

CHAPTER - VI
ARYA SAMAJ LITERATURE
IN ORISSA

Literature is a continuous flow which presents a mirror reflection of the society. The development of a society or a civilization is best indicated through its development of literature. Moreover, whenever the religious sentiment is at stake, literature comes to its aid playing a significant role in showing the right way to a purposeful socio-religious life. The spread of religion can't be perceived through discourses, but through the movement of pen.¹ The Arya samaj movement founded by Maharshi Dayananda Saraswati was strengthened and gained momentum because of the literature produced by him which was rich in its variety and essence. Maharshi Dayananda used Arya Samaj to formulate and propagate his wise thought of urging the whole of human society to acknowledge the universal conclusions preached by the Vedas. He could be able to do it to a large extent, with the help of his innumerable lectures and discourses and his vast bulk of immortal literature. He has interpreted volumes on the Vedas, on Sanskrit grammar and religious topics. J.F.T. Jordan has given an account of all his publications.

Sandhya- 1863
Bhagabat Khandanam- 1864
Advaitmata Khandanam- 1870
Satyārtha Prakash - 1875
Pancha Maha Yajna Vidhi- 1875
Veda-virudha Mata-khandana- 1875
Vedanti Dwanta Nirvana- 1875
Shiksha Paridhenanta- Nirvana- 1876
Aryabhinaya- 1876
Sanskara Vidhi- 1877
Rigvedadi- Bhashya- Bhumika- 1877
Bhranti Nivarana- 1857
Aryodeshya Ratnamalas- 1878
Veda Bhashya- 1927
Goutam-Ahalya-ki-katha- 1879
Sanskrit-Vakya-Prabodha- 1880
Vyavahar Bhanu- 1880
Brahmo Chetana- 1880
Anubhramo Chhedana- 1880
Vedanga Prakash- 1880-83
Gokarunanidhi- 1881
Sanskar Vidhi- 1884.²

The Flag of Arya Samaj was held aloft even after his death by stalwarts like Pandit Gurudatta Vidyarthi, Swami Nityanandaji, Swami Shradhananda, Pandit Bhimsen Sharma, Pandit Lekhram, Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya and many others.

Arya Samaj is not only a revolution, but its manifesto is to discover and reveal the truth. Therefore *Satyartha Prakash* written by Swami Dayananda has given birth to this great revolution like 'Das Capital' of Carl Marx giving birth to communism. Keeping that in view, I shall discuss about the writers who have specific contributions for the rich growth of Arya Samaj movement on the soil of Orissa. But, before that identity crisis that Oriya language was going through during the pre-independence period must be mentioned to make a comprehensive assessment of these writers' contribution to the Arya Samaj Movement in particular, and Oriya literature in general.

The literature of the Arya Samaj at the national level inspired literature in various regional languages propagating the teaching of its great founder. But in Orissa, Arya Samaj literature took a lot of time to gain its foothold as Oriya as a language was already facing a big crisis because of some historical development. The decline of Orissa as a separate state with its own culture and literature was nearly complete with the defeat of king Mukunda Dev at the hand of Sultan of Bengal, Suleman Karni in 1568. Subsequently under the British, the ancient glory of Orissa appeared to be a mere legend, Orissa lost its separate political boundary and it vainly groped for an identity. The Oriya speaking tracts were tagged to either Bengal or Bihar. Having no roads, it was

connected with Calcutta only through steamer. Oppressed by the feudal system and exploited by the unscrupulous officers of neighbouring provinces, the uneducated masses were pushed to dire poverty. The Bengalis occupied many official positions in Orissa by virtue of being educationally advanced. Due to want of press and educated elite, there were few textbooks in Oriya language in the mid-nineteenth century. Concerted efforts were made to make the Bengali the official and court language, and also the medium of instruction in schools. Some zealous officers made attempts to establish a notion that Oriya was merely a dialect of Bengali.³

In 1869, Umacharan Haldar, a Bengali Deputy Inspector of schools advocated the replacement of Oriya by Bengali in view of the scarcity of textbooks in Oriya language and the availability of good number of textbooks in Bengali language. Another Bengali Deputy Inspector of Schools Siba Das Bhattacharya, also gave his view for the introduction of Bengali language in the schools of Orissa. For this reason, the Oriyas of Balasore petitioned against him and got him transferred in 1870. In the same year Kantilal Bhattacharya, a teacher of Balasore Zilla School, published a book, called *Odiya Ek Swatantra Bhasa Nay* in which he propounded the theory that Oriya was not an independent and separate language, that it was a sub-language of Bengali. The famous antiquarian scholar Rajendra Lal Mitra of Bengal supported this move to replace Oriya by Bengali. He held that a language (Oriya) that was spoken only by twenty lakhs of people (referring only to the population of Orissa division) could not develop into a full-fledged language.

The Oriya-speaking people in the western part of Orissa in the district of Sambalpur and its adjoining areas, were suffering on the same lines as those in the eastern districts. Repeated attempts to impose Hindi on these people by the Madhya Pradesh authorities had driven them to a state of desperation, as for instance, in the year 1895, the chief commissioner of Madhyapradesh, Andrew Fresher, issued an order dated 25th January 1895, to the effect of replacing the Oriya language by Hindi in the courts and offices of Sambalpur. This was a striking blow to the people of the region and Oriyas in general.⁴

As in case of the northern and western tracts of natural Orissa, Oriyas in the southern part also experienced a grave threat to their language and literature arising from the dominating and hostile attitude of Andhra and Madras presidency. In courts, offices and academic institutions the Oriya language was getting replaced steadily by Telgu. The need of the hour as in case of the other two parts was resurrection of the Oriya language and literature catering to the basic interests of the Oriyas in offices, courts and schools.⁵

This language crisis became the genesis of future resurgence of Oriya consciousness. Against this move to abolish Oriya language there were protests from the Oriya elite. Poets and writers beginning with Radhanath Rath, Fakirmohan Senapati, Madhusudan Rao, Gourishankar Rai, Pyari Mohan Acharya etc. to those belonging to the Satyavadi and Sabuja Schools have trumpeted the cause of a consciousness and also contributed to the literary awakening in the closing part of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century.

