

# ***Introduction***

## CHAPTER-1

### INTRODUCTION

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*“Swami Dayanand Saraswati had not only studied, from his youth onwards, that supreme Vedic culture out of which India has risen to her full height of spiritual wisdom and experience. He had lived it. In his unique personality, he recapitulated the Vedic life. He embodied it in himself. He made it vital and actual for others. Amid a land, that was turning away from its past, to find all its ideals in Europe, he showed, by a living example, that this entire absorption in the culture of the West was to despise one’s birthright, to foreshake one’s true nature, to sink in the scale of humanity, rather than to rise. Swami Dayanand Saraswati believed intensely, that these Vedic times were superior to the age in which we now live. A Sanyasi, with such a unique genius and moral character, that the past itself was quickened into recreated life by his presence among men.”*

*Rev, C.F. Andrews<sup>1</sup>*

In the 19th and 20th centuries, India saw a rise in various social-religious reform movements to bring about social change and reforms in Indian society. These movements were mainly categorised into two groups, first came the Western-oriented, influenced by contemporary Western ideas and second the Revivalist Movements, which sought to revive ancient traditions and emphasise the importance of preserving cultural and religious heritage.

The common thing between the Western-oriented and revivalist movements is that they wanted to reform the Indian Society. Their way of reform was different as Western-oriented movements wanted to reform society under Western ideas. They considered that India should learn from Western ideas on the other handed Revivalist Movement believed in establishing the Ancient Vedic culture. The Brahmo Samaj and Prathana Samaj movements both were aimed to reform the Hinduism and Hindu society. Raja Ram Mohan Roy's efforts to promote monotheism and denounce idol worship and the caste system, as well as Atmaram Pandurang's emphasis on social

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<sup>1</sup> Vachaspati, Vidya, Dev Dharma, *Maharishi Dayanand and Satyarth Prakash*, International Aryan League, Balidan Bavan, Delhi, 1945, Pg-4.

equality and women's education, demonstrated significant attempts to reform traditional practices. As has been described by C.F. Andrews<sup>2</sup> Swami Dayanand Saraswati wanted to re-establish the old Vedic Culture, which can be considered as the Golden period of Indian History. Swami believed that the Vedic culture was superior in comparison to other cultures and we need not to follow the philosophy of the Western ideas because we have the most unique characteristics in our culture. In this way, Swami Dayanand Saraswati established the Arya Samaj which followed the principle 'Back to Vedas'. Revivalist movements played a crucial role in shaping India's cultural and social landscape, and their impact can still be felt today. They were instrumental in bringing about social reforms, promoting education, helping raise Nationalism and raising awareness about India's rich cultural heritage.

At the start, the Britishers had no intention of dominion but after the Industrial Revolution, they made India a colony to fulfil their economic needs. The consequences included economic exploitation, the destruction of traditional industries, and the disruption of rural livelihoods. In the 19th century, continued foreign domination led to economic destruction as well as many social evils such as child marriage, sati, female infanticide, polygamy, and so on crept into society.

For study the history of the Arya Samaj it is very important to understand the meaning of this word. The word 'Arya' has its origin in the Sanskrit language. It means pure, noble, righteous, and progressive person. The word Arya is not limited to any particular sector race or region. It is used for the people who live in the land of India. The importance and role of the Arya Samaj Movement is expressed in the words of the Danpat Pandey.

*"Arya Samaj Movement was one of the important Socio-religious reform Movements which tended to have a national Scope and a programme of reconstruction in the Socio-religious sphere."*<sup>3</sup>

The first centre of the Arya Samaj was established in Rajkot, but due to some political turmoil, it stopped working. But after some time it will revive again as an important centre of Arya Samaj. As a result, there would be a developed in the different parts of India. All these institutions played an important role in the social, political, educational and religious reforms in the different parts of India.

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<sup>2</sup> He was a Anglican priest and Christain missionary, educator and social reformer and an activist for Indian Independence.

<sup>3</sup> Pandey Danpati, *Arya Samaj and Indian Nationalism*, S.Chand & Co. Pv.t. Ltd., New Delhi, 1972, pg-72

The social contribution of the Arya Samaj can be seen from the different social reforms which was introduced by the Arya Samaj. Arya Samaj tried to interrupt the different social evils that existed in society like polygamy, untouchability, child marriage, and Sati, and support the widow re-marriage. It tried to challenge the contemporary Brahmins-dominated Society. Brahmins interrupted the ancient literature according to the need to establish their superiority in society. Arya Samaj not only criticised the Western ideas but also tried to reform the different evils that existed in Indian Culture at that time.

