

Arya Samaj
and
Its Philosophy

CHAPTER-2

ARYA SAMAJ AND ITS PHILOSOPHY

The 19th century marked a significant period of change and transformation in India. When superstitions and social evils became rampant, society demanded change. As a result, several socio-religious movements emerged during this time. These movements were part of the modern era. The middle Ages witnessed the Bhakti movement, where Ramanuj, Ramananda, Kabir, and Vasihnavism aimed to bring social reforms. The foreign invasion tried to attack the Indian culture. After the medieval era, there was continuity in the foreign invasions that aimed to undermine the Indian culture, and socio-religious movements became even more prevalent. Unfortunately, due to the continued foreign Dominance, India's population had to bear the loss of their own culture amid such unrest.

First, we must understand the meaning of the Socio-Religious Reform Movement. The best description can be found in the 'The New Cambridge History of India'. As described, the term 'socio' means restructuring the society. The word 'religious' means the authority to legitimize the ideology.²² As we know, religion is very important for human beings and they can go to any lengths to safeguard it. These 'movements' resulted in groups working to spread their accepted ideology in different parts of the country. So, all these Socio-religious movements started to change the scenario of Society with the help of religion.

After the establishment of these socio-cultural Movements in the 19th and 20th centuries, debate started within Indian society. This can be defined as the Western Oriented Movement and the Revivalist Movement. The Western-oriented reformers were the Western-educated class and they supported the Western organization and the British government. These socio-religious movements supported the Ancient culture but they were also under the influence of the Western ideas like- The Brahmo Samaj, Prathana Samaj, and Theosophical Society. These movements gave birth to many reformist leaders including Keshav Chandra Sen, Swami Vivekanand, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Jyoti Bai Phule, etc who made significant contributions to changing the social scenario of the society. Some of them tried to establish the supremacy of the Western culture.

²² Kenneth, W, Jones, *Socio-Religious Reform Movement in British India*, The New Cambridge History Of India- III, Cambridge University Press, 1989, Pp- 1-2.

To establish their supremacy, the Britishers introduced many policies in India in the mid-nineteenth century. One of the powerful pieces of equipment was the educational system, which helped them to control India. Before the 19th century, the Britishers presented the Indian culture as the deep and ancient culture in the world in comparison to other cultures. Johan. Z. Holwell described in his book ‘The Religious Tenets of the Gentoas’²³ the superiority of the Hindu text in comparison to the Greek, Roman, and Egyptian. Lt. Colonel Alexander Dow²⁴ presented the Sanskrit language in his book ‘The History of Hindostan’. He said that the Sanskrit language describes the principle of the whole.²⁵

At the end of the 18th century, an orientalist group was interested in Indian literature. The most important was Hastigton²⁶, who had a great interest in Indian culture. He believed that understanding the Indian culture gave a strong base to their administration. As a result, there would be many translations were also undertaken.²⁷ After some time, there arose the Evangelical movement and its main propaganda was to bring reform in Indian society, which was in contrast to Orientalism. They presented themselves as ‘Indophobic’ and wanted change or reform in the society as they considered Indian culture to be orthodox.²⁸ Due to such policies of the Britishers, India started to lose the identity of its own culture. Indians lost the pride of their Ancient Vedic culture and believed in western ideas supremacy.

We can summarize that in the beginning, the Britishers praised the Indian culture, religion, and literature but at the end of the eighteenth century, when they became a colonial power, they started to criticize their culture, religion, and society. When people are good to us and praise us, we easily accept them, which is why Indians easily accepted British dominance. However, when they started to criticize the Indian culture, they wanted to establish the supremacy of western ideas.

In the opposition to the Western-oriented Movement, there rose of the revivalist movement. The Revivalist movement supported the glory of the ancient vedic culture.

²³ John, Z, Holwell, *The religious Tenets of the Gentoos*, The second part of his Interesting Historical Events relatives to the Provinces of Bengal and the empire of Indostan, 1767, Pg-46.

²⁴ Lt- Colonel in the company of Military Service

²⁵ Jain, M, *Sati, Evangelical Baptist, Missionaries and changing of the Colonial Discourses*, Aryan Book International, 2016, Pp- 47-48.

²⁶ First Governor General of Bengal

²⁷ Op.cit. Pp-49-61.

²⁸ Jain, M, *Sati, Evangelical Baptist, Missionaries and changing of the Colonial Discourses*, Aryan Book International, 2016,Pp- 111-112.

Arya Samaj was one of them. It profoundly established the supremacy of Indian cultural thought and dubbed the slogan “Back to Vedas.” It tried to revive the glory of the ancient vedic culture which was thought to be the golden age for India. However Arya Samaj was beyond the socio-religious movements. It was not limited to the religious aspect of society but also focused on the political, social, educational and Nationalistic values. It was the first reformer movement that introduced the spirit of nationalism²⁹. It means that Arya Samaj was not only a social-religious reformer movement but also made the surroundings for the rise of Nationalism in India. It tried to focus on the use of ‘*Swadeshi*’ and introduced the concept of ‘*Swaraj*’, which tried to develop the sentiments of nationalism in India. It also provided great nationalist leaders to the nation, who played an important role in the Indian national movement. In this way, these socio-religious movements initiated the age of definition and redefinition.

In order to comprehend the Arya Samaj it was essential to understand Swami Dayanand Saraswati as the founder of Arya Samaj.

Swami Dayananad Saraswati

The late 19th century witnessed the rise of Arya Samaj as a movement that was established by Swami Dayanand Saraswati. He was born on 12th February 1824 in Tankara a small village of Gujarat.³⁰ For the first twenty-one years of his life, he lived in Morvi with his family and completed his education. After that, he left his home and moved towards the path of wandering in search of yogis.

His father’s name was Krishan ji and he was a great devotee of Shiva³¹. He belonged to the Audichya³² Brahmin caste. His father was a wealthy Brahmin and was a landlord, a banker, and a revenue officer- ‘Jamadar³³’- in Morvi State. His father used to take him to every ritual because he wanted his son to become a great devotee of lord Shiva. However, there is a lack of information about Swami Dayanand’s

²⁹ Gupta, Sumitra, *The Arya Samaj and Indian National Movement*, Proceeding of Indian History congress, vol.63, 2002, Pp- 722-723.

³⁰ Mukhopadhaya, Devendranath, *Dayananad Charitra*, Hindi weekly, Ayodhya, 1968, Delhi, P-2.

³¹ A minor religious sect whose followers worship ‘Shiva’ one of the great tried of the Hindu deities. An elaborate account of the sect is given by the R.G Bandarakr in his *Shivism and Minor Religious systems* (Strassbourg: 1913) and S. Sivapada Sundram in his *The Shaiva School of Hindusim* (London: 1934).

³² ‘Northern Brahmana’; they immigrated to the Gujarat in the 10th century A.D from uttar Pradesh on the invitation of Raja Mularaja (915-997 A.D.), the chalukya ruler of Anhilwara. K.M. Munshi, *Glory that was Gujardesha, Bhartiya* (Bombay, 1995), Vol. I, Pp, 214-215; Harbilas Sarda, *Life of Dayanand Saraswati*, p.1.

³³ The post of Jamadar was one of great responsibility, beings much like a Tehsildar, and the principal duty of its incumbent was the realization of the State revenue. Bawa Chhajju Singh, op. cit., Pg.1, Part.I.

mother. There is very little description of his mother in 'Dayanand Charitra', which presents an incident when Dayanand broke the fast of Shivratri, his mother fed him with love instead of scolding him³⁴. It presented her kind-hearted nature.

