

Introduction

Urbanity: A Study of Kathmandu Valley

An anthology of selected Nepali poems, *Whose City is this?* by 21 poets, highlights an issue of environmental change in Kathmandu valley. Adopting urban ecology as groundwork, I explore how the environment of urban space is in vulnerable position. This research further studies the relationship between humans and nature. It also focuses on how ecology and urbanity are represented in literary critical writing, particularly in poetry. Such literary creative imaginings can address the environment in crisis.

Applying ecocriticism in general and the urban ecological theory in particular as a device to justify, this research shows how the poets are trying to raise the awareness among the people regarding the purity of the urbanity through their poetry. So, this city has become the source of poetic inspiration and creation. Furthermore it shows the interdependency and interrelationship between the natural elements and human being. Regarding the greatness of earth, John Wain points out, “joy and pleasure on the greatness of the earth” (32). Earth means nature. So, he finds pleasure when he remains in close contact with nature.

The poets find the urban nature as the source of poetic imagery and the domain of literary imaginings. The land is the vehicle of thoughts and supplier of images for creative writers to shape their imaginings. The poets, in their poetry, raise the voice that people have destroyed the organic beauty of the Kathmandu valley due to their activities such as construction, industrialization and commodification. About industrialization, Manisha Gauchan in her poem “Am I Seeing the City” states, “O People, the city itself is

a factory” (11). She calls the people to say that the factories are gradually increasing in the city. She shows her concern on the expansion of factories that invites unnecessary gases which cause environmental ruin. This study further finds the answer to the question: Whose city is this?

The poets and ecologists remain in forefront to aware people about the ongoing loss of urban nature. Their literary imagining has exhibited why the problems like ozone layer depletion, excessive rain, drought, acid rain, landslides, soil erosion and contamination are rampantly taking place everywhere. Human beings are responsible for these natural hazards. Manisha Gauchan again says, “Fumes eager to destroy the ozone layer/ Excessive rain and drought” (11). Here, Gauchan views the problems which people of Kathmandu valley are confronting because of environmental fluctuation.

The poet, Phulman Bal regard himself as urban dweller and the thing that he represents in his poem is mainly the human steps to lead the beautiful natural space into ugly one. Bal states, “Who landscaped your beautiful garden/ Who built those white palaces?”. When Phulman Bal sees the white palaces in place of beautiful green landscape, he questions for those, who are not paying no more attention on environmental deterioration. M.A. Hajar, an ecocritics, mentions, “the nature around us becomes deeply embedded in social institutions” (qtd: in Hannigan:36). It unveils that expansion of social institutions does not have positive impact on nature, though it has some benefit on material prosperity.

Modern world is the world of frustration and depression. In order to be away from alienation and to find solace out of the bitterness of peripheral life, the poets have turned to the environmental surroundings of the Kathmandu metropolitans and regard

human beings as part of nature as L. White JR regards, “Formerly man was part of nature, now he is the exploiter of nature”(147). White points out that at the passage of time man has become the exploiter of nature. Nepali poet, Amar Neupane in his poem, “The Song of the City in the Memory of Village” asserts, “No more are the trees and birds” (36). The birds are in the verge of extinction as the trees are gradually destroyed to expand road and houses.

Manu Manjil and Bhupal Rai raise an issue of urbanization. Though industrialization and urbanization have positive impact in economic progress, it has adverse effect on environment. Manu Manjil in her poem, “The City Belongs to You” articulates, “Expansion of industry/ the city with no ground for play/ no solitude for thought” (24). City has become a place of industry and mob, which invites the environmental loss. As urbanites become economic minded, they do not care about the effects that might appear in the environment. “Urban development is now a primary engine of economic growth and profit-making across the U.S. and globally. Yet the benefits of this growth are not equally shared. Rather, cities have become centers of extreme inequality” (qtd: in Plumwood: 163). Bhupal Rai claims, “Now cement, bricks, concrete electric wires define the city” (46). Greenery is being slowly replaced by skyscrapers and factory. Thus urban expansion has become one of the causes of environmental degradation. Skyscrapers in place of trees, rivers and lakes, made the poets nostalgic and they start thinking about preserving nature as they were obsessed by natural loss.

Human- nature relationship is affected by anthropocentric activities of the people like cutting down trees, building houses, expanding roads, polluting rivers and air. People

impose their vested interest to gain profit not paying any heed to the gradual loss of nature. Benju Sharma in her poem, “City” mentions, “Mixed with polluted air and river/ with poisoned food the city lay insensate” (49). Here, Sharma shows the human nature relationship being affected by pollution and pesticides used in fruits and vegetables. She puts herself at the front and awares people about the environmental ruin caused by pollution and poisonous food in her poetry. Likewise, She has been very much conscious about this and tries to make people aware of the fact that destroying nature means destroying ourselves because human nature relationship can not be isolated as Bary Commoner says, “Everything is connected with everything else (qtd: in Glotfelty: XIX). The connection is inevitable to maintain harmony in nature. Thus, the Nepali poets have disseminated their news and views about their dwellings, Kathmandu city, for the purity of nature through their poetry. They accompany nature to build up social harmony. “We must aim to establish better communicative relationships with nature in all its aspects as a preliminary to learning to balance human needs with nature’s needs and limits (qtd: in Plumwood:142). The Nepali poets’ ideas are no different from the Plumwood in terms of environmental concerns.

The poets Dilli Raman Nepal, Krishna Joshi, Biplov Pratik and Purna Baidhya illustrate the notion of eco-consciousness. They are equally conscious of modern environmental crisis. Consciousness raising through wilderness concept is their most important task. How can people solve environmental problems unless they start thinking about them? Consciousness raising is the most important task of the poets as theorized here “Revaluing nature-oriented literature can help redirect us from ego-consciousness to eco –consciousness” (Glotfelty: xxx). Because of the emerging science and technology,

the environmental degradation and pollution mainly in urban area created serious problems to human beings. Nature is vulnerable as human beings are not conscious about its preservation on their every step. “We thereby cease to pay as much attention when nature is destroyed by manipulation, development, consumerism, and dumping as long as our environment stays intact” (qtd. in Hochman: 188). Nature is explained differently in order to cope with the problem and have eco-friendly relation with the environment and also to aware the people about the environment. Purna Baidhya in his poem, “At the City Fair” says, “I escape from myself/ from the very city of masked city/ go back to rural past” (63). Here, he wishes to escape from the city life and revitalize the rural past as he wants to go back to nature. In such circumstances, he expresses his discontentment on environmental fluctuation caused by urban growth. He celebrates wilderness and rural district. Thus, he highlights the affiliation between human and non-human entities as the subject matter of their poetry.

People have a right to clean air, land, water and food, and the right to work in a clean and safe environment. Thus, the poets want to preserve the people’s right to live in healthy environment in Kathmandu valley. In the context of America, Robert Bullard in his work, *Dumping in Dixie* expresses as “The basic rights of all American, the right to live and work in a healthy environment” (50). All the people have equal right to exist in hale and hearty milieu. In the United States, a number of health related environmental inequities were exposed during the 1960s and 1970s that highlights the differential treatment given to three issues during this period: pesticide poisoning, the toxicity of lead and uranium hazards. These issues were serious issues to disgrace the environment in USA. Environmental justice of Cierra club adopted its first environmental justice policy

stating that “to achieve our mission of environmental protection and sustainable future for the planet, we must attain social justice and human right at home and around the globe” (Hannigan: 51). Likewise, Vernice Miller says “Environmental justice is ‘a global movement that seeks to preserve and protect global ecosystems” (15). As stated by Robert Bullard and Vernice Miller, Nepali poets have shown their profound concern on the right to live in healthy milieu. The inevitable rights to healthy environment were valorized by them in their poetry. Thus, keeping the environmental condition of Kathmandu city in mind, they pay their entire attention about the creative imaginings for beauty, purity, utility and sanctity of nature.

Finally, To address the environmental issues of Kathmandu valley, I have divided this project in 4 chapters. This project has dealt with the urbanity of Kathmandu valley in introduction part. It deals with the issues of ecological ruin of Kathmandu valley. Then, keeping the urban ecological theory as its foundation, this research goes on exploring how urbanity is portrayed in Nepali poetic imaginings in 2nd chapter. After that, in 3rd chapter, it further explores how urbanity has become a location of loss in Nepali poetic imaginings and also how living and non-living organisms are victimized due to the flux environment, especially in the context of Kathmandu city. Afterwards, it moves ahead with the quest for revitalization of glorious and pristine nature. It has been further elaborated from the sub chapter as ‘Pursuit of Wilderness’ and ‘Back to Nature’ to strengthen the sub matter. Finally, this research arrives in destination with the concluding chapter ‘Urban as Degeneration of Wild’. This subject matter is further justified with the help of pictures of Kathmandu valley as well. In appendix, some pictures will be shown

in order to depict the urbanization, pollution, destruction and devastation of Kathmandu valley. In this way, this dissertation acquires its completion.

2. Urbanity in Nepali Poetic Imaginings

The main objective of this project in this chapter is to remind city dwellers about urban life and environment and how it has been conquered by human beings and also to make them aware for the preservation of natural world in the city. This research reminds the people about the problems of urban issues like sanitation, pest control, black-topped road, pollution, hunger, malnutrition, poor health, diseases, pre-mature death, traffic congestion, crowding of recreational space and natural resource degradation. These issues are deteriorating the environment of Kathmandu valley. Urban development has created landscape fragmentation and habitat loss. It goes on exploring how Nepali poets have raised the same issues of urbanity in their poetry.

This research work poignantly presents ideas for social change with creative works. Poems of this anthology show myriad concerns and emotions; a sense of loss and discovery, of belonging and not belonging, alienation, fear, terror, trauma, nostalgia and anguish due to the fluctuation of the environment and ecology in urban area like Kathmandu.

