CHAPTER - V

KĀLIDĀSA'S CONCEPT OF NATURE: ECOLOGICAL INCLINATIONS

Introduction

Modern man armed with science, and technology, views nature as merely an inert object, a raw mass that could be effectively used for the development and progress of human life and society. The increase in industrial production and the expansion of markets are considered as the marks of progress. This utilitarian approach to nature and environment causes unrestricted exploitation of natural resources, in the forms of mining deforestation, urbanization and so on. Indiscriminate human interference in the eco-system has caused serious destruction of ecology. The existence of several species are in danger and many have disappeared from the earth for ever. Man's attitude that nature is made for his own use and pleasure has led to the pollution of nature and his alienation from natural surrounding.

Recently we have understood that earth's resources are not unlimited (for example most of the petroleum deposits has been used up.) They will stop one day. Therefore humans cannot move on in the manner he lives today. In order to survive man should change his life-style. He
should not separate himself from his natural surroundings and ruin the nature's bounties. Instead he should learn how to live in harmony with nature, without exploiting it, controlling his greed. He should learn to be sensitive to his life within the natural surroundings. Man has to regain his quality of respecting and loving other sentient and non-sentient beings of the world. In these matters we have to learn a lot from our ancestors, both philosophers and poets. In this chapter an attempt is made to see how Kālidāsa the greatest of Indian poets conceived and represented nature and how far his thoughts become relevant within the context of ecology and aesthetics. We have to take in to account of Kālidāsa's view of nature, which was colored by his aesthetic concepts ancient philosophy and mythology.

An important factor of the life on earth is its endless diversity. Nature is filled and proliferated by both living and non-living things. Our ancestors had the eye to see these diversity and they respected and admitted it as an essential feature of prakṛiti or the mother nature. According to ancient samkhya philosophy the diverse objects of the Universe are evolved from a single primordial matter or prakṛti. It is the character of the prakṛti to produce and multiply. The off-springs of prakṛti are equal although they are
of different qualities Indian tradition considers that all living-beings possess equal right to live and prosper.

Kālidāsa is never tired in describing the various aspects of nature. In his poems he has referred to a host of creatures from ants to elephants and plants from grass (darbha) to the tall Devatārus. Mountains, hills, valleys, rivers, ponds, fields, ocean, streams, forests, peaks covered with snow etc. are described by him along with the presence of life, found on them. There is no doubt that he had traveled extensively throughout India and had first hand knowledge of these regions.

As we have referred earlier, because of the rapid growth of Industrialization and modern life-style, the bio-diversity of the world is in danger. The environmentalists are acutely aware of the extend and necessities of protecting nature's diversity. Diversity is a virtue that sustains life on earth but it also gives rise to serious conflicts. Therefore tolerance and inclusively are also needed to protect diversity. For a peaceful co-existence there should be genuine mutual respect and joy in sharing. The virtue of inclusively is not an impossible ideal. Kālidāsa had showed that in the depiction of tapovanas and in the behavior of beings in the wilderness during the spring time etc. such a life is possible. During the description of the cloud’s journey from central India to Himālayas and in the description of
In nature things do not exist in isolation from one another. According to Aldo Leopold, they are "inter locked in one humming community of co-operations and competitions, one biota". Hence the crane, no mere birds, lends "a paleontological patent of nobility" to its marshy habitat. We cannot love cranes and hate marshes. The marsh itself is now transformed by the presence of cranes from a "waste" a 'god-forsaken' mosquito swamp, into a thing of precious beauty.¹ He further says that the appreciation on an environmental natural beauty could involve more than the visual appeal of natural environments. The appreciation of an environment’s natural beauty could involve the ears. eg: the sounds of rain, insects, birds or silence itself the surface of the skin as the warmth of the sun, the chill of the wind, the texture of grass, rock, sand, etc. the nose and tongue as the fragrance of flowers, the taste of saps and waters as well as the eyes. Most of all it could involve the mind. The aesthetic appeal of country, should have less to do with its adventitious colors and shapes or its scenic expanses and picturesque proportions than with the integrity of its evolutionary heritage and ecological processes.²
According to Kālidāsa, nature is a continuous process and the all natural aspects are related with each other. In *Abhinjānaśākuntala*, Kālidāsa gives an appropriate picture of Śakuntalā related with the all aspects of nature. He never avoids the natural surroundings. Along with Śakuntalā’s portrait, he wishes to add the following:

कार्यां सैकतलीनहसमिधुना स्नोतोवहा मालिनी
पदास्तामीभो निष्णहसिरणा गोरीगुरोः पावना:।
शाखालिपितवत्तकलस्य च तरोनित्तामात्तिमित्तामः
श्रुक्कृणमृगस्य वामनवं कण्डूस्यमानं गुणगुमः॥ [AŚ. VI. 17]

The stream of Mālinī ought to be drawn with a pair of swans resting on its sands, and on both its sides must appear the sacred hills at the base of the Himālayan ranges, where the deer are squatting; and I wish to draw, underneath a tree that bears some bark-garments suspended from its boughs, a doe that rubs her left eye on the horn of a black antelope.³

In another scene, when the king entered the way to hermitage he observes the natural surroundings. Under the trees, the grains of wild rice are fallen from the openings of hollow trunks filled with parrot. Some other places shine with the polished stones; The fawns too from having acquired confidence bear the sound without varying their course, the paths are
marked with lines by the drippings from the fringes of bark-garments. The roots of trees are bathed in the waters of streams. The fresh leaves are partially obscured by the smoke that rises from clarified butter, the young fawns are leisurely grazing without fear on the garden lawns where the sprouts of Darbha-grass have been cut away. In *Meghadūta* the picture of Daśārṇa country gives the following natural images.

Once you reach the vicinity of the daraśana country, the hedges of its gardens will have the ketakās flowering with their edges opened at their top part the sacred trees of the villages disturbed by the commotion with the birds like crows making their nests, outskirts lined with jambu trees with ripened fruits and with the swans halting there for a few days.⁴

Kālidāsa does not argue for the domination of nature by humans. He does not place human beings on the top and in the centre of things. In his world of poetry Human beings becomes perfect when they are properly related to nature. Nature becomes acceptable to humans when it is
interpreted and understood in proper manner with love respect and compassion. He gives a balanced view of togetherness of mankind and nature. His keen concern for nature coincidences with the idea of deep-ecology to a certain extend so far as nature is placed at the centre of his poetic descriptions. He initiates anthropomorphism for a better understanding and emotional relation with natural phenomena. But he does not favor anthropocentrism that promotes human rule over nature. According to him it is better to control human-desires and take only what is only needed for the satisfaction of human-existence from nature as approved by nature.

As we has have already mentioned the Norwegian philosopher Naess proposed some basic principles of deep ecology which transformed the attitude of modern-man towards nature. They are:

1. The well being and flourishing of human and non-human life on earth have a value in themselves, independently of their usefulness for human purposes.

2. Richness and diversity of life forms are also values in themselves.

3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
4. The flourishing of human life is compatible with a smaller human population. The flourishing of non-human life also requires a smaller human population.

5. The present human interference with the non-human world is excessive.

6. Policies must therefore be basically changed.

7. Appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) has to replace adhering to ever higher standards of living.

8. Those who subscribe to these points have been obligation to try to implement them.\textsuperscript{5}

Kālidāsa respects the affiliation of other living beings and he unfolds the rich diversity of nature in his poetic world. He shows that love is the unifying force of all life whether it is human or non-human.

G. Naganathan in 'Animal welfare and nature' observes that Kālidāsa is supreme in depicting the love motif which makes the whole world kin.\textsuperscript{6} He draws animals and birds, the trees and the creepers into the magic spell of this emotion. In his treatment of Nature he makes no distinction between the abstract and the concrete, the world of matter and the world of spirit, the things outside and the things inside. The creeper and the deer, the cloud and the mountain are all invested with a personality, and everything
springs forth instinct with life and feeling. His similes are not just embellishments but the doors through which the poet’s vision reaches out on all sides and presents things in an underwent of aesthetic relatedness. In his poetry the Upaniṣadic Hindu ethos comes out in a vision of the unity of the world. Situating the microcosm within the context of macrocosm have always received his aesthetic attention.

In *Abhijñānaśākuntala* the poet presents Nature as living and full of feeling. As Śakuntalā herself the boys and girls who live in the hermitage were brought up in direct communion with Nature. All of them are members of the one and the same family. They tended the trees and animals with care and love. Any type of violence was strictly prohibited. Examples are many. When king Duṣṭhyanta tried to shoot a deer of the hermitage of Kaṇva he was politely but firmly forbidden.

