‘Body and Nature’: A.K. Ramanujan

Ecology is not a study of the “external” environment we enter—some big outside that we go to. Ecology is a study of inter-relationship, with its bedrock being the recognition of the distinction between things-in-themselves and things-for-us. (Introduction, Gaard 5-6)

‘Things in themselves’ refer to existence as it is, without human conceptualization or judgment as opposed to ‘Things for us’ that is the human perception or manipulation of reality. The discordance arises due to the limited vision of human eyes and mind. For instance, in order to consider the ‘usefulness’ of anything, our mind starts working on the ‘human need’ of it and not its ecological significance. Human comprehension of the need for existence of a particular entity is very limited. The vast unknown reveals only some of the interconnections between. Ecology attempts to study the inter-relationship between the two perceptions ‘things in themselves’ and ‘things for us’ and further tries to explore some of the myriad connections of the particulars with the vast. Poetry too is a venture in this direction. It is not only inspired by nature but also unravels the mysterious ways of the natural world. John Elder quips “Just as natural phenomena can re-ground a poem’s language for us, so too can poetry mediate and heighten our awareness of the living earth.” (“The Poetry of Experience” Armbruster 320). Poetry connects us with nature, the human with nonhuman:

If words tie us in one with nature, tying human with non-human, if speech in the beginning brings all into being, maybe the speech of poems will revive our lease of life. We can count on this: the poems we hear have news for us. (Felstiner 15)
This emerges from Ezra Pound’s oft quoted statement that Poetry is “news that stays news.” (qtd. in Felstiner 3) News is fresh information, not heard before else it would not be ‘news’ and so is ‘Poetry’. It remains fresh since it evokes new meanings every time it is heard. Also, it touches upon issues which in our day to day living we often remain oblivious about. The poet establishes a rapport with ‘nature’ before he writes, so in the poetry that ensues he is able to evoke similar feelings in his reader and by and by the reader starts listening to the poetry. What we ‘hear’ maybe only sound falling on our eardrums but what we listen has a deeper connotation. In Sanskrit we call it ‘Shruti’ which is to listen with rapt attention involving both the head and heart, in fact the whole being. This is how one is connected to one’s being and to all existence, human and non-human, living and non-living through the ‘sustainable energy’ emanating from poetry. So Ramanujan says in “Christmas”:

For a moment, I no longer know
leaf from parrot
or branch from root
nor, for that matter,
that tree
from you or me. (RCP 33)

It is noticed that this poem is in the present tense, in the moment, with a sharp ‘attentiveness to nature’. Here, for the poet, all distinctions of leaf, parrot, branch, root, tree, all non-humans and humans melt into each other, for ‘this’ moment. This may also be understood as a single basis of all existence that undergoes the same processes of birth, life
& death. This is what Selvamony means by ‘Integrative oikos’, an association of human, nature and the spirit in which entities dissolve their boundaries to evoke the ecological perspective. In “Towards Simplicity”, Ramanujan reiterates:

Corpuscle, skin,

cell, and membrane,

each has its minute seasons
clocked within the bones…

into the soil as soil we come,

to find for a while a simplicity

in larger, external seasons. (RCP 37)

The poet is exploring the inner intricate seasons of the body which generate from the soil ‘as soil’ to think, in unawareness, about the external seasons as simplistic. This poem is applicable to all living beings, yet we, humans, with the ability to think, often, obliviously, choose to overlook the similarity in our memory pads. However, the natural law will take its course and all the living bodies will become one with the soil after death. This is the way of nature and none can avoid it finally. Vinay Dharwadker in the Introduction to the Collected Poems also says:

One of the recurrent concerns in Ramanujan’s poetry as a whole is the nature of the human body and its relation to the natural world…The clock that ticks inside the natural mechanism of any living body is also the clock ticking away in the natural world outside, and it is the nature of this universal clock to tick inexorably towards the terminal irony of death(RCP xviii-xxiii).
Yet, while one is alive, one can be aware of this stark reality in full consciousness so that “No Man Is an Island” says our poet. In the poem titled such Ramanujan refers to the huge Island like alligator who allows small sea birds to pick its teeth for ‘yellow crabs and jelly-fish’ but ‘this man, / I know, buys dental floss.’ Natural beings live in symbiosis with other creatures whereas humans remain aliens not only to each other but also to the rest of existence. The example of the alligator is only to magnify the alienation of mankind from nature. Ramanujan tries to work out the position of mankind in nature, to find that there is no hierarchy involved here. It results in a decentered reality check. Mankind, too, like the alligator is another creature of the earth though much smaller in size and seemingly smarter than animals. Yet, ironically, we tend to remain disconnected from nature unlike the ‘non-human’ entities.

In “A River” Ramanujan comments on the poets who like to sing about ‘cities’ and ‘temples’ as also ‘floods’ which create problems for mankind but overlook and forget ‘the river’ which dries up every summer ‘baring the sand-ribs, /straw and women’s hair/clogging the Watergates’(P.38, CP). His concern for the unsung river which ‘dries every summer’ is very significant. The natural reservoirs are drying up due to human apathy, topping it with throwing all sort of rubbish in it without giving a thought to its pollution and other ill effects. Then Ramanujan reveals the ‘eco feminist’ streak in this poem when he says

…but no one spoke

in verse

of the pregnant woman
drowned, with perhaps twins in her…(RCP 39)
Both ‘women’ and the ‘river’ are treated with utter indifference which pains the poet. Women seem to be of no consequence to mankind except as an object for gratification. The blatant disregard of women and that too of a ‘pregnant woman /drowned’ or wizened nature/ river during the summer heat, by the new poets intrigues Ramanujan. His eco-vision can see neither women nor nature being overlooked. Womankind is as partial a reality as the male species or for that matter any animal or non-living entity. The recognition of the partial reality of ‘the body’ reveals the existence of ‘the whole.’ In Berry’s words, “We thus come again to the paradox that one can become whole only by the responsible acceptance of one’s partiality.”(Elder 60)

Then if Ramanujan’s partiality is “being a Hindu”, he accepts it responsibly by critical appreciation of it.

I must seek and will find

my particular hell only in my Hindu mind: (“Conventions of despair”, RCP 34)

In his “Hindu” poems, he reveals his critical cum ironic stance, when he foregrounds the ‘body’ over the ‘soul’. Since, Hinduism tends to nullify the ‘body’ and overindulge in the spirit or soul. Ramanujan’s imploring is neither merely a reaction nor simply a satiric denigration. This is his ecological understanding of life and existence that makes him say:

…dear body: you brought me

curled in womb and memory.

. . . do not leave me

behind. When you leave all else,

. . .
to rise in the sap of trees
let me go with you and feel the weight
of honey hives in my branching
and the burlap weave of weaver-birds
in my hair.(“A Hindu to His Body,” RCP 40)

Ramanujan visualizes human beings transformed into ‘trees’ in nature. With his iconoclastic ideology, Ramanujan speaks of the person, not being ‘brought’ into this world by the self/soul/spirit, but the ‘self’ coming into existence because of the ‘body’, which is quite contrary to the Hindu belief. After death, the body dissolves into its elements and becomes part of the dust/soil which rises as the sap of trees and sets the soul/the self, free. However, his ‘self’ does not want to be left behind by the body after its separation, it wishes to be part of the ‘natural order’ and thus ‘become whole’. Thus, rather than wishing to conquer ‘nature’, the spirit or the self desires to experience what the ‘body’, rising as the ‘sap of trees’, feels or harbours. This ‘body’ dynamics expands and spreads itself as ‘branching’ of trees, the recognition of which evokes a heightened awareness of ‘nature’ around us. The body as ‘sap’ of the trees can be imagined when one becomes a “part of the earth, not a calculating consciousness held apart in its own individuality.”(Elder 52) Recognizing oneself to be ‘a part’ not ‘apart’ from the Earth is the ecological consciousness. The ‘physical’ here merges in to the ‘spiritual’. This poem has similar vibrations as Michael S. Harper’s poem:

Dust and root grew
In his human skeleton:
Bones became apple tree. . .
Take up a chunk of apple root,

Let it become my skeleton… (qtd. by Elizabeth Dodd in Armbruster 180-181)

In “A Poem on Particulars” Ramanujan talks of ‘oranges’ having

...almost human

umbilicus

at the top

where once the Tree

had poured its

future

from forgotten roots (RCP 54)

The similarity of humans and the fruit has been so effortlessly revealed here. Just as the human foetus is nourished through the ‘umbilicus’ similarly the ‘orange’ too has one where it was attached to the branch of the tree. Birth and nurturing are similar in the living world though applicable to entirely different entities. The tree, taking its nourishment from the roots, feeds the orange to make it plump for humans to consume. However, the contribution of the ‘roots’ is conveniently ‘forgotten.’ The root, the basis of all that ‘is,’ is this earth which is often times ‘forgotten.’ Ramanujan is hinting at the blatant disregard of ‘mother nature’ together with our forefathers, the ‘forgotten roots’, here. This constant flipping and comparing of human and non-human nature goes to the philosophical level of:

*Jal mein kumbh hai, kumbh mein Jal hai*

*Bahar bhitir pani.*

*Phuta Kumbh, jal jal hi samana,*
Yeh tat jano gyani (Kabir doha)

Dharwadker too reflects about Ramanujan’s poetry: “Not only is the body contained in nature, but in an extraordinary, hyper real state of consciousness all of nature also seems to be contained in the human body”. (RCP xxii). The human body alone does not harbour the whole of nature, Ramanujan says that even an ‘orange’ contains the whole of existence. He ends the poem with a very cryptic and philosophic remark:

you can sometimes count
every orange
on a tree
but never
all the trees
in a single
orange (RCP 54).

Comprehending the whole cyclical order and expanse of existence/nature is beyond human calculation. However, the poet has meditatively brought in the fact that each resultant has in it the prospects of the unfathomable whole embedded in it. (“…never all the trees in a single orange”)

It is important to mention here the influence of ancient Tamil poetry on Ramanujan’s literary output. It is said that the recognition of his poetry came about only after he established himself as a translator of Tamil poetry. He has translated ‘love’ (Akam) poetry as well as that of ‘war/heroism’ (puram) with similar ease. The ‘Interior landscape’ of love poetry (Akam in Tamil terminology) of Ramanujan goes much deeper than the word meaning therein.
Akam poetry is not poetry of the insulated self, nor is it poetry of the narcissistic self-indulgence; it is poetry of a sensitive self who internalizes the external and meets out the challenges of the world...(Kumar 230)

Some of the translated titles of Akam poetry also form part of Ramanujan’s original poetry. His adulation of ‘Sangam’. Poetry, that deals with the elements of nature as ‘five landscapes’ seeped into his own writing too with his love for nature. However, in A. K. Ramanujan’s words, “This spurious name Sangam (fraternity, community) for the poetry is justified not by history, but by poetic practice.”(Sangam../http.) Ramanujan, calls ‘Sangam’ as spurious probably because of the origin of the word from ‘Sangha’ which is Buddhist in its import, even though Ramanujan’s own poetry is said to be revealing the Buddhist impact.

Here are lines from one of the Tamil poems translated by Ramanujan: This poem is about the time when the earth was said to be saved by the Vishnu avatara, the ‘boar’:

…and when all four elements
lay drowned in the old flood,
the particles of earth lay there…
then came the age of great earth
lying potential
in them all; { “Hymn to Tirumal (Vishnu)” TR 219}

The particular has the whole embedded in it along with its immense ‘potential.’ Earth has the same elements whether it is a compact unit or lying asunder. The potential of the vast in the infinitely small is recognized by science too in the ‘power of the atom.’ Yet we do not give cognizance to the power of the ‘non-human.’ The power of the infinitesimal
translates into that of another being. In the poem “Oranges” (UCP 38) the poet notices the ‘ash of living /mould’ on the oranges, the ‘green-eyed bacteria’ on the pile of wood ‘in the backyard’. Implying thereby the death of one gives life to another in nature. He continues in the same poem ‘Snows feed the springs of summer’ revealing the inter dependency in nature. Then he talks of the ‘Bacteria (that) thrive in the kissing mouth, the dying brain’. A kissing mouth is revitalizing as opposed to the ‘dying brain’, yet both ironically share similar bacterial life. This is an amazing comparison where life and death seem to unite. He ends the poem with: ‘Just wait, /you too would live again’ signifying the inevitable chain of existence. Ramanujan is here talking of the intricately linked ‘web of life’ and the ‘natural processes’.