At the age of five, Dayanand got the education of *Vedic Mantra*, *Varna Shiksha*, and *Veda Bhashaya*. At the age of eight, his *Upanayana (Yajnopavita)*³⁵ ceremony took place and his Yajurveda education began. After finishing his early education he wanted to go to Kashi, which was the center of Sanskriti education at that time. However, his mother did not give him permission for distance education. During that time, three incidents happened in Swami's life that attracted him to the life of a recluse. One of the biggest incidents in his life was the night of 'Shivratri'³⁶ which left a question mark on his mind about idol worship. After this incident, he asked too many questions to his father about idol worship. His inquisitiveness can be observed by Bawa Chajju Singh, It is astonishing how a child can ask such pertinent questions about the existence of God. It shows that he could not accept anything without any reasoning. He once asked- 'the mice were running on the image of stone, and taking unwarranted liberties with it and the Mahadeva, of whom the Katha spoke, is an animate being, how can he permit mice to run over his body?'³⁷ By this question it can be claimed easily that from childhood he had the gift of questioning and critical thinking.

In the present day, a great '*Rishi Bodhotsva*' festival is organized, every year in Tankara. Scholars from different parts of India come to this Festival. For the people who believe in the faith of Vedas, *Shivratri* is important because from this day Swami moves towards the path of a recluse. The other incidents that affected him were the death of his sister and his beloved uncle. These two incidents raised a question on his mind that no one could escape from death, the one who is born will perish.

³⁴ Mukhopadhaya, Devendranath, *Dayananad Charitra*, Hindi weekly, Ayodhya, 1968, Delhi, Pg-2

³⁵ The sacred thread sacrament ceremony is one of the sixteen periodical ceremonilas observed by hindus at special turning points in their age. It is performed in the eighth year, when the preceptor initiates the child by giving him a sacred thread. A detailed description of the sixteen ceremonials is found in Swami Dayanand's *Sanskaravidhi*, Vedic Yantralaya, Ajmer, 1948.

³⁶ The thirteenth day in the dark half of each month is sacred to Shiva and hence called 'Shivaratri' in the month of 'Magha' (Januray- February) is, however, most hallowed and called Mahashivaratri'

³⁷ Singh, Chhajju, Bawa, *Life and teaching of Swami Dayanand Saraswati*, Jan Gyan Prakashan, 1957.

There was a lot of confusion in his mind about how can anyone escape the cycle of Life and Death? After that, he concluded that the best way to attain the *Parampad* (supreme position) was to practice ‘Yoga’. However, when his parents got to know about his attraction towards asceticism, they started to plan his marriage. At the age of twenty-one, he left his parent’s house in the search of the truth of life. In his biography, he described that he ran four yards and reached the village, where he spent the night and continued walking for three days. He gave up all his money and the gold ring he had with him when he left the house³⁸. When Swami reached ‘Siddhapur’, his father went there and tried to take him back home. Swami also pretended to go with him abandoning the Saffron clothes. This incident did not faze him as he was conscious of his goal and he left the place that very night. Afterwards, he reached Ahmedabad and then went to Baroda. In Baroda, he stayed at Chaitanya Math near the Narmada River and learned yoga. In search of yogis, he reached Sayal Nagar where he met a Brahmachari- ‘Lala Bhagat ji’. From him, he started to learn yoga. Lala Bhagat dubbed him as ‘Shuddha Chaitanya’³⁹. In India, there were four Mathas of Shankaracharya and Swami who belonged to the South monasteries (Arya Dayal 1986). In 1846, he was initiated into Brahmacharaya and named Shuddha Chaitanya at Sayal. Initiated into Sannyas by Swami Parmamanand Saraswati he was named Dayanand Saraswati. Yoga had been taught to him by Jwalanand Puri and Sivananda Giri at Dudeshwar near Ahmedabad.⁴⁰ Then he travelled to Chanod, Varanasi, Karnali, and Mt. Abu Mountain. In 1854 he went to Haridwar, where the Kumbh Mela was organized. He was astonished to see the large number of saints who indulged in hypocrisy. Then, he went to Rishikesh, Tehri, Gorikund, Shivpuri, Badrinarayan, Rampur, and Muradabad. In his autobiography, he described an incident in which he studied a book on Anatomy, and to examine the authenticity of that book. He described that-

“One day I chanced to meet a corpse floating down the river. There was the opportunity and it remained with me to satisfy myself as to the correctness of the statements contained in the books about anatomy and man’s inner organs. Ridding myself of the books which I laid nearby, and, taking off my clothes, I entered the river and soon brought the dead body out and laid it on the shore. I then proceeded to cut it

³⁸ Shastri, Shankardutt, *Maharishi Dyanand*, Ahemedabad, 2013, Pg-12.

³⁹ Arya, Dayal (Tra), *Atamaktha* (Swami Dayananad Saraswati), Rajkot, 1986, Pg-5.

⁴⁰ Bawa, Singh, Chhajju, *Life and Teachings of Swami Dayanand Saraswati*. Jan Gyan Prakashan, 1957, Pg- 161.

open with a large knife in the best manner I could. I took out and examined the kamal (the heart) and cut from the navel to the ribs, and a portion of the head and neck, I carefully examined and compared them with the descriptions in the books. Finding they did not at all, I tore them to pieces and threw them into the river after the corpse”.

When he realised that the information given in the book was not correct, he tore the book. This incident shows his love for research. It also presents that he cannot accept anything without examining it or practically experiencing it ⁴¹

While traveling, he met Swami Parmanand of Shankar Math who named him Swami Dayanand Saraswati. He was famous by this name not only in India but all over the world. This name revealed such ideas in the 19th century, which are still widely accepted by the world.

Education under Virajanand Swami

During his travels, he saw the condition of India and how Indian people were immersed in darkness. He realised that the people of India followed a false religion that was full of hypocrisy. Because of this hypocrisy, a large number of the population was attracted to Western culture. So, in that condition, he decided to re-establish the glory of the pristine purity of Indian culture. For this, he started his search for a person who had a systematic knowledge of religious texts and as a result, he met Virajanand Swami.

Virajanand Swami was a man of great character and he found that Dayanand was not an ordinary man. After meeting with Virajanand, Swami reached the destination of his life which was spreading the factual knowledge of Vedas. Virajanand was a great critic of superstition, which existed in India. Before meeting with Virajanand, Swami's thoughts were limited to some questions but after meeting him, his thoughts broadened and he started thinking about the pathetic condition of the whole world. He learned Vedas and grammar from a blind scholar. When his guru was at the last stage of his life, he promised him that he would spend his life propagating the Vedic religion.⁴²

⁴¹ Parsad, Durga (Tra), *Sathyarth Prakash* (Swami Dayanand Saraswati), Varjannand Press, Lahore, 1908, Pg-13.

⁴² Parsad, Durga (Tra), *Sathyarth Prakash* (Swami Dayanand Sraswati), Varjannand Press, Lahore, 1908, Pp-15-18.

Following the path of his Guru, he reached Haridwar for the Kumbh Mela in 1867. He called this Mela 'A flag of hypocrisy Pandits'. Through, Shastrarth, he tried to oppose superstitions and idol worship. He tried to convey the value of Vedas in the modern period. When he reached different parts of Northern India, he realized that if a person wanted to bring about reform, a strong organization was necessary. This was evident when Swami Dayanand Saraswati met with Keshav Chandra Sen of the Brahmo Samaj. After that, he reached Mumbai, where he came in contact with 'Prathana Samaj'. After sometime he established the Arya Samaj in Rajkot but due to political upheaval, it broke down and the first centre of Arya Samaj was established in Mumbai on 10th April 1875. Gradually, different centres of Arya Samaj were established in different parts of India.