When Śakuntalā is teased by her friends why she takes so much pains to water the plants she says: ने केवल तात्तनियोग एवं, आर्तितमें सोदरदोहोप एतेषु। I do this not merely because of my father’s instruction, I have a sister’s love in them.

Śakuntalā is about to marry but she celebrates first the marriage of her friend vanajyotsna creeper with the mango tree. In the fourth act there
is a touching description of how nature herself decks Śankuntalā before she
goes to meet her lord.

When Śakuntalā starts her journey to Hastinapura to join Duṣyanta
as his royal consort, she has something to plead with her father: "father!
when this hind, roaming in the vicinity of the hut and dull on account of
pregnancy, will have safely delivered, you will sent someone to
communicate to me the glad tidings".8

Another beautiful scene is in the fifth act when the suspected
Śakuntalā reminds Duṣyanta about their love scenes at the āśrama. "One
day when we were in the jasmine bower you had in your hand water in a
cup of lotus leaves. Just at that moment the little fawn, my adopted son
came up. And you, before you quenched your own thirst, gave it to the little
creature saying 'drink you first', He would not from strange hands. And yet
immediately after, when I took some water in my hand he drank absolute in
his trust. Then with a smile you said, 'Each creature has faith in its own
That trusting kinship between, man, bird, beast, plant and free, that conviction in the one life pervading all through, mark an authentic approach towards Nature. Mick Gold in his article "A history of Nature" gives a sketch of how nature was conceived by people throughout the history. In the beginning man's attitude towards nature was quite opposite to the modern approach that aims at the maximum exploitation of the resources of nature. 'Nature' is a complicated word, it has different meanings and these meanings affect each other. In western culture, three very basic meanings are available the essential quality of character of something the underlying force which directs the world and the material world itself, the world that is separate from people and human society.

As observed by Massery and Allen nature is the physical universe which preceded the world of human values, and which will presumably outlive the human race because what is out there keeps changing. Every value attributed to nature-harmonious, ruthless, purposeful, random brings nature inside human society and its values.
It is noteworthy that western culture refers to a singular force called Nature, which is personified as a woman. There is dame Nature in mediaeval mystery plays: Mother Nature in everyday speech. The famous critic Raymond Williams had pointed out that in other cultures, nature is represented as a complex network of forces. A spirit of the rain, a spirit in the wind, and so on. The western model of nature is often personified reflecting the fact that this model is created within a culture based on monotheism in the west during the medieval period, Nature was described as God’s deputy. Nature was responsible for carrying out God’s wishes on Earth. This relationship embodied a compromise between Christianity and the older animistic way of interpreting the world. Earth is seen as a living body, live forces are seen in rocks and winds as well as in trees and animals. According to this view, Nature was not a process, out there to be analysed or exploited. Within the scholastic worldview, nature was a complex chain connecting God to the humblest pebble and man was also inside the system. He was above the other creatures by virtue of his reason, but below the angels. This belief system was not just about nature, as we understand it today, it also embraced the structure of society.¹³

When we look into the other primitive cultures, we know that American Indians regarded the Earth as a great mother and found the white
man's way of exploiting the Earth abhorrent. A belief that persisted from Greek and Roman writers until well into the 18th century was that the earth produced minerals and metals within her reproductive system. Several ancient writers warned against mining the depths of mother Earth. Pliny in his 'Natural History' agues that earthquakes are an expression of anger at the violation of the Earth. A hermit falls asleep and dreams that he witnesses a confrontation between a miner and Mother Earth-noble and freeborn, clad in a green robe, who walked like a person rather mature in years. Her clothing is torn and her body has been pierced. She is accompanied by several gods who accuse the miner of murder.

In his work 'The Death of Nature' Carolyn, Merchant suggests a striking congruity between the scientist's interest in nature and the medieval western state's interest in witchcraft. He points out that Francis Bacon the philosopher who patroned scientific progress proposes an experimental methodology for investigating nature, using language which is starkly sexual in its metaphors and suggestive of a witch finder in its techniques. He writes "For you have but to follow, and as it were bound nature in her wanderings, and you will be able to lead her and drive her to the same place again". Describing the investigation of nature in the laboratory, Bacon invokes the language of the torture chamber. For like as a man's disposition
is never well-known till he be crossed, nor Proteus\textsuperscript{15} ever changed shape till he was straitened and held fast, so nature exhibits herself more clearly under the vexations of art than when left to herself.