As the poems approach human and natural processes from various angles, they uncover forms of repetition, cyclical departure and return, as well as continuity and disruption that dismantle the whole scientific and technocratic myth of progressive temporality. (Dharwadker xxviii)

‘Temporal progression’ is only a human construct not the rule of ecology and Ramanujan vehemently attacks it time and again in his poetry.

Existence is cyclical and Ramanujan has time and again revealed that. In “The Hindoo: he doesn’t hurt a fly or a spider either,” we find, the subjectivity with the non-human and the over lapping boundaries between human and the ‘other’. Believing in reincarnation that by itself is an ecological concept he admits:

Why, I cannot hurt a spider

either, not even a black widow,

for who can tell Who’s Who?
Can you? Maybe it’s once again my
great swinging grandmother,
and that other (playing at
patience centered in his web)
my one true ancestor,…(RCP 62)

Alice Walker, an American novelist and activist, says: “Surely we are recycled millions of incarnations as everything is…the daffodil might be me.” (Keogh244) This is not some inconsequential imagination but a hard reality that encourages us to be eco centric in our conduct in every sphere of life. “Questions” also refers to ‘rebirth’, ‘being born over and over’ (RCP 130) and at the same time ‘Eating, being eaten-parts of me watch, parts of me burn…’ (130) Ramanujan’s sensitivity towards the inexplicable is truly eco centric which could also serve as a basis of desisting from killing animals or other living creatures.

Many animals and insects also entice the poet. Thus ‘Ants’ become a source of inspiration for Ramanujan, in his poem “Army Ants”. He seems to admire them “they have only themselves for bricks; knees for hinges; heads/for the plinths of their rain-/soaked Corinths;… a crazy pavement of hands and feet…the living, the young, / are the brick/ and the mortar of this house/ without legend./ And the work,/as they say, is the workman at last.” The bodies of ants serve as the structure of their dwelling. It may be worthwhile to note here that ‘ants’ have a greater ‘ecological value’, i.e. its value for sustaining the ecosystem, than humans according to scientists.

In the case of human primates, in fact, the ecological value is negative: most of the other forms of life would be better off, and the ecosystem as a whole
would not be threatened, if we did not exist (David Ray Griffin, *Worldviews*

203).

‘The ecological value’ is an ‘extrinsic value’, value for other species, the eco system as a
whole. So insects, worms, ants, plants etc. have the greatest ecological value. In contrast,
the ‘intrinsic value’ means the species which have the capability of ‘experience’ and
therefore have a value for themselves. ‘Experience’ is based on “sympathy that is, feeling
the feeling in another and feeling conformally with another” (*Worldviews* 199). So
Ramanujan echoes:

My sister and I have always wished a tree
could shriek or at least writhe
like that other snake
we saw
under the beak
of the crow. (“A Leaky tap…” RCP 10)

In the poem, it is the woodpecker constantly ‘pecking’ at the tree. Humans, too, have been
treating trees very callously, cutting or destroying them as it pleases their needs. The poet
is able to feel the pain of the tree even more than that of the snake in the beak of the crow.
It is just the hold, the touch of the crow that causes so much agony in the snake to make it
‘writhe’.

