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## A STUDY ON NATURE AND CONSERVATION IN CLASSICAL SANSKRIT LITERATURE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KĀLIDĀSA'S COMPOSITION

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Nature is the world of animals, water, trees, rivers, mountains etc. that surrounds the earth. In ancient times, the relationship between man and nature was sweet. Nature worshiper humans conserved these elements of nature. Nature has always been favorable as an integral part. Life has emerged on earth. Humans, animals, trees (trees with flowers and fruit) plants (plants with fruit without flowers) and other living things depend on nature. According to astrologers, a burning piece separated from the sun. After many ages, the piece of sun cooled and our earth was formed. At one time, seas, rivers and mountains were formed by natural causes. Organism also originated for biochemical reasons. Nature is created for the welfare of man, and so that relationship between nature and man should be absolutely friendly, humane and affectionate. The five elements – earth, water, light, air and sky are actually components of nature. There are three parts of nature – the land sphere, water sphere and atmosphere. Everyone must carefully preserve these three zones and wish for the prosperity of each without pollution. This is perhaps why the sages frequently performed sacrifices in the Vedic period. The atmosphere becomes purified, fragrant by the sacrifice. Plant plenty of trees to get fresh air. Drinking clean water promotes longevity and health. Vegetation on the banks of rivers and on mountain should not be cut down to maintain stability. The normal flow of water should not be interrupted. Animals and birds should not be killed unnecessarily to maintain the balance of nature.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Welfare, Nature, Kālidāsa, organism, worship*

## INTRODUCTION

Vedic literature is made up of samhitās, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and Upaniṣadas. The Ramāyāṇa or post Rāmāyāṇa Sanskrit literature is classical Sanskrit literature. When the krouncha bird had killed by the hunter and felt on the lap of the sage Vālmīki then he uttered a verse begins with ‘Mā nisāda pratisthām ... etc. which was in anuṣṭup metre. This is the first verse of the world. The preceding vedic verses are mantras. The next rhymed verses or proses etc. are classical Sanskrit literature.

Now let us briefly discuss some facts about nature and nature conservation in classical Sanskrit literature. An attempt has been made to do so. Nature is the collection of water, land and space. The elements of nature are the seasons forests, trees, birds animals, sun, moon, clouds, rivers, lakes, mountains, streams, reservoirs etc. In short animals (conscious) and non-animals (unconscious) together are the kingdom of nature. Sanskrit poets have depicted all these animals and non-animals in living form. They think that trees, plants, animals, birds also have feeling like humans, behave or can act like humans. So man also must be truthful or show sympathy.

## LITERARY REVIEW

Scientific discoveries are sometimes good for the public and sometimes they can be destructive to the nature. If people do the first, then positive impacts fall to the nature. Global warming is now increasing due to the negative impact on nature and tsunamis are becoming more frequent. Indian believes in ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’. So we must think of nature as our own. There is a need to increase the number of plants. Therefore perhaps the great poet Kālidāsa wrote in verse number fifty five of the second canto of the Kumārasambhava that poisonous trees also should not be cut with one’s own hand. (Biṣabṛkṣhohapi shamvardhya shvayam chettumashāmpratam). Naturally flowing water should not be obstructed. There are many types of animals, birds forests, mountains etc. to maintain the balance of nature. To maintain the balance, it is not appropriate humanized obstacles on these. Nature should be allowed to go its own way. The real thing is to know how to coexist with nature. The culture of a country also is known on the knowledge of nature conservation here. Conserving nature means prosperity of the country. Depletion of nature effects civilization, culture and ultimately health. Advances in science can be both a blessing and a curse. We should not forget that we are born in the lap of nature; we live by eating what nature gives us. Therefore we must avoid activities that have a negative impact on nature. The Vedic sages performed sacrifices frequently. The sacrifice purifies atmosphere. From the smoke of the sacrifices produce clouds and from the clouds come rain. When it rains the earth becomes fertile and food crops are produced. There is also in the Śrimadhagavadgītā –

*Annādbhavanti bhūtāni parjanyaḍannasambhavah*

*Yajñādbhavati parjanyo yājñakarmashamudbhavah. Gitā – 3/14*

The nāndi verse of the play Abhijñanaśakuntalā also echoes the fact that the priest controls the pollution of nature through sacrifice. The sun and moon are also important in purifying the environment.<sup>1</sup>

Nature goes by its own rules. As the moon sets, the moon light disappears. Electricity is absorbed with the clouds. These are never altered.

*Śaśinā shaha yātī koumudi shaha meghena taritpralīyate. Kumārsambhava 4/33*

Nature and the environment are always busy for the benefit of others. In the play Abhijñanaśakuntalā the heroine herself speaks of the importance of nature. The tree always takes tremendous amount of hot on its head and helps it and soothes the heat on the head of the dependent with its shade. The same thing is said in the Hitopadeśa that the tree does not take away the shade from the one who comes to cut down the tree.

