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Role of the Arya Samaj in Jatavs mobilization and Sanskritization

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Abstract

The question of identity became very crucial at the beginning of the twentieth century. Every caste was engaged in various political and social movements so that a respectful place could be gained in society. Jatavs, who live mostly in the western parts of Uttar Pradesh, claimed a higher identity at the beginning of the twentieth century. This claim was based on the Sanskritized notions that Arya Samaj promoted among Dalits. Historians and anthropologists interpret that a group of the Charmakar community refused to tolerate untouchability as they were fully identified with the leather work. It was the time when leather work was considered a polluting occupation. This small group of Charmakars started practicing Vedic rituals in their daily lives. In the contemporary period, Arya Samaj was propagating Vedic teachings among the lower section of Indian society so that they could maintain their lives with purity and the stigma of untouchability could be removed from society. Many schools were opened for Dalit education in the various parts of Uttar Pradesh by Arya Samaj. It supported the Jatavs' claim for a new Kshatriya identity. The aim behind this support was to Sanskritize Jatavs in a Vedic way so that a conversion that was taking place in a specific period could be stopped strongly.

Keywords: Jatavs, Arya Samaj, identity, untouchability, dalits, Sanskritization

Introduction

When Jatavs realised the social importance of the caste, they started thinking about caste consciousness. At the beginning of the twentieth century, they started working on those factors that connected them with untouchability. First of all, they announced their separation from the Charmakars, who were primarily engaged in leather work, and then they successfully claimed to have been the historical descendants of Kshatriya Varna. They started performing Kshatriya traditions on special occasions in their lives. Historians interpret that the motive behind this demonstration was to show Hindus that they belonged to the Kshatriya Varna; therefore, the Hindus should accept them as a Kshatriya caste. However, Jatavs have been generally described as a sub-caste of the Charmakars by sociologists. On the other hand, Jatav scholars and activists denied the fact that their roots are linked with the Charmakars. They emphasised that they are descendants of the Yadu clan, which is an ancient Kshatriya tribe. Simultaneously, Jatavs announced no participation in such activities that were being run by the Charmakars and the Adi-Hindu Movement because they declared it a movement of Charmakars and considered it harmful to their identity.

The Arya Samaj played an important role in the Jatavs' mobility for the new identity. It supported Jatavs and other Dalit communities to participate in mainstream society. Many schools were opened by the Arya Samaj for Dalit education, which played an extraordinary role in the upliftment of the Jatavs and other Dalit communities. Most of the leaders of Jatav Mahasabha and other organisations were highly influenced and motivated by Arya Samaj's ideology. Swami Achhutanand was also one of them. The reason behind this motivation was that most of the leaders were educated in Arya Samaj schools. They were propagating the Arya Samaj's Vedic ideology and teachings among Jatavs so that a 'pure' and 'clean' status could be maintained.

The motive of Arya Samaj behind this support was to stop religious conversion and propagate Vedic culture and tradition among Jatavs and other Dalit communities. It also played a very significant role in ending discrimination in society. It could be observed that Arya Samaj advocated that kind of society, which should be based on social equality; it pushed social harmony among all the Varnas.

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Jatavs were fighting to achieve their lost Kshatriya identity; therefore, they were following Arya Samaj's ideology because it supported their claim. On the other hand, Charmakars and other Dalit communities criticised the caste system and wanted to abolish it appropriately. Jatavs did not criticise the Varna system, as they were strictly following it because they had to rise with the Varna hierarchy. The Shuddhi movement, which was started by the Arya Samaj, was an initiative to reconvert (Ghar Wapsi) those people into Hinduism who converted earlier to Islam, Christianity, and other religions.

Arya Samaj was trying to evaluate a large section of society that was considered untouchable. Many branches and educational institutes were established in the different parts of Uttar Pradesh for Dalit education. However, as the conditions were built at that time, the Arya Samaj had more success in the western parts of Uttar Pradesh than in the other parts of the state. It could be seen that the most educated and mobilised communities lived in western Uttar Pradesh. In this way, the bond between the Arya Samaj and the Jatavs was highly influenced by each other. On one side, it was observed that the motive of Arya Samaj was to take Jatavs into mainstream Hindu society; there, Jatavs wanted to gain a new respectful identity through Sanskritized ideology.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, Agra Jatavs became more active in their social assertion with the influence of Arya Samaj and Sanskritized ideology. Beyond these characters, many other national and international events inspired Jatavs to gain a respectful place in mainstream Indian society. As we know, Indian society has been a part of social discrimination, and the caste system that has existed since the Vedic period could be seen as a social stigma. Now the time has come when every caste and community is keen to break all the restrictions that were created in the name of caste hierarchy.

