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“Environment and Literature: Poets as Spokesman”

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The capacity of human beings to create, has been a matter of great concern, is reflected in literature also. It shows relationship between environment and writings. Every literary writer has precious and complicated internal environment which is to be seen in context of the changing world of Nature. Ancient literature like Veda, Bible etc. evidently speak about importance of environment as holding the elements of nature, the life giving sources, as pious and pure in high regard, as personifying various powers like a young plant looked upon as a child of one's own, tree as growth of life, river as continuity or earth as mother, sky as father so that it gives sense of unity, co-existence, interdependence and answerability of man while using natural resources. Since then Nature as seen, evoked and transformed, nourished and exploited has nourished the creativity of poets to try to care, protect, preserve and worry for environment in their works.

Literature comes out of writer's creativity and environment of its time. It is no mere imitation. It brings into the world something altogether new in the world of thought and philosophy and makes social contribution to maturity, delight and well – being of man. When talk is held for environment, two sides of it should be taken into account, that is, one with which we are surrounded and the other which is social and cultural. But natural environment is most important than heredity. Because, there can be three different responses to it: one when over industrialization in developed, under developed and developing countries victimize man to grow, wither and decay the values poet like Sir John Betjeman says in poem 'Inexpressive Progress' that 'AND IF THERE IS SOME SCENERY/ SOME UNPRETENTIOUS GREENERY/ SURVIVING ANY WHERE/ IT DOES NOT NEED PROTECTING /FOR SOON WE'LL BE ERECTING /A POWER STATION THERE.'

Another response is of challenge as man does not take a defeat, he fights through thick and thin which poet Carl Sandburg conveys in poem 'The People yes' that 'THE PEOPLE WILL LIVE ON/IN DARKNESS WITH GREAT BUNDLE OF GRIEF/ THE PEOPLE MARCH IN THE NIGHT-----WHERE TO? WHAT NEXT? And lastly, of perfect harmony and natural growth as Rabindranath Tagore has versed in poem 'In Praise of Tree 'O TREE LIFE FOUNDER YOU HEARD THE SUN SUMMON YOU FROM THE DARK WOMB OF EARTH./ O PROFOUND SILENT TREE BY RESTRAINING VALOUR/ WITH PATIENCE YOU REVEALED CREATIVE POWER INTO THE PEACEFUL FORM'/THUS WE CAME TO YOUR SHADE TO LEARN THE ART OF PEACE/ TO HEAR THE WORD OF SILENCE/ MAN WHOSE LIFE IS IN YOU, WHO IS SOOTHED BY YOUR COOL SHADE, STRENGTHENED BY YOUR POWER----O TREE FRIEND OF MAN.'

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Accordingly, Poet shows sublime joy, thrill, anger, dissatisfaction, pessimism, depression, loss, satire, dislike etc. for polluted environment in his poem because man is too lazy or indolent to help own self and others. He lives in the midst of stink but forgets that civilization itself cannot survive if the natural environment collapses so poet Nissim Ezekiel satirically writes in poem 'Urban': 'AT DAWN HE NEVER SEES THE SKIES/ WHICH SILENTLY, ARE BORN AGAIN/NOR FEELS THE SHADOWS OF NIGHT/RECLINE THEIR FINGERS ON HIS EYES/HE WELCOMES NEITHER SUN OR RAIN/HIS LANDSCAPE HAS NO DEPTH OR HEIGHT.' and Words Worth In his poem 'Nutting' conveys nature to be a source of joy and inner peace as he writes ' I FELT A SENSE OF PAIN WHEN I BEHOLD THE SILENT TREES AND SAW THE INTRUDING SKY / THEN DEAREST MAIDEN, MOVE ALONG THESE SHADES/ IN GENTLENESS OF HEART WITH GENTLE HAND TOUCH-FOR THERE IS SPIRIT IN THE WOODS."

It is true that environment supports creativity and influences it. It is equally true that creation may be of a poem, a work of art or a monument in its own environment suggests something to comprehend the pain or pleasure of the new, which wants to reshape the atmosphere of the world to heart's desire but hints to face boldly the contradictions and resolve them towards the harmony of man, Nature, self history and the beyond as reflected in the poem 'Stopping by the Woods in a Snowy Evening' where American poet Robert Frost presents the conflict in the mind between demands of practical life and desire of reverie when says 'WOODS ARE LOVELY, DARK AND DEEP/BUT I HAVE PROMISES TO KEEP/ AND MILES TO GO BEFORE I SLEEP/ AND MILES TO GO BEFORE I SLEEP.'

