CHAPTER III
LALA LAJPAT RAI ON PRE-COLONIAL EDUCATION

Several of Lala Lajpat Rai's writings bring into focus his ideas on education in earlier times. His views on the education of the ancient and medieval periods of history provide a clue to his own perception of education. Lajpat Rai's understanding of the past educational system does not find expression in any one particular book or article but his ideas are scattered in his numerous writings. Some of these include 'Reform and Revival' (1904), 'The Social Genius of Hinduism' (1919), 'William Archer's "India and the Future"' (1919), 'The Right Honourable Mr. Fisher on Educational Problems' (1919), 'Why the National School failed' (1920) and books like The Arya Samaj (1915), The Problem of National Education (1920), and Unhappy India (1928), which all reflect his ideas on the subject.

A number of scholars have studied Lajpat Rai, and his life and times, but his ideas on education in the past have not been undertaken seriously. For example, Purushotam Nagar in Lala Lajpat Rai The Man And His Ideas, (1977) in his discussion of social objectives does take up the educational concerns of Lajpat Rai. He underlines that Lajpat Rai's views were 'catholic' and that he was deeply impressed by the American system of education.¹ He also comments on the problems raised in connection with national education, and points out Lajpat Rai's views on spiritual ashrams and gurukuls. He does not however, take up a study of his ideas on the education of the past. S.R. Bakshi in Lajpat Rai Socio-Political Ideology (1990) has a similar approach and says that Lajpat Rai wanted an all round development of mental and physical faculties of young boys and girls to build them as better citizens but again, no serious discussion of education in earlier times is taken up in this work.² B.R. Garg in Lala Lajpat Rai As An Educationist (1973) discusses Lajpat Rai's ideas on national education. The first four chapters deal with

1. Purushotam Nagar Lala Lajpat Rai The Man And His Ideas New Delhi: Manohar 1971. 232-233

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growth of national education in India. The next thirteen chapters focus on a biographical sketch and his major works. Another eleven short chapters deal with some specific concerns of Lala Lajpat Rai like, defects in the existing educational system and the need of national education, meaning and aims of National Education, the responsibility of the State for education, courses of study, vocational education, physical education, teaching of patriotism and co-operative system of education, negro education in U.S.A and education of depressed classes in India. Education in ancient India is dealt with in three pages only and is based on his two major works *Arya Samaj* and *Unhappy India*. There is ample scope therefore, for a critical analysis of Lajpat Rai’s ideas and his perspective on the theme.

The present chapter attempts to understand Lajpat Rai’s concept of the educational system of the past, from earliest times upto the establishment of British rule. In order to understand his particular perspective on past education, a brief idea of the earlier system of education is taken up in section one. The second section deals with Lajpat Rai’s views on past education and the third section attempts an analysis of Lajpat Rai ideas on the education of the past.

I

Respect for learning has always believed to have been the redeeming feature of 'the east'. Ancient education systems are mentioned in the *Vedas, Samhitas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads*. The later Vedic period is seen as a golden age of literature and intellectual progress. The highest level of which is registered in the works known as *Aranyakas* and *Upanishads*. They are considered to be rich sources on the education structure of the Vedic period.

The system of education recorded in the *Rigveda* is concerned with the acquisition of the highest knowledge and saving wisdom of ordinary secular

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3. *These Include: Problems of National Education in India, Unhappy India, The Arya Samaj, The United State of America, The Evolution of Japan and other Papers, Report of All India collegiate-students conference held at Nagpur on 25th December 1920, Political Future of India, Young India, India’s Will to Freedom, Story of my Deportation, The Ideals of Non-co-operation, England’s Debt to India and The Massage of Gita*

knowledge, or intermediate truths, for the purpose of worldly or economic life. Education was to realise the ultimate truth or Satya and not merely mastery or recitation of its lessons. There is no doubt however, that certain secular non-religious educational avenues existed to build up economic life in relation to agriculture, industry and trade, and various arts and crafts. The aim of education was the achievement of the highest knowledge or muki and the supreme reality by conquest of desire, by a disciplined mind and a detachment of the objective world. It was a process of life and growth, of discipline and development of the mind as the instrument of knowledge.

Rigvedic civilization was based on plain living and high thinking. Its makers were 'Rishis, or seers who stood for a direct vision or realization of truth by means of tapas or a total pursuit of the ideal in extreme austerity or penance till it was revealed to concentrated contemplation upon it.' The teacher is described as Muni, Deveshita, Vipra, Manishi, Vedhas and Kavi. The teacher acquired knowledge by a process of meditation and imparted it to his select pupils, including his sons, whom he could train in meditation by admitting them to his household as its resident pupils. Thus, the Vedic school was a domestic school. The teacher imparted his revealed knowledge orally and the students had to memorize it by constant repetition and collective recitation in monotonous voices.

Later on, a Rishi or teacher was one who would start the learning process by imparting to his son and others the texts of knowledge he had personally acquired and which were the special property of his family. Each such family of Rishis was in this way functioning like a Vedic school, admitting pupils for instruction in the literature or texts in its possession. Rigveda defines a Rishi as the person 'who is possessed of vision, resulting from the Tapas of Brahma'; Munis as 'the seers of truths beyond the serves.'

There were different kinds of priests like Hasti i.e. leading priest he used to

5. R.K. Mookerji Ancient Indian Education 35-36. Blacksmith, Tanners, Leatherer, Plougher, money-lender, architecture of stone were known.
6. Ibid 54-56
7. Ibid 81
9. R.K. Mookerji Ancient Indian Education 211
10. Ibid 23-24
recite poems or hymns during sacrifice, *Udgatri*, sang *sarnans* during *soma* sacrifice and *Adhvaryes*, perform manual acts of sacrifice. *Brahmans* and *kshatriyas* were *Rishis* and women were called *Rishikas*. One of the well-known teachers was *Yaryanasatika*. Manu mentions two classes of teachers.

1) *Upadhyaya* who took to teaching as a profession for his livelihood and taught only a portion of the *Veda* or *Vedanga* and (2) *Acharya* who taught the *Veda* with its *Kalpasutras* and *Upanishads* without charging fees. The *Upanishads* also mention learned conference of philosophers, meeting at the court of king *Janaka* of Videha from the Kuru-Panchala country headed by *Rishi Yajnavalkya*. The conference was attended by both men and women.  

Education was for the few who were ready to dedicate their life for the attainment of highest knowledge and truth. It was thus, not meant for many. The *Dharam Sutra* recognises the *Vidya rambha* ceremony as the initiation to education at the age of five. The *Upanayana* ceremony followed later when the pupil was endowed with a spiritual body by the *Acharya*. The pupil was admitted without any fee and had to follow the rules of *Brahmacharya* in the *Surukula* i.e. domestic school. Admission solely depended upon the pupil’s fitness. A pupil could change teachers and schools. Later on, the end of studentship did not mean the end of education but they were *charakas*, scholars wandering in quest of knowledge.