In this campaign of revival and restoration of Oriya language and literature, the local Arya Samaj followers had a huge contribution. For the sake of convenience, I shall divide the major writers of Arya Samaj movement into two groups. The first group belongs to the pre-independence period, which includes writers like Sribatscha Panda, Kuntala Kumari Sabat, Bira Kishore Behera, Bimaleswar Nanda, Braja Bihari Bahidar, Pandit Bedabrata Shastri, Banamali Panda, Mukunda Mishra and Priyabrat Das. There is also the new generation of writers like Dr. Devebrata, Dr. Umesh Patri, Dr. Ujagar Patel, Prafulla Kumar Bohidar, Raj Kishore Hota, Bishi Keshana Shastri, Trinath Sarangi and lastly Dr. Arya Kumar Harshabardhan in the period after independence.

The first name that comes to the mind when one talk about Arya Samaj literature of Orissa is that of Sribatscha Panda. It was he who had initiated a reformative thought in Oriya literature by translating the famous book of Swami Dayananda, *Satyarth Prakash*. He was also responsible for bringing in a new awakening in the minds of the Oriya readers by editing the journal titled *Sanskara*.

Sribatscha Panda is one of the few men of literature, who spearheaded the campaign of saving Oriya language and literature during the last decade of the nineteenth century. From his boyhood, Sri Panda was a voracious reader, going through all printed materials, that he could avail; newspapers, magazines, essays and books, all in Oriya language. With the objective of spreading the message of the Arya Samaj ideals, he created literature which opposed

conservative and orthodox views of Hindu religion. A large number of essays titled as :

Stree Swadhinata (Empowerment of Women)

Vidhava Vivaha (Widow Marriage)

Stree Prati Sanmana (Respect to Women)

Ausprusya Jati (Untouchable Caste)

Atithi Satkara (Treatment of Guests)

Shisu Vivaha (Child Marriage)

Asavarna Vivaha (Intercaste Marriage)

Shradha Pinda (Death Rituals)

Nua Bohu (Newly Wed Bride)

Bhartare Jativeda (Casteism in India)

Jati Galani (Loss of Caste)

Utkal Mata (Mother Utkal)

Purohita Atyachara (Oppression by the Priest)

Nari Niryatana (Women Torture)

Vidhaba Jubati (Young Widow)

Jubati Vivaha (Marriage of Young Girl)

Vesya Srusti (Creation of Prostitution)

Bramhacharya (Celebacy)

Sikshya (Education)

Matrubhasa (Mother Tongue)

Chatra Jibana (Student Life)

Sahitya Prasanga (The Concept of Literature)

Pandit Sabha (Pandit's Conference)

Antarjatika Vivaha (Inter Communal Marriage)

Vivaha Nahauunu Vidhaba (A Widow Without Marriage)

Diyan Gadhu Gadhu Mankada (Getting a Monkey while Creating God)

Pathagara (Library)

appeared in different journals in Oriya.⁶ He was appreciated by Fakir Mohan for his literary contribution, who said :

I read all your writings with great care and sincerity. It is true that some people scold you but take it for granted that your writings contain some valuable thoughts which they read and then shout. Unless there had been nothing important they would not have shouted at you.⁷

Even Kabibar Radhanath Rai was so impressed with his writings that he urged him to arouse nationalistic ferrou through his literary outputs. Another poet of eminence, Kabishrestha Gangadhara Meher lauded his contributions as he discovered the two great qualities of truthfulness and fearlessness in his writings. When Sri Panda expressed his disappointment by saying that nobody cared to listen to him, Gandhadhar consoled him saying that his writings were priceless and were powerful enough to influence the kings and landlords of Western Orissa.⁸

Panda's main aim was to reconstruct the societies in the Vedic structure, the ideals which he held most precious. While dealing with relevant social issues he stressed upon positive development of the society which is reflected in many of the books authored by him. The translation of the unique and universally accepted creation of Maharsi Dayananda's *Satyartha Prakash* into Oriya was done by none other than the great Vedic scholar Sri Panda which was published in the year 1929.⁹ The book, a milestone in the religious history of India, discusses Dayananda's social, ethical and moral philosophy which were highly critical of the evil practices prevailing in the contemporary Hindu societies. For this he had to incur wrath of the conservative Hindus. But his efforts were highly appreciated by none other than Fakir Mohan Senapati, Biswanath Kar and Gopal Chandra Praharaj who themselves had an enormous contribution in creating a separate identity of Oriya as a language. His reformative, aggressive, nationalistic writings made Dr. Prashanta Mohapatra say, "The great Literary contributions of late Sribatscha Panda created a new excitement in the public life of Utkal."¹⁰

Books after books flowed from the pen of Sribatscha Panda till the end of his life. Besides the above-mentioned articles, twenty-six books broadening the horizon of Hindu consciousness go to his credit. For his great contribution to Oriya language and literature as a whole and Arya Samaj literature in Orissa in particular he achieved a praise for the poet Kabibar Chintamani in his epic, 'Ghumusara'

He was rich even in his old age

Continuously pursuing his pen

Without caring for criticism

Writing to arrive at truth and eternity.¹¹

Arya Dharma (Aryan Religion),¹² Sribatscha Panda's another great creative work emphasizes upon the essence of Arya religion, which is the source of all other religions in India. In this book, the author has put forth his views on issues like idol worship, death rituals, anti-Vedic activities, caste discrimination, cannibalism and five great sacrifices, giving rise to a hot debate among the conservative and orthodox Hindus, *Vedic Dharma* (The Vedic Religion)¹³, another authoritative work on the Vedas, is critical of the Brahmins who were responsible for a division in the society on the line of non-Vedic and anti-Vedics. By stressing upon the importance of Vedic systems and rituals, Sri Panda tried to spread the greatness of Vedic religion.

