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SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATI AND HIS POLITICAL IDEAS

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Swami Dayananda Saraswati and His Political Ideas

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Abstract – Swami Dayanand was the one who kept the love of freedom alive in hearts of Indians. He travelled throughout India to unite the people. Dayanand was fully convinced that only armed revolution could drive the British out of India. The real aim of Swami Ji was to unify India nationally, socially and religiously, he was the one who taught us the lesson of Swaraj and took it as birth right of men. Dayanand was democratic in his views and wanted general welfare of the countrymen. India has her own priceless heritage to offer to anybody who has anything to contribute to her regeneration thus Swami Dayanand's views gave a new shape and creed to Indian Nationalism.

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After the failure of the great mutiny of 1857 three agencies became responsible for the spread of nationalism in India. They were the foreign Christian Missionaries, the British Government and the educated Orientalists. The Orientalists were divided into two groups – the English educated Indians and the Indians who had faith in the India's past glory. Swami Dayanand had grasped the importance of India's glorious past as the great lever of national upliftment. Swami Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Samaj stood against Western influences. He was the first reformer to depart from this tradition and gave an indigenous orientation to Indian Nationalism. His Arya Samaj, established in 1875 at Bombay, set into motion strong religious, social and political movements embodying a close and intimate reference to the past glory and cultural heritage of India and reacted against western influences. Swami Dayanand gave a new impetus to Indian Nationalism. Swami Dayanand gave the war-cry of 'Swaraj' is our birth-right. In the country of Dayanand there was no place for Europeans and Indians could manage everything for better than Europeans.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati's was basically a person with a political bent of mind. His views on Hinduism were clarified and expanded. He not only started the most vigorous religious movement of Nationalism, which is known with the name of Arya Samaj means Church of the Aryan but also accepted the comparative method by which he saved the country from the downfall. Swami Dayanand Saraswati proved to be greatest exponent of the most advanced ideas of politics in India. His political views were formulated and advance of his time. He was one of the most ardent prophets of reconstruction and national organization. He evolved a complete system of state craft and political institutions because he wanted to lay

the foundation of India's freedom from every aspect. He advocated a moral and ethical state as opposed to the political state of the west.

He also realised that without this freedom it was impossible to give effect to any wide scheme of social and economic reconstruction. That time, it was claimed by the English educated people of India that the British Government was the best possible government. Dayanand did not waste his time in controverting this claim. He compared Suraj with Swaraj and said that no foreign government however good, could ever equal self-government. This was the time when nobody could dare to teach the meaning of Swaraj. It was in 1906 that Dadabhai Naroji, the Grand old man of India, spoke of self-government in his famous presidential address at the Calcutta Session. Therefore, Swami Dayanand's talk of Swadeshi Raj or Swaraj at a time when the country was so backward in political consciousness. He had already given the slogan 'India for the Indians, this slogan became the basis of the Indian National Congress during the Calcutta Session.

Dayanand believed that without the sense of self-confidence Swaraj could not be achieved. During his time the political good fortune was not in favour of India. India was slave. He was in confidence that if Indians become politically conscious and physically strong, then Swaraj was not far from then. If the people accept the Vedic religion as their national religion, then Swaraj is not far from them. The idea of Swaraj have been fully discussed in the sixth chapter of the Satyarth Prakash. Dayanand was democratic in his view and wanted general welfare of the countrymen. The British Government was plundering Indian Wealth. In pointing out such nature of the government. Swami Dayanand warned Indians to be

conscious of such monarch who was responsible for bringing ruins and untold miseries upon them.

Swami Dayanand was influenced by Kautilya's view of state in this respect. He said that the king who administers law beautifully would succeed in fostering the threefold advancement of life i.e. piety, enjoyment and plenty. He said that the annual taxes should be collected through honest persons and the kings and the other officials of the state should treat the people parent – like kings and his assembly should bear two points in mind, first, the smooth carrying on of government work and secondly the well-being of the people. Dayanand Saraswati's views the state is a political organization and it associated with the community indeed. Further, he said that the state would protect the general interest of the community. Basically he was in the favour of Republican form of government means the government Democratic in constitution. He proposed pensions for the government staff and the state was to look after widows and for the weaker sections of the society. Further he suggested that the state should arrange free and universal system of education. He also favoured the enforcement of laws against early marriage and polygamy and also suggested stamping out the corruption. According to him the whole aim of the state was to check evil trends. Swami Dayanand Saraswati ordained that all should be equal before the law and none can be above law. In the Satyarth Prakash, he wanted the king to arrange great public sacrifices. Swami Dayanand Saraswati made Vedas as the common constitution under which all Hindus must live and act. They were authorities in their own right.

