

**The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School of Lahore:  
A Study of Educational Reform in Colonial  
Punjab, ca. 1885-1925.**

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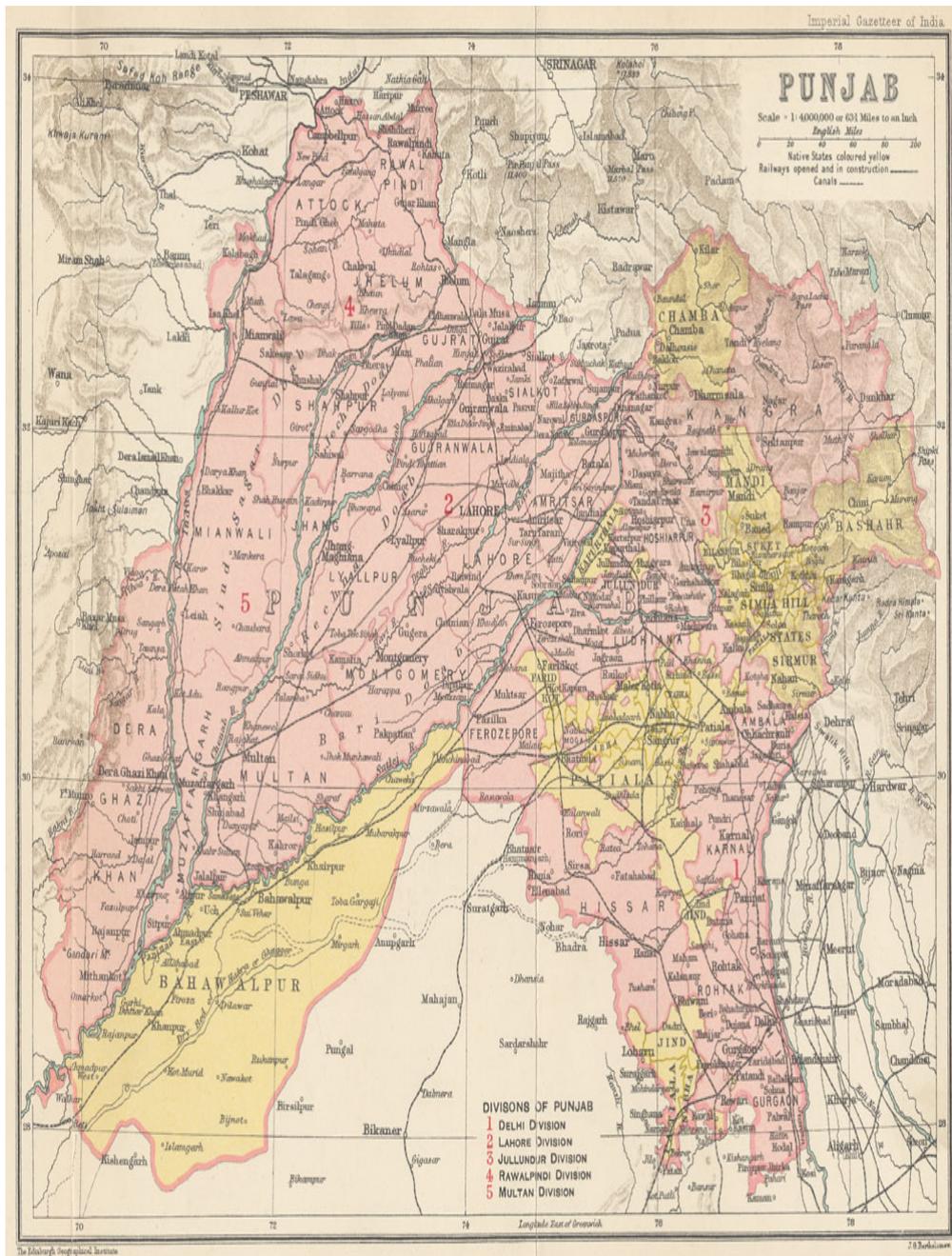
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[Source: *Imperial Gazetteer of India*. New edition, published under the authority of His Majesty's Secretary of State for India in Council. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907-1909. Volume 20, opposite page 394, accessed: [https://dsal.uchicago.edu/maps/gazetteer/images/gazetteer\\_V20\\_pg394.jpg](https://dsal.uchicago.edu/maps/gazetteer/images/gazetteer_V20_pg394.jpg)]

## INTRODUCTION

British rule in India was characterised as much by the genesis of colonial institutions as by the establishment of indigenous enterprises and movements. Indians were particularly active in the field of educational reform and various kinds of 'nationalist' schools and colleges were established across the country. These educational institutions played a pivotal role in the formation of a political, social and cultural consciousness among a vast majority of Indians.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, a study of these institutions is an indispensable part of the larger endeavour to understand the history of modern India. It is surprising then that much of the conventional historiography on modern Indian education has focussed almost exclusively on British colonial education, thereby neglecting the importance of indigenous educational institutions. In the twentieth century, the discourse on modern Indian education revolved around the 'colonial project' and how it was instituted with the passage of acts and legislations introduced by the colonial government. Standard histories written by eminent educationists like J.P. Naik, Syed Nurullah and Aparna Basu documented the evolution of colonial education policy in India and the corresponding socio-political impact on Indian society.<sup>2</sup> Other contemporary historians examined the role of English education in fostering a spirit of nationalism in modern India.<sup>3</sup> With the 'post-colonial' turn in history writing, scholars such as Gauri Vishwanathan

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<sup>1</sup> The impact of nationalist institutions on the formation of new identities in colonial India has been discussed by many scholars. See Krishna Kumar, *Political Agenda of Education in India* (New Delhi: Routledge, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> Syed Nurullah and J.P. Naik, *History of Education in India during the British Period* (London: Macmillan & co., 1943). See also Aparna Basu, *The Growth of Education and Political Development in India, 1898- 1920* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1974).

<sup>3</sup> One of the first works to use nationalism as an overarching theme in the historiography of Indian education was B.T. McCully, *English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1966).

highlighted the use of colonial education as an instrument for political and cultural domination.<sup>4</sup> Fortunately, recent historiographical trends have led to a paradigm shift in the perspective of historians. Breaking away from conventional narratives that were premised on a sharp dichotomy between the colonising ruler and the subjugated ‘native’, scholars now argue that the project of colonial education in India saw a higher degree of collaboration between the colonial state and its subjects than was hitherto believed.<sup>5</sup> Recent studies have also shed light on how Indians received and transformed colonial education in various ways to suit their agendas. These studies not only contend that educated Indians and colonial officials jointly collaborated in developing an educational code, but also argue that colonial knowledge was shaped as much by the colonised as by the coloniser.<sup>6</sup> Notwithstanding these recent historiographical trends, much of the scholarship on modern Indian education continues to focus on colonial education or colonial knowledge in its various forms. In comparison, educational movements and institutions started by Indians have received far less attention. With a view to filling this lacuna in the present historical and educational discourse, my PhD dissertation studies one of the most popular indigenous educational institutions in colonial India, namely the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (D.A.V.) School of Lahore.

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<sup>4</sup> Gauri Vishwanathan, *Masks of Conquest* (Pennsylvania: UPenn, 1991). Another prominent works belonging to this category is Krishna Kumar, *Political Agenda of Colonial Education*.

<sup>5</sup> For recent developments in the historiography on modern Indian education, see Barnita Bagchi, “Connected and entangled histories: writing histories of education in the Indian context”, *Paedagogica Historica*, 50, no.6 (August 2014):813-821, accessed September 11, 2016. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00309230.2014.948013>.

<sup>6</sup> See, for instance, Sanjay Seth, *Subject Lessons: The Western Education of Colonial India* (Duke: Duke University Press, 2007) and Tim Allender, *Ruling through education: The Politics of Schooling in the Colonial Punjab* (New Delhi: New Dawn Press, 2006).

At the outset, it is imperative to understand the way in which the D.A.V. educational initiative fits in the wide spectrum of Indian reactions to colonial rule. As is known, the introduction of English education in India elicited a variety of responses. On the one hand, a large section of educated Indians, including reformers and nationalists, whole-heartedly welcomed English education. For instance, the famous Bengali reformer Ram Mohan Roy (1772 - 1833) took to English education in earnest, believing that the colonial endeavour to “improve the natives of India by education” was a “blessing” for which Indians “should ever be grateful”.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, nationalists like Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866 - 1915) strongly advocated the extension of English education in India, believing that “not only the highest but all Western education” was useful in order to liberate the Indian mind from “the thralldom of old-world ideas”.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, another section of Indians who are often loosely called ‘revivalists’ were equally forthright in their dismissal of English education. These men rejected colonial education in its entirety. They preferred to revive Indian education along the lines of traditional institutions such as the *Patshalas* (traditional village schools) that flourished in India prior to the advent

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<sup>7</sup> “Address, dated 11th December 1823, from Raja Rammohan Roy”, in Henry Sharp, ed., *Selections from Educational Records, Part I, 1781-1839* (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1920), 99. In this letter addressed to Lord Amherst (Governor-General of India, 1823-1828), Ram Mohan Roy advises the government that instead of allocating funds for the establishment of a Sanskrit College at Calcutta, it should set up English schools in India.

<sup>8</sup> See “The Indian Universities Act” in *Speeches of Gopal Krishna Gokhale* (Madras: G.A. Natesan & Co., 1908), 259. In this speech Gokhale was opposing a reform bill that was introduced by Lord Curzon (Viceroy of India from 1899-1905). In 1903, the Curzon government proposed a legislation that aimed to strengthen control over university education in India. Gokhale, who was a member of the Viceroy’s legislative council, strongly opposed this bill on the grounds that it was pointless to prioritise ‘efficiency’ over ‘expansion’ when a vast majority of Indians were ‘illiterate’.

of colonial rule. It is also important to understand the critique of colonial education by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) who led India's non-violent struggle against colonial rule. Although Gandhi was not a 'revivalist' of the kind mentioned above, he was deeply critical of colonial education which he believed imparted superficial knowledge and alienated young boys and girls from their rural roots. An alternative scheme of education as proposed by Gandhi included manual work and training in various handicrafts with a view towards stimulating the intellect and spirit.<sup>9</sup>

A third kind of response came from a section of Indians who wished to combine both 'traditional' and 'modern' learning. These were mostly English educated Indians who believed that 'modern' education imparted in government institutions through instruction in western literature and sciences was the key to national progress.<sup>10</sup> These Indians were deeply familiar with western ideas and western civilization, yet they were also sharp critics of colonial education. Moreover, they shared with the 'revivalists' the concern that there was a dire need to develop an alternative to colonial education. This group of Indians responded to colonial education by formulating educational programmes and institutions that combined 'traditional' and 'modern' knowledge. One such institution was the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (D.A.V.) School of Lahore which forms the central focus of this PhD dissertation. The thematic focus of my dissertation is the syncretisation of 'traditional' and 'modern' aspects of the D.A.V education model. This syncretic character of modern Indian institutions in general and the D.A.V. movement in particular has not yet been thoroughly

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<sup>9</sup> T.S. Avinashilingam, *Gandhiji's Experiments in Education* (New Delhi: Ministry of Education, Government of India, 1960).

<sup>10</sup> It is for this reason that 'modern education' is sometimes used synonymously with 'western education' although the two terms may not necessarily refer to the same thing. To avoid confusion, I generally only use the term 'modern education', whose meaning I have elaborated in detail in the section titled "Terms and Categories".

researched. My dissertation attempts to fill this gap by examining the manner in which D.A.V pedagogues modelled their education scheme along ‘modern’ lines, and the extent to which they adapted and redefined ‘traditional’ pedagogical practices.

### **Historiography Review**

While there exists an impressive corpus of literature on the Arya Samaj, there are relatively few studies on the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College at Lahore. Studies on the educational activities of the Arya Samaj have generally focussed on the other major institution of the Samaj, namely the *Gurukul Kangri* which was established in 1902 at the holy city of Hardwar.<sup>11</sup> Prominent leaders of the Arya Samaj have authored several works, mostly in Hindi, that document the history of the Samaj. Beginning with the establishment of the Arya Samaj in 1875, these histories trace the development of Samajic ideology and mission throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>12</sup> In doing so, these works inform us about various initiatives undertaken by the Samaj in social and educational reform.<sup>13</sup> It is ironical that these Samajic histories devote only a

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<sup>11</sup> Notable works on the Gurukul Kangri include Saraswati Shantipriya Pandit, *A critical study of the contribution of the Arya Samaj to Indian education* (New Delhi: Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, 1975); Harald Fischer-Tiné, *Der Gurukul-Kangri oder die Erziehung der Arya-Nation* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2003), especially “English Summary” in *ibid.* 343-346. Also see Fischer-Tiné, “The only hope for fallen India: The Gurukul Kangri as an experiment in National Education (1902-1922)” in Herman Kulke and others, eds., *Explorations in the History of South Asia* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 2001).

<sup>12</sup> The word ‘Samajic’ is used in this dissertation to refer to characteristic features of the Arya Samaj.

<sup>13</sup> See, for instance, Satyaketu Vidyalkar, *Arya Samaj ka Itihas, Vol.1* (New Delhi: Arya Svadhyaya Kendra, 1988). For a work dealing exclusively with Punjab, a

single chapter to discuss the D.A.V. movement even though this movement is described as an important vehicle of the Samajic ideology and mission. Among the existing Samajic literature, there are only a few essays that focus exclusively on the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic movement. Among these is an old tract titled “The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, Lahore: A Brief History (1886-1936)” that was published on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of D.A.V. College.<sup>14</sup> This brief essay, about fifteen pages long, summarises the aims and ideals of the movement and traces its evolution during the mentioned period. Another such tract entitled “Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Movement (1886-1986)” was published fifty years later on the hundredth anniversary of the D.A.V. College.<sup>15</sup> This was a brief article, again about fifteen pages long, and largely covered the same background and salient features of the movement as discussed in the previous tract of Sri Ram Sharma.

In sum, there is hardly any comprehensive volume on the D.A.V. movement published by the Arya Samaj. The only exception is a Hindi volume recently published by the D.A.V. Publications Division.<sup>16</sup> This is the only existing ‘history’ of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic movement. It narrates in great detail the evolution of the D.A.V. education movement and the spread of the vast network of D.A.V. schools across the country. Although this publication provides a voluminous amount of historical data, it is replete with official hyperbole. In this sense, this work is more or less a continuation in the series of official attempts by the Samajis to write a glorifying narrative of their

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province where the Arya Samaj was most popular, see Bhimsen Vidyalankar, *Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Punjab ka Sachitra Itihas* (Lahore: Navyug Press, 1935).

<sup>14</sup> Sri Ram Sharma, *The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, Lahore: A Brief History* (Lahore: Swami Virajanand Press, 1936).

<sup>15</sup> Dr. Shiv Kumar Gupta, “Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Movement (1886-1986)” in Ganda Singh Ed., *The Panjab Past and Present*, Vol. XX (39), April 1986, 226-241.

<sup>16</sup> Dharamdev Vidyarthi, *D.A.V. Andolan ka Itihas, 1886-1947* (New Delhi: D.A.V. Publications Division, 2011).

educational initiatives. In sum, all the existing accounts of the D.A.V. movement contain considerable information about the birth, rise and spread of D.A.V. institutions across Northern India. But these tracts are fraught with several limitations. Firstly, since these accounts have been written by Arya Samajis or D.A.V. staff members for their audience, their works are largely descriptive in nature and are therefore lacking the analytical and academic rigour that characterises ‘modern’ scholarship. Secondly, these works are in Hindi and so they have not been accessible to a wider audience. In fact, since these works were intended for a Samajic audience, they are barely known outside the Arya Samaj network. Thirdly, because they have been composed by Arya Samajis themselves, these works contain a ‘subjective’ bias. Therefore, even though these histories provide extensive information on various aspects of the D.A.V. movement, they are rarely critical of the Arya Samaj or the D.A.V. institutions.

Outside the Arya Samaj too, academic works that discuss the D.A.V. movement are few and far between.<sup>17</sup> There are studies that focus on religion or religious consciousness as a unit of analysis and examine the endeavours of D.A.V. leaders within the purview of the religious or cultural agenda of the educational movement. Kenneth Jones’ *Arya Dharma* (1976) is a notable work that belongs to this category. Jones deals with the overall emergence of Hindu consciousness in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Punjab, focussing primarily on the political expression of Hindu consciousness in the province.

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<sup>17</sup>There is no single published volume that is dedicated to the D.A.V. movement alone. The only exclusive study on this subject is an unpublished M.Phil dissertation that is exclusively based on English language sources. Among other things, this dissertation provides a cursory glimpse of the course of instruction followed in D.A.V. schools. See Kenneth Samson, “Ombongi, Eclecticism and expediency: Evolution of Dayanand-Anglo-Vedic Society Education Movement in colonial north India, 1886-1936,” (M.Phil dissertation, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 1996), accessed february 12, 2017, <https://dumas.ccsd.cnrs.fr/dumas-01277946/document>.

Within this framework, Jones looks at the D.A.V. movement both as a product and catalyst of Hindu consciousness among the Punjabis, in general and Arya Samajis, in particular. Like Jones, most scholars have viewed the D.A.V. movement as part of a broader work that discusses the nature of Arya Samaj and religious reform movements, in general. For instance, scholars like Llewellyn argue that the D.A.V. movement was part of the Samajic mission to propagate a fundamentalist religious ideology.<sup>18</sup>

In addition, the nationalist aspects of the D.A.V. movement have been widely documented in several histories of modern Indian education. Several works discuss D.A.V. institutions among other indigenous educational institutions that are grouped under the broad umbrella of ‘nationalist’ institutions.<sup>19</sup> According to this framework, the multifarious instruction imparted in such institutions is invariably linked to the overarching goal of infusing nationalism in their pupils. This is particularly true for educational

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<sup>18</sup> J.E. Llewellyn, *The Arya Samaj as a Fundamentalist Movement* (Delhi: Manohar, 1993).

<sup>19</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there was an increasing demand among many sections of Indians for the need to develop a ‘national’ system of education. But the term ‘National Education’ was probably first used in relation to the educational institutions set up in Bengal under the auspices of a “National Education Council” which was part of a broader *Swadeshi* movement in Bengal. This council was established by prominent Bengali intellectuals in 1905 in order to formulate “a system of education – literary, scientific and technical – on national lines and under national control.” See “National Education” in R.C.Majumdar, ed., *Struggle for Freedom. The History and Culture of the Indian People. Vol. XI* (1969; repr., Mumbai: Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, 2003), 43-44. There have been recent efforts to compile contemporary writings and speeches on the National Education Movement. For instance, see Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, *Educating the Nation: Documents on the Discourse of National Education in India 1880-1920* (Delhi: Kanishka Publishers Distributors, 2003).

institutions affiliated to the Arya Samaj because the Samaj was often seen from the prism of nationalism alone.<sup>20</sup> This was because nationalist ideals formed one of the core objectives of Samajic educational initiatives. For instance, one of the reasons to establish the *Gurukul Kangri* was to create an “experiment towards a truly national education.”<sup>21</sup> Similarly, D.A.V. leaders made the following remarks in the preamble of a draft scheme that was publicly circulated before the inauguration of the institution:

The reaction towards a national education is asserting itself everywhere, and the demand for the study of national literature is growing [...] Influenced by these important considerations we propose to establish an educational institution which will supply the shortcomings of the existing systems, and combine their advantages. The primary object will, therefore, be to weld together the educated and uneducated classes by encouraging the study of the national language and vernaculars.<sup>22</sup>

In view of the above quote, it is hardly surprising that the nationalist theme was predominant in the works of contemporary D.A.V. leaders like Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) who viewed the education movement as a nationalist initiative that

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<sup>20</sup> See, for instance, Dhanpati Pandey, *The Arya Samaj and Indian Nationalism* (New Delhi: S. Chand & co., 1972).

<sup>21</sup> *The Rules and the Scheme of Studies of the Gurukula, sanctioned by the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, Punjab, together with an introduction by Lala Ralla Ram* (Lahore: Punjab Printing Works, 1902), 8. In fact, the founders of Gurukul Kangri aimed to enforce the study of Sanskrit as part of their endeavour to design a “truly national” educational programme. See *ibid.* 3

<sup>22</sup> This quote is based on excerpts from the draft scheme reproduced in Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj: An Account of Its origin, doctrines and activities, with a biographical sketch of the founder* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1915), 181-182.

formed part of the larger anti-colonial struggle.<sup>23</sup> In fact, Rai observed that, prior to the foundation of the National College in Bengal, the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College at Lahore was the only “national” institution in the country.<sup>24</sup> It is hardly surprising then that scholars have generally viewed the D.A.V. institution from the prism of nationalism.

The above survey of existing literature on the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic movement reveals many important gaps in our current understanding of this widespread educational phenomenon. Firstly, it shows that there has hardly been any exclusive study of the D.A.V. education movement that originated at Lahore in 1886 and gradually spread throughout the province of Punjab and beyond. This is quite surprising since by the third decade of the twentieth century, the D.A.V. schools and colleges formed one of the largest indigenous institutional networks in India. Secondly, the historiographical survey reveals that nationalist and religious themes have dominated the study of Indian educational institutions. Notwithstanding the merits of such studies, this ideological approach has handicapped our understanding of Indian educational endeavours. Various aspects of indigenous institutions have been treated as secondary to the larger nationalist or religious agenda. As a result, the diversity and creativity which was so integral to the pedagogical and curricular practices of such institutions has not been sufficiently examined. As a result, a large chunk of the curriculum, including textbooks and practices taught in such institutions, has not been sufficiently explored for their pedagogic value. It is in this sense that several primary sources pertaining to the D.A.V. movement have not been examined. This is partly due to the fact that much of the existing scholarship is based on institutional records and journals, all of which are in

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<sup>23</sup> See Lajpat Rai, *The Problem of National Education* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1920), and S.K.Gupta, *Arya Samaj and the Raj 1875-1920* (New Delhi: Gitanjali Publishing House, 1991).

<sup>24</sup> Rai, *The Problem of National Education*, 4.

English. Considering that linguistic, moral and religious instruction was conveyed to D.A.V. students primarily through Hindi textbooks and manuals, it is not surprising that ‘traditional’ aspects of the D.A.V. education model have been given limited attention. On the whole then, there are several lacunae in existing literature which my dissertation attempts to fill by highlighting hitherto unexplored aspects of the D.A.V. educational model.

My study is also inspired by latest historiographical trends. Recent scholarship has transcended the category of ‘nation’ as part of a larger trend wherein the history of the erstwhile colonial world is seen from a transnational perspective. For instance, Vickie Langohr argues that the D.A.V. movement was an instance of a global pattern that witnessed the emergence of indigenous religious movements in response to colonial education that had “significantly minimised the role of religion in education”.<sup>25</sup> Other scholars have sought to highlight the manner in which European ideas were ‘creatively borrowed’ and refashioned by Indian educationists to serve their purpose. For instance, Fischer-Tiné discusses how Arya Samaj leaders appropriated and assimilated Victorian and Edwardian notions of eugenics and environmentalism in their educational scheme for the *Gurukul Kangri*.<sup>26</sup> Just as the validity of ‘nation’ as a unit of analysis has been challenged by recent scholars, so has the universal and generalised use of ‘religion’ been criticised.<sup>27</sup> Also, there are many

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<sup>25</sup> Vickie Langohr, “Colonial Education Systems and the Spread of Local Religious Movements: The Cases of British Egypt and Punjab” in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 47, No. 1 (Jan, 2005), 161-189.

<sup>26</sup> Harald Fischer-Tiné, “From Brahmacharya to ‘Conscious Race Culture’: Victorian Discourses of ‘Science’ and Hindu Traditions in Early Indian Nationalism”, in Crispin Bates, Ed., *Beyond representation: colonial and postcolonial constructions of Indian identity* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 241-269.

<sup>27</sup> Wilfred Cantwell Smith was perhaps the first scholar of religious studies to argue that the concept of ‘religion’ was deeply linked to Christianity and so it was inadequate

meanings and definitions of the term ‘religion’ and because of the lack of consensus on arriving at a common understanding of religion or religious studies, many scholars have made the case for abandoning the use of the word altogether while others have argued for its qualified usage.<sup>28</sup> More importantly, it is now widely acknowledged that the category ‘religion’ is inadequate to explain the various traditions in India. Therefore, it is recommended that ‘religion’ be either substituted by other terms such as ‘faith’ and ‘tradition’, or that it be qualified in any study of Indian traditions.<sup>29</sup> Bob van der Linden argues that categories like ‘religious’ and ‘secular’ do not fully capture the complexity of traditional phenomenon in colonial India. So, he prefers to use the categories of tradition and history.<sup>30</sup> Now, it is beyond the scope of this dissertation to discuss the appropriateness and meaning of various epistemological categories used in the historiography of modern India. But being aware of the limitations of categories such as ‘nation’ and ‘religion’, my dissertation does not look at the history of the D.A.V. movement through the exclusive and unqualified use of any epistemological category. Instead, this dissertation aims to reveal the

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to explain the ‘religious’ phenomenon of other cultures. He instead advocated the use of categories like tradition, community and faith instead of religion. See “Is the concept adequate?” in Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1964), 119-153. For a recent compilation of essays on the use and misuse of the concept of religion in the context of South Asia, see Esther Bloch and others, Eds., *Rethinking Religion in India* (London: Routledge, 2011), especially “Introduction: Rethinking Religion in India”, 1-22.

<sup>28</sup> Michael Bergunder has carefully reviewed the state of existing literature on religion in his well-known essay titled What is Religion?. See Bergunder, “What is Religion” in *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* Vol. 26 (2014), 246-286.

<sup>29</sup> W.C. Smith (1962) and Richard King (1999) explain the Eurocentric bias of the term ‘religion’ and how this bias was inherent in the colonial ‘constructions’ of Hinduism.

<sup>30</sup> Bob van der Linden, *Moral Languages from Colonial Punjab* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2008), 9.

multi-faceted nature of the D.A.V. movement by highlighting various aspects that have not been studied before. In other words, my analysis of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic movement challenges the notion that indigenous educational enterprises can be boxed into a single monolithic category. To this end, my dissertation highlights the interrelatedness of linguistic, moral and cultural aspects of instruction given in the D.A.V. schools. Without denying the nationalist and religious agendas of these institutions, this dissertation aims to examine the various ways in which the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic educational model constructed an inter-disciplinary curriculum that catered to a diverse and overlapping variety of themes and issues. This study also analyses the extent to which D.A.V. pedagogues ‘reinvented’ tradition and reformulated traditional pedagogical practices.

### **Terms and Categories**

Some terms and categories used in this dissertation need to be clearly defined in order to avoid confusion. The need for clarification is also necessary to understand their use as analytical tools in this dissertation. For instance, in attempting to understand which aspects of the D.A.V. education model may be classified as ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’, it is imperative to have a working definition of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ education.

Let me begin by defining the term ‘indigenous’ which is often used differently in different contexts. In colonial historiography, ‘indigenous’ has been used synonymously with ‘native’ to refer to institutions that were being maintained by Indians<sup>31</sup> prior to the advent of colonial rule. I retain this usage

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<sup>31</sup> ‘Indigenous’ was generally used by colonial officials to refer to Hindu institutions, although it was also occasionally used as a general term for both Hindu and Muslim institutions. For instance, in his *History of Indigenous Education in Panjab*, Dr. G.W. Leitner collectively refers to all kinds of religious and traditional schools as ‘indigenous’ institutions.

of the word 'indigenous' in my discussion of early colonial surveys. But for all other contexts in my dissertation, 'indigenous' refers to any enterprise associated with Indian agency. As stated by Lajpat Rai, one of the objectives of the D.A.V. movement was "to try an experiment in purely indigenous enterprise."<sup>32</sup> Although the focus of my dissertation is on a Hindu educational movement, 'indigenous' enterprises can be associated with any Indian religious community. This was also generally understood by several prominent Arya Samajis like Lajpat Rai.<sup>33</sup>

It is also important to qualify the use of this term because of the challenge involved in disengaging the 'indigenous' from the colonial context due to the intricate entanglement of Indians in the colonial government. So, it is important to clarify that in this dissertation, I use the word 'indigenous' to refer to voluntary Indian agencies that emerged in opposition to colonial rule. The word 'indigenous' also emphasises the fact that many of these Indian reformers identified themselves not with a foreign colonial power but with their local and traditional culture. These Indian agencies were active in various fields but my focus is particularly on educational initiatives taken by Indians.

Like the word 'indigenous', the term 'English education' can be a source of confusion for the reader because it may refer to instruction imparted through the medium of English language or to the specific teaching of English literature. So, it is important to clarify that 'English education' is used in this dissertation to refer to colonial education which means the education system instituted by the British government in India regardless of the medium of instruction used to impart such education.

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<sup>32</sup> Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 190.

<sup>33</sup> While proudly noting that no other province in India had developed "private enterprise in education to the same extent and with the same success as we have in the Punjab," Rai clarified that by "we" he was referring to "all classes, Hindus, Aryas, Brahmos, Sikhs, Muslims, and Indian Christians." Ibid.

A related yet broader term that I have frequently used in this dissertation is ‘modern education’. The word ‘modern’, according to the Oxford Dictionary of English, is defined as anything “related to the present or recent times as opposed to the remote past.”<sup>34</sup> In view of this definition, I have used the category ‘modern education’ to refer to the recent idea of state controlled education, particularly as it has evolved since the nineteenth century. In England, the educational ideas of thinkers like John Locke (1632- 1704) and Helvetius (1715-1771) had become remarkably popular in the nineteenth century, leading to a growing recognition of the responsibilities of the state in England.<sup>35</sup> Beginning in the 1840s, state control had increased in the form of inspections that were linked with state grants as also with the institution of various commissions. By the end of the 1860s, the British Parliament “had introduced major reforms at the ancient universities and passed legislation to reform the endowed schools.”<sup>36</sup> Thus, there is little doubt that by the middle of the nineteenth century it was widely acknowledged in England that the state should take on a more pro-active role in education. The passage of the Elementary Education Act in 1870 may be considered as the starting point of ‘modern education’ in England. But in India, the British had imposed state controlled education as early as 1854 with the implementation of Wood’s despatch.<sup>37</sup> The category of ‘modern education’ then has a double meaning in

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<sup>34</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

<sup>35</sup> “The English radicals of the 1790s saw education as one of the objectives in their search for a just and sensible social order. Embedded in Tom Paine’s *The Rights of Man* or Mary Wollstonecraft’s *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* are assumptions about education in the context of the pursuit of human rights. These assumptions are more thoroughly explored in William Godwin’s *Political Justice*.” See Jack Lawson and Harold Silver, *A Social History of Education in England* (London, 1973), 229.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* 268.

<sup>37</sup> The contents of Wood’s despatch are discussed in detail in the first chapter of this dissertation.

the context of Indian history. It refers to the general principles of state education (such as classroom teaching and standardised testing) that came to be practised across the modern world, as also to the specific manner in which education was instituted by the colonial state in India. It is in this dual sense that I use the term 'modern' in my dissertation. Here, it is also important not to confuse 'modern' education with 'western' education. For instance, the modern phenomenon of mass education and the corresponding movement for universal literacy, especially among urban populations, is not unique to the western world. Mass education followed in the wake of industrialization and so it became a characteristic of all industrialized economies of the world.

Another term that lends itself to multiple meanings and needs to be carefully defined is 'tradition'. It is particularly important to underscore the way in which 'tradition' is used in this dissertation because it forms a key analytical unit for my study. At the outset, let me mention that I am aware of the uses to which traditions are put. One such use, as Eric Hosbawm has explained, is in the way traditions are constructed by a state or group in order to boost their claims to antiquity and legitimise a cultural pattern they wish to uphold.<sup>38</sup> In this sense, my dissertation examines whether, and to what extent, D.A.V. leaders 'constructed' new traditions and redefined old traditions in their attempt to design a curriculum that would be both 'traditional' and 'modern'. But a larger analysis of source material depends, as my dissertation shows, on what we understand by the word 'tradition'. On the one hand there are those who interpret tradition as forms of knowledge or set of beliefs and customs handed down, largely unchanged, from generation to generation. On the other hand, there are authors like J.H.Plumb who hold that the past is continuously changing.<sup>39</sup> My usage of 'tradition' in this dissertation lies between these two

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<sup>38</sup> See Eric Hosbawm, "Inventing Traditions", in Hosbawm and Ranger, Eds. *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1-14.

<sup>39</sup> J.H. Plumb, *The Death of the Past* (New York: Macmillan, 1969).

extreme positions. I use the word to refer to a versatile set of adaptable knowledge practices that keep evolving even while retaining a sense of continuity over long periods of time. In this sense, my usage of tradition corresponds closely to the manner in which it has been defined by Milton Singer who observed that “traditionalization is not simply a blind handing-down of meaningless and functionless ‘survivals’ but rather a creative incorporation of contemporary events and innovations into the living and changing structure of tradition.”<sup>40</sup> This view of tradition implies that it should not always be seen in contradistinction with ‘modernity’.

In this dissertation, my understanding of the word tradition relates to a continuously evolving structure and I denote those aspects of the D.A.V. education model as ‘traditional’ which have evolved from similar practices followed in the ‘traditional’ *patshalas* or village schools that predated colonial rule. These aspects of the D.A.V. curriculum or pedagogy need not be exact replicas of the *patshala* model. My dissertation examines the extent to which certain aspects of the traditional *patshala* model were, intentionally or otherwise, adapted and redefined by D.A.V. authorities.

### **Sources and Methodologies**

Although theoretical studies, particularly those pertaining to textual criticism, provide the conceptual framework for my argumentation, the empirical historical documents are the main sources that inform my analysis. So, the methodologies employed in this dissertation are largely historical and empirical since my study is more descriptive than theoretical and deconstructive.

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<sup>40</sup> Milton Singer, ‘Beyond Tradition and Modernity in Madras’, in *When A Great Tradition Modernizes* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 404-405.

I have used various kinds of primary source material for my dissertation. These sources have been procured from various libraries and institutions in India, Britain and the United States of America. The National Archives of India was one of the primary sites from where I have accessed documents related to colonial policies such as the 'Punjab Education Code, 1886 - 87' and proceedings of the Simla Education Conference, 1901. In my analysis of these documents and colonial archives in general, I often follow a critical approach. This has been particularly useful in understanding the complex means and ends for which records and documents were created by the colonial government in India.<sup>41</sup>

Another set of sources used in this dissertation comprises selections from the vast set of proceedings of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic (D.A.V.) College Society and its subsidiary body, the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. All of these institutional records were accessed from the Manuscripts Division of the Nehru Memorial and Museum Library (N.M.M.L) in Delhi which holds a large collection of papers, files and registers that were maintained by the D.A.V. College Society ever since its establishment in 1885. These records throw light on various aspects of the D.A.V. movement such as aims and ideals, administrative control, budgetary allocations, teacher appointments. The minutes of regular meetings held by the D.A.V. College Managing Committee are an important indicator of the educational programme and curriculum prescribed in D.A.V. schools and colleges. The N.M.M.L collection also contains various annual reports of the D.A.V. School and College that furnish statistical information about the number of schools, student enrolments and academic results. Along with these documents, I used the decennial census reports and Lahore district gazetteers to analyse general population and literacy

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<sup>41</sup> One of the finest illustrations of the use of this approach may be found in the work of Bernard S. Cohn. See Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

trends in Punjab. I am aware of the limitations of these sources and the corresponding challenges involved in relying on the data contained in them. So, in using these sources, I am particularly cautious of the inherent bias and distortion caused by colonial agency. However, despite their shortcomings, select extracts and tables in these records provide vital statistical information that is helpful in gaining a rough idea of contemporary social trends.

A third set of sources used in this study are the textbooks used in D.A.V. schools including manuals composed by Arya Samajis. These texts were procured from various locations across the world. The set of 'Vedic Readers', for instance, was obtained from the British Library in London. An extant copy of a *Dharma Shikshak* reader was procured from the University of Chicago Library. Two other copies of textbooks in the *Dharma Shikshak* series, particularly numbers 11 and 12, were accessed from the D.A.V. College Jullundur, Punjab. Other contemporary readers composed by Arya Samajis were accessed from the library of Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha in Delhi and the Lal Chand Library of D.A.V. College Chandigarh. Other well-known compositions such as Dayanand Saraswati's *Vyavhaar Bhanu* and *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh* were accessed from the N.M.M.L library. All of these texts provide an example of the pedagogical and educational reforms initiated by D.A.V. authorities. My interpretation of D.A.V. school books draws upon theories of textual criticism in order to highlight the multiple meanings and layers of these literary texts. As Roland Barthes (1915-1980) argues, any literary text has multiple meanings and the author is not necessarily the only and primary source of the work's semantic content. In the light of recent literary theories, I have been cautious about assigning a single definitive meaning to a literary text.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> One strand of what is called the 'reader'-response' theory is postulated by Roland Barthes who argues that the reader, as opposed to the 'Author', is the primary

## Chapter Outline

This dissertation is divided into five chapters, each of which addresses a specific argument which in turn informs the overall structure of my thesis. A brief outline of each chapter is given below along with the allied research questions.

The first chapter of my dissertation provides a historical and conceptual background by reviewing the general state of education in India from the 1830s up till the 1880s. In doing so, this chapter elaborates upon the meaning of ‘modern’ education in the Indian context. It discusses how ‘modern’ education was instituted by the colonial state with the setting up of an educational bureaucracy following the Wood’s despatch of 1854 and the formation of an education code. Parallely, this chapter delineates the concept of ‘traditional’ education, as it was practised in the *patshalas* (traditional village schools) and other ‘indigenous’ institutions that prevailed in India before the advent of colonial rule. The impact of colonial policies on the functioning of these traditional institutions is also examined. The *patshalas* of Punjab are discussed in particular detail with a view to highlighting their defining characteristics and exploring the reasons why these institutions were not amenable to government norms. Owing to the policy of religious neutrality, the colonial government could not recognise and aid a large number of *patshalas* that were seen as ‘religious’ institutions.

The second chapter of my dissertation also provides a historical background for the dissertation by discussing some of the major grievances held by Indians against colonial education in the late nineteenth century, for it was this criticism of colonial education that laid the background for the emergence of indigenous educational initiatives such as the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic movement. The social and cultural setting of Lahore in the late nineteenth and

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interpreter of a literary text. See Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author," in *Image / Music / Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 142-7.

early twentieth centuries is then reviewed in this chapter which also examines the demography of Lahore and briefly summarises the rise of various contemporary reformist organisations. Subsequently, the chapter reviews the reformist agenda and educational philosophy of Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883), the man who founded the Arya Samaj in 1875 and in whose memory the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (D.A.V.) institutions were established. This chapter closes with a discussion of the principal tenets of Arya Samaj and of the factors that contributed to the growth of this reformist organisation in Punjab.

The third chapter of my dissertation studies the genesis and growth of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic movement in Punjab with the establishment of the D.A.V. school at Lahore in 1886. This chapter discusses the aims and ideals of the Arya Samajis as they formulated the D.A.V. educational model that would be both ‘Anglo’ and ‘Vedic’. This chapter examines how ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ elements were blended together in the D.A.V. education model by scrutinising the curriculum that actually came to be practised in D.A.V. schools, and comparing it with the government school curriculum. The chapter closes with a discussion of the ideological split within the ranks of the Arya Samaj over critical questions such as: How was ‘traditional’ or ‘Vedic’ instruction to be accorded an adequate place in the D.A.V curriculum? In designing a scheme for ‘traditional’ education, does one have to strictly adhere to the scheme outlined by Dayanand Saraswati? and to what extent can the ‘traditional’ model co-exist with the ‘modern’ educational model? These questions pave the way for the next chapter that discusses how ‘traditional’ instruction was imparted in D.A.V. schools.

The fourth chapter of my dissertation examines the ‘traditional’ aspects of the D.A.V. school curriculum in detail. In doing so, this chapter shows that the category ‘religion’ does not fully capture the various ‘traditional’ modes through which students received instruction. Through the analysis of D.A.V. textbooks and Dayanand Saraswati’s compositions, this chapter examines the manner in which instruction in language, ethics and tradition was given. With

these objectives, a set of D.A.V. textbooks called *Dharma Shikshaks* or 'religious' readers are then analysed in this chapter. The chapter closes with a discussion on a special ritual known as *Brahma Yajna* that D.A.V. students were expected to perform on a daily basis.

The fifth chapter of my dissertation describes the state of the D.A.V. movement on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Arya Samaj. This was a time when several prominent Arya Samajis and D.A.V. pedagogues took stock of the contemporary state of the grand educational institution with a view to assessing whether the original aims and objectives of the D.A.V. movement had been fulfilled. Results obtained by D.A.V. school students in the university examinations are reviewed in this chapter which provides detailed statistics on the growth and spread of the D.A.V. network of schools during the period under review. Another objective of this chapter is to study the impact of the D.A.V. movement on the literacy of Punjab. In addition, this chapter discusses the reception of 'traditional' instruction by the D.A.V. students. Thus, by analysing the results and effects of instruction imparted in D.A.V. institutions, the final chapter of my dissertation seeks to ascertain the extent to which the D.A.V. movement was able to meet its original aims and ideals.

On the whole then, each of these five chapters contributes in some measure to resolving the larger question of whether the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic education movement was 'modern' or 'traditional'. The overall picture that emerges from these chapters is that the dual character of the D.A.V. movement was not a dilemma but an asset.

**CHAPTER 1: EDUCATION POLICY IN COLONIAL INDIA. A HISTORICAL  
BACKGROUND, CA. 1800-1880**

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with the early nineteenth century by shedding light on the 'indigenous' education system that prevailed in India before the advent of English education. The discussion then moves to the institution of colonial education and the setting up of an educational bureaucracy following the Wood's despatch of 1854. Some of the prominent features of this newly constituted education code are examined in detail. At the same time, it is discussed how colonial policies gradually disrupted the functioning of 'indigenous' schools which were either ignored by the colonial dispensation or 'improved' and assimilated into the government machinery.

It is further analysed why a large number of 'indigenous' schools were not recognised by the colonial government which tried in vain to classify these schools into certain categories. As a case in point, the traditional *patshalas* of Punjab are studied in order to illustrate. It shows that the dynamic and multi-dimensional character of these *patshalas* was one of their defining characteristics and one of the major reasons that these 'indigenous' schools were not amenable to government norms. This chapter also throws light on the policy of religious neutrality which not only prevented the colonial government from recognising and aiding indigenous schools but also prohibited the inclusion of 'religious' texts in government schools. On the whole then, this chapter analyses colonial education policies to give a view of the backdrop against which educational movements such as the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic movement were born.

‘INDIGENOUS’ INDIAN EDUCATION : A COLONIAL SURVEY, CA. 1820-1830

As the British expanded their dominions in India, political and administrative needs made it imperative for them to acquire more intimate information about their subjects.<sup>43</sup> Hence, systematic and meticulous surveys began to be commissioned, particularly as the East India Company assumed charge of educating the natives. By the third decade of the nineteenth century, a considerable number of official and unofficial surveys on indigenous education had been carried out in all the three presidencies of British India. On 25th June 1822, the Governor-General of Madras, Sir Thomas Munro (r. 1814-1827) ordered the district collectors of his province to collect information on the state of village schools. Among other things, he directed the collectors to prepare ‘a list of the schools in which reading and writing are taught in each District showing the number of scholars in each and the caste to which they belong.’<sup>44</sup> After four years, in a minute dated 10th March 1826, Munro summarised the results obtained from these enquiries on the state of native education in his presidency.<sup>45</sup> He concluded among other things that, ‘the state of education here exhibited, low as it is compared with that of our own country,

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<sup>43</sup> “By 1820s the Raj was already based far more on direct observation and measurement in the Indian countryside than on the citation of Sanskrit texts [...] the production of such knowledge continued to flourish as part of a larger positivist enterprise that sought empirically verifiable information about all societies everywhere.” Thomas Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj* (The New Cambridge History of India, III.4), rev. ed. (1998; Cambridge University Press, 2013), 26.

<sup>44</sup> “Minute of Governor Sir Thomas Munro ordering Indigenous Education: 25.6.1822.” In Dharampal, *The Beautiful Tree* (New Delhi: Biblia Impex, 1983), 83-84. For an overview of the returns furnished by the collectors, see *ibid.* 88-227.

<sup>45</sup> “Minute, dated the 10th March, 1826, by Sir Thomas Munro.” in Henry Sharp, Ed. *Selections from Educational Records Part I* (1920; repr., New Delhi: Government of India Press, 1965).

is higher than it was in most European countries at no very distant period.<sup>46</sup> About the same time as enquiries on indigenous education were made in Southern India, the Governor-General of Bombay, Mountstuart Elphinstone (r. 1819-1827), gave orders to the Commissioner in Deccan and to the district collectors of Gujrat and Konkan to report on the state of education in their respective districts. With a view to determining the “most advisable means to be adopted for the better education of the Native population”, the Government of Bombay in a letter dated 10th March 1824 asked officials to furnish information on the number of village schools in their respective Zillahs, the allowances granted to schoolmasters etc.<sup>47</sup> But Elphinstone believed right from the outset that the colonial state had to radically reform native schools.<sup>48</sup> According to him, it was no use to teach people to read if their studies were “to be confined to legends of Hindoo gods.”<sup>49</sup> Therefore, even before he had ordered enquiries, Elphinstone devised an elaborate scheme of reforming the indigenous system. His plans consisted of imposing regular superintendence, increasing the number of schools, supplying ‘useful’ and ‘moral’ books,

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> “Extract from Bombay Secretariat Records, G.D. Volume 63 of 1824, 333-340,” in R.V. Parulekar, Ed. *Survey of Indigenous Education in the Province of Bombay* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1945), 179-181. For an overview of the results of these enquiries, see *ibid.* 1-195.

<sup>48</sup> “I have attended, as far as in my power since I have been in Bombay, to the means of promoting education among the natives, and from all that I have observed, and learned by correspondence, I am perfectly convinced that without great assistance from Government no progress can be made in that important undertaking.” See Extract of “Minute by the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, dated December 13, 1823.” In A.N. Basu, Ed. *Indian Education in Parliamentary Papers* (New Delhi: Institute of Education, 1952), 197.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid. 200-204.

training school masters, diffusing European knowledge etc.<sup>50</sup> In many ways, therefore, he anticipated the new educational machinery that was to be formally established by the state in 1854.

A similar story unfolded in Bengal, where William Adam was appointed by the Bentinck government in 1835 to undertake an enquiry into the nature of indigenous institutions.<sup>51</sup> Adam conducted three surveys and published his final report in 1838. Like many of his contemporaries, Lord William Bentinck (r.1828-1835), the Governor-General of Bengal believed in the ‘universally accepted axiom that education (English education) and the knowledge to be imparted by it can alone effect the moral regeneration of India.’<sup>52</sup> Nonetheless, Bentinck wanted to know the ‘actual state of Native education’ so that government aid and assistance could be accordingly given in the most effective manner. So, the government’s ultimate object in conducting enquiries was to utilise and assimilate indigenous institutions in the state machinery. In addition, Bentinck’s motive in sanctioning the surveys stemmed from the need to “ascertain the exact nature and extent of the popular wants” before venturing to extend the government educational plans “from town to country, from the few with whom the European society are in direct communication to the body of the people.”<sup>53</sup>

Considering the wide scope of the colonial surveys, it is hardly surprising that these surveys revealed rich details about the nature of indigenous

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 198-200.

<sup>51</sup> See ‘Minute by his Excellency the Governor-General, dated Calcutta, the 20th January, 1835’, in “Introduction”, Anathnath Basu, Ed. *Reports on the State of Education in Bengal* (Calcutta University Press, 1941), lxiv-lxvii.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Charles Trevelyan, *On the Education of the People of India* (London: 1838), 34-35. Charles Trevelyan (1807-1886) was a young British civil servant who became an influential member of the Education Council in India during the administration of Bentinck.

institutions. On many an occasion, the colonial survey brought to light a wide range of curricular and pedagogical practices followed in indigenous schools. Dharampal's *The Beautiful Tree* contains select extracts from the educational surveys conducted in Madras (1822-26), Bombay (1824 -25), Bengal (1835-38) and Punjab (1882). In particular, the Madras surveys were analysed in detail by Dharampal who drew inspiration from Mohandas Gandhi (1869-1948)<sup>54</sup> The results and findings of colonial surveys mentioned in *The Beautiful Tree* are discussed in detail later in the subsequent pages. Following the publication of Dharampal's work, several scholars have researched about the nature of indigenous education. As a result, recent scholarship has unraveled hitherto unknown aspects of Indian indigenous schools. For instance, D. Senthil Babu has highlighted the interconnections between mathematics, music and memory in Tamil indigenous schools.<sup>55</sup> In his fascinating work, Babu shows how traditional learning was dynamic and deeply rooted within the cultural ethos of the local communities. More recent works have argued that textbooks used in indigenous institutions were not always discarded but selectively harnessed for the colonial educational project while also undergoing several transformations in their usage by twentieth century Indians.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> In 1931 at Chatham House in London, Gandhi had remarked: "the British administrators instead of looking after education and other matters which had existed began to root them out. They scratched the soil and began to look at the root, and left the root like that and the beautiful tree perished." See Mahatma Gandhi, (1869-1948), *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 54 (New Delhi: Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, 2000), 53-66.

<sup>55</sup> D. Senthil Babu, "Memory and Mathematics in the Tamil tinnai schools of South India in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries", *International Journal for History of Mathematics Education*, vol. 2, no. 1, (2007), 15-37.

<sup>56</sup> See Avril A. Powell, "Old Books in New Bindings: Ethics and Education", in Indra Sengupta and Daud Ali, Eds. *Knowledge Production, Pedagogy, and Institutions in Colonial India* (New York: Macmillan, 2011), 199-226.

But some of the official replies presented a relatively favourable picture of indigenous schools. To highlight these exceptional cases, a single report from each of the three presidencies of Madras, Bombay and Bengal is discussed in that order.

### Madras

In Madras Presidency, the report compiled by Mr. A.D. Campbell, the Collector of Bellary, gives detailed information on both quantitative as well as qualitative aspects of indigenous schools. In *The Beautiful Tree*, Dharampal has referred to Campbell as ‘an experienced and perceptive officer, previously having held the post of Secretary of the Board of Revenue.’<sup>57</sup> On the number of schools, Campbell’s report reveals that there were 533 schools in the Zillah of Bellary, in which 6,338 boys received instruction, out of a total male population of 4,38,673.<sup>58</sup> In addition, the distribution of scholars according to their castes is reported to be as follows: 1,187 *Brahmin*, 982 *Vyase* (or *Vaishya*), 3,024 *Sooder* (or *Shudra*), and 1,205 of other castes. These figures show that the number of pupils belonging to the lower social classes, i.e. the *Shudra* and ‘other castes’, was more than twice the number of *Brahmin* (high caste) pupils, thereby challenging the missionaries’ claims that native schools were out of reach for the socially and economically backward sections of society. Several scholars have argued that the indigenous education system was discriminatory in nature, and that it was ‘beautiful’ only for the socially higher classes.<sup>59</sup> However, Campbell’s figures clearly challenge the perception that upper castes were the

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<sup>57</sup> ‘Introduction’, in Dharampal, *The Beautiful Tree*, 73.

<sup>58</sup> “Collector, Bellary to Board of Revenue: 17-8-1823.” In Dharampal, *The Beautiful Tree*, 188-189.

<sup>59</sup> For a typical instance of such narratives, see P. Radhakrishnan, *Caste Discriminations in Indigenous Education* (Madras: Madras Institute of Development Studies, 1986).

only beneficiaries of education in early modern South India.<sup>60</sup> This does not necessarily imply that marginalised sections of society enjoyed free access to all levels of education. However, in view of the available empirical data, it can be reasonably inferred that the transmission of knowledge in early colonial Indian society was complex, fluid and dynamic.

Campbell's report, besides furnishing a great deal of quantitative information, also gives an account of the pedagogy that was followed in the elementary schools. It describes how pupils switched from writing on sand to writing on leaves and paper, as they progressed from one stage of instruction to the next.

The number of classes is generally four; and a scholar rises from one to the other, according to his capacity and progress. The first business of a child on entering school is to obtain a knowledge of the letters, which he learns by writing them with his finger on the ground with sand, and not by pronouncing the alphabet as among European nations. When he becomes pretty dexterous in writing with his finger in sand, he has then the privilege of writing either with an iron style on Cadjan leaves, or with a reed on paper, and sometimes on the leaves of the *aristolochia identica*, or with a kind of pencil on the *Hulligi* or *Kadata*, which answer the purpose of slates.<sup>61</sup>

Campbell also recounted in vivid detail, the course of moral and religious instruction followed in these schools. He compiled a long list of various

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<sup>60</sup> Yet, as recent scholarship has shown, one must be cautious not to make sweeping generalizations about caste patterns. The reification of caste categories was itself a result of the colonial quest to classify its subjects. For a brilliant discussion, see Susan Bayly, 'Caste and Race in Colonial Ethnography', in Peter Robb, Ed. *The Concept of Race in South Asia* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 165-218. Also see Gita Dharampal, "Interrogating the Historical Discourse on Caste and Race in India", NMML Occasional Paper, *History and Society*, New Series 28 (New Delhi: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, 2013).

<sup>61</sup> "Collector, Bellary to Board of Revenue: 17-8-1823." In Dharampal, *The Beautiful Tree*, 179.

textbooks that were read in the native schools. The three books which Campbell found to be ‘most commonly read’ in all the schools, and which were ‘used indiscriminately by the several castes’, were the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, and *Bhagvata*. The children of the ‘manufacturing class’ of people supplemented these texts with those that were directly concerned with their own religious tenets. Prominent examples of such texts listed by Campbell include the *Nagalingayna Kutha*, *Vishwakurma Poorana*, *Kumalesherra Kalikamahata*. The *Vishwakurma Poorana* (also spelt as *Vishwakarma Purana*) is a Hindu mythological text that narrates the story of *Vishwakarma*, the Hindu deity believed to be the pioneer of architecture, engineering and crafts. Vishwakarma is believed to personify the ultimate reality (*Brahman*) as well as the abstract creative power inherent in deities, living and nonliving being in this universe. In the native schools, the *Vishwakarma Purana* was taught to children of the manufacturing classes such as carpenters, blacksmiths and so on.

Nonetheless, all these texts, Campbell observed, are considered sacred by the respective classes and are studied with a view of ‘subserving their several religious creeds’. In addition to these, Campbell noted that light stories that were ‘read for amusement’ generally included the *Panchatantra*, *Bhatalapunchavansatee*, *Punklee Soopooktahuller*, *Mahantarungenee*. So far as lessons on vernacular languages and grammars are concerned, these were imparted through texts such as the *Nighantoo*, *Umara*, *Subdamumbured*, *Shubdeemunee Durpana*, *Vyacarana Andradeepeca*, *Andhranamasungraha* etc. etc.<sup>62</sup>

The above list illustrates the variety of curricular textbooks taught in native schools. It further shows that children were given instruction in language through texts such as the *Umara* (or *Amarakosha*). The *Amarakosha*, also called *Namalingaanushasanam*, is one of the oldest and most popular Sanskrit lexicons. It was composed by the ancient grammarian and poet named

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid. 180-181.

Amarasimha who lived in the fourth century AD. The *Amarakosha* has been reprinted several times across the whole of India, and there exist more than forty commentaries on the *Amarakosha*.<sup>63</sup>

Grammar was taught with the help of texts such as the *Shubdamanidarpana* which is a Kannada grammar manual authored by Kesiraja in 1260 AD. This work, which literally means "Jewel-mirror of Grammar", is considered a classic work on Kannada grammar, as it lucidly explains the principles of Kannada language.<sup>64</sup>

In addition, the children were instructed in religion and morality by reading excerpts from traditional epics such as the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* etc. To supplement this course, lighter texts such as the *Panchatantra* were read with a view to impressing upon the young mind moral maxims in the form of interesting and symbolic short stories. The *Panchatantra*, for instance, is an ancient Indian collection of interconnected animal fables in verse and prose. But, "Besides the delightful stories wonderfully told", writes Patrick Olivelle, "and the pithy proverbs containing ageless and practical wisdom, one of the secrets to its appeal and success is that **the *Panchatantra* is a complex book** that does not seek to reduce the complexities of human life, government policy, political strategies, and ethical dilemmas into simple solutions; it can and does speak to different readers at different levels."<sup>65</sup> [Emphasis mine]

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<sup>63</sup> In 1940, a critical edition of the *Amarakosha* was published by the Oriental Book Agency, Pune as part of the "Poona Oriental Series". See Dr. N.G.Sardesai and D.G.Padhye, ed., *Amara's Namalinganushasanam* (Pune: Oriental Book Agency, 1940).

<sup>64</sup> An edition of *Shabdamanidarpana* was published by the Kanarese mission in Mangalore. This was partly based on previous editions as well as on a manuscript retrieved near Mangalore in 1872 by Dr. A.C. Burnell. See Rev. F.Kittel, ed., *Kesiraja's Jewel Mirror of Grammar* (Mangalore: Kanarese Mission Press, 1920).

<sup>65</sup> Patrick Olivelle, trans. *The Panchatantra: The Book of India's Folk Wisdom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), "Introduction", p.x.

It is important to emphasise that such textbooks as *Panchatantra*, *Amara Kosha* and *Shabdamanidarpana* were not simply story books or lexicons or grammar manuals. These textbooks served a much broader purpose, helping to inculcate cultural, moral, religious and linguistic training to young pupils at the elementary level of their education.

### Bombay

The Bombay Government received an exceptional report from Mr. Crawford, the Collector of Ahmedabad, on the state of indigenous schools in his district.<sup>66</sup> In the first appendix to his report, Crawford has given a tabulated analysis of the number of schools and scholars in the collectorate of Ahmedabad. According to these returns, there were 928 villages in the Collectorate, but only 49 of them had schools.<sup>67</sup> There were, in all, 84 schools in which about 3,000 scholars received instruction. Of these, 410 were classified as *Brahmins*, 1080 as *Wanees*, and 524 as *Kunbees* (agriculturists). The remaining scholars were distributed over 17 different castes including such ‘menial castes’ as *Mochees* (cobblers) and *Koombhars* (Ironsmitths).<sup>68</sup>

Turning to the qualitative aspect of instruction, Crawford gives a detailed sketch of fifteen successive arithmetic lessons that were taught to children, especially of the trading classes. Upon the completion of this course, the pupils were expected to know multiplication tables of whole numbers up to

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<sup>66</sup> “Appendices Nos. 1s-4 attached to the report dated 20th September 1824 from the Collector of Ahmedabad.” In Parulekar, Ed., *Survey of Indigenous Education in the Province of Bombay*, 85-95.

<sup>67</sup> This statement must be read with a grain of salt considering that a ‘school’ meant different things for the village dweller and the Company official.

<sup>68</sup> See “Appendix Nos.1 and 2”, in Parulekar, Ed. *Survey of Indigenous Education in the Province of Bombay*. Appendix No.2 gives details of the various allowances that school masters received from their pupils. See *ibid.* 86-89.

forty, and of fractions up to three and a half.<sup>69</sup> Crawford was amazed to see the complexity of mathematical calculations that boys, barely 10 years old, were expected to master. For instance, upon completing the tenth arithmetic lesson, a pupil could perform multiplications up to 20 times 20; and by the end of the fifteenth lesson, he would have memorized tables up to 100 times  $\frac{3}{4}$ . Crawford further observed that after the pupil had mastered these arithmetic lessons, he was taught ‘the alphabet and also to read and write’, following which he proceeded to learn the different tables of weights and measures.<sup>70</sup> Having completed the above course of instruction, the pupil was taught ‘moral and religious precepts’ before he left school and entered upon business.<sup>71</sup>

### Bengal

In Bengal, a province that had been under British control since 1765, missionaries and several other officials had enquired from time to time about the nature of indigenous education in the province. However, no systematic and detailed surveys were done until the Government in 1835 appointed William Adam to undertake an investigation. On 20th January 1835, barely a month before Macaulay was to deliver his famous minute on Indian Education, Lord Bentinck appointed William Adam to conduct an official enquiry into the native institutions of Bengal and Bihar.<sup>72</sup> Following his investigations that lasted over two years (1836-8), Adam submitted three reports which “remain to this day an extremely important source of information regarding the state of indigenous education in early nineteenth century Bengal.”<sup>73</sup> Four editions of Adam’s work,

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<sup>69</sup> “Appendix No. 3: Statement of the various branches of learning taught in the schools within the Ahmedabad Collectorate”, *ibid.* 89-93.

<sup>70</sup> “Appendix No. 3”, *ibid.* 92.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* 93.

<sup>72</sup> Lynn Zastoupil and Martin Moir, *The Great Indian Education Debate* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1999), 28-29. Macaulay’s minute is discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* 29.

including the original reports that were submitted to the government from 1835-38, have been published at various junctures of time.<sup>74</sup> In his introduction to the fourth edition of these Reports, Joseph DiBona, summarises the reasons that make the Adam Reports stand out: “Adam had spent 17 years in India when he began his work; he knew several Indian languages. (He) was sympathetically concerned about his subject [...] was adequately supported by the government.”<sup>75</sup> Adam’s first report was based on a preliminary investigation and a review of pre-existing materials. Therefore, it is the second and third reports of Adam that contain the results of his fieldwork and that reveal a “wealth of information”.<sup>76</sup> In his second report that pertains to the district of Rajshahi in Bengal, Adam reveals that every native school has but one teacher, whose name, caste and age is provided in a separate list that Adam appended to his report. Other items listed in Adam’s second report include the number of pupils, the usual age of admission as well as of leaving school, the medium of instruction, the curriculum, the school building and the remuneration of the teacher.<sup>77</sup> Adam’s third report pertained to three districts of Bengal (Burdwan, Beerbhoom and Moorshedabad) and two districts of Bihar (Tirhoot and South Bihar). This report reveals for each district, the number of schools categorised according to the medium of instruction.<sup>78</sup> For instance, the district of South

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<sup>74</sup> Following the famous Wood’s despatch of 1854, the Rev. James Long edited Adam’s work in 1868. The third edition by Anathnath Basu was published in 1941 while Joseph Dibona prepared the fourth edition in 1983.

<sup>75</sup> See Joseph DiBona, Ed. *One Teacher, One School: The Adam Reports* (New Delhi: Biblia Impex Private Ltd., 1983), 1.

<sup>76</sup> Zastoupil and Moir, *The Great Indian Education Debate*, 59.

<sup>77</sup> See ‘Appendix: Table II’ of “Second Report On The State of Education in Bengal: District of Rajshahi” in William Adam, *Second Report On The State of Education in Bengal* (Calcutta: Bengal Military Orphan Press, 1836), 134-151.

<sup>78</sup> William Adam, *Third Report On The State of Education in Bengal* (Calcutta: Bengal Military Press, 1838), 14-17.

Bihar was reported to have a total of 286 Hindi schools in which 3,090 scholars received instruction.<sup>79</sup>

The reports also give information about the social composition of students and teachers of indigenous elementary schools. This data is particularly interesting because it challenges the widely believed notion of the hegemony of Brahmins in indigenous institutions and the corresponding lack of opportunities for socially backward classes.<sup>80</sup> For instance, Poromesh Acharya claims that the Bengali *patshala* system “in spite of its extensive mass-base and mass-mooring in the curriculum, contributed in perpetuating the hierarchical social structure and Brahminic hegemony over society.”<sup>81</sup> These notions are quite contrary to the picture that emerges from Adam’s reports. Like Mr. Campbell of Bellary, Adam found that a significant percentage of students belonged to low castes such as *Malo*, *Chandal*, *Kahar*, *Luniar*, *Dhoba* and *Kalu*.<sup>82</sup> These castes were also found to be well represented amongst the teachers of elementary schools, the majority of whom were non-Brahmins. For instance, Adam observed that in the district of South Bihar vernacular instruction was “almost wholly in the

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid. 17.

<sup>80</sup> See for instance, Poromesh Acharya, “Indigenous Education and Brahminical Hegemony”, in Nigel Crook Ed. *The Transmission of Knowledge in South Asia* (Oxford University Press, 1996), 98-118.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. 116.

<sup>82</sup> A caste-wise distribution of all Hindu students of the aforementioned districts of Bengal and Bihar is displayed from pages. 24-30 of Adam’s third report. Surprised to find an overwhelming number of low caste students in all of the five surveyed districts, Adam makes the following remarks: “The number of scholars of low caste is so considerable that without explanation it might be supposed that they were chiefly found in the Missionary schools [...] the fact, however, is otherwise, for the number of scholars belonging to sixteen of the lowest castes amounts to 760, of whom only 86 are found in the Missionary schools, and the remaining number in native schools.” *ibid.* 30.

hands of the Kayastha or writer caste, and that the institutions of the country are still in this respect in almost unabated force. There are no brahman-teachers.”<sup>83</sup> There is enormous evidence in the form of colonial surveys indicating that nearly all sections of pre-colonial Indian society enjoyed comfortable access to mass elementary education.

Besides compiling statistics on teachers and pupils, Adam researched extensively on the qualitative aspects of indigenous schools. He found that a scholar typically went through four stages of instruction during the course of his studies in a Bengali *patshala*.

the *first* period seldom exceeds ten days which are employed in teaching the young scholars to form the letters of the alphabet on the ground with a small stick or slip of bambu. The sand-board is not used in this district, probably to save expense. The *second* period extending from two and a half to four years according to the capacity of the scholar, is distinguished by the use of the palm leaf as the material on which writing is performed [...] the scholar is then taught to write and read, and by frequent repetition he commits to memory, the Cowrie Table, the Numeration Table as far as 100, the Katha Table (a land measure table) and the Ser Table (a dry-measure table). The *third* stage of instruction extends from two to three years which are employed in writing on the plaintain-leaf [...] the *fourth* and final stage of instruction generally includes a period of two years, often less and seldom more. The accounts briefly and superficially taught in the preceding stages are now taught more thoroughly and at a greater length, and this is accompanied by the composition of business-letters, petitioners, grants, leases.<sup>84</sup>

Amongst the textbooks taught in Bengali schools, the *Subhankar* was found by Adam to be commonly used for basic arithmetic. Elementary grammar was taught through books such as *Sabda Subanta* and *Ashta Sabdi*. In addition, the Sanskrit verses of *Chanakya* (a book on statecraft and general principles by the ancient philosopher named Chanakya who lived between 371 and 283 B.C.)

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<sup>83</sup> A caste-wise distribution of all teachers of the aforementioned districts of Bengal and Bihar is displayed on pages 32-37 of the third report.

<sup>84</sup> Adam, *Second Report*, 18-19.

containing pithy maxims and general precepts of morality were read and memorized. Other general instruction included compositions in praise of various gods and goddesses such as *Data Karna* (on the altruistic nature of Karna, a hero in the *Mahabharata*), *Ram Janma* (on the birth of Lord Ram), *Ganga Bandana* (on the qualities of the river Ganges) etc. as well as extracts from religious epics such as the *Sundar Kand* of the *Ramayana*, or the *Adi Parva* of the *Mahabharata* etc.<sup>85</sup>

#### TRADITIONAL PATSHALAS IN COLONIAL PUNJAB, CA. 1848 -1882

Punjab, which passed under colonial rule as late as 1849, was the last province to be annexed by the British in India. So, the first colonial account of indigenous education in Punjab appeared in 1850 when the first provincial administration report for the year 1849-50 was published. This report classifies the existing indigenous schools in the province according to the nature of religious instruction. ‘At the Hindoo schools’, the report notes that ‘writing and the rudiments of arithmetic’ were taught in the ‘Hindee character’.<sup>86</sup> Regarding the instruction, it was reported that the textbooks read in ‘Mussalman schools’ included the ‘Koran, in Arabic, and the didactic and poetical works of Sadi, in Persian (the *Gulistan* and the *Bostan*) whereas at the ‘Seikh [sic] school’, the ‘Grunth’ was taught in Goormukhi.<sup>87</sup> Written in typical ‘orientalist’ style, this report strictly identifies indigenous education with religious faith and dismisses the instruction imparted in indigenous schools. For instance, the following observation is made about the curriculum of indigenous schools: ‘The studies

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<sup>85</sup> For a list of textbooks used in the Bengali schools of Nattore, see “Table II”, in Adam, *Second Report*, 134-151. For similar information in the districts of Moorshedabad, Beerbhoom, and Budwan of Bengal, see Adam, *Third Report*, 30-37.