Urban ecology is the scientific study of the relation of living organisms with each other and their surroundings in the context of an urban environment. It is the study of relationship between living and non-living things of the cityscapes. The interconnectedness between human life and ecology leads to the creation of any work of art, i.e. poetry, which evokes the sense of protecting nature. The urban environment refers to the environment dominated by high density, residential and commercial buildings, paved surfaces, and other urban related factors that create a unique landscape dissimilar to most previously studied environment in the field of ecology. The study of urban ecology examines the biota of urban areas, while the North American concept has

traditionally examined the social sciences of urban landscape as well as the ecosystem fluxes and processes.

Urban ecology, a part of ecocriticism, studies the relationship between cityscape and the literature. As an academic discipline, it began in 1990s. Cheryll Glotfelty in *The Ecocriticism Reader* defines as “the study of relationship between literature and physical environment” (xviii). To negotiate between human and non-human world, Ecocriticism “has its one foot in literature and the other on land (Glotfelty XIX). By ecocriticism, Rueckert in “Literature and Ecology” meant “the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature” (107).

The idea of the city has been so central to the linear narrative of civilization that urban growth or urbanization is often conceived in evolutionary terms, “It is analogous to biological process and organized development of an advanced social and political community” (Ross 114). The environment in pre-industrial time was not so much ruined as it is now. After industrialization, it is gradually deteriorated. Carol Stabile states, “Pre industrial, romanticized environment and industrialized non-environments inhabited on a daily basis” (58). After industrialization, the urban area is gradually moving towards human control and bears environmental variation. The concept of city is very old but its study mainly started from 19th century with the rise of industrialization and urbanization from America and Europe. Joanne Gottlieb says, “The city of future has its roots in the nineteenth century underground” (234).

The railway transforms the surface into underground space. As the railroad grew, Lewis Mumford in his work *The Culture of Cities* argues, “the environment of the mine once restricted to the original site was universalized by the railroad” (150). Quality of soil

decreases after the expansion of railroad. Didier Gille expresses, “the controlled and orderly technologies of pipe and conduit replace the qualitative transformation of soil” (247). In Kathmandu, though not touched by underground railway, the sewage and pipes put underground to supply the dung and droppings has spoilt the soil as well as so called holy rivers. Sarubhakta in his poem “Houses of Sand” writes, “For ages/ Sewage-clogged hearts have been taking a holy dip/ In the Bagmati and Bishnumati rivers” (47).

Current urban development is seen as a result of excessive economic exploitation of natural resources for development. It is reality that development and conservation of nature are seen as contradictory to each other, but the way people are doing at present is really curse for environmental balance. Because of over concentration on economic pursuits, they have reduced positive nurturing of nature. Historically speaking, Kirat settlement was centered around a city, which was always located in a ecologically important site. There were clump of trees, rock spur, and spring source of water, hillock and agricultural hinterland. They steadily consumed this land. Then Lichchhavis, who migrated to the valley from the southern plains, started living and grew with rising commerce. Afterwards, the Social, cultural and religious practices of Malls occupied the hinterland and ecology was affected. Sudarshan Raj Tiwari in his research article, “Kathmandu Valley: Urban Capital Region and Historical Urbanism” affirms, “The marvelous temples, chaityas, palace squares, monasteries and the towns they perfected into art forms for living, are mostly handed down to their generation from that period of history. Political, administrative and economic importance of the valley continues to attract more migrants into it” (8). Rana oligarchy also took over available large chunks

of land around the traditional cores of the towns of Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur for their huge palaces.

The growing urban population and the relatively dwindling natural resources have created environmental problems in Kathmandu valley towns. The major environmental problems evident in the urban areas are diesel vehicles, brick factories, cement factory and the dirty streets, physical congestion, water and air pollution, lack of cleanliness, loss of public open spaces. Evidently, such public spaces in these parts of the towns have more or less gone. Again Tiwari says, “Light and ventilation problems are featured in an earthquake prone area” (9). In this way, Kathmandu valley is confronting the environmental challenges.

From the collection of 27 poems, I have selected only 21, which shows the response to the growing urban landscape that is transforming villages into cities and greenery into dry land. An effort made to develop urban sector has spoilt the city. Farming has been rare in Kathmandu valley by expansion of houses. Alok Lamsal in his research article “Urbanization Fast Shrinking Fertile Land in the Valley” which was published in *The Kathmandu Post* affirms, “more than 50 percent of the valley land has been occupied by concrete buildings and farming activities are being superseded by housing culture”(7). Here, Lamsal has illustrated the condition of farm land being occupied by construction of houses. Such city is fragmented and compartmentalized by town planning, land plotting, hills slicing, building constructing, road mounting, durbars and tower erecting. Swo Swopnil Smriti’s poem, “The Red Brick Jungle” is an epitome of slicing of beautiful hills and expanding house plotting. He points out as:

A gamble staking cities like this one on the throw of the dice

Slicing hills “town planning” to make the deal

Whose city is this?

These Babar Mahals, Kaiser Mahals, Harihar Bhabans, Basantapurs

They who built Dharahara, Ghantaghar, Ranipokhari. (54)

Here, Swopnil portrays how this naturally rich city is being devastated by human activities. The place of erected trees is being occupied by mahals, towers and durbars.

The progress of new modern city was introduced by the railway. With the modernity and the emerging technologies of sewage and water systems, railways and underground railways, gas, telegraphy, telephony, pneumatic tubes, steam and electricity, the urban ecology is being badly affected. Gottlieb again asserts, “The development of the technology like underground railway, road, railroad and housing defined modernity and later promised the improvement of urban life but it trashed the environment of urbanity (234). Though urban development gives transitory luxurious life, it is really dreadful for shaping environment. Rajan Mukarung in his creation, “City of Dreams” articulates concerning the condition of the city as “uprooted/ suffocation/ vaporized” (32). People of metropolis are facing such complicated life. Uprooting of trees generates suffocation and people are compelled to bear unexpected physical and mental problems.

The Kathmandu valley is highly concretized due to anthropocentric activities like expansion of roads and buildings. Anthropocentric attitude regards humans as superior and the non-humans are taken to be subdued by human beings and their role has been neglected for the development of ethics. Everything from the earth is manipulated for the use and satisfaction of human masters. In anthropocentric culture, nature and animals are

constructed according to the logic of One and the Other, “with nature as other in relation to human in much the same way that women are constructed as Other in relation to men” (qtd: in Plumwood: 107). An anthropocentric viewpoint treats nature as radically other and humans as emphatically separated from nature and from animals. Nature and animals are subordinated by anthropocentric activities. “Anthropocentric culture and science conceive nature and animals as inferior stereotyped as like in their lack of reason, mind and consciousness” (qtd: in Plumwood: 108). They struggle to conquer nature.

Plumwood here really evokes a heart touching matter pointing out that animals and nature are victimized by anthropocentric activities since they don’t have reasons and consciousness.

Nepali poets valorize the urban decadence by anthropocentric doings. They discard utilitarian value of nature along with anthropocentric devastation. Dilli Raman Nepal in his renowned poem, “This City Belongs to All” asks the questions about, “Who built the city?/ Who cleared the weeds and trees?/Who built temples, caves and clock tower? Who developed the art of building?” (33). It is an anthropocentric action of human being as they ask questions on the loss of trees and rise of temples and tower. Not surprisingly, the response of his questions can be easily found that it is human being, who is fully responsible for building temples, caves, tower clearing the trees and weeds. This city has victimized the people who can not feel the real presence of nature. Similarly, Janak Paudyal’s poem “In This City” expresses the same notion of loss as “When I emerge onto the city street/ I get no sun, no water, no laughter/ I learned to walk on the narrow alleys/ I learned the mechanical laugh” (38). Here, Paudyal is trying to say that the alleys have been narrower by the expansion of buildings and also the sunlight gets

blocked due to the tall skyscrapers. People are destined to keep in touch with machines, industry and technology. So, they have mechanical laugh as they have no more connection with nature. They bear the response of their actions done upon the nature. It is really pathetic. Thus, people are really victimized from the real absence of nature in the municipalities caused by the human deeds.

City inhabitants have been victim of urban trauma. Their careless activities lead to natural chaos. They are creating the loss in the earth as “Human actions are damaging the planet’s basic life support system (qtd: in Glotfelty: XX). Manisha Gauchan’s poem “Am I Seeing the City” relates the experience of urban trauma. The poet sets on a journey to search for the city and finds herself amidst the heap of bricks, factory and multi-storied buildings. The noise and gases emit from the factory are really bad for human health. The polluted gases have caused the reduction of ozone layer in the atmosphere. As Gauchan fosters, “the whirring noise of the factory/ fumes eager to destroy the ozone layer/ fingers moving with the machines” (11). The depletion of ozone layer caused by emission of the gasses from the factory and vehicles supplies ultra-violet rays, which create the diseases like skin cancer. The experience of natural trauma for Gauchan, is inextricably tied to the uncertainty of perception. The opening of her poem shows the poet gazing at the city from the height of the five-storied building and trying to make sense of its alleys and footpaths from the above. As her explorations continue, the city becomes more ambiguous. She utters that city is no more a city, it is a factory itself. She again foregrounds, “Am I seeing the city in the factory/ O people, if the city itself is a factory” (11). The factory owners are conscious about accumulating the property. They work day and night for profit earning but they don’t pay any attention regarding the environmental

predicament. Consequently, the city has become a hub of factory. Also in the poem “In Kathmandu”, Buddhi Sagar Chapain mentions, “Kathmandu- sleeps uneasy and always drowsy” (7). How difficult it has been for the people to survive amongst the garbage world. Environmental loss causes the physical problems which make people lethargic and unhealthy; as a result, the country goes backwards.

