

# Anthropocentric Thought and War: The End of Environment: A Socio - Ethical Analysis

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**Abstract:** *Women's empowerment in 21<sup>st</sup> century is not something absolutely a very new topic. What could be considered as new is its huge gap that is noticed in its theory and practice. The increasing realization and recognition that empowering women is absolutely essential rather imperative for familial, societal, national and international development and progress, the real picture in between theory and practice is quite dismal. While theoretical advantages for women and girl child are hugely discussed in papers, seminars, programmes on Medias by citing fiery speeches, sensational news, the reversed pictures are seen on practical field. Though it is a fact that, lot of work towards empowering the women had started by the social reformers and women movement right from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. Now it is being done by various movements—Women's, NGO's and activists movements, women's study centers of universities, research centers and individual research scholars and intellectuals apart from the genuine work being done by the Government at various levels. To give specific importance, the Government of India has declared 2001 as the year of women's empowerment that also crossed 23 years as we have stepped into 2024. Still the visible line between theory and practice is markedly deep and raw particularly for the women from lower strata though today's world is brazing the gap between different classes of the society. Yet women in general are prone to victimize to crimes, abuses, tortures and sufferings. My effort will be to expose the different stages of women development leading the path towards empowerment on two ways particularly citing stress on social and economic ground. The gradual empowerment of women society begins through Gandhiji's movements in India and in Bengal the tireless effort of Raja Rammohan Roy, Vidyasagar, Swami Vivekananda and after independence though industrialization, the social pattern tends to change much faster. With women education and women's participation in different consumption linked services women empowerment takes gradual shape towards its dignified journey. Though much has been done in theory, in practice it is a far cry.*

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Modern civilization with its scientific temper, humanistic spirit, and secular view of life is uprooting the world over the customs of long centuries and creating a ferment of restlessness. The new world cannot remain a confuse mass of needs and impulses, ambitions and activities without any control or guidance of the true human spirit. The void created by deserted superstitions and uprooted thinking calls for an ethical filling. We are aware of the scale, level and difficulty of the problems on which this article is touched. War is one of the essential factors of morality and environmental ethics. In regard to the question of the relation of man - made war and environment it is wise be less solemn and more sincere. We tend to fake a part to the world in these deepest matters of life.

Environment is the sum total of all social, economic, political, moral, biological, and chemical factors which make up the surroundings of human, who are the creators, benefactors and moulders of environment. Therefore, all components of environment are maintaining cause and effect relationship to each other in a multifarious way, comparable to a life support system of living beings and the disorder of any one of these components will intimidate the organization of the environment. The natural world and its wilderness are integral part of the heritage of humanity.

It is tragic in a world which is there for us to enjoy and which might be made full of happiness for everyone, if only we are prepared to spend a fraction of the energies which are now given to the perfection of war machinery, we let death and destruction go on. A blind impulse to destroy seems to have taken possession of mankind, and if there is no check to it. We will take a long stride towards final extinction and prepare for an era of intellectual barbarism and ethical

darkness in which man's noblest accomplishments of the past would be laid waste. The tragedy of its oppresses all of us with the weight of physical burden, creating pains our minds and troubling our hearts. We live in a period of agonising strain of grave anxiety of manifold disillusionment. The world is in a condition of trance.

The beginning of the modern military system was the formation of a royal army in France, serving the king for pay. Hence the name 'soldier', suggest for 'paid man'. This model is copied universally. From the early stage of human history, human beings have a keen desire to keep everything in his surroundings under his control. These types of activities may be for his security or for his fooding, or housing. But how these thoughts came to his mind is a matter of deliberations under the field of psychology. The desire of human beings to own everything from the beginning of human civilisation has changed with the passage of time and has taken destructive shape in the modern era.

From the primitive period people were scattered in small groups and their gradual evolution in this way leads to the formation of Tribal or indigenous communities. Firstly, wars started among the Tribal communities, the reasons attributed for these wars may be the desires pointed out in the previous paragraph. In this way the eagerness of them to defeat the neighbouring communities, their wish to make neighbouring communities weak, powerless and less important continued for many years.

In the next stage, Monarch's also carried on the same legacy and worked in the same way in Monarchical ages. Even after many years when man became modern and experiences the

emergence of democracy or federalism, the concept of war signifies different connotation to various countries. The issues concerned were mainly social, economic and political.

What exists there in the physical and mental structure of human beings, still present now - a - days due to the existence of either religion or war? How does war emerged in any country at any period? How rivalous human nature to fight first did came up? What is the primary from of war, from which other forms of war evolved?

The answer to these questions, the evolvement of Homo Sapiens war from a shrewd and ferocious ape. That's why the ferocious mentality of human beings is very inherent and this behavior is genetically inherent from our ancestor. This mentality is articulated at the time of wars and also torture, massive killing etc.

Not all neighbours were important to early man. Those who don't have distinguishing power about what are right and what are wrong, early man did not concentrate. But those neighbours who were dangerous, powerful or have the rationalising ability, early man concentrated more on them.

