

Social Science

(History) (Chapter – 7) (Women, Caste and Reform)
(Class – 8)

Let's recall

Question 1:

What social ideas did the following people support?

Rammohun Roy
Dayanand Saraswati
Veerasalingam Pantulu
Jyotirao Phule
Pandita Ramabai
Periyar
Mumtaz Ali
Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar

Answer 1:

Rammohun Roy:	Ban on sati
Dayanand Saraswati:	Widow remarriage
Veerasalingam Pantulu:	Widow remarriage
Jyotirao Phule:	Caste inequality
Pandita Ramabai:	Ill treatment of widows
Periyar:	Caste inequality
Mumtaz Ali:	Women's education
Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar:	Widow remarriage

Question 2:

State whether true or false:

- (a) When the British captured Bengal they framed many new laws to regulate the rules regarding marriage, adoption, inheritance of property, etc.
- (b) Social reformers had to discard the ancient texts in order to argue for reform in social practices.
- (c) Reformers got full support from all sections of the people of the country.
- (d) The Child Marriage Restraint Act was passed in 1829.

Answer 2:

- (a) When the British captured Bengal they framed many new laws to regulate the rules regarding marriage, adoption, inheritance of property, etc. **True**
- (b) Social reformers had to discard the ancient texts in order to argue for reform in social practices. **True**
- (c) Reformers got full support from all sections of the people of the country. **False**
- (d) The Child Marriage Restraint Act was passed in 1829. **False**

Let's discuss

Question 3:

How did the knowledge of ancient texts help the reformers promote new laws?

Answer 3:

Various social reformers used ancient texts to convince the people about the need for abolishing certain social evils. Quotation from ancient texts gave weight to their arguments.

Question 4:

What were the different reasons people had for not sending girls to school?

Answer 4:

Initially, people were skeptical about girls' school. They thought that education would pollute the minds of the girls. They also feared the schools would take away the girls from home and away from their domestic duties.

Question 5:

Why were Christian missionaries attacked by many people in the country? Would some people have supported them too? If so, for what reasons?

Answer 5:

Christian missionaries opened schools for tribal and lower caste children. Caste based segregation was not being followed in the schools which were run by Christian missionaries. Hence, many orthodox people attacked the missionaries. Social reformers would have supported the missionaries for their work against social evils.

Question 6:

In the British period, what new opportunities opened up for people who came from castes that were regarded as "low"?

Answer 6:

Education gave them a tool to change their world. At the same time, many poor began to migrate to cities in search of jobs. Some also went to work in plantations in Assam, Mauritius, Trinidad and Indonesia. Work in the new locations gave them an opportunity to get rid of the oppression which they suffered at the hands of upper-caste people back in their villages. Moreover, the army also offered job opportunities.

Question 7:

How did Jyotirao the reformers justify their criticism of caste inequality in society?

Answer 7:

He attacked the Brahmans' claim to superiority. He argued that the Aryans were foreigners who subjugated the true children of the country. He said that the upper caste had no right to land and power and the land belonged to the low caste people who were the original inhabitants of the land in the peninsula. Many other social reformers used the same logic to promote caste equality.

Question 8:

Why did Phule dedicate his book *Gulamgiri* to the American movement to free slaves?

Answer 8:

The Civil Rights Movement in America helped in ending slavery and racial discrimination. Hence Phule dedicated his book *Gulamgiris* to the movement.

Question 9:

What did Ambedkar want to achieve through the temple entry movement?

Answer 9:

The dalits were not allowed entry into the temples. It was like denying them one of the basic rights, i.e. equal access to a public place. By organizing the temple entry movement, Ambedkar wanted to regain self respect for the dalits.

Question 10:

Why were Jyotirao Phule and Ramaswamy Naicker critical of the national movement? Did their criticism help the national struggle in any way?

Answer 10:

He used to be a member of the Congress. But when he saw seating arrangements on caste affiliations during one of the feasts organized by the Congress, he left it in disgust. While nothing is mentioned in this chapter on this issue, we can make some assumptions. After the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa, issues about untouchables became focus of debate by the nationalist leaders. Hence, it can be said that movements by Phule and Periyar must have helped in shaping the opinion of nationalist leaders.