In the contemporary modern surfaces of the city, one can read the traces and memories of past history; of times when the city was partly a village. Nepali poets represented in this volume try to come to terms with their own experience of the city including its physical spaces and the environmental degradation by writing poems about the urban landscapes within which they live. The poets are more concerned about the nature as they have such innovative creativity. Naturalist, John Burroughs’ “Nature and the Poets”, credits that “the true poet has greater insight into nature than naturalists have, because the poet carries her open secrets in his heart” (88). Here, he means to say that Poets are more naturalists than the naturalists themselves, the greater the poet, the more accuracy of reflecting nature because they inculcate the environmental notion in their poetry, which arises eco-consciousness. Burroughs further considers that “the greater the poet, the more correct and truthful will be his specifications” (88). He stresses at the end of his essay that the poet’s proper role is not merely to chronicle nature but “to see it subjectively” (89). It justifies that poets can visualize the real environmental world by their poetry. Dhanraj Giri in his Poem “This City Belongs to Poets” claims, “only the poet can render this city desirable for everyone/the poet writes so that public can’t exploit more” (14). Poets are like ecologists, who aware people by means of their poetry. Hence, the role of poets is important for natural conservation in the town.

The poets are pondering upon the damage due to the carelessness of people. Again, Wendell Berry says “the subject of poetry is not words; it is the world, which poets have in common with other people.” (qtd: in Buell: 102). In the same way, again Dhanraj Giri says that the city belongs to its poets, who are able to dream and envision its ideals and sustain the purity of nature rather than its businessman or politicians, who exploit it and use for profitable purpose. Poets are great for him, “Only the poets can recognize the supreme soul dwelling within/ It’s the poet who can cleanse and enliven this city” (15). Vigorous nature of the poet has boosted up the awareness movement amongst people. They, moreover, appeal the people to take care their dwellings, where they are born and die. Therefore, we can assert that poets have the capacity to awake people to maintain the nail-flesh relationship between human beings and nature.

Abhi Subedi finds a mixture of modernity and tradition and of history and contemporary culture in the complex, ambiguous surfaces of the cities of Kathmandu valley. Such a mixture of the multiple histories and nostalgia of natural loss, however, becomes a source of creative expression for the poets who arrive to write the legend and aesthetic narratives of the city. Though there are no more trees as in the past, their nostalgia reflects the imaginings of lost urbanity. He unravels, “With no trees, only their memories, the gardens still retain the name” (55). Those poets who have faced past and present, compare it and find the existing complexes in place of trees. Subedi further views that it is the city of scarcity due to paved surface, over exploitation of land, there is scarcity of water. Abhi Subedi in his poem “In This City” marks, “Water streams dry up.../Nowadays I revisit this city/The same ancient lake that lost its livid waters” (56).

The remaining lakes, ponds and rivers do not have livid or pure water; rather they are full of polluted and infected water.

The city is not to be blamed for its ills; rather it is the people who live in it including the rich and poor, and the rulers and ruled, who must be blamed for exploiting the city to further their own vested interests. Human beings are guided by pleasure seeking tendency by their non-natural activities like the concrete construction of the buildings and houses which results into the ruin of natural beauty. Prakash Angdambe outputs his view as:

Being a city is to be a little larger
If larger- roads, campuses, houses,
movie halls, shops, hospitals,
entertainments, parks, vehicles,
dreams, imaginings, desires,
and possibilities also become larger. (1)

It shows the artificial replacement of beauty of Kathmandu valley. People make such structure for their needs, entertainment and blissful life. They are expanding roads, campuses, houses, movie halls, shops, hospitals, and buildings day after day. It arises the questions like why are they not conscious about the upcoming environmental hazards caused by their own activities. Why are they leading the only material life, which never gives them mental pleasure? Such questions remain unanswered. The more they have, the more they want regardless the environmental loss. The human desires for earning keep on increasing which turns the beauty of nature in to ugly material world.

Many of those writers came from the villages to cities and others, who grew up in the cities, have seen how the cultural and architectural landscapes of the cities have changed. They have also seen how the older cities which were full of scattered rural locations within their growing modern spaces are now acquiring new urban characteristics. Sangeeta Thapa, Director of Siddhartha Art Gallery, in her Gallery Statement of the poem *Whose City Is This?* says, “These poems would then function as a terrain for the exploration of the urban experience and creates a unique threshold of awareness about the city” (VI). Throughout the history, urban migration patterns have shown that people have always flocked to cities in pursuit of economic opportunities and civil liberties. In the name of accumulating financial incentives, they forget their moral duties and start exploiting the land by destroying the trees, and also by making the house, throwing garbage and drains to the rivers. Uncontrolled urban development has produced the problems like global warming, extinction of animals and birds, toxic pollution in the world as shown in the following lines:

Urban growth transforms nature; the forces of nature reshape the city.

Rampant urban development has made this age-old dynamic increasingly unsustainable, contributing to global warming, species extinction, water scarcity, and toxic pollution. Meanwhile, these conditions exacerbate inequalities of race and class, in the US and globally. Through coalitions of labour, urban, and green movements, these conditions have also become the target of campaigns for environmental justice, sustainable development, and green jobs” (qtd: in Plumwood 165).

Here, Plumwood has raised the problems caused due to the rampant urban development. All kinds of pollution and natural hazards appear.

The level of pollution in Kathmandu is so high that one cannot even wear the same dress for two days. The water is so dirty that it leaves a black stain, especially on white clothes. We cannot eat or drink in restaurant or any other eatery our own home. Walking around without a mask is impossible. Pollution in the city caused by pollution in rivers is experienced in Sharubhakta's poem as "sewage-clogged hearts... in the Bagmati and Bishnumati rivers" (47). Bagmati and Bishnumati rivers are regarded as the holy rivers historically, culturally and religiously. But they are so polluted that only people can not stay for a minute without closing their nose on the banks. In the same way, Amar Neupane in his thrilling poem "Song of the City in Memory of the Village" puts across: "The Bagmati River has become poisonous even as it flows" (36). The rivers which are regarded to be holy are badly contaminated in such a way that only the manure, sewages and garbage flow. The life of the people besides such rivers is badly affected. They are victim of diseases. Though the efforts have been made by the government to manage sewages and garbage, the condition of such rivers is as it is. In such situation, the poets, through their creativity, are trying to alert people not to contaminate such rivers, which have direct connection to human life and health.

War, natural disasters and climate change around the globe have also led people to move to the cities. These migrations have created demographic and social demands that have transformed cities and affected their inhabitants. What are the socio-economic and environmental expenses that the individual has to bear in these circumstances? More importantly how has Kathmandu valley and its people experienced this world wide

phenomena. During the last eighteen years Nepal has undergone major changes with the rise of Maoist insurgency and the second people's revolution that took place during the brief and turbulent reign of king Gyanendra. Thus, many Nepalese fled the rural areas, where the conflict was centered and moved to the urban centers of Kathmandu valley for safety. The rush in migration from the hills and plains has drastically changed those once sleepy and green cities into chaotic and dry urban life. Once Kathmandu was surrounded by forests and green fields but now it cannot be seen any more. Nevertheless, people are enjoying the artificial beauty. Amar Neupane again articulates "A forest flower is now confined to a pot/ and what blossoms lacks fragrance/ the joy-spreading garden lies barren" (36). The forest is destroyed so the flowers were found in the forest in the past, have been confined in a pot at present. Such flowers have no natural quality since they lack aroma and bouquet. The gardens, where people could get environmental pleasure, are now turned into concrete and barren land. Hence, Neupane presents the vigorous imaginings on urbanity to instruct people to internalize the upcoming ebb and flow of nature.

The changes in the contemporary city are marked by the forces like privatization, globalization, municipal expansion and the loss of public space. Modernity moves towards increasing urbanization even if urban infrastructure collapses and burns. Regarding the commercial activities in the context of American metropolis Los Angeles, Mike Davis in his famous essay "Who Killed Los Angeles" expresses, "Neo-Disney, plastic Stone Age" (47). The apocalyptic metropolis is represented by the technological or social forces. Urbanization was tied to the institutions and processes of industrial capitalism through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, has become a global

phenomenon. Urbanization is a major feature of technological modernity. The commodified nature is reflected in Gobardan Puja's phrase as, "plastic flowers in a flower pot/ aromas spread from a bottle's hole" (42). These lines describe the extreme forms of commodification that reign within the city. This city is the space of commodification and loss on which Nepali poets have responded to set flowers not on the pot, but on their original place.

Imagination of utopian urban society has overtaken rural urban space. As city becomes hollow, the imagination and advanced urban society comes to be false. Scott Bukatman in his work *Terminal Identity: The Virtual subject in Postmodern Science Fiction* affirms, "The disappearance of the real city and the obsolescence of utopia are entirely commensurate as the monumental urban forms that marked the utopianism of the old modern era become empty and inert" (123). Ironically, the utopian imagination overtakes real urban space. Emphasis form social control and dependence upon technology creates a type of cultural space Jean Baudrilard identified as "a world of simulation ... a world completely catalogued and analyzed, then artificially resurrected under the auspices of the real " (Simulacra 8). Human beings are imitating the technology and adopting it forgetting their moral duties. It has provoked the thrashing of natural world on the urbanity. Benju Sharma in her creation, "City" asks the question about the moral decadence of civilization as:

Who has perverted and misdirected?

This city which had health, culture, civilization

Memorials, affection and the legacy of amity

Who has robbed, stripped

Ravished and polluted it?

You, profit seeker

Why do you show disgust on it. (50)

Sharma opines that the city is misdirected, robbed, stripped, ravished and polluted. Those profit seekers of the city do not care for the habitat loss. Culture and civilization are in the verge of collapse as people of the city are imitating the unwanted western technology. Such culture imports the modernity and technology, which have become the means of urban natural destruction. Thus, people are victimized in this entirely artificial and ecological degraded urban cultural space.

