

# Arya Samaj and the DAV Movement's Contribution to Indian Educational and Social Upliftment

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## ABSTRACT

Swami Dayananda advocated moralistic and social reforms in India in the 19th century like Martin Luther and John Calvin lead Protestant reforms in Europe. About twenty years before the Ramakrishna Mission was created and forty seven years after Raja Rammohan Roy founded the Brahmo Sabha, Swami Vivekananda organized the first Arya Samaj in Bombay in 1875. Through social participation, labour, nationalism, and pride, the Arya Samaj carried the Vedic legacy to Punjab and areas of northern and western India, while the Brahmo Samaj brought about social reform in Bengal. Arya Samaj led the revival of the Vedic principles that had suffered from religion and social relations and saw education as a catalyst for social change, the skills of men and women in arts and sciences, in life and in technology to enhance the intellectual views to transpire natural skills and develop talents. Lala Lajpat Rai launched the "DAV Movement" in 1886. As a result of Arya Samaj reformers like Mahatma Hans Raj, Pandit Gurudutt Vidyarthi's laborious endeavors, this movement gained momentum. Dayanand Anglo Vedic Schools were set up in 1886 at Lahore by the endeavors of Mahatma Hansraj in the reminiscence of Swami Dayanand Saraswati.

**Keywords:** DAV Movement, Arya Samaj, Education, Society

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## INTRODUCTION

Born in 1824, Swami Dayanand left his home at the age of 22 to become a Sanyasi. From 1860 to 1863, he studied under Swami Virjanand. He traversed the land for twelve years; in 1869, he took the orthodox Brahmans of Banaras; and on April 10, 1875, he founded the Arya Samaj. The Samaj's guiding principles were revised in Lahore in 1877, Dayanand passed away in 1883 at the age of just sixty. Both his commentary on the Rig and Yajur Vedas and his introduction to the Vedic commentary are significant.

Dayanand maintained that action is preferable than conviction and dedication. He was quite knowledgeable about yoga and samadhi and recognised the legitimacy of mystic experience. He seemed to be saying, like in the Bhagwadgita, that a Yogi's or a Bhakti's status in society relied on

what he did for it. Being a devotee was not as essential to him as becoming a good guy. Because of his conviction in knowledge and his faith in God, his excellent man appeared to be a source of inspiration. He eliminated the necessity for Pandits, who maintained their status by mastering Sanskrit, by explaining the Vedic religion in Hindi.

His adherents were armchair philosophers who were bound together by the Arya Samaj's Ten Principles, inspired by his attitude of selflessness and service, and pledged to a struggle against superstition and indifference towards the problems that beset modern society. His adherents disapproved of idolatry and did not adhere to astrology. He declared that he believed that the individual, soul, and matter are three elements of God that are everlasting. By God's favour, each individual was free to seek out the truth for himself with whatever assistance he could. Additionally, he broke predetermines. Men have grown accustomed to viewing themselves as the playthings of destiny. Daynand reduced ceremonies but did not completely eliminate them. Even though the Samaj built shrines, they might also be used as meeting spaces or schools. Simple rites made up the sixteen Sanskaras that span a man's lifespan. No mysterious or evil spirits were worshipped throughout the rites. All rituals, with the exception of the funeral, involve singing Vedic hymns and performing Havan. In Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, parts of Bihar, and Hyderabad state, his cause took hold strongly. The followers of Arya Samaj lacked the power to punish or exclude someone from society. This prompted him to concentrate on the function of education in human affairs. He elevated the spread of knowledge to the status of a fundamental principle. The Vedas represented all available knowledge to him. He urged all men to conduct independent searches for truth rather than accept prefabricated ideologies from the priestly elite. During his lifetime, he established schools and pathshalas.