When Arya Samaj was established, a contemporary New York Theosophical society was established by Madame H.P. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott in 1875. The founders of the Theosophical Society wanted to connect their organisation with Arya Samaj. Madame H.P. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott came to India in 1879 to meet him. In 1881, their relationship broke on the question of doctrine. This was because Swami Dayanand discovered that Madam and his associate focused on promoting something of their principal rather than the Vedic Dharma.⁴³

Swami spent his whole life spreading factual knowledge of the Vedas. At that time it worked as a boon for the Indian culture because Western culture had tried to make it worse. His message made the Indians proud to be part of Vedic culture. He saved India from that condition when the elite educated people were attracted to Western ideas. By presenting the superiority of the Vedic culture, he tried to prove that they already established all the concepts and theories that the world faced today such as politics, economics, society, sciences, materialism knowledge, astronomy, Medical Sciences, and many others.

India lost this precious gem on 30th October 1883 at Ajmer. He did not die a natural death but was poisoned. After struggling for about a month he left his body.⁴⁴ Through the newspapers of that time, we can witness the powerful influence of Swami Dayanand Saraswati. His teachings continue to inspire and guide India in the independence Movement also-

⁴³ Upadhyaya, Prasad, Ganga, *The Origin, Scope and Mission of the Arya Samaj*, Arya Samaj, chowk, Allahabad, 1940 Pg.31-32.

⁴⁴ Upadhyaya, Prasad, Ganga, *The Origin, Scope and Mission of the Arya Samaj*, Arya Samaj, chowk, Allahabad, 1940, Pg-33

Deen Bandhu (Anglo-Marathi weekly), Bombay, November 4th, 1883:

"Swami Dayanand was a man of great scholarship and great religious knowledge. His death shocked his relatives, friends, students and especially the religious community."

Hindoo Patriot (English weekly), Calcutta, November 5th, 1883:

*"It is with great regret that I announce the passing of two of India's great Sanakritists, Pandit Dayanand Saraswati and Pandit Rohalam Sirorthna. He gave new interpretations of the Vedic texts. He spoke Sanskrit and the flow of the dead language was great. He was the originator of Arya Samaj."*⁴⁵

Gujrat Mitra (Anglo-Gujarati Weekly), Surat, November 11th, 1883:

*"In India, he was one of the leaders of the old-school Reformation at the end of the truly useful life of the now-historical Pandit Dayanand Saraswati Swami, who liked to draw his last breath in the dying convulsions of 1883. We have lost a rationalist proponent of the Vedic revelation who is a man. Differences as to the accuracy or correctness of the Vedic scriptures, but who, in our public spheres, have the profound grace of his speech, the irritable bombardment of his will, the steadfastness of his resolve, the frankness and frankness of his motives, the independence of his character and actions, and his integrity Patriotism, superstition,⁴⁶ and clergy, idolatry, and meaninglessness. A fervent zeal to save the country from the depths of its vaunted ritual?"*⁴⁷

Oudh Akhbar (Urdu Daily), Lucknow, November, 8th 1883

"While Swami Dayanand Saraswati's views did not receive universal approval, the steps he took to reform Hinduism will long be remembered. I lost with him."

Colonel Olcott, speaking of Swami in his old diary pages Said:

*"Swami is undoubtedly a Sanskrit-learned Pandit who possesses immense courage, willpower, self-confidence and is a leader of his people."*⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Bawa, Singh Chhajju, *Life and Teachings of Swami Dayanand Saraswati*, Jan Gyan Prakashan, 1957, Pg- 92.

⁴⁷ Parsad, Durga (Tra), *Sathyarth Prakash* (Swami Dayanand Saraswati), Varjannand Press, Lahore, 1908, Pg-60.

⁴⁸ Bawa, Chhajju, Singh, *The life and teaching of Swami Dayanand Saraswati*, Addison Press, Lahore, 1903, Part-II , Pg-95-98

The Arya Samaj and its Philosophy

Swami Dayanand described that his aim was not to establish a new religion, but he wanted to re-establish the Vedic period and Vedic doctrine which had been believed by sages from Brahma to Jaimini. Swami believed in the Arya tradition while giving importance to Vedas. He talked about the importance and utility of the Vedas in the present age. Swami expressed his views on various subjects. He presented his philosophical views on god, the soul, reincarnation, etc. He also gave ideas related to society, education, and the state. The principles of Swami Dayanand Saraswati were followed by his organisation Arya Samaj.⁴⁹

Arya Samaj was the only organization in the modern history of India that took the form of a mass movement. Arya Samaj created social awareness against the evils that were present inside the society and spread feelings of nationalism in society. First of all, we need to understand the meaning of Arya Samaj; it is a group of two words, which originated from the Sanskrit words 'Arya' and 'Samaj'. 'Arya' means a person who possesses noble qualities. On the other hand 'Samaj' is related to society. So, its complete meaning is a society of noblemen whose objective is to make others good.⁵⁰

Arya Samaj raised its voice against the high and low discrimination, hypocrisy, veil, child marriage custom, dowry, etc. prevalent in the society and encouraged widow re-marriage. Many educational organizations were formed for the education of women on a large scale. Women's education was propagated not only in India but also in different countries of the world with Africa being one of them. The Arya Samaj made the public aware of the spirit of indigenous, nationalism and Patriotism. The word *Swadeshi* was used for the first time by Arya Samaj. Before going to the philosophical ideas of the Arya Samaj, it is essential to understand the ten principles of Arya Samaj.

1. God is the primary source of all true knowledge and of the things made known by it.
2. God is all truth, all knowledge, all beatitude, boundless, almighty, just, merciful, unbegotten, without beginning, incomparable, the supreme lord of all, all-pervading, omniscient, immortal, eternal, holy, and the cause of the universe.

⁴⁹ Pandhya, Jigishkumar, *Dyananand Saraswati ane Gujaratma Arya Sama jni Chaval: Ak Aitihatik Adhyayan*, published by Sardar Patel University Vallabh Vidyanagar (2011), Pg-5-10.

⁵⁰ Upadhyaya, Prasad, Ganga, *The Origin, Scope and Mission of the Arya Samaj*. Published by Arya Samaj, Chowk, Allahabad, 1940, Pg-40-51.

3. The Vedas are the true source of knowledge and it is the prominent duty of the Aryas to read, hear, teach, and preach them.
4. We should always be ready to accept the truth and renounce falsehood when discovered.
5. The truth was achieved after deep thoughts arrived at it, and it should be our guiding principle in all our actions.
6. The primary object of the Arya Samaj is to do well to the world by improving the physical, social, intellectual, moral, and spiritual condition of mankind.
7. Love, justice, and propriety should guide us in our dealing with others.
8. We ought to try to dispel the darkness of ignorance and spread the light of knowledge.
9. No one should be satisfied with his good but ought to seek his good in the goodness of others.
10. Everyone should consider oneself as bound to obey social and all the benefiting rules, but everyone is free in matters of individual knowledge.⁵¹

This principle describes the rules for the Members of Arya Samaj and that they ought to follow them. These rules also provide some glimpses of Arya Samaj's philosophy. Let's see some aspects of Arya Samaj Philosophy:-

Re-establishment of the Vedic Period:-

The main objective of Arya Samaj was to re-establish the Vedic period. It is believed that nowhere in the Vedic religion, anything has been mentioned about the incarnation of God. It is described that in the Vedas, God is considered to be the supreme power of the world, which has no shape, which is not found in any idol forms, but it is present in the whole world.

