

Chapter IV

Earthlings and the Endangered Earth

The element of earth caters to the need of all mortal beings on its solid part of the surface, land, by being the abode of existence. The complex competency of the element of earth is beyond the functioning of the basic elements. The entire body of the earth is tangled with the play of the four basic elements, air, water, fire and ether. Ancient traditions and cultures beheld the earth with awe and reverence as they were conscious of the bounties the earth provides for survival. The basis of creation and sustenance are directly held responsible in the revolving of the earth system. Receptive vibes, mastering spirit, endurance and fundamental support of the earth in its active state are quite marvellous. The nurturing and nourishing aspects of earthlings are enriched by earth with its several layers of composition and is thereby bestowed with feminine characteristics and fondly called 'Mother Goddess' in varied cultures. The Christian faith has the evidence of the element of the earth being present in human bodies by stating that man was formed by God from the dust of the ground. The constant guarding and supporting mechanism of the earth is venerated, which is reflected in people worshipping it as 'Mother Earth' or as a deity. The structure of the universal earth giving form and life to all creatures makes it all the more vital, and hence this element has to be guarded and escorted.

Human activities in the contemporary period become modernised at a rapid speed creating long term threats harming the soundness of earth. Technological intelligence, overpopulation, industrialisation, materialism, deforestation, overexploitation of resources, corporate play, illegal activities, government negligence and political strategies are the main factors causing major threats in the preservation of earth's environment. Exhausting the

resources of the earth, excess production and utilizing the scarcest resources to satisfy human needs are harming the environment leading to increased catastrophic conditions. The human-centred living making nature submissive and deriving benefits of nature to the fullest have been the prime ground of the exploitation of earth element. The hotspots turning to leisure resorts and developments intruding into the forest reserves and woodlands indicate the ecosystem at stake. Climate change, ozone depletion, greenhouse effect, quality of soil, wildlife extinction, pollution, global temperature rise, plastic contaminants, toxic substances, melting of icebergs, rising sea levels and species becoming extinct are indicators of the injured planet. The human habitation is in danger, and humans are to be in defence mode to save the earth element.

For human beings and all living creatures to stay healthy, prioritisation is to be given to the wellbeing of the planet earth. To modify it as a green world requires recreating the lost green landscapes, reverting to the water and air systems and restoring the earth's resources. Effective community building, implementing environmental policies and measures to save natural resources are to be carried out. 'Earth day' which is being observed globally on 22nd April, began in 1970 to make people aware of the consequences of the consumer world and to develop environmental concerns. The programmes organised for 'Earth day' emphasise the need to conserve the resources and to teach people to be aware of the happenings regarding the habitat. The earth has to be celebrated, and the earthman has to volunteer to protect it. The protection measures are not the responsibility of the government and social organisations alone but also of the collective responsibility of people. Radical thinking and ecological consciousness are the prerequisites of contemporary society.

The home environment needs serious solutions to balance life, and the preservation of biological diversity requires small steps of eco- friendly activities along with social and

community building. The ancient traditions from indigenous cultures emit morals and ethics which connect lives within the web of life. The primitive cultures propagated the concept of connecting with nature which has to be revived to avoid impending climate change and the resultant disasters. Philosophy, social sciences, visual arts, mass media, video games, films, television programmes, books, movements, activist groups, journals, music and paintings are all diverse in form yet convey significant environmental messages incorporated in them to keep the earth safe for the wellbeing of human lives. Literature plays a crucial role in the depiction of the ecological crisis of the earth and to enhance the ecosphere varied conceptual terms are studied under ecocriticism such as ecosophy, deep ecology, ecofeminism, green cultural studies, eco spiritualism, environmental ethics and environmental justice.

The myth of the creation of earth varies according to cultures and religious faiths, but the tradition of looking at the element in awe for the element remains constant. The earth is represented through a variety of symbols and signs in different cultures and is adored primarily as mother earth. In literature, the earth symbolises the cleansing spirit, fertility, creativity, prosperity, solidity, permanence, order and wisdom. Literature written on the surface of the earth with themes expressed based on the world is classified as earth literature. The mystery, features and aesthetics associated with the planet are commonly examined by writers through their works like fiction, novels and other literary genres. Many literary styles, like the utopian and dystopian categories, are created to break the anthropocentrism ideology. Many science fictions portray the earth as the core element wherein the mystical aspects are pondered. The harmonious living similar to the primitive traditions is worked upon by literary writers to reconnect humankind to the element of earth.

Authors using a variety of techniques and different forms creatively model their writings on the wonderment and mysteries of the depths of the earth. Apart from the portrayal of aesthetics, significant challenges faced by the earth's layers are also projected in the contemporary writings to deliberate on the environmental awareness necessary for the planet's health. Humanity has to come to terms with the element of earth for the continuity of the existence of human species in the future decades. With creative complacency, the ecological writers represent and bring out different methods and approaches in the wide range of literary texts and critical works. The poems, plays, novels, short stories, fictions and many more genres depict the concern and anxiety of people regarding the environmental deterioration in the contemporary age. Climate change and the crisis are also depicted in innovative literary forms such as travel writing and scientific writings. The novels also convey through violent featuring, thrilling and complex narratives and ideas related to extremist environment drive home the message that social responsibility should become the concern of the earthlings.

In representing the element of earth, novels and fictions dominate the literary scene in producing imaginative and recreated narratives, comparing earth to celestial beings, conveying the histories and futuristic scopes. The fiction, in particular, explores the possible futuristic planetary shifts due to environmental damages. To mention a few works dealing with climate change and the emergency of global warming: Margaret Atwood's *The MaddAddam* trilogy, Whitley Strieber and James Kunetka *Nature's End*, Arthur Herzog's *Heat*, George Turner's *The Sea and Summer*, Morgan Llywelyn's *The Elementals*, Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* and *Water Knife*, Rock Brynner's *The Doomsday Report*, Clive Cussler's *Arctic Drift*, Matthew Glass's *Ultimatum*, *The Broken Earth* trilogy by N.K Jemison, Saci Lloyd's *The Carbon Diaries*, T.C Boyle's *A Friend of the Earth*, Jeanette Winterson's *The Stone Gods*, Sarah Moss's *Cold*

Earth, Ian McEwan's *Solar*. The thriller factor implicated environmental works include James Herbert's *Portent*, Liz Jensen's *The Rapture* and *State of Fear* by Michael Crichton.

The best approach to demonstrate the environmental changes is science fiction as it vehemently pinpoints to the drastic consequences. The destructive and luxurious lifestyle by humans harming the earth's surface is mirrored in the works. Ecological science fiction strongly narrates nature's valuable presence on the surface of the earth and implies that the unaltered maintenance of the earth's resources is of significant importance. The fiction depicts the planet earth along with the numerous stars, celestial beings, cosmic objects and other planets in the solar system but the plot centre primarily on the need to realise the threat for humanity due to its harmful way of life. The plot is about the turbulent relationship between humans and nature. To cite few examples in the contemporary times dealing with such concerns are: *Blackfish City* by Sam J. Miller, *A Friend of the Earth* by T. C Boyle, H.G Wells's *The War of the Worlds*, C.S. Lewis's *Space Trilogy* or *Cosmic Trilogy*, Jules Verne's *A Journey to the Center of the Earth* and *Earth Abides* by George R. Stewart.

The genre of apocalypse science fiction predicts the upcoming ending of the world and the human race. The survival hardships for the human race in the near future by catastrophes and depletion of natural and earth resources are pictured in the narratives. Disastrous events caused by nuclear war and other scientific inventions are detailed in them. The tale places the catastrophe at the centre to raise consciousness in protecting the minimal resources in the age of exploding population. Post-apocalypse fictions are the group of works depicting the aftermath of the massive catastrophic event of the planet which has faced the destruction of biodiversity and natural elements. The plot lines feature the things fallen apart in the earth element, and characterisation is presented in the doomed world. A few of the works that belong to apocalypse

fictions are: *The Earth Remembers* by Susan Orain Olan, *The Last Man* by Mary Shelly *Red Alert* by Peter George, *The War of the Worlds* by Orson Welles, *The Stand* by Stephen King and *On the Beach* by Nevil Shute.

‘Dying Earth’ is a subgenre under scientific fiction forecasting the end of the times on earth for mortal beings. It predicts the period when the universe would fail to sustain man and elements of nature fatigue to function simultaneously. The extreme exhaustion level of resources and depletion of nature’s bounties are presented as the main cause for the dying planet. The short story collection of Jack Vance, *The Dying Earth* gave the genre its name, and many images represent the dying earth like the popular work of H.G Wells, *The Time Machine*. These novels reiterate the necessary transformation required for ideal and harmonious living with the consciousness to protect the earth.

Speculative fiction incorporates the characteristics of science fiction, superhero fiction, fantasy, horror and other fictions. The fictional works combine the unfamiliar things with familiar objects, and present imaginative worlds beyond reality and a few examples of such fictions are *Dune* by Frank Herbert and *The Half-Made World* by Felix Gilman. The genre climatic fiction abbreviated as Cli-Fi depicts the literature dealing with climate changes and global warming. The new body of literature is the need of the hour as numerous writings are set forth to safeguard the high levels of risk affecting the planet earth. The reduction in nature writing and increase in fictions dealing with climate change indicates the state of the planet, and it is presumably predicted that in the near future the genre of climate change would be the predominantly existing work of literature. *The overstory* by Richard Powers, *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead* by Olga Tokarczuk, *Latitudes of Longing* by Shubhangi Swarup,

Ducks and *Newbury Port* by Lucy Ellmann are some current literary works voicing climatic changes.

The planet Mars acknowledged for its distinguished red colour, is represented in numerous fictional works. The scientific speculations, curiosity and interest in mission to Mars have provided matter for the writings. The possibility of human life over the coming centuries to accommodate the surface of Mars will make it even interesting to narrate. Travels to mars, adventure stories, categorizing as substitutes in the case of ecological emergency on earth and the war based themes are articulated by writers of the present century. Arthur C. Clarke's *The Sands of Mars*, *The Greening of Mars* by James Lovelock and Michael Allaby, *The Great Wall of Mars* by Alastair Reynolds, *Mars Trilogy* by Kim Stanley Robinson *Mars Crossing* and *Falling onto Mars* by Geoffrey A. Landis, *Mars Underground* by William K.Hartmann are a few of such writings dealing with the red planet.