Achhaba Jati (Untouchables)¹⁴, is again an out-standing work on the prevalent caste-system in India, especially the Hindus, who were divided into four groups strictly on the basis of their nature and activities. The author, removes the superstition tagged to the untouchables by clarifying that who fail to perform strictly the work allotted to their respective groups and indulge in injustices and aggression should be called untouchables. It was like taking a fresh look at the Hindu religion. The *Ramayana* and the *Mohabharat* constitute the ancient history of the great Indian sub-continent. In spite of the imaginative outbursts and exaggerations, these two epics still reflect the religious history of the country. Sri Panda has gathered the central essence of these two great pieces of literature in his notable creative work '*Ramayana*

Mohabharata Sara Sangraha (Collection of Central Concept of the Ramayan and the Mohabharat) ¹⁵

Godhana (Cattle Property)¹⁶, by Sri Panda, in a simple and lucid language emphasises upon the importance of cattle to humanity at large. While being severely critical of cruelty to cattle, the author regrets the negligence in taking care of the cattle population in spite of their great utility. Like the book mentioned above stressing upon the practical usefulness of the cattle, '*Sandhya*'¹⁷ also highlights the need of sixteen sacraments from the beginning of life in mother's womb to the final stage of death and also emphasises upon the importance of evening worship. Observing the lowering of standard in social conduct, especially our negligence and dishonour to our elders, Sri Panda in his book *Pancha Devatas* (Five Gods)¹⁸ has assumed the mother, the father, the teacher, the guest and the husband or wife as five gods such as Lord Ganesh, Sungod, Lord Siva, Lord Vishnu and goddess Durga. According to the author, by worshipping these living gods with all sincerity, one can achieve the grace of God. They are not only th source, but also the saviour of our life.

'*Niti Dharma*' (Religion of Ethics)¹⁹ another great work of Sri Panda, the source of it being an inspiration from Gandhi's ideals aims at developing the right temperament among the people to lead an ideal life. Panda believes firmly in sketching a map of life like preparing a blue print before constructing a house. Besides dealing with religious topics, Sri Panda, as a true Oriya, has discussed the ethical aspects of mother tongue in the development of a nation in his remarkable work *Mo Matrubhasa* (My Mother-tongue)²⁰. In the face of

the strong propaganda against Oriya language, Sri Panda has been able to put forth sufficient evidence to establish Oriya as a language with a separate identity, *Nibedana* (Appeal) ²¹ is a ground-breaking work of Panda which records a struggle of the author between his conscience and the established practices of the society which are often wrong and evil. The author is shocked to find the practices like child-marriage, seclusion of women and the exploitation of the untouchables in the name of religion and makes an earnest appeal to the Hindus to get rid of these beliefs and practices for the sake of all-round development of the society.

Dastabiz Lekhana (Document-Writing)²² was written by Sribatscha Panda after he came to realise the inadequacy of Oriya language for the preparation of official documents in courts and offices. The Telgus were very influential in Ganjam's official sector and Sri Panda thought it very important to use Oriya language in official matters; hence there was the need of the book to be written.

Sribatscha Panda with his broad social outlook authored a very conspicuous book *Panchayat*²³ which relates to the concept of Panchayat and it warns the people against fake witnessess and unnecessary expenses of legal wrangles. He has urged for the smooth and effective functioning of Panchayat in all villages.

Sanskara, (Reformation) consists of three volumes of essays, all of which are directed against relevant social evils with prescriptive remedies. The first part²⁴ is a vehement attack against irrational beliefs and superstitions

such as ghosts and devils. At the same time, the author describes elaborately the advantages of journey like Gundhicha Yatra and others. Part II of the same book comprises a number of Oriya essays dealing with the topics of freedom of women, widow marriage, travel to foreign countries, respect to wife, untouchability, child marriage, non-vegetarianism, inter-caste marriage, death rituals, begging and many other burning social issues.²⁵ The third part of the series discuss completely enlightened topics such as the effect of education, education and educators, scripting and publication of books, literature, meditation, discussion of scriptures, true concepts of religion and a lot more.²⁶ The series of books clearly prove the versatility of the author in treating wide range of topics with the prime objective of reforming and reconstructing the society in the Vedic pattern.

Swami Dayananda Saraswati galvanised a new spirit and enthusiasms among the scholars and the people for a study of the Vedas and practice of Vedic sacraments. The book '*Sanskara Vidhi*' (Code of Rituals and Sacraments)²⁷ has been translated into Oriya language by Sri Panda.

Sri Panda's literary talent was not confined to prose-works alone. He has also excelled in the field of poetry with publications like *Sanskara Sangitabali*.²⁸ In spite of having rudimentary knowledge of the rhythmic pattern, he has composed some lyrics with a view to bring reformations concerning some evil social practices. His other poetic creation *Jatiya Sangita* (National Anthem)²⁹ comprises of three long poems, in which the poet is critical of women carrying heavy metal bangles in their hands, as it is a symbol of

slavery on their part. He also urges the people to do away with unethical and superstitious beliefs that cripple the organic growth of the society.

As a great admirer of Mahatma Gandhi and his unique way of life, Sri Panda has also composed a book *Arogya Bidhana* (Healing Methods)³⁰ in which, following Gandhi, he has prescribed some simple methods to prevent and cure illnesses. Comparing human life to a rose and the soul, its fragrance; the author advises proper maintainance of body and soul for a purposeful, healthy life.

Besides the books mentioned above, there are also a large number of unpublished books authored by Sri Panda, manuscripts of which are lost. But in all his creative works, the reformative zeal of Sri Panda is clearly evident. Like a true Arya Samaj follower, he not only elaborately dealt with important social issues, but also as a leading exponent of the Samaj, he gave a definite direction to the movement in Orissa, which others were later to follow. In his attempt to inject a moral enthusiasm and ethical spirit into the movement in the state, he has earned an unenviable place for himself in the heirarchy of Arya Samaj movement in Orissa.