The image of the Earth as an elderly lady who has been assaulted is striking. One can see that the characterization of nature as a subordinate woman justifies scientific research and exploitation of nature takes place.\textsuperscript{16}

The idea of Earth as a personified goddess and the idea that the cosmos as a whole is a living being is central in Hindu mythology. Goddess Pr\text{\textthv\textvi} is usually portrayed in medieval mythological texts. Bh\text{\textu\textdev\texti} becomes an important aspect of Vai\text{\textn\textava} mythology. When Bh\text{\textu\textdev\texti} complains that she is being oppressed by demonic forces Vi\text{\textsh\textnu}, attentive to the welfare of the Earth, assumes the appropriate form (avatar) and rescues the earth from her predicament. It is common to see Vi\text{\textsh\textnu} served by Śrila\text{\textk\textshi\textmi} on one side and Bh\text{\textu\textdev\texti} on the other. Bh\text{\textu\textdev\texti} is the personification of the under lying stable, broad ground that supports all creatures or of the source of inexhaustible fertility. These aspects of Earth expressed in early hymns to pr\text{\textthvi}, are also found in other goddesses, such as Śakambari, Laksm\text{\texti} and Mah\text{\texta\textdev\texti}.\textsuperscript{17} Mah\text{\texta\textdev\texti} is often identified with prak\text{\textr\textti}, pre-mordial matter or nature. The identification of the Dev\text{\texti} with matter, the earth, or the cosmos is often expressed by identifying parts of
the world with parts of her body. The Devī Bhāgavata purāṇa calls the earth the Devī’s loins. The same text speaks of the oceans as her bowels, the mountains as her bones, the river as her veins, and the trees as her body hair. The sun and moon are her eyes, and the nether worlds are said to be her hips, legs and feet. In a Gupta inscription, Kumāragupta is said to rule over the whole earth, whose "marriage-string is the verge of the four oceans, whose breasts are the mountain Sumeru and Kālidāsa, whose laughter is the full-blown flowers showered forth from the borders of the woods".18

Again going back to the Indus-valley civilization we can find hundreds of female figurines, which are made crudely in terra-cotta, representing nature others, notably the famous dancing girl, are skillfully crafted and made of bronze. Some of the figures are virtually indistinguishable according to sex, where as others appear to be androgynous, having breasts. Along with these possible worship of the feminine goddess in the Indus valley culture, mention should be made of several small circular stone objects or discs with holes in the center. This emphasizes the sacred power of human fertility. The seal depicting a tree issuing from the womb of a nude woman emphasizes the relation between vegetative life and some divine feminine-being, a Goddess who was associated with or manifested
herself through vegetation. It is probable that a blood offering was made to a goddess to reinvigorate her productive energy for ensuring abundant and continued crops. A female being or goddess was known who gave birth to vegetation and had some association with crops.\textsuperscript{19}

In the Vedas much of the imagery of the poetry and religion can be understood as the response of the imagination on Nature and natural forces that seemed living and animate. The best example of the poet's understanding of the beauty of Natural world is the compendium of hymns to U\textasharp sas, goddess of dawn. They typify the resonance felt by the ancient Indians between the phenomenal world and human concerns. In the early stage we can see the nature as a frame for human emotions. There the natural world is not apart from man, but as a reflection and extension of his moods and passions.\textsuperscript{20}

The Goddess of the forest, Ara\texttilde{\textasharp}y\textasharp\textasharp{n}i is celebrated and worshipped. The forest is different from the village. Life in the forest is seen as harmonious with songs of many birds and creatures, cattle grazing, wagons carrying heavy loads of natural harvest. The 'forest queen' is praised as 'sweet scented'. She is a mother of all sylvan things. The picture is clearly one of balance and prosperity. Man eats savery fruit and then takes, with their wish, his rest. But the "Lady of the wood" is an object of sylvian beauty
wherein element of mystery dominates. The goddess never slays, unless some murderous enemy approaches.\textsuperscript{21}

