

# Agro-Cultural Perspective in Sadanand Deshmukh's "Baromaas"

Gaikwad Ravindra Vilas

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Assistant Professor, Department of English, Savitribai Phule Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Satara. Karmveer Samadhi Parisar, Raviwar peth, Powai Naka, Satara-415001 (Maharashtra)  
Email: [tr.ravindragaikwad@gmail.com](mailto:tr.ravindragaikwad@gmail.com)

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**Address for correspondence:**  
Gaikwad Ravindra Vilas  
Assistant Professor, Department of English, Savitribai Phule Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Satara. Karmveer Samadhi Parisar, Raviwar peth, Powai Naka, Satara-415001 (Maharashtra)  
Email: [tr.ravindragaikwad@gmail.com](mailto:tr.ravindragaikwad@gmail.com)

## Abstract

Sadanand Deshmukh is well-known Marathi short story writer and Novelist. His works reflect the lives of common people, farmers, workers, traders, religious people, rural people and downtrodden people in Maharashtra. His literary contribution is so vast and realistic especially depicts struggle of rural people with either man-made issues or natural calamities. Literature is a reflection of society. Novel is a major form of literature. It is an expression of problems of human life. India is geographically versatile country. Agriculture is a main occupation in India. Majority families are economically dependent on farming and farming related activities. In a nut shell Indian people and their livelihood is based on Environmental Justice. The environment play an important role in agricultural productivity like seasonal cycle, rain, drought, natural calamities etc. The present research paper focuses on various social, political, economic and cultural issues faced by farmers in Marathwada depicted by Sadanand Deshmukh in his novel "Baromass." The protagonist of this novel Eknath Tanpure represents the plight of young, educated, ambitious farmer who is a victim of the system. This novel also depicts struggle of farmer's life in contemporary India. Farmer's suicide is the major problem in Maharashtra and in India also. Through this miserable tale of farmer Sadanand Deshmukh awakes us about local to global issues in Agricultural activity. The present research paper examines the Agro cultural perspective in Sadanand Deshmukh's Baromaas, highlighting social, economic, and cultural struggles, along with Environmental injustice faced by Farmers in Maharashtra.

**Key Words:** Agro-Cultural, Down Trodden, Environment, Rural and Urban crisis.

## Introduction

Sadanand Deshmukh was born in a traditional, orthodox farmer's family in Vidarbha, Maharashtra. He is the prominent writer in Marathi literature. His writing reflects social and economic situation of farmers in Maharashtra. He honoured with various prestigious awards for his writing. He began his literary career by writing a novel "Tahan" (1998). The protagonist of this novel is a young man. Deshmukh realistically portrays his struggle from common man to successful man. His major literary contributions Baromass, Bhuringani, Lachand, Mahaloot, Rangadaa, Charimera and Uthaawan etc. For his literary development he is awarded with most prestigious prize of India *Sahitya Akademi Award* for his Baromaas in 2004. Dr. Vilas Salunkhe skilfully translated this novel into English and it spread all over the world as an example of a struggle of Indian Farmer in critical situation.

## Objectives-

- To understand agricultural perspectives in the novel Baromaas.
- To analyze Environmental role in farming in Maharashtra.
- To highlight major and minor problems of farmers through the novel Baromass.

## Research Methodology

The present research is carried out by using interpretation and analytical methodology. The primary source used for this research is the Novel "Baromass".

## Result and Discussion-

The novel "Baromaas" subtitled as Twelve Enduring Months divided into Twenty Four chapters. It reflects it is Twelve months farming activity divided in Twenty Four fruitful chapters. Indirectly the novel symbolically reflects seasonal cycle of Farmers life.

Rural cultural, Indian Education System and Corruption especially the donation system affects the younger youth in India. This aspects create this book as critique of contemporary Indian life in modern era.

### **Economic Struggles -**

The novel depicts the financial instability and debt burdens faced by small-scale farmers. Eknath Subhanrao Tanpure, the protagonist, represents the educated but unemployed youth of rural India. Despite his education, he struggles to find a job due to systemic corruption and caste-based reservations. The economic hardships culminate in his family's downfall, as his father's suicide becomes a tragic outcome of financial ruin and societal neglect.

The novel portrays farmer's life in marathawada especially rural farmers and their economic struggle, cultural beliefs, politaical helpless condition, religious traditions and social norms. The novel is about the struggle of the three generations in Maharashtra. Eknath, Eknath's father and Eknath's Grandfather. Eknath is the central character who is well educated and unfortunately unable to secure good job. Ekanath struggles with his wife Alka, father Subhanrao, mother Sheventamai, brother Madhu and grandfather.

### **Environmental Challenges and Climate Change-**

As far as Indian Environmental Challenges are concerned "Monsoon" and "Winter" play the crucial role in Farming activities. The whole farming activities are based on these Two Major seasonal changes in India. These changes affects the crop farming system in India. In agricultural terminology we used to call it as "Kharip" and "Rabbi". These Two agricultural seasons totally based on environmental conditions. The novel emphasizes the dependency of farming on environmental factors such as rainfall and soil quality. The recurring cycles of drought and natural calamities in Marathwada are central to the struggles faced by Eknath's family. These challenges highlight the broader issue of climate change, which exacerbates water scarcity, reduces crop yields, and destabilizes rural livelihoods. Deshmukh's narrative serves as a commentary on the urgent need for sustainable agricultural practices and government intervention.