<sup>86</sup> “The Punjab Administration Report for the year 1849-50”, cited in Richey, 278. See Chapter VII, “Provincial Developments: Punjab” in Richey, 278-311.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

being chiefly confined to sacred books written in a classical phraseology, unintelligible to both teacher and pupil, do not tend to develop the intellectual faculties of either.’<sup>88</sup> On the question of fees charged by school teachers, the report notes that such ‘remuneration’ was ‘variable and precarious’. The fees generally consisted of ‘presents, grain and sweetmeats, given by the scholars and their parents.’ But, the report notes that ‘occasionally, the whole community subscribe for the support of the school.’<sup>89</sup>

About seven years later, in 1857, indigenous education was briefly discussed in the first report submitted by Mr. William Delafield Arnold (1828-1859), the Director of Public Instruction. On the question of ‘what had the people been doing for themselves in the way of education’, Mr. Arnold remarked with certainty that ‘the idea of education is not new to the Punjabis’.<sup>90</sup> But the account of indigenous schools given by Mr. Arnold is, for the most part, superficial and condescending. He describes four kinds of indigenous schools, namely ‘Persian schools’, ‘Koran schools’, ‘Sanskrit schools’ and ‘*Lande* schools’ (where students learned book-keeping) . The report says that Persian schools are ‘the most genuine educational institutions in the country.’ The ‘great object’ of these schools, according to Mr. Arnold, is to ‘teach the boy to read the Gulistan and the Bostan, and the lad who will read a page of either in a fluent sing-song without understanding a word, has received an education which fully satisfies both his teacher and parents.’<sup>91</sup> Mr. Arnold’s report is similarly dismissive of Koran schools where he believes pupils do not necessarily learn reading and writing. So, Mr. Arnold does not include these pupils in his calculation of ‘boys under instruction’.<sup>92</sup> The ‘Sanskrit schools’, Mr. Arnold

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<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. 279.

<sup>90</sup> “Extract from Mr. Arnold’s first report, dated the 6th July 1857”, in Richey, 288-300.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid. 290.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid. 290.

says, are ‘largely attended by adults and entirely by Brahmins’. Turning to the category of Lande schools, Mr. Arnold writes that here the children of shopkeepers learn ‘the mysteries of book-keeping’ and ‘that vicious system of accounts which is daily deprecated in our civil courts’.<sup>93</sup>

Mr. Arnold’s sweeping generalisations about indigenous schools are also found in his second report which was submitted the following year. In this report, Mr. Arnold summarises his views of indigenous education in the following words:

We must consider what we found on the one hand and what we aim at on the other. We found a whole population agreed together that to read fluently and if possible to say by heart a series of Persian works of which the meaning was not understood by the vast majority, and of which the meaning when understood was for the most part little calculated to edify the minority, constituted education [...] We found then a whole people wedded to a system diametrically opposed to that which we wish to introduce.<sup>94</sup>

It is fairly evident from Mr. Arnold’s dismissal of indigenous schools that being the Director of Public Instruction in Punjab, he was interested in demonstrating the dire need for colonial education in the province.

In view of the aforementioned accounts, there is little doubt that official reports generally contained brief and casual remarks on indigenous schools. No wonder then that even the quantitative statistics of indigenous schools gathered from these early reports were admitted by the Hunter Commission to be ‘incomplete and erroneous’.<sup>95</sup> It was the Hunter Commission that, as we shall see in a later section of this chapter, reinvigorated the discourse on indigenous education in its bid to bring as many schools as it could under the umbrella of the State. In this matter, the Commission took into account the

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid. 291.

<sup>94</sup> “Extract from Mr. Arnold’s second report, dated the 25th June 1858” in Richey, 301.

<sup>95</sup> *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee* (Calcutta: Govt. Superintendent Printing, 1884), 2.

views of officers from the Education Department. But more importantly, it recorded the evidence of several witnesses including prominent public personalities of every province. Witnesses that testified before the Hunter Commission were supplied with a standard list of questions regarding indigenous education and they were asked to reply to one or more of these queries as per their knowledge and capacity. These questions ranged from the extent of the number of indigenous schools in the province, to a description of the subjects and character of the instruction given in such schools.<sup>96</sup>

Most Punjabis responded to the cause of indigenous education with great enthusiasm and expressed deep sympathies that they had long kept suppressed in their hearts. But the man who took up most seriously the cause of indigenous education in Punjab was Dr. Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner (1840-99), a German-Hungarian orientalist who served as the first principal of the Lahore Government College. In addition to testifying before the Hunter Commission, Leitner authored his well known *History of Indigenous Education in the Panjab*. He began this *History* by posing two fundamental questions: ‘What is this indigenous education which is so held up to admiration? What are these indigenous schools, and how are they supported?’ Leitner reminded that these questions were initially asked by Mr. Arnold, the first Director of Public Instruction in the Punjab. But they had remained unanswered even though twenty-six years had elapsed since the establishment of the provincial Education Department.<sup>97</sup> In these twenty six years, many of the indigenous schools no longer existed and the traditional system of education was already in decline when Leitner began his surveys in October 1882. Nonetheless, Leitner conducted an extensive survey of indigenous schools across the entire province of Punjab. He subsequently published this survey in 1883 as part of his

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<sup>96</sup> For a full list of these questions, see Q.4 in the Standard List in *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 300.

<sup>97</sup> See “Preface and Summary,” in Leitner, 2.

voluminous *History of Indigenous Education in Panjab*. This voluminous report compiled by Leitner, together with the various testimonies recorded before the Hunter Commission, reveal a great deal of information on three particular aspects of indigenous education, namely literacy, curriculum and fees.

As far as literacy is concerned, the exact number of indigenous schools in Punjab, at the time of the Hunter Commission, was itself a matter of controversy. According to the statistics compiled in the Report of Col. Holroyd, the Director of Public Instruction in Punjab for the year 1880-81, the number of indigenous schools was returned as 4,662. But this figure considerably differed from the numbers reported by Dr. Leitner, who had conducted a survey on indigenous education in 1882, claiming that he had enumerated 6,362 such schools. To resolve the discrepancy, a special enquiry was ordered by the Lieutenant Governor of Punjab. This enquiry revealed that there were as many as 13,109 indigenous schools in the province in which 135,384 pupils received instruction. This enquiry revealed that there were a total of 13,109 indigenous schools in the province in which 135,384 pupils received instruction. In this respect, the Education Commission noted that 'Dr. Leitner's largest estimate of 120,000 pupils, so far from being exaggerated, was far below the truth.'<sup>98</sup> In view of these revelations, Col. Holroyd admitted the statistical discrepancies in his findings and made due corrections in his report for the subsequent year. Therefore, in the report for 1882-83, the statistics for indigenous education in the province were summarised as follows:

There are 13,109 schools attended by 135,384 pupils, of whom 25,576 are Hindus, 103,133 are Muhammadans, and 6,516 Sikhs, and 59 belong to other denominations. 74,425 are agriculturists and 60,955 are non-agriculturists. These schools and scholars are very unequally distributed throughout the Province. The Umballa Circle contains 14,950 scholars, of whom more than one half are in the Umballa and

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<sup>98</sup> See "Note by the President", in *Report of the Education Commission*, 621-2.

Ludhiana Districts; the Lahore Circle contains 35,717, the Rawalpindi Circle 61,293, and the Mooltan Circle 23,424.<sup>99</sup>

Nonetheless, a broader historical picture, as shown by Leitner, pointed to a worrying trend as far as indigenous schools were concerned. For, when one took a holistic view of literacy figures as reported in government documents since the annexation of Punjab, one could not help but notice a sharp continuous decline in the number of indigenous schools. On the basis of a comparative analysis performed by Leitner, these figures revealed that the number of pupils attending indigenous schools were half of their corresponding number at the time of annexation of Punjab.<sup>100</sup> Moreover, the fact that a contemporaneous increase in the enrolments of government schools did not compensate for the decline in indigenous school students implied that the overall literacy of Punjab had been higher before it was annexed by the British.

In addition to numbers of schools and scholars, contemporary sources contain fascinating details about the curriculum and pedagogical practices of the traditional *patshalas*. Now, the portrayal of indigenous education in official reports followed a standard imperial language. The British believed that Persian schools were the “most genuine educational institutions in the country”. It was reported that the instruction in elementary Persian schools was confined to the *Gulistan* and *Bostan* as “it was thought sufficient to be able to read a few pages of these authors in a fluent sing-song, without understanding a word. Writing, too, was taught without much energy or success.” In the more advanced Persian *maktabs*, the pupils were taught calligraphy and prepared for official work. Furthermore, according to colonial officials, Hindus attended Persian schools in greater numbers than Muhammadans, with *Khatris* forming the majority of

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<sup>99</sup> W.R.M. Holroyd, *Report on the State of Education in the Punjab and its Dependencies for the year 1882-83* (Lahore: Central Jail Press, 1883), 6.

<sup>100</sup> According to the statistics put together by Leitner, there were about 330,000 pupils attending indigenous schools in 1849, the year that Punjab was annexed by the British.

the pupils.<sup>101</sup> In addition to these categories, colonial officials added *patshalas* to refer to schools in which “children of the trading classes learned bazar accounts”. These schools were considered amongst the few “secular indigenous schools” in the province. The Hunter Commission described the course of instruction imparted in *patshalas* in the following words:

In these schools they teach an elaborate multiplication table, in which fractional numbers are included, and also the prices of given quantities of goods. This multiplication table is applied to a kind of *Practice* called *Phailawat*, which is similar in its method to the mental arithmetic of European schools. The course also includes writing out bills, and sometimes *hundis* and bookkeeping, though these last are generally reserved for the apprenticeship of the shop.<sup>102</sup>

The above colonial narrative contrasts sharply with the accounts given by Punjabi teachers of indigenous schools. For instance, Pandit Ishwar Prasad, who maintained a *patshala* at Lahore for twenty years, testified before the Commission and described in vivid detail the curriculum of several types of indigenous schools. Prasad used a very different set of categories as compared to the Department officials. For instance, he used the term *patshalas* to refer to schools where Sanskrit texts were taught and the medium of instruction was Hindi or Sanskrit, and the script employed was *Nagari* (also called Deva Nagari in which Hindi characters are written). He also described another kind of *patshalsas* for Punjabi or Gurumukhi where the “religious books of Sikhism and occasionally of Hinduism” were read. Furthermore, he used the term *Pandahs* to refer to the teachers of *Chatsalas* - the class of schools where specific instruction in account keeping was given to traders. Prasad noted that the instruction in such schools consisted of the following oral multiplication tables: Ordinary, (1 to 10) x (1 to 10); Superior or called *bara gyarah*, (11 to 30) x (11 to 30); Fractional, (1 to 50) x (1 ¼, 1 ½, 2 ½, 3 ½, 4 ½, and 5 ½, &c.);

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<sup>101</sup> *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 2-3.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.* 34.

Some fractions into fractions,  $1\frac{1}{4} \times 1\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $1\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$ ;  $2\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ , &c.; In addition to these tables, pupils learn account-keeping and ‘small petty sentences resembling verses containing some very useful lessons of every-day life and morality; also *dars, gurs &c*’.<sup>103</sup> Thus, the above evidence recorded by Pandit Ishwar Prasad once again shows the inadequacy of colonial categories. In his *History of Indigenous Education in Panjab since annexation and in 1882*, Leitner has also described in minute detail the pedagogy and curriculum of every kind of native school he came across. For instance, with respect to the Gurumukhi Schools, Leitner observed that the ‘economy, simplicity, greater compass, and ease in effacing wrongly-formed letters, of writing on the ground, seem to have much to recommend the practice’. Having thus learnt the ‘forms of the letters of the alphabet’, the pupil orally recites alphabetically-arranged moral maxims.<sup>104</sup> This stage is followed by writing on a wooden slab or *pati*, and the children then learn ‘the forms of the numerals and simple enumeration’, as well as ‘the signs for weights and measures’. Eventually, the pupils are made to write down the ‘names of God, of the people of the house in which they are, of surrounding objects, of eatables, and indeed of everything that can be pointed out to them or that can create an interest’.<sup>105</sup> Leitner’s report also lists the various textbooks that were taught in indigenous schools. In the case of elementary Hindi *patshalas*, Leitner provided the following list of vernacular titles along with the corresponding meaning and English translation.

Akshar Dipika	Light of the alphabet.
Barn Mala	String of letters.
Pahare	Multiplication tables.
Bidhyarthe-ki-Pratham Pushtak	1st book of the student.

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<sup>103</sup> “Evidence of Pandit Ishwar Prasad”, Reply to Q.5, in *ibid.* 330.

<sup>104</sup> This was indeed a most ingenious method of imparting elementary instruction in the alphabets as well as inculcating moral lessons to young and impressionable minds. For a list of moral maxims (accompanying each letter), see “Part IV”, *Ibid.* 5-7.

<sup>105</sup> Leitner, *History of Indigenous Education in the Panjab*, Part I (A), 33-34.

Charnavek	On letters.
Baital Pachisi	The famous 25 stories of the
Demon.	
Prem Sagar	Ocean of love (the well-
known story).	
Dil Bahlao	Heart entertainments
Ganit Kirya	Arithmetic.
Ramayan	of Tulsi Das.
Akhyan Manjri	A brief story. <sup>106</sup>

Besides advocating vehemently for the cause of indigenous *patshalas*, Leitner waxed eloquent on the superiority of the instruction given in the *Chatsalas* or trading schools. He remarked unabashedly in what was also a diatribe against colonial education.

As for the system of account keeping taught by these *Padahs*, so far from “being deprectaed by our courts”, they have often been admitted as the best unsupported evidence there can exist of the correctness of an entry, as nothing can exceed the regularity and accuracy with which eg. Bahi-Khatas (Ledger and Index) are kept, and the difficulty which the system offers against fraudulent entries or falsification of accounts.<sup>107</sup>

But much like Willam Adam of early colonial Bengal, Dr. Leitner was fighting a lost battle, for despite the enormous information that was overwhelmingly in favour of preserving and maintaining the indigenous schools in Punjab, the colonial state siphoned off the funding sources that were used to sustain indigenous schools. As we shall see below, the colonial government did not find much to appreciate in the reports of Leitner, Adam and others. Grants and resources were directed elsewhere and indigenous *patshalas* were left to decline.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid. 49.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid. 40.

<sup>108</sup> The disruptive impact of colonial policies is discussed later in this chapter in a section titled “Instituting Colonial Education”.

#### THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Colonial confirmation required colonial legitimacy and this was amply seen in the Madras government's response to the educational surveys. Despite its detailed coverage about indigenous education in the district of Bellary in Madras, Campbell's report failed to impress his superiors in London partly because of the pre-conceived notions and biases that were then characteristic of the imperial mind and partly because all educational systems were then judged by British standards and values. So, in 1828, the Company's directors issued a despatch to the Madras government, stating that the collectors' reports generally confirmed the opinion they had always held regarding 'the very imperfect state of native education.'<sup>109</sup> Accordingly, the Directors asked the Madras Government to facilitate the diffusion of English education by emulating the Supreme Government in Bengal where the diffusion of "ideas and sentiments prevalent in civilized Europe" was making "satisfactory" progress.<sup>110</sup> In Bombay too, Crawford's account of native schools failed to deter the Company's directors who were convinced about the depressing state of indigenous education. The Company's Directors in London, upon receiving the reports pertaining to the Bombay presidency, also concurred with the local Government that the instruction imparted in the Hindu schools in particular was "not calculated to give to the pupils moral and intellectual improvement."<sup>111</sup> Like their Madras and Bombay counterparts, officials of the Bengal

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<sup>109</sup> "Extract of letter in the Public Department from the Court of Directors to the Governor in Council of Fort St. George, 16th April 1828." In Basu, Ed. *Indian Education in Parliamentary Papers*, 190.

<sup>110</sup> "Court of Directors' Public Department despatch to the governor in council of Fort St. George (Madras), No. 34 of 29 September 1830." In Zastoupil and Moir, *The Great Indian Education Debate*, 126.

<sup>111</sup> "Extract Letter in the Public Department, from the Court of Directors to the Governor in Council of Bombay, dated 16th April, 1828." In A.N.Basu, Ed. *Indian Education in Parliamentary Papers*, 226-229.

Government paid little heed to the reports on indigenous education in their province. William Adam was also painfully aware that the Government would not accommodate his recommendations for the improvement of indigenous schools. If anything, his reports were interpreted by the government as further evidence in support of the case for introducing English education. One year after Adam published his final report, the Governor-General, Lord Auckland (r. 1836-1842) observed that it was not possible to read Adam's "valuable and intelligent" report without being "painfully impressed with the low state of instruction as it exists amongst the immense masses of the Indian population." Auckland urged that corrective measures to redress such a "lamentable" problem should be "eagerly embraced by benevolent minds."<sup>112</sup>

The government's response was partly unsurprising because the colonial survey was, after all, an integral part of what Bernard Cohn has called the "documentation project" whose ultimate object was to control and subjugate the colonial subjects.<sup>113</sup> Therefore, a key purpose of instituting educational surveys was to dismiss indigenous education and justify its supersession by colonial education. In the process, much of the information acquired by the colonial state was simplified and digested into a monolithic narrative. It is hardly surprising then that several returns submitted by district collectors to their respective local governments were filled with colonial stereotypes and disparaging remarks about the quality of indigenous education. For instance, in a letter to the Bombay Government, the Judge at Surat remarked that nothing could be more "contemptible" than the instruction imparted in indigenous schools. In his prolonged condemnation of the native system, the Judge further wrote:

No information, no ideas are gained – the education is carried on and completed if it can be so called, without the most remote view to

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<sup>112</sup> "Minute by Lord Auckland 24th November 1839." In Zastoupil and Moir, *The Great Indian Education Debate*, 311-312.

<sup>113</sup> See "Introduction" in Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its forms of knowledge*, 3-15.

foundation being laid for the acquirement of knowledge or of mental improvement – the masters are ignorant, and in fact, as to knowledge to be gained from books, have as much to learn as the boys themselves.<sup>114</sup>

The above reply is emblematic of the general comments made about native education in the replies submitted by colonial officials. The reports submitted by district collectors and judges generally conformed to the colonial idea of how indigenous education ought to be. For the most part, these official replies were brief and largely pertained to the statistics that were sought by the government. Hence, these replies rarely contained any additional commentary or qualitative information on the nature of indigenous schools. The survey modality of the colonial state was also employed to point out qualitative deficiencies in the system of indigenous education. For instance, the instruction imparted in native schools was shown to be extremely inadequate. It was particularly represented as immoral and useless. It is hardly surprising then that upon completion of the enquiries ordered by the Bombay Government, it was concluded that the moral and religious improvement of children formed no part of the indigenous system of education.<sup>115</sup> In fact, colonial officials were so deeply convinced of the sordid state of indigenous education that they often disregarded official surveys that tended to reveal a contrary picture. Overall, the ‘investigative modalities’ of the colonial state were made subservient to the political ends of Empire. By 1835, the object of colonial education had been settled and now there remained only a question of the means of furthering this education. Reflecting on the colonial government’s policy after the passage of the English Education Act of 1835, Arthur Howell noted how it was necessary for the colonial state to “utilise to

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<sup>114</sup> “Letter dated 30th September 1824 from the Judge, Court of Udalat, Surat to the Secretary to the Government regarding education at the Sudar Station (Surat).” In Parulekar, *Survey of Indigenous Education in the Province of Bombay*, 65-70.

<sup>115</sup> “Extract from Bombay Secretariat Records, G.D. Volume No. 92 of 1825 pages 357 to 375.” Ibid. 177-179.

the utmost every kind of indigenous institution so as to make the Government contribution go as far as possible.” Therefore, Howell writes, “it was desirable to ascertain what these institutions were; what instruction was given in them; how they were maintained, and how they were regarded by the people.”<sup>116</sup> It is thus evident that surveys on indigenous education were generally motivated by an imperialist agenda. Hence, the British often misunderstood and misrepresented the information contained in the surveys on indigenous schools. Therefore, despite the presence of various surveys that testified to the presence of a comprehensive system of indigenous education, the colonial establishment was firmly convinced that Indians needed a replica of the English educational model. Ironically, contemporary schools in England imparted no more than a basic knowledge of the three Rs, with a particular emphasis on reading the Scriptures that were believed to “contain the most useful of all knowledge.”<sup>117</sup> But then, a calculated analysis was of no use for colonial authorities determined to supplant native instruction by English education. The introduction of this new system of education under colonial rule is discussed in the following section.

#### INSTITUTING COLONIAL EDUCATION, CA. 1835-1885

In February 1835, Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-1859) delivered his famous minute in which he dismissed the entire Oriental literature as being

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<sup>116</sup> Arthur Howell, *Education in British India prior to 1854 and in 1870-71* (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1872), 28.

<sup>117</sup> Lawson and Silver, *A Social History of Education in England*, 271. Specific subjects (in addition to reading, writing and arithmetic) such as History and Geography were introduced in England only after the recommendations of the Newcastle Commission (1858) were approved. Even thereafter, school inspectors in England were reluctant to examine scholars beyond the three Rs. See *ibid.* 267-313.

not worthier than ‘a single shelf of a good European library.’<sup>118</sup> Shortly thereafter, the then Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck (r.1828-1835) passed a resolution which came to be known as the English Education Act. This resolution declared that “the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India, and that all the funds appropriated for the purpose of education would best be employed on English Education alone.”<sup>119</sup> Bentinck’s resolution, which was soon enacted into legislation by the Council of India, significantly changed the nature of colonial discourse. Indian literary texts, languages and culture were no longer found to have any moral or intellectual value. Eschewing a language that glorified Indian culture, all parties now avoided rhetoric and focussed their efforts on the most effective means for the transmission of “useful knowledge”.<sup>120</sup> But it took a while before the system of colonial education could be properly instituted. By the end of Lord Bentinck’s tenure, it was clear that sooner or later, the colonial government would have to frame a systematic code for the education of its Indian subjects. ‘Anglicists’ continued to pressurise the government to compose a comprehensive educational code. For instance, Charles Trevelyan wrote a treatise in 1838 titled *On the Education of the People of India*. In this work, Trevelyan argued that:

Many circumstances indicate that the time has arrived for taking up the question of Indian national instruction in a way in which it has never yet been taken up [...] The people want instruction: the Government wants well educated servants to fill the responsible situations which have been opened to the natives. Every thing concurs to prove that this

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<sup>118</sup> See “Minute recorded in the General Department by Thomas Babington Macaulay, law member of the governor-general’s council, dated 2 February 1835.” in Lynn Zastoupil and Martin Moir, *The Great Indian Education Debate*, 161-174.

<sup>119</sup> “Resolution of the governor-general in council in the General Department, dated 7 March 1835.” Ibid. 194-196.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid. 218.

important subject ought no longer to be regarded only as an amusement for the leisure hours of benevolent persons.”<sup>121</sup>

But, at this stage, the state administration under Auckland was reluctant to embark on a clear educational strategy. Perhaps, it believed that Bentinck’s English Education Act had not been as popular as the colonial authorities had anticipated. In 1844, several hundred students of the Calcutta Sanskrit College had signed petitions asking the state to reinstate the stipends that the Bentinck administration had abolished. This had forced the state to make various concessions to the Orientalist institutions. As a result of this scenario, the Company adopted an ambivalent approach to the question of giving a final shape to educational policy.<sup>122</sup> But this ambivalent approach of the East India Company did not last long. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 1854, the Directors of the Company issued a despatch that contained the first systematic outline of the Indian Education Code. This despatch, authored by Charles Wood (1800-1885), “finally and absolutely” settled the question “whether the education of the people of India was a task which England ought to charge herself with, or whether, on the contrary, it was to be viewed as an undertaking full of danger and peril to British supremacy.”<sup>123</sup> At the outset, the despatch acknowledged, in a characteristic evangelical tone, that “conferring upon the natives of India those vast moral and material blessings which flow from the general diffusion of useful knowledge, and which India may, under Providence, derive from her

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<sup>121</sup> Charles Trevelyan, *On the Education of the People of India*, 143.

<sup>122</sup> “We forbear at present from expressing any opinion regarding the most efficient mode of communicating and disseminating European knowledge. Experience indeed does not yet warrant the adoption of any exclusive system.” See “Court of Directors’ Public Department despatch to the governor-general of India in council, No.1 of 20 January 1841.” In Lynn Zastoupil and Martin Moir, Eds. *The Great Indian Education Debate*, 335.

<sup>123</sup> House of Lords Debate, 05 March 1855 vol. 137 cc79-95.

connexion with England” was one of the most “sacred duties” of the British Empire.<sup>124</sup>

But the object of colonial education was to serve both Church and Empire. Therefore, through this despatch, the Company’s Directors relayed to the colonial government that Indians had to be educated not only in order to “produce a higher degree of intellectual fitness”, but also to “raise the moral character of those who partake of its advantages, and so to supply you with servants to whose probity you may with increased confidence commit offices of trust.”<sup>125</sup> The despatch further emphasised that “the spread of education in India will produce a greater efficiency in all branches of administration by enabling you to obtain the services of intelligent and trustworthy persons in every department of Government.”<sup>126</sup> The Wood’s despatch was followed by another despatch that the India Office in London sent to the Indian government in 1859, nearly a year after the British Crown had assumed the responsibility of the government of India. It is the two despatches of 1854 and 1859 that together formed what is known as “The Indian Education Code”.<sup>127</sup>

The bureaucratisation of education was begun in earnest following the despatch of 1854. At the outset, an Education Department was established along the directions of the colonial authorities in London who believed that it was “advisable to place the superintendence and direction of education upon a more

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<sup>124</sup> Paragraph 2 of “Despatch No. 49. Dated the 19th July 1854”, 364. Quoted in J.A. Richey, ed., *Selections from Educational Records Part II, 1840-1859* (1920; repr., New Delhi: National Archives of India, 1965).

<sup>125</sup> Paragraph 3 of “Despatch No. 49. Dated the 19th July 1854”, in *ibid.* 365.

<sup>126</sup> Paragraph 72, *ibid.* 384.

<sup>127</sup> “The Indian educational code is contained in the despatches of the Home Government of 1854 and 1859.” See “Despatch of Home Secretary to the Government of India” as cited in “Appendix D” of James Johnston, *Our Education Policy in India* (Edinburgh: John McLaren and Son, 1880), 59.

systematic footing.”<sup>128</sup> Accordingly, the Company Directors decided that it was best to have an Education Department as an integral part of the machinery of the imperial government in the several presidencies of India. The functions of this department, as the first Indian Education Commission (1882) would succinctly explain, may be broadly classified under three heads, namely ‘Instruction’, ‘Inspection’ and ‘Control’.

As far as Instruction was concerned, the Company’s directors earnestly advocated for the introduction of useful and practical knowledge that would educate the colonial subjects in:

the marvellous results of the employment of labour and capital, rouse them to emulate us in the development of the vast resources of their country, guide them in their efforts and gradually, but certainly, confer upon them all the advantages which accompany the healthy increase of wealth and commerce; and, at the same time, secure to us a larger and more certain supply of many articles necessary for our manufactures and extensively consumed by all classes of our population, as well as an almost inexhaustible demand for the produce of British labour.<sup>129</sup>

The above directions from the East India Company show how colonial education was instituted for commercialisation and for the ultimate benefit of British economy. But, colonial education was to serve not only commercial interests but also ‘civilise’ the natives. This is evident in what the Company’s directors say regarding the content of education. They stated unequivocally that the education they desired to see extended in India was “that which has for its object the diffusion of the improved arts, science, philosophy and literature of Europe; in short of European knowledge.”<sup>130</sup> To this end, it was imperative that the people of India should be “made familiar with the works of European authors, and with the results of the thought and labour of Europeans on the

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<sup>128</sup> Paragraph 17 of “Despatch No. 49. Dated the 19th July 1854”, Richey, 369.

<sup>129</sup> Paragraph 4, *ibid.* 365.

<sup>130</sup> Paragraph 7, *ibid.* 365.

subjects of every description upon which knowledge is to be imparted to them”.<sup>131</sup> It is important to note that the colonial preference for European knowledge was rooted in its prejudices against indigenous knowledge traditions. In the Wood’s despatch, the Company’s directors minced no words in dismissing Asiatic knowledge. According to them, Eastern science and philosophy were filled with “grave errors”, and eastern literature was “very deficient as regards all modern discovery and improvements”.<sup>132</sup> Thus, by categorically instructing colonial officials to disseminate ‘western’ knowledge, the Wood’s despatch put a decisive end to the Anglicist-Orientalist debate. But merely outlining the desired course of instruction was not enough. The colonial state also had to ensure that its policies were strictly implemented on the ground. This is where the second function of the Education Department namely ‘Control’ became important.

In 1831, when the G.C.P.I. issued their first report, the total number of educational institutions under State control was 14 with 3,490 pupils.<sup>133</sup> Gradually, the State increasingly sought to expand its control by bringing more educational institutions under its umbrella. With the appointment of the Council of Education in 1843, State control over educational institutions expanded significantly. Within a short span of twelve years, the Council of Education prepared the ground for the Education Department that replaced the former body in 1856.

While using its examinations as a means for raising the standard of education throughout Lower Bengal, the Council of Education did much to improve the character of the text-books, and to create a regularly trained staff of schoolmasters. After twelve years of unwearied activity, it had raised the number of institutions under its

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<sup>131</sup> Paragraph 10, *ibid.* 366-7.

<sup>132</sup> Paragraph 8, *ibid.* 366.

<sup>133</sup> Report of the General Committee of Public Instruction. Quoted in Howell, 23.

control from 28 in 1843 to 151 in 1855, and the number of pupils from 4,632 in 1843 to 13,163 in 1855.<sup>134</sup>

State control, among other things, radically altered the manner in which schools were financially maintained. Prior to the colonial era, the village community provided for the schoolmaster and maintained the local school. The village communities were provided tax-free lands and revenue assignments for a variety of purposes that included among other things, to set up their own schools. To cite one instance, the Collector of Madura in the Madras Presidency reported that in the *Agraharam* villages that were inhabited by Brahmins, it had been usual for the native kings to allot for the study of *Vaidoms* (Vedas) and *Pooraunoms* (Puranas), “an extent of *Mauneom* Land yielding from 20 to 50 *fanams* (Madras currency) per annum, and in a few but rare instances to the extent of 100 *fanams*.”<sup>135</sup> In return, the Brahmins gratuitously and generally instructed all pupils that were voluntarily brought to them.<sup>136</sup>

But with the advent of the British, the State became directly involved in running the schools. Not only did the colonial government discontinue the earlier tax exemptions to village communities, but it also devised a new system of ‘Grants-in-aid’ that would determine how the State was to disburse funds to select schools. The State was now the sole decision making authority that could recognise a school and endow grants provided the school fulfilled certain conditions. The Wood’s despatch ruled that aid would be given to all schools that gave ‘a good secular education’. The other pre-requisites were that these schools should be under adequate local management and that “their managers

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<sup>134</sup> *Report of the Education Commission* (Calcutta: Government Superintendent Printing, 1883), 17.

<sup>135</sup> “Collector of Madura to Board of Revenue: 5.2.1823.” Quoted in Dharampal, *The Beautiful Tree*, 108-109.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

consent that the schools shall be subject to Government inspection, and agree to any conditions which may be laid down for the regulation of such grants.”<sup>137</sup>

In line with the policy of religious neutrality, the system of grants-in-aid, as outlined in the Despatch, was to be based on “an entire abstinence from interference with the religious instruction conveyed in the school assisted.”<sup>138</sup> This guideline was further recapitulated in paragraphs 34 and 35 of the 1859 Despatch.<sup>139</sup> With a view to further ‘improving’ indigenous schools and strengthening state control, the Wood’s despatch recommended that government aid be given to only those schools that charged fees from their pupils.

It has been found by experience, in this and other countries, that not only an entirely gratuitous education valued far less by those who receive it than one for which some payment, however small, is made, but that the payment induces a more regular attendance and greater exertion on the part of the pupils; and for this reason [...] we desire that grants-in-aid shall, as a general principle, be made to such schools only (with the exception of normal schools) as require some fee, however, small, from their scholars.<sup>140</sup>

As a result, under the colonial education system, schools were identified with respect to their relation with the State. The Hunter Commission defined the phrase ‘public schools’ as schools belonging to one of the following categories depending on their relation with the State. The first category was that of Departmental schools that were supported by local fund committees and municipalities, as well as those exclusively managed by the Education Department. The second category of Aided schools included schools that were not managed by the Department but were recipients of grants-in-aid. All the

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<sup>137</sup> Paragraph 53 of “Despatch No. 49. Dated the 19th July 1854” in Richey, 379.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> See ‘Educational despatch, No. 4, dated India Office, London, 7th April 1859, from the Secretary of State for India,’ reprinted in Richey, 438.

<sup>140</sup> Paragraph 54 of “Despatch No. 49. Dated the 19th July 1854” in Richey, 379.

remaining schools that did not belong to the first two categories were identified as Unaided. These schools were either merely inspected by the State or in many cases they were not connected with the State at all.<sup>141</sup>

The new educational order was not only marked by a different financial arrangement. It also radically changed the knowledge that was imparted in schools. Colonial authorities were generally convinced that the knowledge imparted in indigenous schools was limited at best and false at worst. Therefore, the Wood's despatch advised officials to continue with the remedial measures of improvement that missionaries and government officials had been long using. For the most part, these measures consisted of improving indigenous schools by making them "capable of imparting correct elementary knowledge to the great mass of the people."<sup>142</sup> The state sought to further streamline the dissemination of knowledge by recommending a uniform set of textbooks to be used across all government schools. Indigenous schools, as colonial surveyors had discovered, lacked both written textbooks and good infrastructure. The lack of these modern pedagogical features was used to bolster the official argument that native schools did not impart sound instruction.<sup>143</sup> Hence, the Court of Directors asked the colonial government to provide for 'vernacular school-books, which shall provide European information to be the object of study in the lower classes of schools.<sup>144</sup> But the British realised that they needed various additional means to control the knowledge that would be acquired by the natives through the State's

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<sup>141</sup> *Report of the Education Commission*, 85.

<sup>142</sup> Paragraph 46 of "Despatch No. 49. Dated the 19th July 1854" in Richey, 377.

<sup>143</sup> In his Second Report, Adam wrote: "the disadvantages arising from the want of school-houses and from the confined and inappropriate construction of the buildings or apartments used as school-rooms, have already been mentioned." See Adam, *Second Report*, 54 - 58. In his Third Report (p. 223), Adam made a tabulated analysis of the number of schools (for each district) where written and printed texts were used and where they were not.

<sup>144</sup> Paragraph 70, of "Despatch No. 49. Dated the 19th July 1854" in Richey, 384

educational machinery. And this task could not be achieved without the help of the large number of native schoolmasters who were then found to be highly inefficient. The key, therefore, was to train 'efficient' schoolmasters. For this purpose, the Wood's despatch recommended that the government train teachers by sending them to "Normal Schools". The precedent for such a move was found, as usual, in the educational history of England. The Company's Directors recalled that:

In England, when systematic attempts began to be made for the improvement of education, one of the chief defects was found to be the insufficient number of qualified school-masters and the imperfect method of teaching which prevailed. This led to the foundation of normal and model schools for the training of masters and the exemplification of the best methods for the organisation, discipline and instruction of elementary schools. This deficiency has been the more palpably felt in India, as the difficulty of finding persons properly educated for the work of tuition is greater; and we desire to see the establishment with as little delay as possible, of training schools and classes for masters in each presidency in India.<sup>145</sup>

Regarding the qualities that the Court of Directors expected of a schoolmaster, the despatch observed that masters should possess "a knowledge of English in order to acquire, and of the vernaculars so as readily to convey, useful knowledge to their pupils."<sup>146</sup> The introduction of reformatory measures aimed at 'improving' the *patshala* teachers meant that the *guru*, who was hitherto regarded as the central figure of the *patshala*, was no longer to exercise 'unquestioned authority'.<sup>147</sup> In his well-known study of the Bengali *patshalas*, K. Shahidullah has discussed how government regulations 'dictated what was to be taught in the patshalas, how it was to be taught, how discipline was to be

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<sup>145</sup> Paragraph 67, *ibid.* 383.

<sup>146</sup> Paragraph 45, *ibid.* 377.

<sup>147</sup> Kazi Shahidullah, "The Purpose and Impact of Government Policy on Patshala Gurumashoys in Nineteenth Century Bengal." In Nigel Crook, Ed. *The Transmission of Knowledge in South Asia* (Oxford University Press, 1996), 127.

maintained, and how, in general, the patshala was to be made more efficient.’<sup>148</sup> This pattern was replicated in other provinces of British India. In neighbouring Bihar, for instance, James R. Hagen studied the impact of government regulations on traditional gurus and arrived at the same conclusion as Shahidullah. “The gurus were told to hold regular school hours [...] (and) students were asked to read and write silently instead of shouting at the top of their voices as formerly.”<sup>149</sup> The radical diminution of *gurus* under colonial rule has been analysed by several postcolonial scholars. Krishna Kumar, a historian of Indian education, has succinctly summarised this transformation in the following words:

Teachers had traditionally enjoyed reverence. Often, they combined priestly functions with teaching. In the indigenous schools surveyed by Adam in 1835, the teacher exercised autonomy in choosing what was worth teaching and in deciding how to teach it. The curriculum mostly consisted of an acquaintance with culturally significant texts, and the learning of skills useful to the village society [...] the new system of centralised official control eroded the teacher’s autonomy by denying him any initiative in matters pertaining to the curriculum [...] Apart from the official curriculum and texts, the new system also imposed on the teacher the responsibility to fulfil official routines, such as maintenance of admission registers, daily diaries, record of expenditure, and test results.<sup>150</sup>

Besides imposing a uniform curriculum comprising of standard textbooks, the colonial state instituted an examination system to test the students’ knowledge of the curriculum and certify their eligibility for promotion to the next grade. In this manner, the government was able to discipline and control the kind of

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<sup>148</sup> Shahidullah, *ibid.* 128.

<sup>149</sup> James Ray Hagen, “Indigenous society, the political economy, and colonial education in Patna District: a history of social change from 1811 to 1951 in Gangetic North India” (PhD Dissertation, University of Virginia 1981), 381.

<sup>150</sup> Krishna Kumar, *What is Worth Teaching* (1992; repr., New Delhi: Orient BlackSwan, 2011), 27-28.

knowledge imparted. Examinations were then a way to ensure strict adherence to the code of instruction laid down by the state. “The official function of the examination system,” as Krishna Kumar has noted, “was to evolve uniform standards of promotion, scholarship and employment.”<sup>151</sup> Thus, the colonial government controlled and monitored every lesson that was taught in public institutions, from the elementary to the collegiate level. Consequently, indigenous institutions were gradually transformed or superseded by the new educational dispensation of the colonial state. Prior to the advent of colonial rule, the purpose of elementary education had been to impart a basic knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic in addition to inculcating social, ethical and cultural values. The subsequent course of education pursued by students depended upon the line of occupation they wished to practise. For instance, children of traders and merchants were taught how to manage accounts and were trained to perform advanced mental calculations that they would require in their daily business. But with the advent of colonial education, the situation changed drastically and children were alienated from their immediate environment as the colonial state sought to impose uniform and universal standards and controls, defining very precisely what was meant by primary education. This was done in 1879 when the Government of India promulgated a standard definition of primary education that was applied throughout the subcontinent. The government defined primary schools as those ‘in which pupils are under instruction from the earliest stage up to the standard at which secondary instruction begins; this standard being marked by an examination to be called the upper primary examination.’<sup>152</sup> Examination standards for every stage were

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<sup>151</sup> Krishna Kumar, *Politics of Education in Colonial India*, 59.

<sup>152</sup> *Report of the Education Commission*, 80.

clearly outlined by the provincial governments. In Punjab, for instance, all public schools were required to follow the ‘Punjab Education Code’.<sup>153</sup>

Besides devising a mechanism for controlling the instruction that was to be imparted through government norms and examination standards, the British established a full-fledged ‘inspection’ bureaucracy that was exclusively meant for the purpose of keeping a check on the education system they had established. The following paragraph of the Wood’s despatch delineated the modus operandi of this bureaucratic structure.

An adequate system of inspection will also, for the future, become an essential part of our educational system; and we desire that a sufficient number of qualified inspectors be appointed, who will periodically report upon the state of those colleges and schools which are now supported and managed by Government [...] They will conduct, or assist at, the examination of the scholars of these institutions, and generally, by their advice, aid the managers and school-masters in conducting colleges and schools of every description throughout the country.<sup>154</sup>

Now, government and aided schools were to be managed by an Education Department consisting of a Director of Public Instruction, Inspectors, Deputy Inspectors and so on. In Punjab, the Education Department was set up in 1856 with William Delafield Arnold (1828-1859) serving as the first Director of Public Instruction.<sup>155</sup> Subordinate to the Director were two inspectors of schools, ten deputy inspectors and sixty sub-inspectors. It was proposed that the Education Department be given charge of “a Central College at Lahore, four Training schools, twenty-seven district schools and one hundred superior

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<sup>153</sup> We shall return to a discussion on the this education code in the third chapter of this dissertation.

<sup>154</sup> Paragraph 18, of “Despatch No. 49. Dated the 19th July 1854” in Richey, 369.

<sup>155</sup> W.D. Arnold was the son of Thomas Arnold (1795-1842), the famous headmaster of the Rugby School in England.

vernacular schools”.<sup>156</sup> In this way, the Company’s Directors ensured that schools were subject to “constant and careful inspection”.<sup>157</sup> Such minute and localised supervision was necessary since the colonial state wished to improve a vast network of indigenous schools which were believed to be “not only very insufficient in quality, but of exceedingly precarious duration.”<sup>158</sup>

With the adoption of several measures, the colonial government was able to induce a large number of indigenous schools to make considerable modifications that would enable them to be eligible for government recognition and funding. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the educational landscape in India had changed considerably. Indigenous village schools had given way to government schools. But unlike the former that had been present in every village, the latter were few and far between. Moreover, government schools exacted a higher fee from students since these schools were more expensive to administer and maintain as compared to the indigenous village schools. Gradually, as the government sought to expand primary education further into the interiors of Indian towns and villages, it realised the need to incorporate indigenous schools. The need to use indigenous schools as a means to further the spread of colonial education in India was to form one of the core objectives behind the appointment of the first Indian Education Commission. This happened about a quarter century after the Wood’s despatch laid down an elaborate and comprehensive educational structure. On 9<sup>th</sup> May 1881, Lord Ripon, the Viceroy of India remarked in a minute that there was a need to review the results of the education system that had been instituted. He added that it was about time the government reviewed the educational scenario and compared

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<sup>156</sup> Richey, 282-283.

<sup>157</sup> Paragraph 42, of “Despatch No. 49. Dated the 19th July 1854” in Richey, 376.

<sup>158</sup> Paragraph 60, *ibid.* 380. One of the measures aimed at improving indigenous schools was the method of ‘payment by results’. According to this method, school masters were to receive remuneration in proportion to the results achieved by their pupils at the middle school or matriculation examinations.

“the results obtained with the objects set forth in the despatch of 1854” besides considering what remedial measures, if any, may be needed.<sup>159</sup> In this minute, Lord Ripon particularly emphasised the need for primary education that he thought lagged “far behind” higher and middle education. This was ironical since primary education had received the maximum share of government attention ever since the British undertook the responsibility of educating their colonial subjects and yet the Viceroy was not satisfied with the advance that had been made in the last twenty-five years on elementary instruction.<sup>160</sup> Therefore, he recommended the establishment of a Commission in order to fulfill the following objectives.

To examine into our existing educational system, and to report to us fully upon its nature, upon the progress which has been made since 1854, upon the results which have been secured, and the defects which have been brought to light, and upon the measures which should now be taken to improve and to extend that system with especial reference to the promotion of primary education.<sup>161</sup>

Accordingly, on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1882, the government passed a resolution appointing the first Indian Education Commission under the presidency of William Hunter.<sup>162</sup> The resolution also stated that since the government was “firmly convinced of the soundness” of the policy outlined in the Wood’s despatch, it had “no wish to depart from the principles upon which it is

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<sup>159</sup> See “Primary Education in India”, Proceedings No. 24 A, June 1881 in Home (Education) Department, National Archives of India.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> In addition to the President (W.W.Hunter) and the Secretary (B.L.Rice), twenty prominent government officials such as Mr. A.P. Howell (Commissioner of Berar) were part of the Commission. Seven out of the twenty-two members were Indians. See “Resolution of the Government of India appointing the Education Commission,” Appendix A, *Report of the Education Commission* (Calcutta: Superintendent Govt. Printing, 1883), 623-628.

based.”<sup>163</sup> As noted earlier, the Governor-General was desirous that the Commission “should especially bear in mind the special importance which the Government attaches to the subject of Primary Education.”<sup>164</sup> In view of this objective, the Commission had to make as much use as possible of the indigenous schools in the province that still heavily outnumbered the government schools. For instance, in Punjab, the total number of government schools was 2,061 including Departmental (1,743) and Aided schools (318) in the year 1881-82. But this was far below the number of indigenous or ‘extra-departmental’ schools ascertained by the State Department was 6,362.<sup>165</sup>

In its bid to convert or improve existing indigenous schools, the Hunter Commission faced considerable challenges. Since the government had characterised most of the indigenous schools as “religious” and the policy of neutrality mandated that only secular schools were eligible to receive grants-in-aid, indigenous schools were left out by default. Therefore, as the Commission noted, the principle of neutrality ‘interposed difficulties in the ways of assisting schools which are sometimes exclusively religious.’<sup>166</sup> The predicament of giving aid to indigenous schools without violating the principle of neutrality was resolved in the Commission’s recommendation that ‘all indigenous schools, whether high or low, should be encouraged and recognised, if they serve any purpose of secular instruction whatsoever.’<sup>167</sup> But it is difficult to fathom how colonial officials classified indigenous schools as religious or

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid. 624.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid. 625.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid. 46. As far as primary education was concerned, the Department alone ran 579 primary schools when it was established in 1856-57. This number rose to 1,254 schools in 1870-71 and on the eve of the appointment of the Education Commission, there were as many as 1,549 primary schools managed by the Education Department. See *ibid.*, 46.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid. 62.

<sup>167</sup> Recommendation No. 1, *ibid.* 78.

secular, for no such clear distinctions existed in the case of pre-colonial institutions. Religion was not learned separately outside of the school. No wonder then that the Hunter Commission acknowledged that “*some religious character* attaches to all indigenous schools of the old type that teach the classical languages of the East, as well as to a large number of ordinary vernacular village-schools.”<sup>168</sup> (Emphasis mine) As a result, the task of assimilating indigenous schools into the government system proved to be a stiff challenge because of the ‘religious’ character of indigenous schools. The policy of neutrality then not only became a major hurdle in the way of spreading primary education in India but that also, as we shall see later, led to much of the criticism against colonial education and subsequently laid the foundation for the birth of several Indian educational enterprises. Therefore, it is imperative to understand this policy in some detail.

#### THE POLICY OF RELIGIOUS NEUTRALITY

During its early years in India, the East India Company did not share the missionaries’ zeal for religious proselytization and educational work. Being a political and commercial body, the Company was reluctant to intervene in matters of education. This was also because the evidence gathered by company officials was generally “in strong opposition to educational or missionary efforts being undertaken or even recognized by the State”.<sup>169</sup>

the general tenor of the evidence of the old Indians was, that any such measures would be in the highest degree dangerous, as illustrated by the mutiny at Vellore, and that the people of India had little to learn on the score of morality from England. Indeed, Sir Thomas Munro did not hesitate to declare his conviction that if civilization were to become an

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<sup>168</sup> Ibid. 57.

<sup>169</sup> A.P.Howell, *Education in British India* (Calcutta: Government Printing, 1872), 4.

article of trade between the two countries, England would be the gainer by the import cargo.<sup>170</sup>

The Company also forbade missionaries to operate within its territories, for it was wary of native insurrection. In fact, as the Company expanded its dominions over the subcontinent, it sought to maintain a distance from missionaries whose proselytizing activities had caused quite a stir among the natives. Lest the Company be viewed with suspicion, the Court of Directors issued a despatch dated 7<sup>th</sup> September 1808, declaring strict religious neutrality and refusing “to add the influence of authority to any attempt made to propagate the Christian religion.”<sup>171</sup> Henceforth, the colonial state followed a policy of non-interference with the religious beliefs of Indians. Because they wished to appear non-partisan, colonial officials remained steadfastly loyal to this principle of neutrality. As colonial rule consolidated itself, the principle of neutrality became sacred and inviolable and “the conviction deepened that religious neutrality was sound imperial policy as well as good business.”<sup>172</sup> The strict adherence to neutrality appears to contrast sharply with the evangelical attitude of men like William Wilberforce who, in 1813, had petitioned the British parliament to legally allow Scottish missionaries “to impart the benefits of Christianity to the natives of India”.<sup>173</sup> Gradually, the principle of neutrality influenced almost every sphere of the British government in India. Aware of the predominance of Anglican ideas in the colonial government, it was assumed that the ‘natives’ perhaps harboured a feeling that government officials were

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid. 4-5.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid. 9.

<sup>172</sup> Donald Eugene Smith, *India as a Secular State* (London: OUP, 1963), 68.

<sup>173</sup> See “Petition Respecting The East India Company, From The Society In Scotland For Propagating Christian Knowledge”, House of Commons Debate 19 February 1813 vol 24, cc655 in *Hansard Collection*. (Accessed here:- [http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1813/feb/19/petition-respecting-the-east-india#S1V0024P0\\_18130219\\_HOC\\_5](http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1813/feb/19/petition-respecting-the-east-india#S1V0024P0_18130219_HOC_5))

working in collusion with the missionaries. With a view to allaying such apprehensions, Governor General William Bentinck (1823-1835) reaffirmed the government's unwavering commitment to the principle of religious neutrality. He averred that the "fundamental principle of British rule, the compact to which the Government stands solemnly pledged, is strict neutrality."<sup>174</sup> In his parting address to the missionaries, the Governor-General again cautioned that any "interference and injudicious tampering with the religious beliefs of the students, all mingling direct or indirect teaching of Christianity with the system of instruction, ought to be positively forbidden."<sup>175</sup> But as Smith has pointed out, the colonial government's neutrality had never been perfect.

Governor-General Wellesley, for example, did much to identify the government with Christianity, both in external symbols and by official patronage of missionary projects (e.g., translations of the Bible). And many later government officials gave open encouragement to Christian work, occasioning periodic admonitions from nervous directors against "indiscreet" and "tactless" support of the missionaries. The establishment of the Church of England in India, and the royal appointment of the "Governor-General's Guru" (the bishop of Calcutta) were hardly in keeping with the profession of neutrality.<sup>176</sup>

By 1858, when the British Crown assumed direct control of the government of India, the dictum of neutrality had become a fundamental guiding principle for the conduct of the colonial state. The Queen's proclamation of 1858, upon the transfer of sovereignty to the Crown, "plainly declared that no interference with the religion of the people, or with their habits and usages, was to take place."<sup>177</sup> The policy of religious neutrality basically required no interference with the

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<sup>174</sup> Howell, 34.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Smith, 69.

<sup>177</sup> See 'Educational despatch, No. 4, dated India Office, London, 7th April 1859, from the Secretary of State for India,' reprinted in Richey, 448.

religious beliefs of the natives. Given its apparently impartial character, this policy was time and again used by the colonial government to publicly distance itself from Christian missionaries who were involved in religious proselytization.

The principle of religious neutrality is, of course, not a colonial invention. Various rulers in pre-colonial India followed the principle of neutrality and encouraged the practice of all religions with equal facility. For instance, in pre-colonial Punjab, it was common practice for the state to support all kinds of religious and educational institutions. Ranjit Singh, the erstwhile ruler of Punjab (r.1799-1839) generously gave endowments to *Masjids* (mosques), *Khanqahs* (muslim monasteries), *Dharamshalas* (Sikh temples), *Thakurdwaras* (Hindu Temples), and *Samadhs* (Hindu or Sikh shrines) besides patronizing a large number of *Akalis*, *Brahmins*, *Babas*, *Bhais*, *Fakirs* and *Pandits*.<sup>178</sup> During its early years, the East India Company did not disrupt the pre-existing tradition of patronising educational institutions of all religions. In fact, colonial officials like Warren Hastings endowed grants to Hindu as well as Mohammedan institutions of learning. This was because the British were keen on conciliating the natives and so they did not wish to disrupt the traditional policies of Indian kings. But, as the British gained a strong foothold in the subcontinent, they realised that adhering to this practice would require the government to allow instruction to be imparted not just in the Bible but also in all the ‘false and superstitious’ religious lessons that were believed to be taught in indigenous schools. Such a proposition was entirely unacceptable to some of the Company officials who were heavily influenced by Christian missionaries. Moreover, as discussed earlier in this chapter, many Company officials held orthodox Christian views which prevented them from allowing the teaching of ‘false’ religions. In order to avoid being seen as a facilitator to non-Christian

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<sup>178</sup> Chanjit Kaur, *Education in Punjab: A Historical Study* (New Delhi: Intellectual Publishing House, 1992), 192.

teachings, the colonial state began to distance itself from religion. So, the principle of religious neutrality under colonial rule was interpreted to mean that the state should not support the practice of any religion. It is this form of religious neutrality that eventually came to be practised by the colonial government in India. This interpretation of religious neutrality – that the State favour no religion – was more convenient for the British. The consequence was, as Thomas Metcalf has noted, that the colonial state constructed two separate and mutually exclusive spheres – the religious and the secular.

At the same time, the British sharply distinguished the ‘religious’ from the ‘secular’. They sought to confine the activities of the state to what they considered ‘secular’ affairs, and, consequently, to withdraw it from such activities as the management of Hindu temples and Muslim shrines. [...] the British in India, anxious to distance themselves from any appearance of supporting ‘heathen’ faiths, insisted that the spheres of the ‘religious’ and the ‘secular’ be identified and kept separate.<sup>179</sup>

When this interpretation was applied to the domain of education, it resulted in the colonial government’s ruling that no kind of religious lessons should be taught in state schools. Thus did the British give rise to the idea of a secular or non-religious curriculum in Indian education. And so, “India became one of the very first countries in the world to develop a system of secular public schools.”<sup>180</sup> As discussed earlier, there were no sharp distinctions between ‘religious’ and ‘secular’ education in indigenous *patshalas* of Punjab. So, one of the most important consequences of colonial intervention was that it provided a rational, legal and moral justification to institute ‘secular’ education and weed out ‘religion’ from public schools. As Vickie Langohr notes:

Most education in the pre-colonial Middle East and South Asia was inextricably permeated by religion [...] In contrast to its predecessors, however, Western-style education was based on the conceptualization of religion as a discrete subject separate from and incapable of

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<sup>179</sup> Thomas Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj*, 36.

<sup>180</sup> D.G. Smith, *India as A Secular State*, 340.

shedding reliable light upon worldly matters, and on the premise that it was mastery of these worldly matters, rather than knowledge of sacred scriptures and rituals, that would bring students success.<sup>181</sup>

The colonial anxiety for secular education found repeated expression in official correspondence beginning with the Wood's despatch. The twenty-eighth paragraph of the Wood's despatch mandated that examinations for degrees were "not to include any subjects connected with religious belief".<sup>182</sup> Again in the thirty-second paragraph, the Court of Directors ruled that in teaching the classical languages, professors should mainly direct their attention to the grammar of these languages and refrain from giving instruction in "the tenets of the Hindoo or Mahomedan religions." The Directors further stated categorically that they would "refuse to sanction any such teaching, as directly opposed to the principles of religious neutrality."<sup>183</sup> As noted earlier, the grants-in-aid were to be given purely on the basis of secular instruction that was imparted in indigenous schools. Inspectors were asked to take "no notice whatsoever of religious doctrines which may be taught in any school"; and to strictly confine their duty to "ascertaining whether the secular knowledge conveyed is such as to entitle it to consideration in the distribution of the sum which will be applied to grants-in-aid."<sup>184</sup>

As a result, in the secular colonial state, it became imperative to identify and clearly distinguish between the 'religious' and 'secular' domains. But the problem of identifying what constitutes 'religion' is a predicament in itself. Indeed, the 'puzzle of the two spheres', as Jakob De Roover phrases it, involves

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<sup>181</sup> Vickie Langohr, "Colonial Education Systems and the Spread of Local Religious Movements: The Cases of British Egypt and Punjab" in *Comparative Studies in Society and History* Vol. 47, No. 1, January 2005 (Cambridge University Press), p. 161, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3879428>, accessed: 28-11-2015.

<sup>182</sup> Paragraph No. 28 of the 'Despatch of 1854', 372.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid. 373.

<sup>184</sup> Paragraph No. 56 of the 'Despatch of 1854', 380.

great difficulties in determining the precise scope and interpretation of religious and secular objects. De Roover argues that this predicament is faced by all liberal secular states that ‘grant religious freedom to their citizens and strive to keep religion out of politics.’<sup>185</sup> With the help of several practical examples, De Roover shows how the same symbols or rituals that are considered ‘sacred’ by one section of a religious community are held as ‘secular’ or merely cultural objects by other members of the community.<sup>186</sup> The subjectivity and variety of interpretation that De Roover has shown to exist in the perception of symbols also applies to scriptures and ‘religious’ texts. As Stanley Fish has explained, no single interpretation of a literary text can be considered as the ‘authentic’ and ‘acceptable’ interpretation when each ‘interpretive community’ understands the text in its own right.<sup>187</sup> In the Indian literary context, the *Itihasas* and *Puranas* (i.e. the great epics) such as the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Bhagvata Purana* are also called *Kavyas*. The term *Kavya* implies that these texts were poetic compositions catering to a whole gamut of human emotions.<sup>188</sup> In his analysis of various *Puranas* including the *Bhagavat Purana*, Ludo Rocher

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<sup>185</sup> Jakob De Roover, *Europe, India and the Limits of Secularism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2015), 21.

<sup>186</sup> See ‘The Puzzle of the Two Spheres’ in Jakob De Roover, *ibid.* 15-31.

<sup>187</sup> Stanley Fish, *Is there a text in this class?: the authority of interpretive communities* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1980).

<sup>188</sup> A classic example of a *Kavya* is the fifth chapter of the *Ramcharitmanas*, namely the *SunderKand* that was commonly read in *patshalas* nearly all over Northern India. Composed in sixty stanzas with varying metre, this text requires the reader to have a basic understanding of linguistics and prosody. Considering the subjects that it includes, the text pertains to the realms of statecraft and diplomacy (as seen in Hanuman’s dialogue with Ravana), human psychology and emotion (as seen in Hanuman’s dialogue with Sita, Sita’s dialogue with Ravana, and Ram’s dialogue with Hanuman) and morality (as seen in Vibhishan’s dialogue with Ravana). Clearly, the text is not only ‘religious’ but also literary, moral and philosophical at once.

mentions that these texts shed light on a wide range of topics such as temples, medicine, astronomy and grammar.<sup>189</sup> It is important to note that just like the *Puranas* and religious epics discuss a wide range of topics, most of the scientific Sanskrit texts contain religious references.

On the whole then, a preliminary survey of classical Indian literature reveals that it is impossible to categorise Indian literary texts as religious or secular. Correspondingly, there was no real distinction in India between the 'religious' and 'secular' spheres. In the absence of a yardstick to classify, identify and proscribe 'religious' texts, colonial officials resorted to a blanket ban on everything they regarded as part of 'religious instruction'. Therefore, just as the *Puranas* were kept out of the public school curriculum, so were other texts pertaining to mathematics, astronomy, grammar, linguistics and so on. This was in sharp contrast to the syllabus taught in traditional village schools (*patshalas*) that flourished across the country prior to the intervention of colonial administration. Leitner has shown that in a typical Sanskrit *patshala* of nineteenth century Punjab, texts such as *Chandrika* and *Siddhant Kaumudi* were taught for Grammar, along with *Raghuvansham* and *Meghadutam* for poetry and drama. Then there were texts like *Siddhant Shiromani* and *Mahurata Chintamani* in the course for mathematics and astronomy while *Madhava Nidanam* and *Nighantu* were used in the curriculum for students of medicine.<sup>190</sup> But none of these texts was included in the curriculum of government institutions. In 1858, the Director of Public Instruction in Punjab directed the 'disuse of all books of a religious character in the schools, and in order to leave no room for the pretext that secular books were not procurable', he distributed

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<sup>189</sup> Ludo Rocher, "The Puranas" in Jan Gonda, ed., *A History of Indian Literature* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1986).

<sup>190</sup> For a complete list of books read in Sanskrit pathshalas of nineteenth century Punjab, see 'list of sanscrit books' in Gottlieb Wilhelm Leitner, *History of Indigenous Education in Punjab* (1884; repr., Patiala: Languages Department, 1971), 85.

them ‘gratuitously among the village schools in every district.’<sup>191</sup> In 1877, the Punjab government had appointed a textbook committee that was asked to recommend a selection of books for school and college libraries. This committee was ‘reconstituted’ in 1881 whence it was asked to deal with school-books of all kinds.<sup>192</sup> For the purpose of instituting a series of moral readers, a sub-committee on moral instruction was formed. This sub-committee resolved that:

in the lower primary school morality should be taught by means of stories, parables and proverbs; that a separate chapter on morality should be included in each Reader; that instruction in moral subjects should be conveyed through the medium of prose and of poetry; that in the upper division of primary schools lessons should be prepared on moral subjects treating more directly of particular virtues and vices; that in this division also there should be a special chapter on morality in each Reader; and that the subject should be taught through the medium both of prose and of poetry.<sup>193</sup>

Since it was bound by the principle of religious neutrality, the text-book committee professed to follow the principle of ‘ethical teaching without a religious basis’ in its endeavours to prepare a course of moral instruction. It is interesting to note that the persons chosen by the Committee for this purpose included some religious personalities such as the Reverend Dr. Forman and The Right Reverend Dr. French, the latter being charged with the compilation of two works on ethics. In fact, mission societies such as the Punjab Bible and Religious Book Society and the American Mission Press had an important share in the supply of text-books in Punjab.<sup>194</sup> Nonetheless, morality was officially

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<sup>191</sup> Cf. ‘Educational Reports, No. 70/689, dated 25th June, 1858’, quoted in ‘Appendix VI’, Leitner, 19-20.

<sup>192</sup> See Chapter XXI, “The Supply and Distribution of Text-books”, in *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee* (Calcutta: Govt. Superintendent Printing, 1884), 63-68.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.* 63.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.* 63-67.

separated from religion and made into a separate discipline by the colonial government and moral instruction came to be instituted as an independent subject in schools. The government's commitment to secular instruction was further confirmed by the Text-Book Committee which recommended that none of the books that were used in purely denominational schools for purposes of religious instruction be allowed in government or aided schools.<sup>195</sup> So, as it came to be practically implemented, the government's policy of secular education proscribed not only prominent 'religious' epics such as the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Bhagvata Purana*, but also led to the marginalisation of a vast body of Indian literature on various knowledge systems. This result was in conformity with the views of Macaulay, Trevelyan and other members of the General Committee of Public Instruction. In his famous minute on Indian education, Macaulay acknowledged that it was the duty of the British government to adhere to the principle of religious neutrality. But, he argued that the government could not allow the study of a literature that was "admitted to be of small intrinsic value" merely because the state was obliged to treat the texts of all religions with equal respect. To highlight the absurdity of such an exercise, Macaulay remarked:

It is confessed that a language [Sanskrit] is barren of useful knowledge. [Yet] we are to teach it because it is fruitful of monstrous superstitions. We are to teach false history, false astronomy, false medicine because we find them in company with a false religion.<sup>196</sup>

In other words, Macaulay reasoned that a ban on the teaching of Sanskrit and Arabic literature did not violate or contradict the principle of religious neutrality. Consequently, when Macaulay's successors drafted the Indian

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<sup>195</sup> *Report of the Indian Education Commission*, 339.

<sup>196</sup> See "Document Fourteen-Minute Recorded in the General Department by Thomas Babington Macaulay, law member of the governor-general's council, dated 2 February 1835" in Lynn Zastoupil and Martin Moir, eds. *The Great Indian Education Debate*, 161-173.

education code, they strictly upheld the principle of religious neutrality and maintained that the curriculum should only consist of ‘secular’ texts. Therefore, on account of their supposed religious references, various Sanskrit and vernacular texts pertaining to a wide gamut of disciplines were deemed unsuitable for use in government schools and colleges. In addition to Sanskrit and Arabic texts, the elementary textbooks used in indigenous schools found no place in the standard state curriculum. For instance, in a typical Hindi *patshala* (traditional school) of nineteenth century Punjab, the pupil would read texts such as the *Akshar Dipika* (a book of alphabets), *Pahare* (a primer of multiplication tables), *Ganit Kriya* (a text of arithmetic).<sup>197</sup> But now even these texts were not recognised by the colonial government. “The Arabic, Sanskrit and Gurumukhi schools were so identified with religious teaching”, complained Dr. G.W. Leitner, “that a Government which derives its taxation from all denominations ignored them on the plausible, if economical, principle of religious neutrality”.<sup>198</sup> Upon realising how the colonial policy of ‘non-religious’ education prohibited the use of native textbooks, a Punjabi *patshala* teacher expressed his anguish in the following words:

Native theology, philosophy, astrology, and medical science, are looked upon with disfavour, being supposed, all of them, as false and therefore deserving of every discouragement [...] I would consider that even instruction in such subjects (though distasteful to many Englishmen) should not be excluded by the rules from Government support, at least so long as people are not convinced of the superior merit of the Western sciences.<sup>199</sup>

It appears from the above testimony that the teachers of traditional *patshalas* were keen on retaining the old textbooks and the associated way of teaching.

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<sup>197</sup> For a complete list of books read in Hindi *patshalas* in nineteenth century Punjab, Cf. Leitner, 47-49.

<sup>198</sup> Leitner, 2-3.

<sup>199</sup> “Evidence of Pandit Ishwar Prasad”, Reply to Q.4, in *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 331.