Dr. Kuntala Kumari Sabat accepted the faith of Arya Samaj when she was in Delhi working with Krishna Prasad for the rehabilitation of widows and fallen women, to whom she finally married. Though the marriage brought an abrupt end to her literary career in Oriya language, she exhibited her talents by writing a number of Hindi books. Besides her literary contributions, she was invited by the Allahbad University and Banaras Hindu University to deliver

lectures, and also delivered the convocation address of Gurukul Viswa Vidyalaya, Brindaban. She presided over the All India Arya Mahila Sammilan at Bareilly and later became the chairperson of Harabilas Sarada's social organisation engaged in social reforms such as introduction of widow marriage and abolition of child marriage. In spite of being away from Orissa, she always tried to encourage, publish and project at the national level the best of Orissa in literature, art and sculpture. Though Sabat's literary career in Oriya language is indirectly linked with her acceptance of Arya Samaj faith, yet in her earnest appeal to God in her devotional songs, her nationalistic spirit and her spirit of rebellion and fight against social evils endear her as a major contributor to Arya Samaj literature in Orissa.³¹

Kuntala's first anthology of poems entitled *Anjali* (Offering) in 1923 is a beautiful expression of the poet's soul yearning for its Lord. The *Atma-Paramatma Bhaba* (The link between Soul and Super-Soul) forms the undertone of the poems. However, the poet's spiritual attainments reached lofty heights after she accepted the spirit of *Sanatan Dharma*. Her *Puja Paddhati* (Ways of Worship) shows the identity and the harmony of various ways to realise the ultimate. It is a master-piece in Oriya literature for its touching and universal appeal. Her odes like the odes of Keats shows her oneness with nature, an inner quest and a mystic appeal. Not only did she soar to the heights of imagination with her odes, but also she displayed her pragmatism and realistic attitude by joining the freedom struggle of India and also showed her deep concern for the poor and the downtrodden in her

anthology of poems *Archana*. The volume *Ahwan* (Call, 1930) captures the spirit of Gandhi's call to the people to join the freedom struggle. In this book, Kuntala urges the women to shed their inhibitions and plunge into the movement. We may say that, between her patriotic and spiritual feelings, the entire gamut of her poetic works seem to oscillate.

Kuntala made her debut in the field of novel with *Bhranti* (Delusion, 1923). Her other novels *Kalibohu* (The Dark Bride), *Parasamani* (Touchstone), *Raghu Arakhit* (Raghu, the Destitute) are successful works of fiction. Like a devout Arya Samajist, Kuntala wrote force fully on the themes of untouchability, child marriage, widowhood, exploitation and oppression of women in society. By exposing the evils of the society ridden with superstition and ignorance, she revolted against them. As she was a physician by profession, she prescribed the panacea for the ills from which the society suffered. Thus Dr. Kuntala Kumari Sabat like Dickens attacked the social conditions of her time and like a strong believer in the faith of Swami Dayananda showed the people enveloped in the darkness of ignorance the light to guide them in the true path of life.³²

Sri Bira Kishore Behera, who was later called Sri Bira Kishore Arya, born in the small village of Sayadpur of undivided Cuttack district had given up education and had joined the non-cooperation movement led by Gandhiji when he was a student at school. Sri Birakishore then worked as the manager of *Gorakshya Ashram* (Cow-protection Centre) at *Tanarada* of Ganjam and the monthly magazine *Arya* under Sri Sribatscha Panda. Sri Panda was so

impressed with the integrity and managerial ability of Bira Kishore that he handed over all the responsibilities of editing and managing the journal *Arya*. Besides that, Bira Kishore worked as Aryopadeshak in Orissa under Lahore Arya Pratinidhi Sabha. He also represented the underdeveloped communities of Orissa in a conference of the Hindus by Pandit Madan Mohan Malavya in Mumbai to demand for an election. He acted as the member of the working committee of the state level Harijan Sevak Sangha, a member of the district board, a member of the legislative assembly from 1937 to 1947, the member of Orissa branch of Radical Democratic Party and also took active part in various other organisations in different capacities. As a staunch follower of Swami Dayananda, he had complete faith in the Vedic religion, culture and civilization. After having set up Arya Samaj centres at Nuahat and then at Indupur of Cuttack district, he had begun the movement against social evils such as untouchability, sacrifice of animals as religious rites and child marriage and had pleaded for the causes of freedom and education of women.

Of all the books written by him, *Varna Veda*, (Difference of Caste), *Gitare Bishesh Dharma* (The Important Principle in the Gita), *Mo Dhan* (My Property), *Smarana Shakti Badhibara Upaya* (How to Enrich Memory Power), *Prarthana O Bhajana* (Prayers and Devotional Songs), *Dhramopadesh* (Religious Advice), *Dharma Tatva : Jyajna Kahaku Kahanti O Tirtha Kahaku Kahanti ?* (The Concept of Religion: What is called Yajna and What is Called Pilgrimage ?) have been published and have been appreciated by a large number of Oriya readers believing in the greatness of Swami Dayananda and his message.³³

Pandit Bedabrata Shastri, another outstanding Arya Samaj personality was formerly known as Sri Harihar Patnaik. Being inspired by the reformer Sribatscha Panda and after the completion of education from prestigious Vedic Upadesaka Mohavidyalaya at Lahore in Punjab and honoured with Sidhanta Bhusana Sahitya Ratna and Shastri, he had established himself as an outstanding organiser and committed teacher. Presently at the age of one hundred three he is still propagating the Arya Samaj ideals through books composed by him.