The educational contribution of the Arya Samaj can be seen that *till 1975 Arya Samaj managed and ran more than 300 colleges and high Schools, 2000 middle and primary schools, 710 girls Schools, 322 schools for backward cast and 40 Gurukuls.*<sup>4</sup>

The political contribution of the Arya Samaj can be seen in Swami Dayanand Saraswati who introduced Indians to the concept of ‘Swadeshi’ in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He also described different ways that how we can adopt the ‘Swadeshi’ for the economic development of the country. I can be from the words of renowned Parsi Patriot Dada Bhai Naoroji who first used this word in the Calcutta Session of Congress in 1906. When Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak asked him after this session that have you become an Arya Samajist? He replies that

*“No, I get great inspiration and respiration from Swami Dayanand Saraswati’s work in the struggle for Swarajya”*

Tilak not only introduced the concept of Swarajya but also adopted the most of the goals that were conceived during the Indian independence movement. Swadeshi was the primary goal during the Bengal Movement. Another achievement, which we can trace from the words of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, an Iron Man of India that

*“Swami Dayanand Saraswati laid the foundation of India’s freedom..... In the Indian Constitution, untouchability has been declared a crime and Hindi is the National language. It was Swami Dayanand, through himself a Gujarati, who first propagated that Hindi be made the National Language”*

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<sup>4</sup> Vedalankar Nardev Pandit, *Arya Samaj and Achievements*, Veda Niketan (Arya Pratinidi Sabha, S. Africa) Durban, South Africa, 1875-1975, Pp -1-20.

The Arya Samaj played a significant role in the development of the independence movement in India. While it is mostly associated with religious history, it also had a profound impact on social, political, economic, and educational aspects, as well as the Indian independence movement. Many members of the Arya Samaj actively participated in various independence movements.

### **Arya Samaj in Gujarat**

This thesis is limited to Gujarat, a region separated from Bombay in 1961. It comprises various areas where Arya Samaj was established during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. As mentioned earlier, Arya Samaj was first established in Rajkot and then spread to different parts of Gujarat. Swami Dayanand Saraswati was invited by Hargovind Das Diwarkar, who was the local secretary of the Prathana Samaj. Before its establishment, Dayanand visited various parts of Gujarat to spread the message of the Vedas. He was also invited by T. Madhava Rao of Baroda, where he delivered a lecture on Rajdharma to a large gathering.<sup>5</sup> Afterwards, he visited Rajkot, Ahmedabad, and other parts of Gujarat. It was observed that the popularity of any reformer's organization increased after the death of the reformer. Following the same principle, Arya Samaj became popular in the early 20th century after the death of Swami Dayanand.

In Gujarat, Arya Samaj was supported by the wealthy class of traders, who donated a large amount of wealth for the development of the Arya Samaj and its institutions. Arya Samaj introduced many educational, social, and political reforms in Gujarat.

The philosophy and literature of Arya Samaj influenced a large number of writers in Gujarat, such as Narmad, Dalpatram, Govardhan Tripathi and many others. They tried to restore the ancient Aryan culture's glory with the movement of Sanskrit Revivalism. In Gujarat, Arya Samaj also played an important role in the politics of Gujarat. Many leaders gave their service to the governmental sector. Many Arya Samajis participated in the independent movement of India. They also participated in Hyderabad Satyagraha and *Hindi Rakshan Andolan*. Arya Samaj also established a large web of educational institutions. These institutions made memorable contributions to women's education. At a time when foreign travelling was considered a sin, Arya Samaj of Baroda took the group of Girls Arya Kanya Vidyalaya, to different parts of the world mostly in Africa. Arya Samaj also worked for the upliftment of the Harijans and the tribal caste.

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<sup>5</sup> Bhavanilal, Bharti, *Maharishi Daynanad ka Baroda Pravash*, Arya Pariwar, Aryanidam, Baroda, 1955, Pp-15-20.

Many of the things, which we consider simple and easy today were considered complicated a century ago. The greatness of Dayanand and the Arya Samaj lies in their courageous opposition to the difficulties they faced. In the early days, followers of the Arya Samaj principles had to endure many hardships, including communal boycotts from their opponents, restrictions on social contact with others, and being forbidden from obtaining water from public wells. They were also subjected to assault, violence, and insults by their opponents. Despite this opposition, the Arya Samaj worked continuously for the betterment of society and the nation.