Students during the Rig Vedic period had to perform certain duties. First of all, they had to learn by heart the *Veda* of his school by repeating after his teacher. Priests gave instructions on his duties (*Vidhi*). They had to explain the meaning of the hymns and rituals (*artha veda*). They had to follow rigorous discipline and work for their teacher both in home and field, attend to his sacred fire, look after his cattle, collect alms for him, accompany him and in the free time study the *Vedas*. Among the duties of the student was the daily begging for food which occupied an important place. The pupils were to

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1. R.C. Mazumdar *History and Culture of the Indian People* Vol. II. The Age of Imperial Unity and also see R.K. Mookerji *Ancient Indian Education* 170
2. R.K. Mookerji *Ancient Indian Education* 173
3. Ibid 174-175
4. There is reference of scholars, for example, Uddalaka Aruni and learned philosopher Patanchala Kapya: R.K. Mookerji *Ancient Indian Education* 82
5. F.E. Keay *Ancient Indian Education* 21, 24, 25
avoid honey, meat, garments for the body and collyrium for the eyes, except
during his illness. He was not to mention his teacher’s name and should avoid all kinds of conveyances, shoes and umbrellas, singing and dancing, harsh
and coarse speech, and even women while undergoing his education.16

There existed a most affectionate relation between the teacher and his pupils. They often resided together in court and there was intellectual communion. The pupils were always in close contact with their teachers like father and son. No regular fee was charged and pupils were provided with free boarding and lodging by their teacher. Profound respect and personal service were expected from the pupils, and teachers in return regarded it their moral duty to equip their pupils with all their moral and material improvement.17 The relationship between the teacher and taught extended to a monitorial system. More intelligent and advanced students were associated with their teachers values in the work of teaching.18 They were appointed as monitors for the assistance of the teacher in conducting the class, maintaining order and even giving some lessons.

Study was to be conducted by a Brahmana, since learning from a Kshatriya or a Vaisya was permitted only in times of distress.19 Relation between the teacher and the student was one of give and take though it was considered as a sin to accept gifts from students. The teacher received money from his pupils as it was also a means of livelihood, he could even beat his pupils to correct them. The beating was done by rope or bamboo and applied not to the head but the lower part of the body. In early Vedic schools instruction was confined to young Brahmans as preparation for their future vocation as priests. Before 500 BC, the education of young Kshatriyas and Vaisyas had come under Brahman control.20

Rig Vedic education was marked by a variety of contents comprising not only the hymns or prayers to God, invocations and sacrificial songs; but

17. F.E. Keay Ancient Indian Education, An inquiry into its origin, development and ideas London: Oxford University Press 1918 (12-13) (cited further as Ancient Indian Education) 178-180
18. Ibid
19. R.K. Mookerji Ancient Indian Education 91
20. Ibid 101
also ballads and fragments of secular poetry together with hymns giving expression to highest thought, philosophy or metaphysics.\textsuperscript{21} There is reference of princely education in the \textit{Vedas} and military science. They were taught to mount horses and elephants, manage chariots, wield the bow and other weapons and even literature and fine Arts. The subjects of study included the four \textit{Vedas}, \textit{Itihasa} and \textit{Purana}, \textit{Vyakarana}, \textit{Rasi}, science of numbers, \textit{Nidhi} or Minerology, \textit{Vakovakya}, \textit{Tarkasastra} or science of logic, \textit{Ekayana}, \textit{Niti-sastra}, \textit{Brahma-vidya}, \textit{Bhutariyda}, Biology, \textit{Kshatra-vidya}, military science, \textit{Nakshatra-vidya}, Astronomy or \textit{Deva-jana-vidya}, arts and crafts \textit{Jana-vidya}, and \textit{Ayurveda} or Medicine.\textsuperscript{22}

The \textit{Rigveda} reveals two stages or levels of education. The first was the matter of the \textit{Rigveda} itself and the second was \textit{tapas}. The recitation of texts, pronunciation, comprehension of their meaning and a summary of Vedic ext was considered important. Education had reached a climax and achieved a high degree of efficiency and service in this period. A more remarkable literary development was registered during the later Vedic period with its branches of \textit{Brahmanas}, \textit{Aranyakas}, and \textit{Upanishads} among others. Evaluation no more was an end but a means to an end. The necessity of self-study, \textit{Svadhyaya}, was combined with the instructions of the teacher. The period of studentship was fixed at twelve years. \textit{Brahmacharya} duties continued as before as did the arrangement of study. New subjects of study were added such as \textit{vedangas}, and \textit{sutra} and additional methods of learning emerged. Catechism, explaining a subject by an intelligent and graduated series of questions and answers as well as discussions were important methods of education. As the individual was the chief concern and centre of this education, it was individualistic by nature. It was not exclusively a theoretical and academic pursuit but a parallel liberal education also existed and was related to a craft or profession. Industrial schools were found mainly in the form of guilds.\textsuperscript{23} There also existed guilds of cultivators, herdsmen, traders, money-lenders, artisans, artists and dancers. There was a schools of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{21} R.K. Mookerji \textit{Ancient Indian Education} 90-93
\item \textsuperscript{22} Information on the content of Vedic Education is from R.K. Mookerji \textit{Ancient Indian Education}
\item \textsuperscript{23} Ibid 353
\end{itemize}
sculpture. In Sanskrit, Buddhist and Jain literature there are references of 64 arts and crafts (kalas). Secular education provides training to different pursuits like the carpenter, the physician and weaver. Besides domestic schools and charakas there were regular organizations for advanced study and research. Sanghas were assemblies of learned men meeting for discussions on the language and philosophy of the Vedas.

By the end of the Vedic period a clearer picture of the different stages in schooling emerges. The domestic schools run by a rishi or teacher had several stages – in the primary stage was the noisy recitation of Vedic hymns, in the second stage was collective work where each had to achieve for himself through individual effort i.e. solitary meditation. Sanghas (assemblies) were considered as the highest stage of education where the method of discussion in form of seminars was used. The method of teaching thus, remained oral. Recitation was considered as an act. Importance was given to the second of the letters and syllables. There were long recitation of mantras in Brahma Mahurat and there were different ways of recitation according to a sound system of phonology.

In addition to the Vedic system, there existed education and learning centred around Buddhist monasteries. All education, sacred as well as secular, was in the hands of the monks. The vow of chastity and poverty were the essential mark of monastic life. Originally, they dwelt in woods, at the foot of trees, on hill-sides, in mountain caves, in cemeteries, in forests, in open plains and in heaps of straw. In the initiation ceremony followed by the Buddhists, the teacher tied a girdle around the student who became a Bhikshu. There was an intimate relation between the teacher and pupil. The pupil was to help his teacher and teacher could expel and terminate the

24. R.K. Mookerji Ancient Indian Education 352. It was established by the master-craftsman Kunika was very famous in its locality and produced accomplished sculptors like Naka and Gomitaka to whom India owes her ear lies statues of colossal figures, male and female
25. R.K. Mookerji Ancient Indian Education xxii-xxx
26. One of these were the Panchata-Parishad, an Academy whose meetings were attended daily even by the king of the country for example Pravahana Jaivali. R.K. Mookerji Ancient Indian Education 83
27. F.E. Keay Ancient Indian Education 25
28. R.K. Mookerji Ancient Indian Education 26
29. F.E. Keay Ancient IndianEducation 30
studies of the pupil. The monks and the pupils then came to live in Viharas. There were Viharas, and Prasadas, Addhayogas and Guhas. As in the Brahmanical system, the method of education stressed upon the efficacy of the method of debate and discussion in education. The system, in a limited way, was opened to women and produced numerous remarkable women as leaders of religious reformation. They became nuns and were considered to be the 'training ground' for other women, like Manora purani of Buddhaghosha. There was also provision of secular education for Brahmacharins. Kaushitaki Brahamana tells of an Aryan lady Pathyasvarti of the title of Vak i.e. by her learning.

Although, there was no idea of mass education. People learnt what they felt was needed for their livelihood. The spread of education was closely related with religion. With the emergence of Buddhism there also emerged new education centres, catering to a larger category of pupils. Generally, education was provided within religious buildings or temple. Education of a more formal kind, with greater emphasis on secular subjects, continued to be provided at some of the Buddhist viharas and monasteries. Students from distant places, including Tibet, were drawn to these famous educational centres. Educational institutions received financial help or support from the rulers in the form of large grant of money and land.

