# Modern History · GS - I

**Mahatma Jotirao Phule's writings and efforts of social reforms touched issues of almost all subaltern classes. Discuss.**

| EXAM YEAR | PAPER | SUBJECT |
|---|---|---|
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| MARKS | WORD LIMIT |
|---|---|
| 15 | ~250 words |

## Answer Hint

**Jyotirao Phule, Satyashodhak Samaj, caste oppression, women, Shudras and Atishudras, education, widowhood, Brahmanical dominance, peasant exploitation, social justice**

## Model Answer

### Introduction

Jyotirao Phule was among the foremost nineteenth-century Indian social reformers who challenged caste hierarchy, patriarchy and social exploitation. His reform agenda extended beyond a single community and addressed multiple marginalised sections.

### 1. Upliftment of Shudras and Atishudras

Phule challenged the social and ideological foundations of caste discrimination. Through the Satyashodhak Samaj, established in 1873, he sought social equality and liberation from hereditary domination.

### 2. Women's Empowerment

Along with Savitribai Phule, he promoted female education and established schools for girls. He opposed child marriage, caste-based restrictions on women and the exploitation of widows. His Balhatya Pratibandhak Griha provided support to vulnerable pregnant widows.

### 3. Peasant Concerns

In works such as *Shetkaryacha Asud*, Phule highlighted the exploitation of peasants by landlords, moneylenders and colonial revenue structures. He connected caste oppression with economic deprivation.

### 4. Religious and Social Critique

His *Gulamgiri* criticised social structures that perpetuated inequality and compared caste oppression with slavery. He advocated rationalism and social equality.

### Conclusion

Phule's reformism was intersectional in its concerns, linking caste, gender and economic exploitation. His emphasis on education, dignity and equality laid important foundations for India's later social-justice movements.

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