*Anubhabati hi mūrdhnā pādapashtībramuṣṇam*

*Śamayati paritapa chāyā shamśritānām Abhijñāśakuntalā 5/7*

*Chettuh parśvagatām chāyām nopashamharate drumah -Hitopadeśa*

Similarly, once the sun is orbiting (giving heat and light) does not stop. The air is blowing day and night. The śeṣa serpent is continuously carrying the burden of the earth.<sup>2</sup> The trees bend down bearing fruits so that the visitors can easily pick and eat them. The honest persons are humble with their wealth.

On other words, trees and clouds are benevolent even though they are unconscious objects.<sup>3</sup> In the drama Abhijñanaśakuntalā, it is described that nature gave the new bride clothes and ornaments when she went to her husband's house. The trees give white auspicious clothes like the moon. Other trees gave many ornaments. If unconscious trees can do these things, why cannot conscious people be sensitive and sympathetic to them?<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, it is perhaps the sage kanva performed the farewell ceremony of Śakuntalā seeking permission from the nature, who grew up in nature, took care of the trees animals and birds. Kanva said, she who did not drink herself without watering you. Śakuntalā never picked up the new leaves though she likes to adorn herself.

It is said in the play Uttaraāmācarita that trees are also good at welcoming. When Rama goes to the forest in the third act Vāsanti says – “Offer offerings to Rama with flowers and fruits, blow lotus scented forest wind, sing unspoken sweetness of melodic voice, for Rāma as he himself has come to the forest”.<sup>5</sup> In the Meghadūta, Kālidāsa gives a detailed introduction to the terrain of India by describing the path of clouds from mount Rāmagiri to Alakā and the places where they reached. Again he describes the clouds are the combination of smoke, light, water and air and after all the clouds are the mixture of nature<sup>6</sup>. In the Meghadūta Kālidāsa describes the effects of the rainy season and says that the clouds are the inexhaustible treasure of nature. All men

have an attraction to the rainy season. There is a wonderful description of clouds in the Meghaduta<sup>7</sup>. Whether or not agriculture takes place depends on the rainfall provided by the clouds

*Tvavyāyattam kṛṣiphalamiti Bhribilashanabhijñai. Pūrvamegha – 16*

In another verse of the Kumārasambhava, he describes the excellence of the Himalayas. Kirātas live here breathing its excellent air. Kālidāsa imprinted the most sacred form of the Himalayas. The Himalayan air, which carries the water droplets of the Ganges flow, which shake cedar tree and which separates feathers of the peacock, is consumed the hunters (kirātas)<sup>8</sup>.

In the epic Naiṣadhacarita, Śrīhasa describes the human like nature of the trees and presents the human like functions of the trees, the guardians of nature. The tree of the gardens, with fruits and flowers in their leafy hands, taught an old sage how to entertain Nala. At that time when a bird flew, the leafy hands of the trees trembled in the wind.<sup>9</sup> It is seen in the epic Raghuvamśa also that today there is no sage Śarabhanga, yet the form of hospitality of that sage is functioned day and night. The trees are like excellent fruitful son taking away the labour of the treavellers by their shade. In the absence of the sage, the trees are satisfying the hunger of the guests by giving them fruits.<sup>10</sup> In the same epic, after abduction of Sīta by Rāvaṇa, lifeless plants showed the way to Rāma, while he was searching for Sīta. The plants understood the pain of Rāma's heart. The trees, though they could not speak in human language, showed the way to the halo in the form of a swinging branch that Rāvaṇa has abducted Sīta to the south direction.<sup>11</sup> In the Rāmāyaṇa also writer mentions that creeper informed Rama about Sīta.

Nature also has the quality of loving oneself and loving others. In the Kumārasambhava, following his beloved black-bee the male blackbee sat on the same flower vessel and drank honey together. This verse is an excellent example of love<sup>12</sup>. In the same book there is a reference that the tree in the form of a lustful lover embraced the beautiful creeper with trembling leaf like lips adorned with flower like breasts and branch like arms. Here the tree is of human like nature with quality of consciousness<sup>13</sup>. In the epic Raghuvamśa, there is also a conversation between Kauṣṭha and Raghu, who poured water on the roof of the plants and asked them about their welfare. The next verse says that no one prevented the deer from eating and lying on the Kusa grass collected for the sacrifice.

## CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it has been cleared that such nature must be carefully protected by men. Trees and plants increase the amount of oxygen in the atmosphere. Agriculture also produces food crops and increases oxygen levels.

Seasons change prematurely due to decrease and increase in the heat of the sun. plants are destroyed day by day. So, everyone should take appropriate measures to prevent nature's pollution. It is said, in the Mahābhārata, about the conservation of animals and birds that animals should be protected as a father protects his son.

*Pitṛvat pālayed vaiśyo yuktah sharvān paśuniha.*

So, at last we may say everyone should develop and conserve the nature and in return they will also be benefited for us.

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