But the colonial government turned a blind eye to their demands. This was also because the space and freedom enjoyed by traditional teachers in using a wide range of texts, both written and oral, was an unaffordable luxury in colonial India. Therefore, as compared to traditional *patshalas* where religious texts particularly the *Kavyas* and the *Puranas* served simultaneously as moral, linguistic and geographical readers, school books prescribed by the colonial state were strictly secular in the sense that they pertained only to ‘wordly’ matters such as maths, science, geography and so on.<sup>200</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

This chapter has charted the evolution of educational policy in colonial India from its origins in the 1813 charter of the East India Company to its first coherent expression in the 1854 despatch of Charles Wood. In parallel, this chapter has highlighted the nature of Indian indigenous education and its supersession by colonial education. In the process, this chapter has brought to light the wide variety of curricular and pedagogical practices prevalent in the native schools. It is shown how the colonial discourse on indigenous education was characterised by an ‘essentialist’ portrayal of indigenous schools as ‘religious’ institutions. This gross generalisation of indigenous schools was further accentuated by the colonial policy of religious neutrality. It is argued that the British used this policy to mask the ‘double’ nature of government secular education. The first aspect of this secularity was that it was used to filter out ‘religious’ instruction and ‘religious’ texts from schools. This was done without a uniform or shared definition of what constituted religious instruction. It has been illustrated that the policy of religious neutrality was a smokescreen

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<sup>200</sup> Vickie Langohr has beautifully captured this contrast between ‘pre-colonial’ and ‘western-style’ education models while referring to the practice of using ‘religious’ texts in traditional *patshalas*. See Langohr, “Colonial Education Systems and the Spread of Local Religious Movements: The Cases of British Egypt and Punjab”, 169-170.

used by the British to get rid of traditional texts by generalising and dismissing them as ‘religious’. The second aspect of secularity, as discussed in this chapter, was reflected in the curriculum that was prescribed in government schools. Subsequently, this chapter has shown how the public stand of colonial officials was at sharp variance with their private views. While Company officials publicly distanced themselves from all kinds of missionary activities, they privately worked in concert with missionaries in their endeavour to educate Indians in the ‘true’ knowledge and ‘true’ religion.

The chapter has also discussed the appointment of India’s first Education Commission in 1882 and the attempts made by this commission to expand primary education in India. It has been further discussed in this chapter how nineteenth century colonial officials tried in vain to employ the religious/secular binary in their endeavour to classify traditional Indian institutions.<sup>201</sup>

In highlighting these historical breakthroughs, this chapter has sought to describe the functioning of the educational system that the British introduced in India. This background is necessary to understand the impact of colonial education and its reception by Indians in general and Punjabis in particular. At the close of the nineteenth century, various colonial officials began writing on the effects of colonial education on Indian youth. For instance, former Bombay

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<sup>201</sup> Peter Van der Veer has shown that simplistic oppositions (such as modern and traditional, secular and religious, progressive and reactionary) “on which nationalistic discourse depends and which the historiography of Britain and India adopts” are problematic. By highlighting the limitations and inadequacies of the ‘secularization thesis’, Peter Van der Veer points out that ‘religion’ and ‘secular’ were not mutually exclusive even in Western European societies where there was a clear separation between Church and State. So, it would be meaningless to universalise these categories to other regions such as India where there are no churches. See Chapter One: “Secularity and Religion” in Peter Van der Veer, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011), 14-29.

Governor, Sir Richard Temple (1826-1902) was prolific in writing about the providential effects of British rule and English education. Temple's writings, drawn from his thirty-three years of experience as an Indian Civil Servant, served to bolster the imperial narrative that English rule was benevolent and English education was a blessing for Indians. In one of his monographs titled *Men and Events of My Time in India* which was published about the same time as the Hunter Commission, Temple described how English education had "elevated the character of the Natives."<sup>202</sup> Yet, as we shall see in the next chapter, colonial education did not appear to have impressed Indians to the extent the colonial officials would have hoped.

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<sup>202</sup> "It has taught them truthfulness and honour both morally and intellectually. It has made them regard with aversion that which is false and dishonest. It has imbued them with a love of abstract truth and a desire to exercise the reason with fearless impartiality, to insist upon knowing the why and the wherefore for the faith they may be required to accept. They will no longer tolerate superstitions or any absurdity whatsoever." Richard Temple, *Men and Events of my Time in India* (London: John Murray, 1882), 494.

**CHAPTER 2: RESPONDING TO COLONIAL EDUCATION. PUNJABI  
REFORMERS AND THE ARYA SAMAJ, CA. 1880-1920**

CRITICISM OF GOVERNMENT EDUCATION IN PUNJAB

By the close of the nineteenth century, a large section of the Indian population came to believe that colonial intervention had caused a major disruption in the functioning of traditional schools. People became accustomed to the fact that *patshalas* were now a “relic of the past” and that the new educated class were products of colonial education. But the general resentment against colonial education was expressed by Indians in many ways such as in the form of testimonies that were recorded before the Hunter Commission. As we discussed in the previous chapter, the first Indian Education Commission more popularly known as the Hunter Commission was established in 1882. This commission set up different committees to cater to the various provinces of British India. The Punjab Committee of the Hunter Commission that was responsible for the maintenance of educational affairs in Punjab, recorded various testimonies from a wide range of public figures in the Punjab. The committee classified these witnesses into two categories, namely departmental and non-departmental. The former category included officials of the state Education Department only. All other witnesses were clubbed under the non-departmental category. It is hardly surprising then that departmental witnesses generally testified to the “sound basis” of government education, whereas the non-departmental witnesses held a “contrary opinion.”<sup>203</sup> It is these non-departmental testimonials particularly those of prominent Punjabi personalities that inform our subsequent discussion of the criticism of government education. Here, the major aspects of colonial education are considered one by one.

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<sup>203</sup> *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 95.

### The Lack of Religious Instruction

One of the most important concerns expressed against colonial education was the issue of secular instruction that was imparted in government schools. As discussed in the first chapter, the principle of religious neutrality mandated that government education was to be exclusively secular. Some members of the Hunter Commission, like Arthur Howell for instance, raised objections to the hitherto inviolable policy of secular education. Howell felt that religious and moral instruction was an integral part of a child's education, and that nowhere in the world was this education denied to students except in British India. He minced no words in expressing his opposition to the policy of neutrality which he regarded as "the most remarkable feature" of Indian education. Howell reminded the government that such a 'secular' policy was "without precedent or parallel elsewhere, besides being entirely opposed to the traditional idea of education current in the East."<sup>204</sup> As the criticism of secular education increased in the late nineteenth century, the Hunter Commission acknowledged the double standards of the British in so far as the institution of secular education was concerned.

It has been pointed out in evidence that, until lately in Europe education was entirely in the hands of ecclesiastics, that the conditions are similar in India, and that a system of education divorced from religion can never have much hold upon the good-will of the people. There is much truth in this, but, on the other hand, the British Government cannot well interfere in matters of religion, and it may be wiser to sacrifice a point rather than to attempt to use a weapon which may burst in the hand. The attitude of religious neutrality, which is maintained by the English in India, is as prudent as it is acceptable to the people.<sup>205</sup>

In other words, the Hunter Commission admitted that despite its unpopularity and limited acceptance, the policy of secular education was still worth upholding because of the prudence of religious non-interference. Moreover, a

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<sup>204</sup> Howell, *Education in British India*, 34.

<sup>205</sup> *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 44.

majority of the Commission's members believed that "religious feeling was so inflammable in India" that it was "not safe to depart from a policy that had worked so well in the past."<sup>206</sup> So even though the value of religious education was generally acknowledged, the Hunter Commission could not recommend the imparting of such education in government schools. The Commission instead "hoped" that the "recognised evil of banishing religion from Government primary schools" would be largely minimised by home instruction and the increase of aided schools where religious instruction could be freely given.<sup>207</sup> On the whole then, the Hunter Commission upheld the principle of religious neutrality and recommended that existing rules be applied to all primary schools regardless of their affiliation to municipal or local fund boards.<sup>208</sup>

The 'duplicity' of colonial policy was recognised and criticised by many Indians. For instance, a local village schoolmaster named Pandit Ishwar Prasad told the Hunter Commission that the policy of neutrality was nothing but a mask to obscure the tacit understanding between Christian missionaries and the colonial state. In his testimony, Prasad accused the colonial government of showing double standards on the issue of allowing religious instruction in schools. He noted that:

As no measures have heretofore been taken by the educational officers to encourage the establishment of private schools by Natives, where they might be at liberty to give religions instruction according to their inclinations, while aid is given in every instance to Missionary bodies to establish schools giving instruction in their Christian religion, the system, though not actually and practically a propagandist one, is

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<sup>206</sup> *Report of the Education Commission*, 129.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.* 129. It has been extensively documented in contemporary writings that most of the aided schools were missionary institutions.

<sup>208</sup> Recommendation No. 14, *ibid.* 174.

nevertheless considered by the majority of people as leaning unduly towards instruction in the Christian religion.<sup>209</sup>

In a similar vein, the Arya Samajis also vehemently criticised the policy of religious neutrality. Lala Mulraj had testified before the Hunter Commission in his official capacity as the Extra Assistant Commissioner of Gujrat, Panjab. In his testimony, Mulraj minced no words in calling the bluff of the policy of neutrality. He remarked that:

the generality of people think that Government aids the mission schools because it secretly wants that people should embrace the Christian religion. Why should otherwise, say they, the teaching of Bible every day, the attendance at churches and Sunday schools, and taking part in prayers by remaining in the standing position, be compulsory in mission schools which receive Government grant-in-aid? Why should, say they, a boy be expelled from the school and punished if he declines to do any of these? cannot have any wholesome results.<sup>210</sup>

The Arya Samajis were outspoken in their critique of the secular instruction given in government schools. Such education, the Aryas felt, devoted no attention to the moral and religious aspects. Lala Shyam Dass, President of the Lahore Arya Samaj, along with Lala Dwarka Dass, Secretary of the Samaj, addressed a memorial to the Commission on behalf of the Lahore Samaj.<sup>211</sup> This memorial contained a scathing dismissal of secular instruction as it was

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<sup>209</sup> "Evidence of Pandit Ishwar Prasad", Reply to Q.20, in *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 337.

<sup>210</sup> "Evidence of Lala Mulraj, M.A. Officiating Extra Assistant Commissioner, Gujrat, Panjab", Reply to Q.20, in *ibid.* 320-321.

<sup>211</sup> At this time, the educational endeavours of the Arya Samaj were in a nascent stage. In its five-year history at Lahore, the Samaj had established a Sanskrit school as well as a girls' school. Although these schools were not 'Anglo-Vedic', they were modelled largely along the ideational lines of Dayanand Saraswati who had established various patshalas in different cities across Northern India including Allahabad and Varanasi.

imparted in government schools. It is worth quoting here an excerpt from this memorial of the Arya Samaj.

Government schools and colleges are termed *godless* institutions by many men. If the object of instruction in these schools is to train the faculties of the students, there is no reason why the moral faculties should be left in the dark, and only the intellectual faculties trained. The instruction now imparted has a powerful effect in reducing our hereditary notions and long-cherished beliefs, but makes no provision for supplying their place with better ones.<sup>212</sup> (Emphasis AK)

It is thus fairly evident that Arya Samajis were extremely forthright in their criticism of secular instruction imparted in government schools. At the same time, several Arya Samajis and D.A.V. leaders in particular expressed their anxieties about the evangelical effect of missionary schools. This was evident in a speech given by Lala Hans Raj (1864-1938), the first headmaster of D.A.V. School Lahore, at one of the anniversary celebrations of the Lahore Arya Samaj. In this speech, Hans Raj vehemently criticised the methods and tactics of missionaries who used intellectual awakening as a pretext for religious proselytization.

The dramas of Shakespeare, the poems of Milton, and the writings of Bacon attest the intellectual eminence of the ruling people. The perseverance, truthfulness, courage, patriotism, and self-sacrifice of Englishmen excite feelings of respect and admiration in our minds. What wonder is then that in their company we feel ourselves conquered and humiliated? Just at this moment of weakness, the missionary comes to us and whispers that the superiority of the European over the Indian is the gift of the Son of God whom he has acknowledged as his King and Saviour, and that your countrymen can really become great if they come under His banner. The idea thus insinuated is daily fed and strengthened by the education that he imparts to us through a large number of Mission Schools and Colleges that cover the country with their network. The missionary criticizes the evils that have of late corrupted our society, and proudly points to his own community as entirely free from those curses. He compares our sacred books with

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<sup>212</sup> “Memorial addressed by the Lahore Arya Samaj to the Education Commission”, Reply to Q.39, in *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 478-9.

Christian Scriptures, and proves to the satisfaction of many misguided people that the latter are infinitely superior to the former.<sup>213</sup>

It is further interesting to note that Hans Raj did not put the blame solely on Christian missionaries for the slanderous attack on Hindu scriptures. According to Hansraj, it was incumbent upon Hindus to put their own house in order before blaming others. Hansraj regretted the lack of religious fervour among the Hindus as well as their disregard for their texts and traditions. This lackadaisical attitude of the Hindus, Hans Raj believed, was chiefly responsible for the success of the missionaries.

He (the missionary) is also encouraged in his proselytizing work by the apathy of the Hindus towards religious instruction. They send their children to schools for secular education without making any provision for religious training at home or at school, with the result that our boys grow up utterly ignorant of the religious principles of their Shastras [...] The godless education of our Schools and Colleges has sapped the foundations of faith in God and His revealed Will; our boys are taught to despise their own religious books and prize those of the foreigner; above all, the conviction has been brought home to us by the writings of European savants that, although we possess some philosophical works of inestimable value, our religious books contain a great deal of rubbish and nonsense along with a few gems of truth that lie embedded in it.<sup>214</sup>

The above excerpts from speeches given by Hans Raj clearly bring out several shades of the criticism levied by the Arya Samajis against colonial education. These addresses show that more than regretting the problem that government institutions were ‘secular’ or ‘godless’, the Arya Samajis lamented the fact that government schools promoted Christian ideas and deprecated Hinduism. Thus, the Arya Samajis were firmly cognisant of the covert agenda of mission schools that taught religious instruction.<sup>215</sup> However, what these addresses reveal is that

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<sup>213</sup> Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 243-244.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid. 246.

<sup>215</sup> It will be discussed later in this dissertation how some of these missionary tactics and strategies were turned on their head by D.A.V. leaders in their endeavour to impart *Dharma Shiksha* (Moral and Religious Instruction).

the primary concern of the Arya Samajis was not that colonial education was 'godless' (as given in government schools) or 'Christian' (as given in mission schools) but rather that it was not favourable to the teaching of 'Hinduism'. Like many of his contemporaries, Hans Raj felt that the need of the hour was to impart instruction to Hindus in their own religious scriptures. Thus, in a meeting held in 1894, the D.A.V. College Managing Committee decided to have religious instruction taught as a separate subject in its classrooms.<sup>216</sup> We shall return to a discussion of this academic discipline of *Dharma Shiksha* (religious and moral instruction) in the third chapter of this dissertation. Before doing so, it is imperative to look at other important strands of the indigenous critique of colonial education, particularly as it was expressed by the torchbearers of the D.A.V. movement.

#### The Problem of Moral Education

In late nineteenth century England, moral instruction and Christian teaching were inextricably linked. In fact, religious instruction was regarded as the 'main element' of elementary schooling.<sup>217</sup> In fact, one of the primary objects of early education was to 'cultivate religious principles and moral sentiments.'<sup>218</sup> But this was not possible in India where the colonial government was bound by the policy of religious neutrality which forbade the use of religious texts in government schools. Thus, the British were faced with a dilemma of how to impart moral education in India. This predicament of imparting moral education in India without teaching Christianity was felt by various colonial officials. This dilemma was perhaps first officially expressed

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<sup>216</sup> Dharamdev Vidyarthi, *D.A.V. Andolan Ka Itihas*, 171.

<sup>217</sup> Lawson and Silver, 271.

<sup>218</sup> Minutes 1846, II, p.550. Cited in *ibid.* 282. Lawson and Silver have also noted how children were led, by object lessons, 'line upon line and precept upon precept ... to a perception of God's bounties.'

in a note written in 1823 by Holt Mackenzie, then Secretary to the Bengal Government. Mackenzie expressed the challenge of applying the educational curriculum of England to the Indian context where no religious teaching was allowed. Whereas in England it was “under the Christian scheme alone that one would “expect to find the labouring Classes really educated,” in India there was “no such instrument with which to work beneficially on the lower orders here.”<sup>219</sup>

At the same time, the colonial policy of secular education came to be severely criticised by Christian missionaries who saw it as an impediment to the propagation of their religion. In a bid to protest against what they considered a ‘godless’ education, the missionaries began to underscore the need for ‘moral’ instruction. As discussed earlier in the first chapter, the missionaries had successfully used the plank of ‘moral improvement’ in persuading the East India Company to take on the responsibility of educating the colonial subjects. Now, the missionaries were rebuilding a case for the colonial government to allow direct Christian instruction in public schools. So, the missionaries voiced their disapproval of secular education through the medium of various testimonials and petitions. For instance, in his testimony to the House of Lords, the Reverend William Keane complained that ‘the example of the Government in not teaching the Bible, and in not inculcating religious principles, has a further demoralizing effect.’<sup>220</sup> To bolster their case, missionaries argued that the secular education imparted in government schools was a half-baked endeavour. While government education induced the natives to reject their old beliefs, it did not give them a new moral anchor. Therefore, as Sanjay Seth has argued,

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<sup>219</sup> ‘Note by Holt Mackenzie, secretary to the Bengal Government in the Territorial Department, dated 17 July 1823,’ reprinted in Zastoupil and Moir, 100.

<sup>220</sup> ‘Evidence of the Rev. William Keane, dated 19th July 1853.’ in *Second Report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords* (Great Britain: House of Commons, 1853), 301.

missionaries constructed a narrative of ‘moral decline’ and conveyed the impression that government education left the Indians ‘unhinged and unsettled’.<sup>221</sup>

Consequently, the colonial government slowly began recognising the problem of ‘moral decline.’ This recognition was further accentuated by the native resentment to secular education. In 1882, the Punjab Provincial Committee of the Hunter Commission had summarised local apprehensions in the following words:

Most of the witnesses we have heard have recommended that some sort of moral teaching be introduced in schools; generally this idea has taken possession of the minds of people, - that boys after leaving school become immoral and irreligious, and now some means are to be devised whereby Government can meet the wishes of the people, and at the same time observe strict neutrality. I think it a very difficult task; but it may be done in this way – that books containing the principles of religion upon which all sects and religions agree, and some general truths, should be taught in schools.<sup>222</sup>

In the light of the aforementioned recommendations, the colonial government sanctioned the teaching of moral textbooks in the late nineteenth century. These textbooks included universally accepted maxims taken from an eclectic variety of religious texts. Accordingly, textbooks such as Lethbridge’s *A Moral Reading Book* were prescribed.<sup>223</sup> Lethbridge authored several works on Indian history and education. In his *A Moral Reading Book*, he included lessons on general values such as ‘Duty towards God’, ‘Conscientiousness’, ‘Patience’,

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<sup>221</sup> See ‘Diagnosing Moral Crisis’ in Sanjay Seth, *Subject Lessons*, 47-78.

<sup>222</sup> *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 114.

<sup>223</sup> Sir Roper Lethbridge (1840-1919) was a civil servant in India and a member of the House of Commons from 1885 to 1892. During his stay in India, he held various important positions. He was appointed a Professor in the Bengal Educational Department in 1868, and became a Fellow of University of Calcutta and then Secretary of the Simla Educational Commission.

‘Temperance’, ‘Truthfulness’, ‘Gratitude’ and ‘Perseverance’. These lessons were illustrated using excerpts not only from English literary sources but also from Sanskrit (texts including the *Upanishads*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* etc.), Arabic (texts such as the *Quran*) and Persian sources like the *Gulistan* of *Saadi*.<sup>224</sup> This select compilation from both ‘English and Oriental sources’ was evidently, as explained by Lethbridge himself, a sincere attempt to teach morality without violating the principle of religious neutrality. Lethbridge underscored the sincerity of his endeavour in the introduction to his book:

I believe there exists a widespread desire for the more systematic teaching, in our schools, of the great principles of Morality and Good Conduct that are common to all religions. It is universally admitted that, in such teaching, there should be nothing that might have even the appearance of an infringement of that golden rule of strict religious neutrality which has always been observed by the Education Department. I know of no Moral Reading book hitherto published that fully satisfies the important condition of neutrality; and in this little book now offered to the public I have endeavoured to supply this want.<sup>225</sup>

Remedial measures were adopted by both central and provincial governments to tackle the issue. But, as discussed in the first chapter, even these attempts emphasised that moral teaching was to be imparted “without a religious basis”. So, as the government persisted with secular education, Punjabis became increasingly concerned at the prospect of shaping the character of their children without a moral and religious foundation. Through numerous testimonies, memorials and petitions, reformers of all sects requested the government to revise its existing policy. The educated natives of Punjab, many of whom had found government employment, also voiced their concern about the need for

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<sup>224</sup> Sir Roper Lethbridge, *A Moral Reading Book* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink and Co., 1883).

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.* 13.

moral and religious instruction.<sup>226</sup> One of them named Sardar Gurdyal Singh was the Assistant Commissioner of Hoshiarpur. He felt that owing to the lack of moral instruction, schools turned out “well-educated” men with “no sense of moral responsibility”.<sup>227</sup> It was not just select individual Punjabis who complained about the demerits of secular instruction in government schools. Socio-religious reform organisations of all denominations sharply criticised the lack of religious and moral instruction in government schools and colleges. Most reformist organisations reiterated the fact that instruction in the principles of moral conduct was absent from the course of Government colleges and schools. For instance, a prominent *Anjuman* (Islamic association) of Lahore submitted a detailed response to the Hunter Commission on the question of religious instruction. It is worth quoting here an excerpt from the reply submitted by the *Anjuman*.

Instruction in duty and principles of moral conduct is not given in Government schools; and the result is that the students of the Government schools are generally ignorant of the duties and obligations which they owe, to parents, to teachers, to Government, and to God. If the votaries of different religions be allowed and induced to observe their respective religious ceremonies and worship, this will raise their moral tone. The unnecessary strictness of the masters and teachers not to allow the students to perform their religious worship causes pious persons to hate the Government Education Department.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> The phrase ‘educated natives’ was first coined by McCully to refer to the new class of English educated Indians. As recent scholarship has shown, this class was by no means a homogenous entity. Nonetheless, in the given context, it generally refers to all individuals who had received government education.

<sup>227</sup> Evidence of Sardar Gurdyal Singh, Assistant Commissioner, Hoshiarpur, Reply to Q. 39, in *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 237.

<sup>228</sup> Evidence of Anjuman Hamdardi Islamiya, Reply to Q.39 in *ibid.* 137. Similar views were expressed by the Anjuman-i-Rifa’i-Am of Jhang in a memorial they had addressed to the Commission. See *ibid.* 457.

The above concerns about secular education expressed by the Anjuman were shared equally by members of other religious communities. For example, the memorial addressed by the Singh Sabha also reaffirmed indigenous apprehensions about secular instruction. Secular instruction, this memorial said, was “sure to turn out students destitute of all principles of duty, obedience, and fear”.<sup>229</sup> In a similar vein, the Lahore Brahma Samaj, in their memorial, maintained that government education “ignores religion altogether, and thus favours irreligion or atheism.”<sup>230</sup> The memorial further recommended that “lessons on morality (chiefly translated extracts from religious scriptures of Hindus, Christians, and Muhammadans) and theistic moral philosophy should be made compulsory subjects of instruction in all Government schools and colleges.”<sup>231</sup>

#### The Rural-Urban Divide

Prior to colonial intervention, the difference between Indian towns and villages was not so stark. As the 1881 Punjab Census noted, the difference was “one of degree rather than of kind.”<sup>232</sup> But with the advent of colonial education, the social fabric of Punjabi society was considerably altered. Ironically, colonial education had been introduced on the pretext that government schools would facilitate an equal and classless society free from the discriminations of caste. But by the 1880s, it was amply clear that far from bridging social differences, colonial education had given rise to fresh divisions. English education, as the Panjab Committee of the Hunter Commission had noted in its report, was

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<sup>229</sup> Memorial addressed by the Sri Guru Singh (Sikh National) Association, Panjab to the Education Commission, Reply to Q.39, in *ibid.* 502.

<sup>230</sup> See Memorial addressed by Navin Chandra Rai on behalf of the Punjab Brahma Samaj to the Education Commission, Reply to Q.20, in *ibid.* 493.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>232</sup> *Punjab Census 1881, Part I*, 17-18.

primarily acquired for prospective employment in government offices. Consequently, there was a large-scale emigration from the villages, of educated men who found employment in the cities. But life was miserable for many of those unable to procure a government job, for being unfit to work in the village, these men belonged nowhere. Thus, by the early 1880s and barely three decades since the inception of colonial education, the social fabric of Punjab was divided into two visibly distinct classes of employed haves and unemployed have-nots. Lajpat Rai (1865-1928), one of the principal leaders of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic movement noted that colonial education had “produced a schism in society which is truly deplorable”. He added that “An educated class has been created – a class, which moves by itself; a class incapable of materially influencing, or being influenced by, the uneducated masses; and a class without precedent in any country on the earth.”<sup>233</sup>

Another major criticism levied against government education was that it did not provide any useful and practical instruction. This had been a persistent complaint in Punjab almost from the time that colonial education was introduced in the province. Likewise in the 1880s, through its enquiries and surveys, the Hunter Commission had discovered that the public were generally of the view that government education did nothing to prepare pupils for rural life. Punjabis, in general, complained that government education was of no practical use, for it did not impart their children with skills that would prove useful in a young man’s daily occupation, especially if he chose to work in the village.

The D.A.V. leaders particularly regretted that there were no provisions in the education system “for imparting technical and practical education, which is so essential to its (India’s) economic and material progress.”<sup>234</sup> The resulting anger and frustration with government education was reflected in the various

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<sup>233</sup> Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 181.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.* 182.

testimonies that were presented before the Hunter Commission, as we have previously noted. Nearly all of the prominent reformist organisations in Punjab felt that government education offered little or no practical instruction. “A boy educated according to the present system,” the Anjuman Hamdardi Islamiya said in their memorial, “is like the dhobi's dog, neither at home nor abroad.”<sup>235</sup> The Anjuman pointed out that the primary school subjects such as geography were only “suitable for the rulers of a country and for rich merchants.”<sup>236</sup> Instead of these, the Anjuman believed it would be better to give instruction in “the principles of trade, mental arithmetic as used by banias, religious morality, and the laws of health.”<sup>237</sup> The Lahore Arya Samaj, in its memorial, also informed the Panjab Committee of the Hunter Commission that the public at large did not seek primary instruction. It informed the Commission that government education was sought by “only those classes whose aim is Government service”. For this reason, the Arya Samajis felt that artisans, agriculturists and traders were “practically excluded” from government education because the instruction imparted in government schools was of no use to this section of society as it did not help them in their professional work.<sup>238</sup>

In addition to the aforementioned point of criticism against colonial education, there was the contentious issue of the medium of instruction. This problem gradually became inextricably linked to religious identity as both Hindu and Sikh reformers vehemently advocated for Persian to be replaced by Hindi and Punjabi respectively as the medium of instruction in government

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<sup>235</sup> “Evidence of Anjuman Hamdardi Islamiya”, Reply to Qs.2 &3, in *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 132.

<sup>236</sup> “Evidence of Anjuman Hamdardi Islamiya”, (Reply to Qs.2 &3) in *ibid.* 132. Similar views were expressed in the “Evidence of Khan Ahmad Shah, Extra Assistant Commissioner (Hoshiarpur)”, *ibid.* 124.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>238</sup> Memorial addressed by the Lahore Arya Samaj to the Education Commission, Reply to Q.3, in *ibid.* 467.

schools. In a memorial addressed to the Hunter Commission, the Sri Guru Singh Sabha demanded that “all the books required for the elementary instruction should be in Punjabi, or the vernacular of the people.”<sup>239</sup> For their part, the Arya Samajis also vehemently criticised the use of Persian not only as a medium of instruction but also as a subject included in the curriculum.

The object of primary schools is to teach the students in their own vernacular, so as to make them better members of their society and better men in their profession. But Urdu and Persian, which are foreign to the soil, cannot possibly answer this object. Their study, which is made still more difficult by the imperfect and redundant letters in which they are written, is a mere waste of time and energies, without any substantial good of any kind. Urdu is only spoken by the higher classes of Muhammadans residing in such places as Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, &c.; while Persian is nowhere spoken by any section of the people, except, perhaps, in Peshawar. Besides, no student, whose studies do not extend beyond the primary school, knows much of them. He cannot even write and read a single letter of Urdu, far less of Persian [...] Persian should be made to make room for the new subjects which we will suggest below as the course of instruction; while Urdu should give its place to Hindi, at least for the Hindus.<sup>240</sup>

Finally, in addition to the aforementioned grievances related to government education, there was the issue of exorbitant fees being levied from students, especially those from the lower economic rung. For instance, there was a common complaint that the high fees levied in schools was a deterrent to the spread of education in Punjab.<sup>241</sup> The Lahore Arya Samaj felt that fees for primary schools should not to be taken from the agricultural classes since they

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<sup>239</sup> See Reply to Q.34, in “Memorial addressed by the Sri Guru Singh (Sikh National) Association, Panjab”, *ibid.* 501.

<sup>240</sup> See Memorial addressed by the Lahore Arya Samaj to the Education Commission, Reply to Q.2, in *ibid.* 466-467. Also see “Evidence of Lala Mulraj”, (Reply to Q.11), 318 in *Ibid.*

<sup>241</sup> See “Evidence of Khan Ahmad Shah, Extra Assistant Commissioner (Hushiarpur)”, (Reply to Q. 13), in *ibid.* 125.

were already paying the education cess. But for other classes, the Samaj believed that “small fees in money, varying according to the pecuniary circumstances of the payments, might be taken”, with an exemption for those who were too poor to pay any fees at all.<sup>242</sup> Moreover, the financial centralisation of the colonial education system was criticised by the Arya Samajis. Lala Mulraj pointed that the practice of schoolmasters being paid by the State and the government giving grants-in-aid destroyed the principle of self-help among the people. In his evidence, Mulraj recommended that the management of schools be entrusted to village communities who would directly pay the salaries to the teachers.

The system of collecting the fees of primary schools into Government treasuries has nothing to recommend itself. It serves to destroy the principle of self-help among the people, and tends to make the establishment of school by the people a work of difficulty. The indigenous schools in our country are generally maintained by a system of fees (in cash and kind); but wherever Government steps in to establish its own school, the indigenous schools disappear, and thus the interference of Government results in the destruction of self-help.<sup>243</sup>

This was in sharp resonance with the pre-existing financial model used in the *patshalas* as recounted by several witnesses before the Hunter Commission. These witnesses stated that pupils of indigenous schools rarely paid a fixed amount of fees in cash. Instead the teacher was paid through various other modes such as food items, agricultural produce etc. As Baba Khem Singh Bedi testified before the Hunter Commission: ‘The fee is levied according to no fixed scale. A few pice at the end of every month, food and other necessaries of life,

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<sup>242</sup> Memorial addressed by the Lahore Arya Samaj to the Education Commission, Reply to Q.13, in *ibid.* 471.

<sup>243</sup> Evidence of Lala Mulraj, M.A. (Officiating Extra Assistant Commissioner, Gujrat, Panjab, Reply to Q.2, in *ibid.* 313.

such as oil, soap, &c., a rupee or so on entering school, and subsequently at each change of class, or on occasion of marriages, births of sons, are what constitute the fee paid by pupils, or, in other words, the income of the teachers. In villages these men are also given a certain proportion of the produce at each harvest.’<sup>244</sup> Similar responses were given by other prominent public figures of Punjab. For instance, Lala Mulraj (r.1877-1945), the first president of the Lahore Arya Samaj remarked in his evidence that most indigenous schools charged no fees at all. The only exception were the schools maintained by *Pandhas* where reading and writing letters, *hundis* etc., arithmetical tables and mental arithmetic, and the system of account-keeping were taught. In such schools, Mulraj informed, the fees was one pice a week and bread (*roti*) on fixed days, and presents on holidays and marriage occasions. ‘The pupils of such schools’, Mulraj noted, ‘know mental arithmetic and account-keeping much better than those trained in Government schools.’<sup>245</sup>

The surveys conducted by Dr. Leitner in October 1882 reaffirmed the impressions of most witnesses regarding the fees charged in indigenous schools. Leitner also found that in several cases, ‘education given by Brahmins certainly to members of their own caste, was gratuitous, as it, indeed, still is, whilst in innumerable instances, now unfortunately reduced to an ascertainable number, the teacher both fed and instructed his pupil.’<sup>246</sup> More importantly, Leitner found that Ranjit Singh, the former emperor of the Sikh Kingdom, bestowed a large number of grants and *jagirs* (rent-free lands) to the prominent teachers of every sect. On such lands, the beneficiaries maintained schools that were attended by a large number of students. These *jagirs* were however taken back

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<sup>244</sup> “Evidence of Baba Khem Singh Bedi, C.I.E. (Rawalpindi)”, Reply to Q.4, in *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 305-6.

<sup>245</sup> Pice is derived from the Hindi word Paisa. It is a former monetary unit of India and Pakistan, and is equal to one quarter of an anna. “Evidence of Lala Mulraj, M.A.”, Reply to Q.4 in *ibid.* 315.

<sup>246</sup> Leitner, *History of Indigenous Education in the Panjab*, Part I (A), 19.

by the British when they annexed Punjab, and subsequently with the establishment of the new educational dispensation, all teachers were made salaried servants of the State.

Also, unlike colonial officials, the Lahore Arya Samajis were aware that indigenous education was more differentiated than colonial administrators would have them believe. Therefore, in the memorial that the Lahore Samaj addressed to the Hunter Commission, it classified indigenous schools into three categories – religious, secular and secular-religious. As per this classification, “religious” schools were identified as those where texts such as the *Granth Sahib*, *Gita*, *Vedanta*, *Upanishads* etc. were learned in the “religious houses” of different sects. The second category namely “secular” schools included the *Mahajani* schools where multiplication tables, bazar accounts, and *Lunde* or *Sarafi* characters were taught. This category also covered Persian *maktabs* where Persian was taught by maulvis and munshis. And the final category of “secular-religious” schools included all Sanskrit *patshalas* where Sanskrit texts on religion, religious ceremonies, mathematics, astrology etc. were taught. This category also included Arabic and Persian schools, held generally in mosques, where books on religion and secular subjects were taught to the Muslims.<sup>247</sup>

In addition, the Lahore Arya Samaj leaders realised that the introduction of colonial education had severely disrupted the functioning of indigenous institutions. In the light of the prevailing conditions, Arya Samaj leaders recommended that indigenous schools should be ‘improved’ by supplementing rather than superseding the instruction given in them.

These schools are so numerous that many thousands of boys daily receive education in them, and some of them, especially of the second class, which are attended by the children of both Hindu and Muhammadan shopkeepers, are so popular that every effort should be made to utilise them. They can be turned to good account by supplementing and not superseding the course of instructions pursued

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<sup>247</sup> “Memorial addressed by the Lahore Arya Samaj to the Education Commission”, Reply to Q.4, in *ibid.* 468.

in them. To set aside their present masters, who have much local influence, or to tamper with the national way of teaching to any very serious extent, will prevent any great use being made of them as part of a system of national education.<sup>248</sup>

To sum up the above mentioned criticism of government education, the ‘natives’ were, by and large, disenchanted by the education imparted in colonial institutions. It was felt that there should be an alternative education model that would suit the national interests. It is against this backdrop that one must look at the rise of reform movements and their educational institutions in late nineteenth century Punjab.

#### COLONIAL LAHORE AND REFORMIST ENTERPRISES

It must be mentioned that now-a-days societies are springing up in different parts of the country as the *Arya Samajes*, the *Anjumans* and the *Sabhas*, which also set up schools. Elementary education would be greatly diffused if these societies become part of the institutions of the country and are encouraged.

- Lala Mulraj<sup>249</sup>

Punjab, like other provinces of British India, witnessed a huge uprising of social and religious consciousness in the late nineteenth century.<sup>250</sup> Reformers

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<sup>248</sup> See Memorial addressed by the Lahore Arya Samaj to the Education Commission, Reply to Q.4, in *ibid.* 469.

<sup>249</sup> Evidence of Lala Mulraj, M.A. (Officiating Extra Assistant Commissioner of Gujrat, Panjab) in *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 316.

<sup>250</sup> There are several works on the rise of socio-religious reform movements in colonial Punjab. For instance, see ‘Punjab and the North-West’, in Kenneth Jones, “Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India”, *The New Cambridge History of India Volume III.1* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 85-121. Also see ‘Recession and Resurgence (1849-1919)’, in J.S.Grewal, “The Sikhs of the Punjab”, *The New*

belonging to various religious sects and denominations established *Samajes*, *Anjumans*, and *Sabhas* in nearly all prominent locations of the province. Between 1863 and 1879, over ten such organisations were established in the province with Lahore, the capital of British Punjab, serving as the headquarters for most of them. The cosmopolitan nature of Lahore as well as its strategic location made the city a preferred hub for Punjabi reformers.<sup>251</sup> It is also noteworthy that Lahore, in the late nineteenth century, was home to a wide range of religious communities including Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Jains, and Buddhists. The diverse religious demography of Lahore is captured in the following table that lists the population of the four most prominent communities in order of their numerical size:

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*Cambridge History of India Volume II.3* (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 128-156; and “Religious Movements” in Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, Volume 2: 1839-1988 (Oxford University Press, 1999), 123-150.

<sup>251</sup> Lahore lay at the junction to Multan and Kabul in the West and Kashmir and Delhi in the East. For a recent exposition of Lahore’s cultural diversity and its cosmopolitan environment, see “Colonial Lahore: The City and Beyond”, in Ian Talbot and Tahir Kamran, *Lahore in The Time of the Raj* (Delhi: Penguin Random House India, 2016), 13-40.

Table 2.1: Religious Demography of Lahore (Town), 1881-1901<sup>252</sup>

	<b>Muslims</b>	<b>Hindus</b>	<b>Sikhs</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total Population</b>
<b>1881</b>	86,413	53,641	4,627	4,688	149,369
<b>1891</b>	102,280	62,077	7,306	5,191	176,854
<b>1901</b>	119,601	70,196	7,023	6,144	202,964

The diversity of religious demography, as evident from the above table, was matched by the creation and consolidation of an identity consciousness. Moreover, official records such as census reports and gazetteers played an important role in fostering inter-communal competition. By including religion as a fundamental category in enumerating people of various districts and occupations, the census documented the relative size and decennial growth of

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<sup>252</sup> This table has been adapted from the Punjab Census Reports for 1881, 1891 and 1901. The figures mentioned in the table refer to the population of Lahore town which is not to be confused with Lahore District that comprised of seven towns (namely Lahore, Kasur, Khemkarn, Patti, Chunian, Khudian and Sharakpur) and several hundred villages. Unlike in nineteenth century England where there was a sharp contrast between urban and rural areas, in Punjab the distinction between towns and villages was “one of degree rather than one of kind” as the 1881 Census report acknowledged. So, the general “arbitrary standard” used was that all places “in which a population of 5,000 souls or upwards inhabited a fairly compact collection of houses” were classified as towns. See *Panjab Census Report*, February 17, 1881 (Lahore, 1883), 18.

religious communities. Kenneth Jones has explained how, in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Punjab, the Census became “an arena of religious and political competition.”<sup>253</sup> Census reports, Jones says, “focussed greater attention on religious competition as it was heightened through proselytisation by Christians, Sikhs and Muslims, plus the development of reconversion (*Shuddhi*) by aggressive Hindu movements.”<sup>254</sup>

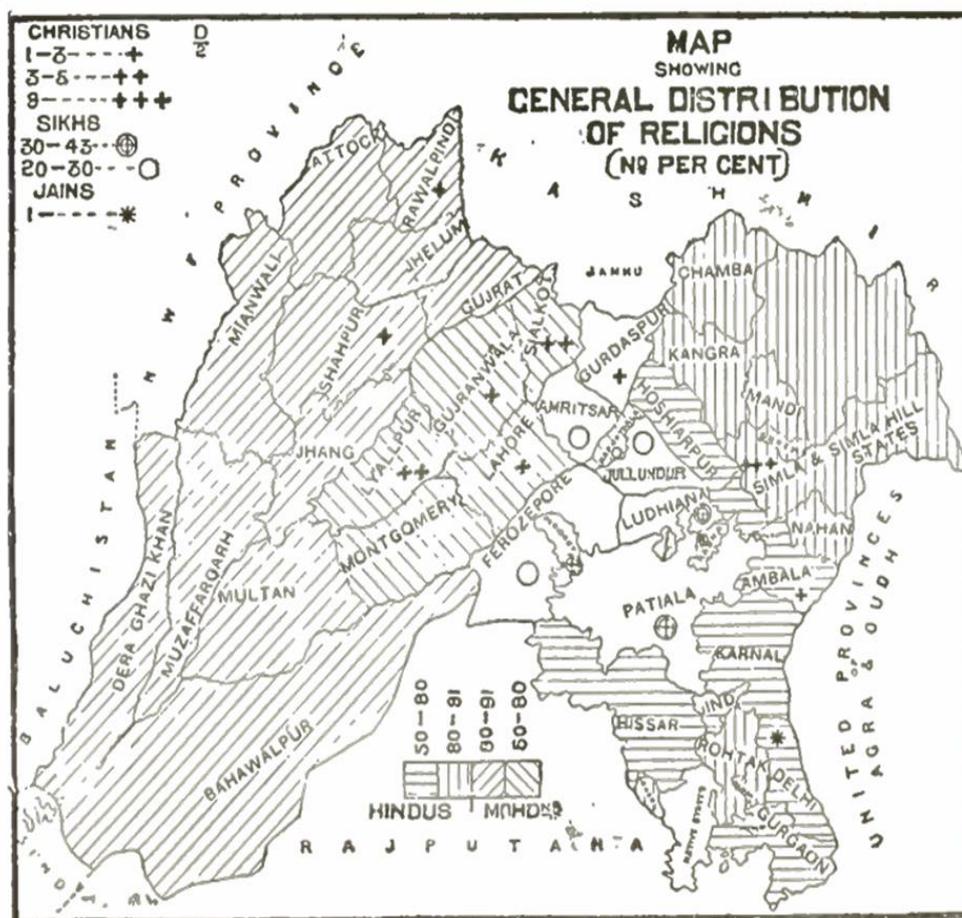
Thus, for various reasons, Lahore remained the epicentre of reformist movements in Punjab throughout the period of British rule. It was from this city that reformist enterprises of various organisations spread out to other parts of the province and beyond. It is hardly a coincidence then that the most prominent socio-religious movements of the three major religious communities in Punjab – Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs – were started at Lahore.

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<sup>253</sup> Kenneth Jones, “Religious Identity and the Indian Census” in N.G.Barrier, Ed., *The Census in British India* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1981), 73-102.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.* 81

**Map 2: Distribution of All Religions in Punjab, ca. 1910**



[Source: *Census of India, 1911. Volume XIV. Punjab. Part I* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1912), p. 98]

Notwithstanding the differences in their socio-religious tenets, the reformist movements of late nineteenth century Punjab shared many similarities. Firstly, they all generally espoused a reformation along ‘fundamentalist’ lines. “All socio-religious movements,” as Kenneth Jones has noted, “were fundamentalist, i.e. they sought a return to what each considered the ‘fundamentals’ of their

religion.”<sup>255</sup> Accordingly, these reformers believed that the widespread ‘decadence’ and ‘corruption’ in contemporary society was a consequence of deviation from the ‘original’ scriptures. To redress this situation, reformist organisations stressed on the need to revive the ‘original’ message of their respective scriptures. Thus, the famous clarion call of the Arya Samaj, a Hindu reformist organisation that had been established at Lahore in 1877, was “back to the Vedas.”<sup>256</sup> In a similar vein, the Singh Sabhas of Amritsar and Lahore, that had been established by the Sikhs in 1873 and 1879 respectively, aimed to revive the teachings of the Sikh gurus by publishing and disseminating Sikh literature on a wide scale.<sup>257</sup>

A second characteristic of the social and religious reform movements of this period was their emphasis on education. Several reasons have been given to explain the establishment of educational institutions by Punjabi reformers. One obvious reason was that institutions served as an effective medium for socio-religious reform as also for imparting a unique combination of traditional and modern instruction. For instance, the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam (Society for the propagation of Islam) that was founded in 1884 at Lahore played a

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<sup>255</sup> Kenneth Jones, *Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India*, (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 217.

<sup>256</sup> This phrase has been used by Kenneth W. Jones, *Arya Dharma: Hindu Consciousness in 19th-Century Punjab* (Delhi: Manohar, 1976), 23. The need to return to the ‘original’ texts was emphasized by several other Hindu reformist organisations. For instance, the Niti Prakash Sabha (Society for Moral Enlightenment) that was established at Ludhiana in 1873 primarily attacked ‘popular bad customs’ such as the worship of trees and rivers. Its founder Munshi Kanhya Lal Alakhdhari advocated a return to the Vedas and Dharma Shastras and in a bid to popularise ancient Sanskrit literature, he translated into Urdu various scriptures including the Bhagwad Gita, Upanishads and Yoga-Vashishta.

<sup>257</sup> For a concise discussion of the Singh Sabha movement, see “Singh Sabha and Social Reform” in Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, 136-150.

crucial role in establishing the Islamiyah School and the Islamiyah College at Lahore in 1886 and 1892 respectively.<sup>258</sup> By the second decade of the twentieth century, the Islamia High School was “the premier Muhammedan educational institution” in Punjab with a total of 1,030 students in attendance at all branch schools of this institution.<sup>259</sup> Similarly, in the case of Sikhs, the Singh Sabhas established the Khalsa College School at Amritsar in 1893. At the opening ceremony of the school held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1893, Bhai Jawahir Singh (Secretary of the Khalsa College Council) remarked that religious education for the Sikhs was “absolutely necessary.”<sup>260</sup> Moral and religious instruction formed an integral part of the curriculum of Khalsa school. A special “Committee of Religious Instruction” was set up to draw a scheme for religious instruction and

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<sup>258</sup> The Anjuman, which was founded by Khalifa Hameed-ud-Din, an Islamic scholar of wide repute, played a prominent social and religious role and is believed to have brought about a “general awakening among the Muslims of Punjab”. For a brief history of Muslim reform movements in late nineteenth Punjab, see “Muslim Organisations” in S.M Ikram, *Indian Muslims and Partition of India* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1992), 202- 219.

<sup>259</sup> *Punjab District Gazetteers, Vol. XXX A* (Lahore, 1916), 224. The Lahore Gazetteer further states that at the Islamiyah High School “free studentships are granted in deserving cases and certain orphans are educated free of charge. Attention is devoted to moral and religious instruction and every student is required to take part in physical instruction.” A thorough research on the Islamiyah College and its parent organisation, the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam, has been conducted by Maria Magdalena Fuchs (Phd, Department of Religious Studies, Princeton University). Her doctoral dissertation titled *Islamic Modernism in Colonial Punjab: The Anjuman-i Himayat-i Islam, 1884-1923* was submitted in September 2019 at Princeton University. Her work is an important contribution to the existing literature on the educational history of modern South Asian institutions.

<sup>260</sup> *Report of the opening of the Khalsa College School at Amritsar on 22nd October 1893*, vi.

arrange for the annual examination in “religious knowledge.”<sup>261</sup> No wonder then that in his annual report for 1896, the school headmaster (Mohan Singh) noted that every child in the school had learnt “by heart a number of good, chaste and moral hymns from the Granth Sahib.”<sup>262</sup>

Similarly, by founding the D.A.V. School at Lahore in 1886 and the Gurukul Kangri at Haridwar in 1902, the Arya Samaj employed education as their main tool to redress what they believed to be contemporary social and religious transgressions. Both the D.A.V. school and the Gurukul were established with a view to furthering the socio-cultural agenda of the Arya Samaj. So, the emergence of socio-religious movements in nineteenth century Punjab naturally resulted in the establishment of educational institutions in the province during the colonial period.

Another major factor that led to the rise of educational consciousness in colonial Punjab was the presence of Christian missionaries, who had been the first to establish English schools in the province. By the middle of the nineteenth century, various societies had set up their mission stations at major cities such as Sialkot and Lahore and every mission station had a school associated with it.<sup>263</sup> The Hunter Commission noted that despite the prevalence of an extensive

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<sup>261</sup> It was proposed that the scheme of religious instruction should include the teaching of the Granth Sahib and “those principles of morality which are included by the tents of the ten Gurus.” In addition to this, pupils living in the boarding house were to recite Gurbani from the Granth Sahib every morning, and Rahras every evening. See “Rules for the working of the Khalsa College (passed at a meeting of the executive committee of the council of the Khalsa College held at Lahore on 26th November 1893)” in *Sunder Singh Majithia Papers* (Printed Material, File No.1), xx.

<sup>262</sup> *Report on the working of the Khalsa College School for the two years ending with 31st March 1896*, 14.

<sup>263</sup> The endeavours of Christian missionaries in Punjab and the corresponding increase in Christian conversions have been extensively documented by John Webster. See John

network of mission schools in Punjab, a widespread “prejudice against missionary education” was genuinely felt nearly all over the province.<sup>264</sup> These bitter feelings were further accentuated by the success of missionaries in making new converts in Punjab. The most prominent case of conversion that raised quite a stir in Lahore was the baptism of three students at the Lahore Mission School in August 1866.<sup>265</sup> So, there is hardly a doubt that by establishing educational institutions, Christian missionaries began playing a more pro-active role in the province. Since the rise of missionary schools coincided with the consolidation of British rule in Punjab, it was widely assumed that missionaries were closely allied with the colonial government. In this regard, J.S. Grewal writes that such perceptions gained momentum towards the end of the nineteenth century and stimulated a reaction in Punjabi society.

Christian missionaries proved to be the greatest allies of the government in spreading English education. The system of grants-in-aid at the time of its introduction was meant primarily for their schools [...] In the popular mind they were closely allied with the rulers, and their socio-cultural programme carried a sharper edge because of this real or supposed alliance. The Punjabis reacted to the presence of the Christian missionaries also because of their spectacular success. Starting from about 4,000 in 1881, the number of Indian Christians in the Punjab rose to over 300,000 in 1921.<sup>266</sup>

These changes in the religious demography of Punjab heavily impacted the character of the contemporaneous socio-religious reform movements that were then prevalent in the region. In this regard, John Webster writes that, “the

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C. B. Webster, *The Christian Community and Change in Nineteenth Century Northern India* (New Delhi: Macmillan India, 1976).

<sup>264</sup> *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 16.

<sup>265</sup> This controversial case has been noted in several missionary accounts and records. For example, see John C.B. Webster, *A Social History of Christianity: North-West India since 1880* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007; repr., 2019), p. 85.

<sup>266</sup> J.S. Grewal, “The Sikhs of the Punjab” (Cambridge University Press, 1989), 130.

resulting level of persistent religious competition and conflict was greater than what Christians had experienced before.”<sup>267</sup> The skepticism for mission schools was particularly strong in the case of Arya Samajis who now “challenged Christianity on the very terms which Christians themselves had laid down during the previous decades.”<sup>268</sup>

Echoing the same view, Kenneth Jones has summarised the feeling of the Arya Samajis in the following words: “The vision of young Hindu boys submitting to daily Christian indoctrination haunted Aryas. English education remained the key to worldly success, but conversion to Christianity was a terrible price for that success.”<sup>269</sup> Perhaps, a similar anxiety inspired the Sikh reformers to establish the Khalsa College at Amritsar. In his address at the opening ceremony of the Khalsa College School, Bhai Jawahir Singh expressed concern over the dwindling numbers of Sikhs.<sup>270</sup> No wonder then that one of the objectives of establishing the Khalsa College and School was “to impart to Sikh youths an education that shall tend to raise the status of the Sikh people, to promote morality and sobriety of life, to *maintain the Sikh Religion*.”<sup>271</sup> (Emphasis mine). The socio-religious agenda of the Singh Sabhas included opening schools and colleges for the spread of literacy within the Sikh community. By the close of the nineteenth century, they felt that the time was ripe for

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<sup>267</sup> Webster, *A Social History of Christianity*, p. 119.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

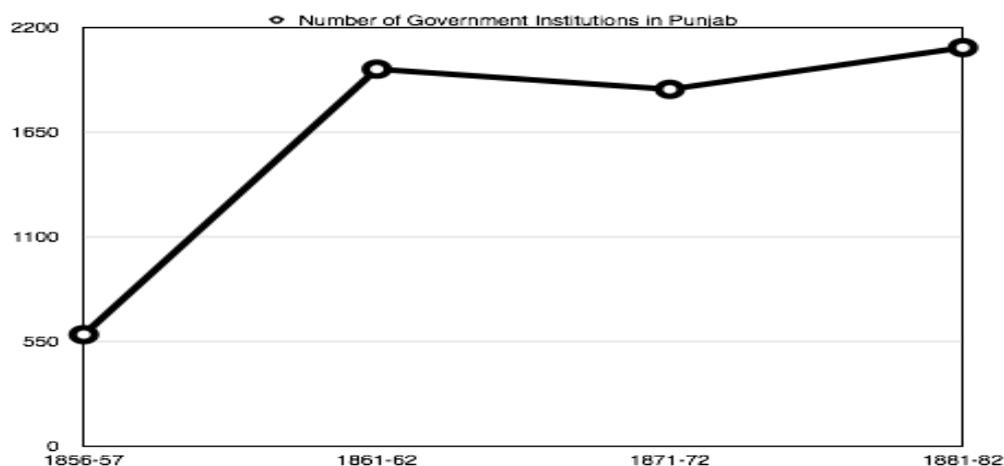
<sup>269</sup> Kenneth Jones, *Arya Dharma*, 48.

<sup>270</sup> *Report of the opening of the Khalsa College School*, iv.

<sup>271</sup> See “Memorandum of Association AND Rules of the Khalsa College, passed at the meeting of the Khalsa College Establishment Committee on the 3rd April 1892.” In *Sunder Singh Majithia Papers*, File No.3, 132-155.

establishing the Khalsa College.<sup>272</sup> On the whole then, nearly all reformist organisations established their own schools while others solely expressed their views through the extensive use of newspapers and journals. In one way or another, reformist organisations influenced the educational discourse of late nineteenth century Punjab.

It is interesting to note that the emergence of reformist organisations and their educational endeavours coincided with the spread of government education in Punjab. In 1856-57, when the Education Department was established in Punjab, there were only 583 government schools and colleges in the entire province. By 1881-82, this number had risen to 2,091. According to official estimates, at the end of 1881-82 there were 1,520 primary schools for boys, including 198 English and 1,322 vernacular government primary schools.<sup>273</sup> The following graph demonstrates this remarkable growth in the number of government educational institutions.



[Source: *Report of the Panjab Provincial Committee of the Education Commission* (Calcutta: 1884), 28].

<sup>272</sup> The Khalsa College was established on 5th March, 1892 at Amritsar and in the following year, the Khalsa College School was also started. The original plan had been to establish the College at Lahore. But due to difference of opinion and a gradual split within the rank and file of the Singh Sabhas, the College was established at Amritsar.

<sup>273</sup> See *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 36.

During the same period, as discussed above, a remarkable growth was witnessed in the number of reform organisations in Punjab. This parallel spread of reformist consciousness and colonial education in Punjab was not coincidental since the educational programmes of reformist organisations were conceived with the purpose of responding to colonial education. Such a response assumed particular significance in the wake of continued criticism of 'foreign education'. Hence, it is important to examine the major points of this criticism especially from the standpoint of Punjabi reformists. As discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation, indigenous views were seldom taken into consideration in colonial government reports until the appointment of the Indian Education Commission in 1882. By inviting the testimonies of various prominent organisations and people working in each province, the Indian Education Commission headed by William Hunter gave the indigenous voice an official and powerful platform. These testimonies were perhaps the first comprehensive means of knowing how a large section of Indians perceived colonial education.<sup>274</sup> Besides highlighting a wide range of native grievances, the testimonies reflected an increasing educational consciousness among the masses at large. For colonial administrators, the Commission opened a Pandora's box as the British were now forced to confront a multitude of concerns from various individuals and organisations. For the Indians, it provided a much needed avenue to express their dissatisfaction with government education. For instance, a member of the Commission noted how

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<sup>274</sup> It is perhaps due to this reason that the Hunter Commission is widely considered the harbinger of a 'great educational awakening' in India because it set in motion a process of intellectual ferment within Indian society and paved the way for subsequent educational reforms. The impact of the Hunter Commission may be gauged from the fact that between 1880 and 1915, the colonial government appointed several commissions and passed a large number of resolutions on matters pertaining to education. See "The Victorian Era", in Syed Nurullah and J.P.Naik, *A History of Education in India*, 241-250.

“the cry began to be heard that the children of peasants were being ruined, and were unfitted for the shop or the plough, without finding the literary employment which had been their object.”<sup>275</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter, the late nineteenth century in Punjab was a period characterised by increasing criticism of colonial education. In the wake of such criticism, Punjabi reformers conceived their educational programmes with a view to developing an alternative to colonial education. As a result, some of the most systematic and enduring responses to colonial education came from the educational programs instituted by socio-religious reformers of the late nineteenth century. This study focuses on one such indigenous response, namely the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (D.A.V.) College of Lahore.<sup>276</sup> The D.A.V. institution was established by the Arya Samajis of Punjab as a memorial to their ideational mentor, Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883). Originating at Lahore, the D.A.V. network of schools and colleges gradually spread across the entire province of Punjab and various other parts of Northern India, thereby becoming one of the largest indigenous educational enterprises of British India. Before discussing the development of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic school as an alternative to contemporary government education, it is imperative to briefly study the emergence of the Arya Samaj in Punjab under whose aegis the D.A.V. movement was born.

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<sup>275</sup> *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 24-25.

<sup>276</sup> The ‘D.A.V. College’ was an inclusive term used to refer to the entire D.A.V. institution consisting of various departments such as the School, College and Boarding House. All of these departments came under the management of a central administrative body, namely the D.A.V. College Managing Committee.

Even though Hindus were in a minority in Punjab, they formed a heterogeneous community with people from various caste and occupational backgrounds.<sup>277</sup> Little wonder then that Punjabi Hindus hardly shared a single monolithic definition of reform. Different Hindu reformist organisations developed their own ideas of reform as they sought to adapt to the new colonial setting.<sup>278</sup> Accordingly, there exist various typologies of reform to describe the different currents of social and religious change in late nineteenth century India.<sup>279</sup> But one typology that has been employed since the nineteenth century to describe the two principal approaches adopted by Punjabi Hindu leaders is the binary of ‘revival’ and ‘reform’. The ‘revival’ approach was adopted by traditional teachers and priests who, having lost their power and social privileges in the new colonial milieu, responded with an orthodox defence of

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<sup>277</sup> See “Abstract No. 64, showing the General Distribution of Castes for Districts and States”, in Denzil Ibbetson, *Punjab Castes* (Lahore: Superintendent Government Printing, 1916).

<sup>278</sup> For a fairly exhaustive review of various kinds of Hindu reformers in colonial India, see *Amiya P. Sen, Social and Religious Reform: The Hindus of British India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). In this work, Sen reproduces excerpts from the writings and speeches of contemporary Hindu reformers in order to underscore the differentiated nature of ‘reform’ and the diverse ways in which the word ‘reform’ was understood and applied by Hindus in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century India.

<sup>279</sup> Kenneth Jones, for instance, has used the terms “orthodox” and “acculturative” to classify reform movements in nineteenth century Punjab. According to Jones, the “orthodox” movements were unaffected by the ‘colonial milieu’ and were largely a continuation of pre-colonial traditions. By contrast, the “acculturative” movements originated within the ‘colonial milieu’ and were pioneered by individuals whose lives were largely dependent on the interaction with the colonial dispensation. Kenneth W. Jones, "Socio-Religious Reform Movements in British India", 3.

their traditions.<sup>280</sup> Because of their rigid defence of *Sanatana Dharma* (the eternal religion), the ‘revivalists’ were seen as opposed to ‘reason’ and ‘reform’. Among Punjabi Hindus, the orthodox leaders or *Sanatanis*, as they were called, appeared to reject modern forms and practices. Some of the *Sanatanis* took several initiatives to preserve their traditional hold and give their voice a more powerful hearing. For instance, Pandit Shraddha Ram (1837-1882) a leading *Sanatani* from Jullundur, Punjab published his monograph entitled *Dharm Raksha* (Protection of Religion) in 1874, strongly defending his orthodox views. Shraddha Ram later founded the *Hindu Dharm Prakashik Sabha* “dedicated to the defence of Hindu orthodoxy.”<sup>281</sup> In 1889, the *Sanatan Dharma Sabha* was founded with the object of preaching the *Sanatan Dharma*. By 1901, the *Sabha* was sending preachers, maintaining an Anglo-Sanskrit High School and a Sanskrit *patshala*, in Lahore, besides “collecting a library of Sanskrit works and manuscripts.”<sup>282</sup> Therefore, the ‘revivalists’ as their name suggests, mainly sought to revive and conserve pre-existing traditions and beliefs.

In contradistinction to the ‘revivalist’ approach, the second approach was the ‘reformist’ approach that was adopted by Punjabi Hindus to deal with the changing colonial environment. The ‘reformists’ advocated a ‘rational’ approach to deal with the contemporary challenges faced by Hindu society. The ‘reformists’ largely came from and were driven by the new English educated class. Many members of this class were influenced by the rationalist temper of the European Enlightenment and the power of ‘reason’ to bring about both

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<sup>280</sup> Nita Kumar, for instance, has argued that the orthodox pandits of Benares (Varanasi) reacted to English education by setting up new institutions that preserved their old social positions. See Nita Kumar, *Lessons from Schools: The History of Education in Banaras* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000).

<sup>281</sup> Kenneth W. Jones, 28. For an overview of the various reformist endeavours launched by Punjabi Hindus from the middle of the nineteenth century, see “The Beginning of Change” in *ibid.* 1-30.

<sup>282</sup> *Census of India Vol. XVII A, Punjab Part I*, p. 115.

social and religious reform largely.<sup>283</sup> Much like colonial officials and missionaries, some of the ‘reformists’ looked down upon the ‘revivalists’ and regarded several Hindu customs and traditions as superstitions that were a hurdle in the path of ‘progress’ and ‘reform’. There was also a section of ‘reformists’ who had great respect for traditional customs but they could not reconcile these traditions with the liberal education they had received in government schools.

The ‘reformist’ approach was perhaps introduced in Punjab by the Brahma Samaj, a reform movement that originated at Calcutta, Bengal. The founder of Brahma Samaj was a Bengali brahmin named Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833)<sup>284</sup> who condemned idol worship and other popular religious practices. In their place, Roy advocated a universal monotheism based on the Upanishads. The social agenda of Brahma Samaj included campaigning against ‘regressive’ social customs such as the practice of *Sati* and supporting the legalisation of widow remarriage.<sup>285</sup> Some Bengalis who settled in Punjab during the mid-nineteenth century brought with them the reformist zeal of the Brahma Samaj, and established the first branch of the Punjab Brahma Samaj at Lahore in 1863. Thus, as Kenneth Jones has noted, the Bengalis supplied the first “antidote” to the English “poison” by providing a reformist model that

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<sup>283</sup> For a glimpse of how reason was used a tool for reform in Europe, see “Reforming Religion by Reason” in Roy Porter, *The Enlightenment* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991), 32-41.

<sup>284</sup> Among the first generation of English educated Indians, perhaps none is more well-known than Ram Mohan Roy. Often called the ‘Father of Modern India’, Roy is remembered for his advocacy of English education and his reception of western liberalism.

<sup>285</sup> For a brief history of the Brahma Samaj, see Spencer Lavan, “The Brahma Samaj: India’s first modern movement for religious reform”, in Robert D. Baird, ed. *Religion in Modern India*, 4th edition (New Delhi: Manohar, 2001), 1-25.

Punjabis could accept and follow.<sup>286</sup> However, the popularity of the Brahmo Samaj was short lived in Punjab. For various reasons, the Brahmos failed to generate a sustained interest among the Hindus. This was partly because of their Bengali origin and partly because of their apparent fondness of ‘western culture’. Another explanation for the low popularity of Brahmo Samaj in Punjab was perhaps the Brahmos’ digression from what were seen as the essential tenets of the movement. Due to various reasons, the Brahmo Samaj came to be seen as a spent force in the reformist environment of late nineteenth century Punjab. Lala Lajpat Rai (1846-1938), an Arya Samaji and an important figure in the socio-political life of contemporary Punjab, summarised the progressive decline of the Brahmo Samaj in the following words.

the Brahmo Samaj had ceased to be an effective shield for the protection of Hindu Theism from the assaults of Christians when Swami Dayanand completed his education with Virjananda about 1860. Raja Ram Mohan Roy's teaching was a denial of the superiority of the West in matters of spirit. He maintained that Hindu Theism was as good as, if not better than, Christian Theism taken at its best. Maharishi Debendranath Tagore was also firm on that point to the last, although he had repudiated the infallibility of the Vedas on the testimony of four young men sent to Benares to study and to pronounce upon their teaching. But Babu Keshub Chunder Sen's development was in a way a confession of Hindu inferiority, which once more strengthened the hands of the Christian missionary who at that moment was engaged in a most bitter campaign against Hinduism based on the opinions of Western scholars of Sanskrit.<sup>287</sup>

With the passage of time, Punjabis became more and more convinced that the Brahmo Samaj was not an adequate response to the challenges faced by Hindus in the new colonial setting. More importantly, both kinds of social movements, viz. the ‘reformist’ and the ‘revivalist’ were opposed to each other. The Punjabi Hindus needed a movement that transcended this dichotomy. This was where the Arya Samajis entered the scene, for many of the Samajis did not see ‘revival’

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<sup>286</sup> Jones, *Arya Dharm*, 15.

<sup>287</sup> Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj* 242.

and 'reform' as mutually exclusive categories. In fact, the agenda of the Arya Samaj could not be neatly boxed into either of these categories. While the Samaj was 'revivalist' for regarding the Vedas alone as the ultimate authority, it was 'reformist' for preaching and carrying out radical social reforms such as widow-remarriage, women's education, and advocating that the minimum marriageable age for girls and boys be raised to 16 and 25 years respectively. Therefore, it was in reference to the false dichotomy between 'revival and 'reform' that Lajpat Rai noted: "the strongest reforming agency in Punjab [Arya Samaj] appears to accept both. To them reform is revival and revival is reform."<sup>288</sup> Lajpat Rai further explained how the Arya Samaj transcended the distinction between 'reformists' and 'revivalists'.

The former [the reformers] are bent upon relying on reason and the experience of European society, while the latter [revivalists] are disposed to look at the Shastras and the past history, and the traditions of their people and the ancient institutions of the land which were in vogue when the nation was at the zenith of its glory. On our part [...] we are prepared to take our inspiration from both these sources though we prefer to begin with the latter and call in the assistance of the former mainly to understand and explain what is not clear and ambiguous in the latter. But so long as our conclusions are principally the same, I think the fight is not worth being continued and may be dropped for good.<sup>289</sup>

In other words, Lajpat Rai did not see a conflict between reformist and revivalist approaches. Rather, he advocated an eclectic blend of both traditional and Western sources. As we shall see later, it was this approach of 'eclecticism' that was manifested in the educational programme of the Arya Samaj and the D.A.V. institutions. The foregoing discussion indicates that the Arya Samaj tolerated and accommodated a wider range of beliefs and views as compared to other

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<sup>288</sup> See Lajpat Rai, "Revival as Reform", *Hindustan Review and Kayastha Samachar*, Volume x (1904), 474-82. Quoted in Amiya Sen, ed. *Social and Religious Reform*, 128.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.* 131.

contemporary reformist enterprises in Punjab. This was certainly one of the reasons that contributed to its huge popularity in Punjab.

