

ISSN : 2395-4132

# THE EXPRESSION

An International Multidisciplinary e-Journal

**Bimonthly Refereed & Indexed Open Access e-Journal**



Impact Factor 6.4

**Vol. 9 Issue 2 April 2023**

Editor-in-Chief : Dr. Bijender Singh

Email : [editor@expressionjournal.com](mailto:editor@expressionjournal.com)

[www.expressionjournal.com](http://www.expressionjournal.com)



**ECOCRITICISM AND THE VOICE FROM THE NORTHEAST: REVELATION OF THE  
ECOLOGICAL WISDOMS FOR THE PROTECTION OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT IN  
MAMANG DAI'S "THE WIND AND THE RAIN"**

**DR. ALOK CHANDRA**

**Editor, Author, Poet**

**PhD, Department of English**

**Nava Nalanda Mahavihara**

**(Deemed to be University, Under Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India)**

**Nalanda, Bihar**

.....

**Abstract**

The safety/survival of species, birds, forests, rivers, lakes, etc., is definitely connected to the healthy eco-systems/ecological balance across the global environment. In other words, the earth's environment must be convenient to anyone to enjoy peace and prosperity. There was a time when various beautiful flowers of sweet and healthy fragrance were in abundance in nature and that is why there was not any dearth of nutrients for the butterflies and bees. Trees were in bulk, healthy conditions and rich in branches, fruits and leaves. The resources of water such as rivers, ponds, lakes, etc., contained sufficient water even in the summer season. Over the years, there have been frequent changes in nature as a result of global warming, pollution, deforestation, landslides, climate change, etc., which have in one way or other intensified/magnified the extinction of both aquatic and non-aquatic plants and creatures. Deforestation and the continuous trilling across the hilly regions are liable for the peak of the global warming. Demolition of trees and omission of harmful gases bring unwholesome change in the climate which is manifested through intense cold and hot seasons, acid rains, drought, flood, collapse of rocks and buildings, etc. The present paper has explored the ecological wisdoms in Mamang Dai's "The Wind and the Rain" which are very much decisive, constructive and relevant in terms of solving the environmental upheavals / disasters.

**Keywords**

Ecocriticism, Eco-consciousness, Wisdoms, Northeast, Environment, Disasters, Safety.

.....



## **ECOCRITICISM AND THE VOICE FROM THE NORTHEAST: REVELATION OF THE ECOLOGICAL WISDOMS FOR THE PROTECTION OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT IN MAMANG DAI'S "THE WIND AND THE RAIN"**

**DR. ALOK CHANDRA**

**Editor, Author, Poet**

**PhD, Department of English**

**Nava Nalanda Mahavihara**

**(Deemed to be University, Under Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India)**

**Nalanda, Bihar**

.....

The field of Ecocriticism pertains to the depiction of the environmental concerns in English literature and it is enriched with relevant as well as constructive ecocritical theories. The term gained the global recognition with the publication/introduction of *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*, a book of critical essays edited by Cheryl Glotfelty and Harold Fromm. Glotfelty states that it is the study of literature and physical environment. She also writes about one of the aspects of ecocriticism in the following words: "As a theoretical discourse, it negotiates between the human and the nonhuman". (Glotfelty, XIX). Lawrence Bull explains the terms "as a study of the relationship between literature and environment conducted in a spirit of commitment to environmentalist's praxis" (Bull, 430). As far as the Ecocriticism in Indian English literature is concerned, Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Kavary Nambisan, Arvind Krishna Mehrotra, Amitabh Ghosh, Gieve Patel, Vihang A. Naik, Keki N. Daruwalla, Dilip Chitre, etc., have contributed much to their literary works in terms of the exact environmental conditions and possible eco-friendly works for the healthy eco-systems. The Northeast region of India is globally attributed as a heaven in the sense that it has preserved the beauty of the natural landscapes and the tribal people have rendered their lives in support of the existence of rivers, forests, hills, etc. In terms of the sustainable development, the people of the northeast regions have set a reliable example before the world with respect to their dependency on the natural assets and not involving in its overconsumption. They are blessed with crystal clear ponds, lakes, rivers which not only serve human's domestic needs but also provide shelter to various aquatic plants, herbs, animals, etc. The northeast India is globally recognized as the destinations of spending time during holidays or summer vacations. A number of adventurous sports such as river rafting, ballooning, mountain climbing, etc., welcome the tourists who come from distant places of the world. As far as the ecological