‘Touch’ is significant for body and also is a vital component of ecological understanding.
In “Eyes, Ears, Noses, and a Thing about Touch”, Ramanujan says:

Touch alone has untouchables,
lives continent in its skin, so
The eyes, ears and noses stray far and wide, into real and imaginary things. It is only the sense of ‘touch’ that remains with the skin. Yet, things that are apparently touching the skin, “yet do not touch” for they may be clawing, drawing blood, “or a wet mouth on a dry…” which conveys unreciprocated love, or it could be the touch of “the burr I plucked/from your back’s hollow, the six, or eight, light/ hairy legs of the tree spider/that walked the small of my back…” The ‘burr’ and the ‘spider’ in contact with the human body, creates a sensory impact that helps one make a connection with one’s own body. These are instances of ‘touch’ that create meaning and understanding just like Helen Keller understood ‘water’ when it was made to flow on her hand, the ‘touch’ made her comprehend the reality. T.S. Eliot is also expressing a similar experience, when he laments in “The Wasteland” in the section ‘What the Thunder said’:

If there were rock
And also water…
If there were the sound of water only
…sound of water over a rock
Drip drop drip drop drop drop drop drop
But there is no water (Eliot 54-55)
‘The sound of water’ of a ‘spring’ or ‘pool’ is the ‘touch’ of sound on the eardrums to evoke the feeling of ‘life’ which is absent in the modern world. Ezekiel also talks of ‘touch’:

How much of me you leave untouched
And yet you touch me well…

The call of what you have not touched

Like some insistent messenger

Waits for a reply. (ECP 67)

Relationships stagnate, hence, touching ‘well’ but the other left ‘untouched’, becomes the bane of modernity and culture. When life becomes just ‘fixed’ and ‘routine’ it establishes a deadness, a staleness to existence together with a lack of sensitivity, so ‘the only risk is heartlessness’ in an effort to remain ‘simple’ and ‘cool’, says Ramanujan in “The Hindoo: the only risk”. ‘Touch’ apparently is physical but it has a lot to do with the heart, the inner connection.

The poem “Real Estate” talks about ‘heartlessness’, the architect knows well his job of designing buildings, he calculates the ‘stress and strain on wood and steel’ but when lives are lost in the ‘marble quarry’, he is unable to gauge the loss of the concerned family and believes money compensates everything. This is nothing but an instance of ‘colonization’ of the oppressed classes, the less privileged that is an offshoot of domination of the environment. What is beyond the architect’s control and comprehension is nature’s intervention, ‘the indiscipline of the second look/ at mushroom after rain/ in the children’s rooms … of rotting timber/bought years ago/for my uncle’s/ very carefully imagined/houses.’ However, ‘we, our uncle’s nephews’

…know

windows without walls

or the kinds of grass that grow

in the twinkle of an uncle’s eye.(RCP 92)
It is through the ‘windows without walls’ that is without barriers, that one sees the reality, the whole, the eternity and the ‘grass’ that seems to come up suddenly. This is “…the ceaseless transience of the world (that) allows for nature’s evolutionary expansiveness” (Elder 170). Being able to experience ‘windows without walls’ or ‘grass that grow(s) in the twinkle of an uncle’s eye’ is an expansive identification of the human “self” with the non-human world, with the ecosphere itself. Naess explains this process of “wide identification” to be a process of the development of the “ecological self.” (Worldviews 211) The external seasons are interwoven with the internal ones to coordinate the nexus of body and nature. Or else, it could be viewed as:

A conservation miracle, change renewing order, is ecology in action… the mind’s eye finding moment-by-moment permanence in transience…

Imagination, momentarily grasping things in a flux, admits in the same moment that nature itself is ungraspable (Felstiner 15).

Such visions transport the poet as well as the reader/listener into the world of nature. Such a person naturally cares for ‘nature’ because of his ‘awareness of the oneness’ that envelops all existence. The poem “Take Care” is about Chicago, the city where ‘breathing deeply’ is not recommended, here ‘fear’ is predominant regarding everything from children to friends or wives. To ‘wear pure plastic/on the daily bus’ is the lifestyle which is bereft of nature and natural products and then finally:

In Chicago,
donotwalkslow,
Findnotime
to stand and stare.
Down there, blacks look black.
And whites, they look blacker. (RCP 104)

