

## **Literature: A Powerful Tool for Developing Environmental Sense**

**Satyendra B. Gadpayale**

Dept of English, Smt. Radhabai Sarda College, Anjangaon Surji, Dist. Amravati Mob. No. 9960884646

Literature has always played a vital role in developing environmental sense and creating awareness in society for Nature and environment.

From the very ancient Epics like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Shivapurana or Krishnaleela, we find rich descriptions related to Nature and natural beauty. The description of God Shankar sitting on Kailas mountain with Nandi (Calf) by his side; a large snake around his neck and river Ganga flowing out through his top of the head or God Krishna playing on his flute; a peacocks feather in his hair; grazing his cows in forest; all these put forth the great company and correlation of Nature and man. The great poet Kalidasa in ancient India had also brought vivid description of Nature in his famous poetic drama 'Meghdoot'.

In other words, literature has always contributed greatly for inculcating Nature values and inter-relationship of Nature with human beings.

The saints in Maharashtra have also advised to preserve and adore the precious Nature and environment. Saint Dnyaneshwar in middle-ages his love for environment in following couplet –

नगरेचि रचावी | जलाशये निर्मावी |  
महावने लावावी | नानाविधे ||

As the same, Saint Tukaram also finds Nature as his best companion when he says –

वृक्षवल्ली आम्हा सोयरी वनचरे |  
पक्षीही सुखे आळवीती |

The great Maratha King Chhatrapati Shivaji had issued an order to his subjects to preserve trees in his kingdom. That order (Aadnyapatra) is now become a popular historical document as well as a beautiful piece of writing. In the letter, Shivaji makes an appeal to people in his kingdom to preserve trees in following way –

रयतेने ही झाडे लाऊन लेकरा सारखी बहुतकाल जतन करुन वाढविली असता, ती झाडे तो डिलियावरी त्याचे दुःखास पारावर काये आहेत? येकास दुःख देऊन जे कार्य करीन म्हणेल ते काम करणारासहित स्वल्पकालेच बुडोन नाहीसेच होते. किंबहुना धण्याचेच पदरी प्रज्या पीडणाचा दोष पडतो. या वृक्षाच्या अभावे हानीही होते, याकरीता हे गोष्ट सवर्था होऊ न दयावी.

A great Nature lover, a famous environmentalist and a prolific writer in Maharashtra Maruti Chitampalli has portrayed ecological correlation, utility, wonder and spirituality in Nature through his number of stories, articles and books. In one of his interview given to radio, he recalls –

वनातून भ्रमंती करतांना वृक्ष-वनांचे, त्यातून दिसणाऱ्या आकाशाचं, तसच धरतीवरील उदकाचं सौंदर्य मला पाहता आलं. पाखरांनी तर माझं सारं भावविश्व व्यापून टाकलं आहे आणि त्यातूनच हळूहळू अनुभव संचित होत गेला.

The great Indo-Anglian poet, A. K. Ramanujan has presented great Indian culture of Nature worship in his poems. In one of his poems 'ecology' the poet presents Indians feeling of gratitude towards Nature at its best. In this poem, the poet has described how his mother who has severe allergy of the flowers of Champak tree; and who in spite of suffering with severe migraine by it, doesn't allow to cut the tree. She says that tree has given basketful of flowers to her daughters and daughters' daughters to decorate hair and to worship gods. The mother says –

“but Mother, flashing her temper  
would not let us cut down  
a flowering tree  
almost as old as her, seeded,  
she said, by a passing bird's  
providential droppings  
to give her gods and her daughters  
and daughters' daughters basketful  
of annual flowers.”

I, myself has also tried to portray picture of polluted rivers in present time in following way –

कूडा-कचरा फेंकते है

मैला—बलगम थूंकते है  
 मुझपे कितने बोध है बोधे  
 मानव ने यूँ स्वार्थ है साथे  
 फैक्टरीयों का जहर हूँ ढोती  
 मन ही मन मै कितना रोती  
 मनुष्य अनेक पर्व पर आते  
 गंदगी करके मोक्ष है पाते  
 घाटों पे मेरे मुंडन करते  
 मल और मूत्र विसर्जन करते  
 आँसू लिये यूँ बहती हूँ मैं  
 कितना कुछ अब सहती हूँ मैं  
 मैली—सुखी नदी हूँ मैं  
 अब तो दुःखी नदी हूँ मैं.....  
 अब तो दुःखी नदी हूँ मैं.....

Finally, I would like to quote the lines by great Nature poet William Wordsworth who finds everything in Nature. The ponders in following way –

“Nature, the anchor of my purest thoughts  
 The nurse, the guide, the guardian of my heart  
 And soul of all my moral beings.”

He also says to his sister Dorothy –

“O lady! We receive what we give  
 And in our whole life Nature alone live.”

In this way, literature plays a great role in developing environmental sense among people. It can be a great tool to bring awareness for environment.

#### Sources –

- संत साहित्यातील पर्यावरण विचार – डॉ. रामचंद्र देखणे, पदमगंधा प्रकाशन पुणे, २००४.
- शिवरायांची आज्ञापत्रे, राजहंस प्रकाशन पुणे, १९९६.
- रानावनातला माणूस – डॉ. सुहास पुजारी, पदमगंधा प्रकाशन, पुणे २००६.
- Bliss of Solitude, Orient Black Swan, 2011.
- Wings of Poesy, Macmillan publication – 1995.
- Winged words, Macmillan publication – 1997.