The First World War was the first modern industrial war. It employed the use of destructive war gadgets and chemical weapons for the first time. The war is mainly fought between allies (USA, England and France) and central powers (Ottoman Turkey, Germany and Italy).9 (nine) million soldiers were killed an 20 (twenty) millions were injured. The major industrial nations which were dependent on overseas loans from one another were fighting with each other in the desire to emerge as a superpower.

After the mass destruction in First World War, in 1920, League of Nations was framed. But within a span of 2 decades after the end of First World War, another massacre at world level began. The Second World War was a forgotten one in human history. This war was (1939 - 1945) mainly started with the attack of Japan on Pearl Harbour, intensified with the dropping of nuclear bombs on Hiroshima ana Nagasaki, the historical blunder of Adolf Hitler to attack Russia. Civilians were killed more than soldiers. It was the main feature of this war. Industrial cities of many nations were devastated. Environment, wilderness etc. were also destructed and re - establishment required a huge time resulting to the fragmentation og USSR and cold war etc. . as a consequence of this, downfall of Hitler and downfall of British economy yielded the decolonisation of many countries in Asia and Africa.

Definite natural phenomena produce environmental disequilibrium or disaster causing large - scale destruction of human life and property, for example, the heavy damage of life and property caused by the earthquake in Bhuj, Earthquakes, Landslides, Floods, Cyclones etc. These disasters are uninternational and mostly created by humans which do not play a significant role in these destructions. However, at times, human activities speed up the process. Disaster management through environmental ethics is an important issue that needs serious consideration. Some of the disasters which cause environmental degradation are floods, earthquakes, cyclones, landslides, drought, famines,

etc. The scale and frequent of these processes depend on factors such as climate, geology, vegetation and human activities.

Disaster can be systematised into two categories—natural disasters and anthropocentric disasters. As we know disasters like air - related disasters, water related disasters; earth - related disasters are natural disasters. Anthropocentric disasters are those that are caused as a result of human activities; these disasters are unpredictable and may be caused intentionally or by accident. They may cause severe damage and destruction life and property. These disasters can also be classified as sociological hazards, such as wars, acts of terrorism and civil disorders and technological hazards, such as industrial accidents, fires and space disasters.

Another significant man - made disaster in the form of Gulf war had created severe damage in environment of earth. The Gulf War lasted for 42 days from 16<sup>th</sup> January to 26<sup>th</sup> February, 1991. The war organised between Iraq and a coalition force from 34 nations guided by the USE. The war caused damage to the environment in many ways. More than one lakh bombs were dropped on various parts of Iraq. Each bomb created huge craters that were approximate 28 to 30 feet deep and 40 to 50 feet wide and raised dust clouds and smoke. Currently, a very destructive war is going on between Russia and Ukraine. Innumerable civilisation destroying and above all environmental destroying weapons are being used in this war.

Meanwhile, most devastating act caused by human more than 5 to 8 million barrels of oil were dumped into Persian Gulf. The oil caused disastrous fire harming the marine ecosystems including coral reefs, fish and turtle breeding grounds, sea - grass beds and mangrove swamps. It look about 9 - 10 months to extinguish these fires and for the oil spill to be brought under control. Saudi Arabia recovered 1.4 million barrels of the oil floating in the open sea. Besides, 35, 000 barrels of oil were flushed out of mangroves and natural water inlets in heavily affected islands. The Gulf War brought new environmental threats to the world such as the danger of oil fires, smoke, oil spill and destruction of the aesthetic value of land caused by tank tracks and by the use of landmines.

We have numerous examples about man - made disaster as Bhopal gas tragedy of Madhya Pradesh, India, Chernobyl nuclear disaster of Ukraine, Fukushima of Japan, Gnanga water pollution, acts of terrorism, riots in different places of earth etc. These kinds of industrial accidents, wars, riots, acts of terrorism, caused by unethical human activities, which has been created perilous condition on earth about ultimate destruction. Any alternation to soil, water, air and food habits that threatens the human health, survival capacity or activities of human beings and other living organisms, it is because of human activities. Regardless of these activities, we need re - education of human mind and improvement in reasoning. The environmental ethics torching the paths how should we behave our neighbours as well as all living creatures on this earth.

We are very shameless remembering the acts of killing at Hiroshima and Nagasaki by USA and his allied friend's country. Every citizen of world's civilised society cannot forget these wars due to its serious impactions and devastating environment crisis enthroned on earth. This is man - made disaster on earth. It is generally called anthropocentric disaster or war.

The political reasons for war cannot be categorized in the chief cause of war. The country exists in order that its citizens may have a good life. It is a social convenience. It is not the judge of its own conduct. Through righteousness depends on force, it is wrong to say that it is the will of the strong. The country is not above ethics. It exists essentially for the good of the individual and has therefore no right to demand the sacrifice of the individual, through it has every right to demand the conditions essential for the performance of its task. The worship of superpower - country with which we are familiar today, that the country is the creator of right and wrong, that reasons of country justify any crime, that ethics is a purely individual matter, are flatly opposed to the true ethical view. I bear arms for the sake of truth. It is not difficult for me to gain this whole universe but I desire not even the domination of the heavens if it is to be through unrighteousness. This is an absolute ethical teaching of Ramayana. This is told by Rama to Laxmana (Ramayana, ii, 97.6 - 7). The country finds its justification according to the measure in which it pursues and protects the full development of the human person. The end is personal liberty and happiness and all government is a convenient means to this end. It is true human spirit which can make national union and union between men to men.