Dystopian and Utopian novels aid to know how to balance and preserve the green state of the element of earth, as they reveal the positive aspects of abiding with the elements along with the effects of modernisation. Utopian society of perfect peace and harmony are narrated, suggesting many modifications in the present way of living. Ernest Callenbach's *Ecotopia*, Ursula K. Le Guin's *Always Coming Home having*, *Kirinyaga* by Mike Resnick, Feminist Utopian *Woman on the Edge of Time* by Marge Piercy, *Pacific Edge* by Kim Stanley Robinson, *Locking Backward* by Edward Bellamy are a few works with the utopian background.

Environmental disasters impending and occurring are discussed in dystopian format, acting as a catalyst to enforce fear for survival. Robert Silverberg's *Hot Sky at Midnight*, Brian Stableford and David Langford's *The Third Millennium*, *The Drowned World* by J.G.Ballard, *The children of Men* by P.D. James, *Annihilation* by Jeff Vandermeer, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* are

few notable dystopian novels. The apocalypse depicted in stories and novels is becoming a reality, as human harms towards the earth are accelerating.

Indian literature in English created a variety of genres and narratives to foster drastic climate changes in the atmospheric environment ranging from poetry to graphic novels. For instance, *A Breath of Fresh Air* by Amulya Malladi indicates the tragic Bhopal tragedy, Arundhati Roy's numerous non-fiction works voice against environmental changes, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* in non-fiction form and fictional work, *The Hungry Tide* by Amitav Ghosh illustrate the Indian writers' comfortable styles in enumerating the human activities destroying their habitat. Further, the Indian regional works are written largely in native scripts presented in all literary formats and firmly raising their ecological concerns.

Ecocriticism holds a wide range of innovative methodology to redress the catastrophic attack on the planet earth and the very many books and criticisms are centred on the conservation of the green globe. Contemporary books like *The Uninhabitable Earth: A Story of the Future* by David Wallace Wells, *Half-Earth: Our Planet's Fight for Life* by E.O Wilson, *Loosed Upon the World: The Saga Anthology of Climate Fiction* by John Joseph Adams and many more non-fictions abound in ecological preservation.

Essays, theories and critical works are produced in ample numbers under the broad terminology of ecocriticism to cater to the environmental needs. To quote a few critical works: Jonathan Bate's *Romantic Ecology*, Robert Watson's *Back to Nature*, Timothy Morton's *Ecology without Nature*, Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, Lawrence Buell's *The Environmental Imagination* and Dana Philips's *The Truth of Ecology*. The critical work, *Song of the Earth* by Jonathan Bate, deals with earth conservation, sustenance and examines the necessity of poets to

focus on environmental issues. The alienation of humans from nature and the element of earth is brought back through picturesque poetical and environmental descriptions. Eco-poetry catalysing immanent major changes in contemporary technological era is demonstrated in the works of these writers. The glorious poetry of nature is revived and is interwoven with nature, culture and environment taking cues from writings of poets of different ages and traditions. The ecological enhancement with new dimensions in the field of eco-poetry is generated, which stands as tall relevancy example for the present chapter. The poetry of Northeast India in its aesthetics and reviving spirit kindle more activism in the readers than the intricate and complex scientific fictions.

Greg Garrard, a notable figure in ecocriticism, exhibits great interest in the study of environment and literature and his work done in collaboration with scholars from Europe and North America, *Climate Change Scepticism: A Transnational Ecocritical Analysis* published in 2019 addresses the issue of the climate crisis. The widely acknowledged critical work of Greg Garrard's *Ecocriticism* published in 2012 reciprocates to the key threat areas of ecology that have to be controlled, highlighting the need for the revival of the relationship between nature and human beings in the chain of existence and presenting a framework for a classic introduction to the field of ecocriticism. The multiple subgenres under ecocriticism such as eco-philosophy, deep ecology, ecofeminism, eco Marxism along with a detailed explanation of the newly emerging field of ecological criticism are enumerated. The text also brings in references from the writings of the nature poets Wordsworth and Thoreau, relating them to the present documentaries of nature.

The various literary perceptions, social sciences, political and philosophical discourses heighten the textual content, and the literary examples are sound and proficient at catering to the

needs of environmental emergencies. The major concepts of discussion in the present century and eco-thought processes are explored in separate units such as pastoral, wilderness, apocalypse, pollution, dwelling, and animals. The topic related to earth in the last section with a crystal clear overview examining the earth serves for supplementing the discussion of the element of earth in this chapter. The unit on earth gives priority to the key concepts like globalisation and is divided into three subdivisions, namely, Globe and planet, Gaia and The future of ecocriticism. The text laments on the way the fragile planet is being exploited by humans rather than considering it as a sacred possession. The fragility and wonder of the green earth along with the restricted use of resources in the minimal living space of exceeding wants are demonstrated.

The final chapter of the book *Ecocriticism*, “Futures: the Earth” talk about the principles, historical importance, geographical features and criticisms of the planet. The narrative aims at averting the anthropocentric claims, thereby elevating the elements of nature, in particular, the earth. The chapter includes citations of various authors, articles and artists encompassing their exploration of scientific notions held for the benefit of the globe. Promoting the values of earth and approximating the essential invaluable goodness the earth system provides to all living creatures are organised chronologically facilitating harmony and balance. Cultural references, illustrations, surveys, sources from other fields and writers of ecological thoughts along with their significant agenda form the crux of the chapter as it details about the element earth. The chapter drives home a strong message facilitating ecological awareness of the element of earth, with a radical change in the field of ecological literature. To quote a few lines from the key reflections of Garrard regarding the need to preserve earth:

Nevertheless, ecocritics have started to give detailed consideration to the transformation in the dominant meaning of the word ‘earth’: from the most immediate ground of existence, the soil, to life’s largest relevant context, the biosphere. The need not only to ‘think globally’ but to think about the globe involves a politicised reading practice more akin to social ecology, postcolonialism and cultural studies than to deep ecology. Such a practice considers construction of the Earth provided by economics, politics and biology, as well as literature, TV and film. (183)

Elemental entanglement explicated in “Eleven Principles of the Elements” by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Lowell Duckert in their *Elemental Ecocriticism: Thinking with Earth, Air, Water, and Fire* expose the adverse affinity and relativity of the element of earth with other elements. The three most acknowledgeable and alluringly embracing principles pertinent to earth are, ‘The Elements Make Love and War,’ ‘The Elements Rise and Fall’ and ‘To Live with the Elements Is to Dwell within Catastrophe.’ The three principles are explicated in the present chapter in detail to the foreground on the essentials of earth element. The philia tangled within the humans towards the earth and the disorderly strife the earth has at times with the human race are balanced in the narratives. The sense of companionship, encounter in the mundane cycle, coldness and peaceful spirit within the movements of the earth are portrayed. The energy, turmoil, power and destructiveness of the earth are paralleled to the amiable nature of the element supplying rich resources for survival.

Elemental Ecocriticism: Thinking with Earth, Air, Water, and Fire by Cohen and Duckert include the writing of Karl Steel titled, “Creeping Things: Spontaneous Generation and Material Creativity” which formulates on the foundational substance of earth and earthlings. The author elaborates on the compositions, forms, varying intensities, materialisation and changes of the

earth. The unified existence of the elements is expressed by Marius's *De elementis*: "If these intensities change, so does their material form, and likewise the things they comprise: 'earth may be changed into water, water into air, and air into fire, and the other way around...'"(209). The recognition of the uniqueness of elemental earth, its identity as a body and mystical substance is distinguished bringing in many references from writings concerning earth sciences and classical literature and all these works assert the stable foundation of the earth, the depths and at times the mysteriousness of the element. In the words of Karl Steel,

With a host of other thinkers, Marius and Heidegger promote a sense of the earth as stable, as heavy, characteristics that support the common metaphors of 'understanding', or the 'ground', 'foundation', or, for that matter, the 'support' of the 'matter' of an argument, combined with a sense that, so long as we understand things correctly, the foundation is itself mysterious, dark and distant, always and ultimately extrinsic to our understanding or experience. (211)

"Earth's Prospects" by Lowell Duckert included in *Elemental Ecocriticism: Thinking with Earth, Air, Water, and Fire* opens with the striking quote from Tim Ingold's *Being Alive*, "For the earth is 'earthing'" (237). The text contemplates on the resources of the earth in reduction and primarily focus on coal exploitations, mining and metals with intentions for energy alternatives. "Earthing frees us to be better inhabitants, to be true earthlings. The ways we narrate stories, and the stories themselves, can shape the earth/s to come" (239) is strongly propagated by Duckert. Elaborate literary citation from Milton caters to eco-consciousness while numerous literary writers are referred for the continual ethical earthing process. Duckert reiterates the need for vital stewardship of the element earth and never to stop loving the earth in all its creative and destructive prospects.

The ecosystems of pristine Northeast India are crowned with marvellous flora, fauna and fertile land areas. The native people's reflection of the mounting beauty of their soil in their regional literature from the ancient period to the contemporary times reveals their ecological concerns and their efforts to fortify them in their poetical composition in English. The major poets from the Northeast region consciously or unconsciously write about the environmental systems as they have been considered sensitive zones and extolled as deity forms right from the primitive ages to the present days. The mother earth is the most valuable element venerated in the region as it supplies to the survival cycle. The rich biological hills and mountains of the eight Northeastern states with their serene, enchanting and flourishing beauty go in tune with the temperate climatic conditions. The poems depict the soundness of nature, adding rhythms to their lives and reveal the characteristic features of the fruitful earth.