### **Significance of the topic**

In Gujarat, Arya Samaj played a vital role in every sphere. There would be very little work on the history of Arya Samaj in Gujarat. The existing body of literature is limited to an overview not a detailed description of Arya Samaj's work in society, politics, education, and literature influence or role in independent movement. The thesis aims to describe Arya Samaj's role in social, educational, political, and literary influence and the national movement mostly in Gujarat. Besides this, the thesis also aims to establish connections with the present times. The current government has shifted its focus towards the Indian knowledge tradition and has initiated changes in the administrative structures and education system. After the Ayodhya Movement, there has been a surge in Hindu nationalism and more importantly the newer generation's renewed emphasis on reviving traditional cultural practices and values.

### **Research objectives**

- I. To analyse the role of the Arya Samaj in Gujarat's society and its reaction toward the ideology and activities.
- II. To study the Arya Samaj's role in the politics of Gujarat.
- III. To understand the contribution of Arya Samaj towards the rise of the Nationalist Movement in Gujarat.
- IV. To evaluate the contribution of the Arya Samaj towards the education of the backward cast and women in Gujarat.
- V. To evaluate the views of different scholars towards Arya Samaj and its influence on Gujarati literature.

## **Hypothesis**

The history of Arya Samaj goes beyond its involvement in the Shuddhi movement or religion. Arya Samaj played a significant role in Gujarat's society, education, literature, and politics and even in the struggle for independence. The contributions of Arya Samaj in these areas are noteworthy and have been given more attention.

## **Research Methodology**

Primarily, the study is based on the archival research method. It attempts to focus on the facts and their context to study the Arya Samaj contribution in Gujarat. The research seeks to provide a historical as well as an analytical perspective on the subject matter. The research uses both primary and secondary sources. Primary sources included the written work of Swami Dayanand Saraswati and the followers of Arya Samaj in Gujarat, Magazines, Annual Reports of activity and official documents from the British government. Secondary sources like books, articles written in peer-reviewed journals, national and local dailies, weekly and fortnightly magazines as well as articles from the internet play a significant part in this study. The archival sources of Baroda are also included in the Research. The research included interviews, newspaper reports, and reports of the working committee of Arya Samaj and Gujarat Arya Pratinindi Sabha.

## **Review of Literature**

This literature review offers a comprehensive analysis of the existing literature on the Arya Samaj and its impact on various aspects of Gujarat Society. It includes the historical context of the organization, its theoretical frameworks, and empirical findings related to its role in shaping the Gujarat Society. Additionally, the review covers the role of Arya Samaj in different parts of India, including the various centres of Arya Samaj and its efforts in reforming society.

Satyaketu Vidyalankar's book "Arya Samaj Ka Itihas"- This fascinating book provides a detailed account of the life and times of Swami Dayanand Saraswati, as well as the origins and evolution of the Arya Samaj movement. The author delves into Swami Dayanand Saraswati's views on a range of topics, including politics, religion, society, and education, shedding light on Swami's unique perspective on these important issues. The book is also an excellent resource for anyone interested in the Arya Samaj movement, offering an in-depth exploration of the different centres of the movement located in the northern regions of India.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Satyketu, Vidyalankar & Vedalankar H. D, *Arya Samaj Ka Itihas*, Part 1, Arya Swadhyay Kendra, New Delhi, 1983.

Satyketu Vidyalanker, Haridatt Vidyalanker and Bhavanilal Bharti's book "Arya Samaj Ka Itihas" Part- 2 - The book provides a detailed insight into the Arya Samaj's educational centres, spread across various parts of India, including some in Gujarat. It beautifully captures the essence of the Arya Samaj's educational reforms and their significant achievements. The book is a comprehensive guide for anyone looking to explore the world of Arya Samaj's education and its contributions to the Indian educational system.<sup>7</sup>

Satyketu Vidyalanker, Haridatt Vidyalanker's book "Arya Samaj Ka Itihas" Part- III, gave a detailed description of the different educational reforms of Arya Samaj. It also gave a brief description of the education of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries and the educational policy of the Britishers. After that, it describes the arrival of the Arya Samaj as a movement in the educational system. It described the different educational centres of the Arya Samaj. D.A.V. school and other institutions played important role in the rise of Indian nationalism.<sup>8</sup>