Summing up this chapter, dozens of Nepali poets have almost the same notion regarding the environmental imaginings. They make their efforts to aware people by unveiling the environmental hazards and its negative effects on the environment. Dhan Raj Giri's view is remarkable as he says poets write about environmental harmony, so the public can't exploit more. Likewise, Swo Swopnil Smriti, Janak Paudyal and Gobaardan Pooja bring to light the concept of urbanization, which is the cause of environmental degradation in the metropolis. Moreover, Amar Neupane and Sharubhakta in their poetry depict the ongoing pollution like pollution of rivers, air and soil, which causes the fatal diseases and badly affects human health. Rajan Mukarung and Dilly Raman Nepal through their poetic imaginings asks the question about who destroyed trees and uprooted natural habitats. They say that the deforestation is being taking place, which gradually weakens the inner knot of environmental harmony. Likewise, Manisha Gauchan and Prakash Angdambe valorize the issue of industrialization, which is the cause of ecological ruin in the municipals. Abhi Subedi, Benju Sharma and Buddhi Sagar Chapain

reveal the nostalgic rendering of rural environment of Kathmandu valley through their poetry. In this way, the poets through their artistic imaginings have depicted the real environmental scenario of Kathmandu valley, the condition of important natural resources and also how the remaining environmental resources are in the verge of ecological collapse.

Now, in the impending chapter, I explore how the urban space, here Kathmandu valley, a green city is becoming a silver city and how it has been a location of loss.

3. Urbanity: A Location of Loss in Nepali Poetic Imaginings

This chapter begins by attempting to answer the question posed by German poet Ulrich Treichel : “*Wem gehört die Stadt?*”- “*Whose City is this?*” However, the answers the poets come up with are that the city is a space of commodification, industrialization, contamination and ecological ruins. This subject matter is portrayed in the poems of Manisha Gauchan, Prakash Angdambe and Gobardan Pooja. Their multiple voices unveil that human activities have been irresponsible for the protection of natural world as they give prior focus to their own needs and prosperity paying no heed to the loss of surroundings. By adopting the American urban theory propounded and analyzed by different writers and critique, I have analyzed here how urbanity has become a location of loss.

The city bears destruction and confronts pollution and contamination. Jonathan Bates in his poem “The Song” utters this matter as “the urban air carries a cocktail of pollutants: nitrozen dioxide, sulpher dioxide, benezene, carbon monoxide and more. We live in the world of toxic waste and acid rain”(24). Not only the city but village also is affected by this problem. The writer Adam W. Sweeting also views the same thing and says in the context of New York City as, “Rivers surrounded the island city but industry had transformed the water front in to an unsightly and foul-smelling collection of factories, saloons and pipes” (95). Such circumstances bring the problems in human health. Nepali poet Sow Sowpnil Smriti in this connection articulates, “The Mount Everest of Plytheene/ Perpetually smiles in this archeologically rich city/ And the rages of storm and pollution” (53). People regard themselves civilized living in the tall building, but a heap of garbage and polytheene are taller than their house. People are proud of being a citizen of Nepal, a country of tallest mountain but their carelessness has

created the highest peak of polytheene and garbage. This plastic zone has polluted fertile land. They are living in the paved city full of pollution. The sky and sunrise can't be viewed clearly due to the tall building. Likewise, Sulochana Manandhar's poem "Me and My City" resembles the same notion as "The sunrise I viewed from my window until yesterday/ Has just disappeared today/My sky has gone murky" (20). The sunrise and sky have become murky. Such human activities have brought the change in environment which invites drought and excessive rain. Another marker of the environmental loss is black topped road, which has disastrous results on the local environment. Such pitched road permanently destroys the landscape and water resources also get dry. Adam W. Sweeting again expresses, "water grew more scarce as streets were paved over formerly clear streams" (96). Water resources decreases by paved roads and over exploitation of land. Even the underground water resources are getting dry. People have faced the scarcity of water in Kathmandu valley. Its main cause is the environmental degradation and over exploitatin of land.

Robert Macfarlane recently offered a thoughtful elegy for the wilder landscapes of the British Isles. "He urges his readers to rediscover the tradition of nature writing. This is vital because landscapes are rapidly disappearing in what novelist John Fowles has called the era of the plastic garden, the steel city and chemical countryside" (39). With the growing fashion of merry making tendency, people do not care about the environmental loss. Society is victimized by various problems. Kathleen Rowallace in her essay "Urban Nature and Cultural Space" expresses "American Cancer Society" , "plastic world" and her further revelation "All things natural are strange in the city" (72). It depict how the renowned city of America like New York, is badly affected in terms of

environmental loss. In this regard Kathmandu is also analogous to New York. Plastic world is faced by the people in Kathmandu. For the poet like Gobardhan Pooja, the city is a space of commodification and the artificial transformation of natural units that are portrayed in the phrase of his poem “This City I Seek” as:

plastic flowers in a flower pot
 aromas spread from bottle’s hole
 not a chirp to be heard
 not a bird to be seen
 no love to be found
 in this broken wasteland. (42)

Fragrance of the flowers is, confined in a spray bottle. People can’t enjoy the melodious sound of the birds any more as the birds have fled to another retreat. Love and sensibility are no more experienced as it has become a wasteland or hollow land full of concrete high-rises and bricks. Fading of human feelings, love and emotions is predictable along with the fading of nature. Sanjeev Uprety in the criticism of *Whose City is This?* “Urban Landscapes, Aesthetic Re-interpretations” states “human emotions such as love and kindness are both actually and symbolically reduced to the status of garbage” (iv). Nature responds us as we do to the nature. Human sentiments are parallel to the nature as they cannot continue their normal healthy life in the deserted condition of nature. Artificial world is really deceptive. Hence, it reflects that the human beings are indulging into the artificial world, which is, no doubt, transitory.

A community without green trees is not a good community. The tall buildings instead of tall trees have ruined the metropolis. Regarding this matter Andrew Jackson

Downing in his text *Rural Essay* affirms, “A community whose streets are bare of trees, ought to be looked upon as in a condition not less pitiable than a community without a school master or teacher of religion” (230). Here, Downing clearly states that the city without trees on its surrounding is ugly city. David W. Teague in his essay, “The Ecology of White Flight” states, “My old backyard that once supported all of those birds, trees and animals –now sports a once-acre blacktop parking a lot. (163). Likewise Terrell Dixon unveils how the anthropocentric activities are leading the original space in New York. He expresses, “neither the original forest nor many of the trees have been preserved. Instead they have been cut down and replaced by other things. There are man-made lakes, manicured parks and greenbelts” (79). The trees are marginalized as greenbelts. The trees and parks are used for human benefits and pleasure. Deforestation is rampant in the name of setting up human settlement.

Human beings are so careless that instead of having natural qualities, they enjoy in the momentary world of artificial object ignoring the world of nature. Nepali scholar Gobardan Pooja again regrets when he happens to see a concrete jungle in place of green landscape:

tall mansions stand lusting for sky
 concerning borderless lands
 callous land stand
 defiling yellow and green fields
 a concrete jungle rises (41).

Here, mansions means the sky kissing concrete cemented building which have replaced the earlier green trees. The land is confined in the corner. Brick walls are set up. Thus,

the organicity of the landscape changes into artificial world by backgrounding the environment of city.

With the destruction of the world of nature, the destruction of the human being is predictable. The environmental degradation is reinforced by the utilitarian value of nature as there is the non-natural replacement of natural units. The environment of the city is fragmented. As mentioned in the philosophy “The environmental crisis has been made worse by our fragmented, compartmentalized, and overly specialized way of knowing the world”(Glotfelty: XXII). The city area is split by factories and skyscrapers. Sulochana Manandhar is bothered by the spectacle of skyscrapers and factories and also by the urban ethical vacuum within which some humans sell other humans. She asserts:

Today Covered with dust and fumes
This beautiful country
Is blanketed in helpless sighs
overnight
skyscrapers have stood on my chest
smoke and dust rule
over green trees and flowers buds. (20)

People have the competition to build skyscrapers. They feel proud of their work but they don't know how they have shot on their own chest. The striking point in her poetry is that smoke and dust is ruling the environment of Kathmandu valley. Many people have been suffering from the asthma and cancer. They are inviting death themselves as they are having smoke and dust more than their food.

Manu Manjil's poem, "The City Belongs to You" also speaks of a similar ethical emptiness and natural fakeness in the cities. The naturalness of life comes frequently in the memories as:

There are neither trees that sing in the morning as in the village
nor are there clean pools or mirrors
the city with no ground for play
no solitude for thought
is harsh on life
the city speaks with the voice of mob. (24-25)

If people destroy trees as much as they are doing now, they will have to buy oxygen to survive momentarily. The remaining open space of the city is occupied by buildings and roads. So people are destined to play in the very limited space. Crowd of people and congestion of vehicles have restricted the human pleasure and they have no peaceful space for thoughts and creativity. As a result, there will be no other alternatives except facing untimely demise caused by the natural ups and downs.

Human emotions such as love and kindness are both actually and symbolically reduced to the status of garbage. The technological modernity of the cities that embraces not only computers and internet, but also ideas such as modernity and post-modernity, which have been imported from "other cities" are truly responsible for the biological termination and as a chaos within which human beings are being sucked into. People are so mechanized that they have no happiness as they are living in fabricated world. The steady loss of the beautiful environment has made city ugly. It has become a place for tomb as Michael Bennett says "town for tomb" (35). The people of the city are compelled

to live in deserted area. Outwardly, they valorize modernity and highlight the concretized world which they term as human progress but it is uncivilized act. The novelist and New York Tribune columnist Geroge G. Foster utters “The very rotting skeleton of civilization (Bergman 39). They are leading the inanimate life like robots when they have gone out of track by gradually destroying the nature. Not surprisingly this theme is expressed in Janak Paudyal’s poem called “In This City” exposes, “I learned the mechanical laugh / a robot with brains inside the city” (38). As human beings are mechanized, they cannot have natural laugh. On account of dreadful condition of environment, robot’s existence is there everywhere in the world. People have become like the robots. It is a challenge upon the natural world. Paudyal further writes:

Crowding like insects
 Covering ditches
 Narrowing streams
 Blocking the sun
 Shutting out the wind. (38)

Here, he wants to disclose how the limited area of the city is occupied by insect like human beings. By the over use of stone and sand, streams are getting narrowed. When the western styled sky kissing apartments stand, they block the sun. In such situation it is very difficult to breathe as well. Also, Phulman Bal is annoyed with the hellish nature of human beings and asks all the important question: “Who built those white palaces on your breast? /...Who landscaped your beautiful garden?” (4). He expresses his displeasure when he finds the misuse of landscape. The green world changes in to the silver world as people have built white houses on Green land.