The richest slopes, hills, plateaus, temperate forests, grasslands, evergreen vegetation, fertile alluvial soil beds, biodiversity hotspots, rare species of flora and fauna and the luxuriant surface of the earth held in benevolence by the Northeast people is mirrored in the powerfully aesthetic expressions of the poets. The major global threats posed to the environment due to the process of westernisation and modernisation do not spare the nature-luxuriant Northeast regions. The poetical lines pinpoint sharply the ethics and affinity lost with the element of earth, and the poems impart the need to amend and revive their ancient roots by their return to nature. The pollution levels and decreasing value of the ecosystem by the establishment of developmental schemes, technological intrusions and economical advancements at the cost of environment, in the region, affect the green hills and the youth are warned by the Northeast poets.

The numerous novels and other fictional works produced in the contemporary age add to the scientific information regarding the devaluation of the element of earth and the complex

presentation of the apocalypse and dying earth are in juxtaposition to the simple aesthetic poetical versification of the Northeast poets demanding ecological purity and balance in the hills. Northeast poets calling for the preservation of cultural roots is quite relevant to all societies of the globe. The primitive affinity and constant comradeship with the mother earth, as pictured in the Northeast poetry mirror the societal formation of the world in the ancient periods. The basic value to abide by the ethics in treatment and tending of mother earth is vocalised very strongly by the poets. The poems instil hope in the minds of the younger generation for a greener earth and healthier planet.

The degradation of the element, earth, due to the changing relationship between man and environment is to be set right which is examined through the three pertinent principles of elemental ecocriticism and Greg Garrard's text, "Futures: the Earth" in application with the Northeastern poems of the selected four renowned poets. The present chapter analyses twenty-five poems selected from the poetical works of Mamang Dai, Temsula Ao, Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih, and Desmond Kharmawphlang. The number of poems studied in the present chapter exceeds the earlier chapters dealing with air and water as deterioration on the surface of the earth is extending to greater global and undesirable calamities and catastrophes. The key qualities of the element of earth are significantly analysed with the three principles, 'The Elements Make Love and War,' 'The Elements Rise and Fall' and 'To Live with the Elements Is to Dwell within Catastrophe.' The Northeastern poems selected are based on their glorification of the native hills, the lamentation over the reduction in natural resources and calling forth for a reunion of humanity with the ancient earthly ties.

The origination myths of the tribal communities differ from one tribal community to another, but they are in accord with the aspect of human creation from the element of earth. The

Ao community believes the popular myth of ancestral creation from stones and that is presented in the poem, “Stone-People from Lungterok” by Temsula Ao. The word ‘Lungterok’ translates to the meaning of six stones, and the Ao community strongly believes that they must have evolved out of Lungterok. The community goes further by dividing these six stones into three male and three female creations. The poet hints in the notes that the stones are yet preserved near the village settlement of Chungliyimti, the surrounding area of Nagaland. The creative myth from the earth’s surface reads like this:

LUNGTEROK

The six stones

Where the progenitors

And forebears

Of the stone-people

Were Born

Out of the womb

Of the earth. (109)

The myth of evolution of the tribes makes them pay due reverence to mother earth. These nature-oriented tribes are claimed, “The Poetic and politic/ Barbaric and balladic” and are associated with the elements as “Finders of water /And fighters of fire” (109). Their prime bonding with the surroundings and living creatures is an important characteristic of the tribal people as they are, “Knowledgeable/ In birds’ language/ And animal discourse” (109). True knowledge and wisdom lie in comprehending the voices of the coexisting species in the web of life rather than the scientific advancements reaching the stars. The association of tribal people with nature at times is deemed falsely as barbaric, but they indeed are the true obtainers of enlightenment and sound wisdom to lead an amiable life along with the elements of nature.

STONE-PEOPLE

The worshippers
 Of unknown, unseen Spirits
 Of trees and forests,
 Of stones and rivers,
 Believers of soul
 And its varied forms,
 its sojourn here
 And passage across the water
 into the hereafter. (110)

The stone people are acknowledged as worshippers of the earthly realm along with its affiliation with the trees, forests, stones and river bodies. Deities of nature are venerated with awe as they provide the necessities facilitating their harmonious living. The cycle of nature, seasons, climatic changes, monsoons, wind directions, course of the river and even the celestial bodies like stars and moon are skillfully brought into their purview of life through their reverence and awe of them. The natives possessing “Savage and sage/ Who sprang out of LUNGTEROK” (111) are acclaimed to be barbarians and civilised philosophically in similarity with the dual nature of the element of earth functioning as a preserver and destroyer.

The unique features of the tribal communities are spread across the globe caused by globalisation and cultural transition. Greg Garrard positively describes these globalisation concerns in “Futures: The Earth.” The multiple cultural and traditional institutions in Northeast India are spread at present in the form of literature, documentaries and other art creations by the wave of globalisation. According to Garrard, the negative face is, “Globalisation, for some, represents homogenization in which diverse local cultures are supplanted by ‘monocultures of the mind’ promoted and sustained by transnational cultural industries based mainly in North

America, Japan and Western Europe” (184) which is true in the case of Northeast region where western popular notions are widespread among the younger generations replacing the ancestral chords.

“Birthplace” by Mamang Dai presents the evolution and rightful inherence the natives proclaim with the forces of nature. The chain connecting the living and non-living beings in the ecosystem is balanced in total accuracy with the adoration and veneration the tribal societies have for these. The practices of paying due respect for the elements of evolution are indicators of the concordance the native culture maintains. Dai states, “We are the children of the rain/ of the cloud woman, / brother to the stone and bat” (79) and denotes the refreshing spirits in the rural settings. Dai pinpoints the peaceful existence people had during the times when there were no strangers in the hills to civilise and modernise the native tribes. Nature is depicted in lucid verses revealing the unrelenting adherence the hill people possess for the elements. The different clans having a simple living in close quarters with nature is presented through Dai’s verses, “...destiny was simple/ like a green shoot” (79). The poet is filled with pride regarding her inheritance from the myth of creations from water and other associated elements when she says, “We descend/ from solitude and miracles” (79).

The relevance and inheritance claimed by the contemporary poets with the element of earth are in contrast to the present inflexion represented by the ‘globe as a market place’ condition which is described by Greg Garrard as ‘technologically and economically enframed globe’ in “Futures: The Earth.” Institutions like World Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Trade Organisation promoting the sociology of globalisation are contrasted to social, environmental protective agencies like World Wide Fund for Nature, Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace International enforcing the ecological issues like ‘substantial global actors.’ For

Garrard, “The planet is developing a meaningful, though fragmented, political identity, in which a range of distinctively globalised social and environmental issues are contested” (185).

The Northeast Indian region epitomises the land for its great significance as the land facilitates for their main occupation of agriculture and supplying to rich living with resources. The poets reflect on the grand mountains to the low lying fields in their verses. For instance, “Enigma” by Mamang Dai in the collection *River Poems*, pictures the yellow mustard field cultivation brilliantly in the Northeast region. The region with its warm climate and the rainy season is quite suitable for agricultural cultivation of rice, pulses, mustard and sugarcane in the fertile belt of alluvial soil. The short poem reflects a similar wonderment and inspiration as derived by William Wordsworth on looking at the long belt of yellow daffodils in his classic famous poem, “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud.” Dai extols the pleasurable sight as “The yellow mustard is a field of gold” (56). Mustard, the trivial ingredient for the modern man, is paralleled to the glorious recital of the poet in the contemporary period, unaltered in admiration for the yellow field even after the modernisation of the Northeast region. The profound joy at the glance of the mustard cultivation fields richly shining and dancing in the breeze brings music to the hearts of the onlookers. The floating yellow field causes the dancing vibes of joy as the poet verses, “Facing this splendour/ the heart that is madness/ chooses to return to its enclosure” (56).

The title of the poem, “Enigma” draws upon the baffling spirit in the vision of the golden yellow fenced fields. The Khasi legend holds the commonly circulated narrative that the peacock was the husband to the sun, but then he left his wife and the heavenly home dazzled by the flowers of the mustard plant on earth. The region upholds the yellow fields in their brightness and beauty as more powerful than the shining sun. To trace the history, Ahoms from upper Burma marched into the state of Assam in 1228, and they called it as mung dun Chun Kham

meaning, 'Country of Golden Gardens.' They named the land from witnessing the mustard blossoms and the paddy fields turning yellow in autumn. The poem reflects the lush colours the solid part of earth's land surface obtains, aiding luxuriant living for humankind.

The poem exhibits the peace, love and stability evinced by trivial things of the elemental encounter, which is a requisite to be possessed by the humans according to Cohen and Duckert. The exhibition of *philia* for the elements, whether with beautiful or adverse features, is to be continuous. Cohen and Duckert refer to Michel Serres stating: "With, a stance that demands a reorientation of intimacy even toward beings we consider ugly, mundane, antagonistic. As Serres considers the cold, he uncovers himself, presents his skin to the chill: 'How can we live without or against the four elements, without thinking like them, without turning toward them, into them, through them, for them, with them?'" (16).