Swami Dayanand Saraswati was a precursor of Gandhi in all his freedom activities, moral regeneration of the nation unity of the people, emancipation of the women, uplift of Harijan, Khadi and cottage industries, cow protection, a new orientation to our educational system. From his writings we come to know that he always prayed to God to get self-rule and enjoy Swaraj. Further he said that foreign rule should not stay in our country and we never be slaves. Swami Dayanand Saraswati was certainly one of the most powerful personalities, who have molded modern India and were responsible for its moral regeneration and cultural revival. His zeal for reformation of his motherland was exceeded only by his unbounded learning. In the words of Swami Dayanand Saraswati, "It is firm conviction that India should attain complete independence. I pray to God to liberate my country system foreign Yoke". These views alarmed the British and the British Indian government gave orders to keep a watch over the activities of this rebel Faqir. It was just because of Swami Dayanand Saraswati's influence that many of the leading freedom fighters and revolutionaries had passed through the crucible of Arya Samaj i.e. Lala Lajpat Rai, Sardar Bhagat Singh, Ram Prasad Bismil, Madan Lal Dhingra and host of others.

The ideas of Swaraj and self-confidence flew side by side like two distinct streams, meeting sometimes at one place. A number of the followers of the Swami began to teach the idea of Swaraj and self-confidence and strengthened the national movement which was going on in India under the leadership of the Indian National Congress. Lala Lajpat Rai expressed his views before the students of the D.A.V. College. He said Swaraj was not to be obtained from others by begging but that a people could get it through their own efforts alone. To learn the lesson of Swaraj they should open national schools and colleges, promote the swadeshi and boycott movements and establish panchayats for the settlement of disputes arising among them. From the year 1909 and onwards the warm feeling of Swaraj arose in India. Dayanand's views began to influence almost all leaders of the country. During the same year about 2000 Arya Samajists enrolled as national volunteers to fight for self-government. During the year 1911 the Arya Samaj became the more powerful association if not in the whole country, at least in the Punjab. It was rapidly increasing in numbers and extending the sphere of the operations.

By the year 1915 the number of enemies of the British Raj in India increased. India's sons in thousands began to feel that it was essential to sacrifice their lives for the country and to cut the bonds of slavery which had enchained their country. When the Non-co-operation Movement was sponsored by the Indian National Congress in 1920-21, the Arya Samajists openly took part in it. Thus from 1876 to 1920 the Swami and the Arya Samaj tried their best to popularise the ideas that the Swaraj was the bright-right of Indians.

In the Indian constitution, untouchability had been declared as a crime and Hindi was accepted as the national language. It was Swami Dayanand Saraswati whose major contribution to Indian Nationalism was firstly for promoting Hindi as national language. Although his mother tongue was Gujrati but he wrote all of his works in Hindi which he usually called Aryabhasha certainly there was on better orator in Hindi and Sanskrit than Swami Dayanand Saraswati throughout the length and breadth of this land. He said that all people should learn Hindi in Devnagari script. Secondly, Swami Dayanand Saraswati was an ardent advocate of Swadeshi. He wished that all things needed by the Indian masses should generally be produced within the country itself and they must have to be independent in every aspect. He felt that India was a supplier of the raw material and England used her as a vast captive market for clothes and many other finished goods. This drained a large amount of wealth out of India to England. So in 1883 AD at Jodhpur he preached in favour of Swadeshi. This nationalist step taken by Swami Dayanand Saraswati was preached by Mahatma Gandhi who added a grand dimension to Khadi and village industrial movement. Thirdly, he opposed government's tax on salt because it was basic item of consumption of all even of the poorest. With the help

of this step he became the forerunner of Mahatma Gandhi's great Dandi March and Salt Satyagrah.

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Swami Dayanand was an ardent devotee of India and a worthy supporter of Swaraj. He was the first man to use the term Swaraj, he was the first to India and to discard foreign things. His vision was clearer and broader than any other nation maker. Dayanand's work was carried on by his Arya Samaj. The Samaj succeeded in its aim and brought a rapid progress in all spheres of the Indian life. The Samaj after the death of its founder, stood as the most powerful and energetic indigenous body which started social, educational and religious movements to further the cause of nationalism in India and to fulfil the dreams of Swami Dayanand. No doubt it is said that if Gandhi Ji was the father of nation Swami Dayanand Saraswati is the Grandfather of the nation.

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