Arya Samaj described that Vedic religion is a very ancient doctrine. From time to time distortion arose in it and to rectify it, many reformists emerged. Yogiraj Krishna of the Mahabharata period tried to reform the Vedic religion. So, with time, there were many reformers, but their reformative works were not so effective. Finally, the Arya Samaj emerged, whose objective was to re-establish Vedic religion in real and

⁵¹ Lal, Ganeshi, Lala, F.A.S, *The Arya Samaj*, Englewood printed and publication house, Chicago, (1893), Pp-13-30.

pure form. Swami the founder of Arya Samaj, considered Vedic literature as ‘Aparushya’, which means that it is not the creation of human beings but Vedic Sages. His views about the Vedas are that “the Vedas are self-evident. They do not need any scriptures to prove their authenticity. Just as the Sun and the lamp are self-luminous, in the same way, four Vedas and the Brahmins of the four Vedas, the Six Upanishads, Six Angs, and four- Sub-Vedas are self-evident. He believed that all knowledge and science are included in the Vedas.”⁵² He used to say that ‘Vedas are the legal book of all the truth’.⁵³

At that time there was the existence of many Sampradayas which spread hypocrisy in the society. They were considered as the drawback for the Indian Culture. Some of them were *Vamargi Samphradhya* and *Cholee Samphradhya*. Many rituals were performed in these sects, in which works like subjugation were performed in the Vamargi sampradaya. These people used to use alcohol and meat in performing Havan. Many a times they used to kill human beings and offer it as a sacrifice. There were people like Aghoris, who used to eat the flesh of dead humans and drink their urine.⁵⁴

There was Cholee, in which many types of ostentation were also present. In which, the women’s private parts were worshipped and called Durgadevi. Alcohol was consumed and different women’s clothes were put in a pot. The man who used to get the clothes in his hand used to make misdeeds with that woman. There were also superstitions in the Shakti religion in which a person was possessed and witchcraft was practised⁵⁵. At this time the population of India was not educated to a large extent. That’s why the description given by the hypocrites’ babas and sadhus was accepted as a primary truth, whereas the truth was different from the truth told by them. Hindus have always had reverence for the Vedas, but the basis of this reverence was the translation of the Vedas by various scholars. They did not try to know about Vedas. Max Muller and Giffin did not study the Vedas themselves; rather they studied the commentaries on the Vedas written by Sayan and Mahidhara to understand the Vedas. They believed that the society of that time was primitive when Veda’s knowledge was assembled in a book form.

⁵² Parsad, Durga (Tra), *Sathyarth Prakash* (Swami Dayanand Saraswati), Varjannand Press, Lahore, 1908, Pg- 71-76.

⁵³ Ibid, Pg-24.

⁵⁴ Pandhya, Jigishkumar, *Dyananand Saraswati ane Gujaratma Arya Sama jni Chaval: Ak Aitihasic Adhyayan*, published by Sardar Patel University Vallabh Vidyanagar (2011). Pp-57-58

⁵⁵ Op. cit. Pg-46

That is why, Indian culture was losing its identity at this time. Swami Dayanand Saraswati translated the Vedas, to tell the truth of the Vedas to the Indian public. At the same time, many such books were composed which were used to refute such superstitions. Lala Lajpat Rai described the importance of Swami Dayanand Saraswati's teachings saying that "to sum up, we are quite safe in saying that the teachings of Dayanand, though not embodied in the principle of the Arya Samaj constitute its creed for all practical purposes. The teachings of Dayanand are, in their turn, the teachings of the ancient sages of India based on the Vedas."⁵⁶ He believed that there is no end to the soul but there is an end for the body. The soul is always external. It leaves only one's body and assumes another. He considered that the definition of the 'Hindu' religion that existed in the 19th century was not according to the Vedic period.

In this way, Arya Samaj considered the Vedic religion as the solution to contemporary social problems and emphasized that we adopt the teachings of the Vedic religion. Vedic religion presents the concept of the welfare of the entire human race, in which every person is allowed to move forward, and there is no discrimination based on caste or racial segregation.

Ekeshvaravad (Monotheism)

Arya Samaj was a supporter of Monotheism. The Arya Samaj believed that the supreme personality of the universe is God who can be considered as 'OM'. It said that the names of Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, Vayu, etc are mentioned in the Vedas. All these are not considered or imagined as the doer of creators, Nurtures, and destroyer. The different words used for god in the Vedas reflect the different qualities and power of 'ishvar'. Following the principle of monotheism, Swami Dayanand Saraswati mentioned two types of God based on Vedas, in which one is pragmatic and the other is worshipable. Based on this *Vayu*, *Indra*, *Mitra*, and *Agani* were pragmatic gods, who can't be worshipped. In the Rigveda, it is said that he is one, but known by different names.⁵⁷ Even in the Upanishads, Ishvar has been described as the creator of the universe. Swami's ideology related to the Ishvar is realistic and philosophical. In Satyarth Prakash he described that offering worship to God is not expiatory but

⁵⁶ Rai, Lajpat, Lala, *The Arya Samaj: an account of its origin, doctrines, and activities with a biographical sketch of the founder*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1915. Pg- 112-116.

⁵⁷ Parsad Durga (Tra), *Sathyarth Prakash* (Swami Dayanand Sraswati), Varjannand Press, Lahore, 1908, Pp-72-87.

purificatory. Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati opposed idol worship as well as Avatarism. To confirm his statement, he took the help of many mantras from the Vedas, which proved that the description of idol worship and incarnation is not found in the Vedas.⁵⁸

Resistance of Avatarvad and idol worship

‘Ishwar’ has been described as formless in the Vedas. Maharishi Dayanand Sraswati said that Ishvar is formless, so God cannot assume anyone’s body. But in the Santan Vedic religion, the belief of the incarnation is mentioned, in which idols of great men like Ram and Krishna were made and they were called the incarnation of God. But Swami Dayanand Saraswati does not accept this doctrine. He only presents ‘Rama’ and ‘Krishna’ as a man.

Whenever sin on earth is at its peak, god will incarnate to end it. This statement is presented in the verse of the Gita (Gita, chapter four, Sloak 7-8)

Yada Yada hi Dharmasya Glanir Bhavati Bharata

Abhyutthanam Adharmasya Tadatmanam Srijamyaham⁵⁹

The belief of Swami Dayanand is not against the Vedas because according to him Krishna will take birth as a benevolent human being when there is more sin on the earth

Paropkaray Santa Vibhutaya

It means that the benevolent dedicated their body, mind and wealth to charity, therefore Krishna cannot be God.⁶⁰

Arya Samaj’s beliefs regarding ‘Avatarism’ are entirely based on intellectualism. There are no elements of imagination in it. For it, Ishavar does not need to incarnate because Ishavar is Omnipotent. Ishavar can destroy the wicked by his will only and God can never take birth from the womb of a woman because he is unborn.

If we say that someone could ask the infinite sky to take the form of a Womb but it is inauthentic to say that because the sky is infinite and all-pervasive. Thus, Ishvar is also infinite and all-pervading. He cannot take birth from the womb of a woman.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Satkythu, Vidalanter, Vedalanter, H, D and Bharati, Bhavanilal, *Arya Samaj Ka Itihas*, Part V, Arya Savadiya Kendra, 1987, New Delhi, Pp- 21-27.

⁵⁹ Op. cit. Pg-218.

⁶⁰ Parsad Durga (Tra), *Sathyarth Prakash* (Swami Dayanand Sraswati), Varjannand Press, Lahore, 1908, Pg-218

⁶¹ Ibid, Pg.236-240

Maharishi also opined against incarnation that grief, happiness, sorrow, birth, death, thirst, fear, hatred, attachment, etc. are the qualities of human beings not for Gods. It is not of Ishavar because these calibres are not in it.

Rendering of Tretaism

In the philosophical opinion of the Arya Samaj, tretaism has a prominent place. Arya Samaj accepts the existence of three entities on the earth. *Ishavar*, *Jiva*, and *Prakriti* are the main ones. He describes that these three entities have their independent existence. He propounded the principle of tretaism after deeply studying Vedic mantras and Upanishads. He believes that *Ishavar*, *Jiva*, and *Prakriti* are eternal by nature.

