Importance of flowers and trees in Ramcharit Manas

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ABSTRACT

The ancient Sanskrit epics, the Ramayana and Mahabharata, also termed Itihasa (History) or Mahakavya (“Great Compositions”), refer to forest and plant life at various places. The language of these texts is the “Epic Sanskrit”. The importance of forests in Indian epics can be understood from the fact that each epic devotes one book to the forests. In Mahabharata it is the Aranyaka Parva (where Vana Parva is also discussed). In Ramayana Aranyak Parva is one Kanda known as Adikavya which devoted one book to the forests. In the Mahabharata the word Aranyaka Parva is used for the forests. The division of Ramayana into Kandas (Books) also includes one Kanda known as Aranya Kanda – Book of the Forest. In Ramayana Kishkindha Kanda – Book of Kishkindha also discusses the geography and forestry of the region. This paper is based on a qualitative research methodology called hermeneutics, which is the interpretation of ancient or classical literature (Valmiki Ramayana) and the review of literatures in transformational leadership.

1. INTRODUCTION

The evolution of life on earth in geological ages indicates that man evolved only a million years ago when he lived in dense forests along with other dinosaurs. Palaeo-botanists have examined the fossils of plants found in rocks of various ages and deduced what kind of vegetation grew in those particular geological periods (Sagreiya, 2005, p.4). Thus Dr. Birbal Sahni concluded from the fossils found in inter-trappean rocks that at that time estuarine conditions prevailed in India, and the flora belonged to the genera of plants found in London clay. These plants may have migrated to India by way of the Tethys Sea which stretched along the northern edge of the Gondwana land before the uplift of the Himalayas. It has also been proved that Kashmir and Rajasthan once had a tropical forest, which later receded as a result of glaciation and the upthrust of the Himalayas. Prior to this upheaval, the Ganges drained northwards into the Sindhu. By this time man had already evolved (Sagreiya, 2005, p.4-5).

Ramayana Æede केवल जीवन के दक्षिण रूप से अभिव्यक्त किया जा सकता है। इसके 24,000 श्लोक है। यह हिंदु मूलभूत कथा आ गई थी जब ऐसे मायावत से रहने के राजा राम की गाथा की गयी थी। इसे अदितिया भी कहा जाता है। रामचरितमानस के राष्ट्रीय अवधारणा यह है जो इन के नाम से जाने जाते हैं। मायावत का खंडाहर और अंतिम कंधे संभवतः बब्बे में जाता गया था। अवधारणा से सात तहसील तक उपयोग हटा हैं। बब्बे के लिए ड्राम के मायावत से जाने जाते हैं। स्वरूप निर्देश निर्देश के अनुसार यह उपयोग हटा हैं। कुछ हौसले के अनुसार इस महाकाव्य में काशी निवासी और कुछ अवधारणा से पता चलता है कि यह पुरुषोत्तम सुसूची दोष पुरुष से पता चलता है। यह पालिका विज्ञान की नई स्थली पर पहली गाथा का विवरण है। 1,000 देवी से पता चलता है। यह पुरुषोत्तम स्वरूप के सथित है। यह स्वरूप से पता चलता है। यह पालिका विज्ञान की नई स्थली पर पहली गाथा का विवरण है। 1,000 देवी से पता चलता है।

Ramayana and the poet Valmiiki, was written by Sanskrit a unique epic is. Its 24,000 staff are. The Hindu memory of the organ through which Raghuvansh King Rama story is told. It Adikavya called. There are seven chapters of the Ramayana that case, the names are known. The first and last episode of the Ramayana probably was added later. Chapters two through seven are mostly emphasized the fact that the Ram Vishnu were the embodiment. According to some Greek and many other references in the epic shows that this book can be no earlier than the second century BC, but this notion is controversial. Since 600 BC, before the time is, however, describe the characters of Ramayana Jataka Buddhist Jataka in the Ramayana does not describe the characters (Sagreiya, 2005, p.4-5). The ancient and prehistoric man has lived in symbiosis with the environment. In the neolithic age, primitive man lived dense forests, on trees or in natural caves, and subsisted on leaves, fruits, and roots of plants. He used fire for keeping off the dangerous animals of the forest (Sagreiya, 2005, p.7).

2. IN GEOLOGICAL AGES

Palaeo-botanical evidence testifies to the fact that there were dense forests in India in the Permian period, 250 million years ago. A fossilized trunk of a tree found in the Raniganj coal-field is nearly 30 m long and 75 cm in diameter at the butt-end and 35 cm at the top-end. It has been named by Dr. Birbal Sahni as Dadovxyl, an extinct genus of plants. Fossil wood is found in several places in Madhya Pradesh and in the Sivalik hills along the Himalayas (Sagreiya, 2005, p.7). Man was evolved in the beginning of Pleistocene Age, only about a million years ago. At this time India had thick forests except in Rajasthan and parts of Punjab which lay buried under a swamp, the remnant of the receding Tethys Sea.