The heart of vedic worship was ready to adapt the beneficent powers of nature to human needs. They believed that gods to whom the prayers were addressed granted favors, but were in turn dependent on humans for offerings in yajña. Here we get a picture of interrelationship and interdependence between people and the great cosmic forces as symbolized in rituals. Philosophers were not content to study human nature only, but turned their speculations on the larger world of nature to which human belonged.\textsuperscript{22}

We have already discussed that in the vedic religion and philosophy the physical order is combined with a belief in ethical order, and both are brought together in the concept of ṛta. There were proper ways of relating people with animate and inanimate objects, and these forms of relating merited rewards and punishments. No discrimination is made between humans and other species.

The upaniṣadic sages synthesized two notions which originally had totally different connotations, namely, Brahman, or the ultimate source of the external world, and Ātman, or the inner self of the person. These sages teach that the Brahman of the macrocosm is none other than the Ātman of
the microcosm. Brahman is equated with Ātman, the eternal ground of the universe, including the ground of the being of human kind and the being of nature. The vedic hymns are connected by the conviction that one thing we can be certain of in this world is that whatever we do must have consequences. The universe is so structured that the consequences of our actions are inexorably played out into an unknown and unseen future.

The diverse theories of creation is found in the Iśavasyopaniṣad, that recognizing the unity that underlies the diversity of the world. The epic and purānic literature contains many theories of creation that shows the interrelationships of things. The Upaniṣad and epics invests people, not with rights and privileges, but with obligations and responsibilities towards nature and society.

According to the environmental thinking, in India the mother goddess motif that the pre-Āryan religion combined with the later Āryan elements gave prominence to the worship of Śakti, the nature power personified as a goddess.23

David kinesly observes that Hindu tradition gives reverence to almost every river of the Indian sub-continent. Some rivers have origin in heaven. In the Ṛgveda Saraśvati river is praised as a Goddess who blesses beings with health, long-life and knowledge. River Gaṅgā, like Saraśvati originates
in heaven. She is brought to earth by Bhagīratha. Śiva receives Gaṅgā on his head and she is released to the Himālayas. Gaṅgā is associated with Śiva as his consort. She is also associated with the Gods Brahma and Viṣṇu. Gaṅgā is considered as the holiest river of India which like a mother distributes water to every living-being. Her waters have the power to wash away all impurities. The rivers Yamunā, Kaverī, Narmadā and Brahmaṇputrā are also revered for their purifying power. 'Gaṅgā mā', mother Gaṅgā, is probably the river's most popular epithet. Like a mother or the Ganges is here in the world to feed and comfort her children, She is tangible, approachable, and all-accepting. All who approach her for comfort and blessing are enveloped by her yielding, redemptive waters, she is the distilled essence of compassion in liquid form. No one is denied her blessing.24

The popular belief in these deities are expressed in the Purāṇas and also in folk-stories. Each village has its own female deity whom villagers worship as a mother. The villagers believe that she takes care of well being of the village community. Often these deities are endowed with the powers of blessing and also punishment by causing natural calamities or diseases. Festivals are conducted to appease the village deities. In some works the presiding deities of cities are also females for example "Laṅkālakṣmi". In all
these examples we can see the mythological identification of nature as a goddess.

Kālidāsa inherited this unique mythological tradition and in his kāvyas tries to express that everything in this universe is endowed with a common natural force which he calls the energy of prakṛti, which is considered as essentially female. From his kāvyas, we understand that Kālidāsa was a great devotee of Śiva and Pārvatī especially in the arthanārīśvara form. He could not tolerate destruction of nature. In KS, Kālidāsa criticizes the actions of demon Tāraka, who interferes and disturbs the system of universe. He shows that making the forces of nature the mere slaves of man or demon is immoral and punishable. Nobody has the right to break the rhythm of nature. The demon Tāraka insolent by the boon of brāhma torments the world like a comet. We have already noted how the Gods complaint against his misconduct against nature.

He controls the sun rays for his pleasure in his city. The sun sends his rays only to bloom the lotuses flowers that Tāraka decides. The full moon shines every night. The wind stops its rapid motion with fear and blows only to bear away the fallen flowers.