Based on Vedas, Arya Samaj believes that *Prakriti*, *Jiva*, and *Paramatma* as ‘Aaj’ means who is never born, which means three words are the cause of the world. There is no reason for their existence.⁶²

Swami Dayanand Sraaswati explains that *Jiva* and *Ishvar* are different from each other because the man himself tries for his welfare. That means a man gets the fruits of the work that he does. He gets trapped in the bonds of birth and death. That is, according to the work he does, he gets the fruits of it. Because of his deeds, he gets trapped in the bondage of birth and death.

Many ancient and medieval philosophers in India expressed their views on *Ishvar*, *Jiva*, and *Prakriti*. However, their philosophical views were not based on the Vedas and Upanishads. *Shankaracharya*, *Ramanujacharya*, *Nimkarcharya*, etc. became prominent in this Philosophy, but only the ‘dualism’ propounded by *Madhvacharya* was close to Tretaism of the Vedas because it propounded *Brahma* and *Jiva* as two separate eternal truths.

In this way, Arya Samaj propounded the concept of tretaism based on the Vedas. This theory has been very beneficial because at that time superstition was prevalent in the name of religion.

⁶² Ibid, Pg- 165-166

Integrate with ‘Shad Darshan’

Indian philosophy is divided into two parts. First came ‘*Vedic Darshan*’ and second ‘*Aa-Vedic Darshan*’. ‘*Shad Darshan*’ is included in ‘*Vedic Darshan*’. ‘*Shad Darshan*’ shows the authenticity of the Vedas. We can say that the philosophy which believes in the Vedas is called ‘*Shad Darshan*’. The number of these ‘*Shad Darshan*’ is six including *Samkhya*, *Yoga*, *Nyaya*, *Vishvak*, *Purva Mimamsa*, and *Vedanta* or *Uttar Mimamsa*. The writers of the *Shad Darshan* were *Kapil*, *Pantjali*, *Ghotam*, *Kanad*, *Jamani*, and *Vadrayan*. The most prominent among these ‘*Shad Darshan*’ were ‘*Yoga*’ and ‘*Samkhya Darshan*’.

Many philosophers believe that these six Philosophies are contradictory to each other. One example is that *Satkaryavada* has been rendered by *Samkhya* and *Asatkaryavada* has been rendered by *Nyaya* and *Vishvak*. According to *Satkaryavada*, everything has some reason or another like a pot is the work and the soil is its cause.⁶³ On the other hand, the exponents of *Satkaryavada* believe that the work does not already exist in the cause, but only when the object in the form of reason has destroyed the substance in the form, work is generated.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati does not agree with the philosophers who propounded contradictions in the philosophy of ‘*Shad Darshan*’ because he believed that each theistic philosophy propounded different aspects and no contradiction is found in them.

It can be found that Swami Dayanand Saraswati settled the long-standing disputes on ‘*Shad Darshan*’ and he presented their affirmation through his statements. He put forward the principle of collaboration among the six ‘*Shad Darshan*’. This was a very decisive legacy of Indian philosophy in the 19th century by Swami Dayanand Saraswati. The *Shad Darshan* presents the authenticity of the Vedas, that by establishing coordination between them, the authenticity of the Vedas became a firm base.⁶⁴

One of the great contributions of Arya Samaj was that it attacked the Western thinker’s materialistic philosophy. It presents that Indian materialistic philosophy is different than Western ideas. The West believes that after death humans enjoy life in heaven but Arya Samaj believes in the concept of ‘*Moksha*’, which means control over all ‘*Indriyan*’.

⁶³Parsad, Durga (Tra), Sathyarth Prakash (Swami Dayanand Sraswati), Varjannand Press, Lahore, 1908, Pg- 245.

⁶⁴ Satkythu, Vidalanker & Vedalanker, H. D, *Arya Samaj Ka Itihas*, Part I, Arya Savadiya Kendra, New Delhi, 1984, Pp- 381-386.

Arya Samaj connected the Worship of God to Yoga practices. It helped to bring the consciousness of mind. Patanjali described the Yoga Darshan, as somethings includes that different ways of concentrating on the mind. It helps the person to feel the existence of the inner self and it is the best method of worshipping God. With the help of yoga, Arya Samaj opposes the practice of offering bribes to god.

The Arya Samaj does not support the Shradha and Tarpana for the dead because for him caring for live parents is the real Shradha and Tarpana. It also opposes polygamy and supports the Inter- caste marriage. Arya Samaj supported the scientific importance of the fasts. Fasts are beneficial from a medical point of view.

So, by the philosophy of the Arya Samaj, we can trace some points of ‘Sanatan Dharm’- Ahinsa, Dhairy, kshama, Dam, Asaty, Shauch, Indriynigrah, Buddhi, Vidya, Saty, Aakrodh, etc. It also presentes some features for the Adharma. Adharmahas can be described injustice. Mental health is also important which is highlighted through evils like- taking someone’s ideas, having jealousy toward someone, and committing violence. Such ideas were useful to society as these ideas enabled people to recognize the difference between Dharma and Adharma. These views were presented in the book ‘Upadeshmangari’ written by Swami Dayanand Saraswati.⁶⁵

These ideas were beneficial at that time because ostentatious superstition in society was at its peak.

POLITICAL VIEWS

Swami Dayanand Saraswati did not limit his views to socialism and religiosity but also expressed his thoughts on politics and economics. The thoughts given by Swami ji were not only for the welfare of India but for the welfare of the world at large. There was a period of political unrest in India for a long time. When the Britishers took over India, at that time a section of India, was influenced by Western education and started considering Indian culture as inferior. People influenced by Western education believed that the main reason for India’s decline was its social and religious system. Therefore, in the 19th century, efforts were made to improve many social organizations but they were unaware that political division is also a great evil. Because of such sentiments, the well-educated people began to unquestioningly

⁶⁵ Pandhya, Jigishkumar, *Dyananand Saraswati ane Gujaratma Aryasamajni Chaval: Ak Aitihasik Adhyayan*, published by Sardar Patel University Vallabh Vidyanagar, 2011, Pp-30-35.

accept that the British were superior to them in every way. Swami Dayanand Saraswati was the first to try to remove the inferiority complex that was increasing continuously among Indians. He drew the attention of his countrymen toward the ancient glory of India.

Swami was not a politician by profession, but still, he presented his ideas related to politics, which proved to be very revolutionary. Swami supported the democratic form of Government, which consisted of three assembles. He gave his political philosophy in chapter VI of his book *Satyarth Prakash*. His political philosophical ideas were taken from Vedas, Manu, Rajadharm, Apatdharm, and a few chapters from Mahabharata. Swami's ideas about the democratic form of government were based on the Vedas. From the Vedas, he took the structure of the government. He believed in the concept of popular sovereignty.⁶⁶ He described 'Raja' as the president of the assembly. According to him, the Raja is not a hereditary monarch but a 'Nirvachita Sabhapati' chosen by the learned men and the members of the assemblies. If he fails to perform his duties, the people and the assembly have the power to remove him from his post.

Dayanand was not in favour of autocracy, which made the ruler super powerful and he used this power for his own sake.⁶⁷ Dayanand described that Raja should have excellent qualities of head and heart. For the ruler, the welfare of the state is foremost in comparison to his own. He also described that the Raja should have some necessary qualifications, the type of training and education, the king should have but the most valuable thing is that he is only elected not seated on hereditary basis. He can't decide for the state alone. There are some limitations on the power of the Raja. He should use his authority per public opinion, law, and Rajdharm formulated by elected assembly members.⁶⁸

Dayananad described public opinion that rulers should behave trustfully with people. The king should exercise his sovereignty on behalf of the people. If the ruler does not work according to dharma then people have the authority to dethrone the king. The first and foremost qualification for the ruler is that he should be acceptable to the people of the state, who gave the 'Raja' authority to use royal power. The ruler should

⁶⁶ Parsad, Durga (Tra), *Sathyarth Prakash* (Swami Dayanand Sraswati), Varjannand Press, Lahore, 1908, Pp -189-192.