diversity in the northeast regions is concerned, the tribal people have really rendered their eco-friendly services towards the flora and fauna of nature. Flowers of different colours are found in abundance across the villages adjoining the hills which can be attributed as the manifestation of the decoration as well as reverence to nature. It is also relevant to know that even groves across the hills play a decisive role in terms of cooling and purification of the air and thus it ensures the strong immune system of the people who either live inside the cities/towns or in villages. When a visitor or tourist visits any local house of the northeast region, he/she will gain the practical wisdom in terms of the inhabitants' eco-friendly works which are in one way other manifested in the availability of a number of herbal plants, colourful flowers, fruit trees, etc., in front of that house. As far as the hospitality across the northeast states of India is concerned, the residing people take ample delight in welcoming the tourists and take care of their food and lodging. The northeast people are undoubtedly and directly connected to the natural environment. For example, the natural resources/treasures such as forests, mountains, rivers, lakes, etc., play the pivotal roles in the people's domestic works as well as farming or peasantry. Mamang Dai is an Indian poetess, novelist and journalist, hailing from Pasighat, East Siang district, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh. She is the recipient of very prestigious Padma Shri Award (2011) and Sahitya Akademi Award (2017). "The Wind and the Rain" is a very famous poem which is composed by the poetess, Mamang Dai; it has strong appeal/message of Ecocriticism with respect to healthy global environment.

Come, let us listen to the rain

All that we had is going -

or already gone,

just like a life,

So intimate and incomprehensible. (Web)

Decoding the poetess' mood during the time of this poetical composition, it becomes evident that it one way or other has a poignant message for the humans in terms of the deterioration of the environment. Mamang Dai recalls the favourable climatic conditions when animals, plants, trees, rivers, hills, etc., were in tune with nature and, in terms of agricultural and domestic works, water was not a problem as the farmers and the common people were happy and satisfied with respect to the seasonal rainfall. In other words, there was a strong passion for care and preservation of nonhuman world. Fitted to this context, it is quite essential to refer to Bill Devil's eco-friendly thoughts in the following words: "But the deep ecology sense of self requires a further maturity and growth, an identification which goes beyond humanity to include the nonhuman world". (85)Plunging deep into Mamang Dai' poetical words, it in one way or other becomes a global environmental concern that impact of the pollution of the atmospheric air was not so horrific in the past decade/time. Hence the word 'wind' stands for a personification, for it works as an effective voice on behalf of nature. The northeast poetess, Mamang Dai, has fabricated the poem "The Wind and the Rain" with a concrete goal to restore the sound health of the environment and to let the humans contemplate on the earth's diminished greenery as well as lost natural resources. It is the universal truth that any form of life on this earth is more precious than a diamond or gold. After a well observation of the above lines of the stanza, it is, to a great extent, justified that Mamang Dai has attained her eco-friendly goal to address the environmental instability in front of the whole world by virtue of the inclusion of an emphatic and effective simile of life. Life is a lesson; life is an inspiration. In other words, humans must utilize their lives in benevolent as well as eco-friendly services such as charity, sympathy, assistance, afforestation, purification of

air and water, etc., which ensure healthy life/lives leading towards the ecological balance. “The Wind and the Rain” has definitely encompassed the relevant environmental issues which find best poetical voice from Mamang Dai, the northeast poetess of tremendous eco-conscious wisdoms. N D R Chandra and Nigamananda Das in the eco-conscious book entitled *Ecology, Myth and Mystery: Contemporary Poetry in English from Northeast India* throw light on the environmental issues and the eco-friendly poetical compositions of the poets/poetesses hailing from the northeast India in the following words:

Indian English Poetry from the North-eastern part of India is rich in enshrining various aspects of ecology of the region. It has been a fashion with the poets of the region to celebrate the ecological glory of the region and their ecological awareness. The ruthless act of deforestation and oppression upon the Mother Nature in various ways by destroying the serenity of nature, obliterating the natural environment, killing rare birds and animals and distorting the landscape and biodiversity have been sharply reacted upon by these poets. (Chandra and Das, 35)

The following lines of “The Wind and the Rain” unravel Mamang Dai’s eco-consciousnesses in understanding the natural phenomenon in terms of the uprising of the environmental chaos. Hence the poetess takes an opportunity to showcase the environmental occurrences during night time. Decoding the words such as night, moon, birds, etc., one in one way or other comes to know about the purpose of these natural words in highlighting the things which have disappeared from the horizon of global environment. In other words, if there is the natural flow of cool wind/air in the atmosphere and also the rhythmic rainfall even during night, the birds participate themselves in support of healthy natural occurrences and welcome the same through their different kind of voices. Hence the wind and the rain have been attributed as the means of listening to the songs of nature.