Jatavs had to raise them from a polluted identity that was considered untouchable and occupied the lowest rank in mainstream Indian society. However, it is a contradictory condition that Jatavs were part of an untouchable community. They denied the fact that they have been a part of untouchability. It was described by the Jatavs that they have historically been Kshatriya Rajputs. They also explained this fact to the Indian secretary Zetland in 1938 about how they have fallen under the untouchable community by mistake. Although historians have different points of view on this subject,.

When the First World War started in 1914, it provided crucial economic support to the Jatavs. It resulted in the Jatavs getting more economic prosperity as they got most of the tenders for necessary war items. Simultaneously, a noble class emerged in the Jatavs, which had very strong control over the leather and cotton industries. They were traders, entrepreneurs, labour contractors, and government employees. Economic wellness provided them with a respectful place in Indian society. It was the time when the question of social upliftment became very crucial to the Jatavs. This social upliftment was based on re-establishing an identity that Jatavs lost historically. They thought to revive their lost rituals and traditions so that a lost status could be gained again. The economic elite group of the Jatavs now starts practicing Hindu Kshatriya rituals and cultures in their daily lives under the influence of Sanskritized ideology. Arya Samaj also gave support to their

ideological initiatives.

The educational background of the Jatavs was not as good as their ability to handle the whole identity movement with the support of government officials. But the elite group of the Jatavs had such economic prosperity that it could afford the expenditure on good education. If we see that the sources of good education at that time were the government schools, private schools, and missionary schools, However, the Arya Samaj schools were also providing qualitative education. If we come on to this question, where were the Jatavs getting their education? So the elite group of Jatavs was getting their education mostly in the government schools and the Arya Samaj schools. On the other hand, some of the rich Jatav families were educated in missionary schools and other private schools.

The Jatav activists and leaders who led the whole Jatav movement were mostly educated in the Arya Samaj schools. So the influence of the Arya Samaj and its teachings on these Jatav leaders could be observed clearly. The Arya Samajists were working against untouchability and wanted to connect Dalits with the Vedic culture and teachings so that a kind of 'Shuddhi' could take place in society. It was the first time the idea of the 'Shuddhi' was introduced. However, historians and social activists see it as a pure initiative to stop religious conversion among Dalits.

The Jatav leaders who were educated at the prestigious educational institutes emphasised spreading Vedic rituals and teachings among Jatavs. The intention behind this effort was to maintain a 'pure' and 'clean' lifestyle so that they could show radical Hindus that they belonged to the glorious Kshatriya clan. Many organisations and committees were established by the elite Jatavs to institutionalise their identity. In 1917, Dr. Manik Chand, Sunderlal Sagar, and Khem Chand Bohre together formed Jatav Mahasabha. The main motive behind the establishment of the Jatav Mahasabha was to maintain a Vedic lifestyle and Kshatriya status. It worked to raise caste consciousness among Jatavs.

If we talk about the rise of Arya Samaj and the 'Shuddhi movement,' we see that it arose when Swami Dayananda Saraswati thought to revive Vedic teachings and culture so that a religious conversion that was taking place in that period could be stopped effectively. The Arya Samaj was established in 1875 in Mumbai, and the primary motive was to teach society in a Vedic way. It could also be traced in its slogan, "Krinvanto Vishwam Aryam," which means "make the world noble." On the other hand, the founder of Arya Samaj, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, also raised the slogan "Go back to the Vedas," which means to follow Vedic culture and its teachings. Therefore, we could see that in the early years of the twentieth century, the Arya Samaj was working on the same motives that its founder interpreted.

At the beginning of the modern period, many revolts were seen all over India. The modern age came with revolutionary ideologies, and it gave birth to many tribal revolts, caste revolts, religious revolts, social revolts, etc. It was the time when the worst of the worst conditions in the lower section of Indian society was ongoing. They were struggling with their untouchable identity, and nobody was pushing them to reform their contemporary condition. Later, the British government tried to take some reform initiatives, and it passed many laws and bills. But the condition was not as much changed as for the other Hindu castes. It was the main subject of the social contradiction in that particular period.