There is no evidence pointing to individual or particular seats of learning at the initial stages. Evidence indicates that it was concerned with the geographical limits within which the Rishi lived and moved. It was marked by the region on the banks of rivers occupied by the Rishi or the makers of their political and spiritual well being. With time a number of famed seats of learning emerged e.g. Yashtivana, Venuvana, and Sitavana at Rajagriha; Purbarama at Sravasti; Nigrodharma at Kapilavasta, Mango-grove at Vaisali. These elaborate establishments were managed by monks. These Viharas were also schools of arts and crafts, and business. There were number of Buddhists monasteries in Nagarkot, Gandhara, Taxila, Kashmir Jalandhara,

30. F.E. Keay Ancient Indian Education 32
31. Ibid 60
32. R.K. Mookerji Ancient Indian Education 55-57
33. Ibid 53
Mathura, Ayodhya, Prayaga, Kosambi Kapilavastu, Sarnath, Vaisali, Nepal, Magadha and Nalanda for example. The famous seats of learning Nalanda, Valabhi and Mithila were also a significant part of the educational system of the ancient times.

Nalanda was an ancient village near Rajagriha in Bihar.\textsuperscript{34} It became popular with the rise of Mahayana Buddhism at the beginning of the Christian era by 4th century. Till the 5\textsuperscript{th} century it was the seat of Brahmanical learning and home of the \textit{Tirthikas}. The kings endowed Nalanda with lands and gifts of buildings. There were 1,500 teachers in charge of 8,500 students and concentration was on academic work. The students were disciplined and provided with academic titles like \textit{Kulpati} and \textit{Pandita}.\textsuperscript{35}

Valabhi University, like Nalanda, was the outcome of royal benefactions. Hiuen Tsang wrote that Valabhi had 'some hundred \textit{Saingharamas} with about 6,000 priests'. It also attracted students from all parts of India. They provided not only religious but secular \textit{Vidyas} like \textit{Dharma}, \textit{Niti}, \textit{Vartta}, or \textit{Chikitsa Sastras}. This university had six colleges with strength of 108 teachers, a Central Hall called House of Science. Vikramasila scholars were Jananapada, Vairochana, Setari, Ratna kara, Ratnavajra, Dipamkara.\textsuperscript{36}

Mithila was a centre of Brahmanical culture under the philosopher king Janaka. Jagaddhara was a versatile scholar as well as Vidyapati. It developed as a famous school of \textit{Nyaya} under the great masters of logic Gangera, Vardhamana, Pak Shadhara and others.

With the advent of Islam in India the sphere of education further widened. Islam attached immense importance to the acquisition of knowledge and the aim of education was to attain knowledge in the study of the \textit{Quran}, the \textit{Ahaditi} and other sciences to apprehend the truth.\textsuperscript{37} Islam contributed immensely to the organization and extension of knowledge. Education was

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\item[\textsuperscript{34}.] According to Buddhist scriptures it was the place where Mahavira met Gosala and was converted as a \textit{bahira} or suburb of Rajagriha
\item[\textsuperscript{35}.] For details see R.K. Mookherji \textit{Ancient Indian Education}. Foreign scholars at Nalanda were Thonmi, Hiuian Chao, Tao Hi and Aryavarman.
\item[\textsuperscript{36}.] Ibid
\item[\textsuperscript{37}.] S.M. Jaffar \textit{Education in Muslim India} Lahore: Ripon Printing Press 1936 (cited further as Education in Muslim India)
\end{itemize}
regarded as a preparation for life and for life after death. It was believed that religion was at the root of all study. In fact, education was greatly valued as is evident from Hazrat Shaikh Dehlavi's, last wish that he should be buried in the place where the students of his madrasah used to keep their shoes.38

There were numerous schools in private houses, village schools and state schools where Muslims and Hindus received education together. In the private schools, the teachers, as a point of honour, taught their pupils without receiving anything. In the village the school master was paid fees in kind.39 Salaried teachers and paid professors were employed in state schools and eminaries. Every house of a Mullah, Maulana or Maulvi was in itself an important centre of culture and good breeding, which often provided free and board and lodging to the students.40 They were taught by the fathers or by learned men for example, Abdul Qadir, the renowned scholar and author of the Tariikh-i-Badaoni during the time of Akbar, completed his studies in the home of his talented teacher Mian Ali Beg, in the city of Agra.41

In maktabs, madrasahs, mosques, monasteries and private houses three forms of education existed. First was the primary education, imparting elementary knowledge. Second was secondary education which was obtained in grammar schools, high schools and private academies; and lastly the university or higher education with two levels basic and advanced seemingly an undergraduate and post graduate courses. Discussion and Mushaeras or poetical symposium were commonly used methods which broadened the view on different subjects.42 The medium of instruction was Persian, and the study of Arabic was compulsory for Musalmans. The Urdu language also originated during this period.

There was not only scholastic learning but fine arts such as painting, dancing and sculpture which were also cultivated from chosen Ustads. Technical training, or vocational knowledge was diffused by the system of apprenticeship. There were karkhanas or workshops for receiving instruction

38. S.M. Jaffar Education in Muslim India 9
39. Ibid 11-12
40. Ibid 145 -146
41. Ibid 18 - 21
42. Ibid 145 -146
43. N.N. Law Promotion of Learning in India London: Longmans Green and Co., 1916 164
44. Ibid 18 - 21

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in particular arts and crafts. Commercial education was also imparted to provide scientific training in the structure of inventory and commerce. By the 17th Century, 'Men of the Sword' emerged who were commanders and cavalrymen, and devoted their lives to the art of war. They were skilled in horseback riding, archery, sword-fighting and firearms. Excellent scholars of art and literature known as 'Men of the Pen', Ahl-i-qalam were another category. They were Hindu Munshis to keep accounts generally and to write letters in Persian to the nobles and princes of the late 17th and early 18th century. 'The Men of the sword 'ahl-i-saif' and the ahl-i-kalam both reflected an extension in the content of education. Elegant speech, poetry, Arabic literature in prose style, poetry, Arabic grammar, syntax and vocabulary were added to an adib's education. Rulers, nobles and merchants patronized architects. Painters were encouraged and patronized in courtly circles. Calligraphy emerged during this period. Wood workers, metalworkers, weavers, rug-makers potters, porcelain-makers, embroiders and other skilled artisans were patronized.

There existed a most cordial relation between the teacher and his pupils. They often resided together like father and son, scholars of art and literature charged no regular fee and students were provided with free boarding and lodging. Profound respect and sometimes personal service were expected from the pupils, and teachers in return, regarded it their moral duty to equip their pupils with all that was essential for their moral and material progress. Maktabs followed rote learning and Madrasahs adopted the lecture method. Learning was free and the expenses were met entirely by the rulers and the rich. The monitorial system existed where more intelligent and advanced students were associated with their masters in the work of teaching and assisted in conducting the class, maintaining order and guiding lessons. Stipends and scholarships were granted to the promising students. No distinction was made between the sons of the rich and of the poor. Even

42. S.M. Jaffar Education in Muslim in India 12-13
44. Stephen P. Blake Shahjahanabad the Sovereign City in Mughal India 1639-1739 Sydney: Cambridge University Press 1993
45. Ibid 130-131
46. F. E. Keay Ancient Indian Education 178-180
47. S. M. Jaffar Education in Muslim India 5-6 and 10-11
upto the 1830’s Indigenous elementary schools derived their principal support from the patronage of a single wealthy family and the institutions of higher leaning depended generally upon the support of the community in the town or village in which they were established.⁴⁸ In late 18th century even Elipinstone found that the Peshwa’s charities amounted to Rs. 15,00,000 and the custom of dakshina contributed to the encouragement of classical learning. In Bengal Raja Kishan Chandra of Nadia and Rani Bhabani of Rajshahi took a keen interest in education. Krishna Chandra gave a stipend of Rs. 200 to every student who reported at the tools in Nadia and the Rani encouraged Sanskrit education by instituting endowments.⁴⁹

In primary or elementary schools the children learnt to write on takhtis and the curriculum comprised reading, writing and elementary arithmetic, in the secondary and higher stages it included the art of administration, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, physics, medicine, natural philosophy, rhetoric, law ritual, accounts, agriculture, economics and history and Sanskrit works for Hindus. Science received greater attention. Muslim rulers patronized architects, painters, calligraphist, woodworkers, metal workers, weavers, rug-makers, potters, porcelain makers, embroiders and other skilled artisans. They were taught in separate schools because they were not included in the collegiate curriculum.⁵⁰ There was a little change in the contents of education with the changing needs of society. A training in correspondence, account keeping, commercial accounts and agricultural accounts formed part of the curriculum in certain schools.