**Influence of the Arya Samaj on the community is as follows:**

- Men gathered more regularly when there was weekly community worship. Men chosen to the governing councils convened on an equal footing to settle issues. These bodies have to swear to take constructive action and be self-driven. As elsewhere, this place fostered the particularly English virtue of working via committees. These bodies were driven by activity. They did not get together to engage in gossip but rather to develop ideas that addressed the issues of the day. The management of educational institutions, hunger relief efforts, and the rehabilitation of victims of natural disasters. In 1886, most probably the very first Indian to devote himself to the cause was Lala Hansraj. The Samaj began its aim of communal development without much help from the state long before the expression became common.
- It required money for all of its endeavors. The Samaj began channeling money for collaborative, coordinated initiatives. Non-Hindus and Hindus alike gave to its causes. In Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, and Hyderabad, it built educational institutions. The establishment of the D.A.V. College in Lahore, that became a college in 1889, served as the impetus for an academic movement in the North. It also demonstrated that teaching English and Western sciences to Indians could be done without endangering their religious freedom or turning them into hypocrites. Another outcome was that the Samaj gained some authority and a significant amount of influence over the school curriculum that would be taught. What the Arya Samaj stood for had a significant influence on Non-Samajis who graduated from its colleges.

- The Samaj became a revivalist organization thanks to Dayanand's portrayal of India's history. He persuaded many others that the Golden Age could be reclaimed. Hindus did preserve a sense of superiority under Muslim control, but with the arrival of the Western assault, they were helpless to withstand the devastating blows to their religion, culture, and values. We accepted at face value the contemporary Western claim to the exclusive possession of the civilized heritage. Dayanand's understanding of the Vedas was a significant obstacle for Western academic thought. Indian intellectuals began to unravel the mysteries of their own civilization. They were inspired to begin with greater certainty than they had previously. Dayanand had claimed that a good administration could not take the place of self-governance. He raised the voice of Swaraj long well before Indian National Congress acknowledged it. The first generation of Arya Samaji leaders consisted of a few princes and government workers. He encouraged them by suggesting that Indians may once again dominate their nation. Prior to the boycott campaign, every Arya Samaji was a devoted Swadeshi adherent.
- Dayanand's research and work that was inspired by him were effectively used to a significant political debate that broke out in the 20th century. A prominent historian named Vincent Smith jumped at the chance to show that the British government's newly announced goal of establishing a responsible government in India was doomed to failure since it was foreign to the country. A member of the Governor-General-in-Council named Sir Shankaran Nair disagreed based on Kashi Prashad Jayaswal's Hindu Philosophy, which was designed to expand Dayanand's suggestions regarding the locations of the Sabhas in historic India. The effort that the Samaj began long ago to improve the lives of the untouchables is the source of the government's current concern for the welfare of the harijans. Taking care of their wellbeing was a religious obligation for the Samajis. When the followers of Arya Samaj in a certain city were compelled to use the educational and social amenities, the Gaikwad of Baroda really sent Dr. Ambedkar there on a scholarship. Christian and Muslim converts were welcomed back into the Hindu fold by the Samaj, in contrast to other Hindu groups. Due to the intense resentment of both Muslims and Christians over this, the Samaj was compelled to pay with the blood of two of its chiefs.
- It was claimed that the Arya Samajis lacked tolerance. The Arya Samajis were accused of having a monopoly on truth when they said that Hinduism could not signify anything to any individual, but only what the Vedas stated. The fact that every revolutionary movement and religious leader, whether located either in or out of India, had already done this was overlooked. The Arya Samajis, supported by their understanding of the Vedas as articulated by Dayanand, threw arguments rather than blows at their adversaries. When Sir Fazal Hussain began trying to discredit administration by stretching ethnic participation from the assembly to services and educational institutions, supporters of the Arya Samaj presented their argument before the sub - committee of the Congress committee.
- In 1939, the Arya Samaj organised a successful Satyagraha to protest the Nizam of Hyderabad for prohibiting its preachers and congregations, rejecting the recommendations of those who had made Peaceful resistance their own weapon. More than 20 Satyagrahis died in prison, while more than 12,000 Satyagrahis, many of them orthodox Hindus, participated. The Satyagraha campaign was put on hold when the Nizam agreed to their demands. The movement gave him such a devastating blow to his prestige in the eyes of his citizens that he

was never able to retrieve. The Samaj also ran enormous risks while in Malabar to bring back more than 2,000 Hindus who were forcefully converted to Islam by the insurgent Moplahs. Even more significant was the re-conversion of about 30,000 Malkhana Kshatriyas in the villages of Kshatriyas and U.P. According to the Defence of India Act, which Satyarth Prakash translated into Sindhi, the Muslim government of Sind was outlawed in 1944. On June 14, 1947, the Arya Samajis began a Satyagraha and carried the book in the open for seven days. The government did nothing, thus the edict was reduced to a dead letter.