The lower section of Indian society was still struggling for everything, including a good education. We all know that Dalits have been deprived of a good education for thousands of years. The Arya Samaj was also targeting mostly this deprived section of Indian society so that it could teach them Vedic culture and a pure Hindu lifestyle. Thousands of schools and libraries were opened by the Arya Samaj all over Uttar Pradesh for Dalit education. It was the most significant effort of the Arya Samaj, which cemented its roots in the lower section of Indian society.

It was generally observed that Arya Samaj was bent on Hinduizing Jatavs and other Dalit castes to make them an active part of the Hindu religion ^[1]. Historians and social reformers interpreted Arya Samaj as trying to rectify historical wrongs so that a large section of Indian society should not be left behind. This initiative was to reconnect or take back those people in Hinduism who left the Hindu religion because of its nature of caste and untouchability.

A historian says that Arya Samaj was trying to create faith in a society that was mostly targeting Dalits. The reason behind this persuasion was to provide Arya Samaj and its initiatives with a vast level of recognition so that they could make a strong grip on the deprived section of Indian society. Most of the castes from the lower section show their faith in the reform initiatives being taken by the Arya Samaj. On the other hand, some of the Dalit castes stand against such initiatives and have announced their reform activities on an individual level.

However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, Jatavs did not criticise Brahmins and Arya Samaj for their present condition. They were doing this because Jatavs' claim for the new identity was not accepted yet, and they hoped for the upper caste Hindus to accept them as a Kshatriya caste. Unfortunately, it could not happen. Later, when Jatavs realised that they had not been accepted as a Kshatriya caste by the upper-caste Hindus, this incident took the Jatav movement from a new Kshatriya identity to a separate identity movement. They started lobbying to enlist them as a separate caste in the official records of the Indian government. Although they continued to fight for a higher identity and followed Vedic rituals in their daily lives,.

I would like to add my fieldwork experience here. When I was in Agra during my research fieldwork, I observed that most of the Jatavs argued with me that they are still fighting for their Kshatriya identity, for which they have been fighting since the first half of the twentieth century until today. I talked to most of the Jatav Mahasabha leaders and members, and I argued with them about their past and present condition. They told me that we are still fighting for our lost identity and status. If the government considers them a Kshatriya community, either the government should equalise all castes, economically and socially, or the government should remove the whole caste system, they will not continue with the all reservation benefits that are being provided for the caste name.

Shuddhi Movement

Arya Samaj started a social initiative programme called the 'Shuddhi Movement' in 1923. The meaning of 'Shuddhi' was 'pure' and 'clean,' in other words, it meant to make

someone pure and clean by following Vedic culture and its teachings. It was an initiative to reconnect Dalits and other Hindus with Hinduism. Arya Samaj wanted to bring these lower castes back to mainstream Hindu society. The intention behind the Shuddhi programme was to stop religious conversion and take back (Ghar Wapsi) those castes into Hinduism who were converted earlier to other religions like Islam, Christianity, and others.

Jatavs respected Arya Samaj's agenda, and their reaction was positive towards its initiatives. Although Arya Samaj was criticised by the orthodox Hindus for supporting the Jatavs' new identity and their education, So the orthodox Hindus saw Arya Samaj as radical as the Jatav reformers and activists.

However, it was generally noticed that the Arya Samaj had been working for social reformation for the last many years, but it officially started the 'Shuddhi programme' in 1925. The Shuddhi movement was also known as the 'Ghar Wapsi' movement at that time. It targeted mostly Dalit communities, which converted and continued to convert to the other religions. The movement reached its peak in 1925 ^[2]. Meanwhile, the rise of the Adi-Hindu movement declined the 'Shuddhi movement' after 1925. The activities or initiatives that were taken by the Arya Samaj were reported by many Hindi and other languages newspapers. Pratap and Abhyudaya were the newspapers that reported every activity of the Arya Samaj at that time. These social initiatives of the Arya Samaj were also noticed by the weekly police reports.