The majestic mountains are mentioned in the verses of Temsula Ao's poem, "Lesson of the Mountain." The poem centres on the thrilling experience of reaching the mountain tops, which reveals the poet to be a nature lover with inherent *philia*, as he versifies profusely, awestruck by the natural elements. The mountain range stands as a symbol of man's glory and achievement. Northeast people have been considering the mountains with reverence right from their ancestral periods, and numerous myths are centred on the greatness of the mountains. That the ranges are considered sacred and are conserved with caution, reveal the importance given to the elemental forces. The highest and voluminous ranges of mountains clad with majestic mysteries and undisturbed by men are described as holders of secrets. The poet pinpoints the paradigms of the mountains as:

The mountain stands,
Impassive, challenging,
Imposing, dominating,

Reposing, secretive
 And smugly benign. (67)

The mounting tops are claimed to thrill the onlooker with challenging invitation with their mysterious and majestic grandeur. The attempts to reach the mountain tops are mixed with pain and peril; however, there is the thrill in the prospect of viewing the magnificent earth surface as is evinced by Ao's words, "The earth,/ In its beauty/ And its variety" (68). The moral lesson is conveyed through the symbol of the mountain and is sublimely assumed from the verse lines that to reach heights in living and to experience the eternal reward struggles are mandatory. Viewing the vast expanse of the earth from the mountain top is narrated as an experience of pure bliss and the impressive scale has appropriate measures to gauge it. The unending expanse of the horizon "Beyond the reach/ Of the highest mountain" (68) and the blue sky enthral the onlooker and teaches him the lessons of life. Ao states:

And if you fail
 To find this secret
 And the majestic thought
 At the top of the mountain
 You have climbed it in vain. (68)

The poem, "Earthquake" by Temsula Ao registers the mightiness and power of the element earth consuming the lives of humans destructively. Northeast India is one of the richest areas known for its biodiversity and resources. However, it is geographically located in the highest seismic zone map of India where landslides are a major geographical hazard caused naturally by the rugged, steep hill slopes, continuous rainfall, cloudburst and many others. The calamitous deforming of the land resulting in death and disaster are narrated by Ao indicating the

superpower of the earth element. In the swelling of the earth's surface the tall infrastructures collapse, the lofty mountains topple, the winding rivers bulge and erupting volcanoes emit hot lavas. The gentle earth turns ferocious uprooting in disastrous and forceful movements the habitat of the humans. Bestowing feminine qualities of temper to the earth, Ao says, "She subsides/ Like a hysterical female/ After her fury is spent" (70).

The Northeast region has experienced the worst recorded earthquake as the earth's surface shook and rocked the landscape, twisted, turned and curled up the hills. The loss sustained during many earthquakes was great, and the impact was similar to the force of a few atom bombs. The financial loss incurred by the government mounted with the addition of the loss faced by people, primarily the thousands of deaths that occurred each time. The Northeast region is mountainous in structure and hence is prone to earthquakes with a high velocity of damages. The relief measures to reach the states are slower due to the landslides caused by the tremor of the earthquakes and the nature of the terrain. Despite the tragic incidents occurring in the region, the native peoples' love for the land never abates, which is evident through the poems praising the power of the earth element rather than lamenting the loss incurred.

The rage burst out by the element of earth subsides after the fury is spilt out which is recorded in the Richter scale is portrayed by Ao. The hysterical characteristics of the element depict the inevitable calamities to be faced by mortal beings. Despite the exceeding damages caused by these events, the earth is the only abode to support sustenance, and the humans are to inculcate philia for the earth element. It should also be pointed out here that, the major causes of the landslides and earthquakes are the human interventions and activities like mining, drilling oil sites, deforestation, illegal constructions and unscientific farming systems. To love and have

communion with the element in all its dark and pleasant aspects is the call of the poet to the younger generation.

Leaving
 Mortal man
 To lament
 That he has
 Only this unpredictable
 And temperamental
 Earth
 To love
 And contend with. (70)

The poems, “Lesson of the Mountain” and “Earthquake” by Temsula Ao demonstrate the sublime but dominating and aggressive characteristics of the solid earth surface which resonate with the principle, ‘The Elements Make Love and War’ framed in the “Eleven Principles of the Elements” by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Lowell Duckert. Cohen and Duckert state, “According to the cosmological matchmaker Empedocles, the elements are held together by love and disordered by strife. While some desiring bodies tangle into in/human trysts, others unravel into rough patches of discord, and yet others suffer the traumatic violence of divorce” (15). The poems exhibit the mysterious, ferocious and all-encompassing nature of the elements which is positively acknowledged by Cohen and Duckert as, “There is hope for those looking companionship, however” (16).

Northeast India, with its riches of flora and fauna, beautifies the hills with grandeur. The states are covered by the spectacular and rich biological variety of flowers of primitive and ornamental plants. The purple tubular jacaranda flowers in half-tree structures are popular in the

hills for their blooming in unexpected places and positions. The floral beds of magnificent flowers capture the onlookers as detailed by Temsula Ao in the poem, “Jacaranda Longings.” The poet enthralled by the beautiful sight of the seasonal blooming says, “They burst in on your vision/ With their subtle mauvish blooming/ As though to astound you” (188). The tourists, family vacationers, admire the flowers, growing near the caves and other places competing with the cathedral’s brilliance, and also catch the passing by couples’ attention. The favourite spot of jacaranda blossoms is the lake which they beautifully adorn. She says the flowers, “...Shine/ Like a string of amethyst/ Round a princess’ neck” (188).

The flowers crammed in the space to extend their roots by the lakeside are versified by Ao indicating the extending of human settlements blocking the growth of nature and its objects; “Looking for more space/ In the immensity/ Of the man-made lake” (189). The bright coloured flowers are fading and moving inward to convey in the words of Ao, “I’ve done with my blooming/ I now have only jacaranda longing” (189). The poet conveys the artificial lake hosting the flowers that lose their essence, along with the impending warnings given by nature to people. At present many measures are taken by the biologists and conservational groups to protect native and non-native floral species in the Northeastern hills to retain the ecological balance and peace of the green world. Only then, the world will become a better place to live in as Cohen and Duckert rightly state in ‘The Elements Make Love and War,’ “And yet this world is nevertheless the one we try to know, we love, we wish to live within” (16).

“An Old Tree” by Temsula Ao voices the withering emotions of an old tree whose time for death is fast approaching. The first person voice of the aged tree is penned in such a way that it conveys to the readers the impending disaster awaiting the green life. The old tree with branches deformed and leaves missing give a rugged appearance in the highway. The gratitude

for the earth element providing nourishment is mentioned in the lines, “The protective earth/ Sustaining me” (145). The veins of the old tree are compared to the aged calves with ‘varicose veins,’ and the dead branches are equated with the ‘balding head.’ The impact of the rough passage of time is given in the verse lines, “The years have done their job/ And time has wrought its havoc” (145). The tree laments of its insecurity and losing the ability to be fruitful and gives expression to its saddening condition through a soliloquy in the following manner:

Birds do not visit me,
Squirrels have shied away
For they all know
I am an old tree
Waiting
For what happens
To all old trees. (146)

With the lively creatures no longer visiting the tree, it has lost its position as the hub of bustling activities. The dying tree is useful even when it is on the verge of becoming wood, losing its life. The wood and fallen barks are used for many productive purposes. The tree lamenting its departure from the surface of the earth indicates the importance given to the coexistence of elements. The poet, with his deep observations of nature and the scenery around, has rightly penned the pleasure and pains of the tree as an entity. The autobiography of the old tree brings out the ecological interconnectedness among all living forms on the element of earth.

“Jatinga” by Temsula Ao explores the mysterious mass suicide of migratory birds in the specific locality of Jatinga, Assam every year. Jatinga is a small town in Assam with a population of approximately 2,500 people. In September, October and November, the numerous migratory birds gather in masses for the event, especially when the night is foggy and moonless.

The event occurs during the evening times from six to nine. The poet, in wonderment and out of curiosity, directs his questions to the little creatures regarding their fate of ending their lives together to turn into immortal beings. The courageous strength to face death and their loud singing and cries of the birds are visualised in the lines. The poet questions the mystery of the magical aspects of the setting sun and the invisible flautist as the reason for their end. The need to reach the place in masses, the necessity to attain death and the daring decision of these birds remain mysteries to Ao. She asks the birds:

What compels you
 O you immortal birds?
 To willingly dare
 The ultimate snare
 Only at Jatinga? (108)

Research shows that around forty-four species of birds arrive at the suicidal base with disorientation signals. The native believed that the birds are possessed by the evil spirits which fly in a daze to the village settlements where they are trapped with bamboo poles and killed or injured. Multiple theories are proposed on the disoriented state of the birds, and the book *The Birds of Assam* by ornithologist Dr. Anwaruddin Choudhury explores the reasons behind the fatal event and finds out that similar things happen in Malaysia, Philippines and Mizoram. The research on the confused state of the birds claims that due to the high velocity of the winds and their tendency to fly towards the light for refuge are reasons for their death. The birds attracted to lights due to the course of the wind are the forty-four species of birds which are residing in adjacent valleys and hill slopes. Wildlife departments and conservational groups have educated the locals not to harm the birds when they reach the lighted destinations. The region has become a tourist spot with the mysterious characterisation of the mass suicides. Recently, the number of

birds arriving there has reduced due to environmental degradation. The poem highlights the wonderful aspects and mysteries of the creatures existing in the ecological chain on earth.

“The Balm of Time” by Mamang Dai reflects on the ‘forest faith’ as an integral component of ancestral traits possessed by the hill people. “Yes, I believe in gods” is the opening line of Dai, asserting strongly and declaring the belief system towards the nature elements practised by the tribal communities. The rich resources of the hills, water bodies and pure air are the guiding and guarding forces of the natives as Dai believes, “In the forest faith of good and evil,/ spirits of the river,/ and the dream world of the dawn” (57). The positivity in the woods realised by the people is exercised in their cultural frameworks for a better living.

That people have been living in communion with nature in the past is strongly believed by the natives despite their transition process. Dai says, “that the past lives in these eyes/ that the jungle shows, sometimes” (57). Life of man dependant on the natural world made the soul remain in undying faithfulness and harmony with the earth’s surface, which is beautifully pointed out in Dai’s lines, “The mountain knows/ how we pressed our hearts against its earth” (57). The level of love and nurturing care exhibited for the land is presented in the lines, “the sky wind knows/ how we grew flowers in fields of stone” (57). The healing process for the earth to bring back its wealth and resourceful shape is possible in finding means to revert to the primitive times. The restoration of faith in nature’s resources and development of awe towards their forceful power are the prerequisites of the hour. The grace, along with allurements of nature on the earth’s crust is to be fortified as they are holy; in the words of Dai, “Some things are sacred” (57).

Despite the strife, the elements generating and the humans shifting their intimacy towards the elements is evident from the poem, “The Balm of Time.” Cohen and Duckert call for a peace treaty from both the elemental and human sides whereby human interactions are beyond encounters with the elements. To quote from the principle ‘The Elements Make Love and War’: “The commonplace rhetoric of ‘battling the elements’- an outright against- demonstrates how prepositions shape our physical relationships. For better and for worse: we must continually take (new) positions with, and occasionally renew our vows to, the elements that make love and war, that engenders both joy and misfortune” (16).