Under Tāraka’s command the seasons are giving up the natural succession of service. The lord of rivers, is anxiously waiting the
development of precious stones, fit to be offered as presents to him, in the bottom of water.\textsuperscript{26} The leafy trees of the Nandana groves are cut off by Tāraka. He has built pleasure-mountains in his garden, having rooted up the peaks of Meru. The water of the heavenly Ganges are made turbid by the rut of the elephants of the quarters. His pleasure lakes have become the abode of the harvest of golden lotuses.\textsuperscript{27} In this manner the natural forces and natural resources are used by Tāraka indiscriminately for his pleasure. The Davās complained against him to Brahma the creator. Through this mythological narration Kālidāsa points out that it is evil to approach nature as if it is made for serving human beings. The account of Tāraka reminds us of the assault of modern man on nature and environment.

According to Cromwell Crawford "The cosmic vision of Hinduism sees humans as an intrinsic part of nature. The fabric of life has many special strands, and human beings are special in their own rights by virtue of their moral character, but this does not place them outside nature or above nature. Distinction, not separation, is the hallmark of the Hindu view of the position of humans in nature. The unitive thinking of Hinduism aligns it with a "deep ecology" which places people in nature, as opposed to a
shallow ecology which is anthropocentric and which ascribes to Homosapiens a position of dominance and superiority over nature.\textsuperscript{28}

Kālidāsa is influenced by the long and matured tradition of vedic puranic religion and philosophy. The world is not permanent because of its ever changing nature. He respects and follows Triguṇa (Satva, Rajas, Tamas) qualities inherent in pṛakṛti or nature. The five elements of 'Mahābhūtās' and their qualities are well known in the ancient literatures. These are responsible for the creation of the world. Kālidāsa acknowledges three stages in nature. (Creation, existence and destruction.) Parameśwara is the root cause of three stage states.

In order to get ultimate liberation the soul depends the blessings of Parameśvara. Śiva is the proprietor and the unified principle of all this world. It is said that the world exists within the body of Viṣṇu. The Trimūrtis or the three Gods are the different aspects of the one and the same supreme god. The eight Mūrtis of Śiva in which the five elements are included are the basic material of the world. Kālidāsa compares the origin of Prakṛti the primordial matter to the birth of Brahma from the lotus on the naval of Viṣṇu constituted by three qualities. Viṣṇu bears the world created by Brahma.\textsuperscript{29} Kālidāsa considers that the Trimūrtis are the cause of the pṛalaya, sriṣṭi and sthiti of the universe, The male and female are the separate manifestations
of the supreme being. All the creature, movable and immovable, consider
the female part as their mother, for Śiva is the father of the universe.

D.N. Bhargava’s opinion is that the impact of Kashmir Śaivism on
Kālidāsa cannot be denied. According to this philosophy the world is a
place for happiness. We do not have, therefore, true tragedy in Kālidāsa.
Secondly, there is no real difference between the spirit and the matter. The
nature in Kālidāsa, therefore, is close to human beings, not as a poetic
make-believe, but as a matter of fact. As he is a follower of the philosophy
of Kashmir śaivism, Kālidāsa has always a liking for mixing the royal
richness with spiritual austerity, because they are not contrary to each
other. They are rather complementary. At the same time he believes that
the material prosperity is always subordinate to spiritual grace. Kālidāsa is
unique in not condemning material prosperity but at the same time pleading
for the chastening of power and pleasure by penance, duty and
contemplation, in short by the concept of dharma. This world view of
Kālidāsa is very relevant for modern times because positive sciences have
caused all material prosperity to mankind, but there is an erosion of moral
and spiritual values. The benefits of science need not be denied but a
balance has to be struck by realizing that true happiness lies in love and not
in prosperity.
We have already seen that the pagan or pre-Christian communities in the west followed the animistic way of interpreting the world. They saw the earth as a living body. He saw live-forces in rocks and winds as well as in trees and animals. Mick Gold observes that even today it is common to describe the way in which farmers allow fields to lie uncultivated for a year as "giving the soil a chance to rest". Such feelings are a reminder of the days when the whole world was felt to be alive.33