The list of books authored by him includes-

Yogeswar Srikrishna (Supreme Yogi Srikrishna)

Vedic Satsanga

Palli Sara

Gruha Vaidya Lembu (Home Doctor Lemon)

Gruha Vaidya Tulsi (Home Doctor Tulsi)

Baidika Bhagabat Gita (Vedic Gita)

and

Vaidika Tatwa Darshana (Vedic Philosophy)³⁴

Of the two main centres of the Arya Samaj working at Sambalpur and Bolangir in western Orissa, during the pre-independence period, the one at Samblapur started its activities due to a teacher named Bimaleswar Nanda. Apart from his teaching work, he also engaged himself in the preaching of the Vedic religion. To acquaint the student with the Vedic religion, he wrote two

books, '*Vaidik Sanatana Dharma* (Vedic Sanatana Religion) and *Bal Satyratha Prakash* (Satyratha Prakash Meant for Small Children) in Oriya. The seed of Arya Samaj which was sown by Bimaleswar Nanda at Samblapur turned into a huge tree of Arya Samaj organisation later on and thus played a major role in the spread of the movement in the western part of Orissa even after independence.³⁵

The other name that stands foremost is that of Sri Braja Bihari Bahidar who was a shining star in the firmament of Arya Samaj literature in Orissa. His creative works remain unparalleled in creating a special kind of religious literature. His first book *Chinta* (Thoughts)³⁶; filled with not only illustrations from the ancient holy books like the Vedas the Gita and other scriptures, but also the essence of the thoughts of our noble men such as Rabindra Nath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Swami Dayananda and many others; is unequalled creative work of the author. 'Kumuda and Kumudini' another important book by Sri Bahidar deals with the most thorny social issue like widow-marriage. The author favours strongly the remarriage of the widows highlighting the miseries and misfortunes of the widows at a tender age. The book pleads for a fresh lease of life for these unfortunate girls. The other book *Satya O Kalpana* (Truth and Imagination)³⁷, is an anthology of seven stories presenting social themes, which indicate the writer's well-defined philosophical outlook to life. *Prema O Parajaya*, (Love and Defeat)³⁸ is another creative work, in which writer presents through stories the disappointment and consequent suffering of the young girls in spite of their sincere and selfless love.

Inspite of his limited contributions, Braja Bihari Bahidar has a unique place in the Arya Samaj Literature in Orissa because of the simple, sincere appeal in writings and his complete dedication and devotion to Arya Samaj principles.

Another distinguished figure is Sri Priyabrata Das, who has enriched the Arya Samaj literature in Orissa with his voluminous contribution. His organisation *Vaidika Anusandhana Pratisthan* is unceasingly busy in bringing the noble precepts of the Vedas to limelight.³⁹ Moreover, he has been honoured by a number of noted organisations like *Orissa Sahitya Academy, Utkal Sanskrit Adhyapak Parishad, Jadumani Sahitya Sansad* for his remarkable literary achievement. More specifically, the award of *Veda Bagis* conferred on him during the silver jubilee function of Gurukula Amasena in 1992 speaks of his greatness in Arya Samaj Literature. He is also recipient of other prestigious awards like *Meghajee Bhai Arya Sahitya Puraskar* given to him by Arya Samaj, Shanta Kruz, Mumbai and *Maharshi Dayananda Sahitya Puraskar* sponsored by the Arya Samaj of Rajasthan.⁴⁰

Of his long list of creative works, one of the most talked-about books is 'Veda Manushya Kruta ki ?' (Is Veda creation of Man ?) The book published in 1958 has fetched the author Orissa Sahitya Academy award in 1960. In a unique way, the book introduces the Vedic manners propagated by Maharshi Dayananda and Maharshi Yaska to the people of Orissa.⁴¹

His memorable contribution to Vedic literature includes the collection of Vedic hymns in four separate volumes known as '*Rigveda Sourava*' (The Glory of Rigveda), '*Yajurveda Sourava*' (The Glory of Yajurveda), '*Samveda Sourava*' (The Glory of Sam Veda) and '*Atharva Veda Sourava*' (The Glory of Atharva Veda). Frequent editions of the books are the index of their growing popularity. Added to this, Sri Das has translated a book in Hindi by Satyabrata Siddhantalankar titled *Arya Sanskritira Mulatatva* (The Root of Aryan Culture). The book deals with the basic concepts of ancient human Vedic culture. Besides the above-mentioned books, Sri Das earns the credit of penning *Chaturveda Sukti Sangraha*, a collection of one thousand verses from the four Vedas, *Vaidika Dharma Prasnotari* (Questionnaire on Vedic Religion) which contains several questions on Vedic religion with suitable answers, *Maharshi Dayananda Saraswati* (Autobiography of Swami Dayananda Saraswati) which highlights the noble preachings and deeds of the Swami and many others. Sri Das has also dealt with the different religious rituals in his other books such as *Vaidika Upanayan Vidhi* (The Vedic Proceedure of Sacred Threading), *Vaidika Vivah Paddhati* (The Proceedure of Vedic Marriage Ceremony) *Vadika Antesthi Samskara O Shraddha Nirnaya* (The Observation of the last Rites of the Dead and Death Anniversary) and others.⁴²

Sri Das can be best remembered through his books like *Arya Samajara Parichaya* (The Identity of Arya Samaj), *Manushya O Vishwa Shanti* (Humanbeing and World peace), *Dehare Atmara Sthana* (The Place of Soul

in Body), *Veda, Vedanta Samana Nuhanti* (Veda and Vedanta are not the Same), *Gomedha O Aswamedha Adhi Pasu yajana Nuhen* (The Sacrifice of Cattle or Horse is not Animal yajna), *Vaidika Deva* (Vedic Gods), *Arya Bhajanabali* (Collection of Aryan Hymns) all of which give the readers a thorough and clear understanding of the aims and objectives of the Arya Samaj as a reformative movement. He has also engaged himself in publishing research-oriented books like *Bharatare Murtipujara Utpati O Parinama* (The Origin of Idol worship in India and its Consequence), a translation of Prof. Rajendra by Sri Yajna Prakash and *Aryamane Bharatare Videshi ki ?* (Are the Aryas Alien to India ?), again a translation of a book authored by Swami Vidyananda Saraswati, through his organisation of Vaidika Anusandhana Pratisthana' dedicated to explore the lost glories of the Vedas. Sri Das has popularised Arya Samaj literature in Orissa by dealing with relevant thought-provoking social issues and by trying to explore answers from our most ancient holy scriptures in a unique way.⁴³

But it seems, in his over enthusiastic drive to create an awareness among people about Arya Samaj as a reformative movement through his literature, he has confined himself to his writings failing to translate them into actions. He has reaped rich financial gains through his literary publications. He has thus deviated from the path directed by the movement's founder Maharshi Dayananda Saraswati.

