

Impact
Factor
2.147

ISSN 2349-638x

Refereed And Indexed Journal



**AAYUSHI
INTERNATIONAL
INTERDISCIPLINARY
RESEARCH JOURNAL
(AIIRJ)**

Monthly Publish Journal

VOL-III

ISSUE-
XII

Dec.

2016

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A Critical Analysis Of The Swadhyay Movement

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Preface:

While thinking on global backdrop, we can witness the important contribution of various movements in transformation of a society. The world has witnessed a no. of movements. Through these movements, it has been witnessed that revolutionary changes have been brought about. But the controversy as to whether the center of movements should be individual or society as a whole has been there right from the inception of these movements. Various isms such as socialism, communism, and cooperative movement left some imprints at a global level, but it has been expected that instead of solving problems, these isms have given birth to new controversies & have also given way to new conflicts. It was not possible to transform the world through these movements. As a result, distance was created amongst individuals & it also increased the gulf amongst the various social strata. As a result, such movements gradually grew weak. But when a movement is initiated for discussing national, social & cultural problems, it gains a wider dimension & it spreads unabatedly. Swadhyay movement is one such movement. Swadhyay movement was initiated with the objective to rejuvenate the social fabric of India by getting over with the inertia in various fields such as social, cultural & political. In the ancient period, the Indian society had reached a level of cultural progress by following the tradition of ideal society & maintaining the age old institution of family but this trend was broken in current times. This movement was initiated for rejuvenating the rich ancient Indian culture.

Background of the Swadhyay Movement:

In the year 1926, this movement was initiated at the hands of the protagonist Pandurangshastri Athawale by keeping its focus on transformation of man. In this movement, it was sought to seek answers to various social problems & thereby uplifting society. It has done it successfully by undertaking various activities / pursuits. In this movement, social problems were considered fervently by taking into consideration global scenario. As a part of it, Bhagwadgita Pathshala was started in the year 1926 as its part. Also philosophical university was established in Thane on 26 October 1926. In the year 1954, this movement spread on a worldwide scale through the forum of World (Global) Religious Conference, after which its contribution was registered by all the countries. As a result, this movement has received many awards at international level.

Analysis of the Swadhyay Movement:

Pandurangshastri Athawale, by adopting certain principles & value – system brought into reality the huge expansion of the swadhyay work. This movement has developed from a very humble beginning & now it has reached international (global) level today & visible results can be seen today. There is one gross misunderstanding which occurs while evaluating the contribution made by this movement & this occurs due to the tunnel vision with which every individual of a

specific religion, cult etc. views it. This happens due to prejudice at individual level as a result of which one puts limitation on the magnanimous work undertaken by *swadhyay* movement. As a result, the very basis behind establishing this movement is often overlooked with the result that its genuineness, wider dimensions & its large view encompassing one & all aren't really fully appreciated.

In Pandurangshastri Athawale's life, there are many incidences of oneness. He has never forsaken the oneness that is reflected in giving & this tendency of giving hasn't stemmed from any theory or policy as such, but it has stemmed from the very affection associated with giving. 'You are the only one', 'There is nothing beyond you' is his viewpoint of viewing the world. From this standpoint, he has given a unique but definite view of looking at human beings & the world. He has taught people to walk in this direction. When today's *swadhyayi* conducts pursuits such as *Bhavpheri* & *Bhaktiphari* fervently, that also means he has learnt to go on in his life selflessly & without carrying any expectations from others.

Pandurangshastri used to say that for any work to sustain, three things are required & these are thoughts, individuals & money. The thoughts should be related to god & hence he expressed the thoughts from the Gita & the Upanishads. Who are the individuals involved in this mission? These are nobody else than those created by the God. What is the source of money? – it is the same money which is sent by the God. Pandurangshastri has brought forth many pursuits from which money can be generated. It was he who conceived the notion of impersonal wealth & this notion has been accepted by noted economists also.

Thoughts give man a basis. These thoughts are the inspiring thoughts which rejuvenate life. If change in the thoughts is brought about, then individuals also change. It is the very reason why he established *Shrimad Bhagwatgeeta Pathshala & Philosophy University* & it is from here that he started propagating very brilliant, sentimental, logical, action – oriented & highly effective thoughts.

Each individual is nothing but a part of the God (the divine) & hence everyone's relation with Him is the same. God resides in every individual & therefore, for viewing an individual, one shouldn't view him by considering external things attached to him such as his religion, caste, post held, status, money, education, profession etc. In other words, one should view other individual primarily as a human being. With this purpose in mind, Pandurangshastri brought forth many activities & established a new alternative to remove the caste system prevalent in the world.

He never adopted such measures as making emotional appeal to persons, attracting men by through the medium of performing some miracle, by luring people by giving them promise of status, or by seeing individual influence, or by seeing one's usefulness or so. He has connected with others only by coming together at a mental wavelength & he had followed the same path uninterruptedly. This purity of thoughts can be seen only in this noble cause/ mission.

Swadhyayis meet other individuals with affection & by going to other's mental wavelength. They meet others in a selfless manner with a spirit of giving love to others & tying a bond of selfless love with others. Nobody from the *swadhyayi* family mingles with other people having such calculations / expectations such as to become famous, to gain status or recognition, or to get some benefit from others. Such approach is very commendable. People are united through this sense of brotherhood only. This phenomenon hasn't been witnessed anywhere in the world in the history.

Pandurangshastri has conceived such unparalleled pursuits in order to impart values on individual's mind, intellect & personality in such a manner that the individual undergoes development only at each stage. Through these pursuits, each one's individual ego (i.e. I) is

transformed into a collective identity (i.e. we). Afterwards, for further expanding the scope of the individual ego, a hierarchy in the order, i.e. from family to some families to village to some villages was conceived & it is seen that affection (cohesion) & unity amongst them goes on increasing only & while affection amongst them goes on increasing, it is seen that each unit becomes one working in unison with each other for the sake of the God. Thus, its affinity towards the God would go on increasing. Through this, gradually each individual would develop his individual characteristics & collective characteristics of the group to which he belongs. For this purpose, Pandurangshastri introduced many powerful instruments in the form of pursuits such as *Yogeshwar krishi*, *Matsyagandha*, *Amrutalayam*, *Goras*, *Shridarshanam*, *Vrikshamandir* & so on. The method & system of these pursuits has been designed with such intricate details that no change is required even today. In other words, its details are perfectly designed.

Conclusion:

By thinking from global perspective, this mission is a spectacular work. Of course, social effect is not the sole desired outcome of this mission, it happens as a by – product. Each thinker, society & the ones who are keenly interested in human upliftment must take a note of the contribution made by this movement. The work propagated by this movement is of such magnitude & its work so seminal, so fundamental, so mature that it is radically different from the work / approach of other established movements.

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