### **Social Issues: Dowry, Superstition and Gender dynamics-**

Dowry is a traditional convention and mostly compelled rituals in Indian society. It is another social problem presented by Sadanand Deshmukh. Lakhs of women lose their lives for this tradition. Here, a bride is compelled to bring some jewels, ornaments, money or prestigious gifts from her father. To complete these illegal wishes, they quarrel with their daughter in law. This creates some dangerous social problems like violence against the daughter in law, violence against her father or to depress her in family etc. Sadanand Deshmukh also depicted Superstition is the big problem of Indian society. People spend their valuable time and money through their superstitions. Some people in the name of God and miracles cheat common people. Subhanrao, Eknath's father in the novel went to meet Tarubhadaji for prayers and rituals for rain. He always sees Panchang and performs various rituals for getting success. He believes that stars affect the human life on the earth. He took a lot of money and other valuable things from them to complete different rituals. Unemployment is also one of the worse problem in India. Madhu and other unemployed friends established a golden gang. The goal of this gang is to dig out the secret wealth which is buried by forefathers. They always dig in the village at night. After digging throughout the village, this golden gang got nothing and decides to loot the cars at night on highway. All members became robbers at the end of novel.

### **Farmer's movements-**

Farmer's movements in Maharashtra State struggle to give justice to farmers and they took efforts to develop the living standards of farmers. The leftist movement and rightist movement are the two main movements in Maharashtra and in India. Both these movements have some goals. They have main aim to give justice to the farmers' life. Lal Bahadur Shashtri wisely and practically announced the slogan "Jay Jawan Jay Kisan". In 21<sup>st</sup> Century we need to recall this slogan to solve Farmers' issues. Now a days in India Farmer's movements are suppressed with the help of Government Bureaucracy. Sadanand Deshmukh depicts this miserable condition of Farmer's movements in Maharashtra in this novel especially Farmers' suicide. Eknath Sister's husband committed suicide because burden of loan for agriculture. Once Eknath's father Subhanrao also tried to commit suicide. At last after losing land he commits suicide and ends his life because of failure in farming and failure in family.

### **Impact of Globalization and Market Pressures-**

Baromaas critiques the impact of globalization on rural economies. Small-scale farmers, like Eknath's family, struggle to compete with corporate farming and fluctuating market prices. The novel illustrates how globalization exacerbates the economic divide, pushing traditional farmers toward financial instability and dependence on moneylenders.

### **Mental Health and Depression-**

The psychological toll of continuous failure, debt, and societal neglect is a recurring theme. Deshmukh delves into the mental health struggles of farmers and their families, emphasizing the urgent need for community support systems and mental health initiatives in rural areas.

### **Comparative Perspective-**

Comparing Baromaas to other literary works such as Premchand's *Godan* and Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* provides a broader understanding of agrarian struggles across different cultures. Like these classics, Baromaas serves as a poignant reminder of the universal nature of farming crises and the resilience of rural communities.

### **Solutions and Recommendations-**

**Policy Interventions** Strengthen irrigation infrastructure, provide subsidies for sustainable farming practices, and ensure timely compensation for crop failures.

### **Mental Health Support-**

**Establish community mental health programs and counselling centres** to address depression and anxiety among farmers. **Education and Awareness** Promote agricultural education and scientific farming methods to reduce dependency on superstitions and exploitative practices. **Empowering Women** Recognize and support the role of women in farming through financial incentives and skill development programs. **Market Reforms** Protect small-scale farmers from market fluctuations by establishing minimum support prices and cooperatives. **Community Initiatives** Encourage farmer cooperatives to pool resources and gain better access to markets and technology.

### **Climate Action:**

Develop adaptive agricultural strategies to mitigate the impact of climate change, including drought-resistant crops and efficient water management.

### **Conclusion:**

At present farmers have been suffering due to various reasons and have no economic stability. We can create everything in factory but crops, vegetables, fruits and grains can be cultivated in agricultural land only and the creator of all these is Farmer. The role of Farmer not only in India but also in anywhere in the world is valuable and respectable. But in India the farmers are depressed, oppressed and living in miserable condition. This condition is described by Sadanand Deshmukh in his "Baromass". Indian Government provides all facilities to private sector especially to Businessmen, Industrialists. In the Society the respect and honour is always to Government employees, IT Sector employees. No one understand the plight and agony of the Farmer. This plight and agony is highlighted by Sadanand Deshmukh in his "Baromass. Through the lens of Eknath's family, the novel portrays the economic, social and environmental challenges that plague India's agrarian communities. It critiques systemic failures, traditional barriers, and the impact of globalization while highlighting the resilience of our society. By addressing these issues, Baromaas remains a timeless and relevant work, urging readers to reflect on the need for inclusive and sustainable solutions to India's agricultural crisis.

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### **Conflicts of interest**

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