The city of Kathmandu is a microcosm representing entire Nepal but people are victimized due to environmental imbalance. It is not only the problem of Nepal, but also the global phenomenon. Cheryll Glotfelty in his essay, “Introduction: Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis” mentions as:

The earth’s life support systems were under stress: oil spills, lead and asbestos poisoning, toxic waste contamination, extinction of species at an unprecedented rate, battles over public land use, protests over nuclear waste dumps, a growing hole in the ozone layer, predictions of global warming, acid rain, loss of topsoil, destruction of the tropical rain forest, controversy over the Spotted Owl in the Pacific Northwest, a wildfire in Yellowstone Park, medical syringes washing on to the shores of Atlantic beaches, boycotts on tuna, over tapped aquifers in the west, illegal dumping in the East, a nuclear reactor disaster in Chernobyl, new auto emissions standards, famines, draughts, floods and hurricanes. (xvi)

For Glotfelty, The world is confronting such environmental predicament due to the human activities. Such factors are deteriorating the nature and all the living and non-living beings associated with it.

The urban problems as Glotfelty says are being confronted by people of Kathmandu. Benju Sharma writes that the city of Kathmandu itself was like a village but now it has been transformed into a repulsive city in terms of environmental loss. She utters, “Mixed with polluted air, with poisoned food/ the city lay insensate” (49). In this saying, she envisions that people are living in the contaminated area and having the inorganic food. They are having fruits and vegetables, which are grown using pesticides.

It has negative effect on both human health and environment. The polluted water has created so many health problems to the people of Kathmandu valley. Outbreaks of cholera, influenza, typhoid and other infectious diseases continued to terrorize residents. The use of pesticides has harmful effects on biodiversity. Regarding the pollution, Ashish Gajurel in his article of Kathmandu Post mentions “Immediate Action Plan Answer to Traffic Jam” mentions, “It is shame to say that our capital Kathmandu ranks second in terms of pollution in the world after Mexican city. The pollution welcomes wherever we go. Garbage, old vehicles and industries are few among many sources of pollution in the valley”(7). It leads to air pollution producing tons of carbon and mono oxide in the atmosphere. Regarding congestion and pollution, Krishna Dharabasi writes in his poem, “We’ve Entered the City” as:

as we drew closer to the city
as our vehicle step towards the city gate
the sounds
of the city’s stupas, temple spires and clock tower Ghantaghar
came to us
And in taking in the city’s commotion, smelling its pollution. (8)

In these lines, Dharabasi shows how the congestion, pollution and contamination have subdued the natural structure of the city.

Industrialization and urbanization are the two major causes for the deterioration of the environment in the city. The life of animals and plants do not get priority in the city. As David R. Shamway says, “Modern cities have increasingly excluded plants and other animals, and urban dwellers have thus been deprived of relationships” (271). The

harmonious relationship between human beings and animals got dismantled by the modern city concept. Furthermore, outcomes of industrialization like waste problems and environmental pollutions are regularly featured in Kathmandu, though the industrialization of the country is only at an early stage. On the other hand, suburban areas also are badly affected by industrial activities. Regarding this issue, American writer Thomas J Sugrue states, “Industrial and tax policies encouraged the shift of jobs from urban to suburban areas. (179). The suburbs that have been parasitical upon cities traditionally provide work places, recreational and cultural amenities for surrounding populace. On the other hand, when people move from urban to suburban, then they started cutting down trees, building houses, using pesticides and fertilizer to produce vegetables and crops and expanded the dwellings. It created the environmental loss even in suburban area. Urbanization of suburbanization is one of the chief environmental harms facing both the human and non-human populations of the United States with its deleterious environmental effects, particularly in terms of resource depletion. Same thing has happened in Kathmandu as well. In Amar Neupane’s poem “Song of the City in Memory of the village” he mentions “Even as I behold the suburbs it has today become a city/ I dearly miss the things exchanged” (36). It ensures that even the suburban area of Kathmandu valley is gradually changing into urban area.

Urbanization, though provides the physical pleasure, has misled the people for the activities as mentioned in “ A Little Bigger Village” a poem by Prakash Angdambe as, “Incidents, accidents, treachery, hatred, selfishness, pain, dishonesty, flattery, sycophancy, disbelief, pride” (1). When people have competition to earn more and to make a big house, they forget their real life and imagine the dreamy life in the mansions.

It carries the environmental fluxes in the city. As the same, Bhupal Rai's poem, "City Which till Yesterday was Someone's" also discloses the effect of urbanization in the city. He claims, "The values of demolition are being adopted/ Now cement, bricks, concrete electric wires and telephone networks define this city." (46). Uncontrolled construction of houses and growing brick factories are decreasing soil fertility. There will be no more places left for agricultural production owing to the increasing number of houses and brick lines.

The environmental concern was revealed even by Bhanubhakta Acharya, who was considered the best Nepali poet of his times. Who described Kathmandu in his swift florid style in the first half of the 19th century? He showed the fear of the migrated rural poets who were horrified viewing the deteriorating condition of the city. On the subject of this regard, Abhi Subedi on the criticism of "Whose City Is This?" writes as "Bhanubhakta compared this city with other cities of the world that he had heard about like London, Lucknow, Patna and Delhi. His exuberance was that of a rural poet awed by the face of this city"(7). At that time, those cities, which were surrounded by green woods, were being occupied by the concrete building and factory as it was the momentum of industrialization and urbanization in European countries. Kathmandu also is not free from such industrial and urbanic phenomenon. Bhanubhakta's fear at that time was that the beautiful Kathmandu city also might confront the same fate. His proposition came to be true in the 20th and early phase of 21st century. By and large, Kathmandu is agog with economic redefinition of the space. The construction of houses is creating the haphazard loss of nature as Subedi with regards to Kathmandu Mandela again unravels;

The farmlands have turned into towns. Race, ethnicity and other forms of demands have become the orchestral symphonies that are regularly presented here. New economic activities, continued construction of residences and networks of urban settlements have turned this city into a confused metropolis. (7)

Conversion of farmlands into towns has really dismantled the environmental harmony of the towns and cities. Their new desires of having beautiful house in the city, and also those, who have earned money by domestic and foreign affairs, want to construct the residences in the city. Such attempt of human beings has created the environmental disorder in the metropolis.

Another marker of urban ecological loss is money minded society. People want to earn more and more by imagining the auspicious life, that is, they say, only possible by money. In this regard, Marxism, which has no concrete vision for the environmental protection, is responsible for ecological loss. “Marxist theory has influenced environmental history, often by ignoring natural science. In Marxist readings, economics determines social history; hence capitalism becomes the source for all conflict, oppression, and environmental abuse”(qtd: in Howarth: 79). Marx emphasizes the economically sound society for which industries and factories need to be set up. Such attempt creates the environmental problem mainly in urban space. When people have economic competition, then conflict and environmental abuse occurs. Social history has been dominated by Marxist economics, notably in the work of Raymond Williams, whose *The Country and the City* shaped a generation of scholars in environmental history. Williams argues that “The relation between country and city evolved from the pressures

exerted by capitalism, and that image of those environs must be attached to material continuum, in which they interact” (qtd: in Howarth: 85).

Capitalism mainly focuses on economically sound society. It calculates profit and loss. The line form the Manisha Gauchan’s poem “Am I Seeing the City” foregrounds the similar notion as:

My eyes travel down
To the owners of goods
To the owners of hope of profit
To the buyer’s cash that vanishes like snow. (10)

People’s attention goes to the material earning. They pay no heed towards the upcoming ups and downs in the environmental world. Affluent people enjoy on their property. Borrowing Neil Smith’s words from *Gentrification of the City* in which he calls urban as “bourgeois playground” (32). Here playground means urban space where elitists are more active over exploitation of resources than poor people. They only pay attention on how to earn more and more but they pay no heed on ecological loss. As Richard Haag says, “The city was no longer the “Urban Jungle” that it had been under industrial capitalism” (125). It justifies that capitalism is one of the reasons of location of ecological loss.

The construction from the ancient time also is responsible for the ruin of urban nature. Momila expresses his notion of ecological degradation as human beings have built the temples, tower, etc. by replacing the organicity of the city. He articulates as:

Malla era water spouts
I’m still visiting temples from the same era

At the temple of Changunarayan

Manadev Inquired

From unknown alleys of the city

Soak the desolate settlements in the city. (27)

Constructing the spouts, pillar like temples in place of column like trees depict how Hindu religion is also responsible for the loss of trees. From the ancient time, durbars, towers and temples were set up by the rulers but it increased in such a way that most parts of the city are occupied at present.

The farmlands and greenery of the Kathmandu valley have been turned into the concrete building. The poet, Amar Neupane has found the same situation of nature in his poem, "Song of the City in Memory of the Village" as, "The garden and greenery is today a sandy sore" (36). The condition is getting worsen due to the maximum exploitation of land in Kathmandu valley. The real fact is the nature is behaving us as we behave to the nature.