There is no doubt that the education of females was greatly restricted by the pardah but there was no obstacle as far as the young girls were concerned as they were taught in at home or in schools. The teachings of Islam were meant for all human beings. Prohet Muhammad believed that the acquisition of knowledge was compulsory for all the faithful, men as well as women. Bibi Fatima and her daughter were efficiently equipped with intellectual attainments. There were separate schools for girls, but usually

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⁴⁹. Ibid 48
⁵⁰. S.M. Jaffar *Education in Muslim India* 21-23
they received their education in their own houses or in those of their teachers, living near them. Education was given to the girls according to their traditional 'requirements'.

Schooling began at age of four with the memorization of verses from the Quran, followed by law and theology, Arabic grammar, diction and syntax, Islamic law and the principles of jurisprudence, tafsir (exegesis of the Quran), hadith, kalam (scholastic philosophy) and mantiq (logic) were introduced. Knowledge of Arabic, Persian and Turkish along with Hindustani was mastered by the amirs who maintained elaborate libraries. They also took interest in music, singing and dancing, and hold mushairas.

The Muslim rulers established several schools and colleges in an effort to extend education. Qutubuddin Aibak known for his literary tastes and scholarship, established 'hundreds of mosques' which were centres of both religion and learning. Under Ilutmish, Delhi continued to be the resort of learned men. Nasiruddin opened the Nasiriyiya college at Jalandhar. Firoz Tughluq not only repaired and reconstructed old madrasahs but built new ones. He is believed to have founded thirty colleges and the most magnificent was the Firoz-Shahi madrasaha, a residential college. Sher Shah opened the Sher Shah Madrasaha in 1520 in Patiala district. Akbar established a number of maktabs and madrashas and contributed to the advancement of education. Shah-Jahan founded a new college at Shahjahanabad. Even Several centres of higher learning in Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian flourished during the 18th century. The major centres of Sanskrit learning were Benaras, Ujjain, Tirhut, Nadia, Rajshahi, Tanjore and Trivandrum. Calcutta had 28 seminaries of Sanskrit learning with 173 scholars in 1818; Nadia had 31 with 747 scholars in 1801. in Rajashahi in 1834-35. Adam found to 38 colleges of Sanskrit education, 19 of Hindu law 13 of general literature, 2 of logic and 4 of Vedanta, Tantric, purani and medical learning. According to him, the number of scholars engaged in the study and teaching of Sanskrit was 126,000 in

50. S.M. Jaffar Education in Muslim India 8
52. N.N. Law Promotion of Learning 19
53. Elliot and Dowson History of India 311-413
54. K.N. Pannikar Cultural ideology, Hegemony, Intellectuals, and Social Consciousness in Colonial India 175-183
Bengal. The chief centres of Islamic learning were Jaunpur, Lucknow and Patna.  

Muslim rulers were great patrons of learning. Iltutmish supported scholars of great calibre, Amir Khusro and Fakhir-ul-Mulk-Usmani. He encouraged scholarships and was a great patron of Persian literature. Nasiruddin, the author of a popular collection of historical anecdotes in Persian also received encouragement and patronage. Under the Tughluqs and Khiljis, India achieved a brilliant literary phase and education made good progress. The encouragement of literary men and literature was an important item of their programmes. The most prominent of them were Balban, Muhammad Nasiruddin and Muhammad Tuglaq. A khanaqah (monastery) at Multan was built by Sultan Balban and he 'spared no pains to discover men of genius, learning and courage'. Feroz Bahmani was one of the benefactors of education. His uniqueness was that he sent ships annually to different countries in search of learned men. Qutab Shah of Golconda gave a great impetus to education through public seminaries and patronage to learned men. Under Sikandar Lodhi, Agra emerged as a great centre of learning where men of learning came from Arabia, Persia and Bokhara. Babar too encouraged literary men. Shuhrat-i-Am (public works department) was entrusted with the publication of a Gazetteer and the building of schools. Akbar extended liberal patronage to the intellectuals belonging to all religious communities and disciplines without discrimination. Before his times, education was treated as a part of the religious duties and was in the hand of orthodox Sunni ulema. Akbar appointed liberal and secular officials and sanctioned stipends and scholarship to scholars and grants to educational institutions. Akbar made Lahore a great centre of learning and had the Akbar Nama and Ain-i-Akbari compiled. The Imperial library was

55. K.N. Pannikar Cultural ideology Hegemony Intellectuals and Social Consciousness in Colonial India 49-50
56. Ibid 52
57. Ibid 26
58. Elliot and Dowson History of India as told by its own Historians Vol. IV (cited further as History of India)
59. N.N. Law Promotion of Learning in India 126-127
60. Ibid 4
enriched and English education was also introduced. Beside Delhi, Agra and Fatehpur Sikri, the provincial headquarters became centres of learning. Imperial libraries were established, maqulat (rational sciences) and karkhanas (industrial and technical education) were introduced. Humayun, a great biographer opened libraries and patronized scholars. Jahangir and Nur Jahan were equally great patrons of learning. Shah-Jahan contributed to growth and development of Hindi language and literature by extending patronage number of Hindi scholars and poets, Sunderdas, Chintamani and Karindraroraya, for example enjoyed state grants.

Agra emerged as a famous seat of learning and centre of education in the reign of Akbar. It was the seat of Islamic government and became a centre of quality of the literary world. Men of learning and erudition from Arabia, Persia and Bokhara poured into it in ever increasing numbers and in course of time it grew into a great university city, containing several schools and colleges, where people flocked from far and wide for the highest education. During this period the Hindus for the first time, began to receive Persian education in the Muslim schools. Lahore too, was at this time, an eminent centre of literary activities Tarikh-i Ali was written and the Mahabharatha and the Rajtarangni were translated into Persian here. Fathepur Sikri was also studded with several schools and seminaries the well-known Ihbadat Khana literally, a house of worship, but in fact a debating hall, was founded in 1578 and played an important part in influencing the life and thought of the people. It was the meeting – place of the intellectuals of various nationalities.

