

4. Social Reforms and Religious Renaissance in India

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Question

Who established Arya Samaj?

- A. Raja Ram Mohan Roy
- B. Keshab Chandra Sen
- C. Swami Dayanand Saraswati
- D. Debendranath Tagore

Answer

c) is correct. Swami Dayanand Saraswati established the Arya Samaj in 1875

a) is incorrect. Raja Rammohun Roy spearheaded the creation of Brahma Samaj

b) is incorrect. Keshab Chandra Sen was the successor of Rammohun Roy at Brahma Samaj

d) is incorrect. Debendranath Tagore was the successor of Rammohun Roy at Brahma Samaj

2. Question

Who is called pioneer of Indian Renaissance in 19th A. D.?

- A Swami Vivekananda
- B. Swami Dayanand Saraswati
- C. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar
- D. Raja Ram Mohan Roy

Answer

d) is correct. Raja Ram Mohan Roy pioneered reforms in religion and social life. He is also considered to have started the wave of Indian nationalism.

a) is incorrect. Swami Vivekananda was the founder of Ramakrishna Mission, and was born towards the end of the 19th century, in 1863.

b) is incorrect. Swami Dayanand Saraswati was a Hindutva leader who established the Arya Samaj in North India in 1875.

c) is incorrect. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was a Bengali reformer, who worked to further education and reform in the Bengali society.

3. Question

Who published 'Sambad Kaumudi'?

- A. Raja Ram Mohan Roy
- B. Swami Vivekananda
- C. Ramkrishna Paramhans
- D. Debendranath Tagore

Answer

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a social reformer, who wished to change the society for the better. In accordance with this desire, he established the Brahma Samaj in 1828. One of the objectives of the Samaj was to offer information about the growth of nationalist movement; hence the samaj published a newspaper titled 'Sambad Kaumudi'. All other options are factually incorrect.

4. Question

When was Brahma Samaj established?

- A. 1862
- B. 1828
- C. 1875
- D. 1893

Answer

Brahma Samaj was established by Raja Ram Mohan Roy on 20 August 1828. The objective of the Samaj was to prevent the effect of Christianity on Indians and rid the society of social evils. All other options are incorrect.

5. Question

Childhood name of Swami Dayanand Saraswati was-

- A. Narendranath Dutt
- B. Mool Shamkar
- C. Jatashankar

D. Bhawani Shankar

Answer

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj, was born in 1824 in Gujarat. His parents named him Moolshankar, as it was a conservative Brahmin family. All other options are incorrect.

6. Question

Pioneer of Anuvrat was-

A. Dayanand Saraswati

B. Vivekananda

C. Keshab Chandra Sen

D. Acharya Tulsi

Answer

d) is correct. Acharya Tulsi launched the Anuvrat Andolan in the light of the horrors of Indian Independence. He was discouraged by lawlessness and lack of civility during Partition, and hence launched the movement.

a) is incorrect. Swami Dayanand Saraswati established the Arya Samaj in 1875

b) is incorrect. . Swami Vivekananda was the founder of Ramakrishnan Mission, and was born towards the end of the 19th century, in 1863.

c) is incorrect. Keshab Chandra Sen was the successor of Rammohun Roy at Brahma Samaj

Very Short Answer

1. Question

When was Swami Vivekananda born?

Answer

Swami Vivekananda, founder of the Ramakrishna Math, was born on 12 January 1863. He was born to Vishwanath Dutt of Bengal.

2. Question

Where was Swami Dayanand Saraswati born?

Answer

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj, was born in 1824, to a Brahmin family of Morvi province in Gujarat.

3. Question

Who established 'Adi Brahma Samaj'?

Answer

Adi Brahma Samaj was born out of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Brahma Samaj, and was established by Devendranath Tagore.

4. Question

When did Swami Dayanand Saraswati have his last breath?

Answer

Swami Dayanand Saraswati departed to heavenly abode on 30 October 1883. He had spent his last days in Ajmer, Rajasthan, and left behind a great legacy, which lives on in Arya Samaj.

5. Question

When was law against Satipratha passed?

Answer

The law to ban sati- burning of widows on the husband's pyre- was signed in 1829. It was the culmination of years of efforts and reforms undertaken by Raja ram Mohan Roy.