The poetical collection, *Midsummer Survival Lyrics* by Mamang Dai includes the poem “Be careful how you cut that tree” which demonstrates in crystal clear terms the richness of possessing nature’s gift and the disadvantages and harms of destroying tree roots. In the golden ages where forests covers stayed green are stated by Dai as “In the frontier days of love and conquest/ these trees grew wild” (64) and the veneration level are claimed to the extent, “They are priests, gods of a pre-human age” (64). The tree and its branches are humanised with beautiful descriptions and composed of vivid aliveness. The tree aiding to varied benefactors and functions associated with growth, merriment, decay and leisured monotony prevailing under the shadowy branches of the green trees are enumerated. Dai, bestowing the tree figure with rich aspects to supplement ease in the living, propagates to save the green tree veins from the axes. To remain cautious in uprooting the living trees from the surface of the earth is the call of the poet.

Be careful how you cut that tree.
A dizzy blow can change the sunlight,
alter the snaking path of a breeze;

kill the ground with unexpected poison- heat,
these things are unpredictable. (64)

The harmful sun rays with the increasing global warming scenario and the unbearable heat are termed as a poison by Dai. The major contributor for the increased global temperature is the decline in the forest covers which are exploited by human beings for futile purposes. The alarming heat waves are on the rise with increased deforestation rate due to human interventions and widespread infrastructural developments. The sight of treetop turning deficient is warned in the poem to revive the green roots for cooling the earth system. The gratefulness of the woody plants are found in the lines, “It is the same tree that watches the hunter/ alone on the hard earth, laying his traps” (64). The vegetation earth unfailingly provides the tenderness and beneficial requirements, even to the harming human society. The poet concludes with a depiction of the trees as the guarding deity of the peaceful ecological hills by saying, “When the evening star is sinking/ the tree on the hill watches over everything” (64).

In the poem “My Hills,” Temsula Ao paints nostalgic images of the resonating nature’s elemental vibes in the hills which at present are lacking in music and harmony. The poem opens with the lines, “The sounds and sights/ Have altered/ In my hills” (157) expressing the present deplorable state of the hills. The primitive days are filled with bliss and vivid descriptions of the bird songs, the stream of waters, shoals of fishes, abundant green trees and magical seasons. The charming transition with its changes of seasons – summer, autumn and winter – brings pure and intense joy catering to the natives’ state of wellbeing. The poet reflects on the current pathetic condition of the hills devoid of the elemental coexistence and the earthing process turning into hardship with violent politics and modernised disadvantages in the hills. The longing to revert to

the good old days in the hills are explicitly brought out in the poetic lines of Ao as the identity marker for the natives were found in their association with earth elements. Ao laments:

But to-day
 I no longer know my hills,
 The birdsong is gone,
 Replaced by the staccato
 Of sophisticated weaponry,
 The rivers are running red,
 The hillsides are bare
 And the seasons
 Have lost their magic,

Because
 The very essence
 Of my hills
 Are lost
 Forever ---- (157-158)

The devastating green spaces reducing are traced through the globalised and sophisticated technological satellites in space which communicate the environmental data. As Garrard states in “Futures: The Earth,” “meteorological and hydrological satellites supply vital information to scientists about global and local environmental issues, from ozone thinning to soil erosion” (186). Garrard mentions about the yearly information reports of the Worldwatch Institute on the natural resources, biodiversity, water supplies and many more which declare earth as “no longer a wild, mysterious Earth, but rather an ‘ensemble of ecological systems, requiring managerial oversight, administrative intervention, and organizational containment’” (186). The reports are the evidence catering for the global controls on ozone depletion and commodification as the

causes for the ecological destruction. According to Garrard, “This process arguably represents a novel inflection of the Earth as the object of new regimes of environmental surveillance and disciplinary design” (186) requiring critical control of the earth element.

“Cherrapunjee in the Fog” by Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih conveys the deteriorating landscape conditions in the rain abounding in Cherra locality. The excess deforestation has led to drought as the waters runoff without being absorbed into the groundwater. The region losing its beauty is mentioned in the lines, “Rumours are rampant of the land being raped, / of people raping it and clawing each other, / but Cherra’s blind keeps prying eyes away” (19). A cautious mind to visualise the impending dangers is necessitated by the poet. Nongkynrih reminiscently depicts the past glory of the ‘cedar-dotted hills’ with the natives living in harmony with nature. The poet praises the days when Cherra was filled with ‘furies of the waterfalls,’ ‘music of the trickling streams’ and the land being ‘screened by the fog.’ He wishes that these ravishing images remain as the real images of the land rather than visualising the current degradation. The earth losing its charming qualities is comprehended from the poem, and the necessity to look primarily into the elemental matters is emphasised.

The elemental forces to be monitored and handled with precaution to avert the catastrophe are detailed by Cohen and Duckert in the principle, ‘To Live with the Elements Is to Dwell within Catastrophe.’ The impending catastrophe is explained etymologically as, “It was bound to happen: like the *vire* (‘to turn, *Veer*’) lingering in the word *environment*, we turn now to the catastrophes that have come and are yet to arrive (*kata-*, ‘down’ and *strophe*, ‘turning’)” (17). Affinity towards the elemental forces is to be practised in ‘forward-thinking’ of the futuristic catastrophe which the poetry of Northeast examined. Cohen and Duckert explain the catastrophe as, “Living with catastrophe rather than ridding the world of its turbulence means

instead to embrace the elemental now (in all its urgency); to explore the dis-anthropocene rather than relinquish the human's anthropocentric title that it never had; to dive deeper into our elemental embeddedness" (18).

The vast expanse of agricultural land turning to miniature gardens in the technological era found a place in the verses of Temsula Ao in the poem, "The Garden." The history of the Northeast holds a very good record of people living in harmony with the rural setting and agricultural background aiding to the blissful cycle of livelihood. The growth in population, technology and developmental advancements reduced the agricultural lands with infrastructures and factories built for economic growth. According to Ao, the gardens are, "A Slice of the earth/ On the ground, / Or farmed in pots" (71) and the greenery are reduced to pots of variable "size, shape and colour". The plants growing from the seeds, saplings, rooted branches and of hybrid variety in the present times are also narrated. In comparison with the immense green fields cultivated organically, the contemporary populous demands are met with fast producing hybrid variety of seeds and fertilizers. Ao states of the pots, "They grow/ Goaded by hormone, / Aided by fertilizer" and particularly "... tended by your loving care" (71).

The poet tunes the verse lines in accordance with the small scale garden maintained by people of today due to the constraint in space and time. The share of the precious earth nurtured brings upon beauties to the garden and the gardener. The crowded and tall apartments and quarters are adorned with the gardens of potted plants, and the residents finding joy in the beauty of the blooming plants become the subject of the poem. The changing environmental spaces are also deemed as constructs of beauties as the presence of the element of earth is overwhelming even in its sliced format. New vegetative life of all types of greenery adds pleasure to the senses as the earth element is part of the composition of man and the individual effort to tend nature in

the form of a garden is quite appreciable. Greg Garrard in “Futures: The Earth” contrasts the encounter of nature in the real world with the stimulated programming of nature recorded in modern media platforms. The real happiness, comfort, pleasure, warmth, senses of touch and smell are never negotiable from the virtual representations of the natural objects. The beauty presented and lessons taught from nature are verbalised in the poetry of Northeast which the information age can never enlighten.

The succeeding poem, “Bonsai” by Temsula Ao in the same collection of poetry, “Songs That Try to Say” elaborate the consequences of exploding human population encroaching the wild places of nature and reserve forest in the tag of developmental extensions. The green earth pictured through satellite gives images of crowded human settlements and deserted parched areas. Ao articulates the newfound attachments of the midget ornamental shrubs and trees grown in shallow pots as, “Giant trees/ Stunted by Man’s ingenuity/ In search of new beauty” (72). Huge tall trees producing tons of oxygen are minimally and creatively deformed to varied formats to decorate the crowded city homes and office spaces. The technological race has shrunk the entire thinking and thought process into instantaneous, materialistic, narrowing, minimalistic and deforming ethical senses of nature. Ao broods over the earth element losing its grandeur:

Orchards
 Reduced to produce
 Only atrophies of fruits.

Earth’s vastness
 Diminished and displayed
 In tiny potted space. (72)

“An Obscure Place” by Mamang Dai distinctly portrays the Northeastern hills with their rich history and traces the bonding roots of the tribal societies. The repetitive and persistent lines of the poem are, “There are mountains. Oh! There are mountains. / We climbed every slope. We slept by the river. / But do not speak of victory yet” (18). The lines demonstrate the strong attachment the natives had with the earth and their united spirit of dwelling along with the elements of nature. The ancient history of the hills narrated in the stories and the accurate details of the language spoken remaining uncertain are also recited. The guaranteed aspect of the natives in the past is the natives’ merged living with nature and its cycles. The simple pastoral life of the natives is narrated, contrasting them with the chaotic world in the hills brought about by the intruders desiring for change. The strangers disturbing the biodiversity of the hills in the name of education, growth and development are regretted in the lines, “See! They have slain the wild cat/ and buried the hornbill in her maternal sleep” (18). It should be noted here that the hornbill was the most treasured bird which at present is included in the list of extinct birds. To cite a few more lines from the poem:

The words of strangers have led us into a mist
 deeper than the one we left behind;
 weeping, like the waving grassland
 here the bones of our fathers are buried
 surrounded by thoughts of beauty. (19)

The harmonious living cycle before the intrusive activities is claimed to be the most wisdom and beauty filled lifestyle in communion with nature and its elements. The hills are mindlessly exploited for natural resources, and the wild creatures and birds are turning extinct due to the loss of their habitat. The strangers bringing in new notions of luxurious lifestyle diverting people from the ethical and natural bonding are the major reasons for the upsetting of

the ecological balance. The earth element treated right and tended with awe are lacking in the present with excessive ideological invasions.