The progress of education in the medieval period is marked by an over all expansion which is evident in both scope and extent. The aim of education broadened from mere religious knowledge and salvation, to professional learning for livelihood to a considerable degree. The number of educational institutions and the number of students under instruction increased tremendously during this period. The content of education

61. N.N. Law Promotion of Learning in India 4
63. N.N. Law Promotion of Learning in India 285
expanded to include calligraphy, architecture, painting, weaving etc. New methods of instruction emerged with writing. This was possible with the deep interest of the State to support education. The State also created new possibilities and avenues for education and employment. New education centres were established in which the State had made considerable contribution. Medieval rulers were great patrons of learning and made efforts to widen the sphere of education. There was thus, a well established indigenous system of education in pre-colonial times and people, specially the upper class, were conscious of the importance of education.64

II

Education was considered the most important question by Lajpat Rai. He wrote 'It is the most important of all our problems. In a way, it is the fundamental problem.'65 In order to understand the existing problems of education he recommended a serious study of the ancient ideals before taking up any kind of reform. He wanted to take an elaborate and critical study of the situation before making any plans. He was clear 'that any widespread revival of the ancient or medieval systems of education is unthinkable'. 'We are in a critical period of our life, and it behoves us to weigh things in their true perspective before laying down policies and making plans for constructive upbuilding of the nation. What is required is sober study of the situation before making plans.'66 He underlined that there was a great deal in our past which can rightly inspire or guide us in the building up of our future social edifice or in the mending of the existing one. For example, the Brahmana is enjoined to study not for the benefit of his soul only, but to teach others, a purely social duty. Lajpat Rai points out Shloka II, 165 which laid down the obligation of studying Vedas for all Aryans: 'An Aryan must study the whole Veda',67 together with the Rahasyas, performing at the same time various kinds of austerities and the vows prescribed by the rules of the Vedas. He quotes the

64. K.N. Pannikar Cultural ideology, Hegemony, Intellectuals, and Social Consciousness in Colonial India 47
65. Lajpat Rai 'The Social Genius of Hinduism' Modern Review April 1919
66. Lajpat Rai The Problem of National Education Delhi: Bana Publication 1928. 18-19
67. Lajpat Rai The Man in His Word Madras: Ganesh and Co. 1907. 66-98
Vedas, Manusmritis, Niti Shastra and suggests that 'there is sufficient in our sacred books round which we can rally for social strength and reform, and that with 'all our eagerness to sit at the feet of European servants and scholars we need neither to discredit our ancestors nor indulge in general lamentations for want of social ideals in our past'.

Lajpat Rai was also of the opinion that 'the best and the most glorious period of Aryan supremacy is yet a closed chapter to us. Almost the whole of the pre-Buddhistic period is shrouded in mystery'.

What is required is a sober study of the situation before making plans. He further wrote 'We the English educated Hindus of the present day, who claim to have embedded the new spirit of nationality and patriotism from the West would really do well to study a few chapters of Vedic literature with care and thought, and I am confident that this study will open a panorama of new ideas to our view'.

According to Lajpat Rai education in the ancient time was in-built into Hinduism which was not only a religion but a system of life. Lajpat Rai looks towards religion as the basis of education and believes that 'a perfect and sound religion must make adequate provision for the harmonious development of all those sides of human nature which are to form the basis of the upward progress of man'.

He is of the view that 'our religion influences our life in all its aspects'. Every religion contains some beautiful and sublime principal which saves its followers from utter annihilation in the struggle for life, be it individual or social, but the bulk of every religious teaching and its literature, as ordinarily understood, lays emphasis on the negation of life, as distinguished from its assertion and intensification.

He further states, 'Hindu religion teaches that salvation lies in gyan and not mere knowledge, but realised knowledge, and knowledge can be attained by Yoga Samadhi. Thus to him, Hinduism was a 'vast sea of beliefs and doctrines, customs and manners, which have been developing growing and accumulating in the course of millennium and it was not a religion but a system. It was not a creed
but a mode of thought. It allowed an amount of individual freedom in thought, the like of which was not known to any other religious system of the world. Hinduism is extraordinarily flexible changing adaptive and progressive.\textsuperscript{74} Hinduism was ‘the most elevating, the most uplifting, and the most invigorating ideas known to the world. Many a scientific truth rediscovered by Europe within the last 500 years, was known to the early Hindus. They were the first to develop a system of medicine, a system of notation, and many more things, upon which the great edifice of the modern civilisation has been constructed. They were early to discover that the earth moved round the sun, and was not flat.’\textsuperscript{75}

The ancient ‘Hindu system did not recognize any regularly organized and well-endowed religious institution, yet it enjoined on every one to devote the first part of life upto 25 years, to study Hindu Law, recognizes no regular organization for the help of the student and the learned. The householders are supposed to look after and support them’.\textsuperscript{76} Lajpat Rai found ‘a system of free and compulsory education deeply interwoven with religious merits among the Hindus. Every twice born Hindus was found to educate his children unless he intended to degrade them to the level of a Shudra, and every Aryan householder was threatened with severe religious demerit if he refused food or alms to a \textit{Vidyarthi}’.\textsuperscript{77} To Brahmans he assigned the role of teaching and studying the \textit{Vedas}, sacrificing for their own benefit and others and giving and accepting of alms. The \textit{Kshatriya} and the \textit{Vaishya} were assigned to study the \textit{Veda}, along with other work. Thus, the Brahmana had to perform a purely social duty. ‘Teaching (and studying) is the sacrifice to Brahmana by the householder. In the struggle for life one should avoid all wealth which impedes the study of the \textit{Veda}, and ‘the devotion to the \textit{Veda}-study secures the realization of his alms’.\textsuperscript{78} Lajpat Rai quotes a few \textit{shalokas} which state ‘An

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{74} Lajpat Rai \textit{The Problem of National Education in India} 63
\item \textsuperscript{75} Lajpat Rai ‘William Archer’s “India and the Future”’ 1919 \textit{Modern Review} 25-29
\item \textsuperscript{76} Lajpat Rai \textit{The Arya Samaj: An Accounts of its Origin Doctrines and Activities with a Biographical Sketch of the Founder London: Longmans Green and Co. 1915/ 1967. 97
\item \textsuperscript{77} Lajpat Rai ‘Social Genius of Hinduism’ cited in Lajpat Rai: \textit{The Man in His Words}
\item \textsuperscript{78} Ibid
\end{itemize}
Arya must study the whole Veda and at the same time follow various kinds of austerities and the vows prescribed by the rules of the Veda.\textsuperscript{79}

Not only is religion the basis of the ancient education system Lajpat Rai but he also includes Hindu literature as part of the content of the education of this time. He wrote 'Hindu literature is as vast, extensive and indeterminate as Hinduism itself... From the period of growth and progress it started at once to decay.' 'During the course of centuries, Indian literature has undergone a curious process of accumulation. Some of the best products of the period of growth and progress have been polluted by subsequent additions and interpolations.'\textsuperscript{80} Lajpat Rai added 'The ancient epics of the land—the chronicles of the life of Rama and his consort, and the great Mahabharata were very often the books that were recited. The recitation of these \textit{kathas} were greatly instrumental in keeping the national spark alive.'\textsuperscript{81}

The education system of ancient India according to Lajpat Rai was not only of long standing but was also highly organised, and revolved around the teacher.\textsuperscript{82} Lajpat Rai underlined the fact that popular and indigenous ancient system was prevalent in India before the British Government took over control of education. He quoted F.E. Keay, Leitner, Ludlow and A.P. Howell and traced the Brahmanical system of education to 'the very remote past' and remarked that it was not inferior to the education of Europe. Before the revival of learning, the Buddhist system was very much like the Brahmanical system.\textsuperscript{83} The Brahman school of learning was scattered all over India and popular elementary education had flourished side by side. He admits that from the earliest times there was a well organized and wide spread system of education in India. This was a two-fold system— one for the aristocratic, cultured and priestly classes aiming at 'religious learning and culture' and the other for the trading and the working classes aiming at 'economic efficiency and dexterity in the use of tools.'\textsuperscript{84} The system of education advocated was

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79. Lajpat Rai 'Social Genius of Hinduism'
80. Lajpat Rai \textit{The Problem of National Education} 79
81. Lajpat Rai 'Reform and Revival' 1904
82. Lajpat Rai \textit{Unhappy India}
83. Veena Sachdeva 'Lala Lajpat Rai on National Educaiton' \textit{Lala Lajpat Rai in Retrospect} 275
84. Lajpat Rai 'Social Genius of Hinduism' 276
\end{flushright}
mainly devised for the children of Brahmans. Religious or cultural education was in charge of priests and monks. Brahmins or Bhikshus, Moulaees and Mullas. It was the privilege of the teacher to command, show the great importance which the old Aryans attached to the position and the profession of a teacher. A householder destitute of the knowledge of the Vedas was looked down upon as unfit for social intercourse with twice born.