### **The DAV Movement**

It was vital to carry on Swami Dayananda's legacy after his demise (October 30, 1883) by joining the area of education in order to eradicate illiteracy of mind and soul. The eighth edict of the Arya Samaj is: "We should endeavour at eliminating ignorance and developing knowledge." Three years after his passing, the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Trust and Management Society (often known as DAV) was founded. This marked the start of the DAV movement, which attempted to formalize his social and educational principles.

On June 1st, 1886, the first DAV High School was founded in Lahore with Lala Hans Raj (1864–1938) serving as its headmaster. Due to Hans Raj's sincerity, moral uprightness, and altruism as well as his insightfulness and vision for the future, he is renowned as the father of the DAV movement and later as the Mahatma. He did not get payment as he worked with a missionary zeal. According to DAV Management Resolution No. 3 of April 28, 1888, the School expanded into a College, and Hans Raj was appointed as its first Principal.

To develop the DAV movement, the principles of conservatism and ethical relativism, revivalism and reform, religion and rationality mixed dialectically. In response to the problems posed by the west, the emergence of a new socio-economic setting and the expansion of the middle classes it exploded, fusing the fundamental components of the Vedic legacy with the predominating principle of research, logic, and humanism. The progressive outlook of DAV in its formative days, a tradition that continues to this day, may be seen in the reality that Lala Sain Das, a science instructor, had been sent to England to conduct extra study in his profession.

What began as a modest educational project with just 505 pupils in the first session has grown to enormous proportions. Over the course of its 125-year existence, DAV has largely covered all of the rural, urban, suburban, and tribal regions of the nation with the exception of Kerala. These are among the 715 institutions that make up its network, which also consists of government-sponsored, public, framework, global, and non-formal school systems, judicial systems, colleges of art and design, technology, farming, research and manufacturing, commerce, business, and strategic planning institutions, a Vedic research facility (Hoshiarpur), and a recently founded university in Jalandhar (Punjab). In order to increase its operations, DAV has partnered with both the government and the private sector.

Powerful souls such as Rai Bahadur Lala Lal Chand (1852–1912), Mahatma Hans Raj (1864–1938), Pt. Guru Dutt Vidyarthi (1864–1890), Lala Lajpat Rai (1865–1928), Bhai Parmanand (1874–1947), Lala Durga Das, Principal Sain Das (1840–1890), Bakshi Ram Rattan, Dr. Mukund Lal Puri, Bakshi Tek It looked to several Arya revolutionaries and martyrs for inspiration, including Shahid Rajpal

(1884–1929), Ram Prasad Bismil (1897–1927), Pandit Lekh Ram (1857–1897), and Swami Shraddhananda (1857–1926).

Even though Dayanand's passing did inflict his followers with a profound sense of sadness, it also sparked a desire to show their appreciation by creating a long-lasting memorial to the wonderful man. It was no longer possible to put off the push to give the study of the Vedas and traditional Sanskrit literature a practical form. His disciples were motivated by it to build the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic Colleges, Schools, and Gurukuls.

The aim of setting up Dayanand Anglo Vedic College was:

- To establish an Anglo-Vedic institution in Punjab in effort to enhance, expand, and regulate the teaching of Hindu literature.
- To encourage and mandate learning of the Vedas and traditional Sanskrit.
- To promote and enforce the study of theoretical and practical sciences, English literature.
- To establish ways for delivering technical education that was compatible with the aforementioned goals.