“Remembrance” by Mamang Dai details the vivid remembrances of the enchanting hills, the trivial joys and enhancing sensual pleasures the natives had, which at present are expiring. The summer rains, the breeze filled nights and greenery deemed to be constant are in a state of fluctuation. Regarding the vulnerable status of nature in the hills, the poet expresses her concern, asking, “Why did we think survival was simple,/ that river and field would stand forever” (16). The natives are gifted with the knowledge of comprehending the elemental natural world, which at present is contrasted with their understanding of the exchange of arms multiplying in the forest settlements. The life-giving forest covers have turned into, “The jungle is a big eater,/ hiding terror in the carnivorous green..” (16). Dai presents the innocent nature-bound living of the pure souls of the tribes in the following lines:

For as long as remembrance
men stared at fire and water.
we dwell in the mountains and do not know
what the world hears about us. (16)

The intimate association, the natives, experienced with the elemental world, is conveyed through the above poetic lines. The acknowledgement of the elemental force and veneration to its existence is validation for the native’s comprehension of the principle, ‘The Elements Rise and Fall’ framed by Cohen and Duckert. The rising and falling movements of the elements of earth and water understood by the natives reflect their *philia* for the elemental forces. The elements operating with no rest are narrated in its rising movements by Cohen and Duckert as, “The elements circulate, spark dense and light effusion, turbulent narrative, a vorticular and

disanthropocentric perspective of force as much as matter. In that spiraled intimacy abides the revolutionary power of the aleatory, entropy's loosening, desire's clasp" (17).

Myths, folklore and legends reveal the peaceful and perfect harmony that existed between man and tiger in the Northeast hills to such an extent that they are equated to the bond of brotherhood. Eco-consciousness is present in the tribal communities as they respect the co-existence of living species and establish kin relationships with them. Numerous works of literature from the Northeast ponder on the man- tiger brotherhood and the ways tigers were acting as the playmates of the children. Arunachal tribes believe strongly in the bond and affinity with the ferocious creature. It is widely believed that man and tiger were born brothers and the killing of a tiger is equivalent to the killing of a man. Similarly, when a tiger attacks a man, a rigorous ritual is followed to select a man to find and hunt the tiger. In the Khasi and Jaintia hills, there are stories narrated of the tiger- man relationships, which refer to men of certain clans turning into tigers on certain nights and that they roamed in the jungle in search of prey.

The poems "Man and Brother (2)" and "The Face of the Tiger" by Mamang Dai give details of the bonding between man and tiger. The saddening demise of the fellow brother is expressed in the poem "Man and Brother (2)," where the natives mourn the loss of tiger brother with regretful hearts. The poem, "The Face of the Tiger" represents the encounter of the man with the tiger face to face. The poet shares the dominance of man over the creature when it is found entering the cultivation fields straying and attacking the livestock. The prose poem puts forth a question regarding the entry of the wild animal into the human settlement as, "Why are they moving into the territories of men? It is habitat loss, dwindling prey?" (48). The animals move into the village settlement in search of prey, and the main reason is the destruction of their habitat which makes them wander for their prey and water and thus enter into the extended

human settlements. That the humans are the real encroachers into the boundaries of the jungles destroying and occupying their habitations is subtly conveyed through the poem.

“A Strange Place” by Temsula Ao provides details of the global estrangement of the humans with the beloved earth. Ao claims the earth to be a strange place, “Where people are/ Exiled in their own lands/ And imprisoned in their own minds” (13). The rat race has caused people to adhere to a system of technology controlled lifestyle without having the freedom of breathing the fresh air and enjoying the environmental bliss. The flights and jets mastering the skies without paying heed to the cries of the chirping birds mark the abatement of humanism and aesthetic sense. The amassing of armaments, national politics and materialism become the concerns of the nations rather than the environmental issues and crises mounting to alarming levels. The art of survival in the future mega modernised world would become impossible with the heights of negligence to the ecological sphere. Human activities deform the amiable earth by exhausting the natural resources, and humans seriously lack eco-conscious insight for the planet, the poet ends with the lines:

And the estrangement
 Becoming stranger still
 Making this world
 Unrecognizable as the place
 Where thinking morals live.

This world is a strange place. (14)

“Lament for Earth” by Temsula Ao connects the elements water, air and earth and demonstrates that one affected element has its impact on the other elements also in the cyclic formation, whereby special care should be taken for the healthy maintenance of the elements of

nature. Earth's surface thus damaged for various monetary and developmental purposes are affecting the health of the planet. The poem mourns the destruction of the vibrant green earth, which once held the splendid and glorious tall trees, singing birds, creatures in movement and the pure air. The poet expresses her grief as the feminine earth is being raped of its natural resources. The poet laments industrialisation leading to deforestation. The poem is a wail over the loss of the glory of the earth as the green forests covers are wiped out:

Alas for the forest
 Which now lies silent
 Stunned and stumped
 With the evidence
 Of her rape.
 As on her breasts
 The elephants trample
 The lorries rumble
 Loaded with her treasures
 Bound for the mills
 At the foothills. (42)

The earth resources ravaged in the name of development shocks the poet because that denotes the end of the human race as the planet is losing its ability to sustain the human race. The crumbling of the earth is indicated explicitly by the numerous reports of environmental catastrophes. The functioning of the earth is made strenuous by commercialisation, materialisation and depleting natural resources resulting in inhumane desertification of the earth's lush green surface. Denuding the hills becomes a threat to the societies as they are known for their abiding communion with nature. The poet grieves over the losses through these lines: "Grieve for the rape of an earth/ That was once verdant, vibrant/ Virgin" (44).

'Gaia' refers to "earth" or "earth mother" in Greek mythology. This term introduced by the novelist William Golding is at present utilised by deep ecologists and ecofeminists to represent the inflexion of the earth element as a 'technologically and economically enframed globe.' This idea is contemplated by Garrard in "Futures: The Earth," who mentions the hypothesis of James Lovelock "that the Earth could be described as a self-regulating system, analogous to a living organism" (199) which corresponds to the Northeast Indian poet's presentation of the vivid earth. The magnificent Gaia has evolved to be stable at all conditions, and it is kept alive by millions of species. The term Gaia used in various fields by climatologists, philosophers, deep ecologists and eco-spiritualists "Ascribing organismic unity to the planet and giving it the name of an Earth-goddess allows Gaia to be appropriated as the object of global environmental consciousness, and perhaps veneration too" (201). Garrard states the elemental characteristics derived from the hypothesis as he points out, "Gaia has proven to be a powerfully productive scientific metaphor, and has considerable value as a way to imagine the planet as at once vulnerable and vast, enduring and evolving" (201). Garrard instils hope for the continuous function of the planet as the element is all-powerful beyond the human levels of destruction.

"The Bald Giant" by Temsula Ao expresses grief over the transforming green landscape of the hills into barren brown terrain. The giant hills held together by the varied biodiversity of flora and fauna in their magnificence make the valleys sound for harmonious living. However, in the present times the mighty hills are "Sitting glum and shorn" of all these beautiful adornments, which grieves the heart of the poet to utter pathetically, "And I do not know/ Whether to cry or laugh/ At this sorry sight" (175). Ao retrieves the memories of the hills clad in her green cloak shining in the sun during the summer, decorated with golden patches in autumn and winter covering the hills with mysterious glory of mists. The cast-off of the lush greenery denuded the

hills and the pathetic sight of the hills, “All of him is brown” is lamented by the poet and she continues, “From base to crown / And his sides are furrowed/ Where the logs has rolled” (175). Deforestation and infrastructural developments have plagued the earth’s rich, valuable surface in the hills, making it appear grotesque and awful. The poet feels that such degradation would lead to the doom of humanity also, “That when the earth shakes/ He will surely disintegrate/ And carry me to our common doom” (176).

The measures for the sustenance are prolonged, and the poet laments negligence of the crucial elemental importance by the human race. That resembles the warning signals of Cohen and Duckert in the principle, ‘To Live with the Element Is to Dwell within Catastrophe.’ When they state: “Still waiting for that deus ex machina to set the elemental world straight?” and picturing further the worsening impacts, “Take another turn: the denouement of catastrophe has been onstage all along, just not in its typical explanatory guise; to ‘unknot’ is to proliferate instead of to solve, to unleash a series of even more knots, even more threads” (18).

“Blood of Other Days” by Temsula Ao deciphers the gradual transportation of nature-loving people to the present modernised generation striving for technological benefits. The cultural and traditional practices of the natives like headhunting are conveyed to the readers. Various forms of nature are worshipped as deities as the poet says, “In the various forms of nature/ Whom we worshipped/ With unquestioning faith” (296). The western religion gradually questioning the credibility of beliefs and myths have transformed the native’s cultural perspectives by “Declaring that our Trees and Mountains/ Rocks and Rivers were no Gods” (296). The confused generation in later days acknowledged the new tribe of stranger’s preaching of promises of heaven and left behind their cultures and taboos. The songs sung in praise of the land, legendary heroes, stories of forests and elements like winds are also decreasing to a large

extent. The strangers started to script new philosophical tenets which stripped the natives of their natural environment in the abandonment of nature with their rituals and reverence.

The tribes becoming perfect mimics of the colonisers is brought out as, “We borrowed their minds/ Ape'd their manners,/ Adopted their gods” (297). The poem addresses the suppressed songs, primitive stories, beliefs, ancient practices, cultural traits and traditional discourse which are re-awakened, articulated, restored and reinstated from ancestral grounds as rich historical identities. The awakening is not easy as the poet says, “In the agony of the re-birth/ Our hills and valleys reverberate/ With death-dealing shrieks of unfamiliar arms” (298) indicating the struggles to resurrect their golden ‘Blood of Other Days.’ The poem with ecological tones implicates the necessary efforts taken by the younger generation to revive the bond with the natural world as in the ancient days to avert the environmental damages in the hills.

