



## MAPPING THE ECOLOGICAL THOUGHT THROUGH RELIGIOUS TEXTS: A CASE STUDY OF STONE CRUSHERS IN GAYA REGION

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### ABSTRACT

*This paper is an attempt to understand the need for an adequate ecological thought that could govern issues in tackling environmental issues ranging from the significance of planting a tree to combating the big issues like climate change. The focus will be to align the knowledge of our religious takes and its importance to inculcate in daily lives so that we can achieve an orientation towards a workable ecological thought. I have taken reference to a case study of stone crushers in Gaya region. The study is trying to highlight the significance of individual action in tunnelling a formidable force to achieve peace in the environment. The methodology is basically narrative analysis of lived experience which comprises of participant observation and content review of news paper over reporting of environmental issues. The expected outcome is that we can finally appreciate and understand the root of ecological thought in our tradition and relevance of yoga of action.*

**KEYWORDS:** Ecological Thought, Yoga of Action,

### INTRODUCTION

The study is basically focused on the case study of stone crushers in Gaya region. At the outset, it is pertinent to have structural idea of the problem so that we can link it to the solution. The gravity of the problem is very much sensed by the public health and concomitant pollution in Gaya region. At the heart of the problem of air pollution in Gaya region is linked to twin problem of brick industry and stone crushers prevalent in the region. There is compulsion to describe and highlight the problem so that we can offer proper administrative solution to the problem and attenuate the public health emergence situation during winter season.

### STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS

There is urgent need to have structural idea of the problem. At the instance, the study will dwell upon the distributional pattern of stone crushers industry in Gaya region. The core is basically the production centres of stones situated near Koshma along with state highway linking Daudnagar town to Gaya city. Another production centre of stone is situated on the railway line in the area of Manpur due to its nearness to mountainous region of Paharpur where big machines can easily be visualized. The core area is benefiting from the peripheral concentration of stone crushers. Most of these peripheral concentrations are along grand trunk road, state highways and railway line. The pattern is being very much conducive for the supply and demand equation of the industry.

Apart from the stone industry, this is contributing to high amount of particulate matter and worsening the situation of air and its quality during winter. Brick kiln industry is equally responsible for

dropping of air quality index in Gaya region. The reason I am highlighting both these industries is that they have two things in common; winter season and construction activities. In the former case, it is purely based on demand and thus local demand may drop subsequently and there may be shutdown of some local stone crushers; primarily due to distance. At the latter case, the problem is cyclical as brick kiln industries is very much dependent upon labour supply and it is experience of every year that after the festival season in October month, there is stream of flow of labourers in the region and contributing to work force. It may further have cascading effect on the problem. It is primarily due to sudden activity and already unfavourable winter conditions, it makes headline every year of public health emergency due to dangerous air quality.

### THE ECOLOGICAL SENSE

Being a participant observant to the problem and also at the receiving end, the study can be formulated as having sociological imagination of the problem through phenomenological undertaking. W.I. Thomas contends that any problem is real by their consequences and it will create context of justification for the study. The sociological imagination will offer context of discovery as well as suggest way to tackle the problem and responsibility of the future. The ecological thought will help as tool in arriving at the kind of sociological imagination.

Now, there will be deliberation on ecological thought through appropriation of religious texts and emphasis will be on “yoga of action”. The ecological thought encompasses ethics and politics. It starts with the opinion of others. The first learning is that whatever we face critical situation in life; we have to face and take as it is. The other aspect of ecological thought is condemnation of actions which are purely based upon anthropogenic aesthetics. The buzzword is the proper orientation of politics and ethics in public life. It implies acceptance of public opinion and proper undertaking of responsibility and abjuring the practice of transferring the problem as well as overtaking unconcerned issues. The similar kind of resonance is found in “yoga of action perspective”. In yoga of action, it enlightens us towards proper individual undertaking in life and the buzzword is “interconnectedness” and “action orientation through proper channel”. The onus is on the individual to carry out the proper function in the right direction. As Sankhya darshan provides theoretical basis of yoga; it has imagined many ‘purusha’ and monolithic ‘nature’. It is the existence of variation in purusha, there is diversity of problems and solution also exist in the diversity. Sankhya tradition contends that the cause of the problem is prior to and inherent in the work. So, unless and until, there is proper knowledge and understanding, there can be no action and no question of liberation at all. Erich Fromm underscores that there is alienation from nature not because we don’t love nature but we are nearer to culture.

### PROBLEM TO PEACE

As evident, any sort of crisis to common property resources shall have incidence on all of us, but a few can handle the situation. Phenemological study requires description of situation an individual undergoes as it is my own circumstances, there is need to brief it. My residence faces a similar kind of stone crushers and surrounded by dozen of brick kiln. As the plant was not working before winter, It came as challenge to me. I tried to communicate problem to them and reached conclusion that it is inevitable as road construction work was on full swing. As this plant was situated near to residential areas, particulate matters emanating creates problem in breathing. At the personal level, I communicated the same to district authorities. As the problem was further compounded by Brick kiln industries emission. It was incident to leave the place and wait for action and bypass any kind of violence and threat due to continuous intervention.

To my sudden surprise, the action was taken by district authorities in January and local print news papers highlighted the action undertaken and its significance but the action was too late. Anyway, it was in better direction.

## ECOLOGICAL THOUGHT THROUGH RELIGIOUS TEXTS

Religion and environmentalism is an emerging interdisciplinary subfield in the academic disciplines of religious studies, religious ethics, the sociology of religion, and theology amongst others, with environmentalism and ecological principles as a primary focus. By the 1990s, many scholars of religion had entered the debate and begun to generate a substantial body of literature discussing and analyzing how nature is valued in the world's various religious systems. A landmark event was a series of ten conferences on Religion and Ecology organized by Yale University professors Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim and held at the Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions from 1996 to 1998. More than 800 international scholars, religious leaders, and environmentalists participated in the conference series. The conferences concluded at the United Nations and at the American Museum of Natural History with more than 1,000 people in attendance. Papers from the conferences were published in a series of ten books (The Religions of the World and Ecology Book Series), one for each of the world's major religious traditions.

From these conferences, Tucker and Grim would form The Yale Forum on Religion and Ecology. The Forum has been instrumental in the creation of scholarship, in forming environmental policy, and in the greening of religion. In addition to their work with the Forum, Tucker and Grim's work continues in the Journey of the Universe film, book, and educational DVD series. It continues to be the largest international multi religious project of its kind.

An active Religion and Ecology group has been in existence within the American Academy of Religion since 1991, and an increasing number of universities in North America and around the world are now offering courses on religion and the environment.

## CONCLUSION

At the end, it is expedient to describe the role of various actors and proper orientation for future responsibilities. So, it has normative undertones. It is incidental to engage in intersubjectivity during the situation of crisis but the action is never to change the existence condition forever, but our approach is short term and it is practice to avoid such concerns. However, the paper has tried to put it in perspective. Now, it is better to highlight the roles of actors, processes involved, and institutions. There is urgent need to moralize human creatures and ready them for environmental action. Next only capacitated individuals can influence the authorities by undertaking proper channel. The role of media is very crucial, as always it tries to preempt the problem and missing out the proper timing. Most of the time, it is always intertwined with administration which lately co-opted the problem but it lead to misplaced priorities. At last, the buzzword is the future responsibility rests upon the present priorities.

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