

PREFACE

Believers and theologians will go on tracing the roots of environmental crises in human departures from scriptural mandates, and therefore identifying the prospects of environmental reform in a renewed adherence to them.

For the historians, however, environmentalism is principally a product of and reaction to the Industrial Revolution. Industrial Revolution with concomitant revolution in agriculture, colonization for augmentation in productivity search for new resources caused unprecedented damage to nature both in scale and intensity. However, with industrialization a civilizational environmental crisis arose. This alarmed some writers and thinkers, who began to search for ways. Thus was born environmental movement.

There was no environmentalism before industrialization; there were only the elements of environmental sensibility. There were tribes who pursued a species to extinction; there was a tribe who harvested its preys prudently so as not to deplete the pray population in the long run. Poets and playwrights both from the East and the West wrote with insights and empathy about the natural world. All this might be said to constitute the prehistory of environmentalism, though not environmentalism itself. For neither peasants nor poets transcended the locality to offer a systematic vision of recognizing nature. However, with Industrial Revolution and concomitant environmental degradation environmentalism saw the light of the day.

Here environmentalism can profitably be compared with three other great movements of the modern world: the democratic movement, which asked that

ordinary, underprivileged folk also be given a political voice; the socialist movement, which wanted the fruits of economic growth be distributed equitably; and the feminist movement which urged the women be granted political and economic right equal to those enjoyed by men. Wherever there is autocracy, there are dissenters asking for democratic rights. Where is capitalism, socialists will rise to oppose it. Where there is patriarchy, there will be women who resist it. The form, shape and intensity of these protests vary; the oppositional impulse remains constant. So, one might say wherever there is industrialization there is environmentalism. Like other great movements of the modern world, environmentalism is not unified or homogenous. We speak of difference feminism and identity feminism, of agrarian socialism and Marxism; likewise, modern environmentalism comes in many shades and strands and as such the environmental movement has been influenced by, and has in turn influenced, struggle for socialism, feminism and democracy.

Women and nature have an age old association- an affiliation that has persisted through culture, language and history. There ancient interconnections have been brought to the fore with the simultaneity of two recent social movements- women's liberation movement and the ecology movement. Hence, environmentalists are warning us of irreversible consequences of continuing environmental exploitation and emphasizing the interconnectedness between people and nature. Juxtaposing the goals of the two movements can suggest new values and social structures, based not on the domination of women and nature as resources but on the full exploitation of

both male and female talent and on the maintenance of environmental integrity. The ecological movement has reawakened interests in the values and concepts associated historically with the pre modern organic world. The ecological model and its associated ethics make possible a fresh and critical interpretation of the rise of modern science in the crucial period. The vision of the ecology movement has to restore the balance of nature disrupted by industrialization and overpopulation. It has emphasized the need to live within the cycle of nature, as opposed to the exploitative mentality of forward progress. It focuses on the cost of progress, the limits of growth, the deficiencies of technological decision making, and the urgency of the conservation and recycling of natural resources. Similarly, the women movement has exposed the costs for all human being of competition in the marketplace, the loss of meaningful productive economic roles for women in capitalist society, and the view of both women and nature as psychological and recreational resources for harried entrepreneur husband.

The multiple environmental crises in the world have awakened society to the need to pay attention to the earth we live in. various forms of environmentalism have caught the imagination of the societies, and raised a consciousness of the urgent need to deal with the survival issue. In this renewed awareness, it has emerged that it is practically impossible to talk of environmental issues without reference to women. Under these circumstances, eco-feminism, 'a new term for ancient wisdom' grew out of social movements-the feminist, peace and ecology movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s; and as such it points to Deep

*Ecology and Social Ecology and such other issues which concern environment;
and hence it exhorts one to go for further enquiry or enquires for better
explications in regard to environment.*