Remembering Wordsworth here, the poet reiterates the modern predicament ‘find no time to stand and stare’. If one could simply be able to spare time to enjoy and take in the bounties of nature with ‘wonder’ in one’s eyes, it would result in being one with nature. In contrast, in pursuit of the mundane and the ‘material’, ‘fast pace walking’ becomes the norm in Chicago, representing city life. Akshaya Kumar comments here:

If the native landscape provided time enough “to stare”, in Chicago there is “no time/to stand and stare”. A comparative frame is so inseparably interlocked in the entire fabric of the poem on Chicago, “Take Care” becomes as much a poem on native landscape. (Kumar 92)

The last two lines of the poem are also a scathing remark on the Western society. The ‘black’ coloured people are the ‘blacks’, however, the possible reasons that the ‘Whites’ look ‘blacker’ can be found in the rest of the poem. The whole poem talks of deceptions, violence and insecurity rampant in society. Lack of connection with nature is the basic reason for this degradation. Even ‘breathing deeply’ is not encouraged because of invisible fears in the minds of the people. This is in complete violation of natural living.

The minute observations and intensity of Ramanujan’s experiences with insects and animals abound in his poems. “Old Indian Belief” is one of the many poems about ants and their ‘brief methodical lives’ having ‘calcium limbs’ to ‘build one ant-hill’ only to leave it the moment they smell a ‘live cobra’ around. The ‘body’ of this snake/ terror, however, becomes their food once it dies to become part of the ecological cycle. After the ‘Ants’ have finished their job and left the skeletons, it becomes an exhibit of the ‘local museum’
to enhance the pride of man wherein he has played no role except to pin up the trophy. The anthropocentricity is remarkably ridiculed.

“Prayers to Lord Murugan” heralds the ‘Lord of new arrivals’ with an invocation like an epic but subverted right in the beginning when the speaker misses the ‘cockscombs’ and the ‘orange banners’, and further deflated when the help of the ‘Lord of green/growing things is entreated not for some great encounter but ‘in our fight /with the fruit fly’. The job of this ‘ancient Dravidian god of fertility, joy, youth, beauty, war, and love’ has been reduced to helping in a petty fight. This is what has become of the disjointed world of today. The persona is concerned: ‘will the red flower ever/come to the branches/ of the blueprint/ city?’ He entreats the ‘Lord of great changes’ to ‘exchange our painted grey/pottery/ for iron copper…’Nothing natural abounds now, it is all painted up, decorated to sham. The bravery of yesteryears is substituted by hypocrisy and artificiality which is the bane of city life. ‘We eat legends and leavings,’

Lord of the twelve right hands
why are we your mirror men
with the two left hands
capable only of casting
reflections? Lord
of faces,
find us the face
we lost early
this morning. (RCP 116)
Nothing original or creative can be expected of a capability that can only ‘cast reflections’ or end up with ludicrous experiments to ‘purify and return/our urine/to the circling body/and burn our faeces/for fuel to reach the moon…’ Here is a ‘lord of the sixth sense’ (ironic) and the present day world is in need of the original ‘five senses’ which when fully utilized may count for the sixth too. The next prayer is for the one and only real ‘face’ which is generally hidden or in oblivion and then, yet again:

   Lord of solutions,

   teach us to dissolve

   and not to drown. (RCP 116)

In dissolving, one becomes one with ‘existence’ which is sadly lacking in the modern world, hence the ‘drowning’ occurs which means lack of awareness in using our five senses. The next is a prayer to the ‘presence’, to be delivered from ‘proxies and absences/from Sanskrit and the mythologies… and return/the future to what/it was.’ Another of the poet’s ecological concerns is alienation from tradition, the ancient past of ‘Sanskrit and the mythologies’ (which had become an absence). He seems to be blowing hot and cold at the same time, never losing an opportunity to ridicule the ‘ritualistic past’ but is all for the ‘usable past, from which further life can be derived.’(‘The Footpath of Tradition’, Elder 109) For Ramanujan, Lord Murugan is a livable past, the ‘Lord of green/growing things …great changes and small cells’.