Greg Garrard in “Futures: The Earth” discusses the close readings of postcolonial studies and ecocriticism for critical responsiveness to globalisation. The exploration of the environmental historians’ of the relationship of colonialism and environmental destruction is detailed under concepts like genocide, ecocide and environmentalism of the rich and poor. That green nature is to be preserved by organisations and implemented with consideration of the ideologies of the indigenous people for balanced ecological interest is detailed by Garrard. The role of environmentalist to revive the prized locale of the indigenous communities from the aftermath of colonialism, hybridity and cross-culture is similar to the contemporary poets of Northeast India seeking to restore the communion with nature.

“The Conquest” by Desmond Kharmawphlang talks about the transitions of the innocent natives living in nature abounding environment to the present days where people are violently

protecting their identity and cultural roots. The poem opens with an exhibition of the poet's philia for the land as, "I never get tired of talking about my/ Hometown" (61). The yesteryears seasonal shift of summer and winter adding grace to the pristine Northeast land are vividly depicted. The coloniser invading their dwellings and hills is mentioned as, "Later came the British/ With gifts of bullets, blood-money" (61) and their leavings made the natives again experience the "Smell of wet leaves again." Violence and insurgency began to seize the land from the chaos generated by the powers of mainstream Indian land. The missionary intervention was not the only happening that estranged people from their native traditions and way of life but the continuous violence and mounting tensions in the hills due to illegal practices of armaments, ailing diseases, lure of easy money and cultural detachment among the youths destroyed their peaceful living.

"Letter to a Dear Friend" by Desmond L Kharmawphlang mirrors the traumatic transitions of the beloved hills rendered in the form of conversation with his friend through a letter. The poet narrates the changes made in nature's course for the sake of man's convenience and luxurious life and the distortion of nature's beauty and bounty. The stones and rivers in the states are altered for the promotions of tourism and other monetary benefits. Land resources from stones to sands are being exhausted mercilessly in the name of commercialisation is also mentioned. The poet laments over the activities carried out by the people like carrying away the green covering clothes of the solid land surface of the earth from the hills to the lowlands for a profitable trade. The hill people remaining ignorant of the environmental changes and the political leaders with their vain promises and rich groups with their modernisation are regretted. In the forthcoming years, bitter environmental catastrophes to arrive in the hills are conveyed by the poet to his friend as:

I may have some interesting things to
 report --- maybe about the advent
 of acid rain or even the disappearance of
 some villages for the mining of
 a rare mineral. (115)

“Thaiang Buried Roots” by Desmond L. Kharmawphlang recounts the voices of the
 Thaiang spirits and voices for the sacred forest preservation. The poem is the narration of the
 conversation between the Thaiang spirit and the poet regarding the loss of ecology in the forests
 of Meghalaya. The decimated landscape with a saddening picture of large trees lying dead, birds
 inhaling the smokes of tourist jeeps and the silent ancient villages are expressed through the
 verses. The poet directly notifies, “It is a race against time to save the sacred forest of/ Thaiang”
 as the earthly treasures of Northeast hills deprived of their beauty are exemplified through the
 lines, “But where are the birds? / I asked the village chief. / ‘Gone, or asleep, I do not know”
 (50) was the answer of the native chief in pensive sadness. The Thaiang spirit claims proudly the
 love experienced by the ancestral natives who are depicted as ‘men of truth’ by the spirit. The
 crumbled landscape is mourned by the natives in memory of the vibrant forest covers of the
 scared green heritage. The pitiful Thaiang spirit voices:

Thaiang spirit: My dreams were sleeping when self-
 seeking men closed over me.
 They ripped and axed me, gathering my children into a
 heap of broken words, smashing the sacred stones,
 disbanding the dreams of your ancestors.
 You perpetrate your own dark deeds. (51)

The poet initiates steps to revive the lush green physical environment through his poetical writings for which he seeks the blessings of the scared spirit, "... I hope to rescue a few dreams. So, bless/ my songs, old one" (51). The sacred groves feature the cultural roots and special identity markers as they incorporate religious importance, with the association to deities and mythological characteristics. The imperative need to conserve the sites of sacred groves is the voice of Kharmawphlang who distinctly pleads with the younger generations to resurrect the pristine patches of the forests. The reservoir of rare flora and fauna are threatened by urbanisation, exploitation of resources and deforestation. The local communities, youths and villagers are appealed to conserve the rich pockets of biodiversity of the sacred forests of Thaiang area in Ri Bhoi district of the Khasi hills. The restoration work catered in the poem is the global call to various indigenous communities to restore the healthy wellbeing of their sacred forest veins.

Greg Garrard's discourse "Futures: The Earth" is a reflection of the ethical values and environmental oriented activism and the responsibility of the humans, which is more significant than the claims to subvert anthropocentrism. Garrard states, "The metaphysical argument for biocentrism is meant to sustain moral claims about the intrinsic value of the natural world, which will in turn affect our attitudes and behaviour towards nature" (202). Northeast contemporary poets render the past ancestral morals towards nature forces to rectify the westernised youths of the hills as it is vital to change the anthropocentric minds and modernised living of individuals, which are considered by Garrard as the rightful redressing and amendment measures of the ecological sabotage, as Garrard pronounces, "Wilderness experiences, or apocalyptic threats, or Native American ways of life, are supposed to provide the impetus or the example by which individuals come to authentic selfhood orientated toward right environmental action" (202).

Environmentalists protest against the industrialisation process due to the apparent health hazard of humans and environment involved as the royalties and business people derive the benefits of keeping the life of the planet at stake. The maximum environmental exploitation in the Northeast hills with coal mining causes several problems to the environment though it provides employment opportunities to many residents in the hills. The mines are located in the tribal habitation, particularly in the dense forest and hills abounding in natural resources. Locally the coal extraction is done following the practice of primitive ways known as rat hole mining where the local miner crawls inside the opening to excavate coal. The miners go inside up to 50-100m in length from the opening and bring the coal in small wooden barrows. Many small mines are illegally constructed without following environmental regulations. The continuation of these traditional practices without scientific methods harms the land as land subsidence, deforestation and increase in wasteland occurs. Minerals are non-renewable assets, and when they are exhaustively consumed, the land will not be suitable even for agricultural or other subsistence activities; hence a curbing is always necessary.

Mining directly affects the environment in many ways, though the activity is labelled under the name of development. The local people have to continue living in the polluted environment while the profits of coal mining accrue elsewhere. The relocation of tribal communities from the mining areas generates a kind of alienation from their native land resulting in socio-psychological issues and other identity-related problems. Their shift to the inhabitation locality allotted by the government always results in discontent in the settlements. The land faces numerous disorders due to coal mining as the mining process disturbs the land surface and underground aquifers; the process sometimes leads to acid mine discharges damaging the vegetation lands, forest area and topsoil. Further, mine waste disposal pollutes the land for which

suitable alternate dumping sites are to be found. Steps are taken by the government officials to improve the land conditions in the mine attached areas. Scientific methods are to be implemented replacing the traditional methods for extraction of coal.

The growth of several industries in the Northeast region is primarily responsible for the degradation of land and the environment. For instance, the crude oil drilling sites, industries like paper, fertiliser, and cement situated near paddy fields, forest areas and agricultural lands contaminate the soil and water in the nearby areas. The drilling effluents and seepages of industrial wastes damage the crops and vegetations and pollute the drinking water sources. The fertile hills, valleys and riverbeds are exploited in the name of quarrying for boulders, building stones and sand which directly cause soil erosion. Deforestation is one of the primary factors leading to the environmental crisis in contemporary times requiring high priority concern. The global temperature rise as a result of this should make the present generation rethink about the world and the environment around them to manage the available forest resources and trees appropriately.

During the last few decades, Northeast has been facing an alarming rate of deforestation, and the majority of the vast hectares of sacred forest covers are being intruded. The destruction of trees and the denudation of earth have resulted in risks for life on earth; the chief is the breaking of the animal-man bonding present in the tribal community. Deforestation causes the living area of animals to shrink, and the reduced forest space by the felling of trees cause the animal kingdom to restrict themselves to lesser use of land. The intrusion of man into their space makes them come out to the living area of native people creating havoc. The highway roads constructed in their living areas and other intrusions have made them come to the rural settlement of people in search of water. The clashes between wild animals and man have

increased as they intrude into human settlements and many stories related to animal intrusion are heard from various parts of India which calls for a consensus among the communities to take a stand against the destruction of the animal zones. The agony of deforestation is equated with the crime committed against the element of earth, Dr. U. Sumathy's paper on Eco-terrorism titled, "Generative Poetics: A Crusade Against Ecoterrorism" talks about the acts of violence against the environment by investigating the poems which address the injustice to nature. She speaks of deforestation as:

The fact is that cutting down of trees and deforestation are the most pressing land-use problems. An area of forest equal to twenty football fields is lost every minute. Twelve million hectares of forests are cleared annually. At this rate all moist tropical forests could be lost by the year 2050. The consequences include alteration of local and global climate through disruption of the carbon cycle, water cycle, soil erosion and the resultant silting of water courses, lakes and dams, extinction of species and desertification. Man does not realize that his paradoxical attitude to nature is self-destructive and suicidal. (25)

The disadvantage of deforestation at present can be visually seen and experienced by the natives as the route they travelled once covered by trees, now look deserted as the trees are destroyed. The merciless act of clearing the trees will be more in the interior parts of the forests coming under the control of the Forest Department. The Department officials have no power to stand against the illegal activities of the top political and business tycoons. Moreover, the department lacks proper planning, equipment and well-trained staff and hence their failure to protect the forest resources. The forest management in the regions at times appears to be non-existent.

The growth of population and the materialistic attitude of people to get more profit in one harvest have led to hybridisation of seeds in agriculture. The traditional genetic seedling resources which take time to produce yield are not practised at present in the states. The tribal agriculture faces rapid changes in the cultivation process as the need for survival make the farmers abandon the genetic resources. The paddy crops of past varieties are now obsolete for instance, Lingachikon, chamlai, moiasaw in Tripura jhum paddy varieties and Hmawrhang, sazukbuh, kaikuanguh in Mizoram paddy are not used in recent times. The genetic crops had nutritional and medicinal values which protected the tribes from common ailments. At present, the majority of the plants are hybrid varieties which cause health hazard to people. The poets lament the loss of the native crops, which gave them strength and immunity, and the poems also reveal the fear that the younger generation will fail to inherit the glorious indigenous knowledge.

