

THE ARYAN THEORY OF RACE

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I. Survey

The theory that Aryavarta [N.W. India] was the cradle of European civilization, the Aryans the progenitors of Western peoples, and their literature the source and spring of all Western religions and philosophies, is comparatively a thing of yesterday. Professor Max Müller and a few other Sanskritists of our generations have been bringing about this change in Western ideas. Let us hope that before many more years roll by, we may have out the whole truth about Aryan civilization, and that your ancestors (and ours) will be honoured according to their deserts.¹

So spoke Henry Steel Olcott, President of the Theosophical Society, to native audiences in Amritsar, Lahore, Multan, Cawnpore, Allahabad, and Benares in 1880. He referred to the Aryan theory of race, developed by German comparative philologists in the 1840's and 1850's, which maintained that the speakers of Indo-European languages in India, Persia, and Europe were of the same culture and race, descendants of one primitive tribe of proto-Indo-European speakers which had lived north of the Hindu Kush and dispersed after 2000 B.C. to the south and west to conquer and colonize. This people had called itself "arya" or noble in the Rigveda and Avesta. Most British writers on the subject ignored the racial equality that this theory gave Hindus and concentrated on the superiority of the ancient and modern Western branches of the Aryan family in conquest, government, technology, religion, and social arrangements. An influential exception was Friedrich Max Müller, the German-born Sanskritist and professor of European languages (1850-1868) and comparative

1. Henry Steel Olcott, "A Glance at India, Past, Present and Future: The Past," *The Theosophist*, II (March, 1881), 124.

philology (1868-1875) at Oxford. Müller used the theory to praise the literature and philosophy of ancient India, to emphasize "the common descent and . . . legitimate relationship between Hindu, Greek, and Teuton" and the blood tie between the Englishman and Bengali, and to reveal the providential nature of British rule in India.² Müller's ideas reached Anglicized Indian intellectuals quickly through his publications, his correspondence and interviews with leaders of the native elite, and reviews and interpretations of his work by Europeans in India.

However, Müller's emphasis upon Aryan unity was quickly adopted only by a small number of Indian intellectuals, those established leaders of the Brahmo Samaj who shared many of his liberal Victorian religious and constitutional views. Among them were his frequent correspondents Debendranath Tagore and Keshab Chandra Sen. They employed his words in a superficial, flattering way, when the occasion demanded, but did not enlarge upon or attempt to popularize them. Often they narrowed their meaning by extolling Indo-British more than Indo-European fraternity. Echoing his correspondent, Debendranath wrote Müller that he hoped the Sanskritist's editions of the Rigveda and Upanishads would help bind together the English and Indians, who had grown up under one roof and then separated, only to be reunited by all-powerful Providence.³ Keshab Chandra rejoiced in the reunion of England and India upon Queen Victoria's assumption of the title "Empress of India":

2. Friedrich Max Müller, "The Last Results of the Sanskrit Researches in Comparative Philology," in *Christianity and Mankind*, ed. C. C. J. Bunsen (7 vols.; London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1854), I, 129; Friedrich Max Müller, *Lectures on the Science of Language* (London: Longman, Green, and Roberts, 1861), pp. 214-215. In India, several British writers in the 1850's reiterated that British rule in India was merely the reunion of one of the youngest branches of the Aryan family with one of the oldest. "The Arian Race." *The Calcutta Review*, LII (January-June, 1856), 487, and John Wilson, *India Three Thousand Years Ago . . .* (Bombay: Smith, Taylor and Co., 1858), pp. 42-43.

3. Debendranath Tagore to Müller, no date [probably after 1884], quoted in German translation in Ludwig Alsdorf, *Deutsch-indische Geistesbeziehungen* (Heidelberg: Kurt Vowinckel Verlag, 1942), pp. 92-93.

... in the advent of the English nation in India we see a reunion of parted cousins, the descendants of two different families of the ancient Aryan race. Here they have met together, under an overruling Providence, to serve most important purposes in the Divine economy. The mutual intercourse between England and India, political as well as social, is destined to promote the true interests and lasting glory of both nations. We were rejoiced to see the rajahs and maharajahs of India offering their united homage to Empress Victoria and her representative at the imperial assemblage.⁴

With more independent thought and passion, his younger brother Krishna Bihari Sen, a comparative philologist and convinced monogenist, then Principal of Maharajah's College, Jaipur, hailed the Aryan theory's possible contributions to Indo-British and international understanding.

What a sublime spectacle is afforded by the present concourse of nations. The Hindu and Englishman are brothers!... Do not jealousies, struggles and bloodshed appear contemptible where every brother man is learning to recognise in the face of his fellow-creatures the image of his first forefathers?... Philosophy has evolved a strange unity out of the hopeless variety of races. Let that unity be the groundwork of future peace and brotherhood.

Pessimistic about India's future, he urged England to aid its elder Aryan brother.⁵

The Aryan theory was less popular among Hindu leaders of the nationalist movement. Many, when they used it, wished to promote

4. Keshab Chandra Sen, "Philosophy and Madness in Religion" (1877), quoted in William Theodore de Bary, ed., *Sources of Indian Tradition* (2 Vols.; New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), II, 67.

5. Krishna Bihari Sen, "The Romance of Language" (1876), reprinted in Lala Jivan Das, ed., *Essays on Swami Dayanand Saraswati and the Arya Samaj* (Lahore: The Punjab Printing Works, 1902), No. 7, p. 12. He had earlier been Rector of Albert College, Calcutta, and was later head of the Brahmo Tract Society.

only Indian self-esteem, not Indo-European solidarity. Some denied or ignored that Europeans and Persians were Aryans: they left "arya" vague or applied it only to the Rigvedic heroes and their descendants. For them, the Aryan tradition was a national one. Others, however, at times accepted the Aryan tradition as Indo-European and used the Western characterization of it, being developed by scholarly and chauvinistic Europeans, to foster India's sense of superiority. Their use of the Aryan theory we shall examine in this survey.

A few writers adopted the Western emphasis upon Aryan physical prowess and conquest, though they often coupled it with praise of Aryan spiritual strength, which the Western Aryans had supposedly lost through conversion to non-Aryan religions. Aurobindo Ghose had the goddess Lakshmi prophesy that though the Aryans would be defeated by "barbarians from the outer shores," they would rise again to conquer and rule empires with their noble spirits. "Empire shall in thy line and forceful brain/Persist, the boundless pulse towards rule/Of grandiose souls perpetually recur,/And minds immense and personalities/With battle and with passion and with storm/Shall burn through Aryan history, the speech/Of ages,"⁶ "Aryan," he wrote, might have been derived from the root "ar," "to fight" for divine wisdom. The Aryan's duty was, through self-conquest and world-conquest, to strive for self-perfection and world-perfection; "what he conquers he does not destroy, but ennobles and fulfils . . . always the Aryan is a worker and warrior . . . Always he fights for the coming of that kingdom [of the Highest] within himself and in the world."⁷ The Goddess in *Bhawani Mandir* exhorted Hindus to be aggressive at home and abroad, "to create a nation, to consolidate an age, to aryanise a world."⁸

6. Aurobindo Ghose, *Urvashi* (c. 1895), Canto IV, *Collected Poems and Plays* (2 vols.; Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1942), I, 77, 80.