3. IN HISTORICAL TIMES

Man progressed rapidly in historical times, and began to live in organized societies, constructed shelters using wood bark, etc. and soon took to farming and domestication of animals. Archaeological evidence shows that the Rajasthan swamps existed till as late as 4000 BC, when Mohenjodaro culture flourished in the outskirts of Lothal Gujarat. In these marshes grew stout reeds which were used by Chalcolithic people to cover dead bodies. The adjoining forest contained rhinoceroses and crocodiles of which we find replicas on the seals. At this time trees must have been felled by axes of flint and bronze, as iron had not yet been used. After the disappearance of this civilization-the reasons for which are still not known-the Aryans started coming into India, from 2000 BC. They introduced the use of iron for making axes, javelins, ploughs, etc (Sagreiya, 2005, p.8).

Senu Singh et al.

Importance of flowers and trees in Ramcharit Manas, Indian Journal of Arts, 2013, 1(1), 1-2.

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There is evidence that at this period a Dravidian civilization of a high order flourished in the country, with its roots in the far south, which apparently lived in consonance with the thick extensive forest and its wildlife. The Aryans were primarily pastoral people. To construct shelters for themselves and for their domesticated animals they cleared the forests wherever they went. But even so, being worshippers of Nature, they preferred for their abodes, and even for their educational centres, sylvan surroundings and inspiring landscape. It is in such setting that the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Aranyakas were composed which sing the glory of the Creator and lay down recepts of conduct for man to live righteously (Sagreiya, 2005, p.8).

Human population at this period was very small, and forests were still plentiful. When the great epic Ramayana was written there were still dense forests in Naimisharanya, Chitrakoot, Dandakaranya, and Panchavati which abounded in wildlife. But by the time the Mahabharata was compiled, onslaughts had been made on forests and we read of the burning of the Khandava Vana. To arrest such vandalism, which was adversely affecting the life of the people, some wise ancestor of ours must have declared cutting of trees a sin and planting and protecting them an act of piety. Several useful species of plants were thus saved from extinction, such as the Banyan, the Pipal, the Bel, etc. Even then some disappeared in course of time from particular areas, such as the Kadam, the Ashok, and the Bamboo from Windavan (Sagreiya, 2005, p.9).

The chronicles of Chinese pilgrims mention dense Indian forests in birthplace of Lord Krishna. Records relating to the invasion of Alexander the great in 326 BC mention the existence of almost impenetrable forests along the Indus. Later, in Kautilya's times protection of forests, planting of new species of trees, and preservation of wildlife were considered desirable, and a special officer was appointed for the purpose. By the time of Emperor Ashoka, heavy inroads had already been made into the forests and their absence begun to be felt. Therefore, as his rock edicts record, this far-sighted monarch ordered that useful trees be planted along the roads and on camping grounds. He also encouraged the cultivation of exotic medicinal plants (Sagreiya, 2005, p.98-99).

Shershah Suri planted trees along the Delhi-Patna Highway. The Mughals were not forest-minded as such, but they created exquisite gardens. Emperor Jahangir introduced the famous Chinor tree in the valley of Kashmir which has now become synonymous with Kashmir. The Mughals also maintained large Shikargahs for hunting. The Ain-ul-Akbari records that elephants roamed in the forests as far west as Mhow near Indore. But a century later Aurangzeb found only scrub forests near Burhanpur. The Marathas and the Gonds planted mangoes and other useful trees along their marching routes and halting places, some of which are still surviving (Sagreiya, 2005, p.98-99).

The remains of extinct creatures discovered in the upper layers of the Sivaliks range and in other parts of India give us a glimpse of the wonderful wealth of animal life that flourished here in the tertiary period. Mastodons and great herds of elephants of many species trumpeted and tramped through the swamps and reedy forests of this region. With them lived hippopotamuses, rhinoceroses of various species, and a colossal four-horned ruminants, the Sivatherium. The one-horned rhinoceros, as born out by the seals of the Ashoka, were thus saved from extinction, such as the Bel, the Chinar, horned ruminants, the Sivatherium, etc. To arrest such vandalism, which was adversely affecting the life of the people, some disappeared in course of time from particular areas, such as the Kadam, the Ashok, and the Bamboo from Windavan (Sagreiya, 2005, p.98-99).

The rich heritage of wildlife came down to us through the ages mainly because of the deep-rooted Indian tradition of compassion for all life in general. Moreover, animals have been closely associated with our folklore and legends. Kautilya's Arthashastra, written in the 3rd century BC refers to definite administrative arrangements for preservation of wildlife. Special areas, called Abhayaranyas, were set aside for their protection. Emperor Ashoka introduced game laws, ordained the preservation of forests, and prohibited killing of animals (Sagreiya, 2005, p.103).

4. CONCLUSION

Concluding sargas (chapters) of Yuddha Kanda and in Uttara Kanda describe the results and outcome of Sri Rama’s transformational leadership. Vikasa (2000) described leadership of Ayodhya, during Sri Rama’s reign. All citizens were fully righteous, always looking towards Sri Rama as their lord and master. Beyond that they saw Sri Rama as their life and soul. All talk centered around Sri Rama. The entire Ayodhya transformed into Vaikunta. Sri rama rama ramel riame rame manorame, Sahasra nata tulyam nara nava varane.

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Senu Singh et al.
Importance of flowers and trees in Ramcharit Manas, Indian Journal of Arts, 2013, 1(1), 1-2.
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