

## Social And Religious Reform Movements

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### Improve your learning

**Q. 1. Evaluate the following statement with examples, “Western education and Christian Missionaries influenced the Social and Religious reform movement in India”.**

**Answer :** Western education and Christian Missionaries influenced reform movements:

1. Christian missionaries that came with the companies heavily criticised the religious practices present in India.
2. They preached and spread Christianity. They opened educational, health and charity services for poor.
3. As debates happened between missionaries of Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, people began to think about the fundamental ideas of their religions.
4. Spreading of new ideas and questions, printing of books and translations of languages like Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic influenced reforms.

**Q. 2. What was the importance of printing press in the development of reform movement?**

**Answer :** Importance of press in reform movements:

1. The printing press which was introduced by Europeans helped in starting numerous magazines and newspapers in India.
2. Books in various languages also got printed and circulated.
3. People got access to a large number of writings at a low cost.
4. Low cost and wide spread printing helped in developing debates and discussions.

**Q. 3. The main idea behind religious reform was to end complex rituals, worshipping of many gods and idol worship. Do you think people have accepted these reforms? Explain.**

**Answer :** Religious reforms about rituals and idols:

1. Raja Rammohan Roy believed that worshipping of idols and having rituals or sacrifices was wrong.

2. Swami Vivekananda and Swami Dayananda also rejected the ritualistic aspects of Hindu religion.

3. In reforms within Hinduism, most leaders have emphasised on one God, equality and removing any elaborate rituals.

4. However, not everyone has accepted such reforms. Many people remain orthodox Hindus.

**Q. 4. Why do you think people like Ramabai paid special attention to the condition of widows?**

**Answer :** Ramabai paid special attention to the condition of widows:

1. Pandita Ramabai was a Sanskrit scholar. She travelled a lot in India and abroad to study women's conditions.

2. After seeing the women's organisations of England and America, she set up an ashram in India.

3. Sharada Sadan was also a school where vocational skills were taught to widows, orphans, blind etc.

4. Ramabai believed women can only get their rights if they were independent in their life.

**Q. 5. Explain the role of Raja Rammohan Roy as a social reformer in India in 19th century.**

**Answer :** Raja Rammohan Roy as a social reformer:

1. Roy was a scholar in many languages and studies numerous religious philosophies.

2. He had beliefs like there is only one God, rituals and priests should be rejected, all religions should be respected etc.

3. He used to publish his ideas and in 1828, he founded the Brahmo Samaj where people believed in One God and a universal religion.

4. After his death in 1833, Devendranath Tagore and Keshav Chandra Sen spread the Brahmo movement.

**Q. 6. What was the main concern of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in promoting English Education?**

**Answer :** Concern of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan:

1. The tension between British government and Muslims can be stopped by learning modern education and taking more government jobs.
2. He started the Aligarh movement to modernize the Muslim community.
3. He wanted education for women, abolition of purdah and a scientific society.
4. He established Mohammedan Anglo Oriental (MAO) College in 1875. It later became Aligarh Muslim University and the most important educational institution for Indian Muslims.

**Q. 7. Why does caste remain such a controversial issue today? What do you think was the most important movement against caste in colonial times?**

**Answer :** The issue of caste today:

1. Many people have biases of caste systems even today.
2. It is a highly political issue now because of reservations given to SCs, STs and OBCs. This has caused agitations.
3. The most important movement could be the Ambedkar's fight for reservations as it ensured that Dalits have a place in the decision making bodies of the government.

**Q. 8. What did Ambedkar want to achieve through the temple entry movement?**

**Answer :** Ambedkar's temple entry movement:

1. Ambedkar wanted to bring together all Dalits as a community who have suffered together.
2. It was a political movement that sought to end caste discrimination
3. He wanted to assert their right for access to public places.
4. He believed it was a huge discrimination to deny Dalits entry to the place of worship of their religion.

**Q. 9. How in your opinion were the movements of social reform effective in ridding Indian society of social evils? What social evils do you find today? Which reform movements should be started to combat them?**

**Answer :** Social evils then and now:

1. Social reform movements became really important in bringing change in practices and ideas of people.

2. It helped suppressed people from all parts of society- religion, women, Dalits etc.

3. Today, many of the social evils exist like caste bias, lynching, dowry system etc. but it is changing slowly.

4. Many NGOs fight for the rights of the downtrodden. We should begin a reform movement that would make people sympathetic to any form of suffering or suppression.