7. Etymology in Aurobindo Ghose, "The secret of the Veda" (1914-16), *On the Veda* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1964), p. 249; Aryan as worker and warrior in Aurobindo Ghose, *Views and Reviews*, quoted in K. R. Srinivasa Iyengar, *Sri Aurobindo* (Calcutta: Arya Publishing House, 1945), p. 237.

8. Aurobindo Ghose, *Bhawani Mandir* (c. 1905), reprinted in B.A. Purani, *The Life of Sri Aurobindo* (2nd ed.; Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1960), p. 94.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak turned away from a rational, astronomical method of calculating the age of the Rigveda to mythological evidence for the original home of the Aryans, from emphasis on the equal merits of all early Aryan civilizations to emphasis on the initial superiority of Asiatic Aryan culture, from praise of Aryan astronomy to praise of Aryan militarism and the technology it required. In *Orion* (1893), in which he acknowledged Müller's etymological aid, Tilak dated the composition of the Rigveda between 4000 and 2500 B.C. (compared with Müller's 1200 B.C.), when, he said, the Hindus, Greeks, and Parsis probably still lived together and shared a similar culture. He praised most highly the accurate knowledge of astronomy that he believed the Vedic *rsis* had had.⁹ However, in *The Arctic Home in the Vedas* (1903), written partly in prison, Tilak let his imagination run away with him. Using evidence from comparative mythology, he pointed to the original home of the Aryan (and perhaps of all mankind) in an Arctic "paradise" of the interglacial period (8000 B.C.). When a deluge of snow and ice forced the Aryans from their homeland, he wrote, those who migrated to Northern Europe relapsed into barbarism. They were unable to preserve their civilization intact in a very cold climate among non-Aryan savage and nomadic tribes. Only the Asiatic Aryans, the ancestors of the Hindus, had succeeded in preserving much of their earlier civilization.¹⁰ Tilak now lauded the powers of conquest of the Aryans:

The vitality and superiority of the Aryan races, as disclosed by their conquest, by extermination or assimilation, of the non-Aryan races with whom they came in contact in their migrations in search of new lands from the North Pole to the Equator, if not further south, is intelligible only on the assumption of a high degree of civilisation in their original Arctic home.¹¹

9. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *The Orion or Researches into the Antiquity of the Vedas* (Bombay: Radhabai Atmaram Sagoon, 1893), pp. vii, 165, 166, 210-211.

10. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, *The Arctic Home in the Vedas* (Poona: Kesari, 1903), pp. 434, 443.

11. Tilak, *Arctic Home*, p. 464.

Many nationalists stressed the superior political organization of the ancient Aryans. Bankim Chandra Chatterji noted their initial consciousness of "nationhood," which had dissipated as they divided into small groups in India.¹² Others emphasized the federal basis of Aryan unity and imperialism, unnoticed by most Western writers. Gaṇendra [Jñānendra] Mohan Tagore, lecturer on Hindu law at University College, London, and Bipin Chandra Pal held respectively that the Aryan tribes in their homeland and in India had organized themselves into centralized federations,¹³ not nation states, which had easily incorporated aboriginal tribes by giving them inferior status.

By the time of the Mahabharata, according to Aurobindo, such federations were headed by hereditary kings, who were considered divine because they incarnated the life of the race. However, like Aryan monarchs in the West, they were not absolute rulers; they were limited in their powers by the laws and customs of their race, including the characteristically Aryan legislative and judicial council, described by Sir Henry Maine as the prototype for parliamentary government. Aurobindo declared that the king had only executive functions; legislative and judicial functions, he implied, were handled by the Lords and the Commons, the other two divisions of the early Aryan polity. Dayanand Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj, wrote that the Aryan king had charge only of the treasury and the executive. As prescribed in the Rigveda, three central councils of virtuous men, presided over by the king, handled legislative, religious, and educational affairs. A Universal Sovereign Assembly selected the king, received reports from state councils, and passed legislation. A cabinet of seven or eight ministers, which based decisions upon majority rule, was required by Manu to counsel the king and to direct

12. B.C. Chatterji, quoted in T. W. Clark, "The Role of Bankimchandra in the Development of Nationalism," in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, ed. C. H. Philips (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 337.

13. G. M. Tagore, "On the Formation and Institution of the Caste System—The Aryan Polity," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S. II (1863), 381. Tagore was a Christian convert and the son of Prasanna Kumar Tagore, a founder of the British Indian Association and *The Reformer*. B.C. Pal, *The Soul of India* (1911), cited in Bruce T. McCully "The origins of Indian nationalism according to native writers," *Journal of Modern History*, VII (1935), 298.

foreign policy and the administration of justice. Both Aurobindo and Dayanand implied that in their period the English Constitution most closely approximated the Aryan ideal. But, in defense of India's reputation, they also criticized Western departures from this idea. Aurobindo claimed that India only learned the concept of the divinity of kings and the practice of "Oriental despotism" through contact with Greek and Persian absolutism. Dayanand suggested that the Aryan empire of *chakravartin* Yudisthira was a federation of autonomous kingdoms and, therefore, less absolutistic than current Western empires.¹⁴

The basis for Aryan limited monarchy and representative institutions was the Aryan capacity for democratic self-government on the local level. This capacity had already been praised as an Indian one by the Paternalist school in its idealization of India's "village republics" and as a purely Aryan one by Henry Maine in his studies of the early Aryan village council in India. Now it was lauded by Indian nationalists who wished to criticize British despotism and to justify *swaraj*. Some maintained, for example, that the election of *panchayats* and headmen, an Aryan institution, had allowed men of all classes a voice in their government, and that government, by its simplicity and cheapness had promoted their education, prosperity, and happiness.¹⁵

Yet nationalists equally stressed the spiritual superiority of the Aryans. Swami Vivekananda told a Western audience in 1895 that only with the help of the "*Aryas*, especially the Hindus," had other peoples conceived of the soul as independent of the body, individual,

14. Aurobindo Ghose, "The Early Indian Polity" (1908), *On Nationalism. First Series* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1965), pp. 100-102. Dayanand Saraswati *An English Translation of the Satyarth Prakash*, trans. Durga Prasad (Lahore: Virjand Press, 1908), p. 206. On Yudisthira's empire, James Reid Graham, "The Arya Samaj as a Reformation in Hinduism with Special Reference to Caste" (Unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Yale University, 1943), p. 198; on England as closest to Dayanand's ideal, Bimanbehari Majumdar, *History of Indian Social and Political Ideas from Rammohan to Dayananda* (2nd ed.; Calcutta: Bookland Private Ltd., 1967), p. 255.