The location is getting loss when man has become not a part of nature but an exploiter of nature. L White, JR in his essay "The Historical roots of ecological crisis" states as, "Man's relation to the soil was profoundly changed. Formerly man had been part of nature; now he was the exploiter of nature" (147). Human beings feel themselves superior to nature and animals since they can't resist human beings and they have no consciousness and reasoning as White, JR further claims, "Man named all the animals and plants, thus establishing his dominance over them" (148). Due to the superiority complex of man upon nature, the city has become a location of loss. They have been so corrupted that they are inviting their death nearer by their heartless activities made upon

nature. Amar Neupane further says in Kathmandu, “No more are the birds’ sweet songs/ nor do lovers’ indulgences transpire in the wild/ Why have men as soft as flowers turned in to stone?” (36). we can’t see the birds in Kathmandu any more. Man has no love to the wilderness, birds and animals as their heart is as hard as stone upon them. It depicts the people’s dominance over birds, animal, plants and natural resources. Therefore, until and unless human, culture and nature are not collaborated, the condition gets deteriorated.

To conclude, this research within this topic has exposed that Kathmandu valley is gradually becoming a location of ecological loss from the human activities like deforestation, technology, industrialization, capitalism, house and road expansion, pollution and ethical emptiness. These are the issues the Nepali poets have brilliantly raised in their artistic creation of poetry. Phulman Bal and Krishna Dharabasi through their poetic creations divulge that modernity and industrialization are the major grounds for ecological ruin in the valley. Likewise, Manu Manjil and Sulochana Manandhar have exposed the ongoing environmental fluctuation in the valley by deforestation and pollution. In the same way, Bhupal Rai, Gobardan Pooja and Momila uncover that the birds, animals and insects are in the verge of extinction as their habitats are collapsed. Thus, the grassland has changed into wasteland, where only the selfish human beings reside shortening their life span by inviting an untimely death. Accordingly, owing to the environmental surrounding, Kathmandu has become a location of loss.

To eclipse the location of loss, the poets pursue for recuperation of glorious nature. It assumes that the poets’ effort is a search of the organic life in Kathmandu valley.

3.2: Quest for Recuperation

The poets want to revitalize the pristine glory of the city. By foregrounding the misdeeds that human beings have done upon nature in urban sector, they give the message about the need of recuperation of destroyed nature on urbanity. In their poetry, they internalize the human life, trees, rivers, meadows, mountains, rocks, soil, flowers, insect, birds, animals etc. and try to show the harmony among them. They finally try to aware the people for the recovery of the loss in nature. Michael Bennett and David W. Teague in their work *The Nature of Cities* express as, “The movement devoted to the greening of cities’ green spaces, green architectural design, human scale neighborhood planning, traffic mitigation, pedestrian friendly development, waste management and energy efficiency (18). They want harmony in nature by its proper management.

For literary creative imaginings, Earth is inevitable as knowledge is dependent on nature. Literary imaginings, poetry in particular, can address the environment in crisis. Poetry can be directly linked with the state of the environment. So, the outer workings of the natural world affect the inner workings of the body.

Western philosophy and culture has marginalized the nature keeping the human being at the centre. This anthropocentric western gaze upon the nature deteriorates the natural world. But ecocritics see the work of art has bio-centric vision not the anthropocentric ones. The major cause of environmental degradation is human apartness from the earth. Jonathan Bate envisions that Dark ecologist are bio-centric in spirit as they believe in connectedness not on technological fix, different from the Dark, the Light ecologists want to preserve nature by technological means. Whatever effort they make, both means are the quest for recovery on ruined nature of urbanity.

The interconnectedness between human and non-human world is required, specifically the cultural artifacts of language and literature. To negotiate between human and non-human world, Ecocriticism “has its one foot in literature and the other on land”(Glotfelty XIX). By ecocriticism, Rueckert in “Literature and Ecology” meant “the application of ecology and ecological concepts to the study of literature”(107). Likewise, Lawrence Buell says that this study must be conducted in spirit of commitment to environment praxis. Drawing on the environmental philosophy literature and on the detailed reading of the history of American environmentalism, “Buell came up with nine distinct discourses: manifest destiny, wildlife management, conservation, preservation, reform environmentalism, deep ecology, environmental justice, ecofeminism and ecotherapy” (qtd: in Hannigan:37). These discourses have magnificent role for consolidating and enlivening the environmental world.

Through the critical analysis of cause and effect of the destruction in nature, this project moves ahead with the natural description. It also aims to highlight the importance of the ecological responsiveness that shapes all aspects of human life. Ecology tightens the human-environment connection. It is the science of relations between organisms and their environments. For this, ecological link is necessary. Concerning the modern age of ecology, Bramwell has hypothesized that two strands of ecology emerged from 1970s, “one was an anti-mechanistic, holistic approach to biology, the other a new approach to energy economics that focused on scarce and non-renewable resources. When these two strands finally used together in the 1970s, the modern age of ecology was born” (qtd: in Hannigan: 43)

The study of bio-centric world vision is noteworthy, important and influential as they reinforce the organic vision and interconnectedness of human and non-human elemental world of nature giving prior focus to the land ethics than other ethical concepts. It is claimed that human and natural world have organic relation to shape human life. Nepali poets show their charms on eco-consciousness and endeavor to find the solace in a desolate world. They further assert that this is the city of both the human and non-human beings. The poets have aroused the passion of environmental safeguard mostly of Kathmandu valley. So the city has become the place of poetic creation.

It is very significant to know about ecology and also to raise awareness about the environment. “Through social discourse ecology also defined ethical principles, as in Rachel Carson’s landmark work, *Silent Spring* (1962), which aroused a sense of conscience about pesticides that poison ground water and destroyed biodiversity”(qtd: in Howarth:74). Poetry focuses on the world not on the words. Wendell Berry says “the subject of poetry is not words; it is the world, which poets have in common with other people.” (qtd: in Buell: 102). In the same way, Dhanraj Giri in the poem “This City Belongs to Poets” says that the city belongs to only those, who are able to dream and envision its ideals and sustain the purity of nature rather than its businessman or politicians, who exploit it and use for profitable purpose. Poets are great for him. “Only the poets can recognize the supreme soul dwelling within/ It’s the poet who can cleanse and enliven this city” (15). Vigorous temperament of the poet has boosted up the awareness movement amongst people. They, moreover, appeal the people to take care their dwellings, where they are born and will die. Therefore, we can assert that poets have

the capacity to alert people to maintain the nail-flesh relationship between human beings and nature.

Due to the carelessness of the people, the nature is behaving us as we behave to the nature. Collaboration of human, culture and nature is crucial for ecological revival in the city. Otherwise condition of the city gets deteriorated. L White, JR in his essay “The Historical roots of ecological crisis” states as, “Man’s relation to the soil was profoundly changed. Formerly man had been part of nature; now he was the exploiter of nature” (147). Human beings feel themselves superior to nature as White, JR further claims, “Man named all the animals and plants, thus establishing his dominance over them” (148). But nature’s dominance over human being is obligatory for natural harmony. We are separating the human, culture and nature. So, the problems have taken place. The end is not very far if people are careless and rupture the environment. The poets raise the voice of indispensability to the human-nature relationship. They make the people aware by showing the devastation of nature and its effects on human beings. They emphasize upon the harmonious relationship between human and non-human beings so as to maintain balance among them. They are pondering upon the damage caused as a result of the carelessness of people. Dilli Raman Nepal in his poem, “This City Belongs to All” writes as “I say this city belongs to all/ Who live in earth over” (33). In these lines, Nepal gives equal priority to all the biotic and abiotic things of nature. This city does not belong only to the human beings but non-human beings also equally possess it.

The poets have shown the interconnectedness between the human and non-human elemental world of nature. Ecological warning reverberates how man is connected to the world of nature and how this ultimate place of dwelling becomes visible in literature.

They dash on the eco-friendly images in order to ponder upon various facets of human-nonhuman relationship. Benju Sharma strongly projects how human and non-human entities are allied to each other. Nature is not only a compassionate force to humans but also a force that empowers human beings with creativity and knowledge. Human intimacy to nature turns them to be satisfied, prosperous and enlightened being. In her poem, "City", She valorizes the beauty of nature as, "Green meadows spread like a clean sheet/of cool moonbeams on smiling fields and open ranges" (49). She wants to draw the attention of the people towards the beauty of nature portrayed by the trees, meadows and fields for revival of smashed nature.

The healthy human society is getting pathetic in the lack of environmental preservation. In connection to this matter, David R. Shumway in his essay, "Nature in the Apartment" says, "pets, trees, shrubs flower and vegetable gardens, robins, pigeons, falcons and other wild creatures that share our urban spaces ought to be understood as elements of healthy human society" (272). He valorizes the harmony among these living organisms and non-living elements. The poets try to find an unrefined whole in nature and place humans as a part of it. They correspond to the place where they were living. They wrote about human beings, animals, birds, insects, flowers, trees, rivers, lakes, hills, mountains, buildings, temples, arts, roads and industries, and show their association in their poems. As an ecological poet, Phulman Bal shows his deep admiration for the organic whole of nature, and treats poetry as dwelling on the earth. He expresses his desire to revive the natural things. His Poems express, as John Wain points out, "joy and pleasure on the greatness of the earth" (32). Bal's idea is exposed in the following lines of his poem "O My Beloved Kantipuri" as:

The crimson rising in the East
 Perhaps from the coupling of the earth and sky
 A new morning is being born
 And this morning
 Will create a new city
 Such a city
 Where
 I can love you without fear. (5)

So, emphasis on the revival of natural beauty of the city, reminiscence of the lost childhood and the lost beauty of the city are recurring ideas in Bal's poems. It is the poetry of place that dwells upon the earth. Human beings attempt to be away from natural forces, which become vain venture since it leads human beings towards the alienation from nature.