The social initiatives that were taken by the Arya Samaj were not successful equally in eastern and western UP. It has been noted that most of the Arya Samaj activities took place in the regions of western UP, so this was the basic reason that Arya Samaj was more successful in the western UP than the eastern UP. Many Achhutuddhar programmes and organisations were formed by the Arya Samaj in the western parts of UP ^[3].

The activities of the Arya Samaj were appreciated and criticised by different social institutes, newspapers, magazines, and journals. Pratap and Chand also appreciated and welcomed the reforms being taken by the Arya Samaj. It criticised orthodox Hindus for untouchability. Both newspapers raised those problems and issues that were creating problems for the untouchables. However, both newspapers were very influential and focused mostly on northern India. Therefore, it might cause the activities that were being done by the Arya Samaj to be noticed in the northern parts of India. Thus, the literature of north India appreciated Arya Samaj's reform agenda. The Shuddhi programme and its efforts towards the upliftment of Dalits were also appreciated by contemporary literature. The nationalist literature, newspapers, journals, and magazines wrote that the Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha were the two organisations that could make some changes in orthodox Hinduism. Further, it was processed in 1926 when a resolution was made by the Hindu Mahasabha and passed in its Delhi conference to begin the Achhutuddhar

1. Ramnarayan Singh Rawat, *Reconsidering Untouchability: Chamars and Dalit History in North India*, Indiana University Press, 2012, p.122.

2. Pratap, March 3, 1924, and March 25, 1928; Abhyudaya, May 17, 1924, and June 21, 1924; Rawat, *Reconsidering Untouchability*, pp.137-140.

3. J.T.F. Jordens, *Swami Shradhdhananda: His Life and Causes*, Oxford University Press, 1981, pp.142-43; Pratap, March 3, 1924; Abhyudaya, May 17, 1924.

Programme ^[4].

The reform efforts by social organisations were seen when the trend of religious conversion became common among Dalit castes. Gandhi also suggested to orthodox Hindus after the Poona Pact that if upper-caste Hindus would not change their attitude towards Dalits, it could be harmful to the nation and also to Hinduism. An eminent social reformer and Hindu leader, Madan Mohan Malviya, made many reform efforts to equalise Dalits on a social level. Many others also followed Pt. Malviya. It resulted in public wells and temples being opened for Dalit castes. However, it gave several positive results, but mostly the picture remained unchanged as before.

The religious conversion was seen in various parts of western Uttar Pradesh. Many Jatav and Charmakar groups had converted to Islam, Christianity, and other religions in Meerut, Moradabad, Aligarh, Bulandshahr, etc. At that time, the religious organisations of Islam and Christian missionaries started visiting the Jatav and Charmakar-dominated villages and towns so that a large number of Jatav and Charmakar groups could be converted to Islam and Christianity.

The ongoing religious conversion worried Hindu leaders. This act was taken seriously by Hindu reformist leaders. They started thinking about the basic elements of this religious conversion. Organisations like Hindu Mahasabha criticised orthodox Hindus for their orthodox ideology. The leaders of Hindu Mahasabha, Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Sampurnanand, interpreted that 'Jatav and Charmakars could leave the Hindu religion and become Muslims and Christians if caste Hindus did not change their attitude ^[5].

The interpretation of these senior Hindu leaders gave positive results. Further, the Arya Samaj organised several meetings among Jatavs, Charmakars, and upper-caste Hindus in the various parts of the United Provinces. In 1923, this kind of meeting was organised in Meerut. The Arya Samaj celebrated an Achhutuddhar week from March 22–28, 1923, in the major areas of the United Provinces. It was appealed to Hindus in this Achhutuddhar week to treat Jatavs as equals by allowing them 'to enter the temples and draw water from public wells ^[6].

To Sanskritize all Indian Dalits, Arya Samaj was motivating them to imitate the Vedic culture in their daily lives. Organisations like Jatav Mahasabha and Jatav Youth League addressed the Jatav youths with their manifesto to keep practicing Vedic rituals. The motive behind this act was to maintain a 'pure' and 'clean' lifestyle so that they could show the upper caste Hindus that they also belonged to the Kshatriya varna. In this way, social upliftment became a very crucial effort for the Jatavs in that specific period.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Jatavs renounced eating beef so that a clean and pure status could be maintained. They prohibited all those activities that they considered untouchable. Arya Samaj started celebrating many Hindu festivals, like Holi, Dussehra, Diwali, etc., among Jatavs and other depressed communities to connect them with mainstream Hindu society. It was a pure new

initiative by the Arya Samaj to make Jatavs and other depressed communities feel that the Arya Samaj wanted to provide social respect to them. These activities took place mostly in the western parts of UP, such as Agra, Mathura, Bulandshahr, Moradabad, Meerut, Bijnor, and Pilibhit ^[7].