15. "A Lecture on Aryan Politics," Coimbatore, April 25, 1886, reported in *The Indian Mirror*, May 23, 1886. Annie Besant, *The Future of Indian Politics* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1922), pp. 230-281; Annie Besant, *India: Bond or Free?* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1939), pp. 51, 73.

pre-existent, and immortal.¹⁶ Aurobindo extolled the intuitional and mystical development of the race.¹⁷ Mahadeva Govind Ranade, probably echoing Matthew Arnold, mentioned its gods of "Love and Brightness, of sweetness and of light,"¹⁸ unlike the Semitic God. Often implicit in such statements were criticisms of Western Christianity, materialism and atheism, as deviations from Aryan belief. Sometimes, Westerners were excluded, for spiritual reasons, from the Aryan fold. Vivekananda, now writing for a Bengali audience, excluded them from his definition of *Aryas* when he contrasted the self-interest of western society with the self-sacrifice of Aryan society.¹⁹ Aurobindo did likewise when he asserted that the Mahabharata's Aryan concern with "mind-issues" alienated Western scholars.²⁰ Writers in *The Theosophist*, the early organ of the Theosophical Society in India, while admitting Europeans were Aryans, attacked Western materialism as un-Aryan and lauded the true Aryan tradition, preserved only by the Eastern Aryans or Hindus.²¹

For some, the Aryan religious tradition seemed to be the basis for Indian nationalism. Ranade and Mrs. Annie Besant emphasized that Brahmanism, the Aryan faith, had served to unite North and South in ancient India. Dayanand and at times Vivekananda advocated that the Aryan faith be used once more to unite India. They urged that castes and other groups that had fallen away or been excluded from hearing Aryan scriptures or participating in

16. Vivekananda, "Metaphysics in India : Reincarnation," *The Metaphysical Magazine* (New York), I (1895), 195, 199.

17. Aurobindo, *Veda*, pp. 28, 24 off.

18. Mahadeva Govind Ranade, *Religious and Social Reform*, ed. M.B. Kolasker (Bombay: Gopal Narayan and Co., 1902), p. 222. Anniversary Address at the Prarthana Mandir, Bombay, 1895.

19. Vivekananda (1899), quoted in English translation in de Bary, ed., *Sources*, II, 104.

20. Aurobindo Ghose, "Hindu Drama," *Kalidasa. Second Series* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1964), p. 7.

21. Lillian Edger, "The Necessity for Religion," *The Theosophist*, XIX (May, 1898), 486. A. Mahadeva Sastri, "The Vedic Law of Sacrifice," *Ibid.*, XLIII (February, 1922), 471.

Aryan practices be Aryanized.²² Expansionistic Aurobindo wished to spread Aryan ideals throughout the world and proposed the establishment of a group of itinerant Indian preachers to prepare Europe for their acceptance.²³

To most of the followers of political and social reformers, however, "Aryan" was merely an important rallying cry, a patriotic equivalent for the Persian "Hindu," with a moral rather than geographical denotation. It appeared in the names of new societies and periodicals and on banners at protest meetings. It had little historical content. Many nationalists probably preferred and even fostered its debasement, because they rejected the Aryan theory of racial history for a number of reasons. A few writers insisted that the theory was unfounded. A Marathi gentleman with an isolationist pride in India said that the linguistic evidence for Indo-European unity was not strong enough and contradicted the evidence of "history, chronology, mythology and geography." The Aryan theory was "nothing but a varnished tale utterly undeserving of the name of traditional history,"²⁴ told by European scholars little acquainted with Indian life. G.M. Tagore admitted the possibility of Indo-European linguistic unity, but denied that this implied racial unity;²⁵ others questioned geographical and chronological details of the theory. By the 1890's, many more writers on ethnology in India, including Charles Johnston for *The Calcutta Review*, Tilak, and Aurobindo, were becoming disillusioned with the racial conclusions of compara-

22. Ranade, *Social Reform*, pp. 189-190. Annie Besant, *The India that shall be* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1940), p. 231. Har Bilas Sardar, *Life of Dayanand Saraswati* (Ajmer: P. Bhagwan Swarup, 1946), pp. lxxii-lxxiii. Vivekananda, "Caste," *Speeches and Writings* (6th ed. rev.; Madras: G.A. Natesan and Co., 1922), p. 576.

23. Aurobindo. Speech to the Society for the Protection of Religion (1908), quoted in de Bary, ed., *Sources*, II, 179; Aurobindo, *Bhawani Mandir*, reprinted in Purani, *Life*, p. 97. Cf. Dayanand, n. 46.

24. Ramchandra Bapuji Jadhao Rao, "Puzzles for the Philologists," *The Theosophist*, I (September, 1880), 305-308, 309.

25. G.M. Tagore, "Caste System," *Transactions Ethnological Society*, N.S. II (1863), 378. Müller himself warned against equating linguistic and racial unity (*Science of Language*, p. 314; *Chips from a German Workshop* [4 vols.; London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1867-75], IV, 222-223, but often ignored his own advice.

tive philology; linguistic evidence on race seemed sketchy and inconclusive compared with what might be expected from physical and cultural anthropology, archaeology, and comparative mythology and religion.²⁶ On the other hand, a very few thinkers, like Dadabhai Naoroji in London in the 1860's, may have wished to discredit all racial theories, without regard to their basis in comparative philology, because they were unrealistic and were often used to prove the inferiority of Asians.²⁷ Indian reformers may have been deterred from adopting racial theory by their desire not to appear to be traitors to the cause of equal rights for Asians regardless of race.

The Aryan theory also posed obstacles to Indian unity by ignoring that major obstacles to this unity existed. It assumed, as did most racial theories, that each nation had been racially and culturally almost homogeneous throughout its history. But, despite Annie Besant's assertion that "India is a continuum, and her Aryan civilisation an unbroken whole,"²⁸ many nationalists clearly recognized historical discontinuities in India's racial and cultural development and the impossibility of creating an Indian nation based upon an Aryan racial myth. Rarely was a nation homogeneous racially, observed B.C. Pal. "This structural affinity is observed among the different branches of the so-called Aryan family. . . . A nation is, however, a more complex and heterogeneous thing."²⁹ Vivekananda noted the weakness of racial ties compared with the bonds of religion.³⁰

The Aryan theory would have denied equality with *dvija* Hindus

26. Charles Johnston, "The Indo-Germanic Myth," *The Calcutta Review*, CIII (July, 1896), 1-10. Tilak, *Arctic Home*, pp. 439-441. Aurobindo, *Veda*, pp. 28, n. 1, 30-32, 563-569.

27. Dadabhai Naoroji, "Observations on Mr. John Crawford's Paper on the European and Asiatic Races," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, N.S. V(1867), 144.

28. Annie Besant, *How India Wrought for Freedom* (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1915), p. iii.

29. Bipin Chandra Pal, *Nationality and Empire* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink and Co., 1916), p. 3. Speech at a conference on the claims of nationalities and subject peoples, London, 1910.