The compulsory degradation of a large part of mankind is disgusting to the refined natures that have a sense of the dignity of man and respect for the preciousness of human life. The right of every human soul to enter into the full ethical heritage of race must be recognized. Caste is a source of disagreement and harm and if it persists in its present form, it will affect with weakness and falsehood the people that cling to it. Society is a pattern or an organism in which different organs play different parts. Every human beings shall have the right and the opportunity to contribute to human achievement, as far as his capacity goes.

Nature has made many races with different languages, religions and social traditions and has set man the task of creating order in human world and discovering a way of life by which different groups can live peacefully together without resorting to force to settle their differences. The world is not intended to be a battle ground of warring nations but a commonwealth of different groups co - operating in a constructive effort to achieve dignity, noble living and prosperity for all. It is the selfishness of man and his worship of abstractions of race, nation and empire. When we search for the root of the matter, we find that the individual spirit is the creator of world conditions. The world can be saved only if men and women developed a heart that will make it impossible for them to witness with equanimity mutual slaughter and suffering of people. The fallen nature of man is the source of the disastrous disintegration of humanity.

In early days, the physically stronger individual exercised control over the weaker, even as powerful country control weaker ones. Does this makes any difference in principle from the male partner who beats his spouse, from a thief who holds up someone at a street corner and catches him of his everything? This faith in force is disease that has complicated and tortured the world. It deprives us of our manhood. A world in which the unutterable malignancy of war is possible is not worth saving. We must get rid of the social order. Ravana, Duryadhana, Mussolini and Hilter are an effect, an indication not cause. They are not mishap but the natural, inevitable outcome of the present order. To avert Fascism we must resolve that all men, irrespective of race, creed, or colour shall have the basic opportunity to work and earn a living wage, that value education, wealth, decent shelter and civil liberties shall be available to all.

Whatever may be the cause like religious, psychological, economic or organisational, only pressure on governments can prevent them from fighting one another. Those who go to the war are not criminals but men who nourish real grievances. They reply to our injustice by violent injustices of their own. Instead of getting angry, we must try to discover and remove the motives of their crimes. We must recognise that there is something deeply wrong in the present world. We must effect peacefully a social transformation which makes justice, individual and national, its objectives. We must build institutions through which we can develop the habits of goodness and peace because war does not settle any problem.

The aim of value education is not to pour knowledge into the resisting brain and impose a stereotyped rule of conduct on his struggling impulses; it is to help the child to develop his nature, to change him from within rather than crush him from without. The value education imparted not only fits man for his role in life but gives him a general idea of the conditions of social life. These ethical values help to the individual to develop the inner conviction which is essential for social and world stability.

A man with true ethical value renounces all possessions, distinctions of caste and practices of religion. As he has perfected himself, he is able to give his soul the largest scope, through all his powers into the free movement of the world and compel its transfiguration. He does not merely formulate the conception of high living but lives it, adhering to the famous rule, the world is my country; to do good my religion. Regarding all with an equal eye he must be friendly to all living beings. And being devoted, he must not injure any living creature, human or animal, either in acts, word or thought, and renounce all attachments. The noble souls of the world dreaming the environment friendly world because of the well-being and flourishing of human and non - human life on Earth have value in themselves. These values are independent of the usefulness of the non - human world for human purposes. A freedom and fearlessness of spirit, an immensity of courage, which no defeat or obstacle can touch a faith in the power that works in the universe, a love that lavishes itself without demand of return and makes life a free servitude to the universal spirit, are the sings of the perfect man. Indian great souls like Buddha, Ramakrishna and Mahatma Gandhi, who strove successfully to realize this

ideal. We should consider the reverence for life on Earth; it is the teaching of Indian cultural heritage. This kind of realisation only saves our civilisation.

More than ever before, the world is today divided and afflicted by formidable evils. Which causes are liable for present pain? In our ideas we require a human consciousness of community, a sense of personal relationships among men. Though this human consciousness was still recently limited to the members of the political states there has been a rapid extension of it after the wars. The modes and customs of all men are now a part of the consciousness of all men. Man has become the viewer, listener, spectator and reader of man. An intimate mutual knowledge between peoples is producing an enrichment of world consciousness. For this we need re-education of mind and improvement in our ideas, beliefs and thoughts. The value education can only restructure the human mind and conducts for the sustainable development and surviving of natural world. The supreme tusk of our generation is to give a moral virtue to the growing world consciousness because civilisation is comradeship. It is to be civil, friendly and not hostile to one's neighbours. Power and force are not the ultimate realities in human society. Self analysis is necessary for understanding morality. Morality is one of the main basis happiness in worldly life.

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