The agenda of the Arya Samaj was very clear. Its objective in its manifesto was to reconnect or bring back scheduled castes to Hinduism. However, most of the Dalit groups did not want to be considered Arya Samajists. So the priority of their self-identification was intended with the Kshatriya status. In brief, they wanted to be an uplifted class of Hinduism with a Kshatriya identity. Jatavs were one of those castes.

It also provided a golden chance for the Arya Samaj to propagate its Vedic ideology among Jatavs. Historian Hardiman described it as a "meeting point" where the Jatav agenda and Arya Samaj reforms equalised them ideologically. Historians mentioned that most of the Jatav leaders were influenced by the Arya Samaj ideology. This influence could also be traced to their activities. These leaders inspired their community members to follow Arya Samaj's ideology and take membership. It resulted in the membership of the Arya Samaj among Jatavs increasing from time to time. On the other hand, the membership of the Arya Samaj among Dalit castes was the same in urban and rural areas. Jatavs believed in Arya Samaj's ideology to be socially uplifted. The Arya Samaj had good interaction with the Jatav organisations like Jatav Mahasabha, Jatav Youth League, and others. It became a good platform to discuss all types of social issues among the Jatavs.

Most of the Adi-Hindu movement leaders were also influenced by the Arya Samaj ideology. Swami Achhutanand and Babu Ramcharan were members of the Arya Samaj. Their upbringing was held in Arya Samaj. However, Achhutanand left Arya Samaj for its discriminatory nature. He alleged that Arya Samaj discriminates against Dalits and spreads lies and demonstrations in society. Thus, a large number of the Dalit population joined Arya Samaj in the first phase of Jatav mobility ^[8]. It started declining after 1925 because of the Adi-Hindu movement. The rise of the Adi-Hindu movement deeply affected Arya Samaj and its Shuddhi movement. However, Jatavs continuously aligned themselves with the Arya Samaj. The ideological similarities between Jatavs and Arya Samaj strongly knot these ties.

In 1922–23, another significant wave of Shuddhi was started in the western United Provinces by a prominent Arya Samaj leader, Swami Shraddhanand. His campaign for Shuddhi reached the Jatavs in 1924. At the same time, many caste-based organisations were established in different parts of the United Provinces. Therefore, the Arya Samaj also established many Charmakar and Achhutuddhar institutes, organisations, and many local units in the different parts of the western United Provinces ^[9].

Most of the elite groups of the Jatavs were educating their children in the Arya Samaj schools. It is generally said that Jatavs had two generations who got their education in Arya

4. Pratap, March 21, 1926; Chand, May 1927 and 1930.
5. Weekly Police Abstracts of Intelligence (PAI), September 20, 1924; Pratap, July 27, 1925, and February 8, 1926; Abhyudaya, March 3, 1928.
6. PAI, March 10, 1923, March 31, and April 7, 1928.

7. Rawat, *Reconsidering Untouchability*, p.142; PAI, March 10, November 3, 1923, October 25, 1924, and October 8, 1927.
8. Owen Lynch, *The Politics of Untouchability: Social Mobility and Social Change in a City of India*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1969, pp. 67-70.
9. Jordens, Swami Shraddhananda, pp.142-43; Pratap, March 3, 1924; Abhyudaya, May 17, 1924.

Samaj schools. Pt. Sunderlal Sagar, Sitaram Singh, Khemchand Bohre, Ramnarayan Yadvendu, and Manikchand Jatav Vir were among them. They all got a good education, so they wanted to carry this forward to the next generation. For this, they opened many schools in Agra and other regions of UP for the Jatav education. They also opened student hostels for the Jatav youths. These types of hostels were opened in Agra by Manikchand Jatav Vir in the first half of the twentieth century.