6. Question

Who started Anuvrat Andolan?

Answer

Disheartened and saddened by the horrors of Partition and the rise of illegal activities in post-independent India, Acharya Tulsi, the 9th Acharya of Terapanth Sampradaya, started the Anuvrat andolan in 1949.

7. Question

State about social reforms done by Brahma Samaj.

Answer

Brahma Samaj aimed to purify the society of many evils, particularly sati, child marriage, dowry and alcoholism. It also emphasised the need to impart Western education to Indians, in order to modernise the society.

8. Question

Describe about role of Swami Dayanand Saraswati in National Movement.

Answer

Swami Dayanand Saraswati helped to further the National movement in many ways. Most prominently, he was the first person to use the term Swaraj, and he also advocated for the boycott of foreign goods and reliance on Indian goods and institutions.

Essay Type

1. Question

Write about main causes of Indian Renaissance in 19th A. D.

Answer

Over the centuries, foreign traders and invaders have repeatedly tried to destroy the Indian culture and impose their customs and practices upon us. However, various revivalists' movements have helped us to preserve and foster our culture. The 19th Century Indian Renaissance was born out of similar efforts:

- a) **DEGRADATION OF INDIAN CULTURE:** Over the years, several social evils and undesirable customs, such as idol worship had crept into Indian society. These practices distanced many Hindus, who sought refuge in Islam and Christianity. Hindu reformers tried to bring the Hindus back to their customs and culture, by preaching the Vedas and speaking against evils like sati and dowry.
- b) **BRITISH RULE:** English rule gave an opportunity to Indians to go to Europe and study Western Thought. People reacted sharply to the spread of Christian Missionaries, and felt obliged to reform their society, who had come along with the British
- c) **NATIONALIST MOVEMENT:** The nationalist movement helped Indians voice their reluctance against the economic exploitation by the British.
- d) **PRINTING PRESS:** With the introduction of printing press in India, newspapers, magazines and novels could be published to inform the people of the social evils in the society. It also helped to talk about the British exploitation and the nationalist movement.
- e) **WESTERN THOUGHT:** There was a wave of independent thought which emerged in Europe and spread across the world, eventually reaching India. Consequently, several European thinkers like Maxmuller and William Jones started probing Indian literature and several Indian reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy got access to Western Thought.

2. Question

Describe about life and teachings of Raja Ram Mohan Roy.

Answer

Raja Ram Mohan Roy spearheaded several important reforms in the Indian society. Most notably, he brought about social and religious reforms. He also

pioneered the ideas of nationalism, which led to the birth of Nationalist movement.

a) Raja Ram Mohan Roy was born in 1772, in Radhanagar, Bengal. He was educated in many languages, including Greek, Latin, Hebrew etc., and was deeply influenced by the Western Thought.

b) Consequently, he came to despise the social evils that plagued the Indian society. He spoke against idol worship, sati, dowry, child marriage and alcoholism.

c) In a significant move, he established the BRAHMA SAMAJ in 1828. The Samaj was based on the teachings of Vedas and Upanishads. It was open to all religions, and was established with the aim to reform the society by eradicating social evils, promoting worship and charity, espousing the truth and working towards the goal of a better society.

d) The main principles of Brahma Samaj were the central teachings of Raja Ram Mohan Roy's life – monotheism, attaining salvation through service, immortality of soul, social equality, search for truth in prayer etc.

e) He was also troubled by the prevalence of widow burning, called sati, in India. He lobbied hard and finally forced the British authorities to pass a law to ban sati in 1829.

f) He also helped to establish institutions that bore origin in Western education and thought eg. Vedanta College, Hindu College, English school. He also started a newspaper titled Sambad Kaumudi

g) He breathed his last in Bristol, England in 1833.

3. Question

Describe about life and principles of Swami Dayanand Saraswati.