Sri Mukunda Mishra, by profession a teacher and a natural therapist, is another established literary figure belonging to Orissa, who has contributed a

lot to Arya Samaj literature. His books *Bhagabat O Ame (We and the Bhagavat)*⁴⁴ and *Vedic Nitya Pradhana Mantra O Iswara Stuti (Vedic Hymns in our Everyday life and Prayer to God)* discuss about the spiritual impact of the holiest scripture 'Bhagabat' on the Oriya people and the relevance of the Vedas in our everyday life respectively. He has also authored books like *Uttama Swyasthya O Dirgha Jivan Nimitta Yogasana (Yoga Postures for Good Health and Longevity)* and *Uttama Swyasthya O Dirgha Jivan Nimitta Dainik Paddhati (Daily Practice for Good Health and Long Life)*, which focuss on the practical aspect of the Vedas in real life.⁴⁴

While dissussing about the new generation of writers of the Arya Samaj literature in Orissa, the name that first strikes our mind is that of Acharya Dr. Devabrat. Born at Bhakuda in the district of Undivided Cuttack in the year 1949, Baikuntha Nath Mishra changed himself to Acharya Dr. Dedabrat after being initiated into Arya Dharma in 1970. He has done his M.A. from Utkal University and has also earned the degrees of Byakaranacharya (Teacher of Grammar) from Gurukuliya Pranali, Jhajjar and Sahityacharya (Teacher in Literature) from Shri Jagannath University, Puri. He has also done his Ph. D. in Vedic Concepts from Tirupati Central Sanskrit University. At present, he is the founder and the chief of Gurukul Vedic Ashram at Veda Vyas of Rourkela and teaches Sanskrit and philosophy in school and college. Many articles of research on the Vedas both in Sanskrit and Oriya besides original essays on the Vedic mantras go to his credit as contributions to Arya Samaj literature in Orissa. At present he is busy in writing books on the Eastern and the western philosophies and a book on the belief in God and atheism.⁴⁵

Dr. Umesh Patri is another name to be reckoned with when we talk about Arya Samaj literature in Orissa. A distinguished academician of English language and literature and an erudite scholar, Dr. Umesh Patri has a large number of books to his credit both in English and Oriya. His book in English *Hindu Scriptures and American Transcendentalists* has been appreciated by both the scholars in India and abroad. His works in Oriya include *Vedas and Bibles* in two volumes ; *A Quest for Another World* ; *East looks at the West* ; *Krishna in Christ* ; *What should we eat: Grass or Meat ?* *The letter of Baula*, *The Story of Three Religions*, *Opinions and Difference of Opinions* and many others. In his books, he supports the causes of the Arya Samaj movement and opposes social evils like cow-slaughter while advocating in favour of vegetarianism. His comparative study of the different religions displays his in-depth study of the religious scriptures. Dr. Patri drives home his point by not only citing the religious scriptures as evidences, but also by taking recourse to scientific facts. I discover in him a curious mixture of a man of science and a man of religion. But like Priyabrat Das, he has strayed from the path, directed by the Arya Samaj ideals. He had turned his attention more to Oriya literature in general than concentrating in Arya Samaj literature in particular. Thus, all his writings indicate his literary excellence and help the causes of the Arya Samaj movement in Orissa.⁴⁶

Dr. Ujagar Patel, another excellent college teacher of Mathematics, is an active organiser of Arya Samaj activities in Orissa. He had edited an Oriya religious journal *Veda Piyush* from 1984 to 1987. Apart from that, his books

in Oriya include *Veddarth Prakriyadir Aitihāsik Mimānsa* (The Historical Solution to the Meaning and Process of the Vedas), *Pūjā Rahasya* (The Mystery of Offering), *Yajna Vaijñānik Rahasya* (The Mystery of knowledge and Science), *Radharu Sriradhā Paryānta* (From Radha to SriRadha). Dr. Patel makes every effort to teach the Arya Samaj ideals through his books.⁴⁷

Prafulla Kumar Bahidar, an advocate by profession, was a genius who has a definite contribution to the literature of Arya Samaj in Orissa. *Sruti O Traitabad (Trinity and Creation)* is his masterpiece, in which Mr. Bahidar in his completely novel and original style, has elaborated the Vedic Trinity philosophy. His incomplete book *Bharat Eka Aviskara* (Discovery of India) is a testimony of Mr. Bahidar's great organising ability and his erudition.⁴⁸

Sri Raj Kishore Hota, a recipient of National Award as an outstanding teacher is another prominent figure in Arya Samaj literature in Orissa. A headmaster of a high school, Sri Hota has composed a number of books in Oriya. His publications include *Bhagawan* (God), *Rig Veda Giti Manjari* (Poetry in the Rig Veda), *Yajna Naayan Brata Katha* (The story of Yajna Narayan), *Omkar Stotra* (The Utterings of Omkara), *Sruti* (Creation) etc. His books show his authority on the Vedic scripts and his boundless zeal for the propagation of Vedic ideals formulated by Swami Dayananda in Orissa.⁴⁹

Pandit Trinath Sarangi had shot into fame with his book *Sambhabami Yuge Yuge*, a book on the incarnations of God on this earth to remove evils. As a spokes-person of Vedic literature and a watchman of the Indian tradition, he has written a number of books basing on the Puranas of Hindu religion.