If we talk about the ideology behind the formation of the Jatav organisation, it was influenced by the Arya Samaj ideology to follow Vedic rituals and a vegetarian lifestyle. The first such Jatav organisation, called Nagar Jatav Committee, was founded in 1888 in Agra by the elite Jatavs^[10]. The manifesto of this committee was to support and follow a vegetarian lifestyle. However, an ideological and political assertion starts in 1917, when some elite and educated Jatav established Jatav Mahasabha in Agra. Many other branches of the Jatav Mahasabha were established in different parts of western Uttar Pradesh by 1924. These branches were established in Mathura, Etah, Etawah, Bareilly, etc. Such a branch of Jatav Mahasabha was also established in Aligarh by Paras Ram.

It was generally seen that the foundation of the Jatav organisations was mostly influenced by the Arya Samaj ideology and Sanskritized notions. It influenced Dalits socially and educationally. The Arya Samaj played a very significant role in Dalit education. It opened many schools and colleges throughout Uttar Pradesh for Dalit education so that they could be uplifted educationally^[11]. An eminent revolutionary and nationalist leader, Lala Lajpat Rai, also interpreted that many schools for Dalits and Jatavs were opened throughout western Uttar Pradesh by Arya Samaj. These initiatives were also supported by nationalist newspapers such as Pratap. It was reported that Arya Samaj opened almost 37 schools for Dalit education in different parts of western Uttar Pradesh^[12].

The Adi-Hindu leader and its founder, Swami Achhutanand, was an active and prominent Dalit leader of the contemporary period. He joined Arya Samaj in 1905 and worked for it until 1918. He took his upbringing and education in Arya Samaj schools. He rose to prominence as a prominent Arya Samajist. Later, he became a teacher who mostly taught in Arya Samaj schools. His contribution to spreading the Arya Samaj spirit among Dalits is tremendous. He influenced a large number of the Dalit population towards the Arya Samaj. In a short time, Arya Samaj gained popularity among Dalit castes, and it was increasing day by day. It was like a chain, where Swami Achhutanand was influenced by the Arya Samaj, and Dalits were influenced by Swami Achhutanand. It connected Dalits with the Arya Samaj on a large scale. However, in 1920, he left Arya Samaj for its discriminatory nature. He was also an active member of Arya Samaj's Shuddhi movement. But when he left Arya Samaj, the Shuddhi movement declined after 1925. Simultaneously,

Achhutanand established the Adi-Hindu Mahasabha and started the Adi-Hindu movement. He started fighting to end the caste or Hindu varna hierarchy and demanded to establish social equality.

It was evident that the reforms initiated by the Arya Samaj were ideologically divided. This division was observed geographically. I am talking about Eastern and Western UP. As most of the population of the Jatavs was centralised in western Uttar Pradesh, Therefore, it was often recorded that the activities of the Arya Samaj were generally held in western UP. So the Arya Samaj was more active in western UP than eastern UP, and most of the reform activities of the Arya Samaj took place in the western parts of UP. It shows that the Jatavs of western UP were more mobilised and active than other Dalit castes in other parts of UP.

Several meetings were organised by the Jatavs in the different parts of western UP for discussing the ongoing issues among the caste. Such Sabhas were organised in 1923 in Meerut, Moradabad, Saharanpur, Bulandshahr, and Mathura. In these discussions, many resolutions for solutions were passed^[13]. The intentions behind these resolutions were to reform the Jatav community and spread caste consciousness among them. Many reform agendas were set up by the Jatavs in these meetings.

In 1923, a meeting was held in Meerut in which an amount of 1500 rupees was collected for Jatav reforms. Arya Samaj also played a very important role in this meeting. It wanted to build a temple with this amount, whereas Jatavs and other Dalit castes wanted to build a school for them. It was the first time a clash over temples and education was seen between Arya Samaj and Jatavs. Now, they understand the importance of their education. Therefore, they put education as their priority, and religion became the second priority of the Jatavs. However, the motives of the Arya Samaj were religious reforms, social reforms, and educational reforms^[14].

To Sanskritize Dalits, Arya Samaj entered Dalit villages and colonies. Nandini Gooptu interpreted that, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the Arya Samaj targeted mostly untouchable leaders and a mass of untouchables for caste upliftment. Further, she says that the main motive of Arya Samaj was to Hinduize the Dalit community and connect them with pan-Hindu society through social upliftment and Shuddhi initiatives^[15].

