit scriptures.