30. Vivekananda, *The Necessity of Religion* (London: Women's Printing Society, 1896), p. 1.

to diverse non-Aryans in India, notably low or out-caste Dravidians and tribals, Central Asian Huns and Jats, classed as Turanians, and Muslims and Jews classed as Semites. Several nationalist writers, consciously or unconsciously, used it for this purpose. Ranade hinted that in India the Aryans were the chosen race and lamented that their chivalrous civilization had been submerged in the South by "lower" Dravidians and hill tribes and in the North by invading Huns, Jats and Muslims. He attributed to their non-Aryan influence the development in India of communal land tenure and of more patriarchal social patterns that degraded women and permitted sati, sale in marriage, polygamy, and polyandry. With Ranade in the chair, Shankar Pandurang, Oriental Translator to the Government, told the Himalayan Union Club at Simla of the well-known "intellectual superiority of the Brahman over the Sudra, the Aryan over the non-Aryan."³¹ Under the pseudonym

31. Ranade, *Social Reform*, pp. 31-32, 98-100; Ranade, quoted in P.J. Jagirdar, *Studies in the Social Thought of M.G. Ranade* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1963), pp. 46, 51-52, 64. Shankar Pandurang, "Our Vedic Ancestors," quoted in *The Indian Mirror*, August 10, 1886.

Partly perhaps to lift the blame from upper caste Hindus, whom he wished to convert from this point of view, Vivekananda accused Westerners of teaching Hindus to despise as non-Aryans their ignorant, low caste countrymen. In some measure, his judgment was correct. In the 1860's and 1870's, Henry Maine and Meadows Taylor did emphasize the barbarity and superstition of the early Dravidians and hill tribes that had infected ancient Hindu society and destroyed its pure Aryan features; but they did not defend the caste system. James Fergusson and R. H. Patterson, in articles written for British reviews, implied, however, that the caste system had made upper caste Hindus more ambitious and progressive than they would have been had free intermarriage between Aryans and non-Aryans been permitted. Herbert Risley sought the motive principle of caste in "the antipathy of the higher race for the lower, of the fair-skinned Aryan for the black Dravidian." He regarded the demands of the National Congress for representative institutions as characteristically Aryan and upper caste demands, unimportant to and unsupported by the lower, non-Aryan castes, [Vivekananda, quoted in English translation in de Bary, ed., *Sources*, II, 106. Henry Sumner Maine, *Dissertations on Early Law and Custom* (London: John Murray, 1883), p. 233; *Village Communities in the East and West* . . . (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1889), p. 128. Meadows Taylor, "Human Sacrifices and Infanticide in India," *The Edinburgh Review*, CXIX (1864), 390-391. James Fergusson, *The Quarterly Review*, CXXVIII (1870), 473. R. H. Patterson, "The Caste and Creeds of India," *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, LXXXV (1859), 314. Herbert H. Risley, "The Race Basis of

“Mukhopadhyaya,” a writer in *the Indian Spectator* said that the time had come for the Aryans to efface from their ancient institutions the degraded customs introduced by the Huns, Muslims, and others, particularly customs, relating to women.³²

The nationalists who attempted to mitigate the Aryan theory's anti-Dravidian and anti-Muslim biases did not, for the most part, reject notions of Aryan superiority.³³ They accepted them and tried, therefore, to include non-Aryan groups within the Aryan fold, either racially or culturally. Several maintained at times that Dravidians were member of the Aryan race. Madame Blavatsky, searching for connections among far-distant peoples, said that a colony of “dark-skinned” Aryans from pre-Vedic Oudh had civilized ancient Egypt and that out-caste *Chandālas*; many of them ex-Brahmans, had migrated to the Middle East to give rise to the Jewish tribes. She also believed that Egyptians, Jews, and Arabs were Aryans, though degene-

Indian Political Movements,” *The Contemporary Review*, LVII (May, 1890), 752.] But European scholars probably did not teach Hindus new caste prejudices. Their conclusions, resting as they did upon examination of Vedic and post-Vedic literature and of Hindu social attitudes and influenced by European color and racial prejudices, corroborated biases existing in India and Europe. In practice, non-Aryan movements generally looked to the British government and public, rather than to high caste Hindus, for aid. The Śūdra leader Jyoti Govind Phule, using “Arya” in its narrow, Indian sense, wished the British “to liberate the disabled Shudras from the slavery of the crafty Aryas.” [*Sarvajaniḥ Satyadharma Pustak* (1891), quoted and translated in Stanley A. Wolpert, *Tilak and Gokhale* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), p. 7.]

32. “Mukhopadhyaya,” “Religious Changes,” *The Indian Spectator*, January 15 1888, p. 51. He and Ranade disliked changes introduced by presumably Aryan Scythians (*Śākas*) and *Yāvanas* (Greeks). Thus their prejudice was not purely racial.

33. No one attempted to elevate the Turanian group, which was merely a catchall category for non-Aryans and non-Semites. And, of those we are considering, perhaps only B. C. Pal, who felt little emotional attachment to the Aryan theory, placed Semitic civilization on a level with the Aryan. Of the Ganges, he wrote: “In thy waters, Holy Mother, the two streams of Semitic and Aryan culture mixed with each other; in the days when, on thy banks, ruled the Moslem kings of India, and both the Hindus and the Mohammedans have a common inheritance in the art and civilisation that grew up on the banks of thy Jamuna, resonant with the minstrelsy of the two great world cultures.” [B. C. Pal, “The Ganges Bath” (1906), *Swadeshi & Swaraj* (Calcutta: Yugayatri Prakashak Ltd., 1954, p. 279.)]

rate, materialistic ones.³⁴ Dayanand and Aurobindo denied that there had been a racial war in India between the Aryans and Dravidians that had resulted in the *varna* system. Dayanand claimed that India had been uninhabited when the Aryans invaded; the present *Sudras* were the descendants not of conquered aborigines, but merely of ignorant Aryans³⁵ and needed to be re-educated in Aryan ways. Aurobindo cited recent ethnological theory and his own observations to show that the dark-skinned Southern aborigines had been culturally and spiritually, but not racially distinct from the Aryan invaders and that even cultural divisions were now disappearing.³⁶ Aurobindo, Lala Lajpat Rai and the Arya Samaj also believed that most Indian Muslims were Aryan in race, because they were descendants of converted Hindus.³⁷ Like the Dravidians, they only needed to be reunited with Aryan spiritual and cultural values to be true *Āryas*. Aryan-ness was thus a culturally acquirable, not a purely hereditary characteristic.

Another nationalist objection to the Aryan theory might be that it tended to internationalize rather than to nationalize Hindu ideals. It was used by the Theosophists to encourage cosmopolitanism and brotherhood. It was used by Müller and Maine to elevate Great Britain as the model Aryan nation, whose example and government were needed to re-Aryanize India.³⁸ Ranade agreed that Providence had sent the English to India to provide a living example of "pure Aryan customs" with regard to the treatment of women; with English support, the Hindus could free themselves from patriarchal Muslim tradition and could restore their "old healthy practices."³⁹

34. Helène P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled* (1877) (2 vols. in 1; Los Angeles: The Theosophy Co., 1931), II, 434-435; *The Secret Doctrine* (2 Vols. in 1; London: The Theosophical Publishing Co., 1888), II, 200.