Man has dominated Nature and its surroundings since ages with a belief that he has turned Nature for his purpose but as expressed by keki Daruwala in poem Hawk: TO KILL FOR HIS OWN PLEASURE AND DIVERSION AS HE SAYS/ DURING THE BIG DRAUGHT WHICH IS SURELY TO COME/THE DOVES WILL LOOK FOR CLOUDS/ AND IT WILL RAIN HAWKS.' hints about the furious response of Nature. Since the time of Vatsyayan, in India also, complexity is really a matter of relationship that man keeps on substituting one order of complexity by another. Here, the poet, who can impress the different elements of Nature into service to speak for, uses words so true, fresh and natural and even poignant that seem to expand like buds at the approach of spring as said by Indian poet Gieve Patel in 'On Killing Tree' describes the process of brutal and merciless murder of tree by saying that 'IT TAKES MUCH TIME TO KILL A TREE/ NOT A SIMPLE JOBOF KNIFE/WILLDO IT-----/ SO HACK AND CHOP/ BUT THIS ALONE WON'T DO IT.'

With the growing seriousness for endangered environment there is realization that man's journey on this earth has proved the inseparable destiny from that of the earth, because whatever befalls the earth, befalls the sons of earth because man is the strand in the web of life which poet Dilip chitre in poem 'Felling

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of Banyan Tree' expresses caution for eco-concern that 'TREES WERE SACRED MY GRAND MOTHER USED TO SAY/FELLING THEM IS A CRIME/ BUT HE MASSACERED THEM ALL/ SOON AFTERWARD WE LEFT BARODA TO BOMBAY/ WHERE THERE ARE NO TREES EXCEPT THE ONE WHICH GROWS AND SEETHS IN ONE'S DREAM., ITS AERIAL ROOTS LOOKING FOR THE GROUND TO STRIKE.' poet strives to impose harmony in the chaos of the world that is sick, unbalanced and on the verge of destruction or mass suicide. by damaging Natural resources.

It is true that life is a process of interchange between the life substance and environment so alike a wheel provided with a bucket of water for irrigation of fields the poet takes direct or constant effort to express need of preservation of environment and be preserved by it. In a cyclical process poet seeks unity between environment and man to understand the inalienable bond between the spirit of Nature and soul of man as observed by poet Words Worth in poem 'I Wondered lonely as a cloud' who says 'I WONDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD/THAT FLOTS ON HIGH OVER VALES AND HILLS/ WHEN ALL AT ONCE I SAW A CROWD /A HOST OF GOLDEN DAFFODILS -----TEN THOUSAND SAW I AT A GLANCE/TOSSING THEIR HEADS IN SPRIGHTLY DANCE-----IGAZED AND GAZED----FOR OFT WHEN ON MY COUCH I LIE/ IN VACANT OR IN PENSIVE MOOD/ THEY FLASH UPON-----AND MY HEART WITH PLEASURE FILLS.'

literary writer's creative consciousness apprehends environment fully, becomes one with it, reconciles after bafflement and despair and accepts it to create effective writing that can be seen in Nissim Ezekiel's poem 'A Morning Walk' expressing Bombay to be a living hell by saying ' BARBARIC CITY, SICK WITH SLUMS /DEPRIVED OF SEASONS, BLESSED WITH RAINS.' It has a satirical attack or comment on the obsession of modernity with so called favour for progress at the cost of Nature or on inability and passivity of man to the beauty of Nature because man aspires for material success and fame.

The most congenial state of being comes into existence which can be seen easily in simple state of the tribal man who with his innocence and pure love proves that human consciousness cannot be separated from the consciousness in Nature that is still super to us as expressed by James Fraser in poem 'Arikara Born' that 'BUT IT'S WHAT MY FATHER TAUGHT ME EVERY SINGLE DAY/ TO LEARN FROM OUR LANDS FOR THROUGH THE YEARS THEY'D DISPLAY/ TRACKING, SEEKING, SEARCHING LIVING FROM OUR LANDS/ EVERY YEAR MORE LEARNED, GROWING IN UNDERSTAND.'

All the different poets, in their creativity are not existentialists but their religion is for existence-clarification that gives coherence and continuity to environment and culture instead of choking it. They advocate directly or indirectly the desire of a healthy-peaceful survival on earth, the environmental awareness, which is the need of the hour. Means, one of the long standing chores in literature is healing: to heal the several wounds of separation of man from Nature, man and self, man and history and man and the beyond. So the taste of society for literature can

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involve man not merely to himself but to every other object as an observer and participant to the realities of cosmic field.

Literature mirrors at Promethean pride – the strutting I (capital) of human self and pride – is the root of every error, especially in case of environment because man has turned the tap on of technology without being able to control the flow. In matter of fact technology and transcendence have to pull together because the fate of earth and fate of man are one and the same. So to say, literature in any form reminds the sane society that life is sacred, all are inter – related, we are all parts of a whole made up of seen and unseen, there is a law of compassion and of consequences. If there is neither peace nor goodwill on earth, we have to thank ourselves only.