Poetry begins in the creative potentialities of human language and in the desire of human beings to use their language creatively. It is being studied in relation to ecology. Ecocritical reading believes that human knowledge begins and ends with earth. Human activities have led the nature towards the destruction so the literature should raise the ecological knowledge. Ecocriticism penetrates literature through ecocritical gaze. It tries to depict the meaning, place and importance of environment in literary works through an ecocritical eye as literature has always conditioned our philosophical understanding of nature. Generally eco-friendly awareness is a response to natural crisis in an era when nature is in vulnerable situation. Vulnerable nature remains in poet's heart. Krishna Joshi in his poem "Outsiders in the City" mentions as, "Outsiders aren't weak/ In their hearts

are the hills, rocks, soil, snow and water” (18). He is longing for the preservation of these entities. Joshi means to say that those who have come to the valley from outside or village, they internalize soil, water etc. in their heart. A accompany with nature gives complete happiness to the human beings. Regarding this matter, Manjul notes in in his poem “The City Gives Sweet Sleep” like this:

From the garden near the window
the sound of birds and winds I listen
and lose myself in happiness
the city gives time
for the reverie of remembrance
of the village. (22)

The happiness comes from the pleasure of birds and winds. This city reminds the poet the greenery of the village. He wishes to have the real presence of nature in the city.

Contentment comes from the natural harmony.

Deindustrialization is the way of revitalization of nature in urbanity. It valorizes the subsistence of natural world in the city. Edward Soja argues, “Deindustrialization has been a critical fulcrum around which many other aspects of social and spatial restructuring revolve” (204). Similarly, Richard Hagg also notes, “The astonishingly rapid deindustrialization and social restructuring of Seattle between 1968 and 1971 accompanied a spatial reshaping of the urban landscape, which manifested itself in the exploding skyline of downtown” (125). The city’s internal linkage gets dismantled by industrialized expansion. Whatever reaction it gives, it belongs to human beings. The poet Viplob Pratik in his poem “My City” expresses, “If preserved it’s yours/ if

destroyed, it's yours" (39). He means to say that if it is ours, why to invite apocalyptic situation deliberately? He tells us to make effort for the protection of nature in the city.

Poetry awakes people to revive earth. "The poetry echoes the song of the earth itself" (Bate, *The Song* 76). Ecopoetics interconnects words and woods, minds and mines. They believe that poetry can be the best source to revitalize the loss of the earth.

Poets have been very much conscious about the poetic images to revive nature. Such images heavily dwell in natural things such as grass, water and soil which are profoundly found in the poem, "The City Belongs to Poets" by Dhana Raj Giri, who valorizes the soil and wants to be submissive with the earth as he expresses, "listens to and obeys the soil" (15). Here, the poet animates soil. It is what we call "animism" in ecocritical sense. He means to say that, where human beings pay attention to the order and response given by the soil, there is no imbalance in nature.

In this way, their poetry promotes the ecological viewpoint to build the eco-friendly urban nature. The poets urge human beings to recuperate the pristine nature for the perfect harmony in urbanity. They want to indoctrinate wilderness, which has been further dealt in this impending topic.

3.3 Pursuit of Wilderness

According to the classical view of wilderness, human society is the standard by which the world is measured and, hence, conquest of the non human areas –the wild signals a form of human achievement, "a victory over the dark forces and measure of social progress" (Short 6). By contrast, the romantic view of wilderness depicts it as that form of nature that has remained close to its "pristine" state, meaning that it has not been "corrupted" by human intervention.

The classical view foregrounds a notion of wilderness as a place that is always marked as a realm of the savage, who is thought to be distinct from civilized human. The wilderness is represented as a kind of hell for the early puritans. The wilderness was a projection of their deepest fears of what they would become in this new land if they were not careful. John Ronnie notes, “The wilderness becomes an environmental metaphor for the dark side of human psyche” (9). They have emphasized the environmental campaign for the wilderness protection. Their notion is parallel to “John Muir, the founder of the Sierra Club, was a charismatic promoter of wilderness protection who waged the country’s first nationwide environmental publicity campaign” (Hannigan: 42).

Andrew Light puts forward three basic early concepts of wilderness: separation, savagery and superiority. Human being need to remain separate from wilderness. The notion of separation according to him is stated here. “The wilderness is bad, evil and cruel. It must be separated from human. It must be marked off as a distinct and kept out civilized spaces” (141). This concept evokes a kind of hatred towards the wilderness. When people want to be separated from the wilderness, it invites the destruction of natural world. He further deals with the savagery as, “The inhabitants of the wilderness are non human beasts and are to be accordingly demonized and vilified” (141). People living in the wilderness are compared with the beasts. To come out from this wilderness, they converted the farmland in to the concrete city. Moreover, regarding superiority, he says, “civilization and its inhabitants may be celebrated for its superiority over wilderness as a haven of virtue” (141).

This concept of wilderness is the major cause of destruction in pre romantic time. Wilderness in pre romantic time was associated with barbarism. People feel that

wilderness makes them backward. So, to be so called modern, they want to come out of what they call barbar culture by destroying the wilderness. They transform the wilderness into concretized world. In this regard, Amar Neupane utters:

No more are the birds' sweet songs
Nor do lovers' indulgences transpire in the wild
Why have men as soft as flowers turned into stone?
Even as I behold my village it has today become a city. (36)

When wilderness gets ruined, then birds leave their place. Human beings can't hear the sweet songs of the birds. After the destruction of wilderness, the village becomes a city, which has become an area without original habitats.

Henry David Thoreau and John Muir were famous not mainly for what they told us about natural world, but for their having lived apart from the human society in what they called the wilderness. "In Wilderness" says Thoreau, "is the preservation of the world" (609). Almost same kind of environment exists everywhere in the world though some parts are more affected. The nature writer John Hanson Mitchel in his work, *A Field Guide to Your Own Back Yard* seeks true wilderness in the rural and suburban area but not in the city. He states, "In spite of development, in spite of the so-called technological age, the same forces and the same diversity of life that are so evident in the larger wilderness areas of the world are alive and well in the rural and suburban backyard" (II). People find the degeneration of wild in urban area. Urban wilderness is gradually diminishing form the over abuse of land. The lines of Purna Baidhya's poem "At the city fair" brings forth the loss of urban wilderness as, "I escape from myself/ from the very city of this masked city/ and all it tends towards" (63). These lines depict

how wilderness is masked and getting deteriorated in cityscape. Thus, the poets appeal the people for the preservation of immaculate environment.

It does not mean that Kathmandu valley has no wilderness. There remains a little of original flora and fauna. It offers a particular kind of nature, where little wilderness stays behind. It has been replaced by an abundance of planned and managed territory, a kind of denatured nature designed and shaped for high-end commodification. The remaining of wilderness of the city as Terrell Dixon says, “The city includes forests, other rivers, creeks, marshes, ponds, lakes, splendid observation tower and some walking paths. There are so many parks where urbanites go to experience the wild” (79). He speaks out for city environments and attempts to inculcate wilderness among urbanites and urges them to re-envision the nature of city. Phulman Bal attempts to awake people not to destroy the real beauty and remaining wilderness of the city. In his famous poem, “O My Beloved Kantipuri” he says, “Kantipuri, O my beloved/ Open your eyes/ Your virgin beauty smiled” (3). He really wants its real virginity, that is to say, wilderness to be inculcated in the mind of city inhabitants.

“As cities forsake their natural diversity, their citizens grow more removed from personal contact with nature, awareness and appreciation retreat. This breeds apathy toward environmental concerns, and inevitably further degradation of the common habitat. The imaginings of city by means of parks, trees and flowers makes the metropolitan area more pastoral and wild. What Bryant and Walt Whitman want is, “imaginings of the new city would be rural” (Bluestone 537). Whitman has a deep connection to the natural world. He endeavors to understand himself only in relation with nature. And beyond nature he does not expect his life to continue. So, he always wishes

to remain in touch with nature. He assures in his “Song of Myself” as, “I am mad for it to be in contact with me” (29).

Analogous to Whitman, Nepali poets by aestheticising the relation between human and nature, they wish to present a very ideal community that reject the separation between living and non-living. To project the human nature relationship in a very intricate web, the poets find the only destination that is back to nature.

3.4 Back to Nature

‘The Back to Nature’ movement mainly evoked by Rousseau, Wordsworth, Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman and Turner is noteworthy. The Nature sublime and frontier Environmental historian William Cronon, who has described the pivotal concept of the wilderness as having its origin in two broad sources:

‘The doctrine of sublime’ as conveyed in the work of 19th century Romantic artists and writer such as Wordsworth, Emerson and Thoreau, and more recent notion of the frontier’ as proclaimed by the American historian Fredrick Jackson Turner. Those two discursive elements accelerated the “Back to Nature” movement in the late 19th and early 20th century, thereby clothing the wilderness in a coat of moral values and cultural symbols that has lasted right up to the present day (Hannigan: 40).

The effort of back to nature movement was the prime subject matter in the creative works of American and British romantic writers. They were enchanted when they got an opportunity to stay in the lap of nature. They tried to raise the positive attitude among the people through their poetic arts. They also wrote poetry about their own dwellings, known as ecopoetics, that does not mean only the work of art which has strong

appeal for the preservation of nature, but it also means presence of description of eco-entities in it. It corresponds the idea that reorganization of eco-entities automatically leads us the presentation of ecology. Such eco-entities are bloomed mainly in the villages which are full of green forests.

The move from urban to wild can be seen in later phase as Michael Bennett says, “A substantial number of African Americans were leaving the city in search of green space and clean air” (16). It shows people’s consciousness on the subject of back to nature progress. In the same way William Cullen Bryant noted that some residents left “the town for shady retreats in the country (100). Bryant expresses the nostalgic view as he is longing to have the beautiful wilderness. He puts forward the idea of “a backward glance to a rural past” (102). The memory of the wild makes him joyful. Bryant further noted that the present situation of the city is not wild as commercial development is “devouring inch by inch the coast” (101). Urbanity gets managed to some extent only when people pay proper attention as stated by George W. Curtis, “improvements in sanitation, the professionalization of municipal services, and beautification of the streetscape” (105).