The teachers of the ancient system were the scores of learned Sadhus, Yogis and Pandits who dwelt on the bank of the Ganges for the purpose of study and contemplation. Some of the best and most profound Sanskrit scholars had been educated here, and in their turn imparted the knowledge, without remuneration, to all who came in quest of it. Charging a fees for imparting knowledge, especially if it relates to the spirit, was a grievous sin. The donor and the recipient alike must give and receive it in a religious spirit, as performing an obligation both sacred and pleasing. Teachers, says Lajpat Rai, must do their full duty to society and learn all that has to be learnt by social amenities, relations and sensations. They can renounce certain phases of life, in favour of certain others. All the great Rishis and Munis of the past had property, as well as families. They preferred to live away from crowds only for purpose of research, for Yoga Samadhi and concentration of mind on the problems of life, it was a social means for a social end. It was not a desire of mukti that led to live away from crowds but the very social and admirable desire of helping humanity by a rational solution of the problems of life. The teacher had no mercenary motive to compel him to teach but was to perform his office solely as the duty. He was forbidden to accept a fee. The pupil, on the completion of his course, would offer a present to his preceptor. But except possibly in the case of rich pupil, it could never have been in sense an adequate remuneration. Discussing the Rishi, he opines Rishi is born as a debt to the Gods, he is bound to sacrifice and make offerings to them. He

85. Lajpat Rai The Problem of National Education in India 16
86. Lajpat Rai 'Social Genius of Hinduism'
87. Ibid
88. Lajpat Rai Unhappy India 20-21
89. Lajpat Rai The Arya Samaj 22
90. Lajpat Rai Unhappy India 20-21
91. Lajpat Rai The Problem of National Education 30-36
92. Lajpat Rai Unhappy India 20-21
is bound to study (the Vedas). The one who has studied the Vedas were called the Rishis’.93

In the Gurukul system teacher and the pupil, the Guru and the Chela, are maintained alike by private philanthropy. There are numerous eating places, where cooked food was available twice daily for the mere asking to those who are engaged in the sanctified work of teaching and learning, or in religious contemplation and meditation. Permanent endowment, land and properties of immense value, were attached to these institutions. Sadhus and Sanyasies, Yogis and teachers of sanctity, usually abided in isolated straw huts, but the general body of students and pilgrims dwell in commodious buildings built of brick and mortar erected for their convenience by donations from pious benefactors.94 Lajpat Rai also notices ‘the periodical religious discussions became popular among the local Pandits, they thought their dignity, prestige and even emoluments were endangered and considered it a challenge to prove their superiority in the knowledge of shastras’.95

Lajpat Rai writes about the students as well. As a rule the young Brahmans were specialized in the Vedic and philosophical studies. The kshatriyas and vaishyas ‘tended less and less to attend the Brahmanical schools, and vocational schools, or at least domestic training for their future duties in life were developed. By the circa 500 BC it had become customary for kshatriyas and vaishyas as well as for Brahmanas to be initiated with the sacred thread as a preliminary to entering upon the period of life under Brahman teachers, which was to occupy atleast twelve years. Later on between the 6th and the 4th century B.C., kshatriya education began to attract special attention as the science of politics had emerged and become dominant.96 The shudras were always shut out from Brahmanic education, and they developed their own system of training for the young craftsmen, entirely vocational and narrow.97
The pupil was trained to a simple life, whether he was rich or poor, and habits of discipline, reverence and self-respect were inculcated. The discipline was somewhat rigorous, but had nothing harsh or brutal about it. In the matter of the punishment of the pupil, the Hindus were far more humane, like beating on a ‘noble part’ of the body (Manu). Aprtamba, however, allows as punishment ‘frightening, fasting, bathing in cold water, and banishment from the teachers presence. Lajpat Rai found that a student also had to follow certain rules. A student was not to accept food from the house of anyone who was deficient in knowledge of the Veda or in performing sacrifices or who were not known as earning their livelihood by lawful means.98

Lajpat Rai mention the education of females in the ancient period in his works. In A History of Arya Samaj, he wrote, ‘In ancient India, both in theory and practice, women were placed on a pedestal in society equal to that of men if not higher. As regards education and marriage they held an equal position. The girls were equally entitled to receive education, and no limitations at all were set on their ambition in this direction. Study was equally enjoined for the girls as well as the boys. The only difference was that, in the case of girls, the period of education expired sooner than in that of boys.99 He notes that ‘there is a consensus of opinion that ‘the position held by the Aryan women in the Vedic Punjab was a most honourable, ney and exalted one, which later influenced and development changed by no means for the better, but rather, and very much, for the worse.100 It is stated in the Later Smrities, a women can never be independent and Lajpat Rai highlights these inequalities. Lajpat Rai notices their existence as teachers and scholars in Vedic India but without making it clear that these positions were outside the home.101

In addition to the Hindu system of education, Lajpat Rai also takes note of Buddhist learning centers. He wrote ‘when Buddhism came, they organized and developed a system of education which was very much like the

98. Lajpat Rai Unhappy India 20-21
99. Lajpat Rai The Arya Samaj 117
100. Lajpat Rai Unhappy India 151
101. Sunita Pathania ‘The position of women in India’ Lala Lajpat Rai in Retrospect 205
Brahmanical system. The high standard of learning attracted many scholars from China and Burma. Their education was not merely theological but the study of medicine received special attention at Buddhist monasteries. The Buddhist seats of learning were open for all castes and creeds. They contributed to elementary mass education considerably.\textsuperscript{102} He further wrote 'it was the first missionary religion of the world and has survived the rise of other missionary religions born since.'\textsuperscript{103} He is of the opinion that 'upto the rise of Buddhism, Hinduism believed only in ideas, and not in the names of the personalities who gave out these ideas. Its culture was more impersonal than personal. Hence the fact, that posterity does not know the names of those who compose the \textit{Vedas} and the \textit{Upnishads} or of those who founded the different schools of Hindu philosophy. Buddhism was and is a child of Hinduism. The Buddhist system of education was considerably borrowed from the Brahmanical system. Since the Buddhist society was egalitarian education was imparted to all. The Buddhist monasteries served as education centres.\textsuperscript{104} Outside of India, it has existed as an independent system of thought and life.\textsuperscript{105}

Lajpat Rai’s deep interest in ancient education system also extends to a criticism of it. He found certain ‘defects’ in the ancient education system. He pointed to the wide gulf in theory and practical of education ideals with time. He was very clear that the past education system was deeply rooted in our religion and religious literature and the aim was to attain \textit{Mukti} through \textit{tyag}. (renunciation) He wrote ‘our epics are the most human documents we possess, yet, even they are full of the sprint of \textit{mukti} and \textit{tyag}’.\textsuperscript{106} They talked much about the future life and consequently neglected the present life. They talked about the concept of \textit{Dharma} and \textit{Karma} which was in contrast to his present where property and wealth held the position of God. At the same time ‘It was our misfortune that a ‘grand exposition of the greatest of social truths should have so degenerated in the hands of an interested priesthood as to be