⁶⁷ Madalsa, Ujjwal, *Political ideas of Swami Dayanand Saraswati*. The Indian journal of political science, vol.61, 2008, Pp. 965-960.

⁶⁸ Ibid, Pp- 966-967.

take taxes from the people only for his service and but the taxes should be levied for the welfare of the people. He believed in the principle of 'no taxation without representation'. The state comes under Dharma. Dharma is the eternal law and it is superior to any authority of the assembly. If the ruler disregards Dharma, he can be dethroned.

Assembly plays the most important role in the decision-making of the state. Its members advise the ruler about his work and the ruler is bound by the decision of the assembly. Assembly works as the final law-making authority. Swami says that the ruler should execute only those rules and policies suggested by the assembly.

Swami Ji acknowledged the scientific and metaphysical knowledge of the Vedas. He believed that political authority should not be separated from spiritual and moral authority because it is useless to separate them. He believed that an ideal state should not separate its political work from moral work. The democratic form of the state was accepted by Swami. The organization of Arya Samaj was based on the elections. In it, every person was selected from the bottom to the top. Swami's idea of election was revolutionary in the 19th century. He organized the works of three branches namely *Dharma Sabha*, *Vidyarthi Sabha*, and *Rajya Sabha* on the principle of democracy. Thus, Swami was an advocate of the democratic system.

Swami opposed the unlimited punishment system but was biased towards harsh punishment. He used to say that the king and the people should never be unrighteous. If someone does, they should not be left off without punishment and the innocent should not be made to suffer.⁶⁹

Swami believed in the democratic principle based on liberty, equality, and fraternity. He believed that all classes should be equal in the state and he made it clear that the evolution of a person should be based on his qualities and not based on birth. Arya Samaj supported such a democratic system in which the common man also had the right to criticize the state. He described that the state should look after the welfare of its citizens. Swami expressed his views in support of the political and economic system in the village. His thoughts were influenced by Manusmriti and he described it in his book *Satyarthaprakash*.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Satkythu, Vidalanter & Vedalanter, H. D, *Arya Samaj Ka Itihas*, Part I, Arya Savadiya Kendra, New Delhi, 1984, New Delhi, Pg- 434-436.

⁷⁰ Pandhya, Jigishkumar, *Dyananand Saraswati ane Gujaratma Arya Samaj Ni Chaval: Ak Aitihisik Adhyayan*, published by Sardar Patel University Vallabh Vidyanagar, 2011, Pg- 52.

Swami has talked about *Chakravarti Rajya* at many places in '*Satyarth Prakash*' but it was not related to the imperialist state. The word *Chakravarti* is not used for any world conqueror emperor but for the organization in which cooperation is established in a different state and a universal '*Maharaj Sabha*' exists. Such thoughts of Swami indicate what we see in the international organizations at present time like SAARC, UNO, and WHO as their main objective is to protect mutual interests.

Swami in his book '*Satyarth Prakash*' discussed about the merits and demerits of British rule. He said that after the establishment of the British state, the frequent fighting had stopped. Their role in justice and education was important but they put their own interest first. There were also many disadvantages of British rule, such as promoting Christianity in India and doing injustice to the Black by a white judge. On the other hand, Swami considered many factors responsible for subordination mainly internal and religious differences, high illiteracy, child marriage, etc.

As we know that Swami gave the concept of Swadeshi before Gandhi. He used the word Swadeshi in '*Satyarth Prakash*'. The Statesman report opposed on 14th August 1879 described that "the Arya Samaj of Lahore which was established by Pandit Dayanand Saraswati decided to wear the Swadeshi clothes and give up the foreign clothes. It would keep improving the quality of Indian manufacturing"⁷¹. Thus, in modern history, it was the first instance of boycotting foreign goods and adopting indigenous goods.

At the time of British dominion, each region in India had different languages such as Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, Tamil, etc. The public believed in their identity based on language. So, there was a lack of feeling of nationalism. That is why Swami accepted Hindi as a national language through which the feeling of nationalism would emerge in the public. Swami supported Hindi as a national language. He believed that due to the use of one language, a sentiment of unity would arise in the country. The letter of Swami Dayanand Saraswati (letter no.303, Pg-369-70) established that Swami not only talked about making the Hindi language a national language but also started a movement for this. At that time, one memorial was prepared and this memorial was sent to different parts of India. Its emphasis was laid on the use of Hindi as a National language.⁷²

⁷¹ Satyaketu, Vidalanter & Vedalanter, H. D, *Arya Samaj Ka Itihas*, Part I, Arya Savadiya Kendra, New Delhi, 1984, New Delhi, Pg -421.

⁷² Ibid, Pg. 422-423.

It is noteworthy that Dayanand Saraswati strongly opposed the tax imposed by the British on salt before Gandhi. He also opposed stamp duty, which was used to buy paper for filing applications and lawsuits in government courts⁷³.

Swami first used the word 'Swarajya' in Indian modern history. He presented one thing: the country's political consciousness is essential for religious awakening. Religious awakening gave a path to total deliverance from all the shackles. He described that "on account of our misfortune, idleness, negligence, and internal dissent, not to speak of other countries, even in India itself, the Aryas have no sole independent, free or fearless government of their own. At presents, whatever little there is foreign trodden. A few states are free. When evil days come, the people of the country have to face many hardships. However, good others may do, the self (Swadeshi) government is the best Government (Satyarth Prakash, chapter VIII).⁷⁴In Satyarth Prakash he presented the difference between the Swaraja (good government) and Svaraj (self-government) that no foreign government is good in comparison to self-government. All these views were very revolutionary at that time because the Indian National Congress after its emergence couldn't demand 'Swaraj'. During the Calcutta session of Congress in 1906 Dadabhai Naroji spoke for self-government.

History shows that whenever great movements have emerged, they have taken the help of the past for their success. Similarly, Dayanand Saraswati took the help of the Vedic religion for a national awakening in the country.⁷⁵ He believed that for any nation to achieve independence, it is necessary to make moral progress. Similarly, for India to get freedom, it is necessary to have moral progress and India will get moral progress only through the knowledge of the Vedas. To establish national unity in India, it is essential to have cultural, religious, and political unity among its people. Swadeshi education also helped to generate sentiments of nationalism in the country. He took the help of Vedic education to spread nationalism in India. At that time, the people of India were divided into many classes and castes. So, there was a lack of national unity. Swami Dayanand Saraswati forced all the people to follow only one religion and that was the religion of humanity. He made ancient culture an essential medium to bring the feeling of nationalism to India.

⁷³ Op. Cit. Pg- 419.

⁷⁴ Prasad, Ganga, *The Origin, scope, and mission of Arya Samaj* published by Arya Samaj, Chowk, Allhabad, 1940.

⁷⁵ Singh, Lakshman, *Aadunik Bhartiya Rajnitik Avaim Samajik Vichar*, college book, Dep, Jaipur, 1980, Pg-58.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati promoted the sentiments of nationalism during the late 19th century. As a result, Arya Samaj had taken a commendable role in the freedom struggle of India. In the non-cooperation movements that the Indian National Congress sponsored in 1921 and 1931, the proportion of Arya Satyagrahis was high. Arya Samaj has always extended political support to the National Movement of India and its leaders played a vital role in it.⁷⁶

SOCIAL VIEWS

Dayanand Sarawati's point of view about social and religious reform is different from the liberal reformers like Raja Rammohan Roy and Mahadev Govind Ranade who established Brahma Samaj and Prarthana Samaj respectively. He was internally motivated to spread the message of the pristine glory of Vedic culture and aimed to establish the 'Aryan society'. The liberal ways of reformation were different from Swami Dayanand Saraswati. The liberal presented the merits of the British Raj, western sciences, technology, and their education. They considered Britishers as messengers of God who would help them to get rid of the superstitions prevalent in society. On the other hand, Swami aimed to restore the Ancient Vedic values and to institute Aryan society. He believed that Indians should never feel inferior in the matter of religion and Philosophy, as they were very unique. The main motto of Arya Samaj was to bring national progress with some radical change in society. Like other socio-religious movements, it was a reawakening movement in nature and had a program to reconstruct the socio-religious sphere of the society. Arya Samaj focused to reconstruct society and make all-round attacks on the superstitions and prejudices prevalent in society then.