By establishing an integrated perspective on divinity (devas), adhering in the eternal principle of unity and harmony that must govern at the cultural level, and adhering to the Rigvedic hymn, the DAV has always shunned sectarianism, caste inequalities, regionalism, and parochialism. It works to create men and develop nations, using the words of Swami Vivekananda, and is both an instrument of the Arya Samaj and a separate group with a number of educational, social, and humanitarian organizations. Establishing information as valuable, preparing pupils for life, and fusing national sentiment with a global perspective are the goals of DAV.

Due to the fact that the bulk of institutions were in Pakistan, the vivisection of India temporarily hampered the DAV movement. Principal Mehar Chand, Lala Balraj, Dr. Justice Mehar Chand Mahajan, Dr. G.L. Datta, Lala Suraj Bhan, Prof. Ved Vyasa, Darbari Lal, Tirth Ram Tuli, and G.P. Chopra were among the pioneers who vigorously worked to revive it. The D.A.V. Organization is the largest non-governmental institution in the country and today manages over 700 academic institutions with distinctive characteristics on a domestic and international level. The D.A.V. Schools also aim to develop in its students a thirst for knowledge, a feeling of duty, honesty, and patriotic zeal in addition to humanism. DAV institutions have done a remarkable service by producing patriots, freedom warriors, social reformers, philosophers, intellectuals, legal geniuses, scientists, doctors, technicians, and athletes of unparalleled quality, integrity, and excellence, in addition to eliminating ignorance and illiteracy.

### **Lahore's Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College**

"All right-thinking people will agree that nationalizing education's tone and ethos is vital to guarantee the best benefits," was a succinct description of the educational institution's mission. There is little question that the influx of foreign ideas has enlightened and improved thousands of brains. However, a genuinely regrettable division in society has resulted from foreign education. The opposition to national education is becoming more pronounced everywhere, and interest in studying national literature is rising. As a result, the institution makes sure that the native language

and literature is studied efficiently and that we carefully introduce lifestyle possibilities that are consistent with the overall spirit and character to the young mind. In light of these aspects, the institution recommended developing a school that will complement the deficiencies of the existing system and combine their advantages. The goal of this institution is to encourage the study of ancient Sanskrit in order to foster moral and spiritual awareness, to encourage the formation of healthy habits via an organized way of living, and to encourage good linguistic knowledge of English.

### **Conclusion:**

Money can come and leave. Death may strike now or decades from now, but the steadfast do not veer from the road. This is what Swami Dayanand stood for and for which he will always be remembered. Swami Dayanand, who was born on September 20, 1824, felt that everyone has the right to education and that no one should be denied it. The Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Trust and Management Society was established in 1886 by a group of enlightened, committed, and dedicated disciples in order to carry out Swami Dayanand's dream. However, on March 20, 1886, the organization agreed to establish a D.A.V in Lahore, a high school. The first Dayanand Anglo Vedic High School was inaugurated on June 1, 1886, which is now considered to be holy in the history of Arya Samaj and the College, with Mahatma Hansraj ji serving as the honorary Headmaster. DAV, a unique synthesis of the East and the West, reached its apex at the Arya Samaj in Lahore and left its mark on humanity. The term "Vedic" refers to the traditional religion, culture, and ideals of India. The word "Anglo" means the western. The great ideas, works, and talks of Swami Dayanand Saraswati in earlier times inspired Aryas to sow the Anglo Vedic seed in the fertile soil of the undivided Punjab, and the seed grew beautifully. The DAV movement grew into a Banyan tree and spread throughout the nation. The heavy load of operating the show is made more bearable by this. The DAV Institutions, which are known as the "Pilgrims of Progress," are in fact expanding numerically. The pragmatic guiding principle of the DAV movement is to keep moving forward. One of the guiding principles of Arya Samaj and DAV Pioneers is "Dispelling Ignorance and Promoting Knowledge." The DAV Philosophy of Education emphasises the equality of boys and girls as well as the development of each person's personality and moral character. There is absolutely no gender prejudice. It strives to give young people instruction in their physical, moral, intellectual, and spiritual aspects. Mahatma Hansraj and his Aryan generation owe it to the current generation of academics and administrators.

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