Mick Gold also points out that in the pre-modern society nature was not a process out there to be analyzed or exploited. People thought nature as a living thing "in Renaissance maps, it was conventional to represent the wind as gusts of breath which issued from the mouths of cherubs and angels. This was but one element of the way in which the Earth was perceived as a living body; the circulation of water through rivers and seas was comparable to the circulation of blood, the circulation of air through wind was the breath of the planet; volcanoes and geysers were seen as corresponding to the Earth's digestive system-eruptions were like belches and farts issuing out of a central stomach.34

Such thoughts and imagining of nature as a living body was replaced by the cultivation of scientific outlook. Modern man saw nature as an endless resource fit for exploitation. In the capitalist world nature's image
has changed from something to be respected as the mother into a source of wealth-that needs to be possibly desired. The American Indians regarded the Earth as mother and opposed the white man's way of exploiting the earth. It is quoted that the American tribes men telling the white people, "you ask me to plough the ground! Shall I take a knife and tear my mother's breast? You ask me to dig for stones! Shall I dig under her skin for her bones? Then When I die, I cannot enter her body to be born again".35

In India also such feelings of hurting nature exists, for example, before felling trees during the time of needs it was a custom to pray after some rituals: "O tree! you are intended for the making of an image of a deity. I salute you please accept my worship offered according to injunctions... May those beings that reside here arrange for their residence elsewhere after accepting the oblations offered according to injunctions. Let them for give me. Salutation to them all".36

In Kālidāsa's work he gives an important role to the Aśoka trees. We have already seen that in Mālavikāgnimitra, the queen Dhārīṇī told Mālavikā that if the flowers of Aśoka would blossom within five days, she would fulfill her desire. But for the touching of Mālavikā, the Aśoka could blossom before time. This ceremony is known as Dohada to Aśoka. Dohada means the longing of a pregnant lady. Here Kālidāsa associates life and desires to
trees and plants as well. In Uttara Megha we see red Aśoka waiting for the touches of the feminine foot. In KS and RV Aśoka tree are said to bear blossoms irrespective of the flowery touches of the feminine feet. Here Kālidāsa seems to visualize a close relationship between nature and the human-world. Kālidāsa considers some trees as divine namely Dēvavṛkṣa. In Amarakośa divine trees are enumerated as thus.

पञ्चैते देवतर्वो मन्दार पारिजातक।
सन्तानः कलपवृक्षर्ष शूरस वा हरिचन्दनम्।।

Mandāra, Parijātāka, Santana, Kalpavṛkṣa and Haricandana are the five divine trees. In Śakuntalā the hermitage of marīca is full of mandāra trees.

अन्तिपरिवर्तितत्तम नदारवृक्षं प्रजापतेश्वरं प्रविष्टो स्वः।।

We have entered the āśrama of Prajāpati where mandāra trees grown by Aditi exist.

तत्वौद्वित्तेऽत्तेरसःकः सिंहासनार्धभाक।

dwitiyāpi सत्यी शच्या: पारिजातांशभागिनी।। [ RV. XVII.5]

According to Manu all trees and plants are full of consciousness with in themselves and are endowed with the feelings of pleasure and pain. Such theory could not advocate violence and exploitation towards nature. Kālidāsa inherited the upaniṣadic way of bringing the entire creation under a unified spiritual principle. The one god is hidden in all creatures, the all-
pervading, the inner soul of all, the governor of their actions, the abode of
all creation, the witness, the perceiver the absolute free from all attributes.
Śvētāśvatara-piṇḍāda declares: "Just as a spider envelops itself with fibres
emanating from its own body. So does the one. God bring forth the world
substance from out of his own being and covers himself therewith. May that
lord gift us the sense of unity with him". 37

Dr. K. Karan singh observes that in the Hindu view of life, all creation
is linked together by a golden thread, because all manifestation has sprung
from the eternal Brahman 'Īśāvāsyamidam sarvam yatkiṇca Jagatyām
Jagat', The seers of the Vedas, therefore prayed for the self, not only of the
human race but for all living creatures, including animals, and even for such
apparently inanimate objects as trees and plants. 38 In our tradition the
principles of Ahimsa and restrain are considered in high esteem. Like all
other living-beings, man also is a child of nature. It is not a sin to take from
nature to fulfil his needs. A mother always allows her children's request for
essential services for survival and good life. Similarly the living-beings can
receive nature’s gifts without hurting her. For this man has to abandon his
greed and abandon wrong ideas of material progress and development.
Technology and industry that kills natural environment should not be
entertained. Instead of consumerism and market oriented production that
aims maximum profit, the society should direct their attention to lead a well balanced life respecting and protecting nature and its contents.