The social idea of Arya Samaj was based on the Ancient Vedic cultural society. They are based on four concepts:-

1. The fatherhood of god and the brotherhood of man.
2. The equality of all the genders.
3. Equal opportunities for men and women.
4. Love and charity for all.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Op. cit. Pg-146.

⁷⁷ Rai, Lajpat, Lala, *The Arya Samaj: an account of its origin, doctrines, and activities with a biographical sketch of the founder*, Longmans, Green and Co, London, 1915, Pg-113.

At that time certain classes in society were considered untouchable from birth. They did not even have the right to education and were not allowed any kind of participation in society. The speech of Lala Lajpat Rai expressed the importance of the depressed and neglected class in the progress of society –

“It is to be kept in mind that national decline has its origin in the oppression of others and if we Indians desire to achieve national self-respect and dignity, we should open our arms to our unfortunate brothers and sisters of the depressed classes and help to build up in the vital spirit of human dignity. So long as we have these large classes of untouchables in this country, we can make no real progress in our national affairs, for this requires a high moral standard and this is not possible when the weaker classes are unfairly treated. No man may build his greatness on his brother’s weakness. Man shall stand or fall by his strength.”(Lalaji’s speech at Gurukul Kangri).⁷⁸

Following the same path, Arya Samaj believes in the concept of equal opportunities for men and women. It believes that at the time of the Vedic period, there was no caste by birth. Vedas presented the classification of human society into four classes based on their qualifications and occupations. The Brahmin, the Kshatriyas, the Vaishyas, and the Shudhras occupied the same position in society. In Rigveda, there is a description of the caste, which is based on the occupation in the place of birth –

*“I am a poet, my father is a physician, and my mother grinds corn and stone. Being engaged in a different occupation, we seek wealth and happiness, as cow seeks food in different postures.”*⁷⁹

Swami gives some examples of some persons who belonged to a lower caste by their birth but were called Brahmins by their deeds. In the *Chhandogey Upanishad*, there was the description of the *Jabali rishi* who belongs to a low caste but by deeds he became Brahmin. In the same way, *Vishwamitra* belonged to the Kshatriya family, and *Martanga* belonged to the *Chandal* family, but by their deeds they became Brahmins.⁸⁰ Based on Vedic Society, Dayanand taught that society should follow the principle of merits and should not discriminate based on colour or creed.

⁷⁸ Prasad, Ganga, *The, Origin, scope, and mission of Arya Samaj*, published by Arya Samaj, Chowk, Allahabad, 1940, Pp-119-120.

⁷⁹ Rai, Lajpat, Lala, *The Arya Samaj: an account of its origin, doctrines, and activities with a biographical sketch of the founder*, Longmans, Green and Co., London, 1915, Pg-136.

⁸⁰ Op. Cit. Pp-124-125.

By the principle of equality in society, Arya Samaj tried to increase the status of the untouchables. Arya Samaj did not consider the problem of untouchability arose from the religious point of view but due to the wrong interpretation of literature, bad environment, association, and training. It was very well known the fact that Arya Samaj works on a large stage for the betterment of the untouchables on the basis of the fatherhood of the god and brotherhood of men. With the help of the Shuddhi movement, Arya Samaj reclaimed untouchables to the privileges of the *Dwijias*.⁸¹ They performed the homa, recite the Gayatri mantra, and held on to the sacred thread. Arya Samaj started the program of inter-dinings and also had a few cases of inter-caste marriages.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj, continued to struggle for a casteless society throughout his life, and after that leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Mahatma Hansraj, Swami Shraddhanand, etc. adopted constructive work for the eradication of untouchability. Gurukul and D.A.V educational institutes were established, in which there would be no mention of the caste.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, women's emancipation was the main motto of every socio-religious reformatory movement in society. Women were in very empathetic condition due to lack of education and some other reasons. Dayanand had the highest respect for womanhood. He gave examples of the Vedic era, in which women had equal rights as men like right to education and choice to marriage. The great scholars of the Vedic era were *Gargi*, *Apala*, *Gosha*, *Visavsara*, etc. For women's emancipation, Swami Dayanand quoted the Vedas and other scriptures to prove that women had equal rights as men in society. Women were also an essential part of society during the Vedic era and they had the right to wear the sacred thread and read the Vedas, and widows had the right to re-marriage. Swami described that purdah and polygamy are curses for the social life of women⁸². For women's emancipation, Arya Samaj started the movement for women's education. They established educational institutes like *Arya Kanaya Vidyalaya* and Gurukuls for their education.

⁸¹ Prasad, Ganga, *The, Origin, scope, and mission of Arya Samaj*, published by Arya Samaj, Chowk, Allahabad, 1940, Pg- 125.

⁸² Ibid, Pg- 110

Arya Samaj broke the Purdah system first and provided full freedom to its women folk. The women in Arya Samaj started to attend lectures and social functions openly. When women couldn't get the rights of suffragettes in the West at the time, Arya Samaj allowed lady members to vote and *Pratinidhi sabhas* had women on their working committee.⁸³

It is believed that if women were uneducated and men were educated, or women were educated and men uneducated, then the house would become a place of constant warfare between the Gods and demons, and there would be no prosperity and happiness in the house.⁸⁴ He believed that women should know grammar, medicine, arithmetic, and art.

Arya Samaj also opposed child marriage. The Arya Samaj fixed the age of marriage to sixteen for girls and twenty-five for boys. At that time, superstitions were prevalent in society, one of which was that if a girl became *Rajaswala* (Menstruation cycle) in her father's house then her family would be part of hell. That's why it was considered proper to get the girl married before she became *Rajaswala*. Not only this but young girls were married to a person, who would be thrice their age. Because of this, girls used to become widows at a young age.⁸⁵

Arya Samaj worked for widow re-marriage and it achieved great success. Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar worked for widow re-marriage and as a result in 1856, the Widow Re-marriage Act was passed. However, this law remained a dead letter till Arya Samaj came into the field and it supported the Widow Re-marriage Act in a very strong manner. The condition of widows was pathetic in society. They were considered a stigma in society. They were not allowed to re-marry but on the other side, men could do several marriages⁸⁶. They were not allowed to come to auspicious events and they were addressed as *Kulakashni*, *Kulgathni*, etc. in society. After the death of her husband, her hair was cut down and she was only allowed to wear black and white clothes.

⁸³ Ibid Pg-113.

⁸⁴ Parsad, Durga (Tra), *Sathyarth Prakash* (Swami Dayanand Saraswati), Varjannand Press, Lahore, 1908, Pg- 126.

⁸⁵ Ibid, Pg-133.

⁸⁶ 'Science report of India' Part-17, National Museum, New Delhi, 1911, Pg-956.