His book *Purana Vyasa Kruta Ki ? (Is Purana created by Vyasa?)*⁵⁰ rejects the concept that Vyasa is the creator of Puranic literature by gathering evidences from the Vedas. However, he does not try to disprove the Puranas altogether, but he attempts to reveal that aspect of literature which has not been discussed so far. We may sum up to say that, Pandit Sarangi endeavours to correct our views regarding Hindu Puranas.

Banaprasthi Anadi VedaSevaka is another name to be reckoned with in the field of Arya Samaj literature in Orissa. *Mandira Prabesha (How to Enter Temple)*, a translation by him of Swami Ananda Swami Saraswati's Hindi Book *Mandir Prabesha* initiates the readers to the spiritual world of enlightenment. His original literary contributions include *Atharva Veda re Bhoomi Sukta* (Chapter to the Earth in Atharva Veda) dealing with heart-touching verses addressed to the mother earth, '*Vaidika Balya Sikshya*' (Childhood Learning in Vedic Manner) focussing on illuminating minds of young learners through questions and answers pertaining to the Vedic thought, '*Nari Gouraba*' (The Glory of Woman) celebrating the glorious role of women in the society, *Vaidika Ashrama Varna O Sanskara* (Vedic Ashrams, Sects and Rituals) stressing in the usefulness of celibacy, family life, renunciation of family at old age and going to forest and giving oneself up completely to Almighty, *Vedopodesha* (Vedic Advice) and *Vaidika Pancha Maha yajna* (Five Great Sacrifice of Vedic Religion) dealing with the different procedures of leading a pure, religious and spiritual life, are out-standing in their merit.⁵¹

Dr. Usha Padhi, a college teacher by profession, is a reputed freelance writer who has contributed several articles to newspapers and journals

in Oriya related to the Arya Samaj movement in Orissa. *Sri Dayanidhi Mishra*, a teacher of Balasore was influenced by Brahamananda Saraswati and his dedicated work for social upliftment of the downtrodden. He was responsible for bringing out journals like *Ashram Jyoti*, *Banabasi Sandesh* and *Voice of Vedic Culture* propagating Vedic ideals. A book *Tirtha and Moksha* (Pilgrimage and Soul's Liberation), authored by him proves his in-depth knowledge of the Vedas.⁵²

Last, but not the least, the name that belongs to this group of new generation of poets is that of Dr. Arya Kumar Harshabardhan. Besides his purely literary contributions to Oriya language and literature, he has also contributed a number of articles to Arya Samaj journals like the *Arya Jagat*, *Sarbadeshike*, *Hindu Sabha Varta*, *Rastravani*, *Panchajanya*, *Ashram Jyoti*, *Veda Piyusha*, *Kula Bhumi* and others. Recently his booklet *Ram Setu* has attracted much public attention when Ram Setu controversy has taken the whole of India by storm. At present, he is busy in writing the biography of Swami Brahmaananda Saraswati, a great leader of the movement.

Besides the writers mentioned above, there is a big group of minor writers who have enriched the Arya Samaj literature in Orissa with their creations. Their names with their contributions are mentioned below.

Dileswar Patel⁵³ is a propagator of Arya Samaj in Sundergarh, a district in the western part of Orissa. Though, he is an Ayurvedic practitioner by profession, he has authored two books i.e. *Divya Dayananda* (Holy Dayananda) and *Manaba Dharma* (Human Religion) the second one being a

translation. The books try to preach the message of Swami Dayananda. *Swami Sudhananda Saraswati*, is another prolific writer who has definite contribution to Arya Samaj literature in Orissa. His books *Vaidika Sanskrit* (Vedic Culture), *Dharma Charana Kahinki ?* (Why Religious Behaviour ?) *Asantu*, *Veda Adhyana Kariba* (Let us Read the Vedas) *Yajna Vidhi* (The Proceedure of Yajna) and *Sandhyaposana* (The Evening Prayer) Shanno Devi, a woman writer in her two books *Vedare Nari* (Woman in the Vedas) and *Vaidika Karma Kanda O Veda Pathare Nariaar Adhikar* (Right of Woman in Vedic Rituals and Vedic Recitation) has emphasised the honourable place enjoyed by women in the society of the Vedic Age. Brajabandhu Panda is another writer who may be remembered for his books like *Yajna Mimansa* (The Solution of Yajna) *Sukhara Swarupa* (The Real Image of Happiness) and *Dharma Swarupa* (The Real Image of Religion), which have helped in the growth of Arya Samaj literature in Orissa.⁵⁴ Bhagaban Acharya has written books like *Vaidika Agnihotra Vidhi* (The Proceedure of Vedic Agngihotra), *Dayanandanka Atmajivani* and translation of the autobiography of Dayananda, which have earned for him a place in the Arya Samaj literature in Orissa.

Birendra Kar, with his books, *Vaidika Nitya Karma Vidhi* (The Routine Work according to the Vedas), *Yoga Darshan* ; Nirakar Das with books such as *Prathama Pranama* (First Obeissance), *Aryabartara Abarta* (The Kingdom of Aryabarta), *Kuru Uru Parichaya* (The Identity of Kuru Uru) ; then Birendra Panda with his books like *Vaidika Dharma Mimansa* (The

Solution to Vedic Religion), *Shiva Shankalpa* (Shiva Promises), *Sukhi Parivara* (Happy Family), Sachindra Kumar Swain with his books *Yuga Nirmata Maharshi Dayananda* (Maharshi Dayananda, the Epoch-maker), *Arya Samajra Abadana* (Contributions of Arya Samaj) have definitely given a concrete shape to Arya Samaj literature as it is in the present form.