35. Dayanand, *Satyarth*, Trans. Prasad, p. 250.

36. Aurobindo, *Veda*, pp. 27, 39-41.

37. Aurobindo Ghose, *The Spirit and Form of Indian Polity* (Calcutta: Arya Publishing House, 1947), p. 86. Lala Lajpat Rai, *Writings and Speeches*, ed. V. C. Joshi (2 vols.; Delhi: University Publishers, 1966), I, 1i, 186; II, 190.

38. Müller, see note 2. Maine, *Village Communities*, p. 294. Address to the University of Calcutta, 1866.

39. Ranade, *Social Reform*, p. 101.

“Mukhopadhyaya” warned orthodox Hindus that some despised English customs were much more Aryan than those the orthodox currently followed.⁴⁰ Thus the Aryan theory could justify closer cooperation between the British and their Hindu subjects and the continuance of brotherly British government. Maine, earlier Law Member of the Government of India, noted: “I myself believe that the government of India by the English has been rendered appreciably easier by the discoveries which have brought home to the educated of both races the common Aryan parentage of Englishman and Hindoo.”⁴¹

II. Dayanand Saraswati and the Theosophical Society

One proto-nationalist spiritual leader, Dayanand Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj in 1875, did develop and utilize a detailed, if sometimes inconsistent interpretation of the Aryan theory in his discussions both of history and morality. The questions we shall try to answer in his case are, what was his interpretation of the Aryan theory, to what degree was it influenced by Western views of the theory, and what effect did it have upon his relations with the Theosophical Society in India. It is difficult to determine the chronological development or even the exact nature of Dayanand's thoughts on many significant subjects. Some of his most important writings like *Satyārth Praksāh* were merely the enlargement and translation into Hindi of ideas Dayanand had expressed briefly in Sanskrit to pandits so that a textbook might be prepared for his followers. Dayanand rarely found time to correct these books' errors, although he did revise and enlarge *Satyārth Prakāsh* for the second edition (1882-84) after having most of the first edition (1875) burned.⁴² Some of his letters to the Theosophists in New York were intentionally mistranslated by Harishchandra Chintamani, President of the Bombay Arya Samaj, who absconded with about

40. “Mukhopadhyaya,” *loc. cit.*

41. Henry Sumner Maine, *Lectures on the Early History of Institutions* (3rd ed.; London: John Murray, 1880), pp. 18-19.

42. Sarda, *Life*, pp. 407-408. Graham, “The Arya Samaj,” pp. 151-152, n. 1.

Rs. 600 that the Theosophists had sent for the benefit of the Arya Samaj movement.⁴³ Modern English compilations of Dayanand's sayings print excerpts from his works entirely out of context with many seeming misinterpretations and mistranslations. Of course, Dayanand was probably himself inconsistent in his many lectures and *śāstrārths* and varied his opinions and mode of presentation depending upon the nature of the audience or the views he wished to attack. Therefore, my analysis of his attitudes can only be tentative.

Dayanand's interpretation of Aryan history was on the whole nationalistic and moral rather than internationalistic and racial. He believed that mankind, not just the *Āryas*, had been created equal and lived in Tribishtapa [Tibet] in primordial times, when the rest of the world was uninhabited. Then the people divided into two sections: the noble, virtuous, and learned called "arya" and the low, vicious, and ignorant called "dasyu." Later, the *Āryas* were classified into *Brāhmaṇas*, *Kṣatriyas*, *Vaiśyas*, and un-Aryan *Śūdras*, based on moral and intellectual, not racial differences. After bitter quarrels with the *dasyus*, the *Āryas* left Tibet for India or *Āryāvarta*, the best country in the world, which was as yet uninhabited. The Aryans settled in India because that land was noted for gold and gems and would make them wealthy. Dayanand denied what some misinterpreters of the Aryan theory said, that the Aryans had come to India from Iran and had conquered India's savage inhabitants whom they called *asuras* and *rakṣasas* [demons]. There were *dasyus* whom the Aryans had called *asuras* and *rakṣasas*, but they were the migrants from Tibet to other lands, not to India. He implied that all barbarians and demons were foreigners. The *asuras* lived to the north, northeast, and northwest and were called "Assyrians"; the *rakṣasas* lived to the south, southeast, and southwest and were devilish-looking Negroes. The allied Aryan rulers of India were victorious in wars with these groups and even established colonies in the underworld *Paṭāla* [America], for Arjuna married an American princess Ulupi. From the time of the Ikṣvaku dynasty to that of the Kauravas and Pandavas, Aryan dynasties ruled over the entire world and

43. H. S. Olcott, *Old Diary Leaves. First Series* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1895), pp. 404-406.

spread education and the Vedic religion, which had been revealed to them alone, to Egypt, Greece, Rome, Western Europe, and America. After the Mahabharatan war, because of ill-luck, indolence, inattention to Vedic custom and worship, and internecine quarrels, the Aryans lost their peaceful, unified rule over India and foreign lands.⁴⁴

Dayanand's definition of the modern Aryan was also based on moral and intellectual considerations rather than race. "Arya is he, whom people should know and value and whose society should be sought because of his knowledge, learning, doing good to others and righteous living."⁴⁵ Righteous living meant in part the practice of Vedic principles as interpreted by Dayanand: the abandonment of idolatry, polygamy, child marriage, the seclusion of women, and caste distinctions based on birth rather than virtue and the application of Vedic inventions and scientific knowledge, such as the purification of air by *homa* sacrifices and the conservation of food supplies through cow protection. To be an Aryan, one had to worship one god and accept only the rational, Vedic religion. Conversion to this religion should be encouraged among all peoples, Dayanand felt. He wrote H. S. Olcott and Mme. Blavatsky that he hoped all false religions would disappear and "only the one eternal, [the] one professed by the Aryas spread throughout the world."⁴⁶ When a Christian missionary told Dayanand, "I too am an Arya," he replied that the man was a gentleman but not an *Ārya*. Only a noble-minded, religious man who studied the Veda was an *Ārya*. The Christian sacred book did not teach the true faith.⁴⁷

44. Dayanand, *Satyarth*, trans. Prasad, pp. 230, 249-251, 284, 291. Compare the translation of the passage on Aryavarta's fabled wealth in Chiranjiva Bharadwaja, trans., *Light of Truth* (3rd ed.; Lahore: The Imperial Printing works, 1927), p. 310, with that in Prasad, p. 291. Helmuth von Glasenapp, *Religiöse Reformbewegungen im heutigen Indien* (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1928), p. 23.