The night has no more songs.

What will it sing

now the moon has drowned

and the songs of birds with it. (Web)

Mamang Dai’s “The Wind and the Rain” is also commendable for its eco-aesthetic beauty which has been depicted/expressed by virtue of the placement of the word ‘moon’ in the eighth line. It is now very much pertinent to note that Mamang Dai in one way or other makes her readers/people understand the threats of global warming which leads to unpredictable changes in the climate. That’s why there becomes the environmental disasters of heavy cyclone, thunderstorms, rainfalls, etc., which are responsible for the destruction of goods and lives and culminate to the extinction of valuable birds, animals, plants/trees, etc. As a consequence of unfavourable weather, the moon does not become visible, for dark clouds don’t let its whitish rays fall across the forests, mountains/hills, rivers, ponds, lakes, etc. The milky rays of the moon create aesthetic charm in the environment and birds such as nightingale, peacock and so many other birds rejoice the blessings of nature and humans listen to their melodious and soothing voices even during late night. Therefore, the poetess strongly advocates the ecological harmony if the world has to enjoy the blissful natural songs.

The concluding poetical lines embody the allegory which refers to the instability or mess in the environment. At first hand, it seems that plants, trees, animals, etc., have no scarcity of rains but, on the other hand, the words such as ‘darkness’ and ‘light’ stand for despair and hope. Hence the old persons stand for rich experience in terms of having a sound understanding of the changes in the Earth’s ecology. Deforestation as well as discharge of

harmful gases in the atmosphere in one way or other become responsible for visibility problems due to unpredictable thick and dark clouds as a consequence of global warming. Therefore, it is very much pertinent to mention Suresh Frederick in context of the current environmental crisis who reiterates that “the most common measure to tackle environmental crisis is sustainable development”. (Frederick, 128).

The northeast poetess, Mamang Dai, incorporates very healthy eco-friendly wisdoms which open the people’s eyes for understanding the quality and quantity of rains pouring down the earth. Healthy and acid-free rains are the need of the present time to get rid of the ecological imbalance. Frederick Suresh also talks about healthy ecology “in which plants, animals, birds and human beings live in such a harmony that none dominates or destroys the other” (147).

Yes, the rain is pouring down my homeland  
The old men are saying they can see  
fields of darkness and fields of light. (Web)

The poem “The Wind and the Rain” is an eco-friendly composition which serves as a companion for the people so as to guide them with the wisdoms of ecology for the protection of the global environment. It is packed with simile, allegory, personification, etc., for their aesthetic effect on the readers. It is a very special kind of environmental/eco-poem which teaches the humans not to conceive of the objects of nature as ordinary things. Fritjof Capra in *The Web of Life: A New Synthesis of Mind and Matter* talks about the change of “Our conceptual focus from objects to relationships” (287).

The northeast poetess, Mamang Dai, has definitely enriched the domain/field of Ecocriticism in Indian Writing in English; she is well versed in showcasing the natural phenomena to unhide each and every aspect of the natural environment. “The Wind and the Rain” is a bridge to connect the people of the world with the natural objects and ensuring their conservation/protection by virtue of gaining the ecological wisdoms through a thorough and deep contemplation on its poetical lines. The poem is loaded with all the required traits to be attributed it as an eco-poem, for it carries a strong emphasis on eco-friendly changes across the global environment through the inputs of holistic attitude and conduct in people’s lives. Mamang Dai has played a pivotal role in making the readers/people understand the initiatives which have to be taken for healthy climatic conditions on earth. Protection of mountains, lakes, ponds, plants, trees, birds, butterflies, species, etc., is the call of nature.

## Works Cited

- Bull, Lawrence. *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing and the Formation of American Culture*. Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Capra, Fritjof. *The Web of Life: A New Synthesis of Mind and Matter*. Flamingo, 1997.
- Chandra, N. D.R. and Das, Nigamananda. *Ecology, Myth and Mystery: Contemporary Poetry in English from Northeast India*. Sarup and Sons, 2007.
- Devall, Bill and Sessions, George. *Deep Ecology: If Nature Mattered*. Salt Lake City Press, Peregrine Smith Books, 1985.
- Frederick, Suresh. *Contemporary Contemplations on Ecocriticism*. Authorspress, 2012.
- Glotfelty, Cheryl and Harold Fromm. Editors. *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*. The University of Georgia Press, 1996.
- <http://poetry.sangamhouse.org/2013/07/the-wind-and-the-rain-by-mamang-dai/>