

DECLARATION

I, Swami Kamalasthananda (Ph.D. Reg. No.- Ph.D/2469/14, Dt. 24.03.2014), hereby declare that the thesis entitled, **“ECOLOGICAL AWARENESS IN BRAHMANICAL LITERATURE UP TO SIXTH CENTURY BCE”** submitted by me under the guidance and research supervision of Prof. Projit Kumar Palit, Professor and Head, Department of History, Assam University, Silchar is an original and independent research work. I also declare that, it has not been submitted previously in any part or in full to this University or any other University or institution for the award of any degree or diploma. This work is free from plagiarism.

The thesis is being submitted to Assam University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History.

Place: Assam University

Date: The , 2016

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Preface

The canvas of the varied expression of life and life-form is nothing but the warp and woof of the earth and its environment. The earth and environment are connected closely each other. The continuance and growth of the living being is dependent upon the environment on the earth. Varied form of living beings gives the earth life-force. The ecology is relation between the living beings with other entities present on earth and environment. The ecological study reveals the close interaction between all these living and non-living beings. Any disruption or alteration of any entity leads to the permanent effect of the ecology.

Present time human civilization is on the pinnacle of the technological growth which fulfils the human need and demands more finest way. Simultaneously the environmental pollution in form of the water, air and soil with numerous toxic and hazardous ingredients increases day by day. River, streams and other water bodies are polluted and causing the rapid deformed and diseased state of the living beings. Smog is shrouding over the cities and piles of garbage is frequent scene of the cities. Air of all cities is highly contaminated with the heavy metal particles and dust. All these lead to many air-borne diseases. Air pollution is one of the most harmful forms of pollution in our environment. Air pollution is cause by the smoke emitted by cars, buses, trucks, trains, and factories, namely sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides. Even smoke from burning leaves, twigs and other plants and cigarettes are harmful to the environment causing a lot of damage to man and the living beings. The result of this pollution leads to increasing level of lung cancer, asthma, allergies, and various breathing problems along with severe and irreparable damage to flora and fauna. Even the most natural phenomenon of migratory birds has been hampered, with severe air pollution preventing them from reaching their seasonal metropolitan destinations of centuries. Water pollution is due to industrial waste products released into lakes, rivers, and other water bodies, has made marine life no longer hospitable. Human beings pollute water with large scale disposal of garbage, liter, ashes and domestic waste. In many rural areas one can still find people bathing and cooking in the same water, making it incredibly polluted. Acid rain further adds to water pollution in the water. In addition to these, thermal pollution and

the depletion of dissolved oxygen aggravate the already worsened condition of the water bodies. Water pollution can also indirectly occur as an offshoot of soil pollution – through surface runoff and leaching to groundwater. Soil pollution is caused due to acid rain, polluted water, fertilizers etc., which leads to bad crops. Soil contamination occurs when chemicals are released by spill or underground storage tank leakage which releases heavy contaminants into the soil. These may include hydrocarbons, heavy metals, MTBE, herbicides, pesticides and chlorinated hydrocarbonsⁱ.

Here some cases are cited to understand the effect of pollution. In 1987, the U.S. released 1.2 million tons of toxic chemicals into our atmosphere, 670,000 tons into our soil, and 250,000 tons into our water. Chronic obstructive respiratory disease (COPD) that develops due to indoor air pollution is responsible for the death of more than 1 million people every year. Every 1 million ton of oil that is shipped, approximately 1 ton from gets wasted in the form of spills. World Health Organization (WHO) estimates 6400 people die every year in Mexico due to air pollution. 88% of the children in Guiyu, China suffer from various respiratory diseases as the area they live in is a huge e-waste site. Around 1000 children die in India every year due to diseases caused from the polluted waterⁱⁱ. All these facts indicates the serious effect of the different pollution caused by human beings. Different living beings are also badly suffered due to the pollution. In living worlds so many species are present of any variety. With time new species are coming up with change or abolishing the old one. Therefore extinction of species is natural phenomenon. It occurs at a natural “background” rate of about one to five species per year. Scientists estimate we’re now losing species at 1,000 to 10,000 times the background rate, with literally dozens going extinct every dayⁱⁱⁱ.

Many Acts and Government regulations have been time to time adopted to check the irreparable damage by different countries or United Nations organizations. All these Pollution Prevention Acts are mainly focused industry, government, and public attention on reducing the amount of pollution through cost-effective changes in production, operation, and raw materials use.

The present study is an attempt to understand the environment and its related problems along with the process of maintaining the environmental stability mentioned in various literatures of ancient *Brahmanical* Literature upto 6 century BCE. This study is primarily based on two factors, 1) finding out the ecological concepts present

in those literatures, 2) based upon these findings try to frame the theoretical idea for improving the present day crisis regarding the environment. Moreover this study is an attempt to sketch what ancient literatures have to teach us about the need for man to live harmony with nature. It is also teach us that ecology, economics and ethics are nothing but the parts of the whole chain made of interconnected rings. If any ring is disrupted the whole chain loses its continuity.

The ideas reflected through the books and articles of eminent persons in the field of environment, ecology and ethics are the source of inspiration for the present study and are the guiding light for whole works. One may see the repetition of ideas in many places but this repetition is perhaps due to discuss the related topics in a particular objective and goal.

I am thankful to my learned guide Dr. Projit Kumar Palit, Professor and Head, Department of History, Assam university for the valuable guidance he has rendered to me in preparation this thesis, more particularly because of his active assistance in tracing the materials in the form of books and other resources.

I am able to finish my work with the blessings of Revered Srimat Swami Prabhanandaji Maharaj, Vice president, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Revered Srimat Swami Suhitanandaji Maharaj, General Secretary, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Revered Swami Jayanandaji Maharaj, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission Boys' Home, Rahara and many other monastic brothers.

I am grateful to all the faculties and staff-members of Department of History, Assam University for the wholehearted support and co-operation. I am grateful to all my teachers who have contributed to my academic, mental and spiritual growth.

My sincere thanks go to all friends and well wishers for their genuine inspiration and encouragement.

I am also grateful to such organizations and libraries : Assam University Library, Departmental Library of History, Assam University; Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Golpark, British council Library, Kolkata; American Library, Kolkata; Ramakrishna Math Library, Belur Math; Inlibnet e-resource; Orissa State Museum library, Orissa; and many other libraries directly and indirectly involved.

Lastly I place my work at the feet of holy Trio – Thakur, Ma and Swamiji and my beloved Guru ‘Revered Srimat Swami Ranganathanandaji Maharaj’ whose divine blessings have helped me the work in this present concrete form.

Swami Kamalasthananda

Reference:

- ⁱ http://www.uccee.org/Environmental_Pollution.html
- ⁱⁱ <http://www.conserve-energy-future.com/various-pollution-facts.php>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Chivian, E. and A. Bernstein (eds.) 2008. Sustaining life: How human health depends on biodiversity. Center for Health and the Global Environment. Oxford University Press, New York.

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