It is also important to note that the late nineteenth century was marked by the refreshing outlook of English educated Punjabis like Lajpat Rai. This new attitude was representative of a larger transformation in the English educated literati in general. This transformation is succinctly expressed in the following excerpt from an article that appeared in *The Tribune* on March 19, 1881.

The first and historical generation of Young Bengal has passed away. English education has spread in other parts of the country, and their place is taken by Young India. The present generation of educated young men are far more sober in their opinions, and far less demonstrative in their actions. They have discarded all hope of literary renown in a foreign idiom, and, under the influence of that reaction, which always follows a violent movement, have turned back to the ancient institutions of the country.<sup>290</sup>

The “Young India” mentioned above was well represented in the Arya Samajes of Punjab and particularly, as we shall see in the next chapter, in the management of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College at Lahore. It is hardly surprising then that within a short span of two decades (1880-1890), the Samaj became the most prominent Hindu reform movement of colonial Punjab. The following pages delineate on the key principles of the Arya Samaj and discuss the factors that led to its growth in Punjab. But in order to fully understand the ideology of the Arya Samaj, it is imperative to have an idea of the educational philosophy of Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj who is counted amongst the most influential figures of modern India.<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> *The Tribune*, March 19, 1881.

<sup>291</sup> The impact of Dayanand Saraswati’s ideas on Indian nationalist consciousness can be gauged from the vast number of commemorations and testimonials written about him by leading nationalists like M.K.Gandhi and Aurobindo Ghosh. For instance, in

The Arya Samaj was established on 10<sup>th</sup> April, 1875 at Bombay by a *sanyasi* (ascetic) called Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883) who regarded the *Vedas* as the source of all knowledge. It is widely believed that by founding a reform movement based on the *Vedas* as the fundamental cornerstone of Indian civilisation, Dayanand pioneered a refreshingly novel approach to the socio-religious upheaval of the nineteenth century.<sup>292</sup> Dayanand believed that the ‘true’ meaning of the *Vedas* had been lost or forgotten in the modern age. So, he embarked upon a unique socio-religious mission with a view to reviving, in theory and practice, what he believed were the fundamental truths of the *Vedas*.<sup>293</sup> After completing his education, Dayanand spent seven years in classifying the existing corpus of Sanskrit literature into two categories, namely *arsha* and *unarsha* texts. The *arsha* texts alone were believed by Dayanand to have been composed by ancient *rishis* or sages, on account of which these texts

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an article written in 1914, Aurobindo Ghosh says that Dayanand “seized justly” on the Vedas as “India’s rock of ages” upon which he built “a whole education of youth, a whole manhood and a whole nationhood.” Placing Dayanand in the lineage of modern Indian reformers, Aurobindo added that while “Ram Mohan stopped short at the Upanishads, Dayanand looked beyond and perceived that our original seed was the Veda.” See Sri Aurobindo, ‘The Man and His Work’, in *Dayanand, Tilak, Bankim: Pioneers of Indian Renaissance* (New Delhi: DAV Publications, 2001), 14. Originally published under the title ‘The Man and His Work’ in the 1915 issue of Vedic Magazine.

<sup>292</sup> For various accounts, see *Ganga Ram Garg, ed. World Perspectives on Swami Dayanand Saraswati* (New Delhi: Concept, 1984).

<sup>293</sup> Dayanand had studied Sanskrit grammar at Mathura under the guidance of his teacher, Swami Virjananda. It was during this period that Virjananda is believed to have instilled in his pupil the idea that the contemporary ‘degeneration’ of Hindu society was a result of the “proliferation and influence of ‘spurious’ works of a sectarian nature, and aggravated by a parallel neglect of the real sources of Hinduism, the books of the rishis.” Jordens, 14.

were deemed to be ‘genuine’ as opposed to the *unarsha* (inauthentic) texts that were believed to have been written by ordinary men.<sup>294</sup> For example, in the study of Sanskrit grammar, Dayanand dismisses the use of *Laghu Kaumudi* and instead recommends students to rely on the *Ashtadhyayi*. The *unarsha* texts, according to Dayanand, contained many errors and consequently misled people to believe in false ideas and superstitions. As a result, the ‘true’ essence of the *Vedas* had become obscure. With a view to shedding light on what he regarded as the ‘correct’ interpretation of the *Vedas*, Dayanand composed the *Rig-Veda Bhashya* (commentary on the *Rig-Veda*) in 1878.

In 1876, Dayananda published his most celebrated monograph titled *Satyartha Prakasha* (Light on Truth). This work is the most comprehensive exposition of the Swami’s philosophical and educational views, many of which find expression in the ten core principles of the Arya Samaj that are discussed later in this section. It is hardly surprising then that the *Satyartha Prakash* laid down the ideational framework for the Arya Samaj and its educational institutions such as the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School discussed in this dissertation. The *Satyartha Prakash* was first composed in 1876 and later revised and republished in 1882. It consists of fourteen chapters pertaining to different themes. In the first chapter, Dayanand elaborates on the meanings of hundred different names of *Ishwar* (Supreme Being).<sup>295</sup> In this chapter, Dayanand claims that names such as *Agni*, *Indra*, *Shiva* and *Brahma* that find extensive mention in Vedic literature do not refer to different deities but to the various names of *Ishwar* signifying his different attributes and aspects. For instance, Dayanand says that since *Ishwar* is all-illuminating, one of his names is *Agni* and since *Ishwar* is all-compassionate and auspicious, one of his names

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<sup>294</sup> As we will see later in this chapter, Dayanand mentions some of the *unarsha* works that students should not read.

<sup>295</sup> See “Pratham Samullas (First Chapter)” in *Satyartha Prakash*, rev. ed. (New Delhi: Sarvadeshik Arya Pratnidhi Sabha, 1969), 1-20.

is *Shiva*.<sup>296</sup> Therefore, the Swami repeatedly emphasises on the exclusive worship of *Ishwar*. He says that none other than *Ishwar*, who is also called *Om* and who is indestructible, is to be worshipped.<sup>297</sup> It is in this sense that Dayanand's philosophy is called monotheistic and it was in this form that it found expression in his social and religious mission that he endeavoured to carry out through the Arya Samaj. Dayanand Saraswati finally laid down the core doctrine of the Arya Samaj on June 24, 1877 at Lahore. Prior to this date, the Arya Samaj had subscribed to 28 principles. These were revised and condensed in the first public meeting of the Lahore Arya Samaj held on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1877. It was here that the final doctrine of ten *niyams* or principles was promulgated. Every member of the Samaj is expected to follow these ten *niyams*.<sup>298</sup> Lajpat Rai explains that "all the Arya Samajes in India or elsewhere accept these principles and are governed by this constitution."<sup>299</sup> Therefore, Rai believes that these ten principles, which are outlined in the table below, constitute the "only authoritative exposition" of the beliefs and doctrines of the Samaj.

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<sup>296</sup> Ibid. 4-5.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid. 3.

<sup>298</sup> In his history of the Arya Samaj, Lajpat Rai has narrated how the Lahore Samaj "revised" and "settled" the constitution of the Samaj. See Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 58.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid.

**Table 2.2: Ten Principles of the Arya Samaj<sup>300</sup>**

1. *Parameshwar* (The Supreme Being) is the original source of all true knowledge and of everything known by its means.
2. *Ishwar* (God) is truth-consciousness-bliss, formless, almighty, just, merciful, unborn, infinite, immortal, all-beatitude, the source and the Lord of all, all pervading, omniscient, imperishable, incorporeal, unbegotten, unchangeable, eternal, pure and the creator of the Universe. *Ishwar* alone should be worshipped.
3. The Vedas are books of true knowledge. It is the paramount duty of every Arya to hear, learn, teach and recite the Vedas.
4. An Arya should always be ready to accept truth and to renounce untruth.
5. All conduct should be in accordance with *Dharma*, i.e. all actions should be done after a thorough consideration of truth and falsity.
6. The chief objective of the Samaj is to benefit the world, viz. by bringing about physical, spiritual, and social progress.
7. One should treat others with love, justice and with due regard to their merits.
8. Ignorance should be dispelled and knowledge should be increased.
9. One should not be contented merely with one's individual progress. One should understand that welfare of others includes the welfare of oneself.
10. In matters which affect the general social well-being, no one should allow his or her individuality to interfere with the general good, but in strictly personal affairs everyone may act with freedom.

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<sup>300</sup> I have translated these principles from the original Hindi principles. For the original list, see *Arya Samaj Ke Niyam-Upniyam* (Delhi: Sarvadeshik Arya Patinidhi Sabha, 1967). In translating the principles, I have borrowed some phrases from Lajpat Rai's translations. But it is worth quoting here Lajpat Rai's remarks on the challenges in translating Samajic principles. "The translation of these Principles", Rai cautions "must be regarded as approximate only. Some of the original words, such as *Dharma* and *Adharma*, have no exact equivalents in English." Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 101-2.

The fact that the Arya Samaj laid a special emphasis on education was evident from at least one of the aforementioned principles. The eighth principle unequivocally states that “ignorance must be dispelled and knowledge diffused.” The importance of education for the Samajis is also evident from a memorial that the Lahore Arya Samaj had addressed to the Hunter Commission in 1882.<sup>301</sup>

It is also clear from the ten Samajic principles that Dayanand Saraswati’s emphasis on the *Vedas* as well as the exclusive worship of *Ishwar* were an integral part of the Arya Samajic philosophy. It is interesting to note that the monotheistic vision of Dayanand Saraswati is often regarded as a departure from ‘mainstream’ Hinduism which is believed to be essentially polytheistic. John Nicol Farquhar (1861-1929), a Scottish missionary was perhaps the first to point out this apparent deviation in the ‘Vedic’ philosophy propagated by the Arya Samaj founder. Farquhar argued that unlike “ancient scholars” who used to invoke various different gods mentioned in the Vedas,

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<sup>301</sup> Lala Shyam Dass and Lala Dwarka Dass who were President and Secretary of the the Lahore Samaj explained in the following words why the Arya Samaj was qualified to express an informed opinion on the matter of education in Punjab. “The Arya Samaj is a reforming body, and as such it has always interested itself in the cause of education. It is scattered all over the country, and counts among its members, men of various degrees of education, information, intellect, and social position. The majority of its members are educated men. It has in its ranks graduates, district inspectors, head masters, and other teachers – men who have immediate connection with education, as also clerks employed in various departments. It has monthly organs of its own attached to the Arya Samajes of the places whence they are issued. Besides, some of the Samajes have got their own schools, where the subjects taught are generally Hindi and Sanskrit. The Lahore Arya Samaj, besides a Sanskrit school, has also a girls' school attached to it. The above are some of the opportunities which the Samaj has had of forming an opinion on the subject of education; the experience of this Samaj has been chiefly confined to the Punjab.” See *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 466.

Dayanand Saraswati “removes all the gods and leaves only the One.”<sup>302</sup> Since the exclusive worship of one God is a characteristic feature of Christianity, there are obvious parallels between Dayanand Saraswati’s agenda and monotheistic religions. For instance, the Protestant philosophy of ‘going back to the Bible’ appears to echo in the mission of the Arya Samaj. In this regard, Jakoob de Roover has noted that “the movement started by Dayanand further disseminated the normative Protestant understanding of religion”.<sup>303</sup> De Roover argues that by composing the *Satyarth Prakash* and laying down “one correct interpretation of Vedas and Shastras”, Dayanand Saraswati “mimicked protestantism” in various ways.<sup>304</sup> But this representation tends to exaggerate the parallels with the Protestant movement by focussing on only one aspect of the Arya Samaj. After all, the alleged similarity to the Protestant movement could be a coincidence since Dayanand Saraswati did not know English and was completely unaware of Western religious ideas. At the same time, it cannot be denied that there were contemporary reform movements that bore a strong resemblance to the Protestant model. As Sanjay Seth writes, several Hindus “came to reinterpret and redefine their religion in ways influenced by western accounts and critiques of it [...] The result was that the riotous pantheon of gods was downgraded, and Hinduism emerged, like other proper religions, as a philosophy and a set of coherent beliefs to which its adherents subscribed.”<sup>305</sup> However, some eminent Indologists do not see in the Samajic philosophy any major deviation from ‘mainstream’ Hinduism. Peter van der Veer, for instance, argues that Dayanand’s philosophy was based on several “Hindu” ideas such as “the monism of the Vedanta and the monotheism of the Shaivites and their

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<sup>302</sup> J.N. Farquhar, *Modern Religious Movements in India* (1914; rev. ed. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1977), 116.

<sup>303</sup> Jakoob de Roover, 194.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.* 195.

<sup>305</sup> Sanjay Seth, “Diagnosing Moral Crisis” in *Subject Lessons*, 62-63.

depreciation of image worship.”<sup>306</sup> It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to ascertain the extent to which Dayanand’s philosophy was aligned with the ‘essential’ spirit of Hinduism. What concerns us here is that the monotheistic philosophy of Dayanand Saraswati and his exclusive emphasis on the *Vedas* greatly influenced the programme of educational institutions such as the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic school that were opened in his name. For instance, as discussed in the fourth chapter of this dissertation, *Veda Patha* (study of the Vedas) was a subject in the D.A.V. school curriculum. Dayanand was convinced that a sound education based on the *Vedas* and *Arsha Granthas* was the only way to dispel falsehood. Since education formed the central plank of his broader socio-religious mission, Dayanand laid down an elaborate scheme of studies in his writings. Dayanand Saraswati has written on education in at least three of his compositions, namely the *Satyartha Prakasha*, *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh* and *Vyavhaar Bhanu*.<sup>307</sup> Needless to say, the educational ideals propagated by Dayanand in these works considerably influenced the world-views of Arya Samajis, thereby playing a pivotal role in shaping the ideology of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic Movement. Hence, it is imperative to discuss at some length the salient features of the educational philosophy of Dayanand Saraswati. A general idea of the Swami’s educational views may be had from his main work, the *Satyartha Prakash* whose second and third chapters discuss the meaning and importance of education as well as the texts that should be read throughout the course of student life.

Dayanand begins the second chapter by outlining some general child rearing practices. He then stresses the need for parents, especially mothers, to exercise great caution in teaching the infant how to speak so that the child learns

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<sup>306</sup> Peter Van der Veer, 51.

<sup>307</sup> The contents of *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh* and *Vyavhaar Bhanu* are discussed in detail in the fourth chapter of this dissertation.

to pronounce each alphabet correctly.<sup>308</sup> Furthermore, it is advised that until their eighth year, children should be taught by their parents and from their ninth year onwards, children should be sent to study under the guidance of a competent *Acharya* or teacher.<sup>309</sup> Dayanand also advises parents and teachers to be strict and to discipline young pupils by scolding or using mild force if necessary.<sup>310</sup> The Swami concludes the second chapter by saying that young children should be asked to emulate and adopt the good habits and righteous practices of their parents and teachers.<sup>311</sup>

In the third chapter of his *Satyartha Prakash*, Dayanand delineates his scheme of education by describing the successive stages of instruction in the course of student life. At the outset, the Swami says that parents should teach their children the *Gayatri Mantra* along with the meaning of each word.<sup>312</sup> The *Gayatri Mantra* prays for arousing and manifesting our mind and understanding. Having recited the *Gayatri Mantra*, students should perform *Sandhya*, which was used by Dayanand Saraswati as a collective term for bathing, gargling, *pranayama* (a controlled breathing exercise) and meditation. The practice of *Sandhya*, as discussed in detail in the fourth chapter of this

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<sup>308</sup> Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyartha Prakash* (1882; Repr., New Delhi: Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, 1969), 22.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid. 26-7.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid. 27. Here, the author substantiates his advice by citing a relevant verse from the *Mahabhashya* (of Patanjali), a commentary that explains the rules of grammar as expounded in Panini's *Ashtadhyayi*.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid. 28-29.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid. 31. The *Gayatri Mantra*, which Dayanand cites from the Yajur Veda (Chapter 39, Mantra 3), is considered highly auspicious and it is recited by millions of Hindus everyday. The Mantra reads as follows: *Om Bhoor Bhuvah vaaha, tat savitur varenyam, bhargodevasya dhimahi, dhiyo yo naha prachodayat* (Almighty, make strong my limbs, my speech, my vitals, my eyes, my ears and other senses).

dissertation, was an integral part of a student's daily routine.<sup>313</sup> After describing in detail the practice of *Sandhya* and the meanings of various religious, Dayanand proceeds to give a general outline of what he believed was the ideal scheme of studies.<sup>314</sup> The course of instruction according to Dayanand should begin with phonetics that should be taught according to the methods of *Siksa*, i.e. the branch of the *Vedanga* dealing with pronunciation of letters. This should be followed by a reading of Panini's *Ashtadhyayi*<sup>315</sup>, after which the *Dhatupatha* should be taught with meanings and ten *lakaras* (conjugational suffixes). Dayanand then advises students to read the *Ashtadhyayi* again along with supplementary books and *paribhasas* (technical definitions) in order to remove their doubts. After completing the *Ashtadhyayi*, students should read the *Mahabhasya* of Patanjali. These two texts, i.e. *Ashtadhyayi* and *Mahabhasya* were sufficient for a sound knowledge of Sanskrit grammar. Dayanand believed that by this process, intelligent students who studied daily should be able to complete *Ashtadhyayi* in one and a half years and the *Mahabhasya* also in about the same time. Thus, students could become masters of grammar in just three years.<sup>316</sup> Interestingly, Dayanand callously dismisses other elementary grammar textbooks such as the *Laghu Kaumudi* that were then commonly

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<sup>313</sup> Ibid. 33-34. After highlighting the importance of Sandhya, Dayanand outlines the performance of a ritual known as Agnihotra in which the Homa (fumigation) is performed with fire in an altar and certain other vessels. The Agnihotra was part of one of the five principal Mahayajnas that every Arya Samaji is expected to perform every day. Dayanand explains that the practice of Homa helps in the purification of the air and surrounding atmosphere, thereby creating a health and congenial environment. Ibid. 35.

<sup>314</sup> See "Atha Pathan Paatahan Vidhi (Scheme of Education)", in Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyartha Prakasha*, 56-62.

<sup>315</sup> The *Ashtadhyayi* is a foundational text of Sanskrit grammar. It expounds the rules on linguistics, syntax and semantics in the form of *Sutras* or aphorisms.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid. 57.

taught in Sanskrit *patshalas* of the time.<sup>317</sup> The study of grammar should be followed by the reading of *Nighantu* and the *Nirukta*, both of which should be finished within six to eight months. The *Nighantu and the Nirukta* is believed to be the oldest Indian work on etymology and semantics. A critical edition of the *Nighantu and Nirukta* was first published and translated in 1920.<sup>318</sup> The *Nighantu* is, in fact, a general term that refers to a collection of important words from the Vedic texts. “The compilation of the *Nighantu*”, explained Lakshman Sarup, “is the earliest known attempt at lexicography”.<sup>319</sup> The *Nighantu* then is a predecessor of the *Kosha* (lexicon or thesaurus) literature which later became an important part of Sanskrit grammar teaching. Given its deep connection with the Rigveda, the *Nighantu and Nirukta* was highly recommended by Dayanand Saraswati. Given his general inclination for ancient texts that alone were considered by Dayanand to be authentic, it is not surprising that Dayanand did not include the *Amarakosha* (which was a common grammar manual in the pre-colonial *patshalas*) in his list of recommended books.<sup>320</sup> The next part of Dayanand’s scheme includes Pingala’s principles of prosody, for which four months were deemed to be sufficient. This study was to be followed by a reading of some well-known texts such as the *Manusmriti*, the *Ramayana* of Valmiki, the *Mahabharata* up to the *Udyoga* chapter, and the *Viduraniti*, in order to inculcate good manners and avoid evil habits. The study of all these texts was to be completed in one year. The next course of instruction was in the

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<sup>317</sup> Dayanand believed that pupils would gain a better understanding of Sanskrit grammar if they were to devote three years to the exclusive study of *Ashtadhyayi* and *Mahabhasya*, than if they were to waste fifty years in the study of ‘spurious’ books such as Sarasvata-Candrika, Kaumudi, and Manorama. Ibid. 57-58.

<sup>318</sup> Lakshman Sarup, trans., *The Nighantu and The Nirukta* (London: Oxford University Press, 1920).

<sup>319</sup> Ibid. 14.

<sup>320</sup> For a complete list of works that Dayanand considered to be ‘inauthentic’, see ibid. 61.

six books of philosophy, all of which were to be completed within two years. At the end of this course, the four Vedas were to be read along with their four *Brahmanas* – *Aitareya*, *Satpatha*, *Sama* and *Gopatha*. Having read the Vedas, the students were advised to study the discipline of medicine (*Ayurveda*) for four years during which the works of *Caraka*, *Susruta* etc. should be read and knowledge of herbs etc. should be given. Students should also be required to practice the use of instruments for surgery, bandage, treatment and so on. This course of medicine should be followed by a course on the *Dhanurveda* or the science of government for which two years should be devoted. Then, the *Gandharva-Veda* or the science of music and dance should be taught by reading books such as the *Sama-Veda* and *Narad Samhita*. Finally, two years should be devoted to the study of astronomy and advanced mathematics. Therefore, Dayanand Saraswati wanted students and teachers to study in the aforementioned manner and thereby try to complete their education within twenty or twenty-one years.<sup>321</sup>

With a view to implementing his educational vision, Dayanand Saraswati established several Sanskrit *patshalas* across various cities of North India, especially at important pilgrimage centres such as Varanasi and Allahabad. But most of these schools that the Swami started in the 1870s were unsuccessful, perhaps due to their exclusive focus on Sanskrit and the corresponding prohibition to use the vernacular. Moreover, Dayanand Saraswati was probably unable to find qualified teachers who could suitably fit the roles he had envisioned.<sup>322</sup> Nonetheless, this early failure did little to deter the Arya Samajis from pursuing their program of educational reform. If anything, this failure instigated the Swami to rethink his strategy and revise his educational plans accordingly. By the spring of 1882, the idea of setting up an Anglo-Vedic institution was gaining ground among Arya Samajis but it was not

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<sup>321</sup> Ibid. 60.

<sup>322</sup> Saraswati, *Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati ki Atma Katha*, 17.

pursued seriously enough until the Swami's death in the autumn of that year. It is to that period that we turn in the next chapter. But before that, let us briefly examine the growth of the Arya Samaj in Punjab between 1890 and 1920.

#### GROWTH OF THE ARYA SAMAJ IN PUNJAB

##### Numbers

Although the Arya Samaj had been established at Bombay, it was in Punjab that the organisation found maximum appeal and its membership grew in large numbers. Several factors contributed to the growing popularity of the Arya Samaj in Punjab. One plausible reason, according to some scholars, is that Punjab had "a long history of imageless worship" which made it easier for Punjabis to accept Dayanand's rejection of image-worship.<sup>323</sup> Another factor that attracted large numbers of educated Hindus to join the rank and file of the Samaj was the organisation's aggressive stance and its unwavering commitment to the defence of Hindus both within and outside Punjab. But perhaps the most important reason for the popularity of the Samaj was that Dayanand's message instantly appealed to the new class of young educated Indians who had become disenchanted by contemporary 'indigenous' responses to the colonial milieu. The young educated class found in Dayanand's mission a refreshing world-view that at once satisfied their practical and spiritual problems. The Arya philosophy resolved the predicament faced by educated Hindus, as discussed earlier. Punjabi Hindus could now explain their rejection of popular religious customs without having to abandon their faith. They could now boldly face the missionaries who claimed that conversion to Christianity was the best choice to escape from the 'meaningless' world of popular Hindu 'superstitions'.<sup>324</sup> The

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<sup>323</sup> Peter van der veer, *Imperial Encounters: Religion and Modernity in India and Britain*, 51.

<sup>324</sup> For a typical missionary account of contemporary Indian society, see J. C Oman, *Cults, Customs and Superstitions of India* 1908.

significance of the moral anchor that Arya Samaj gave to Punjabi Hindus may be gauged from the following passage that Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) wrote in his history of the Arya Samaj.

The simple and spiritual religion of the Vedas, the philosophical teaching of the Upanishads, had been superseded by what was only an “affair of temples and material sacrifices, of shows and processions, of festivals spread over the whole year in honour of innumerable deities,” accompanied by all the paraphernalia of “bells and candles and vestments and ceremonials and incantations and tunes, unintelligible to those who heard them”, and in some cases even to those who uttered them.<sup>325</sup>

It is amply clear from the above passage that Lajpat Rai expressed his criticism of popular religion within the ideological framework of the Arya Samaj.

Another factor that led to the growth of the Arya Samaj in Punjab was the prevailing atmosphere of religious proselytization. It has also been noted earlier how the late nineteenth century was characterised by a pervasive feeling among the Punjabis at large that colonial education was inimical to their ancestral faiths. This fear of religious interference further fuelled the rise of the Arya Samaj in Punjab. Sri Ram Sharma, the biographer of Lala Hans Raj (1864-1939), has explained how these anti-colonial prejudices contributed to the growth of the Samaj.

English education had come as a solvent for all sorts of beliefs then tenaciously held. The Punjab was thus in the throes of a religious revival. It provided no answer, however, to the yearning of religious-minded young men, who were not prepared to submit to the West to the extent to which the Brahmo Samaj seemed to them to be submitting. The establishment of the Arya Samaj at Lahore provided such young men with an opportunity to fulfil their heart’s desire by joining a movement which was able to satisfy their patriotic instincts,

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<sup>325</sup> Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 68–69.

by standing on its own ground, rather than on anything borrowed from the West.<sup>326</sup>

Therefore, a variety of factors combined to make Arya Samaj the most preferred Hindu reform organisation in Punjab. As a result, within a decade of its existence in Punjab, the Arya Samaj overshadowed the influence of pre-existing Hindu reformers, be they orthodox *Sanatanis* or radical *Brahmo Samajis*. As a result, the Brahma Samaj, the Dev Samaj and other reformist organisations witnessed a significant decline in their membership with the result that by the end of the nineteenth century their presence in Punjab was almost negligible. As per the 1891 census, the Arya Samaj had 14,030 followers and it was clearly the most popular reform movement amongst the Punjabi Hindus far outstripping the Dev Samaj and the Brahma Samaj with 12 and 128 followers respectively.<sup>327</sup> By the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, the Arya Samaj movement had gained considerable popularity in Punjab as well as other parts of North India. This was testified by Lala Mulraj in a speech delivered by him in 1893, on the occasion of the sixteenth anniversary of the Lahore Arya Samaj. In this address, Mulraj reflected on the transformation that had occurred in the public image of the Samaj during the sixteen years that had elapsed since its establishment at Lahore. Mulraj noted that in the early years of its establishment, the Punjab Arya Samaj had few members and “very limited” funds. It indeed appears that in 1881 the Samaj was too small and insignificant to attract the attention of Census officials. This partly explains why Samaj membership is not enumerated in the 1881 Census. At this time, the Samaj also faced tremendous hostility from other Punjabi Hindu groups. “The orthodox among the Hindus and especially the Brahmans,” Mulraj

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<sup>326</sup> Sri Ram Sharma, *Mahatma Hans Raj: A Maker of Modern Punjab* (New Delhi: D.A.V. Publications Division, 1987), 9.

<sup>327</sup> See Appendix III: “Reform Societies Membership in Punjab, 1891-1921” in Jones, *Arya Dharm*, 327.

said, “were its determined enemies.”<sup>328</sup> However, things changed within a decade. As Mulraj noted in 1893, the situation was very different than what it had been sixteen years ago. The membership was now quite considerable since Arya Samajes had been established throughout Punjab as well as principal towns of the North Western Provinces. By 1891, there were about forty thousand Arya Samaj members all over the Indian subcontinent. Over the next four decades, the Samaj membership would grow to nearly ten lakhs.<sup>329</sup> Within Punjab alone, the Samaj was becoming increasingly popular by each passing decade. According to the 1911 Census returns, the maximum number of Arya Samajis were concentrated in the central districts of Punjab such as Lahore (8,555), Sialkot (27,910), Multan (6,547), Gujranwala (3,524), Gurdaspur (3,774).<sup>330</sup> Gradually, the membership of Arya Samaj increased in the southern and eastern parts of Punjab which had a higher percentage of Hindu population. Among the southern districts, the Samaj was most active in Hissar (3,506), Karnal (3,470) and Delhi (4,765).<sup>331</sup> By the time of the 1921 Census, the number of Arya Samajis in the whole of Punjab (including Delhi) was 2,23,153. This number was more than twelve times the number of all other Hindu

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<sup>328</sup> See Mulraj, *A Lecture on the Arya Samaj by Mulraj M.A., Delivered at the Sixteenth Anniversary of the Lahore Arya Samaj, on the 25th November 1893* (Lahore: Printed at the Anglo-Sanskrit Press, 1894).

<sup>329</sup> For a tabulated growth of Arya Samaj membership for the entire Indian subcontinent, see Table 2.3: “Growth in Membership of the Samaj, 1891-1941” in K.C. Yadav and K.S. Arya, *Arya Samaj and the Freedom Movement*, 23.

<sup>330</sup> *Census of India, 1911. Punjab. Part I* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1912), 134.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*

reformers combined.<sup>332</sup> The following table shows the increase in membership of the Arya Samaj in Punjab through four decades, from 1891 to 1921.

**Table 2.3: Combined Arya Samaj Membership in Punjab, 1891-1921<sup>333</sup>**

	1891	1901	1911	1921
Total	14,030	Not available	1,00,846	2,23,168
Males	8,103	9,183	57,956	1,24,860
Females	5,927	Not Available	42,890	98,308

**Table 2.4: District-Wise Arya Samaj Membership in Punjab, 1901-1921<sup>334</sup>**

	1901	1911	1921
Lahore	1,331	8,555	12,254
Sialkot	935	27,910	34,946
Gujranwala	649	3,524	Not Available
Gurdaspur	512	3,774	36,843
Delhi	129	4,765	12,281
Karnal	263	3,470	18,212
Rohtak	Not Available	Not Available	27,089

<sup>332</sup> Among other Hindu reformers, the majority were Nanak Panthis (9,723) followed by Dev Dharmis (3,597), Radha Swamis (3,112) and Brahmos (305). *Census of India, 1921. Vol. Part I. Punjab*, p. 181.

<sup>333</sup> These figures are based on Punjab Census Reports for the years 1891-1921. In 1911, Delhi was designated the capital of British India. It was then removed from Punjab and made into a separate administrative unit. From 1921 onward, the population of Delhi was enumerated separately in the decennial census reports. In this dissertation, however, I have combined the figures for Punjab and Delhi. Therefore, the 1921 entries in the table pertain to the region of Punjab including Delhi. So, it is important to note that in 1921, the Arya Samaj membership in Punjab (excluding Delhi) was 2,10,872.

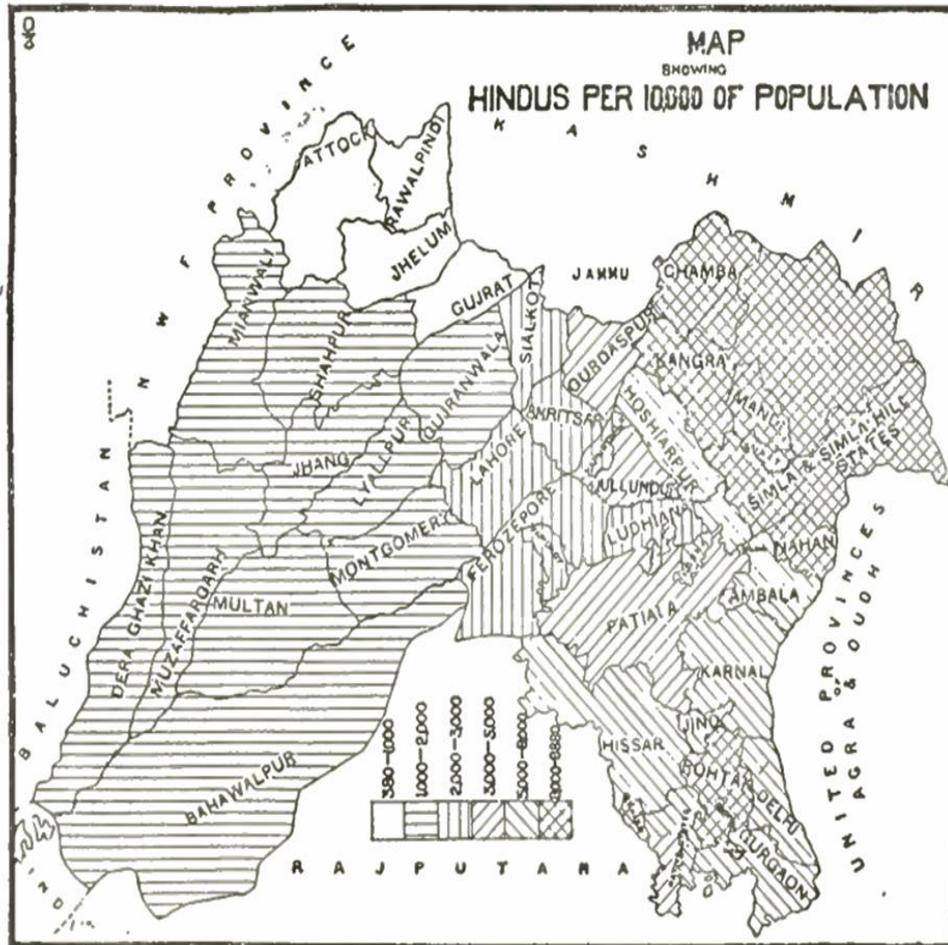
<sup>334</sup> These figures have been extracted from the Punjab Census Reports for the years 1891-1921.

The above district-wise figures for the Arya Samaj population reflect the gradual shift in the concentration and popularity of the Samaj from central to eastern Punjab. Since the Arya Samaj was established in Lahore, the initial influence was expected to be in central Punjab but as the movement gained momentum, it spread to areas with higher density of Hindus who formed the bulk of its members. We shall see later in the final chapter of this dissertation that a similar pattern emerged in the case of student enrollments for the network of Dayanand Anglo-Vedic schools.<sup>335</sup>

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<sup>335</sup> See pages 242-247 of this dissertation.

**Map 3: Distribution of Hindus in Punjab, ca. 1910**



[Source: *Census of India, 1911. Volume XIV. Punjab. Part I* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1912), p. 99]

Map 2 above shows that the distribution of Hindus in various districts of early twentieth century Punjab follows a characteristic pattern. In districts such as Gurdaspur, Patiala and Jullundur, the proportion of Hindus to the total population varies from 30 to 50 per cent. The percentage of Hindus increases as one travels eastward in southern and northern directions. So, in districts like Hissar and Delhi, the proportion of Hindus to the total population is 50 to 80 per cent and then in districts like Rohtak, Hindus comprise up to 88 per cent of

the population. It is fairly evident then that the proportion of Hindus to the total population increases as one travels east of Lahore. Incidentally, the maximum number of Arya Samajis were also located in eastern Punjab. It is evident from the Census reports that the Arya Samaj became more popular in eastern Punjab during the first quarter of the twentieth century. In 1901, seven districts where the Samaj was most popular were the following: Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Gurdaspur, Amritsar and Jullundur. All of these districts were located in western Punjab. In fact, it was reported that the movement “was not so active” in the South-East of Punjab where the Hindus were in majority. Districts like Ambala, Karnal and Delhi had as few as 313, 263 and 129 Arya Samaj members respectively.<sup>336</sup> But there was a remarkable turnaround over the course of the next two decades. Among the eight most prominent Arya Samaj centres mentioned in the 1911 Census (viz. Sialkot, Lahore, Multan, Delhi, Gurdaspur, Gujranwala, Hissar and Karnal), four of the centres namely Gurdaspur, Delhi, Hissar and Karnal were in eastern Punjab.<sup>337</sup> A decade later, Samaj membership grew rapidly in eastern Punjab. According to the 1921 Census, four out of the six most populous Arya Samaj centres in Punjab were located in the eastern part of the province. As discussed in the above table, the names of these six most popular Arya Samaj districts were: Gurdaspur, Sialkot, Rohtak, Karnal, Lahore, and Delhi.<sup>338</sup>

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<sup>336</sup> *Census of India, 1901. Vol. XVII A, Part I. Punjab*, 181.

<sup>337</sup> *Census of India, 1911. Part I. Punjab*, p. 134

<sup>338</sup> Two of these five districts namely Sialkot and Lahore were located in central and western Punjab. In Sialkot, a vast number of “Megh” castes had converted to the Arya Samaj. Whereas, Lahore had been the fulcrum and centre of the movement ever since the first Samaj was founded there in 1877. See *Punjab Census, 1921*, p. 181.

### Social Composition

The membership of the Arya Samaj in Punjab comprised of men and women belonging to a wide range of caste groups and occupations. Out of a total of 9,105 Punjabi men who were returned as Arya Samajis by the 1901 census, about 3,394 belonged to the *Khatri* caste which was the most dominant caste group among Punjabi Hindus. They were mostly merchants or traders who had been among the first to receive English education in the province. The *Khatri*s were followed by *Aroras* (1,627) and *Brahmans* (1,293) as the largest caste groups within the rank and file of the Samaj. At this time, it was the upper section of Punjabi Hindus and particularly the English educated class that largely comprised the bulk of the membership of the reformist organisation. There was also a significant presence of traders and artisans, represented largely by *Banias* (444) and *Jats* (300). But the representation of lower castes was still very low at this stage as evident from the relatively low number of *Sunars* (216) and *Kumhars* (69). The representation of artisans and lower caste groups was quite significant within the Samaj considering that *Rajput* (167), *Sud* (151), *Kaith* (134), *Kalal* (125), *Jhiwar* (110), *Mahajan* (108), and *Bhatia* (70) were among other principal castes that filled the ranks of the Samaj in Punjab.<sup>339</sup>

Within a decade, that is by 1911, the situation changed dramatically after the inclusion within the Samaj of a large section of *Meghs* who were a low caste group that had recently reconverted to Hinduism. This group with a total of 22,115 members now formed the majority within the Samaj. It was followed by *Khatri*s (17,237), *Aroras* (10,547) and *Jats* (9,203). There were also a very significant increase in the number of *Rajputs* (2,403) and *Sunars* (1,009). In addition, a total of 2,533 persons were returned as belonging to various “menial castes.”<sup>340</sup> Over the next few decades, the share of artisans and lower castes in the Samaj increased further.

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<sup>339</sup> *Punjab Census, 1901*, p. 116.

<sup>340</sup> *Punjab Census 1911*, p. 137.

It is clear then that within a matter of three decades, the Arya Samaj had succeeded in gaining followers from a wide gamut of social and economic backgrounds in the province. This was perhaps because of its “universally acceptable” philosophy of “going back to the Vedas” as also due to the multi-faceted nature of its reformist agenda that included among other things, famine relief and orphan relief. Be it the famine of 1897 that affected the Central Provinces of India or the earthquake of 1905 that struck Dharamshala and Kangra, the Arya Samaj sent students from the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College of Lahore to distribute relief and rescue orphans from calamity-stricken areas. On their way back to Lahore, the young Samajis would collect subscriptions and win the goodwill of people.<sup>341</sup>

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Arya Samaj pervaded nearly every aspect of the social life of the province and would continue to do so until at least the third decade of the century. It was during this period that significant work was carried out by the Samaj in the domain of education. The most notable achievement of the Samajis in this regard was the formation of a large network of Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (D.A.V) schools and colleges across the entire province of Punjab as well as several parts of Northern India. The subsequent chapters discuss the genesis and growth of the D.A.V movement.

#### CONCLUSION

This chapter has delineated the rise and growth of the Arya Samaj, the parent organisation of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic education movement that forms the central focus of this dissertation. I began by discussing the criticism of colonial education, particularly as voiced by Arya Samaj members and other contemporary socio-religious reformers. This criticism was instrumental in shaping the establishment of educational enterprises in late nineteenth century Punjab. Subsequently, I described the philosophical and educational views of

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<sup>341</sup> Pandit Vishun Lal Sharma, *Hand Book of the Arya Samaj* (Allahabad: Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, United Provinces, 1912), 93-94.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj and the man in whose memory the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic institutions were established. Finally, I discussed the spread of the Arya Samaj in Punjab and in doing so, we identified some notable patterns. For instance, the Samaj was initially concentrated in central Punjab but gradually became more popular in the eastern part of the province. Moreover, the Samaj was initially largely dominated by high caste groups but gradually came to include a large section of lower castes. The overall purpose of this chapter has been to provide a background for understanding the ideational framework that inspired the visionaries and architects of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic movement.

### **CHAPTER 3: THE DAYANAND ANGLO-VEDIC SCHOOL, CA. 1885-1905**

#### INTRODUCTION: BETWEEN 'TRADITION' AND 'MODERNITY'

The Arya Samajis who took charge of the D.A.V. movement following the death of Dayanand Saraswati conceived of an educational programme consisting of two objectives. The first objective of this programme was to provide instruction in western literature and sciences without the religious and colonial framework that existed in government schools. The second objective of the Samajis was to implement the educational vision of their departed leader, Swami Dayanand Saraswati.<sup>342</sup> With these two ends in view, the Samajis earnestly embarked upon the task of laying down the framework of an educational model that would be 'Anglo' and 'Vedic' at once. The Anglo-Vedic ideal of the D.A.V. Movement was embodied in the constitution of the College Society itself. The third rule of the Society's charter stated that the objectives of the D.A.V. Society were to "encourage and enforce" the study of Hindi literature, classical Sanskrit (including the *Vedas*), and English literature and

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<sup>342</sup> These members of the Samaj were not designated by Dayanand Saraswati for this purpose but they were deeply influenced by the Dayanand's overall mission and his emphasis on education.

sciences respectively.<sup>343</sup> The Anglo-Vedic scheme of the D.A.V. educational program was thus designed to ensure that students acquired a knowledge of English literature and sciences without having to neglect their vernacular (Hindi) and classical literature (Sanskrit). To give this educational vision a practical shape, D.A.V. leaders formulated a detailed scheme of studies that included, on the one hand, a course of English books largely adopted from the government curriculum and, on the other hand, a selection of Hindi books and Sanskrit texts. Thus, in the D.A.V. curriculum, that came to be instituted, the Anglo and Vedic aspects were tied together and taught in the form of distinct subjects. An educational programme comprising of these dual objectives was conceived and first propounded in a draft scheme prepared by the principal founders of the D.A.V. movement. The preamble of this draft scheme that was published in the first report of the D.A.V. College clearly illustrates these twin objectives.

We propose to establish an educational institution which will supply the shortcomings of the existing systems, and combine their advantages. The primary object will, therefore, be to weld together the educated and uneducated classes by encouraging the study of the national language and vernaculars; to spread a knowledge of moral and spiritual truths by insisting on the study of classical Sanskrit; to assist the formation of sound and energetic habits by a regulated mode of living; to encourage sound acquaintance with English literature; and to afford a stimulus to the material progress of the country by spreading a knowledge of the physical and applied sciences.<sup>344</sup>

Armed with the above educational vision, the D.A.V. leaders set out to institute a curriculum that would syncretise 'western' and 'traditional' knowledge systems in the way these were understood by the Arya Samajis of the day. The dual character of the D.A.V. school is obvious from the institution's curriculum

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<sup>343</sup> See clauses (a), (b) and (c) of Rule III in *Draft Rules for the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Committee* (Lahore: Vidyaprakashak Press, 1885).

<sup>344</sup> This quote (undated) has been excerpted from the draft of the preamble as quoted in Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 182-183.

which included the study of Hindi and Sanskrit literature alongside the study of western literature and sciences. The simultaneous emphasis on both the traditional and western aspects was part of the original scheme of the D.A.V. institution. Existing literature on the D.A.V. movement is limited to a superficial analysis of this scheme on the basis of which the character of D.A.V. movement is interpreted as ‘eclectic’. In a major departure from existing approaches, my dissertation endeavours to go beyond a mere cursory review of the educational scheme promulgated by D.A.V. leaders by determining the extent to which the D.A.V. movement conformed to ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ educational models.<sup>345</sup> Viewing tradition as a continuously evolving structure, I denote those aspects of the D.A.V. education model as ‘traditional’ which resonate or correspond closely with similar practices followed in the ‘traditional’ *patshalas* or village schools that predated colonial rule. These aspects of the D.A.V. curriculum or pedagogy need not be exact replicas of the *patshala* model. My dissertation then examines the extent to which these aspects of the traditional *patshala* model were, intentionally or otherwise, adapted and redefined by D.A.V. authorities.

This chapter of my dissertation examines the simultaneous presence of ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’ in the D.A.V. movement by highlighting how these two aspects were blended together in the economic and educational model conceived by D.A.V. leaders. In doing so, this dissertation seeks to answer important questions that have not been sufficiently explored. For instance, which aspects of the D.A.V. movement may be classified as ‘traditional’ and which ones as ‘modern’? What was the curriculum that actually came to be practised in the D.A.V. schools, and, how far was it different from the

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<sup>345</sup> The criteria used in my study to define these models are outlined in the introductory section of this dissertation. See the “Introduction” of this dissertation for an elaborate discussion on the definition of tradition.

government school curriculum of the time? It is these questions that the following pages will attempt to answer.

THE DAYANAND ANGLO-VEDIC SCHOOL OF LAHORE: GENESIS AND GROWTH

### Setting Up

The idea to establish a school where both English and Vedic literature would be taught was first mooted by some members of the Arya Samaj in the spring of 1882.<sup>346</sup> Later on, in the beginning of 1883, Pandit Guru Dutt Vidyarthi (1864-1890) organized a “scheme for the establishment of a science school in connection with the Arya Samaj.”<sup>347</sup> There is no substantive evidence to suggest the involvement of Dayanand Saraswati in these initial proposals. But none of these early proposals were considered seriously enough until the death of Swami Dayanand Saraswati on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1883, an event that galvanised the Aryas into action and generated among them a burning desire to build a lasting memorial in honour of the Swami. The singular event of Dayanand’s death proved to be the strongest uniting factor for all Arya Samajis. United in grief, the leadership of the Arya Samaj felt a strong commitment to their shared ideology. Thereupon, the Aryas began to ponder seriously over the idea of constructing a memorial in honour of their departed leader. With such an end in view, the Lahore Arya Samaj convened a public meeting on 8th November 1883, barely ten days since the death of their leader. The events that transpired at this historic gathering of the Samajis are best described by a contemporary account that was later published in the *Arya Patrika* of 20<sup>th</sup> June 1885.<sup>348</sup> It was at this meeting that Lala Lal Chand (1852-1912), a prominent

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<sup>346</sup> *The Arya*, May 1882

<sup>347</sup> *The Tribune*, April 12, 1884.

<sup>348</sup> “On this occasion the spirit of grief had given place to that of gratefulness, and the touch of enthusiasm seemed to reverberate through every nerve and heart. There was one united purpose that the glorious life of the departed Swami should be immortalized,

Arya Samaj leader and President of the Provisional Collections Committee of the Lahore Samaj, circulated an appeal to found an Anglo-Vedic college in the memory of Swami Dayanand Saraswati.

The one mission of Swami Dayanand Saraswati's life was to preach the sublime truths of the Vedas among mankind and to dissuade us from the path of error [...] It demands that in deep gratitude to his revered memory some memorial be raised in honour which may visibly typify his life by being as great as he was and as useful as his own work. It has, accordingly been proposed to establish in his honour an Anglo-Vedic College, which by diffusing the light of western culture and knowledge, and unveiling the hidden treasures of Vedic lore, will, at the same time, remove a long felt want.<sup>349</sup>

A little later, Lal Chand circulated another note among the prominent Arya Samajis. This note contained a draft scheme briefly outlining the chief objects and rationale behind setting up the proposed institution. The next concern was regarding the financing of the institution. To resolve this problem, the Aryas took to fund-raising through individual donations and subscriptions. Although they managed to raise a substantial amount of nearly Rs. 11,000 by July 1885, this was still a far cry from the capital needed to realise their dream of setting up an Anglo-Vedic institution. There was a silver lining in this otherwise bleak financial situation that the Samajis were facing. On 3rd November 1885, a letter was received from Lala Hans Raj (1864 - 1938). Hans Raj was a fresh graduate who had stood second among the successful candidates that passed the B.A. Examination of Punjab University in 1885. In his letter, Hans Raj offered to

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and the proposal to found an Anglo-Vedic College in honour of his memory, was unanimously adopted. The sight that followed was worth observing. Though the meeting was composed mostly of middle-class men, from 7,000 to 8,000 rupees were subscribed on the spot. Women and children and even poor menials zealously came forward with their mite." See Arya Patrika, June 20th, 1885. Quoted in Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 185.

<sup>349</sup> Sri Ram Sharma, *Mahatma Hans Raj: A Maker of Modern Punjab*, 13-14.

serve as honorary headmaster of the proposed institution. The impact of Hans Raj's letter on the Arya Samajis in general and D.A.V. leaders in particular may be gauged from the following words of another contemporary leader, Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1928) who is also counted among the founding figures of the D.A.V. Movement.

This young man, Lala Hansraj, had just graduated after a brilliant University career and had an equally bright future before him. The call of duty to religion and to the Motherland, however, proved too strong to be ignored, and he offered to serve the Institution as a teacher free of any remuneration, his elder brother agreeing to share his scanty salary with him. For the first two years he served as Honorary Headmaster, and then for twenty-four years consecutively served as Honorary Principal.<sup>350</sup>

The singular act of sacrifice by Hans Raj "drove the educational movement forward with new vigour."<sup>351</sup> The reception of his letter by the Executive Committee of the Lahore Arya Samaj hastened the process of founding the school and events now proceeded fairly quickly.<sup>352</sup> Fund-raising speeches and

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<sup>350</sup> Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 186.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid. 73. Hans Raj was encouraged by his elder brother Lala Mulk Raj Bhalla to work for the cause of the D.A.V. movement. Mulk Raj who was then an accountant financially supported his younger brother, Hans Raj, by giving him half of his monthly income.

<sup>352</sup> "On 10th November 1885, the draft constitution of the D.A.V. society was laid before the same body. It was examined in detail in a series of nine meetings spread over two weeks. On November 29, the scheme was finally approved. The Lahore Arya Samaj invited the representatives of the principal Arya Samajes, which had taken an active interest in raising subscription for the movement, to meet at Lahore on January 31, 1886. It was at this small gathering that the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Trust and Management Society was born. The constitution formulated by Lala Lal Chand was considered, modified in some minor details, and finally adopted. The first meeting of the Managing Committee elected under the constitution was held on February 27,

campaigns were carried out with great force and the “persuasive eloquence” of Guru Datt, Lajpat Rai and Lal Chand ensured that the funds of the D.A.V. Society stood at Rs. 32,000 in the year 1886. This small sum of money was supplemented by various other means such as monthly subscriptions, some of which were as high as Rs. 300 per month.<sup>353</sup>

The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Trust and Management Society was finally registered on 16th August 1886.<sup>354</sup> Lal Chand was elected the first president of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee and he served in that capacity from 1886-1908. Along with Sain Das (President of Lahore Arya Samaj from 1886-1890), Lal Chand framed the constitution and rules for the D.A.V. College Society as early as 7th September 1885. Based on this document, the chief objects of the D.A.V. College Society were laid down in the following rule (no. III) of the society’s constitution.

The objects of the Society are –

1st – To establish in the Punjab an Anglo-Vedic College Institution which shall include a School, a College, and Boarding-House as a memorial in honour of Swami Dayanand Saraswati with the following joint purposes, viz.

a) To encourage, improve and enforce the study of Hindi literature.

b) To encourage and enforce the study of classical Sanskrit and of Vedas.

c) To encourage and enforce the study of English literature and sciences, both theoretical and applied.

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1886. Office bearers were elected on March 20, 1886. Lala Lal Chand, M.A., was elected the first President and Lala Madan Singh, the first secretary.” See Sri Ram Sharma, *Mahatma Hans Raj*, 17.

<sup>353</sup> Sri Ram Sharma, *The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Lahore, A Brief History*, 4.

<sup>354</sup> The certificate of registration of the D.A.V. College Society was read before members of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee in a meeting held on 26 September 1886. See *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 34 (1886-1892), 43-46.

2nd. – To provide means for giving technical education, in connection with the Anglo-Vedic College Institution as far as it not inconsistent with the proper accomplishment of the first object.<sup>355</sup>

In order to manage the routine affairs of the D.A.V. institution, a special committee known as the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Managing Committee was formed as a subsidiary of the D.A.V. College Society. This Managing Committee consisted of representatives from any Arya Samaj branch that had contributed at least one thousand rupees to the D.A.V. College Society. There was no upper limit to the number of members who would form the Managing Committee but to avoid unchecked abuse of power, the Committee had to be dissolved and re-elected every three years.<sup>356</sup>

In its third meeting, held on 24th April 1886, the Managing Committee decided that the D.A.V. school would be opened on the first of June 1886. To this end, it was desired that a prospectus be prepared and published.<sup>357</sup> The **Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (D.A.V.)** High School was finally opened at Lahore on 1st June 1886 and two years later, on 1st June 1888, college or intermediate classes were begun. The first headmaster of the D.A.V. School, Lahore was Hans Raj who served on this post until 1889 when he was appointed as Principal of the newly opened D.A.V. College. The post of headmaster was briefly held by Diwan

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<sup>355</sup> *Draft Rules for the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Committee* (Lahore: Vidyaprakashak Press, 1885).

<sup>356</sup> For instance, after the Committee was reconstituted in 1898, it had 41 members belonging to various Arya Samajes across the Punjab. At this time, the Lahore Samaj had the maximum representation with as many as 10 Committee members being appointed from there. In terms of numbers, Lahore was followed by Rawalpindi (represented by 4 members), Amritsar, Hissar and Multan, all of which were represented by 3 members. See Proceedings of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee held on the 26th February 1898. In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 6A.

<sup>357</sup> See “Teesra Jalsa [...] 24.4.1886 ko dopahar ke 3 baje”, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 34, p. 21.

Chand (1889-1904) and Ram Chand (1904-1905) until the appointment of Bakshi Ram Rattan on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1905. Ram Rattan served as the headmaster of the D.A.V. School, Lahore from 1905 until 1931 and it was primarily during his tenure that the D.A.V. School, Lahore came to enjoy a wide reputation across Punjab. Therefore, I have chosen to limit the scope of this dissertation to the period under the headmastership of Bakshi Ram Rattan.

### Growing: From One to Many

Within one year of the establishment of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School at Lahore, over five hundred students joined the institution. Year after year, the number of student enrollments kept on increasing. By 1890, there were 730 students enrolled in all the classes of the school.<sup>358</sup> The academic results during the initial years of the school also greatly exceeded the expectations of most Samajis. Barely one year after the establishment of the D.A.V. school at Lahore, the Punjab Administration Report for 1887-88 noted that even though the D.A.V. School received no financial aid from the government, it had managed to produce nineteen successful candidates for the Entrance Examination (a government examination held for university admissions). This number was the highest for any other school in the Province of Punjab. Even the proportion of successful candidates which was 41 percent, was “higher than most other institutions.”<sup>359</sup> Such encouraging results were followed by the offer

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<sup>358</sup> It is interesting to note that the D.A.V. School, Lahore was more popular than other contemporary institutions in Punjab such as the Khalsa College School, Amritsar that had opened seven years after the D.A.V. School, Lahore. By the end of 1896, the total number of student enrollments at the Khalsa School was reported as 297. While the majority of these were Sikhs, 53 of the students were Hindus and 5 were Musims. See *Report on the working of the Khalsa College School for the two years ending 31st March 1896*, 7.

<sup>359</sup> “Report on the Administration of the Punjab for 1887-88” quoted in Sri Ram Sharma, *Mahatma Hans Raj*, 51.

of government 'recognition' for the D.A.V. school, Lahore. It is important to recall that the architects of the D.A.V. movement had conceived of the D.A.V. school as an independent private institution. So, the D.A.V. school authorities had never applied for 'recognition' or 'grants-in-aid' from the colonial government. But the offer of 'recognition' from the Punjab Education Department was not rejected by Hans Raj, then headmaster of the school, mainly because government recognition enabled the D.A.V. students to receive government scholarships that they had already been granted.

A string of early academic achievements continued to embellish the image of the newly founded D.A.V. institution and make its visionaries proud. The school passed the largest number of students (in the whole of Punjab) in the Matriculation Examination of 1888. A similar success story repeated itself in the case of the D.A.V. College (or the College Department of D.A.V. College) which passed the largest number of students in the Intermediate Examination of 1892. Such exceptional results encouraged the D.A.V. College Managing Committee to further expand the institution. As a result, Degree Classes were begun in 1893 and the M.A. course in Sanskrit was added in 1895. Therefore, in less than a decade of its establishment, "the tiny school had developed into a full fledged College providing instruction up to the M.A. and even beyond."<sup>360</sup> In the final decade of the nineteenth century, various departments (or institutions) were opened under the auspices of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. Some prominent examples include the Engineering Class which had been opened in 1895 and the Ayurvedic Department which was taken over from the Medical College, Lahore in 1901.<sup>361</sup>

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<sup>360</sup> Sri Ram Sharma, *The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Lahore*, 5.

<sup>361</sup> A list of all prominent D.A.V. institutions that were opened within the first twenty-five years of the movement is given in the final chapter of this dissertation. The various institutions within the ambit of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee were referred to as "Departments" of the D.A.V. College (which was used as an umbrella term) in

All of these were institutions for boys. This was partly because Dayanand Saraswati believed that boys and girls should be educated in separate institutions. It appears that some of the D.A.V. pedagogues were initially unenthusiastic about the cause of women's education. But by the 1890s, several girls' schools and colleges such as the *Kanya Mahavidyalaya* of Jullundur were founded by prominent Arya Samaj leaders to further the cause of female education.<sup>362</sup>

The early success of the D.A.V. movement appears to have been well received by government officials, especially if one goes by the administrative reports. For instance, in his review of the annual report of education in Punjab for the year 1888 - 89, the Lieutenant-Governor of the province, Sir James Broadwood Lyall (1838-1916) noted that the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School and College established at Lahore was a shining example of how communities may take the initiative of educating their children. He urged other classes and communities to emulate the example shown by the Arya Samaj in financing and promoting educational institutions.<sup>363</sup>

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the institutional reports. So, in the annual reports of the D.A.V. College Society, the D.A.V. School of Lahore was called the "School Department" of the D.A.V. College, Lahore.

<sup>362</sup> The Kanya Mahavidyalaya was established in 1890 by none other than Hans Raj, principal of D.A.V. College, Lahore. For a detailed analysis of the history of this institution, see Madhu Kishwar, "Arya Samaj and Women's Education: Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Jalandhar", in *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 21, No. 17 (Apr. 26, 1986), 9-24. For a more comprehensive analysis of the Arya Samaj endeavours in the domain of women's education, see Madhu Kishwar, "The Daughters of Aryavarta," in *The Indian Economic and Social History Review*, Vol. 23, No. 2, (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1986), 151-186.

<sup>363</sup> Letter No. 1508 "from H.C. Fanshawe, Esquire, Offg. Secretary to Government, Punjab and its Dependencies to C.J.Lyall, Esquire, Offg. Secretary to the Government

Notwithstanding its official encouragement and recognition of the D.A.V. movement, the Punjab government was occasionally reluctant in helping the cause of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. For instance, they once refused to grant permission for a building site and on another occasion refused to give to the D.A.V. management one of the government plots that was apparently lying within the boundary of the D.A.V. College Building. But, barring the existence of a few bureaucratic hurdles, the colonial government does not appear to have opposed the D.A.V. movement. As Lajpat Rai noted: “No bureaucracy loves people who can do big things without their help and guidance; much less a foreign bureaucracy.”<sup>364</sup> Nonetheless, Rai noted that, on the whole, the attitude of the Department of Public Instruction, Punjab and the University has been fair.<sup>365</sup> In view of the prevailing conditions, it would be worth knowing how the D.A.V. institution was able to sustain itself without any financial support from the government. With a view to understanding this, the following section examines the various means used by Arya Samajis to raise funds for the D.A.V. College.

#### THE FINANCIAL MODEL

##### Raising Funds: A ‘Traditional’ Approach?

One of the objectives of the D.A.V. movement, as Lajpat Rai stated in his monograph, was “to develop a spirit of self-help and self-reliance in a community in which those qualities had by lapse of time and want of opportunities, reached a low level.”<sup>366</sup> The need to develop self-reliance was all the more necessary at this time when the network of self-sustaining indigenous

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of India, Home Department” dated Lahore, 15th October 1889, in Proceedings of the Home (Education) Department, Nos. 76-106 A, January 1890.

<sup>364</sup> Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 190.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid. 191.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid. 190.

*patshalas* had declined and the colonial government had become the primary agent of education in the province. So, it was a matter of great pride that a community could educate their children without having anything to do with the government. Hence, in order to build the D.A.V. institutions on the principle of self-reliance, the D.A.V. College Managing Committee maintained “an unwritten law” that forbade the managers from seeking any kind of monetary assistance from the Government.<sup>367</sup> By devising a model of economic self-sufficiency, the D.A.V torchbearers scripted one of the most remarkable growth stories in the educational history of nineteenth and twentieth century India. The fact that a wide network of D.A.V. institutions gradually spread across the whole province of Punjab without any financial aid from the government is something the later generations would recall with pride. In 1914, Lajpat Rai could proudly write that “this principle (of self-reliance) has been acted upon, unless a petty grant of a few thousand rupees made by the University be considered an exception.”<sup>368</sup> Other contemporary writings corroborate Rai’s observations and further testify to the fact that the D.A.V. College received no financial aid from the government. For instance, Bakshi Ram Rattan, who was Headmaster of D.A.V. School, Lahore (1905-1931), also recounted how the D.A.V. College Managing Committee adhered to its principle of not depending on government aid. To substantiate his case, Ram Rattan refers to an informal letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> August 1912 written by Mr. Crosse, an official of the government education department to Hans Raj, then president of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. Through this letter, Mr. Crosse informed Hans Raj that the D.A.V. College could easily avail of government aid without going through any further inspections from the department of public instruction. But the letter failed to convince Hans Raj and the D.A.V. College Managing

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<sup>367</sup> Ibid. 189.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid.

Committee to receive financial aid from the government.<sup>369</sup> One of the primary reasons for declining the government grants was that these came with conditions and Hans Raj knew that complying to government regulations meant jeopardizing the integrity and autonomy of the D.A.V. movement. Thus, there is little doubt that at least in the first forty years of its existence, the D.A.V. institutions were by and large maintained and sustained without any financial assistance from the government. From the 1920s onwards, as the network of D.A.V. institutions expanded across the Punjab, many D.A.V. institutions such as the D.A.V. Ayurvedic College of Lahore and the D.A.V. Schools and Colleges of Rawalpindi started receiving large subsidies and grants from the colonial government.<sup>370</sup> Such individual cases of government funding were possible because of the discretion enjoyed by several individual D.A.V. institutions that were affiliated to the D.A.V. College Managing Committee at Lahore. But the D.A.V. School at Lahore, about which this dissertation is primarily concerned, remained a self-reliant institution especially during the period 1880-1930. It is therefore interesting to see how the Arya Samajis reinvented and reinvigorated traditional economic models of decentralized and community funding for their main educational institution.

A scrutiny of the annual budgets of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee reveals the major sources of income for the D.A.V. institution. For instance, in the year 1893-94, the actual income of the D.A.V. College

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<sup>369</sup> See "Letter dated 12-8-1912 from Mr. Crosse to Hans Raj" in Bakshi Ram Rattan, *Some Educational Problems and Movements* (Lahore: Arya Vidya Sabha, 1928), 45.

<sup>370</sup> Some scholars such as Vickie Langohr have used these cases to argue that "British subsidies were essential to the functioning of many DAV schools and colleges." See Vickie Langohr, "Educational 'Subcontracting' and the Spread of Religious Nationalism: Hindu and Muslim Nationalist Schools in Colonial India" in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Volume 21, Number 1&2 (Duke University Press, 2001), 44.

Managing Committee was Rs.19,462.<sup>371</sup> Out of this, the income from “monthly subscriptions” or donations from the community was Rs. 355. Another major source of income was the *Atta* fund which was basically a community ration in which a nominal amount of *Atta* or flour was collected from the people and pooled into a single fund. In 1893-94, the *Atta* fund contributed Rs. 1,247 to the total income of the Managing Committee.<sup>372</sup> In this manner, the D.A.V. leaders managed to revive and reinvigorate the ‘traditional’ practice of relying on the local resources of a community to finance its educational institution. Prior to the advent of colonial education, this practice was used to maintain the traditional village schools and their teachers who were often paid in the form of regular food supplies.<sup>373</sup>

Other major sources of income for the D.A.V. institution included interests on fixed deposits in banks, land mortgages and rents from various buildings.<sup>374</sup> The college and school income generated from school fees also contributed to a great extent in enriching the College Managing Committee and in a short time, the Committee was in a sound financial condition. From a mere Rs. 32,000 in 1886, the total assets of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee reached Rs. 4,50,000 in 1903. In less than a decade, the assets more than doubled to reach Rs. 9,17,598 in 1911. By the fiftieth year (1936) of its existence, the total assets of the institution stood at Rs. 22,19,232.<sup>375</sup> While student fees and various investment funds were the major source of revenue for the D.A.V. College, ‘traditional’ methods of financing ranging from donations

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<sup>371</sup> “Sanctioned (Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College) Budget Sheet for the year 1894-95” in *D.A.V. C.M.C Proceedings*, File No. 4.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>373</sup> See “Traditional Patshalas in Colonial Punjab, ca. 1848-1882” in the first chapter of this dissertation.

<sup>374</sup> “Sanctioned (Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College) Budget Sheet for the year 1894-95” in *D.A.V. C.M.C Proceedings*, File No. 4.

<sup>375</sup> Sri Ram Sharma, *The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Lahore*, 12.

and monthly subscriptions to community rations such as the *Khichhari fund* and the *Atta fund* played an important role in financially sustaining the D.A.V. institution. This ingenious financial arrangement helped meet the expenses of the schools and colleges over a long term. Thus, the D.A.V. Movement was at once an example of financial and educational success for the Punjabi Hindus. In this respect, the D.A.V. model was also a sharp contrast to the colonial education system that derived its income primarily from school fees and government grants. Kenneth Jones noted as much in his review of the variety of fund raising initiatives adopted by the Aryas.

With the success of the school and its parallel rising expenses, Aryas developed a host of new techniques for fund raising. The tradition of giving gifts to Brahmans on important occasions became an important source of revenue, once Aryas modified it for their own uses [...] *Ata* and rag funds, monthly subscriptions, donations on festivals and important occasions, gifts collected during the anniversary celebrations – small and large donations – all added to the growing monetary base for continual expansion of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School. The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Trust and Management Society became both a financial as well as an educational institution. Before the development of Punjabi banking, the Society gained control of a significant pool of capital.<sup>376</sup>

It is evident from the above discussion that the financial success of the D.A.V. movement was a classic case of reformulating the traditional methods of community fund raising. By donating in every possible way, members of the local communities placed a high premium on education because they earnestly desired to educate their children in their own ways.