45. Dayanand to Olcott in New York, July 26, 1878, quoted in English translation in Sarada, *Life*, p. 533.

46. Dayanand to Olcott and Blavatsky in New York, April 21, 1878, quoted in English translation *Ibid.*, p. 526.

47. At the Chandapur Fair, March, 1877, cited *Ibid.*, p. 173. At times, Dayanand felt that even European Christians had accepted Vedic teachings more than Hindus had (*Ibid.*, p. 187).

Although Dayanand based his definition of the modern Aryan on Vedic literature and civilization and did not know Western languages, he was not so impervious to Western influences as some of his followers have stated. Har Bilas Sarada maintained that Dayanand was "what pure Sanskrit learning had made him. He knew nothing of European or Semitic thought and culture." He cited *Banga Darsan* of Calcutta to show that this increased Dayanand's influence among the common people and the truth-seeking orthodox pandits.⁴⁸ However, Dayanand had considerable, if often very narrow and critical, knowledge of Western scriptures, manners, and Vedic scholarship. In 1866, he held one of his first public *śāstrārths* in Ajmer with the Revs. Gray, Robson, and Shoolbred. For four days, Dayanand ridiculed in detail the inconsistency, irrationality, and juvenility of statements on the nature of God, the soul, and the Creation in the Old and New Testaments, which he had probably read in a Hindi translation. There, soon after, he did the same with the Koran, hoping to win back converted Hindus or even to convert Muslims. He thus had a fundamental knowledge of the Western religious texts he was challenging and even of caustic European Biblical criticism, for he recommended current free thought literature to his readers.⁴⁹ A contemporary opponent thought that Dayanand might have derived his emphasis upon strict monotheism and destruction of idols from Semitic notions of deity and worship that appealed to educated Hindus because they had imbibed them from English books,⁵⁰ a far different interpretation of Dayanand's popularity from that of *Banga Darsan*.

48. *Ibid.*, pp. xc, 118, 154. Also Sri Ram Sharma, *The Arya Samaj and its Impact on Contemporary India (In the Nineteenth Century)* (Hoshiarpur: The Institute of Public Administration UNA, 1965), p. 5. Bimanbehari Majumdar, *Political Ideas*, p. 246, is more sensible when he writes that Dayanand embodied India's instinct of self-preservation, and self-preservation does not mean total isolation from and exclusion of foreign influences.

49. Sarada, *Life*, p. 46. Dayanand *Satyarth*, trans. Prasad, p. 492.

50. A. Mitra, "Should we call ourselves Aryas?", *The Theosophist*, I (June, 1880), 223. Scholars have also attributed Dayanand's strict monotheism and rejection of idol worship to the influence of Śthānākavāsī Jainism in his native Morvi State and of Islam in North India, the seat of his later religious training and his movement's popularity.

Dayanand also had some contact with British officials in the 1870's when he asked them to prevent Brahmans from extorting money from worshippers and to introduce his *Veda Bhashya* as a text for colleges in the Panjab. He thought of going to England to ask Queen Victoria and Parliament to prohibit cow slaughter. He was influenced by Keshab Chandra Sen to become more Westernized in his dress and, therefore, probably was more accepted in English mixed company.

He met some of the most famous Sanskritists of his day and undoubtedly discussed the Aryan theory with them. In Bombay in 1875, he sometimes took morning walks on the beach with Horace Hayman Wilson. In 1876, he met Prof. Monier Williams of Oxford, introduced him to his pupil Shyamji Krishnavarma who later took a B.A. at Oxford and became Monier Williams' teaching assistant, and declined to accept Monier Williams' offer to pay his expenses for a speaking tour of Europe. Dayanand said that he felt he must enlighten India first and that he would not be of much use in Europe without a knowledge of English. He later wrote to Shyamji at Oxford inquiring about the latest opinions of Monier Williams and Müller on the Vedas and *śāstras*. He was also acquainted with George Bühler, George Thibaut, and John Wilson, European Indologists teaching in India. He possessed a number of books in English and German by Müller, H.H. Wilson, Muir, Roth, Benfey and other Western Sanskritists, which he probably had informally translated for him. He hired a Pandit to explain Müller's English translation of the Rigveda to him and another in 1876 to teach him English. But he did not find time to learn English and instead had Müller's translation turned into Hindi. At a *śāstrāth*, Dayanand taunted a pandit who claimed that the Vedas had been lost by triumphantly showing him a copy obtained from Germany.⁵¹

Although Dayanand respected these European scholars, he read their books mainly to criticize them. He considered the Vedas to have been revealed shortly after the creation, 5000 B.C. at the latest, and not to have changed since. He, therefore, rejected the European theory of the human origin of the Vedas, their composition

51. Sarda, *Life*, pp. 79, 81, 89, 130, 136, 143, 151-152, 160, 231-232, 249, 278, 383.

over a period of time, and their recent origin (after 1500 B.C.) which he felt was a Christian concession to Biblical chronology. He rejected the evolutionary idea that because the Vedas were ancient their poetry and religion were primitive and naturalistic, with the *devas* representing material, not spiritual forces. Citing for confirmation a letter he had received from the Principal of a German college, he claimed that the Germans were not the best Sanskrit scholars. They appeared to be great authorities only because Sanskrit was so little studied in Europe. Max Müller was only a child in his study of the Vedas and relied on the inaccurate commentaries of Sayana, Mahidhar, and Uvata. Dayanand felt that only an intelligence trained in yogic practices and free from Christian bias could rightly interpret the Vedas.⁵²

However, Dayanand may have borrowed some of the more unusual elements in his Aryan theory from a different group of Westerners, the Theosophists, either directly or through his fellow Arya Samajists. His belief that the Aryans originated in Tibet rather than in the more usual "Central Asia" and migrated from India to Egypt and pre-Columbian America may have been derived from or reinforced by the similar opinions of Mme. Blavatsky and Olcott.⁵³ They also concurred in his criticisms of European Vedic scholarship. They emphasized in their early writings the antiquity of the Vedas, the need to abjure Christianity and to study yoga and Eastern occultism in order to understand them, the spiritual and monotheistic basis of the worship of *devas*, and the practical knowledge of spiritual and scientific matters that could be derived from ancient Aryan scriptures. In August, 1877, Olcott wrote to Moolji Thackersey of Bombay about the Theosophical Society, founded in New York in 1875, and later offered him a diploma of

52. Dayanand Saraswati, *Introduction to the Commentary on the Vedas*, trans. Ghasi Ram (Mcerut: Arya Pratinidhi Sabha, 1925), pp. 25, 32-33, 54, 98, 112; *Satyarth*, trans. Bharadwaja, p. 293. Sarda *Life*, pp. 79, 107-108, 194, 383.

53. *The Theosophist*, I, 148, 170; II, 123. The Theosophists were obviously interested in connections between India and America and questioned Dayanand about them. Blavatsky recorded (*Secret Doctrine*, II, 214, note) that she asked Dayanand to confirm that Ulupi had been the daughter of the king of Pātāla [America] 5000 years ago.

membership. Moolji put Olcott in correspondence with Harischandra Chintamani of the Bombay Arya Samaj, who wrote that the Theosophical Society and the Arya Samaj had the same principles, sent Dayanand's and the Samaj's pamphlets to Olcott, and promised faithfully to translate and transmit letters between the two leaders.