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{102} Lajpat Rai \textit{Unhappy India} 23-24
  \item \textsuperscript{103} Lajpat Rai “William Archer’s ‘India and the future’” 25-29
  \item \textsuperscript{104} Veena Sachdeva ‘ Lajpat Rai on National Education’ \textit{Lala Lajpat Rai in Retrospect} 291
  \item \textsuperscript{105} Lajpat Rai \textit{Unhappy India} 27
  \item \textsuperscript{106} Lajpat Rai ‘National Education’ \textit{Modern Review} April 1919. 331-338
\end{itemize}
made the basis of the present day inhumanly, ingenious, corrupt, invidious 
and demoralizing distinctions between man and man.'\textsuperscript{107}

He further wrote 'I have no doubt that ancient learning could not be 
revived, except for research purposes.'\textsuperscript{108} Talking about national methods he 
wrote 'Descending from national literature to national methods of education, I 
must say at once that it will be a folly to revive the latter. They are out of date, 
and antiquated. To adopt them will be a step backward and not forward'.\textsuperscript{109}

Lajpat Rai found the mode of instruction, Sanskrit, which was a little 
difficult language, was beyond the understanding of the common people. 
Though had great respect for it and found it a perfect language, having a 
great record of valuable literature but as a medium of general education he 
feared it was not fair. He wrote 'Personally I have a great affection for the Sanskrit 
language and the literature contained in it, but in my judgment any uplift is 
bound to fail and deserves to fail'.\textsuperscript{110} He valued Sanskrit only for historical 
research.

Lajpat Rai wanted education for independent thinking and action and 
found these elements absent in the old system where the student was fully 
devoted to his teacher without taking responsibility towards his family and 
society. Under this system there was no attention was paid to development 
towards individual character. He believed that 'the ancient laid much, too 
much attention to life after death' to the study of the 'scripture' to the mastery 
of languages and to rituals and formulas they propounded to care more for 
soul and body.\textsuperscript{111} The discipline enforced was too strict, too mechanical and 
too empirical. The religion taught was too formed, rigid and narrow. 
Disproportionate amount of time was devoted to the memorizing of rules of 
grammar and texts.\textsuperscript{112}

While discussing the relationship between the Guru and the Chela 
Lajpat Rai found that it was good in certain respects and harmful in others. 
The personal relationship supplied the human element which is now missing.

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{107} Lajpat Rai 'Social Genius of Hinduism' 1919
\textsuperscript{108} Lajpat Rai 'Why the National School Failed' 1920
\textsuperscript{109} See Lajpat Rai 'National Education' 1919 and V.C. Joshi ed. \textit{Lala Lajpat Rai} 
\textit{Writing and Speeches} Vol 1.331-338
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid
\textsuperscript{112} Ibid
\end{footnotes}
Greater attention being paid to the formation of habits which compose character, on other hand it had a tendency of enslaving the pupils mind.\textsuperscript{113}

The pupil could not achieve the aim of education i.e. to think and act for himself with a due sense of responsibility toward society. The capacity to transcend the environment and to rise above the limitations imposed on them by authority, be the authority of the parent, the Guru, or the state, was difficult.\textsuperscript{114} During the time of the \textit{Upanishad} the relation between the teacher and the pupil were possibly freer.\textsuperscript{115}

Lajpat Rai, however, does point out some positive aspects of the ancient system of education. He was very clear that ancient learning alone could be the basis of education for India. He wrote 'we do not want to be English or German, American or Japanese; true we want to be Indians, proud of our past and inspiring to a greater and nobler future.'\textsuperscript{116} To him the old Indian system was admirably adopted to the genius and the needs of the people.\textsuperscript{117} He appreciated the personal relationship between the Guru and the Chela. He found it good in certain respects as it supplied the human element and guaranteed greater attention to the formation of habits, which composed character.\textsuperscript{118} He also appreciated Sanskrit literature, which he felt is a perfect language having a great record of valuable literature.

Lajpat Rai has rather brief comments on the education system of the medieval period. He asserts that 'the Muhammadan education has many similarities with the Brahmamic education. The Brahmanic, Buddhists and Muslim system continued side by side. Education was open generally to all comers.'\textsuperscript{119} A system of national literacy continued all through the Muslim period even when some of the Muhammadan sovereigns destroyed Brahman

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{112} Lajpat Rai \textit{The Problem of National Education in India} 14
  \item \textsuperscript{113} Ibid
  \item \textsuperscript{114} Ibid 15
  \item \textsuperscript{115} Ibid
  \item \textsuperscript{116} Lajpat Rai 'Why the National School Failed' He wrote 'he learnt precious little of Sanskrit but this was the first incident of my life to make me a staunch Hindu, and looking backwards I have never had any regrets over it. Sanskrit Literature he learnt from Pandit Bhagwan Dass.
  \item \textsuperscript{117} Lajpat Rai \textit{Unhappy India} 42
  \item \textsuperscript{118} Ibid
  \item \textsuperscript{119} Ibid 24
\end{itemize}
places of learning, and scattered their students.\textsuperscript{120} He felt that the position of
the women was higher among Muhammadans. They were good Persian
scholars and excellent poets.\textsuperscript{121}

Lajpat Rai considered the earlier education system 'outdated', and
absolutely 'unsuited' to modern conditions of life. He was convinced that there
was a need to replace the education pattern with a new one. He did not want
it to be 'a mere copy of our ancestors but better than theirs'. He was clear that
we cannot assume everything ancient was perfect and ideal. Some of the
ideals held by our ancestors have been proved to be wrong, we have to adjust
them, some of their methods were faulty; we have to improve upon them.\textsuperscript{122}

Lajpat Rai wanted education for independent thinking and action and found
these elements absent in the old system where the student is fully devoted to
his teacher without taking his responsibility towards his family and society.
Under the old system there was no attention paid towards the individual
character. He was practical in his ideas of education. He wanted education for
livelihood, progress and for peace and prosperity. He wanted the relationship
between teacher and taught to be liberal and friendly. It should be a two-way
process. He wanted the mode of instruction to be in an easy language
understandable to the common man. He accepted the view that our past had
given a well organized and good educational setup but under the British rule
its decay started and it was uprooted by British administrators.\textsuperscript{123} He quotes
Dr. Leitner's report that British rule 'rooted out the useful old system'.\textsuperscript{124}

III

Lajpat Rai underlines some specific features of the pre-colonial education
system in his writings. He gives however, a partial and incomplete picture of
the pre-colonial educational scenario. The most glaring void one immediately
sees is that he altogether, ignores the contribution of the medieval period to
the expansion of education - both by way of mass education or numbers, and

\textsuperscript{120} Lajpat Rai \textit{Unhappy India} 23-24
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid 38
\textsuperscript{122} Lajpat Rai \textit{The Man in His Own Word} 66-98
\textsuperscript{123} Lajpat Rai \textit{Unhappy India} 18-33
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid 35
in scope or content. The medieval time was one of the proliferation of schools, extended financial support by the state, development of varied vocational streams and technical skills, new methods of teaching and wider content of education. The medieval rulers took a deep interest in establishing education centers and the demands of the State created new avenues for employment based on special training. In this period the requirements of both Hindus and Muslims were being catered to, with support to Arabic and Persian for Muslims, as well as Sanskrit for Hindus. Several ‘Hindu’ works were translated at the time. Lajpat Rai neglects to mention these major developments and makes merely sketchy reference to it. He presents the pre-colonial education as only the ‘Hindu’ Vedic education and thus distorts the historical context.