Answer

Swami Dayanand Saraswati was a reformer, who led social reform through his Arya Samaj.

a) Swami Dayanand was born in a Brahmin family of Gujarat, in 1824. He was christened Moolshankar by his parents.

b) He was disillusioned with idol worship at a young age, and left his house at 21 to become a disciple of Swami Virzanandji of Mathura. His guru advised him to "live and teach Vedas". Accordingly, he started giving public lectures since 1864.

c) He adopted the use of Hindi as the national language, and the sole medium in which he composed his work. With an aim to cleanse the society of social evils, he wrote the book 'Satyarthaprakash' in 1874, and started the Arya Samaj in 1875.

d) The main principles of Arya Samaj were the central teachings of Swami Dayanand's life –emphasis on truth, destruction of evil education, opposition of idol worship, encouraging female education, having good and harmonious behaviour etc.

e) Swamiji firmly believed in removing social evils from the society. Foremost among them were untouchability, girl-infanticide, veil tradition, idol worship, superstitious and orthodox beliefs and child marriage.

f) He also called for equality for women, stating that Vedas believed that men and women were equal. Most notably, he is known to encourage female education and widow remarriage through Arya Samaj.

g) Swamiji also contributed to the Indian Freedom Movement. He was the first person to use the word SWARAJ, and also called for the boycott of foreign goods.

h) Arya Samaj also made contribution to education by opening several schools, colleges and other educational institutions in rural and backward areas.

i) Swami spent a life of preaching, and breathed his last 1883, in Ajmer, Rajasthan.

4. Question

Write an essay on 'Anuvrat Andolan'.

Answer

HISTORY: Anuvrat Andolan was started by JAIN TERAPANTHI DHARMASANGH under the leadership of Acharya Shri Tulsi, the 9th Acharya of Jain Paigambar Terapanth Sampradaya in 1949. In the wake of independence in 1947, Acharya ji was deeply saddened by lack of morality among people and the spread of social evils in the society. Partition had led to bloody riots and people were exploiting their freedom by indulging in unfair market practices. Acharya ji thought that the sacrifice made by the lakhs of freedom fighters would be wasted if we continued indulging in such inhuman practices.

Accordingly, he established the Anuvrat Andolan- a group of 75 rules than any Anuvrati must follow.

COMPOSITION: Anuvrat Andolan was open to people of religion, castes and cultures. Several prominent leaders, including Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Rajendra Prasad embraced Anuvrati.

TEACHINGS: Anuvrat was a form of HUMAN RELIGION or MANAVDHARMA. It was a purely non-violent movement, aimed to promote the welfare of human beings. It has several rules and teachings. These include:

1. **NON-VIOLENCE :** Followers of Anuvrat shall not kill innocent animals, commit suicide or kill children in womb. Nor shall they attack anyone or

support a hostile policy. They must promote world peace and universal disarmament.

2. **EQUALITY:** An Anuvrati shall not discriminate anyone on the basis of caste, gender, religion, colour etc. He shall not practice untouchability.

3. **BUSINESS ETHIC:** Anuvratists shall not cause loss to anyone for personal gain, nor indulge in deceptive behaviour.

4. **SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Anuvrati shall not indulge in any social evil, nor try to harm the election machinery.

5. An Anuvrati shall refrain from alcohol and drug consumption

6. An Anuvrati shall be aware of problems of pollution. She shall not cut trees or consume electricity unnecessarily.

Millions of followers of Anuvrat are spreading the message of peaceful co-existence and brotherhood around the world.

5. Question

Describe about contribution of Swami Vivekananda in Indian, religion and National Movements.

Answer

Swami Vivekananda was a young 19th century philosopher, who worked to reform the society through Western education and espousing of Upanishads. He contributed significantly towards religion and National movement.

1. He is most notably known for representing the Hindu Community at the World Parliament of Religions at Chicago in 1893. Overcoming many hurdles, he reached Chicago and spoke eloquently about the Indian society, its culture, religion and customs. He touted that Indians were the most powerful in the world and it was the highest centre for philosophical and spiritual discourse.

2. The Parliament was enamoured by the eloquence of Vivekananda, and were forced to re-assess their idea of India. In a way, Vivekananda up-lifted the image of India in foreign soil.

3. Back home, he helped people to embrace Hinduism through the lens of the Vedas. Being a Vedanta philosopher, he talked about removing ignorance and helping orphans.

4. He also travelled around the country and talked about the National movement and motivated people to serve Mother India. He also motivated the youth to educate themselves and surrender their lives to the nation.

5. In 1897, Swami Vivekananda established the RAMAKRISHNA MISSION in Bengal, with the aim of preaching ideals that were acceptable to all religions and providing charitable services during earthquakes, famines, floods and outbreak of diseases.