In his first letter in February, 1878, Olcott sent Dayanand a diploma as Corresponding Fellow of the Theosophical Society and declared the Society's devotion to him, partly to strengthen its own movement :

We need the assistance not only of the young and the enthusiastic, but also of the wise and the venerated. For this reason, *we come to your feet as children to a parent*, and say "*Look at us, our teacher* : tell us what we ought to do. Give us your counsel and your aid." . . . Your countenance and favour will immensely strengthen us.⁵⁴

In April, Dayanand responded with a moderately worded appeal to Aryan unity, or so Olcott thought. "Though we [Aryans] (added by Olcott) have been separated for the last five thousand years, and though you, our beloved Brothers, have been living in America, while we in Aryavarta, the time has fortunately come once more for correspondence and interchange of ideas resulting in mutual friendship and welfare."⁵⁵

In May 1878, on the suggestion of Harishchandra without the approval of Dayanand, the Council of the Theosophical Society voted to merge with the Arya Samaj and to restore initiation fees which would be given to the Arya Samaj. Mme. Blavatsky jubilantly proclaimed that the chiefs of the Arya Samaj had asked the Theosophical Society to work with them to discredit miracles, superstition, and all violations of natural law, and to teach the purest form of Vedic philosophy for the good of all mankind. Olcott in June, 1878, told Dayanand that the Theosophists were pleased

54. Olcott to Dayanand, February 18, 1878, quoted in Sarda, *Life*, pp. 525-526.

55. Dayanand to Olcott, April 21, 1878, quoted in English translation by Shyamji Krishnavarma in *The Theosophists*, III (July, 1882), Extra Supplement, 4.

to find that they and Dayanand contemplated the same "Eternal Divine Essence," called the "All Good" in ancient Aryan teachings. Olcott emphasized the Theosophists' feeling of unity with the Aryans of the Araya Samaj, recognizing "as we do, the Aryan source of our race, and of its knowledge of things terrestrial and celestial" . . . A shared love of the Motherland and Mother faith prompted a few of the Theosophists, Olcott said, to come "very soon to Aryavarta to study, and fit ourselves for missionary work among our own races [Hindus or Americans?]"⁵⁶ Olcott wished Dayanand to convey to the members of the Arya Samaj the Theosophists' fraternal sympathy:

And will you not carry to all the Samajes throughout Aryavarta the assurance that, away off at the other side of the globe, there is a society of men and women who hold to the same religious philosophy, teach the same doctrines, rejoice in the same views of the future life, are moved by the same aspirations as themselves, and along that cord of sympathy which stretches from hearts to hearts which beat in unison, send to their Aryan brothers a message of fraternal love and encouragement?⁵⁷

In August, 1878, Olcott received from Shyamji Krishnavarma a translation of the rules of the Arya Samaj that contradicted Harishchandra's statements. The rules showed, Olcott wrote later, that the Arya Samaj was a Hindu sect that required the allegiance of all members to those portions of the Vedas and *śāstras* approved by Dayanand and that recognized one personal, all-powerful, just God rather similar to the Christian one the Theosophists were trying to escape. In September, the Theosophical Society resumed its former status and established the "Theosophical Society of the Arya Samaj of Aryavart" to be composed of members of either of the two separate societies.⁵⁸

56. Hélène P. Blavatsky, *Collected Writings* (Wheaton, Illinois: The Theosophical Press, 1966), I, 384. Olcott to Dayanand, June 5, 1878, quoted in Sarda, *Life*, pp. 529-531.

57. Quoted in Sarda, *Life*, p. 529.

58. Blavatsky, *Writings*, I, 1xi-1xiv, 409. Olcott, *Diary*, pp. 395-406.

In February, 1879, Olcott and Blavatsky arrived in Bombay and transferred the Theosophical Society there. Their activities were warmly received by most Arya Samajists; they continued their association with the Arya Samaj, calling it "our twin sister society," praising Dayanand as a splendid Aryan scholar and orator, and seeking patronage for a book he was to write on yoga. Until 1880, the orthodox pandits of Benares believed that all Theosophists were followers of Dayanand and would make no alliances with other groups. But the Society had already established branches in different parts of India whose members could hold any faith and could form separate branches of their co-religionists. In accord with its avowed desire to promote brotherhood through the study of Aryan philosophy, the Society also allied itself in 1879 with H. Sumangala, a leading Ceylonese Buddhist, and in 1880 with the orthodox Sanskrit Sabha and Brahmāmrita Varshini Sabha.⁵⁹

Dayanand still wished to stress the similarities between the two societies and, in 1880, published a circular describing the providential nature of their similar development.

How very phenomenal is the fact, that just at the very time the Arya Samaj was founded in Bombay, the Theosophical Society was established in New York! The *very same objects and Rules*, as defined by the Arya Samaj for itself, were also adopted independently of the latter by the Theosophical Society for its own part; and, moreover, before the receipt of my third letter, the very same proposal made by me in it, as to the Vedic Section and the Theosophical Society, was also carried out! What? Are not all these results the effects of Divine Providence? And are not these beyond the power of ordinary mortals—that the very same events happening here on this hemisphere should also take place on the other, at its antipodes, i. e., *Paiāla* (America)? I offer millions on millions of praises to that Almighty God, by whose power these miraculous occurrences have come to pass, namely that after five thousand years a bond of

59. *The Theosophist*, I, 147, 151.

brotherhood should be formed between religious men of Aryavarata and those of *Pātāla* in connection with the ancient, well-examined Vedic religious practices! Oh!

Olcott added: "The document closes with a lengthy ascription of praise to God for effecting the union between the long-separated sons of the common Aryan Mother."⁶⁰

However, by November, 1880, Dayanand told Mme. Blavatsky that he did not wish Arya Samajists to join the Theosophical Society. The Theosophists no longer regarded the Vedas as their sole guide or him as their sole guru. They praised the religion of their audiences just to please them, tried to perform miracles without knowing yoga to awe the public, and printed stories of ghosts in *The Theosophist* when no such things existed. Mme. Blavatsky almost forced certain Samajists to join the Society, and yet criticized Dayanand for claiming to be an infallible Pope. At Meerut in September, she told one of Dayanand's followers that neither she nor Olcott believed in a personal God or in the Vedas as revelation. She admitted later that they both were Buddhists, followers of supposedly pre-Vedic Aryan wisdom. After Olcott refused several times to debate the issue of atheism with Dayanand, whom he still called his guru, and gave a revivalist lecture on Zoroastrianism in Bombay in February, 1882, the two societies split permanently.⁶¹

After this split, the Aryan theory of Indo-European unity probably gradually dropped from the writings of prominent Arya Samajists who were not also members of the Society. Self-consciously, the author of "What we Were and What we Are," perhaps Gurudatta Vidyarthi, insisted: "I do not use the word *Arya* in the sense in which it is taken by the modern Europeans: on the other hand, I mean by it the inhabitants of Aryavarta and of Aryavarta only."⁶² However, the theory remained a focus for Theosophical discussion of all-India regeneration and