The Northeast fertile soil basins filled with precious resources are currently losing their rich nature due to excessive curbing of the top fertile soil. The roads built, industries established, cemented houses, bridges and highways indicate their development, yet the soil remains polluted losing its nutrients. It requires governmental monitoring of a major development plan to supervise the changes that have been made in the ecosystem, and the environment eligible framework have to be proposed before launching the plan to reduce the ill effects. Landslides and earthquakes occur when the hills are disturbed adversely; for instance, the excess quarrying done to obtain materials for construction where the unearthing of stones and soil from the fertile land remains as a scar forever. The land had been peaceful, pleasant and aesthetically beautiful before the modernisation entered poisoning the lushness of the green element.

Earth is the creator and support system for all the living things in the universe; it is the element aiding as protector and upholder of all kinds of living beings. The element of earth, in

the embodiment of a female entity, Mother Earth, is the sanctuary for all living beings. The Earth in its grandeur, splendour, richness, wholesomeness and beauty is the web of complex system and structure which keeps the animals, plants, creatures and species bonded with each other in the chain of creation. The functioning system of nature has to be learnt and understood for the peaceful habitation on earth and man has to be earth's thoughtful master who has to execute his responsibility of managing, controlling and improvising the resource. At present, the dangers of living on the planet are increasing as global warming, climatic changes, increasing populations, deforestation, drastic resource utilisation occur at an accelerated rate. Ecocriticism is the earth centred approach instructing humans to live in harmony with natural forces and to project a deep concern for the world of nature.

The interdisciplinary study caters to the need of treating the earth with respect and love flowing out of eco-consciousness from humans. Harming the planet is damage done to oneself, and it is equal to polluting one's own body and the ecosystem of living. Sustaining forests, land, creatures, soil fertility, pastures, trees, vegetation and agricultural lands will lead to the continued survival of the element earth. Cohen and Duckert in the principle, 'To Live with the Elements Is to Dwell within Catastrophe' proclaim human beings to become 'cautious ecological stewards' to restore harmony among the elements:

This is the sovereign's promise: that we will be better prepared *next* time. Elemental poetics instead ask us to *attend* to the elements better, to stretch our imaginations and interdependent senses (from *attendere*, 'to stretch'), to listen to the calls of intracatastrophic things. How postsustainable are we? The human's perspective and prospects are but few among many. To everything, turn- and to turn, everything: an ethics of gyre. (19)

Land ethics implies the wellbeing of the soil, waters, plants and animals collectively to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community, specifically the facilitating of a decent surrounding to live. The Northeast poems on plants, birds, bees, fields and trees explicate their love poured out in verses glorifying nature in the hills and the level of co-existence practised by the natives. The poets studied are truly nature-loving poets who establish an intimate relationship with the varied flora, fauna and natural bodies of the hills which could be observed in their versification. The idea that to dwell on the earth requires abstinence from commercial exploitation of the land resources and not to pollute the land is advocated in the poems. Maintaining the land surface is the responsibility of the native inhabitants for suitable living on earth, and they are indebted to it for all the resources. Scott Slovic's narrative writing of environmental scholarship explained with personal encounters in *Going Away to Think: Engagement, Retreat and Ecocritical Responsibility* is a ratification of the relationship with the natural world:

Add loss of biodiversity, vast increase of human population and resource consumption, gradual (but ultimately dramatic) shifts in temperature, and various other almost imperceptibly vast changes in the human and environmental realms, and we're facing potential systemic transformation that will likely change the Earth into a different planet than the one we currently live on. And yet it would be difficult to convince most people in the United States that there's anything going on that might require them to alter today's habits, their use of resources and production of waste. What kind of language might break through this apparent insensitivity and trigger new alertness to the potential hazards our civilization faces? (152)

Northeast poets' affinity to the landscape and hills are the requisite measures to heal the troubled element of earth as Garrard states in "Futures: The Earth," "Understanding and translating native nature cultures is a project of immense significance that has, as yet, barely begun" (203). The primitive tribal way of living has held the nature world dear, and that feeling has to be inculcated by the younger generation of the hills for the sustenance of the human race. The poets voice out for changes in the behaviour, actions and specific lifestyle connections and alterations in tune with the functioning of the Earth's ecosystem. The hill people live in harmony with nature's bounty, flora, fauna and with a commitment to the forces of nature which is lacking in the contemporary generation and they call for the revival and implication through the revitalising poems. Small remedial measures are subtly urged in the verse lines for soil erosion, and deforestation is to be controlled by planting of trees and shrubs to improve the ecosystem. The Northeast region's dependence on 'Mother Earth' and reverence are reflected in the poems, and the need for survival depends on the security of these resources for providing food and shelter. Eco-consciousness as people had in the remote past is to be revived because they never lacked the joy of life and led their lives in self-sufficiency and peace.

The Northeast poets' commitment to place is evident as they celebrate the ground in their abode. The local viewpoint of the hills and valleys are presented clearly, and the warning that humans never can be ecologically independent and that their interdependence with the ecosystem is essential for their sustenance are the key points delivered through the poems. The landscape, wildlife, seasons, wilderness and their inhabiting natural world are created and recaptured with vivid images, glorious metaphors and literary devices to instil in the younger generation a quest for elemental comradeship as Garrard in "Futures: The Earth" states about the evolving process:

“Gaia, for example, implies unpredictability and dynamism rather than predetermined harmony, but also comforting reasserts the tendency of life to maintain equilibrium or balance” (204).

The poets address the three kinds of relationship on earth – man and landscape, human and animals, and living and non-living – in their poetical works for their convergence with the required ethical standards as narrated by Garrard, “The poetics of responsibility recognizes that every inflection of Earth is our inflection, every standard our standard” (204). The relationship with the element of earth is praised and versified by the poets as dutiful human beings who are thankful for the sustenance of Providence. The personification of the earth, the profundity of nature, intimacy with earth environment, natural eloquence in penning the elements and the bound connectivity with the natural world are explicated in the poetical compositions. Northeast poets are famous for raising the realistic contemporary concerns in their poems as they bring out the predictable doom the human race is going to face by the self-destructive roads it has chosen. The concern for the deteriorating environment makes the reading of poetry from Northeast hills natural, and the poems explicitly depict the humanitarian vision of the poets for the upbringing of the youths in the Northeast region. The poems express their courage, desire, confession and conviction to recover the past ecological wellbeing of the hills. Tracing and recovering history should be relearned and implemented by the younger generation.

Globalisation and commercialisation, along with man’s destruction of the land to attain economical benefits from the natural resources of the hills, cause the tragic denudation of the physical environment. The by-products of technological developments are the exploiting and devaluing factors of nature. The ruthless exploitation of natural resources is threatening humanity as many catastrophes would follow that. People and politics impacting the land with harmful activities in the name of commercial profits and land being raped for tourism purposes

are explored in the chapter. The human beings dominating the natural world have faced many catastrophes changing the globe due to the growing distance between the human race and natural bodies. The hills changing beyond recognition losing their elemental essence are lamented. The poems significantly expose the plight and the politics of nature in the verses. The ancestral belief system and myths centred on nature offering a peaceful living are pictured in contrast to the alienating tendency of the modern world distancing man from the crust of the earth and its benevolent subjects like the mountains and rivers.

The earthly paradise diminishes in its glorious grandeur as humans constantly alter the value of the earth with materialistic pursuits. Earth is a pristine sanctuary and life-supporting system which is to be deeply reflected and self consciously mirrored in human activities, and man has to be thankful for all that earth encompasses for a rich and prosperous living of the earthlings. The earth is a place belonging to the human race for their utilisation and reciprocation of *philia* for the place of inhabitation is required from the humans to prolong the sustaining ability of the element of earth. The hunting of the green cover of the earth should be curbed in the modern days as it is crucial to have communion with the land and with the beautiful treasures and resources it holds. Earth as a separate entity and living organism is to be acknowledged, and it takes up the role of a nurturing mother. It has to be protected with ethical, humane behaviour as the element of earth is alive and sensitive.

Man's place on earth has to be understood, and the conservation initiatives should not be undertaken for profit or with capitalistic formulas. The engagement with the landscape, creatures, and natural surrounding is to be kept in the centre of the lifestyle circle in the contemporary scientific era. Earthly environment and eco-friendly policies are to be practised by humans along with an understanding of the elemental forces in their organic essence; in short

ecological thinking should be developed. The chapter also reminds people that earth is the only home the humans possess, and there is no other planet for them. The existence of man will prolong along with the existence of the earth, and thereby it has to change to bio-centric principles from the anthropocentric notion. The motto of Earth First!, as an environmental organisation reads, ‘No compromise in the defense of mother earth.’

The element of the earth in ceaseless productive motion, causing tempest, history, and storm are affirmed further from the etymology of the word element explained by Cohen and Duckert as, “This ceaseless motion is inbuilt, moreover, into the very word *element*, which condenses a linguistic multiplicity and restless etymological archive that ensures the term will not stabilize into a monolith” (17). That the revolving earth is to be kept in its vividness, aliveness and powerful supremacy is the message of the chapter. Earth being the roof, aiding for the circle of life, it becomes necessary to stay close to the earth and the ecology of the world. A deep soulful connection with the element of earth is required, and the love for the planet earth and the living entity of land is crucial. The views of Greg Garrard in “Futures: The Earth” are worth considering in this context:

There is no such thing as ‘bad weather’, only inappropriate clothing, and likewise there is no such thing as ‘saving the planet’. Gaia is well beyond our capacity to ‘destroy’ – although we are making it horribly uncongenial for ourselves, our symbionts and the other organisms we love. In addition to the clever technologies, wily policies and ethical revaluations that we shall need to respond to environmental crisis, we shall need better, less anthropocentric, metaphors. That is the project, and the promise, of ecocriticism.

(205)