In Lajpat Rai’s understanding of the past education system he sees Brahmancellarial religion as the basis of education and equates education with Hindu Vedic religion, giving a central place to the Vedas. He aimed at ‘the glorification of India’s past’ and ‘showers unstinted praise on its catholicity and universal relevance’125. He equates ‘Indian’ with ‘Hindu’ literature and he focuses on the Brahmanical religion alone and preferred to call it the Hindu Vedic religion. He focused therefore, on a smaller group of upper-caste Hindus only. He also equates ‘Hindu’ with ‘national’ education. For him ancient education clearly meant ‘Hindu’ and Vedic education based on ‘Hindu’ literature and knowledge, and this was labeled ‘national’. Lajpat Rai’s perception of pre-colonial education thus, is a narrow, communal one suited to the particular agenda of the Arya Samaj in pre-independence India. He views only specific features of the education in early times at the cost of other significant aspects.

Even in the Vedic or Brahmanical education system that Lajpat Rai presents, he fails to notice several significant developments. He was of the view that in the ancient times education was ‘in-built into Hinduism’ and was a ‘system of life’. He idealizes the ancient system of education and did not notice any evolution taking place in the system of ancient education. He

125. J.K. Sharma ‘Lala Lajpat Rai’s view of Ancient India’ 283-284 Lala Lajpat Rai in Retrospect 91
accepts that 'Hinduism as extraordinarily flexible, changing, adaptive and progressive.\textsuperscript{126} Whereas in perception Hinduism is considered to be very rigid. But at the same time he added Hinduism was 'the most elevating, the most uplifting, and the most invigorating ideas know to the world'. This idea probably reflects his association with the Arya Samaj. He was very much influenced by Swami Dayanand and adopted his ideas on Hinduism. He writes in his book on the Arya Samaj that 'Hindu system did not recognize any regularly organized and well endowed religious institution.\textsuperscript{127} Yet he discusses it educational system. Lajpat Rai writes on the duties of Brahmans, they had to perform a 'purely social duty' and devoted to the study of the Vedas. He does not include secular education within the content of education. He also ignores the expansion of centres of learning with the spread of Buddhism and considered Buddhism as the 'out come of Hinduism'. On the position of women's education in the ancient period Lajpat Rai writes 'they held an equal position,' the only difference he saw was in the period of education which was small for women comparative to boys.\textsuperscript{128} He ignores completely the lack of education for girls Lajpat Rai views the ancient education system clearly through the eyes of the Arya Samaj.

Lajpat Rai at times gives new interpretation to some features of the ancient system of education. He overlooked the existence of discrimination in the system and viewed that education enjoyed complete autonomy and worked well in ancient times.\textsuperscript{129} Lajpat Rai in his writings seems to be more concerned with the education of the upper castes or twice born. He writes 'the shudras were always shut out from Brahmanic education.\textsuperscript{130} He glorified the ancient Indian institutions. He added a new aim of education i.e. to solve the problems of life an ideas which did not existed in the understanding of ancient Indian education system. Lajpat Rai initially states that religion was the basis of education but later on accepts that the stress was on concentration of mind through Yog Samadhi on the problems of life. Where as according to Rigveda

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126. Lajpat Rai  \textit{The Problem of National Education in India} 35-36
127. Lajpat Rai  \textit{The Arya Samaj} 97
128. Ibid 117
129. Ibid 97
130. Lajpat Rai  \textit{Unhappy India} 21
\end{flushright}
the aim of education was the 'acquisition of the highest knowledge' and 'secular knowledge' for the purpose of economic life. He also presented an idealized status of Guru and exaggerated its status. He writes 'not a desire of mukti that led to live away from crowds but the very social and admirable desire of helping humanity by rational solution of the problems of life.'\textsuperscript{131} Thus, he gives new orientation to the role of teacher and the aim of education in earlier times. On the duties of students also he is adding new perceptions. He writes that a student was not to accept food from the home of anyone who was deficient in knowledge of the Veda.\textsuperscript{132} Whereas we do not come across any such statement in the writings on ancient education system. He is adding Aryan colour to it. He is overlooking economic interest in education and the role of the State in providing education in the ancient times. Lajpat Rai gives a one sided picture of the educational institutions in the ancient times where education was not imparted to all. Lajpat Rai thus, adds interpretations of his own to his understanding of the ancient education system.

One also finds contradictions in Lajpat Rai's statements on ancient education over a period of time. In \textit{A History of Arya Samaj} he writes in the ancient Hindu system there was 'no organized education institution.'\textsuperscript{133} Lajpat Rai makes several claims on the ancient education system in response to Katherine Mayo's \textit{Mother India}. He states that the ancient system was highly organized, free, compulsory, autonomous and meant for the masses. He also claimed 'complete literacy among males and females'.\textsuperscript{134} At the other point of time the writes Kshatriya and Vaishya 'tended less and less to attend the Brahmanical schools.'\textsuperscript{135} He claimed that 'elementary schools for the masses had always existed in India before the coming of the British'.\textsuperscript{136} Probably a reference to the situation of the later medieval rather than the earlier ancient period. Free, compulsory education for the masses, and complete literacy, never existed in the pre-colonial period and this idea of Lajpat Rai needs serious modification. Autonomy of education too, would not be possible since

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item Lajpat Rai \textit{The Problems of National Education in India} 30-36
\item Ibid 20-21
\item Lajpat Rai \textit{A History of Arya Samaj} 97
\item Ibid 292
\item Lajpat Rai \textit{Unhappy India} 18-19
\item Ibid
\end{thebibliography}
the State has a significant role to play, in maintaining order and stability and by way of financial support through grants and gifts. He was more keen to establish the existence of a mass, compulsory free education, projected backwards as per the requirements of colonial responses.  

Discussing the Rishis he writes Rishis is 'bound to sacrifice and make offerings' to God and is bound to study 'the Vedas' and the whole educational system revolves round the teachers. He attached great importance to the teacher and had high expectations of social sacrifice and responsibility from him. Regarding the position of the students he writes that the discipline was 'rigorous' and pupils were isolated as they had to live with the guru away from the crowd. The students did not develop independent thinking and they – blindly followed the instructions of the Guru. Thus, we find there was no independent thinking on the part of the students and as Lajpat Rai himself points out all round development of the pupil was not part of the educational pattern. It was largely based on 'religious literature alone.'  

His efforts to raise the status of teachers is negated by his disappointment at the standard of teaching. 

He talks of a glorified Vedic system, as a fixed one, with no concept of gradual development over time. This was because of his close association with the Arya Samaj. Like other Arya Samajists he was glorying India's past. He also overlooks the later addition of philosophy, folklore and secular poetry to the content of education. He somehow overlooks the expansion of major seats of learning in the ancient time. He fails to give due place to the development of secular streams. 

Lajpat Rai's ideas on the ancient education system seem to be a contradiction. On the one hand he emphasized and 'glorified India's past unnecessarily.' Seeing modern elements of free, compulsory, mass education on the other he, colours it as 'Hindu', 'national' and 'Indian' in character. He was equally convinced that most of the ancient Indian institutions were now obsolete and unworkable. Lajpat Rai's views on the

137. J.K. Sharma 'Lala Lajpat Rai's view of ancient India' 291 Lala Lajpat Rai in Retrospect
138. Lala Lajpat Rai The Problem of National Education 79
139. Ibid 296

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theme seem to reflect an internal, personal conflict - of the Arya Samajist tones in him and the rational, wider outlook he had imbibed and wanted to unfold for India's future. Lajpat Rai was quite certain that ancient educational institutions were one of the best but had lost its positive features and he was not prepared to adopt this system for the future. In fact, his later scheme of national education does not incorporate any features of the ancient system. He largely pays lip service to the ancient education ideals and his rhetoric continues to refer to them. In Lajpat Rai's opinion the colonial rulers were wholly responsible for the 'decay' in the pre-colonial system of education. He was later extremely critical of the colonial system of education as well.