#### Providing Low Cost Education

Another important ideal of the D.A.V. movement was to provide free education to its pupils. In the previous section, we saw that the D.A.V. leaders

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<sup>376</sup> Kenneth Jones, *Arya Dharma* 82 - 84. For a detailed description of the D.A.V. financial administration, see *ibid.* p. 80-85.

and members of the Arya Samaj did much to become self-reliant. Yet, their goals were not fully accomplished to the extent that they would have hoped. This is because the ideal of completely free education could not be implemented by the D.A.V. leaders due to lack of sufficient funds. Looking back at the D.A.V. movement in 1914, Lajpat Rai regretted that the principle of free education could not be given full effect. According to Rai, the “paucity of funds” along with a host of “government and university regulations” were some of the major factors that came in the way of implementing the ideal of providing free instruction.<sup>377</sup> But the idea of providing education at a nominal cost was still put into practice, for the fees levied from students in the D.A.V. institutions were generally “50 per cent less than those of Government schools and colleges.”<sup>378</sup> This brings us to the fee structure followed in D.A.V. schools. In the third meeting of the Managing Committee that was held on 24th April 1886, the following fee schedule was approved (Table 3.1). There were two kinds of fees to be levied from students: one was the Admission Fees, which was to be paid annually when entering a new class, and the second was the Monthly Fees, which was to be paid on a monthly basis. But the fee structure allowed for some flexibility. The Headmaster, for instance, had the discretion to reduce or waive the admission and monthly fees in some special cases.

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<sup>377</sup> Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 189.

<sup>378</sup> *Ibid.*

**Table 3.1: Fees Structure approved by the Managing Committee**<sup>379</sup>

<b><u>ADMISSION FEES</u></b>	
<b>LOWER PRIMARY</b>	<b>4 ANNAS</b>
<b>UPPER PRIMARY</b>	<b>8 ANNAS</b>
<b>MIDDLE AND UPPER</b>	<b>RS. 1/-</b>
<b><u>MONTHLY FEES</u></b>	
<b>LOWER PRIMARY</b>	<b>2 ANNAS</b>
<b>UPPER PRIMARY</b>	<b>4 ANNAS</b>
<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL</b>	<b>8 ANNAS</b>
<b>UPPER SCHOOL</b>	<b>RS. 1/-</b>

Over the course of next few years, fees for the lower primary department were completely waived off and considerably reduced for the upper primary department as well. In a meeting held by the Managing Committee on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1906, the following resolution was unanimously passed:

That in order to introduce the principle of free elementary education, as funds and circumstances permit, education in the Lower Primary Department of the main school be imparted free of monthly tuition fee,

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<sup>379</sup> This table has been adapted and translated from the original fees structure given in the proceedings of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. See “Teesra Jalsa [...] 24.4.1886 ko dopahar ke 3 baje.” In *D.A.V. C.M.C. Proceedings*, File No. 34. (All translations are mine).

and that an admission fee of annas four be imposed on all re-admissions for the purposes of discipline and enforcing regular attendance and that an early report be called for the steps taken to improve the efficiency of the Branch Schools.<sup>380</sup>

The foregoing resolution was to be brought into effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1907, from which date free education was imparted in the Lower Primary Department of the School. The principle of providing low cost education was closely aligned with the ‘traditional’ practice prevalent in old *patshalas* which, as discussed in the first chapter, barely charged any fees from the pupils. Three years later, the Committee also decided to do away with the tuition fees for the 5<sup>th</sup> primary class in the case of those pupils whose guardians earned Rs. 50 or less per month. It was not only the school that liberally exempted some students from paying fees. The D.A.V. College of Lahore also gave “free studentships” to about 7% of its students, while another 15% of its students were given the opportunity to pay discounted fees.<sup>381</sup> In fact, by the twenty-fifth anniversary of the D.A.V. school, education was made “entirely free in the first three and practically free in the two Upper classes.”<sup>382</sup> This was quite a remarkable achievement in view of the fact that the school received no financial aid from the government. The fees were slightly raised only in 1925 with a view to “balancing” future budgets.<sup>383</sup>

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<sup>380</sup> ‘Proceedings of a meeting of the Managing Committee held on the 22nd July 1906’, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 9, NMML, New Delhi, p. 51.

<sup>381</sup> See “Letter dated 14-5-1915” in *D.A.V. C.M.C. Proceedings*, File No. 7.

<sup>382</sup> *Report of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, Lahore for 1910-11*, 10.

<sup>383</sup> For the year 1924-25, the total income was Rs. 46,461 whereas the total expenditure was Rs. 45,750. Hence, the “surplus saving” was only Rs 711 as opposed to Rs. 1,142 in the previous year. See ‘Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1924-25, Lahore: Virjanand Press’, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 110, 50-51.

By contrast, the Khalsa College School, established in 1893, did not charge any admission fees from students entering the primary school. The school charged an admission fees of 8 annas from students entering the secondary department. In addition, the monthly fees were charged according to the economic background of the students. Three grades were identified to correspond to the varying economic status of the pupils' Primary school students in the first class had to pay between one and three annas monthly. This amount increased progressively as the student was promoted year after year. In the fifth and final year of primary school, the monthly fees varied from four annas to one rupee depending on the financial background of the pupil. The monthly fees for secondary departments (i.e. middle and high school) was much higher. For instance, a pupil studying in the tenth or final year of school could be asked to pay as high as six rupees every month (as per grade three).<sup>384</sup>

Like the Khalsa schools, the anglo-vernacular government schools also had three grades of fees. But the amount of fees levied in anglo-vernacular government schools was much higher as compared to both the D.A.V. and Khalsa Schools. For instance, the minimum amount of fees levied from a pupil studying in an anglo-vernacular government or board school was as follows:

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<sup>384</sup> See "School Fees" in *Rules for the Working of the Khalsa College*, xxi-xxii.

**Table 3.2: Minimum Amount of Fees Levied in Government Schools (ca. 1886)<sup>385</sup>**

<b><u>MONTHLY FEES</u></b>	
<b>LOWER PRIMARY</b>	<b>1<sup>ST</sup> CLASS – 1 ANNA</b>
	<b>2<sup>ND</sup> CLASS – 2 ANNAS</b>
	<b>3<sup>RD</sup> CLASS – 3 ANNAS</b>
<b>UPPER PRIMARY</b>	<b>4<sup>TH</sup> CLASS – 6 ANNAS</b>
	<b>5<sup>TH</sup> CLASS – 8 ANNAS</b>
<b>MIDDLE SCHOOL</b>	<b>1<sup>ST</sup> CLASS – 12 ANNAS</b>
	<b>2<sup>ND</sup> CLASS – 14 ANNAS</b>
	<b>3<sup>RD</sup> CLASS – 1 RUPEE</b>
<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>4<sup>TH</sup> CLASS – 1 RUPEE AND 4 ANNAS</b>
	<b>5<sup>TH</sup> CLASS – 1 RUPEE AND 8 ANNAS</b>

In addition to the above monthly fees, an entrance fee of at least one rupee was levied from students joining the middle department of all anglo-vernacular schools. The children of agriculturists were exempt from paying the fees in lower department and they had to pay only half the fees in the upper department.

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<sup>385</sup> This table has been adapted and translated from Chapter VI of Punjab Education Code. See “Punjab Education Code, 1886-87” in Proceedings of the General Educational Conference held at Lahore in the month of May 1886, (NAI Proceedings, Home (Education), September 1888, 31-118 A), 28.

Moreover, fees were waived for students for about 10% of students in the primary department and 5% of the total number of students in the middle department.<sup>386</sup> But the number of fee exemptions given in government institutions was generally less than the corresponding number of exemptions given by the D.A.V. school as discussed earlier in this chapter. It is fairly evident from the foregoing discussion that the fee structure instituted by the D.A.V. College Managing Committee ensured that D.A.V schools were meant for the general public and not only for the elite sections of society. Furthermore, the analysis of D.A.V. Managing Committee's financial model reveals that like traditional *patshalas*, D.A.V. schools maintained a dynamic and close relationship with the local community which was now responsible for the education of their children by directly funding the coffers of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee.

#### THE DAYANAND ANGLO-VEDIC CURRICULUM

Having compared the fee structures of government and D.A.V. schools, it would be interesting to draw a general comparison between the scheme of studies in these institutions. The following pages aim to undertake this exercise.

#### The Scheme of Studies

The D.A.V. College Managing Committee held prolonged and thorough discussions on the curriculum that was to be instituted in the schools. As early as 20<sup>th</sup> March 1886, a special sub-committee was appointed to prepare a draft

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<sup>386</sup> Ibid. 29. For a comparative analysis of fees in contemporary higher institutions of late nineteenth century Punjab, see "Table 3.3." in K.C. Yadav and K.S. Arya, *Arya Samaj and the Freedom Movement*, 59.

scheme of studies for the D.A.V. schools.<sup>387</sup> In its third meeting, which was held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 1886, the Managing Committee sanctioned a list of subjects to be taught in each of the ten classes from primary through high school. The decision on which subjects were to be compulsorily taught and which ones were to remain optional was made after thorough discussion and debate. The final selection of courses was approved by means of voting amongst the Committee members present.<sup>388</sup> Madan Singh, Secretary of the Managing Committee, compiled a summary of the approved list of compulsory and optional subjects that would be taught in the primary, middle and high school stages of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School. At the primary stage, “Hindi reading and writing” was included as a taught subject along with elementary arithmetic, while in the middle and high level, Sanskrit was a compulsory subject along with English.<sup>389</sup> But this preliminary list of courses was set to be revised soon. Also, as Madan Singh noted in his summary, the Managing Committee was not yet in a position to recommend textbooks for each class. A detailed plan of the course of instruction, he added, would require more time and consideration by

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<sup>387</sup> This sub-committee consisted of the following persons: Lal Chand, Kanhaiya Lal, Madan Singh, Sain Das, Ishwar Das and Mulraj. See Proceedings for “27.2.1886” and “20.3.1886”

in *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 34.

<sup>388</sup> See “Teesra Jalsa [...] 24.4.1886”, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 34.

<sup>389</sup> For an English summary, see “Proposed Scheme of Studies for D.A.V. School” in 24th April 1886, Proceedings of the DAV CMC, Register No.1, NMML Collection. The complete list of courses sanctioned at this meeting is given in the appendix of this dissertation. For a complete discussion on the list of subjects approved in this meeting, one may refer to ‘Teesra Jalsa [...] 24.4.1886 ko dopahar ke 3 baje’, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 34.

the Sub-Committee.<sup>390</sup> This was done on 13th December, 1890 when the Managing Committee sanctioned a detailed curriculum for the primary classes.<sup>391</sup> Over the course of the next decade, this scheme of studies went through further revisions and it was not before 1899 that a comprehensive course of instruction was finally systematized and passed by the Managing Committee. In the intervening decade, i.e. 1890 – 1899, the Samajis debated and discussed extensively on the courses and texts to be included in the curriculum. In 1899, six years after the ‘moderates’ gained complete control over the Managing Committee, a comprehensive scheme of studies was finalised for the school department.<sup>392</sup> On 10<sup>th</sup> January 1899, the trio of Lal Chand, Lajpat Rai and Hans Raj held a meeting of the Managing Committee in which they proposed several changes in the pre-existing curriculum. A revised curriculum for primary classes was finally adopted on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1899. In subsequent meetings, the scheme of studies for middle and high classes was also revised and passed. By 1900, a complete scheme of studies for all ten classes from primary through high school was finally instituted.<sup>393</sup> It is this elaborate scheme, mainly for the primary school, that is analysed below.

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<sup>390</sup> See ‘Proposed Scheme of Studies for D.A.V. School’ in “24th April 1886”, *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, Register No.1.

<sup>391</sup> For this scheme, see “13 December 1890,” File No. 35 (1886-1892) in *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*. The full table of the first draft curriculum is given in the appendix of this dissertation.

<sup>392</sup> The split between the ‘moderates’ and ‘mahatmas’ is discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>393</sup> See “13 December 1890,” in *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 35 (1886-1892). For the final schemes of primary, middle and high level, see “10.1.1899”, “19.12.1899”, and “10.3.1900” respectively in Register No. 5 (1894-1900) of DAV College Managing Committee Proceedings. For a tabulation of this consolidated scheme of studies, see Appendix No. 1 of this dissertation. The D.A.V. College Managing Committee made small modifications to the curriculum at regular

Let us begin with the pattern of educational stages or ‘classes’ adopted for the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School. This was largely in tune with the existing pattern followed in government schools. The decision regarding the structure of classes was taken in the Managing Committee’s third meeting itself in which Rai Mulraj broached this subject for discussion.<sup>394</sup>

In addition to the pattern of classes and periods, there were other similarities between the course structures of the D.A.V. and government schools. For instance, English was introduced at the same stage, i.e. in the fourth year of primary school, in case of both D.A.V. and government schools. After all, D.A.V. leaders believed that proficiency in English, a language that was seen as both a ticket to government employment and a means of acquiring knowledge of western science, was indispensable for national progress. Moreover, conformity with government textbooks and norms was felt necessary in order to ensure that D.A.V. school students were prepared for the various examinations, beginning with primary, middle and entrance level examinations

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intervals. The College Society report for 1925 noted that the following textbooks were composed and added to the curriculum. Some of the new textbooks were: “A Modern Arithmetic” by L. Kharaiti Lal Puri and L. Lal Chand Puri, “A New Matric Geometry” by L. Kharaiti Lal in collaboration with Prof. Shiv Dayal (both for use in the High Classes), Sant Gokal Chand’s Hindi readers, Dr. Kishori Lal’s “Hand-book of Practical Physiology and Hygeine”. See *Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1924-25* (Lahore: Virjanand Press, 1925), 48.

<sup>394</sup> The relevant minutes of the meeting are recorded as follows: “Rai Mulraj proposed and Lala Keshavdas seconded that the organization of the school department should follow the same structure as prevalent in government schools [...] It was resolved that the existing arrangement of contemporary government institutions should be adopted in this (i.e. D.A.V.) institution, which means that 3 classes be devoted to lower primary, 2 classes to upper primary, 3 classes to middle and 2 to upper.” See “Teesra Jalsa [...] 24.4.1886 ko dopahar ke 3 baje”, in *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 34. (Translation mine).

which were held for admission to various government colleges and universities. With this objective in mind, Lajpat Rai had explicitly remarked, in one of the Committee meetings, that “the system of education in the school (D.A.V.) be so regulated as to eventually prepare students for the Entrance exam without the necessity of appearing in or passing the Middle School Exam.”<sup>395</sup> Therefore, D.A.V. pedagogues drafted a scheme of studies in accordance with the examination standards laid down by the Punjab government. For instance, in the case of the primary examination, the prescribed government standards for arithmetic lessons were as follows: In the infant standard or the first class, students should learn notations upto 100; in the lower primary classes, multiplication tables should be taught along with the first four simple rules of arithmetic followed by rules of compound division; in the upper primary classes, vulgar fractions should be taught along with square measures, simple and double rules of three and simple interest. These were the standards for the primary examination which was held at the end of the fifth year of school. To pass this examination and get promoted to the secondary stage of school education, students had to score a minimum of 50 per cent marks.<sup>396</sup> With a view to meeting these standards and preparing their students for these examinations, D.A.V. school authorities developed their arithmetic curriculum for the primary school. At the same time, they also liberally innovated with the curriculum, adding lessons and tweaking it to suit their aims. So, firstly, all arithmetic lessons in the D.A.V. school were taught in Hindi. The four simple rules were taught from vernacular books such as *Hisab ka Pehla Hissa* and *Hisab ka Doosra Hissa* (The first and second part of arithmetic respectively).

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<sup>395</sup> “24/11/00.” In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 7.

<sup>396</sup> For a detailed summary of primary examination standards, see “Punjab Education Code, 1886-87” in Proceedings of the General Educational Conference held at Lahore in the month of May 1886, Proceeding Nos. 31-118 A, Home (Education), September 1888, National Archives of India.

Also, the Arya Samajis believed that government education was of little use particularly for the agriculturists who formed a majority in the Punjab. To redress this problem, some Arya Samaj leaders such as Lala Mulraj suggested that mental arithmetic (*Gur*) and account-keeping alongwith lessons on agricultural and sanitary subjects should form part of the course of instruction in primary schools, “besides rough plane-table drawing and surveying of field.”<sup>397</sup> Therefore, unlike the pupils of government schools who learned arithmetic from English books using ‘western’ methods, the D.A.V. students were taught arithmetic in their own vernacular, i.e. Hindi. For instance, the D.A.V. students learned indigenous methods of accounting and mental arithmetic (*Mahajani Gurs*). So, in addition to multiplication tables upto 10\*10, D.A.V. students learned traditional tables called *mahajani gurs* which enabled the children of traders and shopkeepers in calculating traditional weights and measures used in their respective occupations. Therefore, to some extent, the D.A.V. movement was able to revive the indigenous *patshala* curriculum discussed earlier in the first chapter of this dissertation.

As they did with arithmetic, the D.A.V. pedagogues made experiments in other subjects even while ensuring compliance with government examination standards. Reading and writing was taught at the primary school level in accordance with the prescribed education code which mandated that students acquired proficiency in language.<sup>398</sup> So, students were to be examined by means

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<sup>397</sup> Evidence of Lala Mulraj, M.A. (Officiating Extra Assistant Commissioner, Gujrat, Panjab, Reply to Q.2, in *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 313-4.

<sup>398</sup> The detailed scheme for primary instruction in government schools was outlined by the Simla Text-book Committee of 1877. This Committee had recommended that the series of Vernacular Readers for primary schools should convey instruction on the following subjects: (a) Reverence for God, parents, teachers, rulers and the aged. (b) A simple sketch of the duties of a good citizen, and universally admitted principles of morality and prudence. (c) Cleanliness of habits, politeness of speech, kindness of

of dication and judged on their ability to “read with facility and explain a passage from any vernacular work of ordinary difficulty.”<sup>399</sup> But unlike government schools where Urdu was the vernacular, D.A.V. schools taught reading and writing in Hindi through their own set of Hindi textbooks for the primary school.<sup>400</sup> As discussed earlier, the objectives of “encouraging and enforcing” the study of Hindi and Sanskrit were clearly outlined in the constitution of the D.A.V. College Society. The implementation of these objectives was seen in the curriculum drafted by the D.A.V. authorities. The use of Hindi as the primary vernacular and the medium of instruction was one of the most important distinguishing feature of the D.A.V. schools. This was a novel departure from, as well as a ‘nationalist’ response to, the colonial scheme in which Urdu was treated as the vernacular of Punjab. Owing to a unanimous feeling against the use of Persian and Urdu, the Samajis decided to use Hindi or *Arya Bhasha*, as they called it, as the medium of instruction in the D.A.V. schools and colleges. In the third meeting of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee, it was unanimously decided that Hindi would be the medium of

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conduct to other human beings and the brute creation. (d) The dignity and usefulness of labour, and the importance of agriculture, commerce, the various trades; professional and handicrafts. (e) The advantages of bodily exercise. (f) The properties of plants, the uses of minerals and metals. (g) The habits of animals, and the characteristics of different races and common natural phenomena, fables and historical and biographical episodes chiefly derived from Oriental sources. See “Extracts from Proceedings of the Senate of the Punjab University College. regarding the Report of the Simla Text-book Committee convened by the Government of India in 1877,” in *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 586-587.

<sup>399</sup> “Punjab Education Code, 1886-87” in Proceedings of the General Educational Conference held at Lahore in the month of May 1886, Proceeding Nos. 31-118 A, Home (Education), September 1888, National Archives of India.

<sup>400</sup> One such textbook was the Hindi Reader No.1 prepared by Pt. Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya.

instruction at the primary and middle school level while at the upper school level instruction would be given in English.<sup>401</sup> Moreover, as a taught subject at the primary level, Hindi reading and writing was duly emphasised in the new scheme of studies that the Committee adopted in its third meeting. According to this scheme, Hindi remained a compulsory taught subject for all classes from the primary level up to the high school level, while Sanskrit was made a compulsory subject from the third year onwards. Nonetheless, Urdu and Persian were introduced as optional subjects in the fourth and ninth years respectively.<sup>402</sup> Also, Urdu and Persian readers were not excluded from the school curriculum. But Hindi was introduced both as a taught subject as well as the medium of instruction. For reading and writing, D.A.V. leaders composed their own readers such as Mulraj's *Hindi Readers*. In January 1899, the Managing Committee resolved that "early steps be taken to have special Hindi reader of the D.A.V. College series prepared in the case of the Primary Department."<sup>403</sup> Some elementary works of Dayanand Saraswati such as *Vyavhaar Bhanu* (for Hindi) and *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh* (for Sanskrit) were used as textbooks. The *Vyavhara Bhanu* and *Arya Uddeshya Ratnamala* were both read in the fourth year of primary school. It is particularly important to note that these language textbooks also included ethical and religious lessons. So, the purpose of using these textbooks was not just limited to improving the linguistic skills of students. The intermingling of language, ethics and tradition in the D.A.V. curriculum is discussed in detail in the next chapter of this dissertation.

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<sup>401</sup> See "Teesra Jalsa" in *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 34, 9-21.

<sup>402</sup> Ibid.

<sup>403</sup> 'Scheme of Studies for Primary Department'. In *DAV CMC Proceedings*, Register No. 5 (1894-1900), NMML, p. 132-136.

Another related feature of the D.A.V. curriculum was the memorisation of Vedic *suktas*. Unlike government schools where no religious instruction was allowed, D.A.V. schools imparted elementary *Vedic* lessons. For instance, the *Gayatri Mantra* was taught and recited in the first year; certain *Suktas* such as the *Purusha Sukta* from the *Rigveda* were recited in the second and third years; the *Shanti Path* was recited in the fourth year, and *Sandhya* was taught in the fifth and final year of primary school. The subject of moral and religious instruction was initially called *Veda Path* because it included mainly Vedic mantras. With the passage of time, this subject was transformed into a much broader and wider discipline covering a whole gamut of themes. Moral and religious instruction also began to be imparted through readers known as *Dharma Shikshaks*. These textbooks were aimed at imparting literary, moral and religious instruction. This aspect is again discussed in detail in the next chapter.

In view of the above discussion on the Arya Samajis' selection of courses and textbooks, it is clear that by adopting an 'Anglo-Vedic' approach to primary education, the D.A.V. movement offered an educational programme that offered the best of both worlds. Subjects like English and Geography were taught largely in tune with the government pattern. But in teaching 'native' arithmetic lessons, Hindi reading and writing, and Sanskrit in the third year, D.A.V. leaders sought to juxtapose and syncretise 'modern' and 'traditional' education into a single curriculum. By all means this was an advantageous combination for Punjabi Hindus in the changing colonial milieu of nineteenth century Punjab.

### The Calendar

Another area in which D.A.V. schools differed from the government schools was the scheme of annual vacations. While the total number of holidays in both government and D.A.V. schools were about 39, the list of holidays differed. The following general holidays were authorised for government and

board schools: *Proclamation Day* (1<sup>st</sup> January); *King Emperor's Birthday*; *Durbar Day* (12<sup>th</sup> December) and *Empire Day*. On each of these four occasions, government schools would remain closed for one day. In addition to the above "General Holidays", the government sanctioned 11 "Christian Holidays", 8 "Muhammadan Holidays" and 11 "Hindu Holidays". The Christian Holidays included three days for the occasion of Easter and eight days for the occasion of Christmas (24<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> December). The Muhammadan Holidays were authorised for six different occasions to celebrate prominent Muslim festivals. One holiday each was sanctioned for the occasions of Id-ul-Fitr, Id-ul-Zuha, Id-i-Milad, Shab-i-Barat and Jumat-ul-Vida, and three holidays were allowed for the celebration of Muharram. For Hindu festivals, eight major occasions were selected. Among these, one holiday each was granted for Basant Panchami, Sheoratri, Holi, Baisakhi, Salono, Janam Ashtami and Diwali, whereas four holidays were authorised for Dussehra. In addition to the above, three holidays were allowed for Sikh festivals (including Hola Mohalla, Guru Nanak's Birthday and Guru Gobind Singh's Birthday) in those districts where the Sikhs were present in a significant number. These districts were listed as: Ambala, Jullundur, Hoshiarpur, Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Lahore, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Sheikhpura, Rawalpindi and Lyallpur.<sup>404</sup>

In comparison to the above list of holidays authorised for government and board schools, the holidays observed in D.A.V. High School and D.A.V. College were slightly different. The first list of holidays for D.A.V. institutions was sanctioned as early as 26<sup>th</sup> September 1886.<sup>405</sup> Right from the beginning, it was decided that the D.A.V. School would be closed on the occasion of all major Hindu festivals as also on important occasions as far as the Arya Samaj was concerned. Accordingly, the school observed one holiday each in order to

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<sup>404</sup> *Punjab Education Code* (Lahore: Rai Sahib M. Gulab Singh & Sons, 1925), 47-48.

<sup>405</sup> '26 September 1886', In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 34, 1886-1892, NMML, New Delhi, p. 43-46.

celebrate two important occasions namely the Centenary of Dayanand Saraswati and the Anniversary of Lahore Arya Samaj.

In their original scheme, the D.A.V. College Managing Committee had declared one holiday for each of the following Hindu festivals: *Lohri*, *Basant Panchami*, *Shivratri*, *Holi*, *Baisakhi*, *Bhaddar Kali*, *Nirjala Ekadashi*, *Beas Puja*, *Rishi Tarpan*, *Janam Ashtami*, *Anant Chaudas* and *Diwali*. In addition, the Managing Committee had declared three holidays each to celebrate the festivals of *Ram Navmi* and *Dussehra*. Besides Hindu festivals, major Muslim festivals such as *Eid-ul-fitr*, *Eid-ul-Zuha* and *Moharram* has also been declared as holidays. Besides these days, there were a couple of additional holidays such as *New Year's Day*. But the list of holidays was revised in 1905 and then again in 1922 for the School Department and in 1925 for the College Department. The revised scheme of holidays was slightly different from the original list. One holiday was sanctioned, as in the original scheme, for each of the following occasions: *Lohari*, *Basant Panchami*, *Shivratri*, *Baisakhi*, *Bhaddar Kali*, *Rishi Tarpan*, *Janam Ashtami*, *Diwali* and *Nirjala Ekadashi*. The number of holidays for *Ram Navmi* was reduced from three to one, while the number of holidays for *Dussehra* and *Holi* was increased to four and two respectively. In addition, one holiday was granted for the celebration of *Bhai Dooj*. Besides these, one holiday was observed to mark the foundation day of the D.A.V. College while four holidays were given on the occasion of the Lahore Arya Samaj anniversary. As far as other festivals were concerned, three holidays were given for Easter and eight for Christmas. So, the list of Christian holidays was the same as in government schools. Moreover, one holiday each was given for the following Muslim festival of *Muharram* and the Sikh festival of *Guru Nanak's Birthday*. So, we see that *Eid* was replaced by *Guru Nanak's Birthday* and eight days of break were sanctioned for the entire Christmas week, starting from 25<sup>th</sup> December until the New Year's Day (1<sup>st</sup> January). Also, in common with the

government scheme, one holiday was granted for the celebration of King's Birthday.<sup>406</sup>

The foregoing discussion on the calendar and scheme of holidays adopted in the D.A.V. School reflects yet another way in which visionaries of the D.A.V. movement were caught in a dilemma. On one hand, they strove to distinguish their institution from government schools. On the other hand, they drafted their rules and regulations along the lines of government schools in many important respects.

#### 'MAHATMAS AND MODERATES'. THE DEBATE ON SANSKRIT

In framing the scheme of studies, the Managing Committee had to accommodate a wide range of viewpoints within the Samaj. Because there was no uniform or fixed standard on how much percentage of the D.A.V. curriculum should be 'Anglo' or 'Vedic', Arya Samajis were divided over which of these two aspects was to be accorded priority. The inability to fix a common standard led to much debate and dispute within the Samaj. The 'Anglo-Vedic' duality soon became a site of contestation for the Samajis and ultimately led to the creation of two factions namely 'moderates' and 'mahatmas'.

The 'moderates' considered the study of Sanskrit important for the purpose of upholding tradition and valuing the antiquity of India but they believed that practical and modern knowledge could only be acquired through the study of western literature and science. After the demise of Guru Dutt in 1890, the 'moderates' formed one faction within the Samaj. The moderate faction also became known as the 'College Party' for its predominance in the D.A.V. College Managing Committee and its subsequent control over the management of D.A.V. College. The 'moderates' consisted of prominent

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<sup>406</sup> See "11/2/1922: List of Holidays Observed" in Proceedings of the meetings of the School Sub-Committee 1918-1926', In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, Register No. 64.

leaders such as Lala Lal Chand, Lala Lajpat Rai and Hans Raj. These leaders were opposed to the 'Mahatma' faction of the Samaj which prioritised the learning of classical Sanskrit over western science and literature. The 'Mahatmas' also wanted that the D.A.V. school and college should strictly adhere to the scheme of studies laid down by Dayanand Saraswati. The disagreement between 'moderates' and 'mahatmas' threatened to escalate into a conflict between the 'Anglo' and 'Vedic' aspects of the D.A.V. movement, making it further difficult to arrive at a consensus on how 'traditional' and 'modern' elements could be blended in the D.A.V. educational program. But at the beginning of 1890s, there were many points on which the 'moderates' and 'mahatmas' agreed. The inclusion of *Ashtadhyayi* in the D.A.V. school curriculum, for instance, was celebrated by the 'moderates' such as Lal Chand and Lajpat Rai.<sup>407</sup> In fact, Lal Chand on behalf of the Managing Committee, resolved to send a memorial to the Punjab University to adopt the course of classical Sanskrit as an alternative course.

Nonetheless, the inclusion of Sanskrit in the D.A.V. School and College Curriculum remained a contentious issue within the Arya Samaj, ultimately leading to a split within the rank and file of the organisation. The 'moderates' were the predominant party within the D.A.V. College Managing Committee and hence they took over the reins of the network of D.A.V. Schools and Colleges. The 'mahatmas' took over full control of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Punjab and in 1902 they set up the famous *Gurukul Kangri* at Haridwar. This 'Gurukul' wing of the Samaj, as the 'mahatma' faction came to be called, argued for the inclusion of *Arsha Granthas* (the texts considered genuine by

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<sup>407</sup> "Whatever others may think, I am of opinion that the introduction of the teaching of Panini's *Ashtadhyayi* in the middle classes of the D.A.V. College was an important victory for the cause of classical Sanskrit, and for that we shall ever be grateful to the persistent efforts of Pandit Guru Datta Vidyarthi and some others." See Lajpat Rai, *Pandit Guru Dutt Vidyarthi*, rev. ed. Prof. Ram Prakash ed. (Lahore: 1891; New Delhi: D.A.V. Publications Division, 2012), 76.

Dayanand Saraswati<sup>408</sup>) in the school curriculum. The ‘mahatmas’ persistently demanded that classical Sanskrit and Vedic texts be given due importance. They further insisted that Sanskrit instruction should be imparted in exactly the same manner as outlined by Swami Dayanand Saraswati.<sup>409</sup> The ‘moderates’, who were led by Lala Lal Chand, did not follow such a dogmatic approach to the Swami’s writings. They believed that as long as one adhered to the ten principles of the Samaj, one was free to interpret the Swami’s message individually. They had great respect for Indian classical literature, but they placed a higher emphasis on learning western literature and sciences which they believed were essential for the country’s progress. Therefore, the key point of contention between the two factions was the degree to which the D.A.V. school was to be “Vedic” or “Anglo” or both.

With the passage of time, these clashing interpretations of Samajic ideology were reflected in the debates over the curriculum and pedagogy for the D.A.V. schools. For instance, in 1889 there was a lengthy discussion amongst the Managing Committee members on the question of teaching Sanskrit grammar. The discussants at this meeting included the four most powerful leaders of the D.A.V. movement namely Lal Chand, Guru Dutt Vidyarthi, Hans Raj and Sain Das. The main point of contention between the discussants was the scope and manner in which Panini’s *Ashtadhyayi* should be introduced in D.A.V. schools. The ‘mahatmas’ who were represented by Guru Dutt, argued for the wholesale memorisation of the text without laying any emphasis on its meaning. Such a methodology, they argued, was in perfect alignment with the pedagogy and course of instruction outlined by Dayanand Saraswati. However, Lal Chand and Hans Raj argued that it would cause a great strain on the pupil’s

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<sup>408</sup> For a more detailed discussion of *Arsha* texts , refer to the second chapter of this dissertation.

<sup>409</sup> The scheme of education as envisioned by Dayanand Saraswati has been discussed in detail in the second chapter of this dissertation.

mind if they were to memorise the whole of *Ashtadhyayi* without learning its meaning.<sup>410</sup> Ultimately, the Managing Committee decided that select excerpts from the *Ashtadhyayi* would be taught with meaning from the middle level (6<sup>th</sup> class) onwards.<sup>411</sup> But gradually the debates turned into a serious and prolonged controversy. One of the platforms used by the ‘mahatmas’ to demonstrate their displeasure with the D.A.V. scheme of studies was the *Updeshak Class*. It was at a meeting of the Lahore Arya Pratinidhi Sabha that Lal Chand first promulgated the idea of setting up an *Updeshak Class* in a bid to pacify the ‘Sanskrit-loving’ members of the Samaj. The objective was to create a separate institution where *Updeshaks* (preachers) would be trained in the *Arsha Granthas* and subsequently dispatched to various locations for the purpose of disseminating Vedic knowledge.<sup>412</sup> The creation of the *Updeshak Class* was clearly a reflection of the dissatisfaction of several Samajis over the fact that *Arsha Granthas* were not taught in the D.A.V. College. For this reason, some Arya Samaj historians such as Indra Vidyavachaspati have viewed the *Updeshak* movement as the forerunner of the *Gurukul Kangri*, a separate Vedic institution, that the extremists established at Haridwar about a decade later.<sup>413</sup> On 3rd September 1889, the *Arya Patrika* published a notification of the

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<sup>410</sup> See “Report of the Special Sub-Committee for considering the proposal of introducing Ashtadhyayi in the School Classes”, quoted in Lajpat Rai. *Pandit Guru Dutt Vidyarthi*, rev. ed. Prof. Ram Prakash ed. (Lahore: 1891; New Delhi: D.A.V. Publications Division, 2012), 144-151.

<sup>411</sup> ‘Sanctioned scheme of studies for the D.A.V. College Department’, Punjab Economical Press, Lahore, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 2, p. 83.

<sup>412</sup> Bhimsen Vidyalkar, *Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Punjab Ka Sachitra Itihasa* (Lahore: Navyug Press, 1935), 60-61.

<sup>413</sup> “It is this class that would later manifest in the form of the Gurukul Kangri eleven years later.” See Indra Vidyavachaspati, *Arya Samaj Ka Itihasa: Pratham Bhaag* (Delhi: Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, 1957), 215-216. [Translation is mine].

institution of an *Updeshak Committee*. This notification stated that it is necessary to open a “class” for the teaching of *Arsha Granthas*, and that until such a “class” is established, a working committee is being formed which shall collect funds for the proposed “class”.<sup>414</sup> By 1890, barely four years after the D.A.V. College Society had been registered, the extremists became increasingly concerned with the perceived imbalance between ‘Vedic’ and ‘Anglo’ education in the D.A.V. institutions. The number of ‘mahatmas’ was now considerable in the Samaj. They included such influential Samajis as Bhai Parmanand (1874-1947) and Managing Committee members like ‘Master’ Durga Prasad.<sup>415</sup> Most of these ‘mahatmas’ drew their inspiration from Guru Dutt and they were all convinced that the Vedic aspect of the movement was being ignored in favour of the Anglo aspect. In order to express their grievances, prominent members of the D.A.V. College Society called for a revision of certain clauses in the Society’s constitution. In the society’s meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> April 1890 (Lahore), some members proposed that an additional clause be inserted in the rules of the society. The new clause would “specially notice any measures taken during the year towards fulfilling the provisions of Rule 3 – object 1<sup>st</sup>, clause b (Rules of the Society) viz to encourage and enforce the study of classical Sanskrit and the Vedas.”<sup>416</sup> At the same meeting of the D.A.V. College Society, it was also recommended that classes be opened for teaching *Arsha Granthas* and Vedas in accordance with the scheme outlined by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in *Satyartha Prakasha (pathana pathana vishaya)*.<sup>417</sup> The Swami’s scheme of studies (discussed in the previous chapter of this dissertation) was then briefly summarised at this meeting. It was further urged

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<sup>414</sup> Ibid.

<sup>415</sup> Durga Prasad was “Second Master” or deputy to the headmaster, at the D.A.V. School, Lahore.

<sup>416</sup> ‘Lahore 26th April 1890’ (Lahore: Virajanand Press). In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 2, 41-42.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid.

by society members that this scheme be “considered by the Managing Committee with view to its introduction as scheme of study for the proposed classes.”<sup>418</sup> However, the Managing Committee that was at this time largely in the hands of ‘moderates’ like Lal Chand, Lajpat Rai and Hans Raj did not appear to take adequate steps to incorporate the above recommendations of the Society. So, on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1891, the Society held a meeting that was attended by twelve members of the ‘mahatma’ faction. One of the prominent attendees was the representative of the Jullundur Samaj called Munshi Ram (1856-1926), also known as Swami Shraddhanand, who would found the *Gurukul* at Haridwar about eleven years later, was also present at this meeting where it was proposed that an explanation should be added after clause (c) of Rule III of the Society’s charter. This clause, as discussed earlier, represented the ‘Anglo’ aspect of the D.A.V. educational programme since that it stated that one of the chief objects of the Society was to “encourage and enforce the study of English literature and sciences, both theoretical and applied.”<sup>419</sup> Now, the ‘mahatmas’ wanted to ensure that this clause did not limit any endeavours by Samajis to establish a Vedic institution. So, it was proposed to add the following explanation to clause (c).

Nothing in the foregoing shall be construed to prevent the Society from establishing a system of education in the classical Sanskrit and the Vedas *in addition to and independently of* the existing system regulated and controlled by the University regulations.<sup>420</sup>

Having made the above recommendations, the ‘mahatmas’ took the next step in their endeavours to increase the emphasis on Vedic knowledge systems. They

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<sup>418</sup> Ibid.

<sup>419</sup> See Rule 3 of the D.A.V. College Society’s charter mentioned earlier in this chapter.

<sup>420</sup> ‘Proposals for the D.A.V College Society, 1st May 1891’, Virajanand Press, Lahore. In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 2, p. 62.

proposed the establishment of a ‘Vedic Department’ in the D.A.V. College where “Vedas, their Angas and Upangas, as well as Upa Vedas” would be taught.<sup>421</sup> With a view to fulfilling this objective, the following tentative scheme of studies for the proposed Vedic Department (See Table 3.3) was recommended to the Managing Committee. The Vedic Department was to consist of two sections – Lower and Upper. It was proposed that in the Lower Section, the *Angas* and *Upangas* would be taught, while the *Vedas* and *Upa Vedas* would be studied in the Upper Section. In addition, the extremists proposed that “in the period of seven years up to the Entrance Class, *Ashtadhyayi* shall have been completed in the existing school department.”<sup>422</sup>

**Table 3.3: Scheme of Studies for the Proposed Vedic Department, D.A.V. College**

Periods	Course of Instruction
1 <sup>st</sup> Period of 18 months	Grammar – <i>Mahabhashya</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Period of 18 months	Lexicon of Vedic Words – <i>Nighantu</i> and <i>Nirukta</i> of Yaska, Katyayana’s <i>Kosh</i> .
3 <sup>rd</sup> Period of 18 months	Prosody – <i>Pingla Sutra</i> with an appropriate reader. Yaska’s <i>Kavyalankara</i> sutra with <i>Manu Smriti</i> and selections from Valmiki’s <i>Ramayana</i> and from <i>Mahabharata</i> .
4 <sup>th</sup> Period of 12 months	Mathematics and <i>Jyotisha</i> .
5 <sup>th</sup> Period of 24 months	Logic and Philosophy – <i>Purva Mimansa</i> of Jaimini, <i>Vaisheshika</i> of Kanada, <i>Nyaya</i> of Gautama, <i>Yoga</i> of Patanjali, <i>Samkhya</i> of Kapila, <i>Vedanta</i> of Vyasa with the 10 well-known Upanishads.

<sup>421</sup> Ibid

<sup>422</sup> Ibid.

The above scheme of studies for the Vedic department was clearly an attempt to implement the educational course envisioned by Dayanand Saraswati. For example, Dayanand had recommended the use of *Mahabhashya* for the study of Grammar, and the use of *Manu Smriti*, *Mahabharata* and *Valmiki Ramayana* to teach morality and ethics. Similarly, in Dayanand's scheme, the *sutras* or aphorisms of *Pingala* (a mathematician who lived in India around the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C) were given an important place. In fact, the structure of the whole curriculum (describing the time to be spent on the study of various textbooks) as proposed above was based on Dayanand's scheme which we discussed in the second chapter of this dissertation. To be sure, the 'mahatmas' did not limit their proposed scheme to Dayanand's course. In addition to the aforementioned subjects, physical sciences were included in the lower section of the Vedic Department. Having outlined the above scheme for the lower section, the D.A.V. society members said they would consider a scheme for the Upper Section once the Lower Section was in working order.

Another proposal put forward at this meeting of the D.A.V. College Society was the introduction of a separate discipline on religious instruction. The name proposed for this subject was "Vedic Theology" and the College Managing Committee was requested to give this proposal its "immediate attention". But no definite resolution on this issue was possible in the prevailing atmosphere of internal conflict within the Samaj and as a result the proposal did not find any place in the revised D.A.V. scheme of studies. Nonetheless, the discipline of "Vedic Theology" took a rather different course culminating in the formation of a "Theological Department". The curriculum and scheme of this department is discussed in great detail in the next chapter of this dissertation.

There were other reasons for the differences between the moderate and 'mahatma' factions of the Arya Samaj. For instance, the religious and nationalist tendencies, although overlapping to a great extent, gave rise to two similar yet separate ways in which Arya Samajis interpreted and gave practical shape to their mission. One section of the Samaj approached its work with a

religious zeal and primary focussed on the revival of Vedic knowledge. However, another section of the Samaj approached its work with a nationalist fervour and was mainly concerned with the country's progress. The latter group believed that national prosperity and economic advancement would result from a cultivation of 'modern', or (for most Samajis) 'western' knowledge while the cultivation of Vedic knowledge was important to instil nationalism and a sense of pride in India's hoary past.<sup>423</sup> The ensuing factionalism within the Samaj corresponded with ideological clashes within the D.A.V. movement. Varying perceptions of what constituted national or religious reform came to be mirrored and represented by the 'Anglo-Vedic' duality that was embedded in the very constitution of the D.A.V. College Society. On one hand, the 'Vedic' aspect of the D.A.V. movement came to be increasingly identified with the more strongly religiously inclined Samajis, most of whom happened to belong to the extremist group. On the other hand, the 'Anglo' aspect came to be represented by the moderates most of whom were primarily motivated by a nationalist zeal.

The conflict within the Committee reverberated throughout the Samaj at large. In 1893, things came to such a pass that the Arya Samaj officially split into two. The control of the D.A.V. School passed into the hands of the 'College Party' or the 'moderates' prominent among whom were Lala Lal Chand, Lajpat Rai and Hans Raj. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Arya Samaj had undergone several internal divisions with the result that the Samaj was now largely split up into two rival factions - the 'Mahatma' and the 'College' faction - each believing in their individual educational mission. In 1902, the 'Mahatma'

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<sup>423</sup> "Lalaji's [Sain Das] faction did not give an overarching importance to the Vedas. For this group, the study of modern science was the optimal medium for national service and they emphasised on this aspect. Even Rishi [Dayanand Saraswati] had corresponded with some German scientists in this regard [...] Gurudatta adopted Rishi's Veda while Sain Das' faction adopted modern science [...] nonetheless, both factions were adherents of Rishi [Dayanand Saraswati]." Bhimsen Vidyalkar, 88. [Translation is mine].

party had established the Gurukul at Hardwar where they aimed to “revive the ancient Gurukul system of education.” A *Gurukul* was first established by Munshi Ram (1856-1926), an energetic Arya Samaj leader, in 1897 at Gujranwala in Punjab. But since Munshi Ram wished to have a ‘congenial’ environment that would facilitate the development of intellectual and spiritual faculties of young pupils, the institution was relocated to the holy city of Hardwar in 1902. It was here that the institution was named *Gurukul Kangri* (after the *Kangri* village which donated land for this institution) was formally inaugurated in 1902 set up the famous *Gurukul Kangri*.<sup>424</sup> Harald Fischer-Tiné has argued that despite the original proclamations of its founders, the *Gurukul* came to include both ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ features in its curriculum and pedagogy.<sup>425</sup>

Nonetheless, the Gurukul Kangri that sought to revive the ancient *Gurukul* tradition with its avowed emphasis on classical Sanskrit and *Vedas* was seen by many as being more closely aligned with the ideals of Dayanand Saraswati.<sup>426</sup> The growing popularity of the Gurukul Kangri at Haridwar posed a significant challenge for the D.A.V. authorities. Critics of the ‘College’ party had begun to allege that D.A.V. leaders had digressed from the educational philosophy of Dayanand Saraswati. During this time, an American lawyer and religious writer named Henry Phelps (1856-1916) visited the Gurukul Kangri

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<sup>424</sup> The Gurukul Kangri was as a fully residential institution like the traditional Gurukuls where students entered at a young age of eight and remained there until the completion of their school education which lasted 14 years. The institution claimed that it was the “first earnest attempt made in this age to revive Dharma and train students on spiritual lines.” See *Prospectus of the Gurukul Mahavidyalaya* (Gurukul Kangri: Saddharma Pracharak Press, 1911), xx.

<sup>425</sup> Fischer- Tiné, *Der Gurukul-Kangri oder die Erziehung der Arya-Nation* (Würzburg: Ergon Verlag, 2003).

<sup>426</sup> Dharamdev Vidyarthi, 171-172.

and wrote a tract titled *The Gurukul through European eyes*.<sup>427</sup> Phelps appears to have been favourably impressed by the importance given to moral and religious education in the Gurukul. An excerpt from his testimony is reproduced below:

The moral and religious character of the student is further powerfully stimulated and developed by the study of the Sanskrit sacred literature, to which a large proportion of each of the sixteen years of the course is given. The atmosphere of the Gurukula may be said to be saturated with the Vedas and Upanishads.<sup>428</sup>

The above testimony was but one among any favourable impressions about the Gurukul in the twentieth century. These impressions caused immense pressure on the D.A.V. leaders who were led to introspect and reinvent their educational curriculum. In the next chapter, we discuss how the D.A.V. leaders composed their own text books to impart instruction in language, ethics and tradition.

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<sup>427</sup> Myron Henry Phelps was born in Illinois. He wrote on a wide range of subjects including the Bahāī Faith and the Radha Soami movement. In 1917, he published *The Gurukul through European eyes*.

<sup>428</sup> Letter from Mr. Phelps quoted in Lajpat Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 202. In his letter, Mr. Phelps further elaborated on the course of religious instruction: “Moral and ethical instruction is regular, and extends over the whole ten years of the school course. In the earlier years a large number of helpful Sanskrit verses are memorized by the student. Then follow three text-books, published by the Gurukula, made up of selections from the Manu Smriti, than which, as is well known, there is no more fruitful source of sound moral instruction. Appropriate parts of Swami Dayanand's works are also used. To these subjects three to seven periods per week are given. The ninth and tenth classes also receive daily religious instruction from the Governor, and, still more, the boys are assembled, as has been said, each morning for a talk with him on moral and ethical subjects. The moral and religious character of the student is further powerfully stimulated and developed by the study of the Sanskrit sacred literature, to which a large proportion of each of the sixteen years of the course is given. The atmosphere of the Gurukula may be said to be saturated with the Vedas and Upanishads.”

## CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the genesis and growth of the D.A.V. education movement, beginning with the establishment of the D.A.V. School at Lahore in 1886. The early success of the D.A.V. School, Lahore resulted in the setting up of other D.A.V. institutions in various parts of Punjab. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the D.A.V. movement came to be seen as a paragon of local self-reliant educational enterprise in colonial India. This was partly, as discussed in this chapter, due to the community driven economic model of the D.A.V. movement. The D.A.V. leaders ingeniously reinvigorated some 'traditional' financial methods such as community centred fund-raising. This chapter also revealed that like 'traditional' village *patshalas*, the D.A.V. schools charged nominal fees from their students, especially as compared to contemporary government institutions. At the same time, there were several 'modern' features present in the D.A.V. school such as the institutional framework with classrooms, teachers, standard examinations and the like. Similarly, the scheme of studies instituted by the D.A.V. College Managing Committee had a blend of both 'tradition' and 'modernity'. While the curriculum was largely in compliance with the examination standards as laid out in the Punjab Education Code, 1886-87, the D.A.V. school instruction carried many 'traditional' features such as the teaching of Hindi, Sanskrit and the compulsory recitation of Vedic *mantras*.

**CHAPTER 4: TEACHING LANGUAGE, ETHICS AND RELIGION. AN  
ASSESSMENT OF TRADITIONAL EDUCATION IN DAYANAND ANGLO-VEDIC  
SCHOOLS, CA. 1890-1925.**

INTRODUCTION: THE VARIOUS FACETS OF 'TRADITIONAL' EDUCATION

In the previous chapter, it was described how the Dayanand Anglo Vedic educational programme consisted of two aspects - 'Anglo' and 'Vedic' - signifying the 'modern' and 'traditional' elements present in the D.A.V. movement. While 'modern' characteristics of the D.A.V. movement such as classroom teaching are well known, the 'traditional' aspects of the D.A.V. educational programme have been rarely studied in detail. With a view to addressing this historiographical gap, this chapter of my dissertation analyses the 'traditional' aspects of the educational programme instituted by the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. This chapter seeks to understand the manner in which linguistic, moral and religious instruction was imparted in D.A.V. schools. Another related question that this chapter seeks to answer is the extent to which such instruction was identical to linguistic and moral education imparted in the *patshalas* or 'traditional' village schools discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation.

It has been discussed in the previous chapter that the 'traditional' aspects of the D.A.V. school curriculum involved the teaching of language (Hindi and Sanskrit), ethics and socio-religious cultural values. What is also important to note is that these disciplines were not taught as separate subjects. Instead, they were integrated by D.A.V. pedagogues in preparing text books for school and college students. So, the 'traditional' elements were present in the D.A.V. curriculum in various forms ranging from the memorization of *mantras* to the teaching of linguistic, moral and religious instruction. By focussing on these 'traditional' aspects of the D.A.V. curriculum, this chapter highlights one of the significant ways in which the Arya Samajis offered an alternative to colonial

education. In doing so, this chapter also shows that the category ‘religion’ is inadequate to explain the various traditional modes in which Indian reformers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries expressed their reformist agendas. A primary aim of this chapter is to investigate the extent to which the ‘traditional’ aspects of the D.A.V. curriculum resonated with the *patshala* model. In other words, how ‘traditional’ was the D.A.V. movement when compared with the old traditional village schools that had flourished in Punjab prior to colonial intervention?

Another aim of this chapter is to examine whether the traditional aspects of education imparted in D.A.V. schools can be adequately explained in terms of our current understanding of the Arya Samaj which is typically seen as the vehicle of a monolithic religious ideology, or the view that the Arya Samaj tried to reform all Hindu traditions ‘in strict accordance to Vedic principles’.<sup>429</sup> In fact, it is believed that all the principal reformist organisations in colonial Punjab formulated a monolithic reformist agenda that was at sharp variance with the pluralistic spirit of pre-existing traditions. Hence, it is generally understood that instead of propagating a fluid, flexible and heterogenous ideology that would accommodate various perspectives, the Arya Samajis or ‘elitist reformers’, as Van der Linden calls them, “favoured uniformity and homogeneity.”<sup>430</sup> Much of these characterisations about the Arya Samaj are valid because the Samaj was largely modelled along monotheistic lines. However, as we shall see in this chapter, these representations of the Arya Samaj do not square up with the variety and inter-disciplinary nature of traditional instruction given in D.A.V. schools.

Another related aim of this chapter is to question the unqualified use of categories such as ‘nation’ and ‘religion’ in the analysis of D.A.V. school books. Religious standardisation was a global phenomenon as prominent historians of

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<sup>429</sup> Jones, *Arya Dharma*, 96-97.

<sup>430</sup> Bob van der Linden, *Moral Languages from Colonial Punjab*, 17.

the twentieth century have shown.<sup>431</sup> It is also believed that standardisation of religious doctrine for the purposes of education or otherwise was a global phenomenon driven by the advent of new technologies such as printing presses. As a result, it became easier than ever to propagate a monolithic religious ideology on a mass scale.<sup>432</sup> Notwithstanding these global trends in the nineteenth century, this chapter argues that the ‘religious’ instruction given in the D.A.V. schools cannot be categorised as a uniform religious discipline. In fact, it is shown here that ‘religion’ and ‘religious’ instruction did not acquire a uniform pattern in the D.A.V. schools during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Of course, the Arya Samaj was not free from the “standardisation of religious doctrine” syndrome that affected all religious movements across the world in the nineteenth century.<sup>433</sup> But on the whole, the D.A.V. school authorities conceived of dynamic and creative methods to teach

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<sup>431</sup> For instance, C.A. Bayly has compared the consolidation of nation states and national identities with that of religious identities. “What was true for the nation”, he noted, “was equally true for religion in the more uniform pattern that it now came to assume.” See “Empires of Religion” in C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914* (USA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 357.

<sup>432</sup> It is also well known that the practice of instituting a discipline for religious studies or publishing religious readers for that matter was certainly not unique to the anti-colonial movements. Bayly has shown that religious literature in the nineteenth century was at the “forefront of the print revolution as it expanded beyond the European, American, Chinese and Japanese elites.” Ibid. 333.

<sup>433</sup> This is evident from the inclusion of Vedic religious lessons, as discussed later in this chapter. It is also shown in this chapter how the Vedic readers, which were an essential part of the curriculum of Veda Patha, were not restricted to Vedic mantras alone but also included various ethical and social maxims that had been selectively excerpted from some of the ancient Dharmasastras (law books) such as the Manu Smriti.

language, morality and religion to students rather than focussing on standard religious beliefs.

#### VEDIC 'THEOLOGY'

One of the means through which Vedic knowledge was sought to be given to young Arya Samajis and D.A.V. students was by instituting a Theological Department. The idea to introduce a separate branch of theological instruction for D.A.V. students was first mooted by some members of the D.A.V. College Society in 1890 at Lahore. In a meeting of the D.A.V. College Society held at Lahore in 1890, some members who mostly belonged to the 'Mahatma' wing of the Samaj proposed before the D.A.V. College Managing Committee that "Vedic Theology" be introduced as one of the subjects of study in the School and the College Departments. In this proposal, these members of the D.A.V. College Society defined "Vedic Theology" as "the science which treats of the existence, character and attributes of God, his laws and government, the doctrines we are to believe and the duties we are to practice as taught in the Holy Vedas and explained by Swamiji (Dayanand Saraswati)."<sup>434</sup> In other words, this definition suggests that the discipline of "Vedic Theology" was to primarily consist of instruction in religious doctrines based on the writings of Dayanand Saraswati and his commentaries on the Vedas.

Now, the opening of the Theological Class was delayed due to the 1893 split within the ranks of the Arya Samaj, which led to the creation of two factions namely the 'College' party and the 'Mahatma' party.<sup>435</sup> It must be noted that the idea to start a Theological Class was propounded by those who belonged to the 'Mahatma' wing of the Samaj. Therefore, once the split in the Samaj was complete in 1893, the responsibility to give a practical shape to the

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<sup>434</sup> 'Lahore 26th April 1890' (Lahore: Virajanand Press, 1890), printed in *D.A.V.C.M.C Proceedings*, File No. 2, New Delhi, p. 41- 42.

<sup>435</sup> This 1893 split has been discussed in detail in the third chapter of this dissertation.

Theological class fell on the hands of the ‘Mahatma’ party. The ‘Mahatmas’ realised that under the new circumstances in which the D.A.V. College Managing Committee was largely in the control of the ‘College’ or ‘Moderate’ faction of the Samaj, the ‘Mahatma’ party could not expect the Theological class to form one of the subjects within the prevailing scheme of studies for the D.A.V. School and College. This was partly why the Theological class was transformed from being a subject within the curricular framework of the D.A.V. Schools to an individual department of the D.A.V. ‘College’ where every subject (including ‘religion’) was taught. This was a compromise for the ‘Mahatma’ party who did not yet have a separate institution to their credit. The theological class then, as it came to be implemented, served as a parallel and alternative platform to the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School and College. It also became a kind of laboratory for the ‘Mahatma’ faction of the Samaj to test their educational ideas before they would establish their own ‘Gurukul’ at Kangri in Haridwar in the year 1902.

Although the ideological division within the Samaj also contributed in some measure to a reformulation of the original idea of the Theological Class, the process of how the original idea of “Vedic Theology” was transformed is worth studying in some detail. The remaining part of this section examines the curriculum of the Theological Class and seeks to determine whether this department was a platform for religious indoctrination or not.

Since the Theological Class was still a department of the D.A.V. ‘College’, the D.A.V. College Managing Committee had the final authority to approve the scheme of studies for the proposed department. But it was not until three years after the split that both parties could discuss and reconcile their differences for the sake of setting up the Theological Class. In 1896, it was decided to open the Theological Department where a ‘proper’ Vedic education would be imparted to students. Thereafter, a comprehensive and elaborate scheme of studies for the Theological class was discussed, formulated and passed at a meeting convened by the D.A.V. College Managing Committee on

19<sup>th</sup> March 1899.<sup>436</sup> This scheme was intended for all academic levels spanning over ten to twelve years. At the higher levels called *Upadhyaya* and *Acharya*, students were trained in advanced Sanskrit literature. Their course of instruction involved studying the ten Upanishads and the four Vedas. However, at the elementary level, the course of instruction covered a more wide range of topics and themes. The following discussion focusses on the instruction that was imparted at this primary level of the Theological Class.

In the first year or entrance level called *Praveshika* students were taught Sanskrit Grammar, Hindi, English, Arithmetic (upto the compound division) and General Knowledge that also included the History of India. It is interesting to note that no religious instruction as such was given in the first standard. This does not however mean that students' courses were entirely devoid of religious and moral lessons. Through the use of such textbooks as *Chanakya Niti* and Dayanand Saraswati's *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh*, students were not just familiarised with the basics of Sanskrit grammar but also given moral and religious education. In this text, for instance, instruction in elementary Sanskrit was given through the mode of conversations between a teacher and a student. With the help of such dialogues, students incorporated basic values such as the importance of punctuality, cleanliness, physical exercise and the performance of religious rites. This was also the case with the teaching of Hindi for which the textbook used was none other than the *Satyarth Prakash* itself. As a result, students were given a combined dose of literary, philosophical, moral and religious instruction.

In the second year, students learned more or less the same subjects with more advanced textbooks. For instance, instead of *Laghu Vyakarana*, Panini's *Ashtadhyayi* was now used for teaching Sanskrit Grammar. Another interesting addition in the second year courses was the introduction of a subject called

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<sup>436</sup> For the complete scheme, see "19th March 1899", in *D.A.V C.M.C Proceedings*, File No. 6 A, 45-47.

“Literature and Religion”. The curriculum for this subject included selections from two of India’s most famous ‘religious’ epics namely the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Besides these ‘religious’ texts, Sanskrit works on morality and ethics were also taught as part of this subject. For instance, certain selections from the *Panchatantra*, a well-known ancient compilation of various related animal fables were read in verse as well as prose format. With the use of allegories, metaphors and literary symbolism, these illustrated fables were taught with a view to instilling in young minds the distinction between virtues and vices. Some of the stories exemplified the benefits of friendship, wise leadership and righteous conduct while others highlighted the dire consequences of avarice, rash decision making and so on. It would be pertinent here to recall that textbooks such as the *Panchatantra* and *Chanakyaniti* were also read in the mid-late nineteenth century ‘indigenous’ *patshalas* of Punjab that G.W. Leitner had written about. But with the intervention of colonial rule, these textbooks were removed from the *patshalas* on the pretext of “religious neutrality”. I also explained, earlier in this dissertation, that the *Panchatantra* is more complex than a manual of morality and ethics. Arthur Ryder, one of the first English translators of the *Panchatantra*, points out in his introduction to the text that the *Panchatantra* is a “*niti-shastra* or textbook of *niti* which roughly means “the wise conduct of life.”<sup>437</sup> There is hardly any doubt then that *Panchatantra* was not a ‘religious’ text even though it was included by D.A.V. leaders in the subject named “Literature and Religion”.

With this background in mind, it appears that by using some of the old textbooks, members of the the D.A.V. College Managing Committee attempted to resist colonization in a way that may be called ‘revivalist’.<sup>438</sup> More

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<sup>437</sup> Arthur. W. Ryder, trans. *The Panchatantra* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1925), 5.

<sup>438</sup> The term ‘revivalism’ has been much defiled in recent scholarship owing to its ‘communal’ connotations and its use to describe some of the political Hindu nationalist

importantly however, the D.A.V. leaders sought to include a wide gamut of texts and themes in the scheme of studies that they approved for the Theological Class. As noted earlier, the Theological Department was originally conceived as a platform where instruction in “Vedic Theology” would be imparted. Hence, when the proposal was first laid down, the institution was designed to be a medium for instruction in the core tenets of Vedic ‘religion’ as expounded by Dayanand Saraswati. However, as evident from the foregoing discussion, the scheme of studies that came to be implemented was more holistic and covered a wider range of topics than hitherto believed.

Despite the initial enthusiasm and great hopes that were attached to the Theological Class, the institution had a rather short life. It was eventually abolished in 1921 because of lack of sufficient funds as well as what many believe was a lack of ideological clarity. Although it is not fully clear as to why the Theological Class was generally believed to have lost its *raison d’etre*, the institution was renamed as **Dayanand Brahma Mahavidyala** which was established in 1921.

#### VEDA PATH

The subject of *Veda Path* had been a part of the D.A.V. school curriculum ever since a consolidated scheme of studies was sanctioned by the Managing Committee in 1899-1900. The inclusion of *Veda Path*, or study of the Vedas, in the D.A.V. curriculum was one of the modes of giving a practical shape to the Samajic ideology as it was propounded by the organisation’s founder Swami Dayanand Saraswati. As discussed in the previous chapter, Vedic instruction formed the cornerstone of a broader socio-religious agenda that Dayanand Saraswati had envisioned. The Arya Samaj was indeed famous

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endeavours. However, the term needs to be understood in a more dynamic sense where it refers to re-invoking the past without a chauvinistic bias. This is the sense and purpose in which the term has been used here.

for making the clarion call “Back to the Vedas”. Little wonder then that much of the late nineteenth century Samajic endeavours focussed on the ‘revival’ of Vedic literature and what they believed to be the Vedic way of life that included among other things, the practice of daily rituals as elaborated later in this chapter, *Yoga* and the study of Vedic texts. One of the consequences of this reformist consciousness was the emphasis on studying the Vedas and Vedic literature. It was this impulse that led to the inclusion of *Veda Path* in the D.A.V. school curriculum at all levels – primary, middle and high. But the crucial question is what was the nature of this Vedic instruction. Since the subject of *Veda Path* was primarily meant to impart ‘religious’ instruction, a major component of the curriculum consisted of *mantras* or hymns selected from various parts of the four Vedas. At the primary level, pupils learned just one *mantra* each year. In their first year of school, students memorised and recited the famous *Gayatri Mantra* (***Om Bhur Bhuvah Svaha, Tat Savitur Varenyyam, Bhargo Devasya Dhi Mahi, Diyo Yo Na Prachodyat***). This mantra is believed to be highly auspicious and it is recited by millions of Hindus every day. It is generally the first mantra that is traditionally taught to children as they commence their education. The mantra, as Ram Swarup explains, prays for activating and manifesting our mind and understanding, thereby capturing the “truer” aim of Indian education which is “self-unfoldment and self-expression, the expression of our higher Self.”<sup>439</sup> In the second and third year, two *suktas* or hymns from the *Rigveda* were taught. One of these *suktas* was the *Purusa Sukta* relating to the *Purusha* or the Supreme Being and the creation of the universe.<sup>440</sup> In the fourth and final year of primary school, students learned

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<sup>439</sup> Ram Swarup, *On Hinduism* (New Delhi: Voice of India, 2000, repr; 2009), 168.

<sup>440</sup> See “Scheme of Studies for Primary Department: 10/1/1899” in *D.A.V C.M.C Proceedings*, File No. 5 (1894-1900), 132-136.

and recited the *Shanti Path* or Prayer of Peace.<sup>441</sup> Thus, it is evident that the curriculum of *Veda Patha* in primary school was confined to a few select *mantras*. It may be inferred that such teaching was strictly ‘religious’ and that its only apparent objective was to memorise certain religious verses. But, a more thorough scrutiny of this discipline, as done later in this section, contradicts these initial impressions.

The course as well as the scope of instruction expanded progressively as students advanced from primary to middle and high school. A graduated series of seven Vedic Readers was introduced in the *Veda Path* curriculum for the middle and high school departments. The first four of these Vedic Readers are analysed here in this section. One of the chief characteristics of these Vedic Readers was that they were replete with Vedic mantras. This is hardly surprising given that ‘religious’ or Vedic instruction was the main objective behind the institution of the discipline of *Veda Path*. The author of the series of Vedic Readers was a school master named Durga Prasad whose primary aim in compiling and preparing the readers was to enable students to study the Vedas. In his preface to the second Vedic reader, Durga Prasad asserted that if pupils began learning Vedic mantras from the age of ten onwards, they would complete all the four Vedas by their twenty first year provided that they learned 30 Vedic *mantras* every week. Accordingly, the subject of *Veda Path* and the organisation of each of the Vedic readers was designed with a view to fulfilling this objective. The Vedic readers largely consisted of select Vedic *mantras* with a brief explanation of their meanings. The First Vedic Reader contained nine Vedic hymns: four each from the Yajur Veda and Rig Veda and one from the Samveda. Most of these hymns were addressed to *Ishwar* or ‘God’ who was invoked as the protector, the all powerful, merciful and so on. The different

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<sup>441</sup> As we shall see later, the Shanti Path also formed an integral component of the new graduated series of Dharma Shikshaks or ‘religious’ readers that were introduced in D.A.V. schools from the first decade of the twentieth century.

devatas were not invoked with their different names but rather as different attributes of the *Parameshwar* or Supreme Being. While some of the hymns such as “remove all evils and give us that which is good”; “give us wealth”; “may the all-pervading divine mother be pleased to fulfill our spiritual desires and strew blessings around us” were devotional prayers, others such as “I shall talk knowledge [...] speak truth” were selected with a view to imparting general moral instruction. The second Vedic Reader contained 15 Vedic Mantras: eight from the RigVeda, one each from the YajurVeda and the SamVeda, and five from the AtharvaVeda. These selected mantras were both devotional as well as descriptive in nature. They were recited to seek blessings for bestowing wealth and happiness while at the same time describing such attributes of the *Parameshwara* as his immanence and all-pervasive nature. The Third Vedic Reader contained about twenty-four Vedic Mantras: eight from the RigVeda and sixteen from the Yajurveda. These mantras were read for seeking the blessings of ‘God’ for purifying and clearing away sin; the immanence and all-pervasive nature of God (*Parameshwar*), the importance of knowledge. The Fourth Vedic Reader contained twenty-four mantras: twenty-one from the RigVeda, two from the Atharvaveda, and one from the Yajurveda. These mantras pertained to the spirit of friendship and “brotherhood”; purification through external (water, sun, herbs) and internal agencies (the faculties of mind); the immanence and all-pervasive nature of the Goddess (*Prakriti*), seeking protection from the goddess. Each of these selected Vedic *mantras* were taught to students one at a time. The *mantra* was printed in its original Sanskrit form alongwith the reference to the source whence it had been taken. Then the Hindi translation for each syllable of the *mantra* was written for ease of memorization and understanding. This was followed by a complete translation of the *mantra* in Hindi and English successively. The English translation was intended to “let such parents as are not conversant with Hindi, know what kind of religious instruction is given to their sons at the Dayanand

High School”.<sup>442</sup> These translations were often accompanied with the author’s notes in English. The select *mantras* that were included in these Vedic readers pertained to different themes but a majority of them dealt with the attributes of *Ishwar* or the Supreme Being also roughly translated as ‘God’. For instance, in the first year of middle school, i.e. the sixth class, the course of *Veda Patha* included the recitation of mantras pertaining to *Ishwar* or God. The third Vedic Reader contains one such *mantra* from the *YajurVeda*.<sup>443</sup> In their second and third year of middle school, students were asked to learn additional Veda mantras from Vedic reader.<sup>444</sup> The higher department of school consisting of two classes, the ninth and tenth class, were the final years that students spent as part of their school course. For these two final classes, the curriculum of *Veda Patha* included selections from Dayanand Saraswati’s *Veda Bhashya Bhumika* and *Sandhya* as well as some portions of the third and fourth Vedic Readers.<sup>445</sup>

The above preliminary investigation of the *Veda Patha* curriculum suggests that the teaching was limited to religious doctrines and therefore that the subject was some sort of a narrow ecclesiastical discipline. If this were true, it would bolster the argument that the Arya Samaj tried to construct a religious ideology through the mode of *Dharma Shiksha* in the D.A.V. schools. But a thorough scrutiny of the *Veda Path* curriculum and of the Vedic Readers in particular suggests otherwise.