Educational work

The 8th principle of Arya Samaj focuses on the dissemination of knowledge in society. If society is educated, then it brings progress, happiness, and prosperity to the individual. Swami Dayanand Saraswati has expressed his views related to the Indian education system in the third Samullas of 'Satyarth Prakash'. He has mainly emphasized on building of moral character of students in Indian educational system.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati believed that boys and girls should be sent to the Gurukuls for education after the *Upanayana Sanskar* at the age of eight. The ultimate duty of parents is to give education to their children. Arya Samaj established many educational institutes that laid great emphasis on building the character of students. It believes that the main objective of education is to remove the superstitions that existed in society. It also described that academic education consists of 1) Spiritual 2) Moral 3) Intellectual 4) Physical Training.⁸⁷

Swami believed that children should be taught alphabets at their parent's homes.⁸⁸ Arya Samaj divided the education of the students after Upanayana Sanskar from the age of eight as follows-

When a child is admitted to Gurukuls, he should already know the Devanagari Script and should know at least one foreign language. After coming to Gurukul, it would start studying the Sanskrit language. For the Sanskrit language, Arya Samaj forced the study of the Panini '*Aastadhyai*'.⁸⁹

1. Swami Dayanand Saraswati had kept three years for the study of grammar.
2. Study of the *Nirukuth* and *Nirugut* for six to eight months,
3. Chand in four months
4. *Manusmriti*, *Ramyana*, and *Mahabharata* in one year.
5. Shaddharan in three years.
6. Study of four Vedas in two years
7. Astrology for two years.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Parsad Durga (Tra), *Sathyarth Prakash* (Swami Dayanand Sraswati), Varjannand Press, Lahore, 1908, Pg-128.

⁸⁸ Ibid, Pp-90-91.

⁸⁹ Ibid, Pg-119.

⁹⁰ Satkythu, Vidalanker & Vedalanker, H. D, *Arya Samaj Ka Itihas*, Part I, Arya Savadiya Kendra, New Delhi, 1984, New Delhi, Pp- 475-476.

Arya Samaj supported Gurukul's education because he believed that if the student would study in Gurukul away from the family, then he would be able to study with concentration. Parents must provide intellectual and moral training for their children. This include teaching good behaviour and etiquette.⁹¹

Arya Samaj gives an important place to science in its education system. It states the importance of the study of 'Artharveda' for the education of Science. By using science and craftsmanship in education, economic production can be increased and the country can be made prosperous by going for far-flung business abroad. Due to education in science, such machines can be created for which air, fire, and electric power can be used to run. So, because of it, the study of Science was important.⁹²

Thus, the Arya Samaj philosophy which is based on Dayanand Saraswati's views, was revolutionary. It considered Vedas, as solution to all problems that existed in the world and it had every answer to the question that exists in the world. Arya Samaj's views about monotheism, Avtarvad, Tretatism, etc. are very relevant even today because they help to come out from the well of superstition. During the 19th and 20th centuries, superstitions were at a peak and these superstitions were responsible for the downfall of India.

Arya Samaj's political views were relevant at that time. It described that Vedas supported the democratic form of Government and popular sovereignty, which was relevant at that time in politics. Swami Dayanand Saraswati described the duty of the king towards people and their right to de-throne the ruler. It also believed in the democratic principle based on liberty, equality, and fraternity. It is a noteworthy that that our constitution included all these principles. Arya Samaj discussed the 'Maharajasabha' which can be considered as the international organizations at present time like SAARC, UNO, WHO, etc. The spirit of world brotherhood can be developed through such international organizations.

On the other side, Arya Samaj laid the foundation for the development of the National awakening of the early 20th century. Arya Samaj first followed the principle of 'Swarajya' and focused on the one national language 'Hindi', which helped in the solidarity of India. All these things played important role in the development of national sentiments. All these principles were followed or accepted in the national freedom movement of India. As Romain Rolland says:

⁹¹ Parsad, Durga (Tra), *Sathyarth Prakash* (Swami Dayanand Sraswati), Varjannand Press, Lahore, 1908, Pg-96.

⁹² Ibid, Pp -478-79.

“He described that Arya Samaj awakens the movement of the rebirth and reawakening of the national consciousness. Arya Samaj indirectly prepared the way of 1905 for the revolt of Bengal. He calls Swami a prophet of a national organization. He feels that it was he who kept the Vigil.”⁹³

The principle proposed by the Swami Dayanand Saraswati has their distinctive importance. Arya Samaj wanted to build such a society, through education in which everyone gets equal opportunities. The educational system of Arya Samaj plays a significant role in building a revolutionary and progressive society. Arya Samaj not only supported the education of women but also gave equal importance to men and women. Similarly, Shudras were also given a similar right to education. The Arya Samaj did not force women only to know the alphabet and basic knowledge but they felt that women be taught medicine, archery crafts, and material sciences. According to Arya Samaj, women should be good housewives as well as their husband’s co-regionalists in the true sense and this is possible only when she gets higher education.

Conclusion

When Swami Dayanand Saraswati was born, the British had already established their political authority in India. The social and political condition of India was quite pathetic at this time, as there was a lot of turmoil. The British were fighting for power with the princely states of different regions, and the people of India were suffering. Most of the people were educationally backward, and Christianity was starting to attack Hinduism after the Charter Act of 1813 allowed its entry into India. Christian missionary presented Indian culture with poverty which was widely spread among people in India.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati founded the Arya Samaj in Gujarat to address various issues prevalent in society. The organization gradually spread to different regions of India and raised its voice against discrimination, hypocrisy, the veil, child marriage customs, dowry, and other social evils. Arya Samaj played a critical role in challenging these customs and promoting equality and justice in society.

⁹³ Rolland, Romain, *The Life of Ramkrishana*, Advaita Ashram Almora, 1930, Pp-157-158.

The Britishers attempted to weaken Indian society by exploiting the poor conditions of women and backward communities. They also tried to lure untouchables by claiming that their religion denied them equal opportunities in society, unlike the upper castes. In response, Swami introduced the people to the Vedic period and explained that this social disorder was caused by the misinterpretation of religious texts by the Brahmans. Before studying the Vedas, he became proficient in the Sanskrit language.

Swami translated the Vedas into Hindi Language to make it more accessible to the common people. Using the teachings of the Vedas, he aimed to restore the Vedic social condition of the untouchables and Women. He also advocated for widow remarriage and established many educational organizations that focused on educating women on a large scale. This movement for women's education was not limited to India, but it was active in different countries of the world, particularly in Africa. The belief was that unless the social evils of the country were addressed, the country would never truly be free from foreign rule.

For these reforms, Swami took the basement of the Vedic Society. He tried to re-establish the Vedic Society according to the usefulness of that time. He tried to fill up the people with the pride of the Nationalism. He introduced many ancient concepts about women's education, Shad Darshan, Eksahavad and many others. All of this helped to change the scenario of society during British Rule. Swami Dayanand Saraswati proposed the establishment of a global organization called 'Maharajasabha'. This concept can be compared to modern-day world organizations such as WHO, SAARC, ILO, and others. In the late 19th century, Swami emphasized the need for such organizations, which could work towards the betterment of every country.

‘Yoga Day’ is celebrated all over the world on 21st June as the gift of the Vedas. Arya Samaj believes in the ‘Yoga-darshan’. They believe that Yoga is the best method to offer worship to God. It helps individuals to realize self-existence. The great contribution of Arya Samaj is ‘Materialistic Philosophy’, which means ‘Moksh’, control over all senses.

Arya Samaj's philosophy was not limited to the religious aspect but it also gave way to the development of Nationalism in the country in the 20th century. It tried to spread nationalism with the help of education. For education, they believed that they can't depend upon foreign educational institutions but they also established educational institutions of their own to promote *Swadeshi*.

Thus, Arya Samaj was a Revivalist movement that resolved not only the religious aspect of Indian culture but also the social, political, and educational aspects of society. In the 21st century, we can see the rise of cultural Revivalism in the form Ayodhya Movement and the changing of the name of the places. Changing the name of the places was considered as we gave the name that is described in the Ancient literature of the country to save the identity of our own culture like changing the Allahabad name to *Prayagaraj*. Before changing the name of the place most of the population were not familiar with this name. We can see the Ayodhya Movement as that this place is related to the birthplace of the Raja Ram, as an ideal ruler. All these changes will help to continue our ancient glory from one generation to the next generation.