Nature- culture relationship and its inseparability is inevitable to remain in circuit of nature. Kate Soper in his book, *What is Nature? Culture, Politics, and the Non-Human* says “In its commonest and most fundamental sense, the term “nature” refers to everything which is not human and distinguished from humanity” (15). When defined in opposition ‘culture’ refers to everything that is the work of humanity. If we preserve the trees, animals, insects and creatures, it is not only natural act but also cultural act as

David R. Shumway calls “preservation itself is distinctly cultural act” (257). So, the integration of culture and nature is fundamental to go back to nature.

Nepali poet Prakash Aangdambe wishes to maintain a rural order in an increasingly urbanized country. He wants to revitalize the flora of the village in to the city in his poem, “A Little Bigger Village” as he points out, “Let us plant the village in the city” (2). Here, he shows his concern either for back to village or revive village to the city. He longs to restore the natural entities of the sanctified space in to the city so as to maintain the environmental harmony. He wants to bring back the qualities of green village in the city similar to the writers of back to nature movement. The focus on back to nature movement was further strengthened here;

Schmitt (1990) has identified a ‘back to nature’ movement that flourished in the United States from the turn of the century. Wild nature was transformed from a nuisance to a sacred value. The wilderness, like the forests was once a great hindrance to our civilization; now, it must be maintained a great expense because society cannot do without it. (qtd: in Hannigan: 41)

Schmitt says that society cannot exist if human beings do not go back to nature.

George Eliot, in a review of the third volume of *Modern Painters*, she praised Ruskin’s philosophy as “doctrine that all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of nature, (qtd: in Buell: 91). It verifies that study of nature has become the most important issue in this era. Go to the city and go to the village and go back to the nature for recuperation. In the poem “The Story of the city and the Village” Nepali poet Chandra Bir Tumbapo urges us to be back to the nature as:

This-hill

This- field

This-cowshed

Through which village approaches the city

From the village to the city

From the city to the village. (60-61)

When people move to the city for better opportunity and get lost together with the loss of wild nature, then they express intense desire to go back to the pastoral area for natural harmony.

Urban dwellers depend on rural district mainly for raw materials for industry, food, housing supplies and so on. Living in the metropolis, they not only overexploit the urban possessions but also rural resources. Raymond Williams's influential book *The Country and the City* expresses, "A city eats what its country neighbours have grown" (50). Here, he urges the city dwellers not to fully depend on the rural resources rather to revive them in the city as well. He pushes them to go back to nature. One notable thing is that in the name of going back to nature or wild, people can't stay in the jungle without building a house and other important technological advances. But the way they are living is not a good living. Their random and uncontrolled settlement in the city has invited the destruction on urbanity.

The city dwellers do not feel what they have done upon their land. They only seek the pleasure in the city. No matter what response the city gives when they spoil it. The most important thing is their consciousness regarding the nature. Borrowing the words from Walt Disney, the father of American simulated space, "I don't want the public to

see the world they are living in... I want them to feel they're in another world" (Wilson *Culture* 161).

The city dwelling poets and intellectuals celebrate the pastoral landscapes. The agricultural landscape continues to be perceived by many people to be more natural because it is defined by the presence of many other living things that are non-humans. The poet, Gobardan Pooja, seeks identity of non-human beings in his poem, "This City I Seek" as:

Seeking my own identity
 Calling out like a koel
 I walk around the city
 Seeking its identity
 This city, whose is it?. (42)

Pooja asks the questions about whose city is this. The answer is very easy to know that this city is belong to all living and non-living beings of the earth. The real identity remains only in the perfect lap of nature. He also means to say that there is an inevitability of going back to nature to find the real identity of all flora and fauna as well as to get complete mental solace in this world.

Thus, going back to nature is the only way out to get mental comfort in this cityscape. By indoctrinating wilderness concept in people's mind, the poets Chandra Bir Thumbapo, Prakash Angdambe, Viplopatik , Manjul and Krishna Joshi wish to go back to nature, which is the only way to get complete succor from the metropolis. In this way, the poets have presented the nostalgic rendering of back to nature.

In a nutshell, this research within this topic has revealed that Kathmandu valley is steadily fetching a location of ecological loss from the human actions like deforestation, machinery, industrialization, dwelling and road expansion, toxic waste and ethical blankness. These issues are intensely raised by Nepali poets through their creative imaginings. Amar Neupane, Janak Paudyal, Phulman Bal and Krishna Dharabasi reveal that urbanization and industrialization are the major grounds for biological ruin in the valley. Likewise, Manu Manjil, Swopnil Smriti and Sulochana Manandhar have shown the unending environmental instability in the dale by deforestation and effluence. In the same way, Bhupal Rai, Gobardan Pooja and Momila expose that the flora and fauna are in the verge of extinction as their habitats are collapsed. Thus, the green land has changed into wasteland, where only the self-interested individuals reside calling for unfortunate death caused from the biological loss. Hence, owing to the inhospitable surrounding, Kathmandu has become a location of loss. To get rid of such gradual loss of environment, the poets pursue for retrieval of superb nature. They urge human beings to convalesce the pristine nature for the perfect harmony in urbanity. The poets, Purna Baidhya and Amar Neupane want to indoctrinate wilderness. They wish to present a very ideal community that rejects the separation between living and non-living. So, to project the human nature connection in a very intricate web, the poets find the only destination that is back to nature. Going back to nature is an ultimate way out to soothe human being in this cityscape. By inculcating wilderness concept in people's mind, the poets Chandra Bir Thumbapo, Prakash Angdambe, Viplop Pratik, Manjul and Krishna Joshi wish to go back to nature, which is the only way to get complete succor from the metropolis. In this

way, dealing with the loss, recuperation, wilderness and return to nature, the poets wish for the perfect harmony in the ecology.

I have added some different pictures taken from different place of Kathmandu valley to further justify how Kathmandu city has been a location of environmental loss from the ruined markers like deforestation, sewage, pollution, garbage, skyscrapers and urbanization. Moreover, I have attached few pictures of greenery, which was the beauty of the past and also the poets would like it to happen in the imminent days. The detail of such pictures has been shown in the appendix of this volume.

4. Conclusion: Urban as a Degeneration of Wild

In an anthology, *Whose City is this?* Nepali poets through their creative imaginings bring to light an issue of environmental degradation in cityscape. The conversion of old city, Kathmandu, into environmentally destroyed city stimulates to these Nepali poets for the magnificent imaginings of wild and urban nature in Kathmandu valley. They are confronting the turbulence and the gradual ruin of the urban environment, which has been concretized, destroyed and subdued by human beings. They unravel that city populace and other living organisms are victimized due to fatalistic transfiguration of metropolitan milieu. Pillar like skyscrapers in place of column like trees make the poets nostalgic as they were obsessed by natural trauma. Therefore, they illustrate their dissatisfaction on environmental fluctuation caused by urban growth.

The poets come up to the response to the question- Whose city is this? They undoubtedly express that it is the city of both human and non human beings. They make a presence of natural entities such as the trees, meadows, flowers, birds, animals, insects, rivers, lakes, mountains, rocks, soil, air and water in their poetry. They expose that these non-human entities are badly affected by human activities. They also make interplay between all components of nature so as to oppose utilitarian value of nature that has caused modern environmental degradation in urban space for what David R. Shumway affirms, “cities are imagined as lacking such non human life”(258). In such condition, Nepali poets highlight the indispensability of the non human natural entities in which human life is closely attached. In this way, the poets highlight all the eco-entities embedded in Kathmandu valley.

The city has become a location of ecological loss as those eco-entities are subdued and destroyed by the anthropocentric activities like development of science and technology, construction, industrialization, uncontrolled urbanization, contamination, capitalism, over exploitation of natural resources, expansion of houses, traffic congestion, black-topped road, deforestation, poverty and illiteracy. Nepali poets have inculcated these ruined markers of urbanity in their poetic imaginings to make people realize the cause of degeneration of wild. They further reveal that urban ecology is spoilt mainly by those humans who impose their vested interests to gain profit regardless the gradual loss of environment. Conversion of farmlands into towns by irresponsible human beings has really dismantled the environmental harmony of the city.

Suppression of urban nature is the cause of depression of human being. Man has become a victim of diseases, pain and suffering owing to the breaking of pleasant relationship between human beings and urban nature and invites an untimely death. The city has become a place for tomb if we borrow Michael Bennett words as, “town for tomb” (35).

Their poetry fosters ecological awareness to the city dwellers. They unravel close affinity between human and non-human beings. As there is a tendency of separating human from the non-human beings, the poets ask to leave such anti-environmental concepts so as to build the eco-friendly urban culture. We can create the balance in the environment of Kathmandu valley not by exploiting and destroying the urban natural elements but by living in harmony with them. Human beings need to develop environment friendly relationship with the natural world. Such relationship contributes to the formation of balance in the environment.

To overcome such complicated issues of urban nature of Kathmandu valley, the poets urge human beings to go back to nature which gives them solace. Moreover, they yearn for revitalizing the loss of natural sacredness. So, they want to inculcate wilderness, which portrays such a form of nature that has remained to its “pristine” state that it has not been corrupted by human intervention. Hence, going back to natural wilderness is the only way out to get mental relief in this empty and deserted world.

The poets want to preserve the people’s right to live and work in healthy environment. The purity and sanctity of natural world is envisioned through their creative imaginings. Loss, recuperation, wilderness and back to nature are the basic premises they have valorized in their poetic creations. It is obvious fact that everything is connected to everything else in the poetic world of the poets, where every flora and fauna of nature gets equal strength and focus. In this way, the poets raise the ecological wakefulness and illustrate the indispensability of purity, sanctity and beauty of urbanity through their poetry.

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