As we have seen Indian tradition always supports a life-style which is against all types of excess or extreme ways that seeks pleasure by destroying the life of others. It is time to stop running after more and more material pleasures. The world today understands that the material resources of our planet are not infinite.

Mahatma Gandhi identifies human greed as the root cause of exploitation by imperialism and industrialism, which leads to the depletion of natural resources. He does not under estimate the preservation of wilderness but advocates for the revitalization of a village-centered economy, which avoids living at the cost of other. The environmental degradation can be avoided only by opting against the unlimited multiplication of wants and the global chase for resources and means to satisfy them. He considers modern civilization with its mad desire to destroy distance and time, increase animal appetites and go to the ends of the earth in search of their satisfaction.

Mahatma Gandhi’s famous proclamation that ‘the world has enough for every boy’s need but not enough for everybody’s greed’ sums up his environmental philosophy and ethics. For him the issue is not to move from
to bio-centrism or eco-centrism, but from a greed-driven economy to a
need-oriented economy. And his eastern spirituality directly links god to
basic human needs when he says that god appears to the poor in the form
of bread.\textsuperscript{39}

Kālidāsa rightly pointed out that man should discipline his instincts
by tapas which starts from the arrest of indriyas including the mind. He
through his delineation of life in tapovana points out the importance of the
values of love, compassion and non-violence, which enables man to live a
life in harmony with nature. He is not against human pleasures but
advocates the prominence of love and ahimsā which constitute his concept
of Dharma. He had great compassion towards the sufferings of human
beings. In this sense of non-violence and karuna towards nature, the great
Buddha, Kālidāsa and Gandhiji, shares the best of Indian tradition. The
Indian ecological movements could be linked to the indigenous traditions of
nature-worship and empathy with nature.

Conclusion

This chapter concludes that emotional and material life of human
beings becomes enriched when he is properly related to nature. The basic
principles of deep ecology could be compared to the Indian traditional
approach to nature. Kālidāsa shows that love is the unifying force of all life
in the universe. Today the uncontrollable growth of industrialization and the all consuming modern life style puts the bio-diversity of the world in great danger. In Kālidāsa's view for a peaceful co-existence, there should be genuine feeling of mutual respect and sharing of empathy. The virtue of Inclusively is needed not an impatient act of exclusion. Kālidāsa had showed in the depiction of tapovanas and the behavior of beings in the forest during the springtime, that such a harmonious life is his ideal. According to Kālidāsa nature is a continuous process and all aspects of nature are related with one another. He never avoids the natural surroundings. He gives a balanced view of togetherness of man and nature. He favours anthropomorphism for a better understanding and emotional relation with natural phenomena. He attributes divine nature to rivers, mountains, forests, sun, moon, stars etc.. and appreciates their beauty with a worshipful mind. The integrated pictures of nature and it beings provides unique beauty to Kālidāsa's poetry. The reading of Kālidāsa's poetry enables us to find pleasure in natural phenomena and feel empathy with all living and non-living aspects of nature. The animism found in Kālidāsa's poetry is influenced by the upaniṣad teachings and pūraṇas and the early śaiva philosophy.
Kālidāsa’s poetry, read within the new ecological perspectives gives us fresh insights about the importance of good relationship between man and nature. His poetry reminds us that in his dealings with nature man should keep control over his desire and greed. He should learn to live accepting what is the necessary requirement that nature provides him without any harm. The principle of ahimsā is also important in this context. There may be occasions of conflict with natural forces but all these experiences harmonizes with the larger interest of co-existence and survival of life on earth which gives the earth its essential beauty.
Notes:


8. Ibid., p.109.

9. Ibid., p.111.


13. Ibid., p.143.


15. Proteus is a minor sea god and servant of Poseidon, the Greek god of the ocean. He can change his form or appearance at will.


17. Ibid., p.10.


20. Ibid., p.220.


22. Ibid., p.171.

23. Ibid., p.172.


26. Ibid., p.175

27. Ibid., p.176.


30. Ibid., p.173.

31. Ibid., p.203.


34. Ibid., p.13.