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<sup>442</sup> Durga Prasad, *First Vedic Reader*, 19.

<sup>443</sup> This mantra has been translated from the original Sanskrit into English as follows: “God pervades all this, what ever moves in the world. Therefore live righteously. Do not covet the wealth of others.” See Durga Prasad, *The Third Vedic Reader* (Lahore: Virjanand Yantralaya, 1894), 7-8.

<sup>444</sup> See “Scheme of Studies for the Middle Dept.” In *D.A.V C.M.C Proceedings*, File No. 5, 160-161.

<sup>445</sup> See “Scheme of Studies for the Higher Dept.” In *D.A.V C.M.C Proceedings*, File No. 5, p. 164-167.

The First Vedic Reader contained several moral guidelines for righteous conduct. These maxims were mostly supported with copious references from ancient Sanskrit texts such as the *Manu Smriti* from which five verses were excerpted at different instances in the first Vedic Reader. A few examples of these excerpts include: “Pronounce the syllable *Om* at the beginning and at the end of a lesson in the Veda”; and “Let the pupil say the truth [...] let him utter no falsehood”. The reader also included select verses from authoritative or *arsha* texts (such as the *Manu Smriti*) that disapproved of ‘atheism’ and clubbed it together with other vices. For instance, a verse from *Manu Smriti* (IV. 163) was cited as follows: “let the pupil avoid atheism, caviling at the Vedas, contempt of the Gods, hatred, want of modesty, pride, anger and harshness”. A similar verse (*Manu* IV. 174) was cited as follows: “Let the pupil without tiring daily mutter the Veda at the proper time; for they declare that to be one’s highest duty; (all) other (observances) are secondary duties.”

Along similar lines, the Second Vedic Reader contained various moral guidelines for students. One verse from the *Manu Smriti* was included and four verses from the well-known *Chanakya Niti*. The reader contained several verses with a view to inculcating discipline and righteous conduct amongst students. Some prominent examples of such verses in the second vedic reader include: “The student is forbidden eight things: Attachment, anger, avarice, gluttony, ornamentation, sport, excess of sleep, and servility.” (*Chanakya*, X.7) Other verses on the importance of knowledge were also included. The following verse from *Chanakya Niti* was cited in this regard: “A moneyless man is not poor [...] he is poor in all things who is destitute of the jewel of knowledge.” (*Chanakya*, X. 1). In addition to the aforementioned guidelines for general ethical and social conduct, there were some select references warning students about the ‘dangers’ of secular education. In this regard, the author, namely Durga Prasad, cited the following verse from the *Manu Smriti* “the twice born person who studies secular subjects without learning the Veda becomes a low caste in his life with his family” (*Manu*, II. 164). This reference was followed by a note from Durga

Prasad, which read as follows: “Every Hindu should learn the veda before or along with secular subjects. This order of Manu is obeyed in the Dayanand High School.”

Like the first two vedic readers, the third Vedic Reader also contained various ethical, social and cultural guidelines. Six verses were included from the *Manu Smriti*. A few examples are cited below: “By bad marriages, by omitting (the performance of sacred rites), by neglecting the study of the Vedas, and by irreverence towards brahmanas, (great) families sink low. (Manu III. 63); “He who recollecting his former existences, again recites the Veda, gains endless bliss by the continual study of the Veda.” (Manu, IV. 149); “Through virtuous conduct a person obtains long life and desirable offspring, and gets rid of evil propensities.” (Manu IV. 156); “Let a person avoid (the acquisition of) wealth and (the gratification of his) desires, if they are opposed to the sacred law, and even lawful which may cause pain in the future or are offensive to people.” (Manu, IV. 176).

From the foregoing discussion, it is evident that contrary to initial impressions that religious instruction imparted in D.A.V. schools would be monolithic and narrow, the subject of *Veda Patha* and its curriculum and particularly the contents of the Vedic Readers were not confined to the ‘religious’ domain alone. In addition to teaching *mantras* or vedic hymns to the students, D.A.V. educators compiled the course of vedic readers in such a way as to cater to a wide range of ethical, social and cultural issues. In addition, the value of “social service” was taught to the students of D.A.V. School, Lahore through various practical activities. From collecting funds for the school and college to teaching illiterate children and providing medical assistance in their hostel, the D.A.V. school boys were engaged in various activities that taught them the meaning of social welfare.<sup>446</sup> Of course, this was not necessarily a unique feature of the D.A.V. movement. Missionary schools in colonial India

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<sup>446</sup> Bakshi Ram Rattan, *Some Educational Problems and Movements*, 139-140.

were also using similar techniques to impart ‘religious’ instruction.<sup>447</sup> It is difficult to say which group, whether missionaries or Arya Samajis, was first to use this ‘inclusive’ approach with regard to religious education. Perhaps, both groups may have been influenced by each other’s methods. Nonetheless, the ‘inclusive’ pedagogical approach used by D.A.V. leaders was used not only in the teaching of subjects like *Veda Patha* but also in the preparation of linguistic, social and religious manuals that are analysed in the following sections of this chapter.

#### DHARMA SHIKSHA: ‘RELIGIOUS’ TEXT BOOKS OR ‘SOCIO-CULTURAL’ MANUALS?

One of the most important differences was that the D.A.V. school curriculum included a significant amount of lessons in moral and religious education. There has been a tendency to ignore these aspects of the D.A.V. movement and this is one of the reasons my dissertation aims to highlight these aspects. Scholars have underestimated the extent of moral and religious instruction imparted in D.A.V. schools because it was believed that the D.A.V. schools taught more or less the same subjects as government schools. For instance, Vickie Langohr claims that although D.A.V. leaders envisioned a curriculum that would include Vedic education, “in practice, however, the lion’s share of DAV education focussed on non-religious subjects.”<sup>448</sup> A careful scrutiny of the D.A.V. education model, as is done in this dissertation, completely belies the general impressions of a ‘non-religious’ scheme of studies. While there is no doubt that ‘non-religious’ subjects were emphasised in the D.A.V. curriculum with a view to passing government examinations, there was a strong emphasis on ‘traditional’ lessons in the scheme of studies.

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<sup>447</sup> See Hayden Bellenoit, *Missionary Education and Empire in Late Colonial India, 1860-1920* (2007; repr., New York: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>448</sup> Langohr, “Colonial Education Systems and the Spread of Local Religious Movements: The Cases of British Egypt and Punjab”, 177.

This ‘traditional’ aspect was present in the teaching of Hindi readers as well as ‘religious readers’ more commonly known as *Dharma Shikshaks*. This section shows that *Dharma Shiksha* (roughly translated as moral and religious instruction) was an integral and characteristic feature of the D.A.V. school curriculum. The nature and contents of this discipline are analysed in this chapter. But first it is important to understand the factors that led to the inclusion of moral and religious lessons in the D.A.V. curriculum.

Several factors influenced the decision to impart *Dharma Shiksha* in the curriculum of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic schools. Firstly, given the importance it had been accorded by Dayanand Saraswati, religious and moral instruction was always a key concern for Arya Samajis. With the genesis and growth of the D.A.V. movement, Samajis like Hans Raj who were deeply inspired by the religious mission of the Samaj, strived to infuse a moral and religious character to the education that was imparted in the D.A.V. institutions. Adherence to *Dharma* or righteous conduct had been a central concern for Aryas ever since the establishment of the Arya Samaj in 1875. The ten principal *niyams* (rules) that form the core doctrine of the Samaj testify in ample measure to the significance of *Dharma*. The fifth *nyam*, for instance, states that all actions should be performed in conformity with *Dharma*.<sup>449</sup> Swami Dayanand Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj reiterated this overarching significance of *Dharma* in many of his writings beginning with his ‘magnum opus’, the *Satyarth Prakash*.<sup>450</sup> Moreover, the distinction between *Dharma* and *Adharma* was explicitly underscored by the Swami in the *Satyartha Prakash*.<sup>451</sup> Clearly, *Dharmic* conduct formed an integral part of the Samajic ideology, and it

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<sup>449</sup> See *Constitution of the Arya Samaj: Principles & Bye-Laws* (Delhi: Sarvadeshik Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, 1958).

<sup>450</sup> Give the necessary references to *Dharma* in *Satyartha Prakash*. Also cite relevant pages from Jordens and Bob van der Linden in this regard.

<sup>451</sup> Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyartha Prakash* (1882; repr., New Delhi: Sarvadeshik Arya Patinidhi Sabha, 1968).

therefore became imperative for the Samaj not only to elaborate on the multiple meanings of *Dharma* but also to educate and encourage future generations to lead a *Dharmic* life. It is then hardly surprising that *Dharma Shiksha* or education in *Dharma* characterised much of the Samajic literature that was published from the late nineteenth century onwards. This literature was subsequently used in Arya Samaj schools across the Punjab and beyond.

Secondly, the institution of *Dharma Shiksha* stemmed from a reaction to missionary activities. In late nineteenth and early twentieth century Punjab, Christian proselytization was widespread and religious boundaries were sharply drawn. In such circumstances, the Arya Samajis believed that a knowledge of one's religion was indispensable. Thus, inspired by Dayanand Saraswati's mission of religious revival and faced with the need to resist Christian proselytization, the Arya Samajis decided to introduce religious and moral instruction in the curriculum of D.A.V. schools. A knowledge of *Sanskriti* and *Dharma*, they believed, was the only means for national awakening besides being an effective weapon to counter the threat posed by Christian missionaries.<sup>452</sup>

Thirdly, the decision to impart 'religious' instruction was a direct consequence of the perceived demerits of colonial education. Government education, being 'secular' in nature, had come under heavy criticism from all quarters of Punjab. Such a 'godless' education was regarded by the Arya Samajis as being highly detrimental to the moral and cultural upbringing of children. By the first decade of the twentieth century, people all over the country had begun to express a desire for religious and moral instruction. The national atmosphere was thus conducive for such training to be imparted in schools. Even the colonial government, by and large, shared the growing public concern over the widespread deterioration of moral values in the country. Consequently, the Indian Education Policy of 1913 termed the question of moral and religious

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<sup>452</sup> Dharmadev Vidyarthi, *D.A.V. Andolan Ka Itihasa*, 171.

instruction as the ‘most important educational problem of the time.’<sup>453</sup> In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a considerable number of testimonies and petitions were written by a vast majority of Indians many of whom were not even aware of the missionary narrative.<sup>454</sup> In view of such overwhelming evidence, it appears that there may have been some merit in the criticism that government education had a debilitating effect on the moral character of students. In any case, there is no doubt that the introduction of ‘religious’ instruction into the educational programme of Arya Samajis was an attempt to counter the “godless” and “amoral” education offered in government schools of the late nineteenth century. Krishna Kumar has noted in his well-known *Politics of Education in Colonial India* how the absence of religious instruction evoked widespread criticism among Indians and led to the emergence of nationalist institutions with a strong emphasis on religious and cultural education.

The argument that the morality of college-educated youth had declined due to the absence of religious instruction in schools had become quite common. Schools and colleges run under the auspices of religious reform movements such as Arya Samaj had been projected as representing a major advance on English education by virtue of the religious ethos and moral training they offered. The rationale for the setting up of a Hindu university had referred to the role that religious knowledge plays in the upliftment of students.<sup>455</sup>

As the shortcomings of secular education were becoming increasingly evident, the colonial government was also forced to reconsider its century old line of ‘religious neutrality’ in matters of education. Reflecting this change of attitude,

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<sup>453</sup> Governor-General Hardinge, *Indian Educational Policy, 1913: Being a Resolution Issued by the Governor General in Council on the 21st Feb., 1913* (Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent, Government Printing, 1913).

<sup>454</sup> A major bulk of such testimonies has been published in Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, ed. *Educating the Nation*. op.cit.

<sup>455</sup> Krishna Kumar, *Politics of Education in Colonial India*, 138.

*The Indian Education Policy, 1913*, observed that “the most thoughtful minds in India lament the tendency of existing systems of education to develop the intellectual at the expense of the moral and religious faculties”.<sup>456</sup> This viewpoint was shared by Hans Raj, who had by then become President of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. His remarks further testify to the ubiquitous desire, among the Arya Samajis, for ‘religious education’. “Denominational institutions,” Hans Raj had said in his evidence before the *Indian Universities Commission of 1902*, “are springing up in the province, combining religious education with secular instruction and they are exactly the kind of institutions required in the country”.<sup>457</sup>

Last but not the least, *Dharma Shiksha* was seen to naturally and integrally fit into of the Vedic aspect of the ‘Anglo-Vedic’ educational programme that had been conceived and formulated by the D.A.V. pedagogues. For those seeking to conserve their ‘tradition’, the importance of *Dharma Shiksha* was at par with the teaching of Hindi and Classical Sanskrit. In fact, these two aspects, viz. the teaching of language and the teaching of religion, were so deeply intertwined that they were often clubbed together by the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. The number of students receiving instruction in Hindi and Religious Instruction was invariably mentioned in the annual reports of the institution as also in various official and private accounts of educational work done by the Arya Samaj. There seemed to be a consensus among all Arya Samajis that educating their children in Hindi and Sanskrit as well as giving them a basic understanding of their religion were sacrosanct and non-negotiable points of their educational agenda.

Owing to a combination of all the various reasons mentioned above, the idea to have religious and moral instruction taught as a separate subject to

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<sup>456</sup> Ibid.

<sup>457</sup> Lala Hans Raj, University of Punjab, *Report of the Indian Universities Commission (1902)*: Volume III: Written Statements (Part I), p.79.

D.A.V. students was propounded in 1894. In that year, at the bequest of Lal Chand (President, College Managing Committee), a *Dharma Shiksha* sub-committee was constituted with three prominent Samajis namely, Hans Raj, Munshi Ram (also known as Swami Shraddhanand) and Pandit Raja Ram. Around the same time, D.A.V. schoolmaster Durga Prasad included the following advertisement in the Vedic Readers prescribed for students of the middle and higher departments.

Besides university education, Dayanand High School Lahore, opened in July 1894, gives religious and moral education on catholic principles and also teaches the Vedas according to the capacity of pupils. Gentlemen desirous of training their dear ones in righteousness, which exalteth a nation, should send them to this school.<sup>458</sup>

The atmosphere of religious teaching was also visible in the Boarding School of the D.A.V. School, Lahore where “daily prayers were offered in the morning and evening”.<sup>459</sup> In addition, the boarders attended weekly meetings of the Young Men’s Arya Samaj where they listened to “discourses on religious and social topics.”<sup>460</sup>

The D.A.V. leaders composed ‘religious’ textbooks that included a wide variety of ethical, social and cultural themes for the purpose of imparting moral and religious instruction to students. It is this multi-faceted nature of the D.A.V. curriculum that this chapter seeks to highlight through the examples of textbooks. In the following sections, we shall see that with the passage of time, the entire syllabus for moral and religious instruction began to expand considerably.

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<sup>458</sup> Durga Prasad, (Dayanand High School Series) *The First Vedic Reader* (Lahore: Virjanand Press, 1894), 18.

<sup>459</sup> Sri Ram Sharma, *The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Lahore*, 6.

<sup>460</sup> Ibid.

### Composing Dharma Shikshaks

In a meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1910, the Managing Committee resolved that a course on religious and moral instruction, as drafted by the Committee, be taught in all affiliated educational institutions. It further ruled that the examination of this subject be brought under the auspices of the Managing Committee.<sup>461</sup> In what was perhaps the first reference to this matter, the D.A.V. College Lahore's Annual Report for 1910-11 stated that "due attention" was given to "Religious Education" during the academic year under review. It is important to note here that "religious education and classical sanskrit" were discussed under one heading, thereby emphasising that both of these aspects were not separate but integrally united elements of the 'Vedic' aspect in the 'Anglo-Vedic' agenda of the institution. The progress made by the institution in these two domains was noted in the following words:

Principal Hansraj, Pandit Arya Muni, Pandit Raja Ram and Pandit Chanan Ram delivered lectures on religious and moral subjects to the students of the Arts College. *Hindi Bhasha* and *Sandhya* were taught to those who did not know these, at the time of their admission in the College, and a graduated course of study in religious education was prescribed and enforced in all the Classes. A number of students read Classical Sanskrit with Pandit Arya Muni, the Course consisting of *Isho*, *Kena*, *Kath*, *Mundak*, and *Mandukya Upanishads* and *Vedant Darshana*.<sup>462</sup>

It was further announced that during the year 1910-11, a beginning was made "in the matter of the preparation and publication of Text-Books for Religious Instruction."<sup>463</sup> This partially prepared course comprised of certain "selections from *Satyarth Prakash* by Lala Hans Raj, and the books of Pandit Raja-Ram

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<sup>461</sup> "Proceedings of a meeting of the Managing Committee held on Sunday, the 13th March 1910", In *D.A.V C.M.C Proceedings*, File No. 10, 56-60.

<sup>462</sup> See *Report of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Lahore for 1910-11*, 7.

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid.* 10

and Professor Diwan Chand.”<sup>464</sup> So, it was in the second decade of the twentieth century, i.e. from about 1910 onwards, that the discipline of *Dharma Shiksha* came into its own. In the revised course of instruction, excerpts from Dayanand Saraswati’s various compositions such as *Veda Bhashya Bhumika* and *Sandhya* were included as were other pedagogical texts composed by prominent Arya Samajis of late nineteenth century Punjab. It is important to remember that this was a time when Arya Samaj leaders wrote scholarly commentaries on the Vedas and other *Arsha* texts. One such prolific Samaj writer was Pandit Raja Ram who in 1912 was “entrusted with the work of preparing religious readers for the School Department.”<sup>465</sup> During his long association with the D.A.V. College Managing Committee, Raja Ram served as the principal religious instructor for the D.A.V. College and School Departments. In addition to carrying out his primary responsibilities as a religious instructor in the D.A.V. schools, Raja Ram was pro-active in pursuing his own research in the domain of classical Sanskrit. In the year 1899, he was awarded a “special scholarship” of Rs. 50 per month to enable him “to prosecute his studies in classical Sanskrit at Benares.”<sup>466</sup> He was asked to especially study the Mimamsas and the Vedas and also submit a monthly report about the progress of his work. Upon completion of his research, Raja Ram published a long series of over fifty different commentaries as part of the *Arsha Granthawali* series. Most of these compositions were commentaries or revised editions of ancient Sanskrit texts such as the *Samkhya Karika* or the *Vaisheshik Darshan*. While a large number of these commentaries authored by Raja Ram were meant for advanced learners and college students, some titles such as the *Vedopadesh* and *Ved Shikshak* were

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<sup>464</sup> Ibid.

<sup>465</sup> See *Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1912* (Lahore: Jijnasu Printing Works), 9. Also see Proceedings of the College Sub-Committee dated 10.6.1912 in DAV CMC Proceedings, File no. 37.

<sup>466</sup> Proceedings of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee on the 2nd April 1899 in DAV CMC Proceedings, File No. 6 A, 48.

also written for the benefit of school children.<sup>467</sup> At the same time as Raja Ram was pursuing his research in classical Sanskrit literature, the D.A.V. College Managing Committee was redefining moral and religious instruction in most innovative and unprecedented ways. During the first decade of the twentieth century, a series of “religious readers” called *Dharma Shikshaks* began to be published for the purpose of imparting “religious instruction” in D.A.V. schools. Besides elaborating upon procedures for the conduct of rites and ceremonies, the *Dharma Shikshaks* contained detailed commentaries on moral and social issues of the day. Let us consider one such *Dharma Shikshak* reader which was prescribed in all Arya Samaj schools affiliated to the D.A.V. College, Lahore. This *Dharma Shikshak* reader was compiled from select excerpts of Dayanand Saraswati’s two major works namely *Sanskar Vidhi* and *Satyartha Prakash*.<sup>468</sup> Among other things, the *Dharma Shikshak* reader contains a detailed exposition of some basic tenets of the Arya Samaj such as re-incarnation (*punarjanam*), creation of the universe (*srishti-vishaya*), prohibition of idol-worship, the five principal sacrifices (*panchamahayajna*) and the four stages of life (*ashram vishaya*).<sup>469</sup> Most of the chapters were on issues such as *Sandhya*, *Ishwar Vishaya*, *Punarjanam* and so on. At the same time, there were topics such as *Yama-Niyama* (rules and observances) as part of the eight-fold Yoga. These lessons were probably included with a view to showing the importance accorded to discipline and conduct in traditional scriptures. As we shall see later, some themes particularly the *yajnas* were prevalent in various future editions of *Dharma Shikshak* readers. The school book ends with a long

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<sup>467</sup> See Arsha Granthawali series published from Lahore.

<sup>468</sup> Dayanand Saraswati, *Dharma Siksaka* (Lahore: Arya Pradeshik Pratinidhi Sabha, 1910).

<sup>469</sup> These four ashrams or stages correspond, ideally, to four different situations viz. the life of a student (brahmacharya ashram), the life of a householder (grihastha ashram), the life of a forest-dweller (vanaprastha ashram) and the life of an ascetic who has renounced his material and family life (sanyasa).

glossary that succinctly defines some general terms and concepts used by Dayanand Saraswati and Arya Samajis. It is important to note that not all of these terms are 'religious' in the sense we generally understand the word. Many of the terms belong to various categories. For instance, the glossary includes terms such as *paropakara* (service to humanity) and *shishtachaar* (civil conduct).<sup>470</sup> *Shishtachaar* is defined as abandoning falsehood and accepting truth after a careful discrimination of truth and falsity based on a calculated consideration of existing means. This is to be done after having acquired knowledge through the practice of *Dharma* (*Dharma acharan*).<sup>471</sup> *Paropakara* is defined as the performance of any such action which lessens the sorrow or pain of fellow beings, motivates them to abandon their bad habits and instead follow righteous conduct that brings happiness.<sup>472</sup> The contents of *Dharma Shikshaks* are analysed in detail in the following pages. But first it is important to study the evolution of these readers.

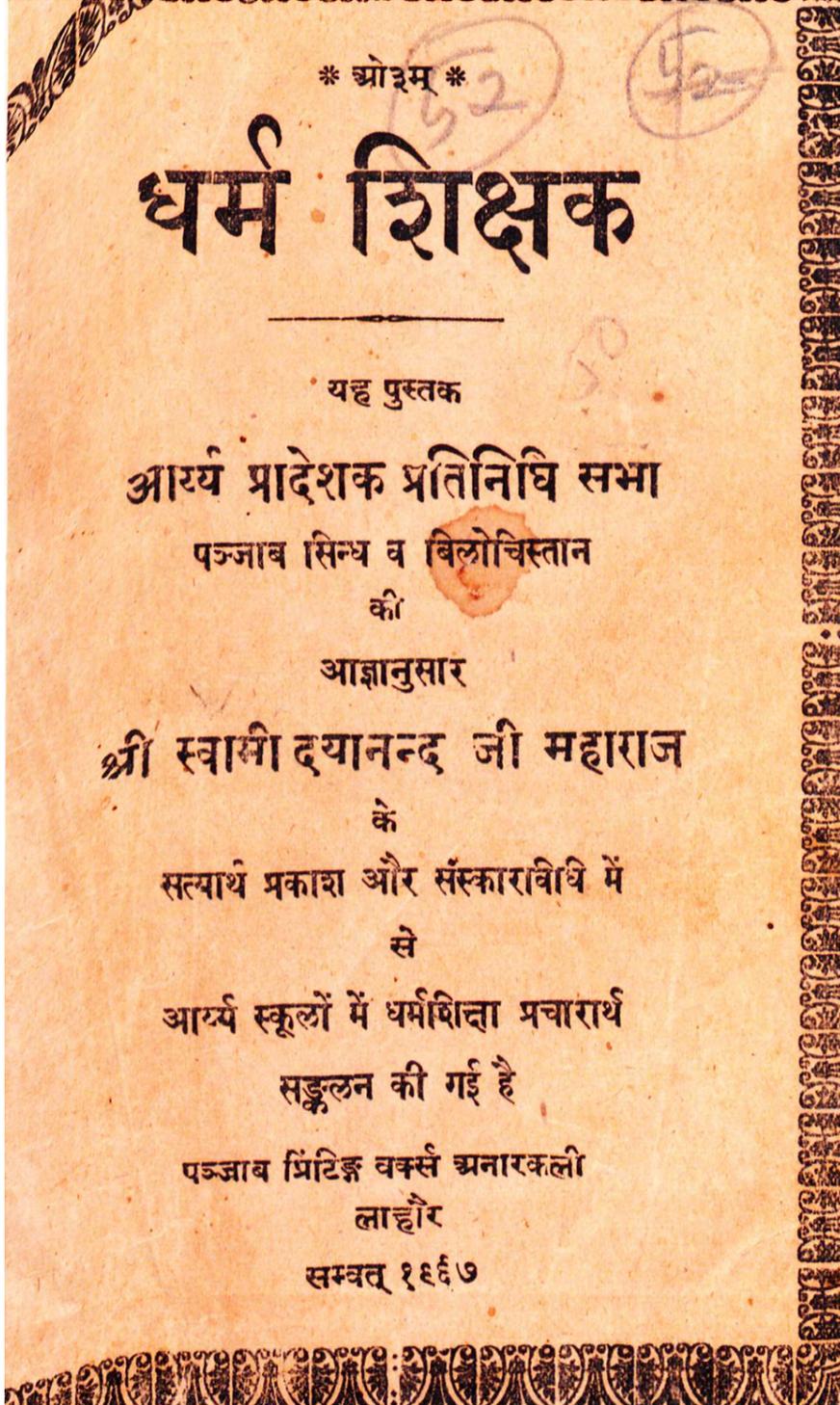
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<sup>470</sup> Dayanand Saraswati, *Dharma Siksaka* (Lahore: Arya Pradeshik Pratinidhi Sabha, 1910), 173 - 182.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid. 180.

<sup>472</sup> Ibid. 181.

Illustration : Cover page of a Dharma Shikshak textbook prescribed in all schools managed by the Arya Pradeshak Pratinidhi Sabha in Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan (ca.1910).



With the passage of time, the scope and range of topics covered in *Dharma Shikshak* readers was considerably widened. During the following academic year, viz. 1912, Pandit Raja Ram was assigned the task of preparing religious readers for the School Department. Religious instruction was now being touted by the Samajis as the “distinguishing feature” of the D.A.V. schools.<sup>473</sup> The Samajis were now confident, as the Annual Report for 1912 noted, that “the (*Dharma Shikshak*) readers, when prepared and adopted by Arya Schools in the Province, will help to bring home to the students the sublime teachings of the Vedic religion.”<sup>474</sup>

The watershed moment in the history of the evolution of the academic discipline of *Dharma Shiksha* came in the year 1913 when a revised and comprehensive course for *Dharma Shikshak* readers was recommended and passed by the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. On 15<sup>th</sup> February 1913, a conference was held in the Office of the Managing Committee for the specific purpose of drawing up a syllabus for religious instruction in all the Samajic schools. This conference was chaired by Hans Raj who was then President of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. The Conference was attended by eleven prominent leaders of the D.A.V. movement including Lala Sain Das then Principal of D.A.V. College, Lahore, Bakshi Ram Rattan then Headmaster of D.A.V. High School, Lahore, Pandit Raja Ram who was Professor of Theology, D.A.V. College, Lahore, Lala Diwan Chand, who was Professor of Philosophy, D.A.V. College, Lahore and Pandit Mehr Chand who was Headmaster of the Anglo-Sanskrit High School at Jullundhur.<sup>475</sup> Most of these men had served the

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<sup>473</sup> See *Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1912* (Lahore: Jijnasu Printing Works), 9.

<sup>474</sup> Ibid.

<sup>475</sup> Other lesser known names included Ram Ditta Mal, B.A., Headmaster, D.A.V. High School, Rawalpindi, Pandit Ram Chandra, B.A., Headmaster, A.S. High School,

movement during their whole life time and so they imbibed the essential teachings of the Arya Samaj. So, this team consisting of the most important D.A.V. leaders of the time set itself the momentous task of designing a revised curriculum for *Dharma Shiksha* is given below. Lala Hans Raj, who presided over this conference, unequivocally stated that the objective of the conference was “the framing of a scheme of religious instruction, which should suit all Samajic schools. The important object was to draw up a uniform syllabus, so that the Samajic schools should be linked together by one common chain.”<sup>476</sup> It will be interesting to see this syllabus for ‘religious’ instruction that prominent D.A.V. leaders chalked out in the conference.

Having studied the chronological evolution of the discipline of ‘religious’ instruction and the preparation of ‘religious’ readers, let us now analyse the contents of these textbooks. What were these ‘religious’ textbooks all about? Were they ‘religious’ as we generally understand the word, or did they cater to a much wider range of disciplines? The following pages shed light on these questions. The final curriculum for religious instruction adopted in the D.A.V. schools as well as contents of ‘religious’ text books are discussed below.

### Contents of Dharma Shikshaks

D.A.V. authorities recommended that ‘religious’ instruction in the first three classes, i.e. lower primary classes, should be oral. This was particularly important to partially mitigate the ‘standardisation’ of religious instruction. It is

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Ambala, Lala Bhagat Ram, B.A., Headmaster, National High School, Peshawar, Lala Sadanand, B.A., Headmaster, H.M. High School, Ferozepur, Pandit Nand Lal Shastri, Head Sanskrit Teacher, A.S. High School, Multan. See ‘Proceedings of a meeting of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee held on Saturday, 22nd March 1913’, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 13, 94-104.

<sup>476</sup> See ‘Proceedings of a meeting of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee held on Saturday, 22nd March 1913’, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 13, 94-104.

often argued that many of the oral ‘texts’ that were incorporated into the new ‘religious’ readers were standardised. As a result, moral and religious languages lost some of their diversity after they were compressed into a monolithic format that was considered suitable for classroom teaching. But oral teaching as prescribed above shows that D.A.V. schools allowed a lot of leeway for teachers while imparting ‘religious’ lessons to kids.

In the first year of primary school, pupils were taught to recite the *Gayatri Mantra*. In addition to this, students were to be taught lessons on *Shrawan* – a character who features in the classical epics – as a role model for truth and filial devotion. The book and the class room were to have Sharwan’s picture installed for “the duty of the love of parents to be impressed” upon young minds. Through a lesson on Sri *Ram Chandra*, whose picture was to be placed in the book and the class-room, the lesson of “obedience to parents” was to be “impressed” on the pupils. Four songs in simple language (1) on love of father and mother, (2) devotion to God, (3) cleanliness, (4) greetings (how to say *namaste*, to teachers and parents) were to be included in the textbook. Finally, a moral lesson on cleanliness and tidiness was to be taught with the help of a picture representing a tidy and untidy boy. In the second class, besides learning four Vedic *Mantras*, pupils learned four moral lessons on: “Honesty, Purity of language, Courage (not fearing evil spirits, etc.) and Work (dignity of labour, helping at home).” In addition, students also learned ten *Dohas* with one song. There were no doubt ‘religious’ references in the book and the class-room such as pictures presenting the scenes of “Vishwamitra’s arrival in Dashratha’s court taking Rama and Lakshmana” or the “fight with Marich and Subahu and the killing of the latter” or “The killing of Tarka”. Similarly, in the third year of primary school, students memorised four Vedic *mantras* besides revising the *mantras* learnt in the first and second classes. But pupils also learned four moral lessons on “Manners, Gratitude, Truthfulness, Kindness (love of brothers and sisters, love towards class-fellows). The book and the classroom was to have the following pictures: “An aged and a blind man being led by a little child (to

illustrate the lesson on Good Manners). The picture of Swami Dayanand as he is going to leave his Guru Swami Virjanand (to illustrate the lesson of Gratitude). Harishchandra's picture (to illustrate the lesson of Truthfulness). Picture of *Rama* and *Lakshmana* (to illustrate Love of Brothers).” In addition to the above, pupils learned ten *dohas* with four songs.

From the fourth primary class upwards, the D.A.V. leaders recommended that there should be a separate text-book for every class. The book for the fourth primary class was to be about fifty pages long. It would include the following lessons: “*Sandhya*, eleven mantras, with very simple *arthas* (meanings), the mantras to be divided into several lessons and interspersed in the book. A brief life of Swamiji (Dayanand Saraswati), covering some six or eight pages. Ten principles of the Arya Samaj. Five moral lessons on: Perseverance, Good manners (if possible selection should be made from *Vyavhaar Bhanu*), Truthfulness, Habits and Punctuality.”<sup>477</sup> In addition to the above, certain selections from *Tulsi Ramayana* and some Samajic songs were to be interspersed in the *Dharma Shikshak* for this class. Similarly, in the textbook for the fifth and final year of primary school, which was proposed to be about 75 pages long, the complete ritual of *Sandhya* was explained with “simple meaning” as were the rituals of *Panchmahayajna* (the five principal *yajnas* of the Arya Samaj). But so were the stories of *Prahlad* and *Haqiqat Rai* – both of whom were seen as paradigms of devotion, steadfastness and righteousness. Moreover, the significance of prominent festivals such as *Holi* and *Basant Panchami* was explained in the textbooks as was the importance of “social service.”

The foregoing analysis of the contents of *Dharma Shikshak* readers informs us about the variety and multi-dimensional nature of moral and religious instruction that was imparted to students of the D.A.V. school. It reveals that moral, social and cultural lessons were not just juxtaposed with

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<sup>477</sup> Ibid.

‘religious’ stories but that such themes were often interspersed within the ‘religious’ lessons that pupils read. The above findings also reveal that the generation of Arya Samajis who controlled the management of D.A.V. schools took a more liberal approach to the inclusion of texts as compared to the approach of Swami Dayanand Saraswati in whose memory the D.A.V. movement had begun. For instance, as we saw above, the *Tusli Ramayana* was included in the curriculum even though Dayanand himself had regarded the *Ramayana* of Tulsidas as ‘inauthentic’ and even discouraged the worship of popular Hindu deities such as *Rama* and *Krishna*. Nonetheless, the revised course of instruction as recommended by the Conference was accepted by the D.A.V. College Managing Committee on 20th April 1913.<sup>478</sup> Another change was made two years later when the Managing Committee decided that selections from the *Ramayana* should be continued to be taught but selections from *Vedang Prakash* should be removed from the course.<sup>479</sup> By the end of the academic year ending 1913, religious readers for the five primary as well as the first and second middle classes had been printed and introduced in D.A.V. School Lahore as also other Samajic Schools.<sup>480</sup> By the year 1915, a “graduated series of religious readers from the 4<sup>th</sup> primary to the 10<sup>th</sup> Class” was in possession of the staff.<sup>481</sup>

Having examined above the curriculum for primary school students, let us now analyse the contents of a *Dharma Shikshak* reader (No. 11) which was prescribed for high school and college students. Like the Vedic readers and various issues of the *Dharma Shikshak* series, the eleventh *Dharma Shikshak*

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<sup>478</sup> Ibid.

<sup>479</sup> *Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1915* (Lahore: Jijnasu Printing Works), 19-20.

<sup>480</sup> See *Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1913* (Lahore: Jijnasu Printing Works), 34.

<sup>481</sup> *Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1915* (Lahore: Jijnasu Printing Works), 33.

reader contained chapters on ‘religious’ topics such as *Ishwar Vandana*, *Punarjanam*, *Varna Vyavastha*, *Ashram Vishaya*, *Sanskars*, *PanchMahayajnas* and so on. In addition, the readers contained interesting chapters on ‘non-religious’ themes such as *Yama and Niyam*, *Achaar Vyavhaar*, *Neeti ke Updesh* and *Dincharya*. The contents of these chapters are discussed below.

*Yama and Niyam*, roughly translated as Rules and Principles, are traditionally considered as the first two steps of *Ashtanga Yoga* or eight-fold yoga expounded in the *Patanjali Yogasutras*. Different authors have interpreted the meaning and importance of *Yama* and *Niyama* in their own ways.<sup>482</sup> In the eleventh *Dharma Shikshak* reader prescribed by the D.A.V. College authorities, *Yama* and *Niyama* are defined as follows:

Those *anga* (parts) of *Dharma* which ought to be present in every civilised man so that he may bring happiness and peace in his own life as well as that of the society, following which brings man closer to *Ishwar* and makes him fulfill his duties towards himself, his society. Such parts of *Dharma* are called *Yama* and *Niyama*.<sup>483</sup>

The textbooks further elaborates on *Yama* and *Niyama* which consist of five parts each. What are these ten parts the practice of which constitutes the practice of *Yama* and *Niyama*. The five components of *Yama* are: *Ahmisa* (Non-Violence), *Satya* (Truth), *Asteya* (Temperance), *Brahmacharya* (Pursuit of *Brahman* or Supreme Being; Traditionally corresponds to the *Brahmacharya Ashram*, i.e. student stage which is regarded as the first of four *ashrams* or stages of life) and *Aparigraha* (Non-Possessiveness). The practice of each of these five aspects of *Yama* is described in detail in the *Dharma Shikshak* textbook with relevant citations and examples from traditional epics such as the *Mahabharat* and *Ramayana*. For instance, *Aparigraha* is the virtue of non-possessiveness which involves developing the ability to sacrifice one’s material

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<sup>482</sup> I have explained these terms in the glossary of this dissertation.

<sup>483</sup> *Dharma Shikshak No. 11 published for F.A. Class as per orders of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee* (Lahore: Bombay Machine Press, 1916), 216-217.

possessions as well as foregoing one's attachment for any person or object. A description of this virtue is followed in the textbook by citing the example of Shri Rama who personifies *Aparigraha* by sacrificing his material possessions at various points in the story of *Ramayana*.<sup>484</sup>

Having elaborated upon the principles and practice of *Yama*, the textbook moves on to defining the five parts that constitute *Niyama*. In serial order, these are: *Shaucha* (purification of body and mind), *Santosh* (contentment with the fruits of our actions), *Tap* (characterised by austerity, meditation and equanimity in all situations), *Svadhyaaya* (study of Vedas, Upanishads and other such texts which lead to the realisation of *Brahma*) and *Ishwar Pranidhaan* (surrender of oneself and one's actions to God). Interestingly, the meaning of *Ishwar Pranidhaan* is explained in the textbook with the example of the following verse from the *Bhagavad Gita*: "*Karmanyeva Adhikaarasti Ma Phaleshu Kadaachan*" (One has control only over one's action, not over the result). This verse succinctly summarises the idea of *Karma Yoga*, a concept that was evoked on many occasions in India's freedom struggle by leaders such as Vivekananda and Gandhi.

In addition to discussing *Yama* and *Niyama*, the *Dharma Shikshak* textbook contained several other lessons on morality. One such lesson titled *Achaar Vyavhaar* (Conduct and Behaviour) taught students to be compassionate and friendly towards fellow-beings. In order to emphasise the importance of civilised behaviour, relevant verses were cited from various traditional texts such as *Manusmriti*, *Mahabharat* and *Bhagavad Gita*, illustrating the benefits of *Sadachaar* (good behaviour) and the demerits of *Durachaar* (bad behaviour).<sup>485</sup>

To be sure, morality was not taught only through direct injunctions on good behaviour and right conduct. The *Dharma Shikshak* contained a chapters

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<sup>484</sup> *Dharma Shikshak* No. 11, 219-220.

<sup>485</sup> *Dharma Shikshak* No. 11, 273-280.

titled *Neeti ke Updesh* (Maxims on Ethics). This chapter contained select *dohas* (couplets) of famous Hindi poets like Tulsidas.<sup>486</sup> These maxims in lyrical-verse form were easy to read and memorise and they conveyed a moral teaching for young minds. *Dohas* have been used since the medieval period in traditional schools in North India. One instance of the use of *dohas* and maxims was discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation in the case of traditional *patshalas* of nineteenth century Punjab.

The foregoing survey of the topics and themes discussed in the *Dharma Shikshak* textbook reveals the diversity of themes that were addressed by this single manual on *Dharma* (righteous conduct). It shows that various disciplines and domains were co-existent in the lessons with the result that these lessons were at once linguistic, moral, educational, poetic, and philosophical. For instance, the elaboration of *Niyams* may be regarded as ‘religious’ or ‘philosophical’ from one standpoint but ‘educational’ from another. This is because most of these *niyams* were considered essential for student life. The *niyam* of *Svadhyaaya* literally meaning self-study will be discussed in detail later in this chapter because it also formed a part of one of the *Yajnas*, or rituals that D.A.V students were expected to perform daily.

On the whole then, it is impossible to identify *Dharma Shikshaks* as ‘religious’ textbooks even though some of the D.A.V. authorities themselves used the term ‘religious’ readers. The primary concern here is not to analyse the contents of linguistic or philosophical topics such as the meaning of vedic mantras or the metaphysical foundations of the reincarnation theory that were discussed in these ‘religious’ readers. Rather, my aim is to highlight the variety and kind of lessons that were taught to students under the broad umbrella of what was called *Dharma Shiksha*.

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<sup>486</sup> For a complete list of these *dohas* see “Tulsidas ke Dohe” and “Sri Lalji ke Dohe” in *Dharma Shikshak No. 11*, 280-282.

It is also interesting to note that the commentaries and the definitions contained in the textbook shed light on a wide range of themes that address some of the most critical moral and social questions of the time. For instance, the later *Dharma Shikshak* readers included extensive data on the social welfare activities such as famine relief and orphan relief that had been done by Arya Samajis in various parts of the country. So, it is fairly evident that the instruction imparted under the discipline of *Dharma Shiksha*, whether through the mode of *Vedic Readers* or *Dharma Shikshaks*, was multi-dimensional and multi-faceted. Moreover, such instruction was based not on synthetically adding different elements or topics but on integrally harmonising various aspects of ‘religion’. This practice of inclusivity was rooted in the traditional principle of *samavesha* which means integrating various constituent elements to form a new complex entity. By drawing on this principle, the D.A.V. leaders creatively engaged and responded to colonial education.

#### ‘Language’ Books or ‘Moral’ Readers?

There is no doubt that the teaching of Hindi reading and writing was used by the Arya Samaj in general and by D.A.V. leaders in particular as a means for propagating their cultural agenda. Indeed, as Krishna Kumar has argued, “Hindi soon acquired the title of *Aryabhasha* in Arya Samaj parlance, and its Sanskritised form became a part and parcel of the movement’s vision of a reformed Hindu society in which Vedic ideals would be practised.”<sup>487</sup> Cultural “revivalism” was surely one of the ways in which Hindi literature was used not only by the Arya Samaj but by the Hindi literati at large. From this perspective, Krishna Kumar has analysed the school books composed by famous Hindi writer and literary historian, Ramachandra Shukla (1884-1941) whose *Hindi Sahitya* was prescribed for literary reading in the vernacular schools of United Provinces. In his analysis, Kumar says that “one-third of the lessons” in

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<sup>487</sup> Krishna Kumar, *Politics of Education*, 145.

Ramachandra Shukla's *Hindi Sahitya* constitute "literary materials that symbolize a Hindu configuration." Kumar further adds that such a configuration "consists of mythology and symbols derived from religious practices and from history, projecting a specific religio-cultural history."<sup>488</sup> With the help of such textual examples, Kumar argues that "school education became the means whereby the cultural agenda of the Hindi literati could advance without facing much resistance."<sup>489</sup> The use of moral and religious lessons in these textbooks is then seen as part of a larger Samajic agenda to promote what Kumar calls a "revivalist view of history".<sup>490</sup>

Notwithstanding its "revivalist" bias, there were other aspects of Hindi pedagogical literature composed by the Arya Samaj which warrant attention. My thesis attempts to highlight some of the 'creative' aspects of schools books used in D.A.V. schools by focussing on the confluence of language, ethics and tradition. In doing so, I intend to bring out the elements of innovation and creativity prevalent in Samajic pedagogical writings and thereby challenge the idea that the D.A.V. educational curriculum was monolithic and uniform. The following analysis of Hindi readers used in D.A.V. schools suggests that the infusion of moral and religious themes was an innovation from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

As a case study, let us analyse Dayanand Saraswati's *Vyavhaar Bhanu*, the first Hindi manual of moral and religious instruction written from an Arya Samajic viewpoint.<sup>491</sup> Being the Arya Samaj's first comprehensive reader on moral and religious instruction, the *Vyavhaar Bhanu* gradually came to occupy a central place in the curriculum of D.A.V. schools. As early as 1890, when the D.A.V. College Managing Committee had finalised its curriculum for the

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<sup>488</sup> Ibid. 149.

<sup>489</sup> Ibid. 132.

<sup>490</sup> Ibid. 154.

<sup>491</sup> Swami Dayanand Saraswati, *Vyavhaar Bhanu*, (Ajmer, 1961).

primary school department, the *Vyavhaar Bhanu* was prescribed as a textbook for the Hindi Reading course taught in the fourth year of primary school. After the 1913 conference, selections from *Vyavhaar Bhanu* were included in the *Dharma Shikshak* readers for third and fourth grade students with a view to teaching them lessons on “good manners” and “*Dincharya*” (daily routine).<sup>492</sup> Composed in 1879, *Vyavhaar Bhanu* is regarded as the third book authored by Dayanand Saraswati on the subject of education.<sup>493</sup> The purpose of publishing this work was outlined by Dayanand himself in the following words:

I have verified and thereby ascertained that those who conduct themselves in accordance with Dharma remain happy and reap benefits in all situations; whereas those who conduct themselves otherwise always remain unhappy and inflict harm upon themselves [...] Therefore, for the purpose of imparting a sound education to mankind, I present to you this *Vyavhaar Bhanu*, based on the Vedas and Shastras and containing the essential principles followed by righteous and wise men. You may see, show, read and teach this text to improve your conduct as well as that of your friends and students so that everyone may live each day with joy and happiness.<sup>494</sup>

With the above objective in mind, Dayanand Saraswati wrote the *Vyavhaar Bhanu* in the form of a conversation between a hypothetical questioner and himself. The conversation begins with the question: “What are the attributes of a teacher?” To this, the Swami replies that a “*Pandit* is one who knows the *Paramatman* [Supreme Soul] and *Jivatman* [Individual Soul], who is industrious rather than lazy, who can bear both happiness and sorrow, who constantly remains in service of *Dharma*, and whose commitment to *Dharma* is

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<sup>492</sup> Lessons on *Dincharya* were also included in *Dharma Shikshaks* for high school and college students. For instance, *Dharma Shikshak* No. 11 contains a chapter on *Dincharya* wherein the ideal routine of a student is outlined in detail. *Dharma Shikshak* No. 11, 319-324.

<sup>493</sup> The first two being the second chapter of *Satyarth Prakash* (later published in 1954 as a separate book titled *Bal Siksaka*) and *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh*.

<sup>494</sup> Dayanand Saraswati, *Vyavhaar Bhanu*, 1 - 2.

not deterred by attachment for any object.”<sup>495</sup> The conversation touches upon several issues among which morality and righteous conduct occupy a prominent place. For instance, an important point of discussion is on the behaviour of a student towards his teacher. The author, i.e. Dayanand Saraswati responds that a student must speak the truth, remain simple, be devoid of arrogance, be obedient, sit on the floor in proper *asana*, maintain silence, listen to the teacher with complete attention and maintain humility in answering or asking questions. Dayanand further says that a student must dress properly, maintain cleanliness, shed lethargy, exercise self-restraint and practice other virtues.<sup>496</sup> Subsequently, the discussion moves on to the conduct of teachers towards their pupils. To this, Dayanand says that a teacher should listen patiently to every word and sentence uttered by the pupil and respond accordingly. In the event that a student is shabbily dressed, does not behave properly, keeps bad company, or indulges in physical fights, robbery and so on, he must be severely punished. In order to prove that his advice was not at variance with *arsha* texts, Dayanand Saraswati cites a verse from Patanjali’s *Mahabhashya* to substantiate his position that a teacher may occasionally reprimand his pupil for the latter’s welfare.<sup>497</sup> The foregoing excerpts from *Vyavhaar Bhanu* reveal that the textbook was a pedagogic, moral and social manual that was meant for both boys and girls as also for adults. This is further evidenced from several conversations in the text that contain advice on marital issues as well as social issues.<sup>498</sup>

Having analysed a Hindi moral reader, let us now analyse a Sanskrit moral reader that was prescribed in the primary classes of D.A.V. schools. This text titled *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh* was Dayanand Saraswati’s second manual on education. This text was composed by Dayanand with a view to helping

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<sup>495</sup> Ibid. 3.

<sup>496</sup> Ibid. 12.

<sup>497</sup> Ibid. 13.

<sup>498</sup> Ibid. 56.

young students become familiar with Sanskrit. By using short, simple and concise sentences, the text makes easy reading for those with little or no background in the Sanskrit language. Composed in 1879, the *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh* is divided into fifty-two different cases dealing with themes ranging from *Guru-Shishya Vartalap* (Teacher-Student Conversation) to *Bhojan Prakaranam* (Food Topic) and *Rog Prakaranam* (Physical Health Topic).<sup>499</sup> Each of these different cases are discussed in the form of conversations in Sanskrit. A line by line Hindi translation of the original conversation appears on the right hand side column next to the Sanskrit text. The sentences are kept short and simple so that beginners may easily follow the language. The idea is to encourage students to start communicating in Sanskrit before they study grammar rules and more advanced aspects of the language. At the same time, this textbook is a moral and cultural manual for young children. For instance, in one of the discussions titled *Kshetravapan Prakaranam* (Agricultural Topic), the textbook introduces Sanskrit and Hindi names of different crops like *Dhaan* (Rice), and *Gehoon* (Wheat), and pulses like *Moong*, *Udad* and *Arhar*.<sup>500</sup> By thus shedding light on various issues ranging from righteous conduct and moral behaviour to the duties of a king and the names of various provinces of India, this single manual inculcates in the young pupil a basic sense of geography and familiarity with the general ethos of his country. In this sense, the *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh* follows the pattern of other textbooks discussed earlier in this chapter. It is composed in an inter-disciplinary style rather than in a singular monolithic style that could be described as being exclusively 'linguistic', 'moral' or 'religious'. Such textbooks are classic examples of innovation in pedagogy.

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<sup>499</sup> Dayanand Saraswati, *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh* (1879; repr., Ajmer: Vedic Yantralaya, 1961).

<sup>500</sup> Ibid. 16.

It must be noted that although the above examples illustrate the multi-disciplinarity of Hindi and Sanskrit literature, the same dynamics was discernible in the case of school books composed in the Urdu language by Arya Samajis. For instance, in 1906 Professor Gokal Chand composed the *Bachchon ki Tarbiyat* (Training of Children). According to a newspaper advertisement, this school book which was then priced at 5 annas was “full of practical suggestions for the bringing up of children and for their physical, intellectual and moral culture.”<sup>501</sup> On the whole then, the foregoing analysis of linguistic moral readers testifies to the multi-disciplinary pedagogical approach used in the D.A.V. curriculum.

#### BRAHMA YAJNA: ‘RELIGIOUS’ RITUAL OR SELF-STUDY?

The preceding sections of this chapter have shown how language, morality and religion were blended together in the D.A.V. scheme of studies. It has been discussed how linguistic, ethical and traditional instruction were inseparable from each other not only in the Hindi and Sanskrit textbooks but also in the *Dharma Shikshaks* or religious textbooks that were taught in D.A.V. schools. This also shows that religious instruction was not only religious in the strict sense of the word since this curriculum covered several disciplines and spheres of knowledge. Therefore, it would be simplistic and naïve to argue that the Arya Samajis had a ‘religious’ agenda in educating their children because, as discussed here, the instruction given in D.A.V. schools cannot be narrowly classified as ‘religious’ instruction.

Now, let us turn to the emphasis given on rituals by the Arya Samajis. There is no doubt that the performance of certain rituals was a compulsory part of *Dharma Shiksha*. Rites and rituals had always formed an integral component of the religious observances and practices of the Arya Samajis. These rituals may be broadly classified into two categories - the *Pancha Mahayajnas* and the

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<sup>501</sup> *The Panjabee*, Wednesday, July 11, 1906.

*Sanskars*. Rituals falling in the first category were the primary *yajnas* or sacrifices to be performed every day. The meaning and method of performing the *Pancha Mahayajnas* or five principal sacrifices was explained in elaborate detail by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in his *Panchamahayajnya Vidhi*. The Swami designated these five principal *yajnas* as the *nityakarma* or daily practice of the Arya Samajis. The second category of rituals was the *Sanskars* which Dayanand Saraswati explained in two different treatises namely *Sanskar Vidhi* and *Aryabhiviniya*. The *Sanskar Vidhi* is a manual on rites and ceremonies in which Dayanand Saraswati explains the method of performing sixteen key *Sanskars* (rituals). The Swami delineates the meaning, significance and procedure of performing these sixteen *Sanskars* (rituals) which correspond to sixteen different junctions of life such as birth, marriage, death and so on. Arya Samajis were expected to perform these *Sanskars* in the same manner as prescribed by Dayanand Saraswati.<sup>502</sup> Considering the importance accorded to rituals by the founder of the Arya Samaj it is hardly surprising that the Samajis who took charge of the management of D.A.V. College included the practice of certain *yajnas* or ritual sacrifices in the curriculum for *Dharma Shiksha*. Two of the five principal *yajnas* or sacrifices namely the *Brahma Yajna* and the *Deva Yajna* were included in the curriculum of D.A.V. schools. The D.A.V. pedagogues believed that besides inculcating what the Arya Samajis regarded as the essential principles of the ‘Vedic religion’, the select *yajnas* would complement the theoretical instruction given in classrooms through textbooks such as the *Dharma Shikshaks*.

This section analyses the nature of *Yajnas* or sacrifices which formed part of the curriculum. Here, I analyse one such *Yajna* known as the *Brahma Yajna* which D.A.V. school students were expected to perform on a daily basis. It is these *Yajnas* that were not merely sacrificial ceremonies to be performed

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<sup>502</sup> For a succinct summary of Dayanand Saraswati’s writings on rites and rituals, see Satyaketu Vidyalankar, *Arya Samaj ka Itihas*, 666-7.

around an altar. A broader, deeper and spiritual meaning of ritualisation and religious instruction, particularly of the *Yajna*, is illustrated in the following description of the *Brahma Yajna*, its meaning and its practice by students of the D.A.V. school.

In doing so, this study primarily aims to explore whether these select *yajnas* may be classified as ‘religious’ sacrifices like the rituals that are usually performed around a fire altar to propitiate and invoke certain deities. It is generally supposed that this was the case. This supposition derives from the suggestions and the manner in which religious instruction has been analysed in much of the existing literature on the subject. Before proceeding to my analysis of the rituals performed by D.A.V. students, it is imperative to present a brief historiographical review.

It is now widely acknowledged that attempts to standardise religious doctrines and rites were not uncommon in the nineteenth century. As C.A. Bayly has convincingly argued, one of the principal factors that facilitated the spread of religious ‘revivalism’ in the nineteenth century was the “formalizing of rites” and the composition of “discrete, coherent bodies of doctrine”.<sup>503</sup> In colonial India, rites and rituals were institutionalised by various nationalist organisations. A prominent and critically acclaimed work in this regard is Nita Kumar’s *Lessons from Schools*. In her work, Kumar shows how ritualization often served as one of the principal modes of ‘indigenous’ response to colonial education. As case studies, Kumar considers two educational institutions in North India namely the Central Hindu College (estd. 1898) and the Arya Mahila School (estd. 1926). What is particularly pertinent to the present discussion is the fact that Kumar lists D.A.V. schools among other institutions whose histories she considers as “parallel” to her case studies.<sup>504</sup> This is because like the curriculum of D.A.V. schools, the educational programme of the Central

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<sup>503</sup> C.A. Bayly, “Empires of Religion” in *The Birth of the Modern World*, 340.

<sup>504</sup> Nita Kumar, *Lessons from Schools*, 95.

Hindu School and the Arya Mahila School included certain rituals as an essential component of their respective curricula. It is important to note that Kumar uses the word 'ritual' in a broad sense, referring to any conventional protocol that included but not just religious ceremonies but also the mannerisms of dressing and greeting. Kumar argues that various kinds of 'rituals' were introduced in the curriculum of these schools with a view to giving a religious colour to the instruction imparted in these institutions.<sup>505</sup> It is suggested that in order to give a 'Hindu' appearance to their educational programme, the visionaries of these schools imposed and synthetically juxtaposed arbitrary 'rituals' with an otherwise non-religious curriculum. Therefore, Kumar argues that the performance of rituals in schools was not in sync with the remaining part of the school curriculum. She claims that the superficial nature of these 'Hindu schools' was amply manifest in their retention of the government syllabus even as they imparted religious instruction.<sup>506</sup> Kumar's reasoning suggests that rituals were arbitrarily and unintelligibly inserted into the school curriculum. This line of reasoning is used by the author to conclude that the kind of ritualisation imposed in the aforementioned institutions was random, enforcing and "reductionist",<sup>507</sup> The problem is that this line of reasoning completely disregards the deeper spiritual and symbolic meaning of rituals and

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<sup>505</sup> "Various rituals, considered to be 'Hindu', worked into the everyday running of the school (the term used is 'gholna', to stir in), apparently with the purpose of creating or supporting the right Sanatan Dharma atmosphere in the campus. At special events, these rituals included yagya or hawan, puja, and mangalacharan (fire sacrifice, worship, and chanting, respectively)". Ibid., 108.

<sup>506</sup> Ibid. 141-142

<sup>507</sup> She even argues that these rituals were not proper 'Hindu' ceremonies. Here, the author draws a parallel with the Central Hindu School established by Annie Besant. Kumar writes: "The Hinduism that Besant sought to institutionalize was [...] a selective and reduced version of 'Hinduism' as it existed [...] Besant picked out a bunch of random rituals and aspects of social structure she preferred." Ibid.143

other related practices in Hinduism.<sup>508</sup> It also shifts the focus from the meaning of the rituals to the political agenda behind institutionalising them. Furthermore, according to this argument, the understanding of rituals is based on a normative definition of rituals as religious ceremonies involving such sacramental acts as invoking deities around a fire altar.<sup>509</sup> Such normative definitions do not consider other meanings and dimensions of the term ‘ritual’. We have already seen a shift from this normative understanding of ‘ritual’ after the publication of the works of eminent scholars like Talal Asad who have elaborated on the diverse meanings and definitions of the concept of ritual especially in the case of Christianity and Islam.<sup>510</sup> In the case of Hinduism, scholars of Vedic texts have explained that the rituals have both internal and external dimensions. In fact, the external performance of a ceremony or ritual cannot be separated from the inner spiritual essence of the ritual is realised. Anirvan explains this through the example of *Somayajna* (the well known *Soma* sacrifice mentioned in the *Rigveda*). Here is what he writes:

The *Somayajna* had a complex ritual form (*Karmarupa*) as well as a simple knowledge based form (*Jnanarupa*). That such was the case is revealed by a Vedic reference itself. The Veda says that those who pound the Soma-herbs, imagine that this way they can consume the extract of Soma; but the essence of Soma that is unveiled to those that know the *Brahman* cannot be consumed by just anybody.<sup>511</sup>

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<sup>508</sup> It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to examine whether the rituals used in these educational institutions may be classified as ‘Hindu’.

<sup>509</sup> The Oxford English Dictionary defines Ritual as “a religious or solemn ceremony consisting of a series of actions performed according to a prescribed order”.

<sup>510</sup> Among other things, Asad has emphasised on the distinction between “outward sign” and “inward meaning”. See “Toward a Genealogy of the Concept of Ritual” in Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 55-80.

<sup>511</sup> Anirvan, *Veda Mimamsa, Vol. I*, trans. Sumita Bhattacharya (New Delhi: Akshaya Prakashan, 2018), 37-38.

In other words, the performance of Vedic rituals will truly benefit those who understand the inner meaning of the ritual. Having understood this background, let us examine the practice of rituals as practiced in the D.A.V. schools. First of all, it should be clear that the term *yajna* meaning sacrifice need not necessarily refer to a fire sacrifice. *Yajna* also has a spiritual meaning and in this sense, it refers to an inner sacrifice which is the sacrifice of the individual ego. It is when we look at *yajna* from this perspective that we can understand the multi-faceted nature of the *Brahma Yajna* that was performed by D.A.V. students, and it is the study of these different aspects of the *Yajna* that is the primary objective of our discussion. By extension, the aim of my study is to highlight and explain the different aspects of the D.A.V. curriculum for what they really stood for regardless of the religious or political motive behind their inclusion in the first place.

The *Pancha Mahayajnas* or the five principal *Yajnas* or rituals are described below in order of their sequence: *Brahmayajna* (meaning meditating on and immersing the self in *Brahman*, the Supreme Reality), *DevYajna*, *PitraYajna*, *BhootYajna* (also called *BaliVaishvaDev Yajna*) and *Nriyajna* (also called *Atithi Yajna*). All of these five *Yajnas* were part of the daily routine (*Nitya Karma*) of the Arya Samajis. The performance of these *Yajnas* involved among other things the recitation of certain *Mantras* which were outlined and explained by Dayanand Saraswati in his *Pancha Mahayajna Vidhi*.<sup>512</sup> In this work, the Swami also prescribed the manner and technique of conducting these rituals. According to Dayanand, the performance of these rituals would bring about the following benefits:- “Spiritual progress would result from the acquisition of

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<sup>512</sup> See Dayanand Saraswati, *Atha Panchamahayajnavidhi* (Ajmer: Vedic Yantralaya, 15th Reprint, 1951). The proper methods for conducting these rituals were further elaborated upon by the D.A.V. College Managing Committee’s favourite ‘religious’ instructor, Pandit Raja Ram in his *Arya Pancha Mahayaja Paddhati* (Lahore: Bombay Machine Press, 1910).

knowledge and physical sturdiness would ensure that the body is free from ailments, thereby enabling people to perform their duties. This in turn would ensure the fulfillment of the *Purusharthas* or the four ends of life viz. *Dharma, Artha, Kama* and *Moksha*.”

*Brahma Yajna* was the first and most important of all rituals to be performed by the D.A.V. students. The *Brahma Yajna* was also known as *Sandhya Upasana* or simply *Sandhya* which has been defined as meditation on the Supreme Being (*Parameshwara*).<sup>513</sup> *Sandhya* was one of the five principal *yajnas* or sacrifices (*Pancha Mahayajnas*) that together constituted what Swami Dayanand Saraswati had designated as the *nityakarma* (daily practices) of the Arya Samajis. The importance of *Sandhya* in the place of the D.A.V. curriculum as well as in the philosophy of Arya Samaj is evident from the fact that various commentaries were written by different Arya Samajis on the theme of *Sandhya* alone. All students living in the D.A.V. boarding hostel were expected to perform *Sandhya* every morning and evening.<sup>514</sup> It is hardly surprising then that this ritual of *Sandhya* was included in every text-book of the D.A.V. schools featuring also in several volumes of the *Dharma Shikshak* series. Also, as noted earlier, in the fifth year of primary school, the course of *Veda Path* included the practice of *Sandhya* and learning the meaning and purpose behind this exercise. Pupils were expected to perform *Sandhya* twice a day, once in the early morning at dawn and once in the evening at dusk. So, *Brahma Yajna* was also known as

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<sup>513</sup> In his *Panchamahayajna Vidhi*, Dayanand Saraswati notes that the word *Sandhya* means the practice of meditating on *Parameshwara*. See *Dayanand Granthamala* (Ajmer: Vedic Yantralaya, 1983), 743-4.

<sup>514</sup> “Proceedings of a meeting of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee held on 9th April 1909”, in *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 10, 13-17.

*Sandhya* because it was supposed to be performed at the time of *Sandhya*, i.e. dawn and dusk.<sup>515</sup>

Now what did the practice of *Brahma Yajna* or *Sandhya* actually consist of? According to Dayanand Saraswati's explanation, *Sandhya* is a collective term for bathing, rinsing, gargling and *pranayama* (alternative breathing). Dayanand says that pupils should take a bath so that the outer impurities of the body are cleansed. Dayanand cites a *sloka* (verse) from the *Manu Smriti* to substantiate his advice on the importance of bathing.<sup>516</sup> Similarly, the importance of *pranayama*, i.e. controlled breathing from alternate nostrils, is stressed by Dayanand by citing appropriate references from various traditional texts such as the *Yogasutra* of Patanjali and the *Manu Smriti*.<sup>517</sup> Now, as outlined by Dayanand, both *Pranayama* and *Achamana* (gargling) are to be accompanied by the recitation of three mantras, one each from the *Yajur Veda*,

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<sup>515</sup> After defining the meaning of the term Sandhya, Dayanand Saraswati stated in his exposition on Sandhya: "So Raat aur din ke sanyog samay donon sandhyayon mein sab manushyon ko parameshwar ki stuti, prarthana aur upasana karni chahiye." (And this is why everyone should pray, meditate and sing the praise of the Supreme Being at the time of the two Sandhyas or confluence of day and night). Ibid.

<sup>516</sup> This Sanskrit sloka, which is cited from ManuSmriti (Chapter 5, Sloka 109), is interpreted by Dayanand as follows: "Water purifies the outer impurities (avyava) of the body, truth purifies the mind, spiritual knowledge purifies the soul, and worldly knowledge purifies the intellect." See Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyartha Prakash*, 32.

<sup>517</sup> For instance, a sloka from *Yogasutra* (Sutra 28, Sadhanpade) is interpreted by Dayanand as follows: "During the practice of Pranayama, in every moment, one experiences the gradual removal of impurity and the simultaneous illumination of the light of knowledge." Similarly, a sloka from ManuSmriti (Chapter 6, Sloka 71), is translated and explained by Dayanand as follows: "Just like gold and other metals are purified by the heat of fire, so are the mind and senses made pure by the practice of Pranayama." See Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyartha Prakash*, 32.

*Atharva Veda* and the *Tattiriya Upansihad*.<sup>518</sup> The meaning and purpose of these recitations was to reflect and meditate on the various attributes and names of the Supreme Being (*Parameshwara*). After practising *Pranayama*, pupils were asked to reflect on the meaning of the *Gayatri Mantra* and subsequently meditate on the qualities of the Supreme Being.<sup>519</sup> Pupils were then supposed to perform *Ishwar Upasana* or meditation on *Ishwar*. This could be of two kinds – *Saguna* (meditating on the various attributes of God) and *Nirguna* (meditating on the formless Supreme Being). On the whole, the objective of performing *Pranayama* and related exercises was explained by Dayanand Saraswati in the following words:

Is Prakaar Pranayam karke [...] aatma ke beech mein jo antaryaatmi roop se jnana aur ananda swaroop vyaapak parameshwar hai, usmein apne aap ko magne karein, atyanta anandit hona chahiye.<sup>520</sup> (By thus practicing Pranayam as outlined above [...] become immersed in the all-knowing and blissful supreme being, and so experience the highest bliss).