Satyketu Vidyalanker, Haridatt Vidyalanker and Bhavanilal Bharti's book "Arya Samaj Ka Itihas" Part-IV describes the political history of the Arya Samaj and Role of the Arya Samaj in the development of the Nationalism. It also described Swadeshi, Swaraj, and Hindi as national Languages, Democracy, the role of the Lala Lajpat Roy, and different Arya Samaji who worked with Congress.<sup>9</sup>

Satyketu Vidyalanker, Haridatt Vidyalanker and Bhavanilal Bharti's book "Arya Samaj Ka Itihas" Part-V- gives a detailed description of the different literary works of Swami Dayanand Saraswati. Hindi literature of the Arya Samaj, Sanskrit literature of the Arya Samaj, biography of the different Arya Samaji, role of Arya Samaj in the development of journalism.<sup>10</sup>

The new Cambridge History of India, "Socio-religious Reform Movement in British India"- This book sheds light on the social reform movement during the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It describes the meaning of "Social Movements" and "Religious

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<sup>7</sup> Satyketu, Vidyalanker, Vedalanker, H. D, and Bharti B.L, *Arya Samaj Ka Itihas*, Part II, Arya Swadhyay Kendra, New Delhi. Kendra, 1984.

<sup>8</sup> Satyketu, Vidyalanker & Vedalanker, H. D, *Arya Samaj Ka Itihas* Part III, Arya Swadhyay Kendra, New Delhi, 1983.

<sup>9</sup> Satyketu, Vidyalanker & Vedalanker, H. D, *Arya Samaj Ka Itihas* Part IV, Arya Swadhyay Kendra, New Delhi, 1990.

<sup>10</sup> Satyketu, Vidyalanker & Vedalanker H. D, *Arya Samaj Ka Itihas*, Part V Arya Swadhyay Kendra, New Delhi, 1986.

Movements” and presents that social and religious Movements are possible because of the literacy rate and translation in regional languages. It described Arya Samaj as an ‘Acculturative Socio-religious Movement’.<sup>11</sup>

Danpat Pandey’s book “The Arya Samaj and Indian Nationalism” - The Arya Samaj’s role in the development of Nationalism in India. It also focuses light on Social reconstruction, national education, Swadeshi, and Stimulus to nationalism. It also brings detail that after 1907 Arya Samaj started to work with the Indian National Congress with the help of many Arya Samaji like Lala Lajpat Roy, Lokmanay Tilak and many others. It also discusses the British attitude towards the Arya Samaj and even Britishers tried to present Arya Samaj as a political Movement. By this, they want to stop the influence of Indigenous Movement Arya Samaj.<sup>12</sup>

‘Makers of Arya Samaj’ Part- II, by Diwan Chand Sharma describes the detailed life of Pandit Grudutt and Pandit Lekhram. Both of them were the great Arya Samaji, who gave their life to spreading the Vedic Message. Pandit Lekaram also played an important role in the development of the literature of the Arya Samaj.<sup>13</sup>

Lala Lajpat Roy’s book “Arya Samaj- An Account of Its Origin, Doctrine and Activities: with biographical sketch of his founder”, discusses Swami Dayanand Saraswati and his teachings on the importance of liberty of thought, liberty of conscience, and liberty of action for individuals. The book delved into the teachings of Swami Dayanand Saraswati that were based on Vedas and also highlighted the Social, Educational, Shuddhi Movement, and Philanthropic Activities of Arya Samaj. It was interesting to read about the organization of the Arya Samaj and its philanthropic activities, which were carried out in various parts of India.<sup>14</sup>

Meenakshi Jain’s book “Sati: Evangelical, Baptist Missionaries, and the Changing Colonial Discourse” - In her book, she describes how British Orientalists, Evangelicals, and Utilitarians had the sole intention of controlling the administration of India and spreading Christianity. She explain that the British misinterpreted the

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<sup>11</sup> Johnson, G. (Ed.), *The New Cambridge History of India: Socio-religious reform movements in British India*, C. A. Bayly & J. F. Richards (Assoc. Eds.), General editor, President of Wolfson College, and Director, Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge. Cambridge University Press, 2008.

<sup>12</sup> Dhanpati Pandey, *The Arya Samaj and Indian Nationalism (1875- 1920)*, S. Chand & Co., New Delhi, 1972.