60. Quoted in English translation in *The Theosophist*, III (July, 1882), Extra Supplement, 8.

61. Sarda, *Life*, pp. 252-253, 543-556.

62. "What we Were and What we Are," reprinted in Das, ed., *Essays*, No. 3, p. 15, n. 7.

international brotherhood. In India perhaps only in the lectures and writings of the Theosophists, mainly the European ones, was the Aryan theory applied in a significant manner to attempt to better both Indian prestige and Indo-European relations, as Müller intended. Before the break with Dayanand, Olcott described the coming of the Society to India as a providential return of the Western Aryans to their homeland. Gopalrao Hari Deshmukh, President of the Bombay Arya Samaj and Vice-President of the Bombay Theosophical Society, welcomed as members of the "great Aryan family" the Hindus, Parsis, Americans, and Europeans gathered to celebrate the fourth anniversary of the Society.⁶³ Even after the split, German and French Theosophists avowed their Aryan solidarity with India. And Tukaram Tatya, founder of the Society's Sanskrit series, echoed Müller's plea for Indo-European harmony from a Hindu point of view: "The Hindus represent the older branch of the great Aryan stock; and our European brethren should look upon us as filled with the same blood, though marked by a different color, and retaining much of the primitive habits and customs which were once common to both."⁶⁴

The Theosophical Society's emphasis upon Aryan unity was credited with helping to reconcile Anglo-Indians and Hindus and thus facilitating future native self-rule. M. D. Chatterji, a Theosophist, wrote:

I am assured by certain of my friends that since joining the Society they have marked a great change in the attitude of the Anglo-Indian members towards them. The Westerns have thus been gradually taught to respect our nation for their past ancestral glory, and the greatness and splendour of their mother-country, and perhaps for the hope that those capabilities, intellectual, moral and spiritual, of the Aryans, though inert, may yet be reawakened in their now

63. *The Theosophist*, I (March, 1880), 147-148.

64. H. Huebbe Schleiden, "Germany: The Western India," *Ibid.*, XVI (January, 1895), 256, 258-259. Dr. Pascal, *Ibid.*, XX (January, 1899), Supplement, 43. Tukaram Tatya, *A Guide to Theosophy* (Bombay: Bombay Theosophical Publication Fund, 1887), p. 93.

unworthy descendants. At the same time the Natives are being taught to respect the Westerns for their present progress and for their growing desire to know more and more of our national sciences and philosophies, as praised in recent noble utterances of professor Max Muller, Dr. [W. W.] Hunter, Mr. [A. O.] Hume and others. The feelings of both Asiatics and Westerns have thus been so far modified as to pave the way for that closer attraction which may draw them together to stand at last upon the platform of Brotherhood.⁶⁵

In more political terms, an anonymous Theosophist in *The Indian Mirror* advocated, as preparation for universal brotherhood, the "union" of Europeans and Indians, two peoples of Aryan stock, through the rebinding of ancient ties.⁶⁶ Annie Besant also took up this theme. Looking forward to the coronation of George V at the Delhi Durbar, she lauded an Indo-British world-empire, which would enforce peace and elevate humanity. "Here, in India, Mother and Son have met, who have been separated since they parted in their early Asian home; they have come together in this ancient land, for mutual helping—Oh! may the High Gods grant it!—for the making of the Aryan World-Empire, to over-top all that has gone before."⁶⁷ Later, with a more egalitarian spirit, she proposed an Indo-British commonwealth as a model for a future voluntary world federation.

I cannot look back over the three centuries and ten years from 1612 to 1922, and miss the golden thread of a divine purpose in bringing under one Crown the root-stock and the youngest sub-race of the Aryan Race.

Is not that purpose that these two may be joined in an

65. M. D. Chatterji, "The Chief Mission of the Theosophical Society," *The Theosophist*, IV (December, 1882),

66. "Theosophy or Universal Brotherhood," *The Indian Mirror*, February 27, 1886.

67. Annie Besant, "The Opening of the New Cycle," *The Theosophist*, XXXII (May, 1911), 174.

Indo-British Commonwealth, composed of coloured and of white Nations, of Asiatics and Europeans, of Easterns and Westerns, of Religion and Applied Science, forming a model, making certain the realisation, of a World Federation, wherein Justice shall reign instead of Power, and Law shall put an end to Violence ?

In an all-comprehending Theosophical manner, she elsewhere included Australians, Canadians, Kelts, Teutons, Parsis, Egyptians, and *Africans* in her projected Aryan Commonwealth.⁶⁸ The amateur scientist and Theosophist Saint-George Lane-Fox in a Madura lecture propounded a mystical theory of hemicycles of union and disunion in the history of races with the conclusion that the "future progress of man on this Planet depends on and therefore necessitates the *reunion* of all these seven [Aryan] sub-races (and their off-shoots) into one Grand Nationality which must rise to a still higher apex of civilization than that attained to by the ancient Aryans, before, in its turn, it goes down."⁶⁹

Dayanand had refused to teach such a universalist interpretation of "Arya." Mme. Blavatsky noted that while the Theosophical Society accepted members of all religions, "your society consists of Aryas and even amongst the *Aryas* only those who follow the Vedic religion."⁷⁰ Dayanand, however, had come to feel that cooperation with "foreigners" was less possible than he had thought and less beneficial for India: "Whatever benefit can accrue and whatever affection can exist amongst those who belong to the same country, speak the same language, and are born, live and marry in the same country, cannot subsist in the society of foreigners."⁷¹ His judg-

68. Besant, *Future*, p. 298. On the Canadians, Australians, and Africans, Besant, *India that shall be* p. 173 (from 1922); on the other groups, Annie Besant, "Theosophy and Imperialism," *The Theosophist*, XXXVII (July, 1916), 480-482.

69. Saint-George Lane-Fox, "The Ancient Aryan Civilization and Modern Progress," *The Theosophist*, VI (January, 1885), 90.

70. Blavatsky to Dayanand, January 17, 1881, quoted in Sarda, *Life*, p. 550.

71. Dayanand to Blavatsky, November 23, 1880, quoted in English translation *Ibid.*, p. 543.

ment of the eclectic Brahmos, he might also have applied to the Theosophists:

Without having a faith in the Vedas and the other Scriptures, you cannot be certain what is truth and what is untruth, nor can you do any good to the *Aryavarrta*. You have no remedy for the country that is ailing. Europeans do not care for you and the people of the *Aryavarrta* look upon you as aliens. Even now if you believe in the Vedas and begin to regenerate your country, it will be all right.⁷²

72. Dayanand, *Satyarth Prakash*, quoted in English translation in N. B. Sen, ed., *Wit and Wisdom of Swami Dayanand* (Delhi: New Book Society of India, 1964), pp. 189-190.