Banaprasthi Jagadananda with his *Kulta Purana*, and *Shuddha Hanuman Chalisa* and Lambodhar Pattnaik with his *Mansha Kan Manushyara Bhojana ? (Is Meat the Meal of Man?) Murti Puja and Sanghatik Manasika Roga* (Idol Worship and Critical Mental Diseases) have greatly improved the Oriya literature in general and Arya Samaj literature in particular.

Pandit Bishikeshan Shastri was a teacher, who played a distinct role in strengthening the Arya Samaj movement in Western Orissa. For a period of time he was in charge of editing 'Ashram Jyoti'. His books like *Adhyatimaka Galpamala* (Collection of Spiritual Stories), *Ashram Bhajana Mala* (Ashram Devotional Songs), *Kanya O Brahma Charya* (Girl and Celebacy) etc., the total number amounting to twenty-five have shown a great potential in him as a man dedicated to the Arya Samaj ideals.⁵⁵

However, the Arya Samaj literature would be incomplete without mentioning the contribution of another prolific writer belonging to this group. He is Pandit Dhaneswar Behera, who has become famous for his books *Vaidika Prashnottari* (Vedic Questionnaire), *Prabhu Darshan* (Calling on God), *Swami Dayanandanka Jivani* (The Biography of Swami Dayananda) and *Vidyarthi Darpana* (The Mirror of Students) in Oriya and *The Only*

Way of Life, Arya Samaj and Our Duty and *Bhagaban Veda* in English have contributed a lot for the development of Arya Samaj literature in Orissa.⁵⁶

While we talk about Arya Samaj literature in Orissa, it is important to mention about three literary societies that have played a key role in helping the growth of Arya Samaj Literature in Orissa. *Utkal Vaidika Sahitya Sansthana*, Vedavyas, Rourkela, a literary organisation founded by Swami Brahmananda Saraswati has a major role on bringing out different books both in original and in translation connected with Arya Samaj Movements. Similarly *Utkal Sahitya Sansthana*, Amsena, Nuapara and *Vaidika Anusandhana Pratisthan*, Bhubaneswar have also done a lot in propagating Arya Samaj Literature aiming at broad social reforms in Orissa.⁵⁷

The role of different magazines in highlighting the view points of Arya Samaj can not be undermined when we discuss about Arya Samaj literature in Orissa. With the first printing press making its appearance in the later nineteenth century, and subsequent publication of journals like *The Jnanaruna*, *The Prabodh Chandrika*, *The Sambada Bahika* and many others, renaissance in form of literature began to have its effect on the Orissa soil. The Arya Samaj as a reformative movement spread its wings in Orissa through a number of monthly, quarterly and fortnightly publications in Oriya, Hindi and English. *Sanskara* (The Reformer), a monthly magazine started in 1903-04, brought out twenty-two issues before having a premature death. However, all the issues contained the preaching and ideals of Arya Samaj Movement.⁵⁸

The Asha saw the light of the day on the 13th April, 1913, first as a weekly journal and a later it came out daily. Sribatscha Panda had a great role in making this daily paper a grand success in meeting the objectives of the reform movements undertaken by the Arya Samaj. As he was a government employee, Sashibhusan Ratha had been entrusted with the charge of the editorship. Later, both of them fell out with each other which resulted in the premature close of this journal.⁵⁹

The other journals that worked feverously to root out evils, both social, and religious under the banner of the Arya Samaj is *Sanskrit*, a monthly magazine, which began in 1926 and continued for about a year, *The Arya*, which had its birth in 1928 and carried on its issues till 1934,⁶⁰ *The Banabasi Sandesh*, a monthly journal, which gave wide coverage to Vedic philosophy and other reformative articles have stopped their circulation. *The Voice of Vedic Culture* which started in 1973, continues till now, thanks to the great effort put in by its editor Dr. Umesh Patri and a host of well-wishers. Apart from the above-mentioned journals, *Ashram Jyoti*, *The Vedic Sanskriti Suhda*, *The Veda Piyusha*, *The Veda Rashmi*, *The Kula Bhoomi* and *The Arya Bani* are the other journals of repute that contributed their efforts one time or the other in turning Swamiji's dreams into a reality by building up a society free from blind beliefs and social evils.

It is an established fact that literature reflects the society and guides its movement. Thoughts in pen and paper can spread far and wide than spoken words of the greatmen. Maharshi Dayananda had realised this and that was

why, he had expressed all his revolutionary concepts through his innumerable writings. The Arya Samaj literature in Orissa does not lag behind in this respect. Many Arya Samaj followers have been able to create an awareness in the political, social, instructive, economic, historical and scientific fields through their literary efforts. But there is still the scarcity of original literature on Arya Samaj in Orissa. Sribatscha Panda, Kuntala Kumari Sabat and Umesh Patri have written books on religious and spiritual consciousness, yet many revolutionary topics are yet to be dealt with by the men of literature concerned with Arya Samaj movement in Orissa. Moreover, there is neither any organisation nor any publication unit, specifically meant for the publication of Arya Samaj literature in Orissa. It is hightime, a sincere effort was made for the upliftment of Arya Samaj literature in Orissa by adopting specific purposful ways.

The Arya Samaj movement, which initially began as a religious movement, broadened its horizon by bringing about reforms in social, political and other fields, besides religion as well. Literature played a pivotal role in helping to arrive at the goal of creating a free and enlightened society. A large number of authors have contributed through literature in promoting the objectives of the Samaj. However, it is unfortunate to note that a few writers have used this as a platform to earn either fame or money for themselves; thus going against the principles of the Arya Samaj. Personal ambitions have become the most important factor. But it is still a matter of consolation that, there are a few dedicated individuals who have used their pens to spread the message

of the Samaj despite growing lack of interest in the spiritual values of life in this modern age. Thus, we may sum up that the Arya Samaj literature in Orissa fulfills the dreams of Arya Samaj in a limited way.



End Notes :

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