Gooptu highlighted Jatav Mahasabha and his protests in the region of Agra and its surroundings in early 1920. She highlighted the role of the Arya Samaj in the Hinduized Dalit communities and connected them to Hinduism. It was also said that the Arya Samaj criticised untouchability and orthodox Hindu practices in Dalits' favor. These acts by Arya Samaj gained more popularity among them. She also appreciated the efforts of Arya Samaj to open temples and wells for them^[16].

Conclusion

So conclusively, the main motive of the Arya Samaj was to

10. Pt. Sunder Lal Sagar, Yadav Jivan (Jatav Jivan) or the Life of Yadavs (Jatavs), Shree Jatav Mahasabha, Agra, 1929, pp.2-3; Ramnarayan Yadvendu, Yaduvansh (Jatav Vansh) ka Aitihās: Navyug Sahitya Niketan, Agra, 1942, p.6.
11. Yadvendu, Yaduvansh (Jatav Vansh) ka Aitihās, p.140; Rawat, Reconsidering Untouchability, pp.140-141.
12. Rawat, Reconsidering Untouchability, p.140; Pratap, March 25, 1928; Lynch, The Politics of Untouchability, p.68.

13. PAI, April 1, April 22, November 4, 1922; March 24, 1923; October 18, 1924; October 9, 1926.
14. Rawat, Reconsidering Untouchability, p.136; PAI, June 9 and October 6, 1923.
15. Rawat, Reconsidering Untouchability, pp.139-140; Nandini Gooptu, The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early Twentieth Century India, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp.155-156.
16. Rawat, Reconsidering Untouchability, p.140.

Hinduize Dalit castes and connect them with pan-Hindu society and religion. For this, Arya Samaj criticised orthodox Hindus and Hindu practices. It also criticised Hindus for untouchability and made many effective efforts to stop religious conversion among Dalits. Arya Samaj made many efforts to open religious places like temples and public places like wells for untouchables. To stop religious conversion, Arya Samaj started a new social initiative called the "Shuddhi Movement" so that it could bring back those Dalit Hindus into Hinduism who converted earlier to other religions.

The reform initiatives of the Arya Samaj were also appreciated by the Hindu Mahasabha's leaders, like Madan Mohan Malviya and Lala Lajpat Rai. They interpreted that if Hindus would not change their behaviour towards untouchables, a religious conversion could not be stopped strongly. He said orthodox Hindus should adopt a liberal mindset towards Dalits and open them to all religious places like temples, public wells, etc.

However, it gave some positive results, and some places like temples and public wells were opened for the Dalits. But the social status could not be changed yet; it remained the same. Most of the places, temples, and wells remained closed to the untouchables. This act insisted Dalits adopt a radical ideology to convert to other religions. It is continued today all over India.

If we talk about the role of the Arya Samaj in the Jatavs' upliftment, the results are positive. It supported the Jatavs' agenda to gain a new Kshatriya identity. It reformed their educational condition and ideology to Hinduize them. The efforts that were taken by the Arya Samaj successfully connected Jatavs with Hinduism. However, it could happen because most of the Jatav leaders were active members of the Arya Samaj. Most of them were educated at the prestigious Arya Samaj schools. So the ideology of the Arya Samaj led these leaders to continue the reform initiatives in their community.

The new initiatives that were launched by Arya Samaj could be traced to the transitional period of the caste movements in India. It supported the new claim and identity of the different groups of Dalits. It can be seen that when Jatavs claimed a new Sanskritized identity, Arya Samaj did not criticise it, although she supported such a claim. Arya Samaj believed that, having supported Dalit castes' initiatives, the religious conversion could be effectively stopped. It also worked to cement the new identities that Jatavs and other social groups claimed. Arya Samaj was also looking at this initiative as an opportunity to promote Vedic culture and teachings among Jatavs and other Dalit communities.

It opened many schools for Dalit education throughout Uttar Pradesh. The reform activities of the Arya Samaj were mostly taken place in western UP; however, they also played a very significant role in Hinduizing Dalit castes in eastern UP and all over India. It did tremendous work towards connecting those social groups with Hinduism which was on a social margin.

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