The above quote succinctly captures the importance attached to *Sandhya* in general and *Pranayama* in particular. Therefore, Dayanand advised pupils to practice meditation for at least one hour every day, and involve oneself in the practice of *Sandhya* with as much devotion as the sages are immersed in *Paramatman* (Supreme Being).<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>518</sup> The technique of doing pranayam and the meaning of the mantras along with the sequence in which they are to be recited is explained in detail by Dayanand Saraswati. Ibid. 744-5.

<sup>519</sup> Ibid. 749.

<sup>520</sup> Ibid. 750.

<sup>521</sup> “nyoon se nyoon ek ghanta dhyaan avashya karein. Jaise samadhisth hokar yogi log paramatman ka dhyan karte hain waise hi sandhya upasana bhi kiya karein.” (One must practice meditation for a minimum of one hour every day. Just like Yogis are immersed in deep mediation of Paramatman, so must one immerse oneself in the practice of Sandhya). See Dayanand Saraswati, *Satyartha Prakash*, 33.

The practice of *Pranayama* was to be followed by a silent period of self-study during which students were to read and reflect on *Vedas*. But, in general, they could read *Upanishads* or any texts that would give knowledge and aid them in realising *Brahma* (Supreme Being). The idea was to immerse oneself in the study of these scriptures in order that one may begin to slowly grasp their meaning. This study was to be done in the morning at a fixed time. That is why *Brahma Yajna* is also known as *Svadhya*<sup>522</sup> *Yajna* because it involved self-study and self-reflection. In other words, the above description of the objective of performing *Brahma Yajna* or *Sandhya* illustrates that the deeper and ultimate meaning behind this ritual was union with god by merging the self with the supreme being. In this sense then, the practice of *Brahma Yajna* is no different from the practice of *Yoga* (where the ultimate objective is to unite the consciousness with the Supreme Self) and various other meditation practices. Hence, from this standpoint, the ritual of *Sandhya* was not a ritual in the narrow sense of the word, for it did not involve any sacramental act such as the performance of a fire sacrifice or the invocation of specific deities. It is this spiritual dimension of the *Brahma Yajna* that this section has sought to highlight. In doing so, the aim of this section is to illustrate yet another instance where the practices of *Dharma Shiksha* cannot be explained in terms of a normative definition of religion. The above discussion on the practice of rituals in D.A.V. schools also shows that there are some specific gaps in our present understanding of the institutionalisation of religious instruction in colonial India. While we have generally assumed that such religious instruction would be rather monolithic and uniform, in practice it was more dynamic and multi-faceted than most scholars would have us believe. The foregoing discussion also shows that the ritual of *Brahma Yajna* or *Sandhya* was ‘traditional’ in the sense that its practice in various forms has been mandated by various traditional texts

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<sup>522</sup> *Svadhya* is a very important part of traditional Indian education. It is made from a combination of two words – *svayam* or self and *adhyayana* or study.

and continues to form an integral part of the daily routine followed by students of traditional *patshalas* and *gurukuls* even today.

#### CONCLUSION

This chapter has illustrated the various dimensions of traditional instruction imparted in D.A.V. schools and how these aspects were integrally connected to each other. While previous chapters of this dissertation had shown how the dichotomies of ‘religion’ and ‘morality’ which were markedly absent in indigenous or pre-existing educational models were introduced by the colonial state, this chapter has discussed how these categories were inadequate in themselves to explain the various modes in which traditional instruction was given in D.A.V. schools. This chapter has shown that even though D.A.V. pedagogues translated the new discipline of *Dharma Shiksha* as ‘religious instruction’, this discipline cannot be put in one category. The curriculum and practice of *Dharma Shiksha* was dynamic and fluid as it harmonised and integrated ‘religious’, ‘moral’, ‘ethical’ and ‘social’ lessons into one subject. This chapter has also shown that the Arya Samaj was neither isolated from contemporary global practices such as the standardisation of religious doctrines, nor was the Samaj entirely free from colonial and Eurocentric worldviews. In composing the *Sanskar Vidhi*, Dayanand Saraswati’s intention was to draft a single comprehensive manual for everyone who professed belief in the Vedas. It was an obvious attempt at compiling, standardising and streamlining the basic set of rituals that every Hindu was expected to perform in his lifetime. But standardising was one side of the picture. The other aspect of Dayanand’s reformist programme was eclecticism and harmonious inclusion. It was this approach that was reflected in the various textbooks prepared for the D.A.V. school students. This exercise was an attempt to synthesise into a coherent manual all variations and different ritual methods that were until then being followed by individual groups and lineages across the country. Finally, the institutionalisation of religious rituals by the Arya Samajis was not necessarily

a means to impose their religious agenda. The emphasis on the practice and meaning of rituals meant that students were encouraged to understand both the external and internal dimensions of religious ceremonies. By illustrating the various dimensions and facets of both practices and textbooks used in D.A.V. schools, this chapter has countered the claim that Arya Samajis imitated European missionaries and orientalist who had “constructed uniform texts and a homogenized written canon.”<sup>523</sup>

The analysis of D.A.V. school textbooks as done in this chapter reveals a very different picture than that suggested by existing scholarship. A scrutiny of various primary sources reveals not only that moral and religious instruction was deeply intertwined in the D.A.V. schools but also that such instruction was more dynamic and inclusive than what is generally assumed. Having said that, the Arya Samaj and the D.A.V. education programme incorporated colonial thought in yet other ways. But this approach evolved over time. The exclusive emphasis on the *Vedas* by Dayanand Saraswati in his texts was reflected in the discipline of *Dharma Shiksha* that the D.A.V. school architects developed. At the same time, this discipline evolved and over the course of time, it drew excerpts from a wide range of literary epics. Interestingly, this pattern bears close resemblance to the pedagogical and curricular practices of ‘traditional’ *patshalas* discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation. Like the D.A.V. school books, the textbooks used in *patshalas* were also culled from a wide range of sources. They too catered to diverse themes. They too were interdisciplinary. This is why, as discussed earlier, colonial officials found it difficult to classify the *patshalas* into ‘secular’ or ‘religious’ schools. Just as it was virtually impossible to classify *patshalas* into one monolithic category, it was equally difficult to classify the D.A.V. school books into a single category.

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<sup>523</sup> Richard King, “The modern myth of ‘Hinduism’” in *Orientalism and Religion* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 101. In this work, King has lucidly explained the Eurocentric bias of missionaries and orientalist.

Thus, *Dharma Shikshaks* were not simply ‘religious’ readers, *Vyavhaar Bhanu* was not just a ‘moral’ reader and *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh* was not only a ‘language’ textbook. Hence, this chapter has shown that *Dharma Shiksha* was distinct from the moral education imparted in colonial schools. Whereas colonial education had created a wedge between religion and secular spaces which were consigned to the private and public spheres respectively, the D.A.V. educational programme bridged the two spheres. This was done not only by including various domestic and social issues in the *Dharma Shikshak* readers but also by citing references from traditional texts such as the *Vedas* and *Puranas*. An overall impression one gathers is that the inculcation and integration of linguistic, ethical and socio-religious lessons in D.A.V. schools resembled the holistic nature of education given in the traditional *patshalas* described earlier.

## **CHAPTER 5: GROWTH OF THE D.A.V. MOVEMENT AND ITS EFFECT ON LITERACY IN PUNJAB, CA. 1905- 1925**

### INTRODUCTION: THE PREDICAMENT OF PASSING A VERDICT

It is my firm conviction that our Educational Mission has been a great blessing for our religion and our country. May this continue to grow and expand is the prayer of a worker in its cause.

- HansRaj (Lahore, 10<sup>th</sup> February 1925)<sup>524</sup>

Looking back at the record of the institution for the last thirty-two years of its life, giving all possible credit to the founder and the managers and the leaders thereof for the best intentions and the best efforts, I regret to say that failure in their principal aims, expressed and unexpressed, is writ large on it.

- Lajpat Rai (1918)<sup>525</sup>

The aforementioned different analyses of the D.A.V. institution made at almost the same time by two of the foremost leaders of the D.A.V. movement reflect the predicament of arriving at a simplistic verdict on the ‘success’ of the movement. The fiftieth anniversary of the Arya Samaj (which roughly coincided with the fortieth anniversary of the D.A.V. movement) was an occasion for reflecting on the social and educational work done by the organisation. In this spirit, several prominent Arya Samajis and D.A.V. pedagogues took stock of the contemporary state of the grand educational institution with a view to assessing whether the original aims and objectives of the D.A.V. movement had been fulfilled.

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<sup>524</sup> Lala Hansraj, “Introduction”, in Sri Ram Sharma, ed. *Our Education Mission: An Account of the Educational Work of the Arya Samajes under the Arya Pradeshak Pratinidhi Sabha, The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, Lahore* (Lahore: A.P.P. Sabha, 1925), viii.

<sup>525</sup> Lajpat Rai, *The Problem of National Education in India*, 3.

The years 1924-25 were especially significant for the Arya Samajis for several reasons. Firstly, the year 1924 marked the birth centenary of the organisation's founder Swami Dayanand Saraswati. The D.A.V. College Managing Committee marshalled all its resources to celebrate this special occasion. It organised among other things, "a grand procession" where "thousands of students of the College and School, headed by the staff, Managing Committee members and Arya Samaj members paraded the streets of Lahore", propagating the message of Dayanand Saraswati.<sup>526</sup> This occasion marked fifty years of the founding of the Arya Samaj and forty years of the establishment of the D.A.V. College Society. This golden jubilee of the Samaj was undoubtedly a time for celebrating the achievements of the reformist organisation on various fronts. To declare the D.A.V. movement a success or failure depends not only on which parameter is used to assess the movement but also on whose account one uses as evidence. In light of the foregoing discussion, it is evident that there is great difficulty in judging the D.A.V. movement and it is therefore hardly surprising that there was no consensus on this matter even within the ranks of D.A.V. leaders. On the one hand, were the institutional records such as the annual reports of the D.A.V. College Society that by and large celebrated the achievements of the whole educational movement in the last forty odd years of its survival. On the other hand, were the accounts of D.A.V. leaders such as Lajpat Rai who in their individual capacity felt that the institution had not realised its goals. A third category of D.A.V. leaders included personalities like Mehr Chand Mahajan (Secretary, D.A.V. College Managing Committee) who felt that although the institution had significant achievements in terms of number of schools and student enrollments, the institution had not quite lived up to the ideals laid down by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in whose name the movement had been started. He felt that the D.A.V. movement had not been

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<sup>526</sup> *Report of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Society for 1924-25* (Lahore: Virjanand Press, 1925), 15.

able to fully incorporate Dayanand's *niyams* (rules of conduct) in the daily lives of the students.<sup>527</sup>

So, on the one hand, was the undeniable and universally acknowledged contribution of the Arya Samaj and the D.A.V. movement to the rapid growth in literacy in the province of Punjab. It was during this half-century that a major bulk of educational work of the Arya Samaj had been carried out primarily by the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic institution whose branches now dotted the whole of Punjab and many provinces of Northern India. By the end of the year 1925, over fifty high schools in Punjab were, directly or indirectly, affiliated with the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. Clearly then, the number of D.A.V. schools was considerably higher than the number of schools run by the Punjab government which had "the resources of the province at its back."<sup>528</sup> At many places, Samajic institutions were the only place where the poor could afford to educate their children.<sup>529</sup> Owing to a combination of these and several other factors, over 35,000 pupils were receiving instruction in schools affiliated to the Arya Samaj in the province of Punjab alone. On the other hand, was the relatively controversial yardstick of religion, for the early twentieth century

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<sup>527</sup> In his introduction to the D.A.V. College Society's annual report for 1923-24, Mahajan summed up his verdict on the D.A.V. movement in the following words: "Our educational propaganda has spread throughout the province and has caused an awakening in the country and in other communities, who are now following us. We have solved the question of untouchability and the depressed classes and our solution is acceptable now even to our conservative brothers [...] but inspite of all this I can not help mentioning that we have not been able to put into practice and incorporate in our daily lives all that the great Swami laid down for us in his Niams [sic]. We are still lacking in that Samajic and Arya Jiwan." See *Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Society for 1923-24* (Lahore: Jijnasu Printing Works), in *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 110, p. 105.

<sup>528</sup> Lala Hansraj, "Introduction", in Sri Ram Sharma, ed. *Our Education Mission*, i.

<sup>529</sup> *Ibid.* v.

witnessed an increasing sense of religious nationalism that many scholars have attributed to the Arya Samaj and its educational institutions. This chapter discusses some of these parameters that were used to assess the D.A.V. movement at the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

#### A 'NATIONALIST' EDUCATION?

Because they were founded and supported by nationalists, many of these institutions contributed in large measure to the rise of a national and religious consciousness in twentieth century India. Many of the diverse educational experiments carried out in late nineteenth and early twentieth century India were formally or ideologically linked to the 'National Education Movement' which was a concerted initiative of several Indians to develop an alternative to colonial education along 'nationalist' lines.<sup>530</sup> It is not surprising then that educational institutions established by Indians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have, by and large, been identified for their nationalist sentiments. It is widely argued that the multifarious instruction imparted in these institutions was primarily aimed at infusing nationalism in the pupils. The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic education movement was also meant to be a creative response to colonial education. As a result, several propositions were made by D.A.V. leaders to redress the limitations of colonial education. One of these was the strong advocacy for a nationalist education. The need for a nationalist education had already featured in the draft scheme of the D.A.V. institution that Lal Chand had circulated in the historic gathering of 8th November 1883. The following extract from this draft scheme is a rich testimony to the nationalist vision of the principal founders of the D.A.V. Movement.

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<sup>530</sup> Sabyasachi Bhattacharya has compiled the speeches and writings of various Indian personalities related to the 'National Education Movement'. For a comprehensive summary of the educational ideas conceived by various Indian nationalists, see Sabyasachi Bhattacharya, ed., *Educating the Nation*, op.cit.

It will be conceded by all right-thinking minds that to secure the best advantages of education, it is necessary to make it national in tone and character [...] as it is impracticable that every member of a nation should receive thorough education, it is peremptorily necessary, and absolutely desirable, that those who do receive education at the national cost, should receive it in a manner best suited to make them useful members of the community. In fact, the system of education should be so devised as to strengthen the ties which naturally bind individuals into a common nationality.<sup>531</sup>

The pioneers of the D.A.V. movement including among others Lal Chand, Sain Das, Guru Dutt etc. minced no words in recommending the adoption of a nationalist curriculum, which they firmly believed was the suitable antidote to counter the ill effects of colonial education.

The reaction towards a national education is asserting itself everywhere, and the demand for the study of national literature is growing. This points out to us the remedy, namely, to make provision for the efficient study of the national language and literature, and carefully to initiate the youthful mind into habits and modes of life consistent with the national spirit and character.<sup>532</sup>

As we shall see below, the inclusion of ‘religious’ and ‘national’ education was not mutually exclusive for the Arya Samajis. The ideological diversity within the Samaj in general and the D.A.V. movement in particular is amply manifest in the historiography of the Samaj. While some scholars have called the Arya Samaj a nationalist movement<sup>533</sup>, others have studied it under the category of religious reform movements.<sup>534</sup> Now, we will see that these two aspects of the D.A.V. movement – nationalism and religious reform – were intertwined. Arya Samajis were involved in nationalist politics right from the

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<sup>531</sup> Ibid. 180 - 181

<sup>532</sup> Ibid.

<sup>533</sup> See, for instance, Dhanpati Pandey, *Arya Samaj and Indian Nationalism, 1875-1920* (New Delhi: S. Chand, 1972).

<sup>534</sup> For instance, see J.E. Llewellyn, *The Arya Samaj as a Fundamentalist Movement: A Study in Comparative Fundamentalism*. Op.cit.

beginning. Several alumni of D.A.V. institutions took an active part in the political struggle against British rule.<sup>535</sup> As early as 1885, Babu Murlidhar Aggarwal, a prominent Samaj member from Ambala, attended the first session of the Indian National Congress which was held at Bombay from 28<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1885. By the beginning of the twentieth century, some of the Samajis had begun to take a more pro-active role in politics. For instance, Ajit Singh (b. 1881), an alumnus of D.A.V. College, Lahore was charged with sedition and deported along with Lajpat Rai to Mandalay on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1907. Another famous personality was Bhagat Ram (b. 1882) who was educated at the Arya High School, Hoshiarpur. His anti-colonial activities included inciting the people of Miani (a city in Punjab) “to refrain from paying municipal taxes.”<sup>536</sup> “Ajit Singh along with his associates who were also staunch followers of Dayanand [Saraswati], formed the *Bharat Mata Society* at Lahore in 1907 for attaining *Swarajya*.”<sup>537</sup> No wonder then that in 1906-07, Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Lt Governor of Punjab, wrote that anti-imperial activities such as publishing anti-colonial articles in *The Panjabee* and radical political agitations were a “whole mischief”. Ibbetson believed that the “active spirits” behind this mischief belonged “almost without exception to the Arya Samaj, a society founded primarily with a religious object, but which, in the Punjab at least, has always had a strong political bent.”<sup>538</sup> But Lajpat Rai strongly rebutted the official view of the Samaj as a political body. This was ironical since Rai was often at the forefront of nationalist endeavours. In 1905, Rai was appointed the first president of the Punjab Swadeshi Association. In the same year, Rai

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<sup>535</sup> For a fairly comprehensive list of such ‘nationalist’ personalities, see “Eminent Arya Freedom Fighters, 1875-1918” in K.C. Yadav and K.S. Arya, *Arya Samaj and the Freedom Movement Vol. I*, 237-308.

<sup>536</sup> Ibid. 246.

<sup>537</sup> Ibid. 91.

<sup>538</sup> “Minute by Sir Denzil Ibbetson on 30 April 1907”, quoted in Yadav and Arya, p. 98.

delivered a series of lectures at various locations in Punjab to promote the swadeshi movement in the province. He also urged the students of D.A.V. College, Lahore to participate in the swadeshi movement. Yet, in an article that he published in the *Panjabee* in 1906, Rai refuted the government allegation that the D.A.V. College faction of the Arya Samaj was politically active. To substantiate his arguments, Lajpat Rai gave several reasons including the fact that like Lala Hans Raj who was the “acknowledged leader” of the College faction of the Arya Samaj, none of the Professors of the D.A.V. College had ever attended any political meeting or joined any political propaganda. Rai further observed that: “from amongst the whole [D.A.V. College] party if you were to search for men who have ever been *active* in political work, you won’t find more than 2 or 3 including the writer. Now on these facts to give out that the Arya Samaj is a political body is a most bare faced lie that could be invented by the most ingenious of mischief-makers.”<sup>539</sup>

The writings and actions of Arya Samajis in general and D.A.V. leaders in particular reflect that both nationalist and religious tendencies were simultaneously present in the Samaj as also in Dayanand Saraswati’s educational vision. These two tendencies, viz. the nationalist and the religious, were reflected in all the educational endeavours of the Samaj, regardless of whether these were affiliated with the D.A.V. movement or to the Gurukul wing.<sup>540</sup> The Samaj was a religious reform movement in the sense that it aimed

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<sup>539</sup> “The Arya Samaj and Politics” by Lajpat Rai in *The Panjabee*, Wednesday, July 4, 1906.

<sup>540</sup> In the early twentieth century colonial officials suspected nationalist institutions of preaching sedition and charged that many Arya Samajis were involved in political work. It was in defence of such allegations that Munshi Ram (Swami Shraddhanand), who was then leading the Gurukul wing, sought to distance the Arya Samaj from all nationalist endeavours by claiming that it was not a political but a religious body. See Mahatma Munshi Ram, *Arya Samaj and Politics* (Lahore: Union Printing Works,

to redress the ‘degeneracy’ and ‘corruption’ in contemporary Hindu society by returning to the Vedic principles. At the same time, the Samaj was a nationalist movement in the sense that the revival of Vedic knowledge was aimed at restoring the lost glory of *Aryavarta* (The Land of *Aryas*). At least in theory, these two strands were inseparable components of the Samajic ideology. After all, the movement’s founder, Dayanand Saraswati, believed that the restoration of the ancient glory of this nation or *Aryavarta* (the land of *Aryas*) was possible only through a revival of the Vedic religion. There is no doubt that both the religious and nationalist tendencies were present in the Samajic ideology from the time of Dayanand Sarawasti. As Bhimsen Vidyalkar (Secretary, Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Lahore) wrote in 1935, the Swami viewed nationalism and religion as two sides of the same coin.<sup>541</sup> So, the national and religious aspects of the Samaj were not separated into two exclusive spheres. Religious instruction, as discussed earlier, formed an essential component of the D.A.V. educational scheme even after the reins of the institution had passed into the hands of moderates who were mostly nationalists. Hence, the discipline of *Dharma Shiksha* included not only religious and moral education but also nationalist education. But what was the nature of nationalism imparted in D.A.V. institutions?

Love for the nation and *Matrubhoomi* (motherland) was instilled through various lessons in D.A.V. textbooks. For instance, as we noted in the previous chapter, D.A.V. schoolmaster named Durga Prasad had included an

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1908). Around the same time, the D.A.V. leaders also debated on the extent to which the D.A.V. institutions should be actively involved in anti-colonial protests. On this issue Lajpat Rai and Hans Raj held widely differing views.

<sup>541</sup> “The truth is that both tendencies existed during the lifetime of the Rishi. The Rishi was a nationalist as well as a lover of humankind. Love for the nation was a part of his love for mankind. He was primarily a proponent of the Vedas. Modern science was a part of his Veda knowledge.” (Translation mine) Bhimsen Vidyalkar, *Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Punjab Ka Sachitra Itihasa* (Lahore: Navyug Press, 1935), 88.

advertisement in the Vedic Readers. This advertisement exhorted parents who desired to train their “dear ones” in the virtues of “righteousness, which exalteth a nation” to send them to the Dayanand High School Lahore.<sup>542</sup> Moreover, this advertisement claimed that not only was moral and religious instruction a distinguishing feature of D.A.V. schools but that it also reinforced a national consciousness. Because they had been trained as nationalists, the D.A.V. students were bound to take a keen interest and play a role in various political agitations against the British Raj in the twentieth century. In this sense, the political expression of Hindu consciousness in the twentieth century is intertwined with the D.A.V. education movement.

#### STUDENT ENROLLMENTS

The popularity of the institution, as the D.A.V. College’s Annual Report of 1914 remarked, was evident from the increase in the number of students on the rolls during the last ten years.<sup>543</sup> As noted earlier in this dissertation, the D.A.V. Education Movement witnessed remarkable growth in the first decade of the twentieth century, both in terms of student enrolments and the number of institutions that were opened in various parts of Punjab.<sup>544</sup> The same story of Annual reports of the D.A.V. College, Lahore clearly reflect an exponential growth in the number of students on the rolls of both the school as well as the college department. Since this dissertation is primarily concerned with the D.A.V. institution of Lahore, it lists below the number of students attending D.A.V. School, Lahore in the first decade of the twentieth century.

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<sup>542</sup> Durga Prasad, (Dayanand High School Series) *The First Vedic Reader*, (Lahore: Virjanand Press, 1894), 18.

<sup>543</sup> *Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1914* (Lahore: Jijnasu Printing Works, 1914), printed in *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 109, p. 61.

<sup>544</sup> See the section titled “Early Growth” in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

**Table 5.1: Student Enrolments in D.A.V. School, Lahore (1904-1914)<sup>545</sup>**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Students Enrolled</b>
1904	772
1905	835
1906	935
1907	1000
1908	1084
1909	1242
1910	1315
1911	1507
1912	1694
1913	1737
1914	1628
1915	1640

The above table indicates that the number of pupils more than doubled in the decade between 1904 and 1914. This increase was both due to the growing popularity of the institution as well as the remarkable success of the D.A.V.

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<sup>545</sup> This table has been adapted from enrolment figures stated in the Annual Reports of the D.A.V College Lahore for the years 1910-15.

students in the university level examinations.<sup>546</sup> It further shows that the number of student enrolments reached its highest figure in the year 1913, something that was both a matter of pride as well as concern for the managers of the institution who had limited resources at their disposal. With a view to maintaining efficiency in the institution, the D.A.V. School authorities decided to lower the intake of pupils over the course of the next decade. The D.A.V. College Managing Committee realised that since “the maximum number of students that could be taught in the School Department under the present circumstances, had been reached”, it was time to reduce the number of sections in each class and the number of students to be taught in each section.<sup>547</sup> Accordingly, the school headmaster had to refuse admission to a large number of students. Despite these measures, the D.A.V. school of Lahore continued to maintain a high reputation and an unparalleled level of popularity in Punjab with students flocking to Lahore from almost all the districts of the province.<sup>548</sup>

It is important to note here that there were only less than ten institutions in Lahore, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, that provided education at the high school level. Among these, there was one government high school in Lahore where student enrolments saw little growth, climbing from about 600 at the beginning of the twentieth century to over 900 at the end of 1915. The other high school managed by the government was the Municipal school which had less than 400 students by the end of 1915. Besides these two government managed schools, there were five or six schools (varying between 1900 and 1915) that received grants-in-aid from the government. The most prominent among these were the Islamia High School, which was the premier institution for Muslims, and the Dayal Singh High School which had been started by Sardar Dayal Singh Majithia, the famous owner of the Tribune

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<sup>546</sup> This point is further elaborated upon in a later section of this chapter.

<sup>547</sup> *Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1914*, p. 61-62.

<sup>548</sup> *Ibid.* 62.

newspaper. Nonetheless, the total combined strength of all aided schools hovered around 3,000 students during the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>549</sup>

In addition to the aforementioned high schools, there was only one high school – the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic High School of Lahore – that did not receive any government aid and yet, with over 1,500 students on its rolls, it was the largest school not only in Lahore but in the entire province. As compared to its contemporary institutions which saw a slow increase in student enrolments during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the D.A.V. High School witnessed a phenomenal rate of growth (See Table 5.1), with student enrolments surging from over seven hundred in 1904 to more than sixteen hundred in 1924. The following description of the D.A.V. School in the 1916 Lahore District Gazetteer further testifies to the fact that by the time of its thirtieth anniversary, the D.A.V. School of Lahore enjoyed an unmatched level of fame and reputation.

The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic High School, Lahore – Founded in memory of Swami Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Samaj, with the object of encouraging the study of Hindi and Sanskrit and of combining secular with moral and religious education, is now **numerically the largest in the province [...]** No fees are levied at all in the lower primary department, nor in the upper department in cases where the parents' income is less than Rs. 50 per mensem. In the middle and high departments fees are generally lower than in the other high schools. Hindi forms the medium of instruction in the primary and middle departments. The Headmaster is provided with residential

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<sup>549</sup> Based on statistical returns from the Department of Public Instruction in Punjab, the Lahore Gazetteer tabulated the annual increase in student enrolments for all schools over the period 1890-1915. See Table No. 51 in *Punjab District Gazetteers, Vol. XXX B* (Lahore: Superintendent Government Printing, 1916), cxlvi-cxlvix.

quarters, and the number of resident students was 300 on March 31st, 1915. The total attendance is 1,545.<sup>550</sup> (Emphasis mine)

The above excerpt shows that the achievements of D.A.V. School, a non-governmental institution, were duly acknowledged in an official government Gazetteer. This further improved the reputation of the school and student enrolments continued to be as high as ever. In 1922, it was reported that admissions for the High School had reached the “maximum number”. As a result, the school authorities believed that it was time that their focus should shift from increasing student enrolments to paying “individual attention to the students that are sent to us to receive education.”<sup>551</sup> The following table lists the number of students on the rolls of D.A.V. School, Lahore during the first half of the third decade of the twentieth century. One notices that growth in the number of student enrolments during this period was not as spectacular as in the first two decades. In fact, the number of pupils attending the school in 1915 (refer to Table 5.1) was about the same as the corresponding number in 1925. However, this does not imply that the school witnessed a decline in popularity or reputation between its thirtieth and fortieth anniversaries. As noted earlier, admissions to the school were purposely kept within reasonable limits to ensure that the limited resources of the school were sufficient to cater to the needs of all pupils.

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<sup>550</sup> *Punjab District Gazetteers, Volume XXX A, Lahore District with Maps* (Lahore: Superintendent Government Printing, 1916), 223-224.

<sup>551</sup> See ‘Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Society for 1921-22, Lahore: Jijnasu Printing Works’, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 110, NMML, New Delhi, p. 76.

**Table 5.2: Year Wise Student Enrolments in D.A.V. School Lahore, ca. 1920-1925<sup>552</sup>**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Students Enrolled</b>
1920	1479
1921	1524
1922	1555
1923	1578
1924	1609
1925	1643

#### NETWORK OF D.A.V. SCHOOLS IN PUNJAB

In addition to registering a continuous growth in the number of student enrolments, the Arya Samaj schools established a considerable network across Punjab. The educational work done by the Samaj was noted by various government officials. The 1911 Census report, for instance, noted that “the Arya Samaj owns one first grade College, 3 Gurukulas, 16 High schools and a large number of Middle and Primary schools.”<sup>553</sup> Although the 1911 Punjab Census did not report on the exact number of schools opened by the Samaj in the province, it observed that the Samaj had opened a school for boys in every important town of Punjab.<sup>554</sup> By the year 1925, more than fifty thousand students across India were enrolled in over five hundred educational institutions

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<sup>552</sup> This table has been adapted from enrolment figures stated in the Annual Reports of the D.A.V College Society for the years 1920-25.

<sup>553</sup> *Census of India, 1911. Punjab, Part I*, p. 135.

<sup>554</sup> *Ibid.*

that were “directly, or indirectly” affiliated to the Arya Samaj. These 505 institutions included Arts Colleges, High Schools, Primary Schools, Gurukulas and so on. The maximum number of these Samajic institutions were primary schools for boys and girls which numbered 144 and 111 respectively.<sup>555</sup>

The first quarter of the twentieth century also witnessed the establishment of several schools and colleges within the ambit of the D.A.V. College Society. During this period, the network of Arya Samaj and D.A.V. schools spread to various other districts of Punjab. By 1925, about twenty schools in Punjab were being administered by the D.A.V. College Managing Committee (D.A.V CMC) in addition to the D.A.V. School at Lahore.<sup>556</sup> Table 5.3 below lists some of the oldest and largest Arya Samaj schools that were opened in the first twenty-five years of the founding of D.A.V. School, Lahore.

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<sup>555</sup> Devi Chand, *A Report of the Educational Work by the Arya Samaj in India* (Amritsar: George Press, 1925), 1. Of all the Arya Samaj institutions of the time, the D.A.V. College of Lahore was the biggest institution.

<sup>556</sup> The names and locations of these schools were as follows:

D.A.V. High School Multan, D.A.V. High School Delhi, G.S.A.S. High School Hafizabad (Gujranwala), A.S. High School Kotgarh, Danpat Mal School Lyallpur, D.A.V. High School Amritsar, D.A.V. Middle School Behrampur (Gurdaspur), D.A.V. Middle School, Quadian, D.A.V. Primary School Tarn Taran, D.A.V. High School Hisar, H.B.A.S. High School Shujabad, D.A.V. School Chuharmanda, G.A.V. School Kangra, A.S. High School Ambala, D.A.V. High School Patti. (Lahore), D.A.V. School Mubarakpur. G.A.S. Middle School Ahmedpur (Bahawalpur), D.A.V. School Khanewal, D.A.V. School Haryana (Hoshiarpur), D.A.V. School Karyala. This list has been extracted from Report of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Society for 1924-25 (Lahore: Virjanand Press, 1925), 18-19. The abbreviations D.A.V, A.S. and G.A.V. are mentioned in the list. The management of these schools was made over at different times to the D.A.V. Managing Committee of Lahore. These were the latest figures at the time of publication of this report. The last four schools in the list mentioned here had applied for being directly controlled by the Managing Committee only in the year of drafting the report.

Along with their names, the table lists the year in which these schools were founded and the number of students enrolled as of 1925. It is important to note that this table is meant to serve as a representative sample, for it lists only those schools that comprised 400 or more students as of 1925. Because of this criteria used in shortlisting schools, some older schools have not been mentioned in this table. For instance, the Arya High School of Jalalpur Jattan in Gujrat district (estd. 1897) was left out because, as of 1925, it had only 315 students on its rolls. Similarly, the Arya High School of Nawashahar in Jullundur district (estd. 1911) which had as many as 398 students as of 1925 was omitted from this list because of its relatively late foundation date.

It is also particularly important to note that the list compiled here is based on the D.A.V. C.M.C Secretary's 1925 account<sup>557</sup> of institutions that were affiliated to the Arya Pradeshak Pratinidhi Sabha which represented the interests of the 'College party' of the Arya Samaj.<sup>558</sup> Therefore, many important Samajic residential institutions in Punjab that were modelled after the famous Gurukul Kangri of Haridwar and that were being managed by the 'Gurukul party' of the Arya Samaj do not find mention here. A detailed account of over thirteen such Gurukuls operating in various districts of Punjab was compiled by Bhimsen Vidyalankar, a minister of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha.<sup>559</sup>

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<sup>557</sup> This table has been adapted from the account of schools given in Sri Ram Sharma's edited volume titled *Our Education Mission: An Account of the Educational Work of the Arya Samajes under the Arya Pradeshak Pratinidhi Sabha*. Op.cit.

<sup>558</sup> D.A.V. College leaders established the Arya Pradeshak Pratinidhi Sabha to represent the 'College' faction of the Arya Samaj. This was also to distinguish themselves from the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha which had passed under the control of the 'Gurukul' faction.

<sup>559</sup> For a complete description of all thirteen Gurukuls, see "Parishisht Ka: Gurukulon ka Itihasa", in Bhimsen Vidyalankar, *Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Punjab Ka Sachitra Itihasa* (Lahore: Navyug Press, 1935), 183-212. In addition to the Gurukuls, there were

It is also important to note that all institutions mentioned in the table below are schools for boys. Samajic institutions for female education are not mentioned here due to constraints of space and time. Nonetheless, the Arya Samaj had done tremendous work in the field of women’s education. By the year 1925, the Samaj had established over 80 schools for girls.

**Table 5.3: List of Prominent D.A.V. Schools in 1925 (for schools established before 1911)**

Name	District	Estd.	Students
D.A.V. High School, Lahore	Lahore	1886	1643
Anglo Sanskrit High School, Alawalpur	Jullundur	1908	474
Doaba High School, Jullundur	Jullundur	1896	600
D.A.V. High School, Hoshiarpur	Hoshiarpur	1908	596
D.A.V. High School, Dasuha	Hoshiarpur	1910	473
GuruDatt Anglo-Vedic High School, Kangra	Kangra	1889	424
Anglo Sanskrit High School, Ambala City	Ambala	1897	578

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13 schools that were being managed by the Gurukul party of the Arya Samaj. The oldest and most prominent among these schools was the Ludhiana whose management was made over to the Arya Samaj on 2nd June 1889. It was converted into a high school in 1906 by which time 230 students were listed on its rolls. As of 1935, there were as many as 1,450 students enrolled in the school among whom were 125 Sikhs and 170 Muslims. See “Parishisht Ga” in Bhimsen Vidyalankar, *Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Punjab Ka Sachitra Itihasa* (Lahore: Navyug Press, 1935), 221. For a complete description of all thirteen schools, see “Parishisht Ga: Schoolon ka Itihasa”, in *Ibid*, 213-225.

Har Bhagwan Memorial High School, Ferozepur City	Ferozepur	1898	842
D.A.V. High School, Multan	Multan	1896	587
D.A.V. High School, Rawalpindi	Rawalpindi	c.1895	951

It is interesting to see that, except Lahore, none of the prominent Arya Samaj districts feature in the above list of prominent D.A.V. schools. This implies that some of the oldest and largest D.A.V. schools were not located in the districts where Arya Samaj was most popular.<sup>560</sup> A similar trend is discernible in the composition of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. When in 1925, the Committee was reconstituted, the maximum number of representatives (24) were from Lahore on account of its being the headquarter of the Managing Committee. But, there was not a single representative in the Managing Committee from any of the districts where Arya Samajis were present in large numbers.<sup>561</sup> This apparent asymmetry between the popularity of the Samaj and the spread of the D.A.V. network may be partly explained by the fact that the surge in Arya Samaj membership in some of the eastern districts such as Karnal and Delhi happened in the second decade of the twentieth century. So, the D.A.V. schools established in these districts registered a high growth at a relatively later stage. For instance, D.A.V. High School at Delhi was founded as late as 1919 but it grew at such a phenomenal rate that by 1925, the school had 475 students on its rolls.

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<sup>560</sup> The only notable exception was Lahore which was both the centre of the Arya Samaj movement as well as host to the oldest and largest D.A.V. school in the province.

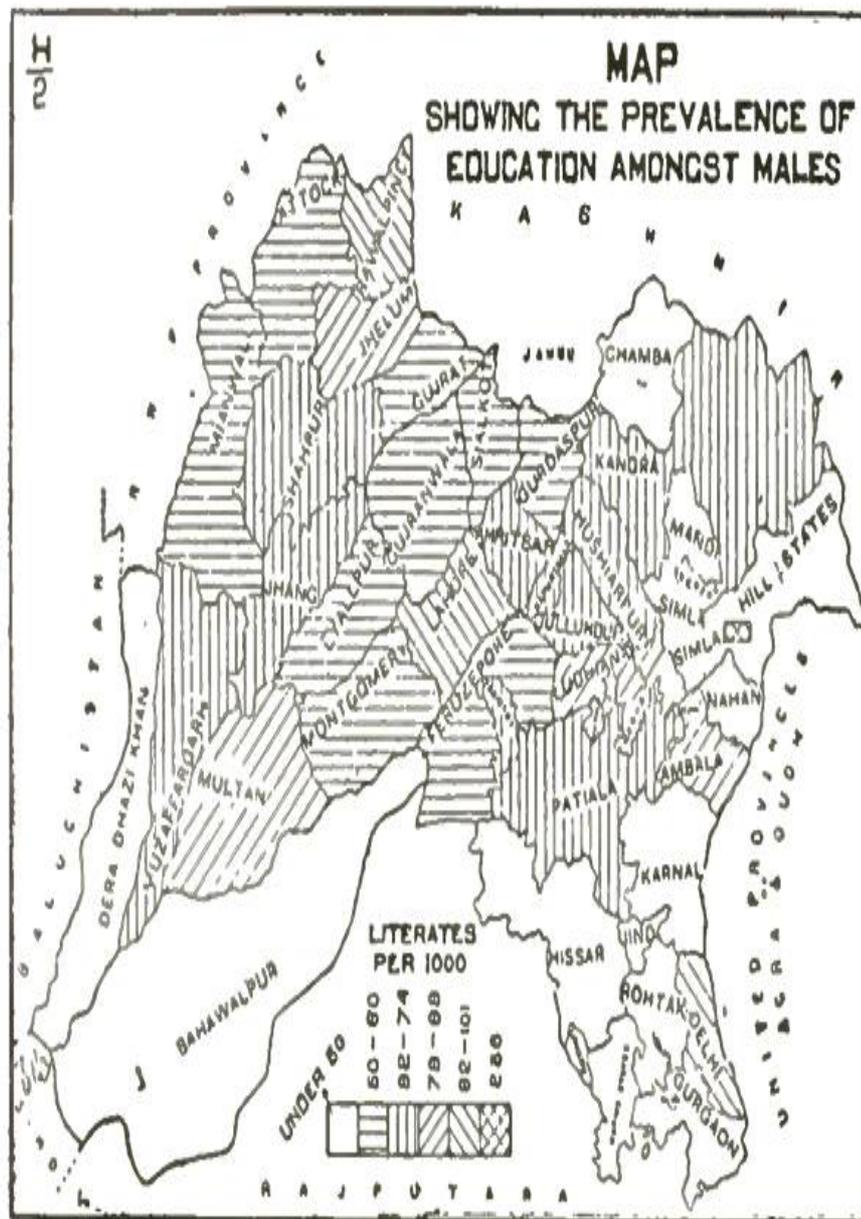
<sup>561</sup> An exception to this trend was the Gurdaspur Arya Samaj which was represented by only one member in the reconstituted Managing Committee of 1925. See *Report of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Society for 1924-25* (Lahore: Virjanand Press, 1925), 1-3.

Nonetheless, statistical data suggest that that no definite correlation can be drawn between the popularity of a D.A.V. school in a given district and the corresponding number of Arya Samajis in that district. What can be said with a fair degree of confidence is that prominent D.A.V. schools were more likely to be located in Hindu majority districts of Punjab. This was perhaps due to the importance given to traditional and religious instruction. This is fairly evident from the geographical distribution of Hindus in early twentieth century Punjab. Except Multan and Rawalpindi, all districts with the most important D.A.V. schools were located in the central and eastern part of the province, particularly in those areas where the proportion of Hindus was considerably large. In fact, the level of literacy for all Punjabis in general was higher in districts such as Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi where incidentally some of the oldest D.A.V. schools were located. This was perhaps because cities like Lahore, being host to a wide range of professionals such as lawyers, clerks and teachers, required a higher level of literacy and skill. It was perhaps a coincidence that Punjabi Hindus were generally in a minority in major cities like Lahore and Multan. One notable exception was the city of Delhi where Hindus formed the bulk of the population. But, on the whole, the general trend was expressed by the 1921 Census in the following words: “in those districts in which there is a large proportion of Hindus, most of them will be found to be engaged in agriculture, whereas in the districts with relatively few Hindus, most of them will be engaged in trades or professions.”<sup>562</sup>

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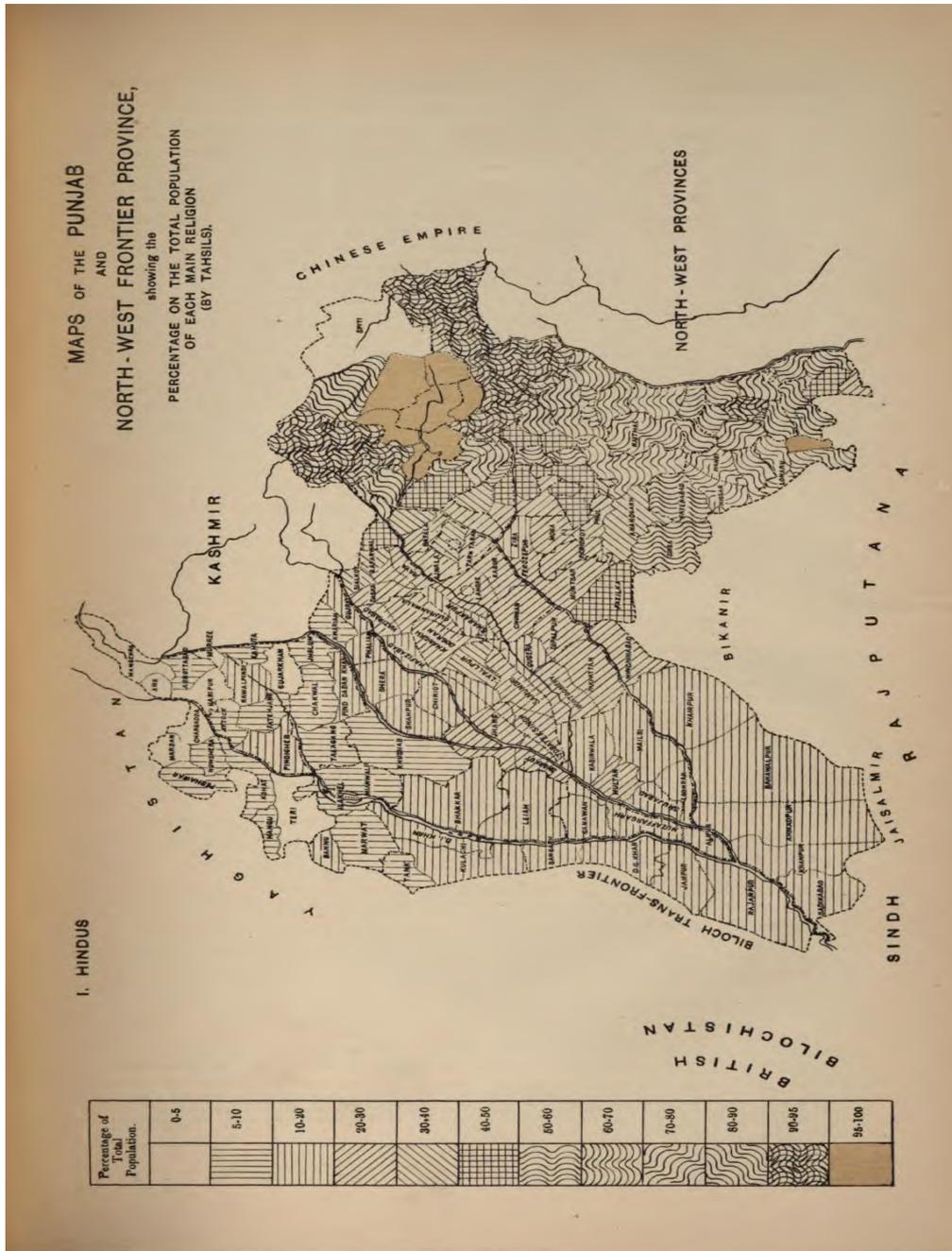
<sup>562</sup> *Punjab Census Report 1921*, p.292

Map 4: Distribution of Literate Males in Punjab, ca. 1910



[Source: *Census of India, 1911. Punjab Report. Part I*, (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1912), p. 318]

**Map 5: Distribution of Hindus in Punjab ca. 1900**



[Source: *Census of India, 1901. Volume XVII- A, Part 1* (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazette Press, 1902), p. 114]

On the whole then, it will not be an exaggeration to say that a D.A.V. school was more likely to gain popularity in a district with a high proportion of Hindus than in a district with a high number of Arya Samajis. This implies that D.A.V. schools were popular among Hindus in general and not only Arya Samajis in particular.<sup>563</sup> There is no doubt that with a membership of approximately two and a half lakh followers in 1921, Arya Samaj was the most popular Hindu reform movement in Punjab. Yet, as per official records, Arya Samajis constituted a mere 2.5% of the total Hindu population which was a little less than a hundred lakh persons.<sup>564</sup> In view of these statistics, it was hardly surprising that D.A.V. schools catered to and were largely attended by all Hindus generally, regardless of their affiliation to a particular sect.

It is important to note that in addition to the above mentioned D.A.V. schools, there were a large number of Arya Samaj schools that operated independent of the auspices of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. By the close of 1925, the number of such institutions was about sixty. These Arya Samaj institutions included over fifty high schools operating in various districts of Punjab. Moreover, the D.A.V. movement was not restricted to the province of Punjab alone. There was an extensive network of Arya Samajes in various other provinces of North India, particularly the North-Western Provinces which later became the United Provinces (presently called Uttar Pradesh). The Arya Samaj was also popular in Rajputana (present day Rajasthan) where Dayanand Saraswati had spent his last days tutoring the royal princes of various kingdoms in the province. The district of Ajmere in Rajputana had been a prominent Arya Samaj center ever since a 'Vedic Press' was inaugurated there in 1883, under the auspices of the *Paropkarini Sabha*, with the aim of publishing the works of

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<sup>563</sup> Arya Samajis were counted under the category of Hindus in the government census.

<sup>564</sup> As per the 1921 Census, the Arya Samajis numbered only 2,23,153 out of a total number of 91,25,202 Punjabi Hindus. Census of India, 1921. Punjab, Part I, p. 180-181.

Dayanand Saraswati. The Dayanand Ashram at Ajmere soon grew into a flourishing centre consisting of the following institutions:- a Library, an Anglo-Vedic College, a Book Depot, an Orphanage, a Museum, a Press and a Lecture Hall. The Dayanand Ashram Anglo-Vedic School of Ajmere which was founded in 1888 witnessed a rapid growth and within five years of its establishment, there were over 200 pupils receiving instruction at the school.<sup>565</sup>

#### IMPACT ON LITERACY

An important parameter used to judge the results of the D.A.V. movement was literacy, meaning the ability to read and write. With the publication of colonial records such as District Gazetteers and Census reports, literacy came to be valued as an important indicator of the social and economic progress of a community. With the Punjabi Hindus, as with other communities, literacy was an important marker of the progress they had made on the educational front.

Although literacy was defined in the colonial census simply as the ability to read and write, it became an indicator of the level of education in a society. So, in order to truly understand the impact of D.A.V. schools on Punjabi Hindu society, it is imperative to compare the state of literacy in Punjab between 1890 and 1920. This time period corresponds approximately to the interval between the founding of the first D.A.V. school at Lahore and the thirty-fifth anniversary of the D.A.V. movement. While gauging the results of the D.A.V. movement, it is particularly important to ask who were the most literate Hindus of Punjab and how they were affected by the D.A.V. movement. Did the D.A.V. schools affect only the higher castes of Punjabi Hindus such as the Brahmans and Khatri, or did it also affect the underprivileged castes? It has been shown in preceding sections of this chapter that D.A.V. schools were attended not just by the children of Arya Samajis but by pupils from various communities of the

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<sup>565</sup> *Report on the working of the Dayanand Ashram Anglo-Vedic School Ajmere for 1892-93* (Ajmere: Vedic Press, undated), 3.

Hindu population in general. So, it is worth exploring what impact D.A.V. schools had on the literacy of Punjab in general and Punjabi Hindus in particular.

To begin with, there is little doubt that Hindu reformist organisations and their members were generally more literate than the overall Hindu population. As the 1911 Census observed, “reform societies among the Hindus appear to be much better off in respect of education than the Hindu population taken as a whole.”<sup>566</sup> This observation was based on the following literacy figures (for 1910) which show that members of Hindu reformist organizations were more literate as compared to their “non-reformist” co-religionists.

**Table 5.4 : Literacy Rates among Hindu Reformers in Punjab ca. 1910<sup>567</sup>**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>All Hindus</b>	5.5%	9.5%	7%
<b>Arya</b>	16.6%	23.0%	8.0%
<b>Brahmo</b>	37.5%	54.7%	15.3%
<b>Dev Dharm</b>	18.4%	24.5%	10.3%

The above table indicates that Arya Samajis were generally less literate than members of other reformist organisations. But it is important to note that unlike the Brahmo Samaj and Dev Dharma Samaj, the Arya Samaj was a much larger organisation in size and character. In 1911, the Arya Samajis numbered over one lakh as compared to just seven hundred Brahmo Samajis and about three thousand Dev Dharmis. Over the next decade, the number of Arya Samajis more than doubled whereas the number of Brahmos reduced by more than fifty per

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<sup>566</sup> See *Punjab Census Report 1911*, p. 322.

<sup>567</sup> The original figures in the census report were per thousand of population. Ibid. 323. I have converted and presented the figures in percentage or per hundred of population.

cent.<sup>568</sup> So, the high literacy rate among Brahmos and Dev Dharmis was concentrated to a miniscule portion of the total population of Punjabi Hindus. In contrast, the literacy rate of Arya Samajis was spread over a large number of people, implying that far more numbers of Arya Samajis were literate than Brahmos and Dev Dharmis combined. Moreover, the subscribers of Brahma Samaj and Dev Dharma largely came from the elite classes whereas the Arya Samaj comprised of people from a wide range of social backgrounds.<sup>569</sup> The 1911 Census Report explained that the relatively lower literacy levels of Arya Samajis were due to the “recent admission of the *Meghs, Ods*, and other menial castes”.<sup>570</sup>

Nonetheless, the primary concern of this section is not to compare the literacy levels between various Hindu reform organisations but to study the contribution of Arya Samaj and the D.A.V. movement to the overall literacy of Punjab. One way to analyse this contribution is to study the relative growth of literacy for districts that contained the oldest D.A.V. schools. In the case of Lahore which was host to the oldest and largest D.A.V. school of the province, the number of boys in schools (at all levels from primary through high school) rose from 7,818 in 1890-91 to 18,176 in 1914-15. During the same period, the number of unaided primary schools increased from 3 schools having a total of 81 boys to 22 schools having a total of 1,088 boys.<sup>571</sup> It has already been noted earlier in this chapter that the numerical strength of D.A.V. High School (in terms of number of students enrolled) was roughly one-fourth or 25% of the total combined strength (student enrolments) of all high schools Lahore throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From about 1890-

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<sup>568</sup> Ibid. 181.

<sup>569</sup> For a detailed analysis of the social composition of the Arya Samaj in Punjab, see chapter two of this dissertation.

<sup>570</sup> *Punjab Census Report 1911*, p. 323.

<sup>571</sup> These figures have been extracted from “Table No.51”, in *Punjab District Gazetteers, Vol. XXX B, Lahore, 1916*.

91 there were 2,692 students in all high schools of Lahore out of which 730 were enrolled at the D.A.V. High School. The popularity of D.A.V. school remained unchanged throughout the next two decades at least. In 1909-10, there were 4,730 students in all high schools of Lahore out of which 1,242 were studying at the D.A.V. High School. Moreover, the D.A.V. High School had the maximum share of students for high schools of the Lahore district.

It is fairly evident from the foregoing discussion that the D.A.V. School made a significant contribution to the literacy of Lahore. Similar patterns may be drawn for other districts to study the overall impact of the D.A.V. movement on the literacy level of Punjab. This entails a detailed statistical exercise that is presently beyond the scope of this dissertation due to lack of sufficient data. However, a rough picture may be drawn from some of the broader trends that point towards the contribution of the D.A.V. movement in Punjab. For instance, before the advent of the D.A.V. movement, there were only 25 high schools across Punjab (in the year 1883-84) having less than a thousand boys and no girls at all. But by the year 1903-04, the number of high schools had risen to 110 with 26,555 boys and 962 girls on their rolls.<sup>572</sup> This phenomenal growth was due to the establishment of several government and non-government public schools including about 10 D.A.V. High Schools. Over the course of the next two decades, the D.A.V. movement grew at such a pace that by 1925, there were about 50 High Schools run by the Arya Samaj across Punjab, most of which were D.A.V. schools.<sup>573</sup> While the D.A.V. movement was not alone in bringing about a phenomenal increase in the literacy levels of Punjab, it certainly played a major role in contributing towards improving the literacy rates for the province.

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<sup>572</sup> Table XVI. "Colleges, Schools and Scholars, Punjab," in *Imperial Gazetteer of India, Provincial Series, Punjab, Vol. 1* (Calcutta: Superintendent of Government Printing, 1908), p. 165.

<sup>573</sup> To determine how many high schools were there in Punjab in 1925.

It is important to note that D.A.V. schools were attended not just by Arya Samajis but by Hindus of all backgrounds. Nonetheless, an analysis of which castes among the Hindus became more literate between 1890 and 1920 will give a rough idea about the impact of the D.A.V. school movement on the Samajic population at least. So, another means of determining the impact of the D.A.V. movement on the literacy of Punjabi society is by studying the overall growth in the literacy levels of Hindus belonging to those castes that featured in the rank and file of the Arya Samaj. The castes from which most members of the Arya Samaj came were mainly Khattris, Aroras, Jats, Brahmans and Rajputs. Besides these, there were a couple of menial castes such as *Meghs* and *Ods* who had been recently admitted to the Samaj. These castes now formed a very significant majority within the Samaj. As per the 1911 Census, *Meghs* were the most populous caste among members of the Samaj. It is well-known that among the Punjabi Hindus, the Khattris, Aroras and Brahmans had traditionally enjoyed a high status. Not only were members from these castes generally more educated than their co-religionists but they also occupied influential such positions as chief assistants in government offices, school headmasters, inspectors and lawyers. Now, it is imperative to learn about the growth of literacy for different castes among Punjabi Hindus over the period from 1890 to 1920. The following table shows the literacy of Punjabis, arranged by their caste.

**Table 5.5 - Literacy of Hindus by Caste, 1891-1921<sup>574</sup>**

	<b>1891</b>	<b>1911</b>	<b>1921</b>
<b>Traders</b>			
Arora	20.3%	21.0%	17.2%
Khatri	21.8%	25.0%	23.1%
<b>Agriculturists</b>			
Arain	0.7%	1.1%	1.7%
Awan	1.4%	1.3%	2.0%
Jat	1.3%	1.7%	1.9%
Kamboh	1.2%	1.6%	1.5%
Rajput	1.2%	2.6%	3.3%
Saini	1.5%	2.6%	3.5%
<b>Priests</b>			
Brahman	10.2%	11.3%	12.2%
<b>Artisans</b>			
Chimba	1.9%	2.8%	3.3%
Kashmiri	1.7%	3.4%	3.9%
Lohar	1.1%	1.4%	1.7%
Nai	1.0%	1.3%	1.6%
Sonar	7.6%	8.0%	8.2%

The above table informs us about how many persons belonged to which caste when an average sample of 100 literates in Punjab is considered. So, it basically

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<sup>574</sup> These statistics have been extracted from Punjab Census Report 1921, p. 293. The original figures in the census report were per thousand of population. I have converted and presented the figures in percentage or per hundred of population.

shows the relative literacy level per caste. It is interesting to note from the above table that although Aroras, Khatri and Brahmans had the highest proportion of literates, these castes made very little progress in terms of literacy during the given period. By contrast, other predominant castes within the Arya Samaj made tremendous progress. For instance, the literacy proportion for Rajputs grew by nearly three times, from 1.2% to 3.3% between 1890 and 1920. Another caste that made remarkable progress was the Sainis whose literacy proportion more than doubled during the given period. Some of the artisan castes like the Kashmiris also showed very impressive rate of growth in literacy.

Having analysed the relative literacy level per caste, it is important to study the literacy level within each caste. The following figures reveal the number of literate persons per thousand persons of a particular caste within the Arya Samaj.

**Table 5.6: Literacy among the Arya Samajis, 1911<sup>575</sup>**

	Total Number in the Samaj	Number of Literates
Arora	10,547	3,613
Brahman	7,240	2,077
Khatri	17,237	5,212
Od	5,102	542
Rajput	2,403	421
Aggarwal	1,983	474

Now, the 1911 Census notes that in addition to the above castes, the highly literate castes were *Suds* (111 out of 306), *Kalals* (103 out of 319), *Kayasths* (129 out of 337), and *Mahajans* (54 out of 108). The Census further adds an interesting fact: “The Rajput Aryas being generally educated people, it is not

<sup>575</sup> These figures have been extracted from the Punjab Census Report 1911, p. 323.

startling to find that they have 175 literates per mille against the proportion of 26 for all Rajputs. But the fact that more than one-tenth of the Ods who have attached themselves to the Arya Samaj are literate and that even the Meghs (mostly of Sialkot), who have been recently elevated, have 5 literates per mille, appears to be a proof of the activity of the Arya Samaj in imparting education to the menial classes.”<sup>576</sup> These observations clearly indicate that the literacy of certain castes, particularly the lower castes, was likely to be much higher if they happened to be Arya Samajis. It is thus fairly evident that the contribution of the Arya Samaj to the literacy of Punjabi Hindus and particularly of lower castes was quite significant, for it raised their literacy levels by a very considerable margin. Although this dissertation has primarily discussed the impact of D.A.V. schools for boys, the contribution of Arya Samaj to the literacy of women was no less remarkable. The 1911 Census notes: “While men had only about twice as many literates (per thousand) as the average figure for all Hindus, Arya Samaj women had 80 literates (per thousand) as compared to merely 7 literates (per thousand) for all Hindu women.”<sup>577</sup>

On the whole then, by the first quarter of the twentieth century, it was clear that so far as numbers were concerned, the D.A.V. movement had been a spectacular success story. In fact, such was the rapid growth of the D.A.V. movement in particular and the network of Arya Samaj institutions in general that in March 1921, an organisation called the *Arya Vidya Sabha* was constituted with the primary goal of supervising the educational work of the Arya Samaj.<sup>578</sup> It is important to note here that Arya Samaj schools across the Punjab could individually choose to be affiliated to the D.A.V. College

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<sup>576</sup> Ibid.

<sup>577</sup> Ibid.

<sup>578</sup> The constitution of this organisation was adopted with a list of eight aims and objectives. Among other things, its objectives were to “improve the teaching of Sanskrit, Hindi”, and to “improve the existing arrangements for Religious Instruction in the affiliated schools.” See Sri Ram Sharma, *Our Educational Mission*, 137-138.

Managing Committee (that was headquartered at Lahore) specifically for the purpose of managing “religious and Hindi teaching”. By choosing to do so, the schools would agree to a common set of rules such as sharing and circulating the copies of religious teaching courses and giving suggestions for improvement. On 14<sup>th</sup> March 1915, a Conference under the presidency of the principal of D.A.V. College (Lahore) met to decide the rules by which schools could be affiliated to the Managing Committee for the given purpose. The following twelve schools agreed to become affiliated according to the prescribed rules:-

1. D.A.V. High School, Lahore.
2. D.A.V. High School, Hoshiarpur.
3. A.S. High School, Multan.
4. G.S.A.S. High School, Hafizabad.
5. A.S. High School, Abbottabad.
6. S.D.A.S. High School, Jullundur.
7. A.S. High School, Ambala.
8. D.A.V. High School, Rawalpindi.
9. D.A.V. High School, Amritsar.
10. D.A.V. Middle School, Behrampur.
11. D.A.V. Middle School, Muktsar.
12. V.B. Middle School, Jalalpur Jattan.<sup>579</sup>

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<sup>579</sup> Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1915, Lahore: Jijnasu Printing Works’, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 109, p. 30-31.

The above affiliated schools would be “inspected” once a year by a person appointed by the Managing Committee to ensure that religious and Hindi teaching was being carried out in accordance with the established standards and norms. In laying down procedures such as these, the D.A.V. College authorities aimed at simultaneously centralising and standardising the course of instruction taught across various Arya Samaj schools. This tendency was remarkably similar to the colonial policy of “instruction, inspection and control” discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation. This inevitably leads to the question that is examined in the following section: To what extent was the D.A.V. an alternative to colonial education?

#### INCULCATING ‘MODERN’ AND ‘TRADITIONAL’ LESSONS

One of the main questions that continues to feature in most debates amongst educational historians both within and outside the Samajic circle is what was the extent to which the D.A.V. institution was successful in imparting both ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’ education to its students. This question is especially important keeping in mind the fact that the D.A.V. movement was conceived to offer a unique combination of both modern and traditional education. This section discusses how the D.A.V. school students fared on both fronts.

#### The University Examination Results

There is no doubt that securing government jobs through the mode of passing university examinations such as the Matriculation, Intermediate, B.A., F.Sc., and M.A. examinations was an important priority for the early visionaries of the D.A.V. movement. After all, the results obtained in university examinations were a gateway to government employment and hence these results were regarded as one of the most important parameters of success in the colonial milieu of late nineteenth century Punjab. Therefore, year after year, reports presented by the headmasters of various D.A.V. schools contained a

summary of how their institutions had fared in these examinations. The 1910-11 report for the D.A.V. School, Lahore revealed that 91 students from the school had been sent up for the Matriculation Examination in that year, and that 78 of these students passed the examination.<sup>580</sup> Similarly, the 1915 report for D.A.V. School, Lahore noted that the school set a new record in that year as 118 out of its 145 students passed the Entrance examination. The report further proudly observed that the D.A.V. School, Lahore had sent the largest number of students for the university examinations, passed the largest number, and secured the highest number of scholarships among all the contemporary institutions of Punjab.<sup>581</sup>

The academic achievements of D.A.V. students at various university examinations continued to embellish the reputation of their institution. A decade later, the broader picture remained largely the same as it was in 1915. Riding on a wave of excellent school results in the academic year 1924-25, the whole D.A.V. College (including all departments and branch schools) celebrated with great fanfare the centenary of the founder of the Arya Samaj. The year 1924 marked the hundredth birth anniversary of Dayanand Saraswati. In that year, the D.A.V. School, Lahore reported “very good” results at the matriculation examination. During that year, the school also passed the largest number of students (171) in the university examinations, besides securing the highest number of scholarships and first division passes (58).<sup>582</sup> A similar trend was

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<sup>580</sup> ‘Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1910, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 108, p. 8.

<sup>581</sup> The names of all twenty-one scholarship holders were printed in this report along with the amount of scholarship and its source. See ‘Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1915, Lahore: Jijnasu Printing Works’, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 109, p. 17-19.

<sup>582</sup> ‘Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1924-25, Lahore: Virjanand Press’, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 110, p. 51.

visible in the case of the College Department whose students continued to perform exceedingly well in the University examinations.<sup>583</sup> It is clear then from annual reports and various other institutional records that the D.A.V. movement was a resounding success when judged by the parameter of officially recognised examinations.

A flip side of this success story was that D.A.V. students found it increasingly harder to distinguish between literacy and education. The parameters of literacy were helpful for the D.A.V. movement because they benefited from it as it helped 'prove' that they were successful. But then this meant that they uncritically accepted the frameworks that had been introduced by the colonial government. So, academic success in colonial Punjab was a double edged sword. On the one hand, it boosted the reputation and popularity of the D.A.V. movement and helped bring literacy to thousands of Punjabi Hindus. On the other hand, it threatened to turn the D.A.V. movement into nothing more than a 'nationalist' version of a colonial institution. This concern was voiced by many important leaders of the D.A.V. movement during the early twentieth century. One of the first persons to question the success of the D.A.V. movement was none other than Lajpat Rai, one of the prominent leaders of the of the D.A.V. movement for about a quarter of a century.<sup>584</sup> Lajpat Rai had been

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<sup>583</sup> In 1910, 67 out of 168 candidates passed the F.A. examination while 43 out of 81 students passed the B.A. examination. In 1924, 103 out of 228 students passed the F.A. examination while 83 out of 145 students passed the B.A. examination. The college principal Lala Sain Das argued that although these results appear mediocre, they were quite "satisfactory" considering that the D.A.V. College did not selectively pick students from the cream of society but rather received "all who seek admission and never shrink from accommodating swarms of third division men of whom some people seem to have a mortal dread". 'Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1924-25, Lahore: Virjanand Press', In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 110, p. 29.

<sup>584</sup> Lajpat Rai, *The Problem of National Education in India*, 2.

an important member of the Managing Committee meeting wherein it was resolved that “the system of education in the [D.A.V.] school be so regulated as to eventually prepare students for the Entrance exam without the necessity of appearing in or passing the Middle School Exam.”<sup>585</sup> It is therefore ironic that Rai challenged the grand narrative about the success of the D.A.V. movement and cautioned his colleagues not to be euphoric about the success of their ‘nationalist’ institution. Towards the end of his career, Rai became introspective and self-critical as he reflected on the national and educational problems of the time, especially on the inadequacies of the national education movement. Among other things, Rai realised that the D.A.V. curriculum largely followed the pattern laid down by the colonial government.

The scheme of studies promulgated by the official Universities was accepted unreservedly, except in the additions that were made to the courses in Hindi and Urdu, Sanskrit and Arabic. The principal business of the staffs engaged was to prepare students for University examinations. The results achieved in these examinations were the measure of their success and popularity.<sup>586</sup>

The above remarks suggest that Rai probably believed that an educational model was not ‘truly national’ if it largely retained the colonial scheme of studies. For this reason, Rai did not regard any contemporary educational institution except the National Council of Education in Bengal as a ‘truly national’ enterprise.<sup>587</sup> This was a point of disagreement between Rai and his colleagues like Devi Chand (headmaster of D.A.V. School, Hoshiarpur) who believed that since all D.A.V. institutions were entirely staffed and controlled

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<sup>585</sup> ‘24/11/00’, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 7, p. 6-9.