<sup>13</sup> Sharma, Chand, Diwan, *Makers of Arya Samaj*, Part-II, Macmillan and co. limited, London, 1935.

<sup>14</sup> Rai, Lajpat, *The Arya Samaj: An Account of Its Origin, Doctrine, and Activities with Biographical Sketch of Its Founder*, Longmans, Green and Co, 1915.

data they saw, which showed more cases of Sati in Bengal, but in reality, it was more prevalent in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Punjab. They did this because, at that time, Bengal was the centre of Nationalism, and the British wanted to suppress the wave of Nationalism in Bengal for their longer rule.<sup>15</sup>

K.C Yadav and K.S Arya's book gives a detailed description of the role of the Arya Samaj in the political awakening and national consciousness during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century. It also described Arya Samaj works with the Indian National Congress. With the help of the Indian National Congress, it tried to achieve its goals at the national level. It also focuses light on the eminent Arya Samaji who worked in Congress.<sup>16</sup>

'The Arya Samaj' book of Lala Ganeshi Lal, This book gives the details of the origin of the Arya Samaj after giving the historical background of the Vedic society. It described the Aryavarta, the land of the noble Aryas. Then, he described the educational and social achievements of the Arya Samaj. The second part of this book described the different principles of the Arya Samaj.<sup>17</sup>

Tarachand Deumal Gajra's book *The Life of Swami Dayanand Saraswati*, describes the early life of Swami Dayanand Saraswati to the establishment of the Arya Samaj in Bombay. Arya Samaj tried to establish the ideal society based on the Vedic culture. Dayanand used different methods for the success of his Goal.<sup>18</sup>

"The Women Question and Arya Samaj" by Indu Bala, *Proceeding of Indian History Congress Vol.I 63 (2002)*, Pp-918-925 - The article discusses various social evils that are perpetrated against women. It also highlights the significant role played by the Arya Samaj in eradicating these social evils. The author refers to Satyarth Prakash, a book written by Dayanand Saraswati, to support her argument. Additionally, the article discusses the educational initiatives undertaken by the Arya Samaj, which included the efforts of Lala Hansraj and Bhai Pramanad. Several magazines like *Panchal Pandita* and *Bharti* were also published to promote women's rights.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Jain, Meenakshi, *Sati: Evangelicals, Baptist Missionaries, and Changing the Colonial Discourse*, Aryan Book International, New Delhi, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> Pandey, Dhanpati, *Arya Samaj and Indian Nationalism*, S. Chand & Co. LTD, New Delhi, 1972.

<sup>17</sup> Lal, Ganeshi, Lala, *The Arya Samaj*, Englewood Printings and Publication House, 1893.

<sup>18</sup> Gajra, Deumal, Tarachand, *The life of Swami Dayanand Saraswati*. Punjab Printing Press. 1915.

<sup>19</sup> Bala, Indu, *The Women Question and Arya Samaj, Proceedings of Indian History Congress*, 2002, Pg-918-925.

“Arya Samaj and Caste System: A Study of United Province” by M. Meera - This article discusses the role of Arya Samaj in the United Province to combat social evils like untouchability. The author also discusses the Shuddhi movement and its role in the purification of untouchables.<sup>20</sup>

“The Role of the Arya Samaj in the Indian Struggle for Independence” by Radash Singh, describes the role of the Arya Samaj in the Indian Struggle for Independence. He portrays Arya Samaj as a reforming and rejuvenating movement. The essay discusses the political influence of Arya Samaj through people like Swami Shardananad, Lajpat Rai, Veer Savarkar, and Madan lal Dingra. The essay then goes on to describe the view of the great historian Pannikar, who believed that the Arya Samaj inspired 80% of those who participated in the freedom movement.

The article “The Arya Samaj and Indian National Movement” by Sumitra Gupta, sheds light on the Arya Samaj as a nationalist movement that inspired the spirit of nationalism in northern India. It describes the role of Bhai Parmanand in association with Gandhi and explained how Gurukul Kangri began the 'Dudhia Bandh' movement to provide financial aid to the Satyagrahis in Africa.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> M. Meera, *Arya Samaj and Caste System: A study of United Province*, ISOR Journal of Humanities and Social Science, Volume 19, 2014.

<sup>21</sup> Gupta, Sumitra, *The Arya Samaj and Indian National Movement*, Proceedings of the Indian History Congress, 63, 2002.