<sup>586</sup> Lajpat Rai, *The Problem of National Education in India*, 2.

<sup>587</sup> Lajpat Rai, *The Problem of National Education in India*, 5. For more details about the National Council of Education, see p. 17 of this dissertation.

by Indians, this was enough to qualify the institution as nationalist in the “true sense of the term”.<sup>588</sup>

Nonetheless, there was increasing demand for setting up an institution that would be truly independent of colonial standards. As a result, the “Dayanand non-university school” was founded in 1920 to meet the growing public demand for “school education independent of university control”.<sup>589</sup> Five years later, this school was renamed the “Industrial High School” because it focussed on practical vocational and industrial skill development. Along with acquiring “literary education”, students received instruction in an “industrial subject for two hours a day”.<sup>590</sup> Technical skills such as book-binding, carpentry, tailoring, tinning, the Indian system of accounts, book-keeping and commercial arithmetic were taught to pupils. Moreover, in keeping with the original aims and ideals of the D.A.V. movement, Hindi was kept the medium of instruction. This school was a “new experiment”, as one of the chroniclers called it, and it did not become as popular as other mainstream D.A.V. schools that mainly prepared students for government examinations. Nevertheless, as of 1925, the school had 625 students attending classes from primary through middle and high school level.<sup>591</sup> But this Industrial school was a one-off exception in the vast network of D.A.V. schools which were generally following a standard pattern of teaching and examination.

On the whole, the D.A.V. school was modelled after the government school in many respects – it largely followed the existing pattern of classes, it prepared students according to the education code prescribed by the state government and it incentivised students to perform well in government

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<sup>588</sup> Devi Chand, *A Report of the Educational Work by the Arya Samaj in India* (Amritsar: George Press, 1925), 4.

<sup>589</sup> Sri Ram Sharma, *Our Education Mission*, 11.

<sup>590</sup> *Ibid.* 12.

<sup>591</sup> *Ibid.* 11.

examinations. In fact, the dilemma of giving students an Anglo-Vedic education meant preparing them for government examinations and government employment while simultaneously imbibing in them a basic knowledge of their tradition. Clearly then, the D.A.V. leaders were faced with the predicament of developing an alternative model which would be loosely confined to colonial standards, for the sake of employment, but which would not be a replica of the existing government school. Kenneth Jones has succinctly captured this dilemma in the following words:

Aryas recognised the new world's demand for English literacy and sought that literacy within a milieu of revived Hinduism. This would provide Punjabi parents with an ideal educational situation [...] Teaching through English, the new schools would further Anglicization while simultaneously introducing a countervailing force of revived Vedic life.<sup>592</sup>

Given the above constraints within which they had to function, the D.A.V. leaders had little scope to improvise and innovate in developing an alternative to colonial education. What then was unique about the D.A.V. schools that set them apart from government schools? The following sections show some of the areas in which the D.A.V. schooling system differed from the colonial set up.

### Creation of Cultural Consciousness

The importance of 'traditional' or 'Vedic' aspects of the 'Anglo-Vedic' agenda set forth by the D.A.V. pedagogues has already been discussed in the previous chapters of this dissertation. The overarching significance of these aims and ideals was reiterated on various occasions in official accounts and reports. First of all, it was important to know what was the number of pupils receiving instruction in these 'traditional' aspects. Most of the official accounts gave a positive verdict on this matter. In April 1907, *The Panjabee* newspaper, well-known for its affiliation to the D.A.V. College, carried a brief article

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<sup>592</sup> Jones, *Arya Dharma*, 69.

summarising the annual report of the College for that year. This article noted “with much pleasure that all the boys of 1<sup>st</sup> B and 2<sup>nd</sup> B, 196 in number, have been taught Mul Raj, M.A.’s first primer in Hindi, and 156 boys of 1<sup>st</sup> A and 2<sup>nd</sup> A have been taught Sandhya with meaning and they can write it from memory.”<sup>593</sup>

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of the school, the headmaster’s report noted that “there is not one among the 1,500 students in the school, who cannot read and write Hindi and who cannot recite *Sandhya* and *Vedic Mantras*.”<sup>594</sup> The progress in the field of teaching Hindi and Sanskrit was also noted in future reports. In 1930-31, it was reported that a total of 1133 boys were reading Sanskrit as compared to 1091 boys in the previous year. Furthermore, the report mentioned that 1667 boys were reading Hindi in 1930-31 as compared to 1575 boys in the previous year.<sup>595</sup>

Nonetheless, in less than thirty years since the institution was founded, the College Managing Committee faced the criticism of having deviated from the

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<sup>593</sup> “D.A.V. College: A Year’s Record” in *The Panjabee*, Wednesday, April 3, 1907.

<sup>594</sup> ‘Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1910-11, In *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*, File No. 110, 9. One of the measures adopted by the Managing Committee with a view to gauging and improving the condition of religious instruction was to conduct an examination on how many students had properly understood the ritual of Sandhya. The results of this examination brought some cheer to the Samajic mission. Out of a total number of 1008 students who appeared for this examination in February 1931, about 569 were reported as “knowing Sandhya correctly”, 295 were reported as “knowing Sandhya incorrectly” and the remaining 144 students were reported as “now knowing Sandhya”. See “Report of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College Society for 1930-31” in *D.A.V. College Managing Committee Proceedings*, File no. 112, p. 26.

<sup>595</sup> *Ibid.* 36.

objectives propounded in the original scheme of the institution.<sup>596</sup> On their side, the Committee officials rebutted the charges made against them by showing their commitment to the cause of the institution. For instance, the D.A.V. College Society's Annual Report for 1914 noted that:

The objects laid before the public in the D.A.V. Scheme have been faithfully and loyally followed by the Managing Committee during the last 29 years, and I emphatically repudiate the meaningless charge that is so often, but so unjustifiably, brought against the College, that it has deviated from the objects for which it was started.<sup>597</sup>

The above remarks made by the Secretary of the Managing Committee were substantiated with statistical evidence from annual budgets. In doing so, the Secretary sought to allay suspicions that the Committee was not doing enough to promote the study of Sanskrit as well as moral and religious instruction. In the institution's annual report for 1914, the Secretary laid out the detailed budget and expenditure of the D.A.V. College Society. On the basis of these figures, the report showed that the annual income of D.A.V. College Society was approximately Rs.33,000. Out of this total, the Managing Committee which was responsible for the administration of the D.A.V. institutions spent over Rs. 21,000 directly on Sanskrit and Hindi and Religious Instruction and the balance amount of Rs. 12,000 was spent on the rest of the institution.<sup>598</sup> Therefore, the Secretary argued that the Managing Committee directly spends "about two-thirds of its income on Sanskrit, Hindi and Updesh, a proportion which is by no means, low, and which ought to silence the criticism."<sup>599</sup>

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<sup>596</sup> The original scheme of the D.A.V. institution was formulated in 1885. See *Draft Rules for the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Committee* (Lahore: Vidyaprakashak Press, 1885).

<sup>597</sup> *Report of the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College Lahore for 1914*, 80.

<sup>598</sup> *Ibid.* 78.

<sup>599</sup> *Ibid.* 78.

While apprehensions about the appropriate use of funds were largely resolved, there remained doubts about whether the teaching of moral and religious instruction was having any beneficial effect on the pupils. The influence that the teaching of Hindi, Sanskrit as well as *Dharma Shiksha* (moral and religious instruction) was having on D.A.V. students and the public at large was undoubtedly an important factor in judging the educational movement. Lala Lajpat Rai, for instance was not so enthusiastic about the cause of religious instruction. Rai was a contemporary of Hans Raj and one of the most important public figures of early twentieth century Punjab. Unlike most Arya Samajis who believed that religious instruction had a largely positive impact on Punjabi society, Rai was ambivalent about the role of religious instruction in the educational scenario of the country. While Rai appreciated the tremendous service rendered by denominational institutions of all hues (Hindu, Mohammedan and Sikh) for their respective communities, he believed that such institutions had been marred by a “sectarian tinge”. Rai further declared that the education imparted in such ‘nationalist’ institutions was “narrow” and “denominational”. He summarised his position in the following words:

The educational facilities provided by these institutions were open to persons of all creeds, denominations and religions, but the nationalism aimed at was undisguisedly denominational. Each institution created an atmosphere of its own – national to a certain extent, so far as the general cult of love of country was concerned, but otherwise openly sectarian.<sup>600</sup>

But there was another set of voices in this discourse for there was considerable dissidence within the rank and file of the Arya Samaj. Not everyone shared the same perceptions about the importance of religious instruction or about the idea of setting up denominational institutions. Commenting on the ameliorative effects of *Dharma Shiksha*, Mr. Devi Chand (Principal, D.A.V. High School, Hoshiarpur) proclaimed in 1925 that “religious instruction does not create, but

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<sup>600</sup> Rai, *The Problem of National Education*, 1-2.

avoids religious dissensions and disputes, as it makes the mind more catholic, and tolerant with the views of other faiths.”<sup>601</sup> The positive influence of learning *Sandhya* and other religious lessons was further evident from the accounts of former students of various D.A.V. institutions. One well-known testimony was that of Dr. Gokul Chand Narang, who had studied in both the D.A.V. School and College of Lahore. On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the D.A.V. College Lahore, Dr. Narang wrote a lengthy commentary on his student days at the D.A.V. institution which was then headed by Hans Raj. The following excerpt from this testimony essentially captures the influence that D.A.V. school and college had on his life. Dr. Narang recalled that:

The atmosphere in the College as well as in the boarding house was then highly religious and there was the example of Mahatma Hans Raj to inspire us with respect, not only for his person, but also for the religion and the movement which he represented. He used to deliver discourses on religious topics in the period reserved for Veda Path. These discourses as well as the general atmosphere of the Institution and the sermons in the Arya Samaj soon cleared our minds of doubts and fears. The religion which we had been taught to regard with contempt as a bundle of superstitions began to appear to us to be the only religion worth following. [...] I have often felt that if I had not joined the D.A.V. College after passing my matriculation examination I might have remained almost totally ignorant of my religion and my duties towards my community and my country.<sup>602</sup>

In addition to making the above comments, Dr. Narang noted the importance of learning *Sandhya*. It is evident from the foregoing discussion that the Samaj leadership took serious account of the effects of moral and religious education imparted in the D.A.V. institutions. Needless to say, Dr. Narang’s views were

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<sup>601</sup> L. Devi Chand, *A Report of the Educational Work by the Arya Samaj in India*, 11-12. This report contains a detailed summary of the educational work done by the Arya Samaj.

<sup>602</sup> Dr. Sir Gokal Chand Narang, “What I Owe to D.A.V. College”, in *D.A.V. College Golden Jubilee Commemoration Volume, Lahore: The Golden Jubilee Committee* (Lahore: D.A.V. College, 1936), 18-19.

corroborated by prominent leaders such as Lala Hansraj who echoed similar sentiments and expressed satisfaction over the apparently ameliorative effect of *Dharma Shiksha*. Speaking on this subject, HansRaj praised the work of Samajic institutions and reminded the Samaj leadership about their educational “mission” in the following words:

The Arya Samaj has refused to be frightened by the ill-reputation which denominational institutions have acquired in certain parts of the country. They decided and wisely to impart religious education to their students and the results can be seen in the Punjab of today. The distinct religious atmosphere that characterises this province and differentiates it from other parts of the country is its creation. But the religious education in the hands of the Arya Samaj has not meant the breeding of a spirit anti-national in tone and character.<sup>603</sup>

The creation of a “distinct religious” atmosphere in Punjab, as mentioned above by Hans Raj, was perhaps first displayed in the establishment of the Punjab Hindu Sabha in January 1907. This religious fervour, particularly among the Hindus, was not confined to the Arya Samajis. It also did not necessarily breed a feeling of animosity for other religious communities. On one hand, the Punjab Hindu Sabha was formed to “protect, promote and represent the interests of the Hindu Community” was a primary concern for all the members.<sup>604</sup> On the other hand, it was declared that the Sabha was “not a sectarian, nor a denominational but an all-embracing movement; and while meaning no offence to any other movement, whether Hindu or non-Hindu, it aims to be ardent and watchful in safeguarding the interests of the entire Hindu Community in all respects”.<sup>605</sup>

In his brief yet exhaustive account of the educational work of the Arya Samajes under the Arya Pradeshak Pratinidhi Sabha Lahore, Sri Ram Sharma

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<sup>603</sup> Ibid. iv-v.

<sup>604</sup> *Report of the First Punjab Hindu Conference held at Lahore on 21st and 22nd October 1909* (Lahore: Virjanand Press, 1909), 1.

<sup>605</sup> Ibid.

(Professor of History at the D.A.V. College, Lahore and Joint Secretary of the Arya Pradeshak Pratinidhi Sabha or Lahore) notes the significant impact made by the D.A.V. movement in the sphere of moral and religious education.

It should also be remembered that the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College saved the educational movement in the Punjab from degenerating into a mere Godless education. The lead it gave in the matter of religious instruction has been followed by others [...] the religious atmosphere that pervades the province [of Punjab] and distinguishes it from other parts of India is the creation of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College. It has produced in the youths of the province a feeling of pride in their past which is not to be surpassed.<sup>606</sup>

Sharma further adds that the example of the D.A.V. movement particularly in matters of moral and religious education has been followed by other communities. “The Sikhs, the Mohammedans and the Sanatan Dharmis have vied with each other in following where the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College and the Arya Samaj led and the results can be seen in the Punjab of today.”<sup>607</sup>

It is evident from the foregoing comments that the Arya Samajis have largely taken the credit for pioneering the trend of imparting religious instruction alongside preparing students for university examinations in Punjab. It also appears that prominent Arya Samajis like Hans Raj were hardly bothered with the negative connotations about the general perception of “denominational institutions” much less with the inclusion of the D.A.V. College among such institutions. In fact, Hans Raj had written in his testimony to the Indian Universities Commission of 1902 that the rise of denominational institutions across the country was the need of the hour.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, scores of educational institutions had been set up by Indian nationalists of all hues. The ‘National Education Movement’ had started in Bengal with the establishment of the National Council of Education in the year 1905. Among other prominent

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<sup>606</sup> Sri Ram Sharma, *Our Educational Mission*, 21.

<sup>607</sup> *Ibid.* 22.

institutions of North India was The Central Hindu School of Varanasi founded by Annie Besant in the year 1921. But, as discussed in the second chapter of this dissertation, other religious communities had been planning the establishment of denominational institutions before or at least concurrently with the genesis of the D.A.V. movement.<sup>608</sup> Nonetheless of all provinces, Punjab appears to have taken the lead in setting up and maintaining a significant network of private denominational schools where moral and religious subjects were taught along with secular subjects like maths and science.

#### CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that under the circumstances of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the D.A.V. movement was an interesting, innovative and nationalist response to colonial education. The D.A.V. leaders clearly sought to integrate modern and traditional methods of teaching in ‘practical manner. Also, the contribution of the D.A.V. movement towards increasing the literacy of Punjab was immense and remarkable. Furthermore, the contribution of the D.A.V. movement in the creation of a social, political and cultural consciousness in Punjab and Northern India was quite significant. The spread of nationalist consciousness among the Hindus of Punjab was largely due to the educational work of Arya Samaj and its educational institutions, particularly the network of D.A.V schools.

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<sup>608</sup> For instance, the Deoband School at Aligarh emerged as an important centre for the revival of Islamic learning. For a detailed study of this institution, see Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India-Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).

## CONCLUSION

It is widely acknowledged that the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic institution was an “entirely novel” enterprise in the province of Punjab.<sup>609</sup> This novelty is generally attributed to the fact that the institution was wholly managed and staffed by Indians. But the most novel and unique characteristic of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic movement, as this PhD dissertation has shown, was the manner in which it syncretised ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ education. In this dissertation, it is this synthesis of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ features that I have analysed by critically examining various aspects of the D.A.V. movement such as the aims and ideals of its founders, the genesis and growth of its institutional network between 1880 and 1920, the heterogenous nature of its financial model and the nature of its curriculum. Because the D.A.V. movement was one of the most popular indigenous educational enterprises of colonial India, I have tabulated and described the vast network of D.A.V. schools and colleges that were spread across Northern India in the early twentieth century. But it is the question of novelty of the D.A.V. education model, as manifested in its unique combination of ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ features, that has been the primary focus of my dissertation. The hybrid nature of the D.A.V. educational programme is obvious from the institution’s curriculum which included the study of Hindi and Sanskrit literature alongside the teaching of western literature and sciences. In a major departure from existing scholarship, this dissertation has gone beyond a mere cursory review of the educational scheme promulgated by the institution’s founders. I have conducted a detailed analysis of the precise manner in which the D.A.V. movement conformed to ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ educational models.<sup>610</sup> In this sense, the dual character of the

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<sup>609</sup> This description, which was probably coined by Lajpat Rai, largely reflected the public opinion about the D.A.V. movement in the early twentieth century. See Rai, *The Arya Samaj*, 186.

<sup>610</sup> The sense in which ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ education are used here has been outlined in the Introduction of this dissertation.

D.A.V. movement is reflected in my research findings which are briefly summarised below along with the inferences that may be drawn from these findings in order to understand the larger implications of this study for our contemporary understanding of modern India.

Let me begin by describing the ‘modern’ features of the D.A.V. education model. As discussed in the introductory section, by ‘modern educational’ features, I refer to general principles of state education (such as classroom teaching and standardised testing) that came to be practiced globally in all industrial societies from the early nineteenth century onwards. In view of this background, the first chapter of this dissertation discussed the institution of colonial education in India. This education system was characterised by three particular features, namely ‘inspection’, ‘instruction’ and ‘control’ which were implemented by imposing an education code that prescribed standard textbooks and examination standards from primary through high school. These characteristics of modern education were present in many of the educational institutions associated with late nineteenth century reform movements, some of which were studied in the second chapter of this dissertation. One of the aims of this dissertation was to highlight the form in which these ‘modern’ features were present in the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (D.A.V.) School – the educational institution started by the Arya Samaj in the late nineteenth century. To this end, the D.A.V. education model was analysed in the third chapter of this dissertation. This analysis revealed the presence of several ‘modern’ educational features in the D.A.V. movement. For instance, D.A.V. schools and colleges were administered by a central organisation based at Lahore much the same way in which modern institutions are controlled by a central legislative body. In the case of D.A.V. institutions, this central body was the D.A.V. College Managing Committee which was a subsidiary of the D.A.V. College Society. The Managing Committee, as the name suggests, was responsible for the general administration and policy matters pertaining to the D.A.V. institutions. The Managing Committee was alone responsible for developing

the scheme of studies to be followed in affiliated schools and colleges. Like modern organisations, the Committee followed a bureaucratic structure with four office bearers and a considerable number of representatives from various Arya Samajes across Punjab. The Committee was reconstituted every three years and office bearers were elected democratically. The Managing Committee held ordinary and special meetings, the proceedings of which were duly entered in a register. These proceedings of meetings held by the Managing Committee reveal that the administrative functioning of the D.A.V. movement followed a set of well-established procedures as characteristic of a modern institutional framework. But the D.A.V. movement was 'modern' not just in the sense of administrative control. Even with regard to pedagogical aspects, the D.A.V. movement was 'modern' in the form, structure and outlook of its institutions. As discussed in the third chapter, D.A.V. pupils were taught a standardised curriculum tailored to the modern classroom style of learning. A detailed analysis of this curriculum, as elaborated in the third and fourth chapters of this dissertation, reveals several similarities between the D.A.V. and (colonial) government education system. This is hardly surprising because the D.A.V. school was a modern institution and since 'modern' education was instituted in India by the colonial state, there were bound to be some similarities between the D.A.V. and colonial institutional models. So, the (colonial) government structure of school education with annual class promotions from primary through high school was also retained in the D.A.V. school. This implied that three classes were devoted to lower primary, two classes to upper primary, three to middle school and two to high school. Furthermore, the scheme of studies promulgated by the D.A.V. College Managing Committee was designed in accordance with government norms and examination standards as laid out, for instance, in the Punjab Education Code (1886-87). Therefore, English was taught as a subject from the fourth grade onwards. Other 'modern' subjects such as Geography and History were introduced in the fourth and sixth grades respectively. This was perhaps an 'expedient' policy. D.A.V. leaders felt

the need to comply with government syllabi and norms to ensure that upon the completion of their schooling, students were prepared for entrance level examinations that were held for admission to various government colleges and universities. Moreover, an important priority for the early visionaries of the D.A.V. movement was that students should secure employment which was only possible if they passed examinations like the Matriculation, Intermediate, B.A. and M.A. examinations. So, the D.A.V. school authorities complied with the then prevailing government education code. It was imperative to do so because one of the avowed objectives of the D.A.V. movement was to prepare students for government examinations in order that they easily find employment after leaving school. After all, passing university examinations and thereby gaining employment were the most important parameter of success in the colonial milieu of late nineteenth century Punjab. By this parameter, the D.A.V. movement was a resounding success. In 1915, for instance, the D.A.V. School of Lahore passed the largest number of students in the university examinations and secured the highest number of scholarships among all the contemporary institutions of Punjab. Also, alumni of D.A.V. schools and colleges were highly successful in the professional world. Most of them led successful careers as clerks in government offices, teachers or professors in schools and colleges, and lawyers in the local courts. All of these factors contributed to the popularity of the D.A.V. institution, particularly in Punjab.

The D.A.V. movement was ‘modern’ in yet another way. D.A.V. leaders codified, institutionalised and propagated what they believed to be the truths of ‘Vedic religion’. Unlike government schools where no religious instruction was allowed, D.A.V. schools imparted elementary *Vedic* lessons. For instance, the *Gayatri Mantra* was taught and recited in the first year; certain *Suktas* such as the *Purusha Sukta* from the *Rigveda* were recited in the second and third years; the *Shanti Path* was recited in the fourth year, and *Sandhya* was taught in the fifth and final year of primary school. The emphasis on *Vedic* mantras alone was in keeping with the doctrine propagated by Dayanand Saraswati and the

core philosophy of the Arya Samaj which regarded the *Vedas* as the ultimate authority. But the teaching of ‘Vedic religion’ also mirrored modern movements. After all, the practice of teaching and preaching a standardised or monolithic ‘digest’ of religious doctrine is often regarded as a ‘modern’ phenomenon. Eminent historians like Christopher Bayly have attributed the rise of ‘world religions’ in the nineteenth century to several modern technological factors such as the invention of printing press. The D.A.V. institution was certainly no exception to the modern trend of instituting a separate academic subject or discipline for ‘religious instruction’. Like other contemporary ‘denominational’ institutions where students were instructed in the key tenets of their religion, the D.A.V. school introduced a subject (*Veda Patha*) and issued special textbooks for religious instruction. In sum, the D.A.V. institution was ‘modern’ in many ways, for it included several features that are generally attributed to ‘modern education’.

Let us now turn to the ‘traditional’ aspects of the D.A.V. movement which were described in the third and fourth chapters of this dissertation. It was also these ‘traditional’ elements that characterised the prominent differences between government and D.A.V. schools. One of the obvious ‘traditional’ aspects of the D.A.V. educational programme was their use of Hindi as the medium of instruction. Unlike government schools where Urdu was the vernacular, D.A.V. schools taught reading and writing in Hindi through their own set of textbooks for the primary school. Hindi remained a compulsory taught subject for all classes from the primary level up to the high school level, while Sanskrit was made a compulsory subject from the third year onwards.<sup>611</sup>

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<sup>611</sup> On the contrary, Urdu and Persian were introduced as optional subjects in the fourth and ninth years respectively. Here, it is important to note that the colonial government ran several vernacular schools but the language used in such schools was Urdu. At a time when linguistic identity was increasingly linked with religious identity, the choice of Urdu was not acceptable to the Hindus of Punjab even though many Hindus were well-versed in Urdu.

Students also learned their arithmetic lessons in Hindi. In the teaching of arithmetic, indigenous methods of accounting and traditional tables called *mahajani gurs* were taught in order to educate the children of traders and shopkeepers in calculating traditional weights and measures that they would use in their respective occupations. This was in common with the practice of *patshalas*, or traditional village schools, where instruction was imparted in the vernacular and mathematical tables were taught in the traditional manner. Therefore, to some extent, the D.A.V. movement was able to reinvigorate the traditional *patshalas* that had largely disappeared after the intervention of colonial education. But this was only a superficial similarity between the D.A.V. and *patshala* education models. A thorough analysis of the D.A.V. school curriculum and the financial records of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee showed that the D.A.V. movement resembled the *patshalas* or traditional village schools in several fundamental ways. It is important to note that my use of the word ‘traditional’ is an approximate reference to general practices followed in *patshalas*. As discussed in the first chapter, such *patshalas* flourished in large numbers at the eve of colonial intervention in the sphere of education. But their functioning was disrupted with the introduction of colonial policies such as the principle of religious neutrality which mandated that only ‘secular’ schools would be recognised and considered eligible for financial aid. Given the variety of instruction given in traditional *patshalas*, colonial officials had a great difficulty in classifying traditional teachers and texts as ‘secular’ or ‘religious’. More importantly, such attempts to neatly classify traditional practices and map them to colonial stereotypes besides were self-defeating, for the colonial government failed to bring all indigenous schools under its control. But the inability to identify secular indigenous schools was not the only hurdle that officials faced in their endeavour to spread colonial education among the masses. Department officials realised that they could not “improve” the methods of indigenous *patshalas* sufficiently enough to convert these *patshalas* to the status of government or aided schools. Lieutenant E. Paske, the officiating

director of Public Instruction in Punjab noted this problem in a memorandum dated 9<sup>th</sup> August 1859.<sup>612</sup> He explained why the original plan of making existing indigenous schools as the “nucleus of a new, improved and organised system” had failed miserably. He noted that in spite of persistent efforts by Department officials, traditional schoolmasters were unwilling to even abandon their old “desultory” scheme of teaching, leave alone giving up the “religious” instruction that formed part of their curriculum. Some of these *patshalas* were ‘improved’ and assimilated into the government machinery while others were gradually disbanded due to lack of financial aid and recognition.

Nonetheless, some characteristic features of the *patshalas* are discernible in the D.A.V. education model. For instance, as shown in the third chapter of this dissertation, the financial model of the D.A.V. school resembled that of the *patshalas* which were maintained not by regular admission fees from pupils but instead by generous endowments and support from the local village community. The Arya Samajis who took charge of the initial fund raising for the D.A.V. school at Lahore relied on similar traditional methods of community funding for their educational institutions. Annual budgets of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee have revealed that school fees (which was very nominal) contributed in a small measure to the overall income of the institution. Instead, D.A.V. leaders relied on traditional methods of financing such as philanthropic donations (from the local community and wealthy individuals), monthly subscriptions and community rations such as the *Khichhari* (a mixture of rice and pulses) *fund* and the *Atta* (flour) *fund*. This system of revenue generation was ‘traditional’ in the sense that it was decentralised and drew resources from the local community unlike contemporary ‘modern’ institutions which

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<sup>612</sup> See “Extract from Memorandum by Lieutenant E. Paske, Officiating Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, No. 155 of 9th August 1859, paras 2,3,43,44, 45.” In *Report by the Panjab Provincial Committee*, 5-7.

maintained themselves with the help of centralised (government) financial aid and high school fees.

Another 'traditional' feature of the D.A.V. education model was manifest in the manner in which linguistic, moral and religious instruction was imparted. As noted earlier, the use of Hindi as the primary vernacular and the medium of instruction was one of the distinguishing features of the D.A.V. school. But, as explained in the fourth chapter of this dissertation, the teaching of language was inextricably bound with the teaching of ethics, culture and religion. Elementary language primers used in D.A.V. schools such as Dayanand Saraswati's *Sanskrit Vakya Prabodh* were replete with dialogues on righteous conduct, behavioural norms and social propriety. Similarly, my analysis of moral textbooks such as *Vyavhaar Bhanu* has shown that these textbooks were pedagogic, moral and social manuals that were meant not only for young boys and girls but also for adults. For instance, several conversations in the *Vyavhaar Bhanu* contain advice on marital issues as well as social problems of the day. In the same vein, I have shown in the fourth chapter that 'religious' readers or *Dharma Shikshaks* catered to a wide range of topics from *Vedic Mantras* and *Pranayama* to physical exercise and student-teacher relationships. There was no doubt an emphasis on the *Vedas* in keeping with Dayanand Saraswati's educational vision. The overarching significance of *Vedas* was reflected in the teaching of moral and religious instruction wherein several Vedic verses were taught. But with the passage of time, the character of *Dharma Shikshaks* underwent considerable revisions. By 1913, the D.A.V. College Managing Committee had approved a final scheme for religious instruction according to which the revised set of *Dharma Shikshaks* was not confined to *Vedic* lessons. The revised 'religious' readers included excerpts from a wide range of literary epics such as *Mahabharata* and *Tulsi Ramayana* as also general topics such as good manners, how to say *Namaste*, the importance of gratitude, truthfulness and kindness. In these *Dharma Shikshaks*, morality was not taught only through direct injunctions on good behaviour and

right conduct. For instance, the *Dharma Shikshak No. 11* contained a chapter titled *Neeti ke Updesh* or Maxims on Ethics. This chapter contained select *dohas* (couplets) of famous Hindi poets like Tulsidas.<sup>613</sup> These maxims in lyrical-verse form were easy to read and memorise and they conveyed a moral teaching for young minds. *Dohas* have been used since at least the medieval period in traditional schools across Northern India. One instance of the use of *dohas* and maxims was discussed in the first chapter of this dissertation in the case of traditional *patshalas* of nineteenth century Punjab.

On the whole then, the inclusive approach adopted by D.A.V. leaders mirrored the pedagogical and curricular practices of ‘traditional’ *patshalas* discussed in the first chapter. The inter-disciplinary mode of teaching language, ethics and religion was similar to the practices followed in the traditional *patshalas* whose teachers and texts could not be classified according to the ‘secular’ or ‘religious’ parameters introduced by the British. Like D.A.V. school books, the textbooks and other select excerpts from the *Puranas* (particularly the *Mahabharat*, *Ramayana* and *Bhagvata Purana*) were used in *patshalas*. Sometimes, the same textbooks (or excerpts from them) such as *Panchatantra* and *Hitopadesha* that had been used a century earlier in the *patshalas* were included in the D.A.V. curriculum. I have explained, throughout this dissertation, that these textbooks were culled from a wide range of sources and catered to diverse themes. They were inter-disciplinary, which is why colonial officials found it difficult to classify the *patshalas* as ‘secular’ or ‘religious’ schools. Just as it was virtually impossible to classify *patshalas* and their curriculum into one monolithic category, it was difficult to classify the D.A.V. schools and their textbooks into a single category. Another important ‘traditional’ feature of the D.A.V schools, as discussed in the fourth chapter,

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<sup>613</sup> For a complete list of these *dohas* see “Tulsidas ke Dohe” and “Sri Lalji ke Dohe” in *Dharma Shikshak No. 11*, 280-282. This point has been elaborated in the fourth chapter.

was the performance of the ritual of *Brahma Yajna* or *Sandhya* on a daily basis. The practice of *Sandhya* involved meditation and *Svadyaya* (self-study) at time of dawn and dusk. This was not entirely a ‘novel’ pedagogic approach invented by the Arya Samajis. In various forms, *Sandhya* has always been an integral part of the traditional *patshalas* and various educational systems in India. It has been described and recommended for students by a large number of teachers and texts. Therefore, the ritual of *Sandhya* was another way in which the D.A.V. education model reinvigorated and redefined the ‘traditional’ educational model.

From the foregoing research findings of my study, it is clear that both ‘traditional’ as well as ‘modern’ features were present in the D.A.V. education model. It is unclear whether the DAV people were actually aware of the distinction between ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’. Perhaps, they did not sharply distinguish between the two and this is one of the reasons they chose to employ certain traditional elements in the curricula, and yet at other times, preferred to comply with modern norms. The adoption of this dual approach was as much ideational as it was expedient. This is evident from the fact that the D.A.V. leaders chose to follow the existing rules and regulations which had been instituted by the colonial government with regard to the functioning of educational institutions and the awarding of degrees.

On the whole then, it might appear from the dual character of the D.A.V. model that the D.A.V. movement was neither ‘traditional nor ‘modern’ since it did not faithfully represent either of the two approaches. But such an interpretation would be based on universal and puritanical ideas of ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’. As explained in the introductory section of this dissertation, the mutually exclusive relation between ‘tradition’ and ‘modernity’ is problematic because ‘tradition’ is not a rigid and timeless concept but a

continuously evolving structure.<sup>614</sup> For this reason, I believe that the D.A.V. model was both ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’. The ‘traditional’ aspects of the D.A.V. movement highlighted in my research have not been examined in any systematic study so far. Therefore, my research on the ‘traditional’ aspects of the D.A.V. movement may be seen as a particular case study of the presence of ‘traditional’ (as well as ‘modern’) features in various indigenous initiatives that were set up in colonial India. The general inferences that can be drawn on the basis of my dissertation are particularly striking because much of the existing scholarship undermines the presence of ‘traditional’ elements in modern Indian educational enterprises. But, as this dissertation has shown, such enterprises were marked by traditional continuity as much as they were characterised by modernity. This does not mean that these indigenous institutions invoked an essential and unbroken chain of traditional ideas that have been passed from generation to generation. Rather, my dissertation has shown that in such institutions, ‘tradition’ was being constantly redefined and reinvigorated in interesting and creative ways. I would conclude by saying that traditions, such including educational traditions, constantly evolve and reform according to the demands of space and time. This is a continuous process that should not be seen only in the backdrop of colonial rule that had its own set of peculiarities and certainly played a role in the evolution of tradition. Nevertheless, the challenge of syncretising tradition and modernity continues to exist in various forms. At the same time, for many Indians who do not see a conflict between tradition and modernity, this challenge is also an opportunity to revive tradition in a new form. For instance, the Government of India recently approved a new education

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<sup>614</sup> Similarly, Milton Singer has argued that the dichotomy between ‘modern’ and ‘foreign’, or ‘modern’ and western’, is problematic because “Indian civilization during its long history has incorporated many foreign groups and cultural elements while maintaining a recognizable continuity.” See Singer, *When A Great Tradition Modernizes*, 389.

policy that, among other things, aims to revive the ancient Indian tradition of holistic and multidisciplinary learning which is the kind of education required for the twenty-first century as well.<sup>615</sup>

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<sup>615</sup> Paragraph 11.1, *National Education Policy 2020* (Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India), 36. **Accessible here:-**  
[https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/NEP\\_Final\\_English\\_0.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf)

**APPENDIX – I: CONSOLIDATED SCHEME OF STUDIES FOR D.A.V. SCHOOLS<sup>616</sup>**

<b>Subjects</b>	<b>Textbooks</b>
<b>First Class</b>	
Hindi Reading	Mulraj’s Introductory Primer (Whole).
Hindi Writing	Letters and Figures up to 100.
Arithmetic	Notation up to 100 and Multiplication tables 10*10.
Physical Instruction	As prescribed in chapter XV of the Punjab Education Code.
(Vedic Instruction) Recitation of <i>Gayatri Mantra</i> .	
<b>Second Class</b>	
Hindi Reading	Mulraj’s Hindi 2 <sup>nd</sup> Reader & Education Department Series 2 <sup>nd</sup> Hindi Reader. (It was resolved in this meeting that early steps be taken to have special Hindi reader of the D.A.V. College series prepared for the Primary Department).
Hindi Calligraphy (sic)	<i>Lipi Pustak</i> No.1.
Hindi Dictation	Of sentences (containing simple words) from the book.

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<sup>616</sup>The above table has been extracted from the discussions held in various meetings of the managing committee. For the full proceedings, see “13 December 1890,” File No. 35 (1886-1892) of *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*. For the final schemes of primary, middle and high level, see “10.1.1899”, “19.12.1899”, and “10.3.1900” respectively in Register No. 5 (1894-1900) of *D.A.V. College Managing Committee proceedings*.

Arithmetic in Hindi	Notation, Native Multiplication Tables 16*16; First four simple rules from <i>Hisaab ka Pahla Hissa</i> .
(Vedic Instruction) Recitation of the first Sukta of <i>Rigveda</i> .	
<b>Third Class</b>	
Hindi Reading	3 <sup>rd</sup> and 11 <sup>th</sup> Hindi series – Punjab series (as long as the DAV College Series is not neglected; after that the DAV College series).
Hindi Caligraphy (sic)	<i>Lipi Pustak</i> No. 2.
Hindi Dictation	3 <sup>rd</sup> Hindi Reader – Nagpur Series.
Sanskrit	<i>Pathopkarak</i> Part I (later changed to 1 <sup>st</sup> Sanskrit reader (DAV College Series).
Arithmetic in Hindi	Up to compound division from <i>Hisaab ka Pehla Hissa</i> .
Geography in Hindi	Of the Punjab from Sri Ram's <i>Geography</i> – with map.
Physical Instruction	Chapter XV Punjab Education Code.
(Vedic Instruction) Recitation of the <i>Purusha Sukta</i> from <i>Rigveda</i> .	
<b>Fourth Class</b>	
Hindi Reading	<i>Vyavhara Bhanu, Arya Uddeshya Ratnamala</i> – to be committed to memory.
Hindi Writing	Copied and Dictation.
English Reading	1 <sup>st</sup> book (DAV College Series).

English Caligraphy (sic)	Arnold's copy books nos.1 and 1.5
Arithmetic in Hindi	Vulgar Fractions and Fractions from <i>Hisaab ka Dusra Hissa</i> .
Urdu Reading	<i>Urdu ka Kaida</i> and 1 <sup>st</sup> Urdu Reader (National Series).
Urdu Writing	<i>Not Clear from the Document</i>
Sanskrit	Selections from <i>Vakya Prabodh</i> .
Geography	<i>Panjab Britant</i> (Geography not required to be committed to memory for examination purposes. The Geographical Reader to be taught as a reader along with a map).
Veda	Recitation of <i>Shanti Path</i> (DAV College Series).
<b>Fifth Class</b>	
English Reading and Writing	2 <sup>nd</sup> reader (DAV College Series); Arnold's copy books nos. 2, 2.5 & 3.
English Translation	Viva Voice Hindi into English.
English Grammar	Parts of Speech (Orally).
Urdu Reading and Writing	2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Readers (National Series).
Arithmetic in Hindi	Mahajani <i>Guras</i> ; Ratio and Proportion; Simple & Double Rules of Three and Simple Interest from <i>Hisaab ka Dusra Hissa</i> .
Hindi Reading and Writing	<i>Niti Pushpawali</i> (as long as our own Hindi course is not ready); Copies – Dictation and Letter Writing.

Sanskrit	<i>Riju Path</i> (35 p. long).
Sanskrit Grammar	<i>Upkramika</i> - first 61 pages (later changed to <i>Sandhi</i> ).
Geography in Hindi	Teaching of Geography as in the IVth class. (Geographical Reader to be prepared substitute for the present Rabi Nandan's <i>Geography of India</i> ).
Veda	<i>Sandhya</i> with meanings.
<b>Sixth Class</b>	
English Reading and Writing	1st English Reader for Middle Schools – DAV College Series. Recitation – 10 pieces from the Reader
English Translation	From vernacular into English (Dr. Sime?) and conversations.
English Grammar	Manual of English Grammar – (Pages 1 to 68 large type)
Urdu Reading and Writing	Fifth Reader Panjab Series, writing and dictation; Transliteration into Roman characters.
Arithmetic	Lock and Lewis Chapter III to VI
Hindi Reading and Writing	Charupath Part I; Selections from the <i>Satyartha Prakash</i> ; Dictation and Calligraphy
Sanskrit A	<i>Ashtadhyayi</i> selection; <i>Vyakaran Bhanu</i> (Noun) and Revision of Sandhi; Selections from <i>Ramayana</i> (40 pages)
Veda A and B	Recitation of Mantras on Ishwar Vishaya from the Vedic Reader.

Geography	Asia and Europe as in outline of Geography
Veda	<i>Sandhya</i> with meanings.
History	Lethbridge's History of India, half (Hindi)
Exercise	Middle course of Physical exercises
<b>Seventh Class</b>	
English Reading and Writing	Second Reader (DAV College Series); Recitation – 10 pieces from the Reader; Dictation and copy books (to be selected by the principal)
English Translation	From vernacular into English and conversations. From English into vernacular.
English Grammar	A Manual of English Grammar; Etymology (complete) and parsing.
Urdu Reading and Writing	First middle course, calligraphy and dictation and transliteration into Roman characters.
Arithmetic	Lock and Lewis upto Chapter IX and revision.
Hindi A	Reading: <i>Updesh Saptak</i> ; Grammar: <i>Bhasha Bhanu</i> (one half); Dictation and Writing.
Sanskrit A	<i>Ashtadhyayi</i> selections; Selections from Manu 40 pages and <i>Vyakaran Bhanu</i> . Translation from Hindi into Sanskrit.

Mensuration	Todhunter, first two sections.
Geography	Africa and America, as in outlines of Geography, and revision of previous lessons and physical geography half.
History	Lethbridge's History of India, latter and revision Hindi
Veda A and B	Recitation of Veda Mantras from the Vedic Reader (pages 10 to 13).
Exercise	Middle course of Physical exercises
<b>Eighth Class</b>	
English Reading and Writing	Third English Reader DAV College Series. Recitation – 10 pieces from the Reader; Copybook to be selected by the principal and Dictation.
English Translation	From vernacular into English; Letter writing and conversations.
English Grammar	A Manual of English Grammar, Syntax and Revision of Etymology.
Urdu	3rd Middle Course; Essay writing and dictation.
Arithmetic	Lock and Lewis Chapter upto XV Chapter and Revision.
Mensuration	Todhunter, first two sections.

Hindi Reading and Writing	Charupath Part III; Essay writing, dictation and Caligraphy
Hindi Grammar	<i>Bhasha Bhanu</i> , 2nd half and revision
Sanskrit A	Selections from <i>Ashtadhyayi</i> and <i>Vyakaran Bhanu</i> (Noun); <i>Hitopdesh</i> (Mitrabha and Suhrdbhed)
Hindi Translation	From Hindi into Urdu and vice versa. Transliteration into Roman characters
Geography	Outlines of Geography. Geckie's Physical geography finished and revision. Sanitary Primer.
Veda A and B	Recitation of Veda Mantras from the Vedic Reader.
Exercise	Middle Drill Course; Middle course of Physical exercises.
<b>Ninth Class (A)</b>	
English Reading and Writing	New oriental (not clear) Reader No. VI first half; The Moral Reader Part II.
English Translation	From Vernacular into English and Vice Versa.
English Grammar	Hints page 65 to 147.
Composition	Composition and letter writing.

Mathematics	Arithmetic by Chakravarti; Algebra by Chatterji, simple rules G.C.M., L.C.M. and fractions. Fraction, square root and simple equation. Mensuration by P.Ghosh, mensuration of lengths only. Euclid books 1st and 2nd by Hall & Stevens.
Sanskrit Classical	Selections from <i>Ashtadhyayi</i> .
Sanskrit University	Buchler's Reader; Bhandarkar's 1st Book.
Veda Patha	Selections from Veda Bhashya Bhumika and Sandhya.
General Knowledge	Manual Geography (whole); Bucklegs History of England (whole).
Physical Science	Chemistry Primer and the Mechanical Powers.
Physical Science	As present in the Code.
<b>Ninth Class (B)</b>	
Same as for IX A in English, Mathematics, General Knowledge, University Sanskrit. The section will not study science and classical Sanskrit. In Veda Patha and Persian, the course is as follows:	
Veda Patha	Vedic Reader and Sandhya.
Persian	Garyinai – Khirad 1st half; Jama-ul- Qawaid 1st half. Translation.

<b>Tenth Class (A)</b>	
English Reading	Calcutta course for 1897 (Thacker specified?)
Recitation	Poetical extracts
Translation	From Vernacular into English and Vice Versa
Composition	Mac Mordus' Composition and letter writing
Mathematics	Arithmetic by Chakravarti; Algebra by S.C.Basu, Simultaneous equations, Ratio, Proportion ... Mensuration whole, and revision. Euclid 3rd and 4th books with deduction and revision
Sanskrit Classical	Selections from <i>Ashtadhyayi</i> .
Sanskrit University	Buchler's Reader; Bhandarkar's Book II, Translation
Geography	General revision; Blackford's physical geography, Chapters I, II, III, VIII, IX, X.
Veda Patha	Selections from <i>Veda Bhashya Bhumika</i> and Sandhya
History	Buckley's History of England – revision. Hunter's History of India.
Physical Science	Physics Primer, revision of Chemistry Primer and the Mechanical Powers.

Physical Science	as presented in the Code.
<b>Tenth Class (B)</b>	
Like X A, in English, Mathematics, University Sanskrit and General Knowledge. The section will not study Science and Classical Sanskrit. In Veda Patha and Persian, the course is as follows:	
Veda Patha	as for IX B.
Persian	Garyinai – Khirad latter half and revision; Jama-ul- Qawaid. Translation.

**APPENDIX – II : COMPARISION OF D.A.V. AND GOVERNMENT SCHOOL CURRICULA**

<b>D.A.V. Schools</b>	<b>Government Schools</b>
<b>First Class</b>	
Hindi Reading and Writing. Arithmetic.	Urdu Reading – Urdu ka Qaida (An Urdu primer).  Writing letters and figures.
Physical Instruction. <i>Gayatri Mantra.</i>	
<b>Second Class</b>	
Hindi Reading, Caligraphy and Dictation.  (Vedic Instruction) Recitation of the first Sukta of <i>Rigveda</i> .	Urdu Reading – First and Second Urdu Readers containing graphic descriptions of everyday life and of familiar trees, animals, &c.;

Arithmetic in Hindi.	The multiplication table, and four Simple rules of arithmetic.
<b>Third Class</b>	
Hindi Reading, Caligraphy and Dictation.	Urdu Reading; Copies and dictation from the First and Second Persian Readers containing a graduated series of reading lessons without grammar.
Sanskrit.	
(Vedic Instruction) Recitation of the <i>Purusa Sukta</i> of <i>Rigveda</i> .	
Arithmetic in Hindi.	Arithmetic to compound division (money), and the maps of the Punjab and India.
Geography in Hindi.	
Physical Instruction.	
<b>Fourth Class</b>	
English Reading and Caligraphy.	The English Primer in English schools, and in vernacular schools, elements of mensuration.
Urdu Reading and Writing.	
Hindi Reading and Writing.	Urdu Reading – Stories from Indian history.
Sanskrit.	Persian – Selections from the <i>Gulistan</i> .
	Grammar and translation.
Arithmetic in Hindi.	Arithmetic – To the end of vulgar fractions.
Geography.	Geography – Outline of the geography of the world, Asia, and revision of India and the Punjab.

Veda – Recitation of <i>Shanti Path</i> (DAV College Series).	
<b>Fifth Class</b>	
English Reading and Writing; English Translation and Grammar.	English First Reader, or for vernacular schools only, mensuration; Grammar – Parsing and translation.
Urdu Reading and Writing.	
Hindi Reading and Writing.	Urdu and Persian Selections.
Sanskrit and Sanskrit Grammar.	
Arithmetic in Hindi.	Arithmetic – Including practice, rule-of three, square measure, interest.
Geography in Hindi.	Geography – Names of the countries of the world, with their capitals and chief natural features, and revision of previous lessons.
Veda – <i>Sandhya</i> with meanings.	

### APPENDIX – III: BIOGRAPHIES OF INFLUENTIAL ARYA SAMAJ LEADERS

#### **Swami Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883)**

Swami Dayanand Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj, is counted amongst the most influential figures of modern India.<sup>617</sup> Dayanand, originally named Mul Sankar, was born in a small village called Tankara in the province of Gujarat. At the age of twenty-one, he ran away from home to escape an impending wedding. He soon became initiated as a “Sarasvati Dandi *Sannyasi* of the Shankaracharya order, receiving the name he would make famous: Dayanand Sarasvati.”<sup>618</sup> The turning point in Dayanand’s life came in 1860 when he met his *guru*<sup>619</sup> Swami Virjananda at Mathura. Under the guidance of Swami Virjananda, Dayanand spent three years in rigorous study of Sanskrit grammar. It was during these years that Swami Virjananda is believed to have instilled in Dayanand the idea that the contemporary ‘degeneration’ of Hindu society was a result of the “proliferation and influence of ‘spurious’ works of a sectarian nature, and aggravated by a parallel neglect of the real sources of Hinduism, the books of the *rishis*.”<sup>620</sup> After leaving his guru, Dayanand spent seven years in identifying and separating the *arsha* texts or works authenticated by the *rishis* from the *unarsha* or inauthentic texts.<sup>621</sup> Between 1870 and 1875,

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<sup>617</sup> There are a considerable number of biographies, commemorations and testimonials on Dayanand Saraswati (both in Hindi and English), some of which have been written by eminent personalities such as Gandhi and Aurobindo Ghosh. One of the most authoritative Hindi biographies on Dayanand is Trilokchand Visharad, *Rishi Dayanand* (Delhi: Govindram Hasanand, 1940).

<sup>618</sup> J.T.F Jordens, *Dayanand Sarasvati: Essays on His Life and Ideas* (Delhi: Manohar, 1998), 13. For a detailed biography of Swami Dayanand Saraswati, see J.T.F Jordens, *Dayanand Sarasvati, His Life and Ideas* (Oxford University Press, 1978).

<sup>619</sup> A guru was traditionally both a patron and a teacher who imbibed various teachings to his pupils, especially on a particular subject.

<sup>620</sup> Ibid. 14.

<sup>621</sup> Dayanand’s list of spurious works is given in the second chapter of this dissertation.

Dayanand travelled widely across Northern India, debating with several orthodox *pandits* of his time and establishing several Sanskrit *patshalas* in cities such as Farrukhabad and Varanasi.<sup>622</sup> During this time, Dayanand also wrote his most celebrated monograph titled *Satyartha Prakasha*. This text – the most comprehensive statement of Dayanand Saraswati’s philosophy – informs the ideational basis of the Arya Samaj. Dayanand wrote more than a dozen other important works on subjects such as Education, Cow- protection, Rituals, Idol- Worship and so on. Dayanand Saraswati’s ideas influenced generations of Arya Samaj leaders in the twentieth century. During his stay at Rajputana, Dayanand Saraswati was poisoned on the behest of a local courtesan. As a result, the Swami developed a serious illness and died on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1883.

### **Hans Raj (1864-1938)**

Hans Raj was born at Hoshiarpur in Punjab on 19<sup>th</sup> April 1864. He was married in 1876 at a young age of 12 but “it was not until several years later that Hansraj brought his wife home after performing the ceremony called *Muklawā* as a sign that he had assumed the full responsibilities of marriage.”<sup>623</sup> In 1879, HansRaj moved to Lahore and in December 1880, he passed the Entrance Examination of the Calcutta University from the Mission High School. HansRaj graduated from Government College, Lahore in 1885 but instead of pursuing a lucrative career, the young man volunteered to become an honorary headmaster of the proposed D.A.V. School, Lahore. From 1<sup>st</sup> June 1886 until 1889, Hansraj served as Headmaster of the school, after which he was appointed principal of the newly opened D.A.V. College, Lahore. He retired from the principalship of the College in 1912, thus serving the institution for more than twenty-five years

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<sup>622</sup> In this context, see the Hindi address delivered by Dayanand Saraswati at Poona on 15th August, 1875. This speech has been excerpted in *Maharishi Dayanand Saraswati ki Atma Katha*, 3rd ed. (Delhi: Govindram Hasanand, 1970), 17.

<sup>623</sup> Sri Ram Sharma, *Mahatma Hansraj*, 11.

without receiving any salary. Hans Raj also served the D.A.V. College Managing Committee in various capacities until his death in 1938.

### **Lal Chand (1852-1912)**

Lal Chand was born in 1852 and received his formal education at the Government College, Lahore from where he received his M.A. Lal Chand joined the Arya Samaj in 1877. He was one of the most influential members of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee as also among the select group of persons who prepared the first draft scheme of the D.A.V. College in 1885. Lal Chand became the first president of the D.A.V. College Managing Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> March, 1886. He served as the president of the committee until 1908 and then again between 1910 and 1911. Lal Chand was also the president of the Punjab Hindu Sabha from 1909-1911. He died in 1912.

### **Guru Datta Vidyarthi (1864-1890)**

Guru Datta, also known as Pandit Guru Datta, was born in Multan on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1864. Initially an atheist, Guru Datta turned towards the Arya Samaj in his quest to resolve the deeper mysteries of life and God. He joined the Multan Arya Samaj in 1880. He was well versed in the *Ashtadhyayi* and various other works of classical Sanskrit. In 1881, he joined the Government College, Lahore where he was in the august company of Hans Raj and Lajpat Rai. In 1883, Guru Datta visited Dayanand Saraswati while the latter was on his death bed. In 1886, Guru Datta passed the M.A. examination in Physics and was soon appointed Assistant Professor of Physics at Government College, Lahore. Parallely, Guru Datta worked tirelessly to raise funds for the newly established D.A.V. School. Unlike his co-workers, Guru Datta lived a short life and died in 1890 after a prolonged illness.

### **Lajpat Rai (1865-1929)<sup>624</sup>**

Lajpat Rai was born on January 28, 1865 at Dhudike of Ferozepur District in Punjab. His father, Munshi Radha Krishan was a teacher of Persian and Urdu. Rai joined Government College Lahore in 1881 and the following year, he joined the Arya Samaj on November 26, 1882. Rai worked closely with Guru Dutt Vidyarthi and Hans Raj. The trio edited the journal called the *Regenerator of Aryavarta*. In 1884, Lajpat Rai passed the *vakalat* examination and moved to Hissar where he practiced as a lawyer from 1886 to 1892. Rai was elected to the D.A.V. College Managing Committee in March 1887 and remained an influential member of the committee until the early twentieth century. Rai was also actively involved in politics. In 1888, he joined the Indian National Congress and also presided over the Calcutta session of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1925. Among other things, Lajpat Rai founded the Indian Home Rule League in New York during October 1917. During his lifetime, Rai edited and wrote for several newspapers including the 'Punjabee', 'Young India', 'The People' and 'Bande Matram'. In October 1929, Lajpat Rai braved physical blows by local policemen while leading a procession against Simon Commission. Rai succumbed to injuries on November 17, 1929.

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<sup>624</sup> This biography is based on an excerpt from Prof. Ram Prakash, ed., *Pandit Guru Dutt Vidyarthi* (New Delhi: D.A.V. Publications Division, [2010] 2012), vi.

**APPENDIX – IV: ARCHITECTS OF THE D.A.V. MOVEMENT. A BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

Prominent amongst the founding figures of the D.A.V. Movement were four men, namely Guru Dutt, Lal Chand, Hans Raj and Lajpat Rai.<sup>625</sup> Lal Chand, the senior most within this group, had been actively engaged in the various activities of the Lahore Samaj ever since its inception in 1877. By contrast, the trio of Guru Dutt, Hans Raj and Lajpat Rai were much younger. But due to their sincere devotion to the cause of the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic movement, they gradually came to wield considerable influence within the D.A.V. College Managing Committee. It was in this context that an article published in *The Tribune* retrospectively honoured this ‘youthful trio’ with the following words.

The Arya Samaj rolled on three boys scarcely out of their teens for championing of their cause – Guru Dutt, Hans Raj and Lajpat Rai. And the youthful trio, fully justified the trust reposed in them and the duty with which they were charged by the elders. Hans Raj was called the father, Guru Dutt, the Holy Ghost and Lajpat Rai, the son of this wonderful trinity.<sup>626</sup>

It is interesting to note that these young English educated men were not instantly attracted to the ideals of the Arya Samaj. Guru Dutt, for instance, was an atheist in his early years and he vehemently denied the existence of God. However, two of his closest friends namely Pandit Remal Das and Lala Chetanananda were Arya Samajis. They gradually persuaded him to read the *Satyartha Prakash* and thereafter, Guru Dutt joined the Multan Arya Samaj on 20th June 1880. But his ‘real conversion’ happened after he attended to Dayananda Saraswati while the latter was at his deathbed in Ajmer. It was here that the “last relic of atheism perished in his mind. His whole nature was transformed into something higher

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<sup>625</sup> See Appendix III for detailed biographies of all these four D.A.V. leaders.

<sup>626</sup> *The Tribune*, September 1, 1920.

and sublimer. All his doubts were solved and he became quite a new man.”<sup>627</sup> Henceforth, Guru Dutt worked with unflinching devotion to the Samaj and inspired the first generation of Arya leaders. Kenneth Jones has argued that it was Guru Dutt who “more than anyone else gave direction to Samajic thinking in the years 1885-1890. His speeches and writings followed closely the arguments utilized by Dayanand, extending them and making them more relevant to the Punjabis.”<sup>628</sup>

Lala Lajpat Rai developed a close association with Guru Dutt during their student years at the Government College, Lahore. In the beginning of 1882, Guru Dutt along with fellow enthusiastic Punjabi students had formed a small coterie of ‘free’ thinkers that debated and discussed on a wide range of issues. This group, called the ‘Free Debating Club’, included amongst its members such prominent figures as Shiv Nath, Lajpat Rai, Hans Raj, Narendra Nath, Chentananand and Ruchi Ram. All of these men were to lead influential careers and become leading public figures in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Punjab. Nonetheless, it was the close bonding between Guru Dutt and Lajpat Rai that formed the central story of this episode, and it was under the former’s influence that the latter joined the Arya Samaj.<sup>629</sup>

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<sup>627</sup> See ‘Biographical Sketch’, in Jiwan Das, Ed. *Works of Pandit Guru Dutt Vidyarthi* (1891), 22.

<sup>628</sup> Jones, *Arya Dharma*, 161.

<sup>629</sup> Recounting his ‘conversion’ to the Samaj, Lajpat Rai wrote the following words in his biography of Guru Dutt. “It was he (Guru Dutt) who first shook the beliefs of his fellow-students, and of all others who came in contact with him [...] from the creation of this world out of nothing he led us towards Eternal Maker, Eternal Soul and the Eternal Matter of the Arya Samaj. It was thus that he made us believe the religion of the Arya Samaj (*i.e.* the Vedic religion) to be the only true and consistent religion which could stand the test of Science and Reason. The writer is one of those who was benefited by this wonderful process of conversion and was one of, or perhaps, the

Owing to the liberal education they had received in government institutions, the pioneers of the D.A.V. Movement were very familiar with the ideas of English liberal and utilitarian thinkers such as Jeremy Bentham and James Mill. For instance, Guru Dutt had ‘fondly studied’ western liberal thinkers such as Jeremy Bentham, Herbert Spencer, Auguste Comte etc. and John Stuart Mill, Bain and Darwin had been among his ‘favourite studies’.<sup>630</sup> According to Lajpat Rai, Guru Dutt was “an ardent admirer of Bentham’s principle of utility, which he believed to be the true test of determining the righteousness or unrighteousness of men’s actions.”<sup>631</sup> Such was the deep influence of liberal political thought on young Arya Samajis that historians believe the Samajis were moved more by a liberal worldview than they were by religious zeal.<sup>632</sup> But it seems that the Arya Samajis absorbed various strands of both eastern and western ideas while remaining resolutely ‘Arya’ at all times. For instance, Guru Dutt’s uncritical admiration of liberal political thought did not last long. After reading the *Satyarth Prakash* of Dayanand Saraswati, Guru Dutt became more inclined towards the Vedic knowledge system and eventually turned into a convinced Arya Samaji. In his biography of Guru Dutt, Lajpat Rai remarked that “in the later part of his (Guru Dutt’s) life a deep and more careful study of ancient Arya literature opened out to him a treasure of moral teachings unsurpassed in the world and the so-called discovery of Bentham lost its

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earliest convert to the faith of Arya Samaj as expounded and advocated by Guru Datta Vidyarthi.” See Lajpat Rai, *Life and Work of Pandit Guru Dutt Vidyarthi*, 18.

<sup>630</sup> See Lajpat Rai, *Life and Work of Pandit Guru Dutt Vidyarthi*, 13.

<sup>631</sup> Ibid. 15-16.

<sup>632</sup> Resting on such hypotheses, C.A. Bayly situates the Arya Samaj movement in a wider tradition of Indian liberal thinkers of the nineteenth century. Therefore, in reference to the Samajis, Bayly prefers to use the term “spiritualised liberals” rather than conventional terms such as ‘religious reformers’. However, as this dissertation will show, the mindset of Arya Samajis cannot be adequately understood by focussing exclusively on any single ontological category, be it liberal or religious.

splendour before the higher sphere of ancient Arya morality.”<sup>633</sup> Nonetheless, despite undergoing what may be called an ideological conversion, Guru Dutt Vidyarthi did not consider Western and Indian knowledge to be diametrically opposed to each other. Rather, he believed that “Swami Dayanand Saraswati was an expounder of the same doctrine (as that of Bentham) and that utilitarian teachings pervaded the Vedas.”<sup>634</sup> Bayly has emphasised on the enduring influence of liberalism on Guru Dutt. Bayly informs us that Vidyarthi (Guru Dutt) “remained an apostle of the European Enlightenment and British liberalism, which he deemed perfectly compatible with the notion of the original and final Vedic revelation of truth.”<sup>635</sup> It is now widely acknowledged that Arya Samajis like Guru Dutt Vidyarthi attempted to reconcile Vedic knowledge with modern western science. In fact, their writings reflect several points of intersection between the Western and Indian thought. This is particularly true in the domain of physical sciences. For instance, Guru Dutt pointed out that contemporary researches in western physiology closely corresponded with the concept of a “central conscious” called *Atma* (spirit) as outlined in the *Upanishads*.<sup>636</sup> Nonetheless, Guru Dutt did not always agree with the

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<sup>633</sup> Lajpat Rai, *Life and Work of Pandit Guru Dutt Vidyarthi*, 17.

<sup>634</sup> Ibid. 15-16.

<sup>635</sup> C.A. Bayly, “Liberals in the Desh”, in *Recovering Liberties: Indian Thought in the Age of Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 225.

<sup>636</sup> “It is clear, then, that by whatsoever name it may be called, *life, vital principle, organising principle occult cause, sensorial energy, vis medicatrix nature, anima* or so many other names, modern scientific world has come face to face with a dynamic physiological reality which they call life. It is no more a mere breath, a mere phantom, or a mere product of organisation. It is rather a *subtle, refined, dynamic substance*, a reality that builds up the organisation, causes growth, vitality, and motion, repairs injuries, makes up losses, feeds, feels, is sentient, originates actions, resists, overcomes and cures diseases. This is the irresistible conclusion to which physiological researches

methodologies of western science and therefore considered them unreliable tools as far as the validation of Vedantic concepts was concerned. He was often critical of the “materialism” of the West that he saw as a major point of difference between Western and Vedic philosophy.

The human spirit is the only substance that is both objective and subjective at the same time. The scientific world, owing to its materialism and the deep-seated tendency of only depending on testimony, have only sought the objective side of the human spirit, and have, therefore, landed themselves into a nihilism which denies the subjective side of the human spirit.<sup>637</sup>

But not everyone in the Arya Samaj was able to perform the kind of nuanced analysis as Guru Dutt would. In fact, Lajpat Rai acknowledged that there were few Samajis of the calibre of Guru Dutt who could so effortlessly blend the ‘Anglo’ and ‘Vedic’ aspects of the D.A.V. movement.<sup>638</sup>

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have led sincere investigators and philosophers in western countries. Thus it is that they have been compelled to admit a reality, (call it material if it will please you), yet, a reality, which the ancient philosophers of the east styled *Atma*”. Quoted in Guru Dutt, “Evidences of the Human Spirit”, in *The Works of Late Pandit Guru Datta*, rev. ed. Lala Jivan Das ed. (1897; Lahore: Aryan Printing, 1902), 86.

<sup>637</sup> Ibid. 89.

<sup>638</sup> Bhimsen Vidyalkar, *Arya Pratinidhi Sabha Punjab Ka Sachitra Itihasa*, 131.

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## GLOSSARY

***Basant Panchami:*** A pre-spring festival dedicated to Sarasvati, the Goddess of learning.

***Bhoot Yajna:*** One of the five great Vedic sacrifices that are supposed to be performed daily. This ritual is a sacrifice for living beings (animals, birds, etc.) It involves food cakes as a ritual offering. It is also poured into a fire altar.

***Brahma-Yajna:*** One of the five great Vedic sacrifices that are supposed to be performed daily. This ritual is dedicated to *Brahman* (ultimate reality). This is the ultimate ritual and it involves meditation and recitation of Vedic mantras.

***Dev Yajna:*** One of the five great Vedic sacrifices that are supposed to be performed daily. This ritual is dedicated to the worship of the gods. It involves firewood as a ritual offering to a deity or. It is also placed into a fire altar.

***Doha:*** An independent verse or a couplet used in Indian poetry and commonly used in Indian Bhakti (devotional) literature.

***Holi:*** A popular Hindu festival that marks the arrival of spring and celebrates mutual love and harmony.

***Khatri:*** One of the principal upper castes of Hindus in colonial Punjab; also one of the principal caste groups in the Arya Samaj from 1880-1930.

***Manu Smriti:*** An ancient Sanskrit text pertaining to law, statecraft and social administration.

***Niyama:*** The second of the five outer practices of Patanjali's (eight-limbed) Yoga that involves setting regulations, observing austerity and practicing devotion.

***Nri Yajna (or Manushya-yajna):*** One of the five great Vedic sacrifices that are supposed to be performed daily. This ritual is dedicated to fellow human beings. It involves giving alms and water by way of service and charity.

***Pandahs (or Padahs):*** Teachers of book keeping, accounts and arithmetic, mainly catering to children of the trading class.

***Patshala:*** Local villages schools that pre-existed in India before the introduction of colonial education in the nineteenth century.

***Pitra Yajna:*** One of the five great Vedic sacrifices that are supposed to be performed daily. This ritual is dedicated to the worship of one's forefathers. It involves a ritual pouring of a liquid, or grains such as rice, as an offering to a

deity or spirit, or in memory of the dead. The libation is usually poured into a fire altar.

***Prahlad:*** A young character in Hindu mythology revered for his unflinching devotion to lord Vishnu.

***Pranayama:*** The fourth of the five outer practices of Patanjali's (eight-limbed) Yoga that involves regulation and control of breathing.

***Samavesha:*** Harmoniously integrating various constituent elements to create a new collective entity.

***Samskara:*** Rites of passage in Hinduism performed at various stages of life such as first learning day, wedding, pregnancy, raising a family, and the final death rites associated with cremation.

***Sandhya (or Sandhyavandanam):*** A traditional Hindu ritual, involving prayer and meditation, supposed to be daily performed by students at the time of dusk and dawn.

***Shrawan Kumar:*** A young character, in the Ramayana, revered for his pure sense of filial duty.

***Siksa (or Shiksha):*** Generally refers to any kind of instruction and teaching; in Sanskrit studies, it refers to a particular branch dealing with phonetics.

***Svadyaya:*** Literally meaning self-study; integral part of traditional Indian pedagogy since it involves introspection and reflection which are key to understanding the meaning of one's subject of study.

***Updeshak Class:*** An dedicated wing of the Arya Samaj meant to train and facilitate preachers who would help propagate the teachings of the organisation.

***Yama:*** The first of the five outer practices of Patanjali's (eight-limbed) Yoga that involves setting in order our external environment.