In “Elements of Composition”, he sees himself and ‘others’ to be composed of the five elements present on this earth together with calcium, carbon, gold, magnesium etc. Basically, he is very much aware of the physical body which is part of this earth. Even the figures engraved on the pillars are part of him:
I pass through them
as they pass through me…
I lose, decompose
into my elements,
into other names and forms,
past, and passing, tenses
without time,
caterpillar on a leaf, eating,
being eaten.(RCP 123)

There can, therefore be no question, no point of anthropocentrism since one can dissolve into one’s elements and be formed into anything else, from ‘living’ to ‘non-living’, from the river or the mountain to a caterpillar. In our human form when we experience such dissolutions we come closer to our reality of existence. So, David Ray Griffin says:

Each moment of experience is a microcosm, taking into itself, at least to some slight degree, all prior events. For the momentary self to realize its true nature is to realize that it is akin to all other things.” (“Whitehead’s Worldview”, Worldviews 198)

Just as Ramanujan questions the presence of disease ‘in the genes of happiness, /the dead twin’s cord of birth/noosed/around his brother’s neck…’ etc. Then he realizes the predicament of ‘being born over and over’ again, going through the same stages. Eventually, birth is ‘bursting /into the cruelties /of earthly light, infected air’. A ‘new-born’ has to face pollution, right at the outset, along with the other ‘cruelties’ that he would have to experience. This is another of Ramanujan’s strong concern about the environment.
The poem “Ecology” narrates the story of the ‘three red Champak trees’ which would give his mother a ‘blinding migraine’ with their blooming. Yet, she would not let the ‘flowering’ trees be cut. Here is an example of the sensibilities, of that generation, which did not simply allow ‘cutting of trees’ even if they were causing problems, whereas it is not a big deal to ‘fell’ a tree in the present age (but for the law at times coming in the way) on the slightest of pretexts.

Ramanujan has written a few poems about ‘fear’ which seem to be trivial but actually are not so. The seemingly insignificant ‘fears’ is a premonition of the monstrous for him. Animals and insects form a bulk of such fears. In the poem “Snakes”, thinking of ‘snakes’ when ‘touching a book that has gold /on its spine, reveals his extra sensitive sense of ‘touch’, or the basket full of ‘ritual cobras’ brought by the snake-charmer, fed milk by the mother, the writhing snakes, wreathed by the snake-man round his own neck, made the child, Ramanujan ‘scream’. Seeing the long, scaly, shiny braid of his sister reminds him of snakes. His fear reaches its zenith when his heel inadvertently squishes a snake to death.

…panic rushes

my body to my feet, my spasms wring

and drain his fear and mine. I leave him sealed,

a flat-head whiteness on a stain . . .

and I can walk through the woods. (RCP 5)

He is relieved finally. One may tend to castigate this act as an eco-critic; however, in such type of moral situations we have the ‘contextual ethics’ to look up to. David K. Johnson has quoted Deane Curtin:
Would I not kill an animal to provide food for my son if he were starving?
Would I not generally prefer the death of a bear to the death of a loved one?
I am sure

I would. The point of a contextualist ethic is that one need not treat all interests equally as if one had no relationship to any of the parties. (Warren 113)

So we, bereft of guilt, encounter “Entries for a Catalogue of Fears” which contains a whole list of the poet’s fears that establish an ‘ethic of care’ as opposed to that of ‘indifference’. However,

Indifference

Alone is unredeemable.

The rest is faith, belief and truth… (ECP 101)

Nissim Ezekiel has thus put it very bluntly and it cannot be wished away. Everything else, apart from what constitutes ‘indifference’, belongs to the realm of ‘truth’ which may not always be verifiable hence comes in ‘faith’ and ‘belief’. We are able to see only the tip of the iceberg of the ‘Truth’ of existence. The rest has to be accepted with ‘faith’ and ‘belief’. One cannot be indifferent towards it. Specially, ‘Indifference’ towards the ‘different’ goes against the norms of ecology, whether it is ‘depths and heights’ in contrast to ‘same level’, taking heed of the presence of the ‘father’, being aware of the ‘insects or Iodine in the eye’ or the ‘sudden knives and urchin laughter in the red-light alley’, or the fear exhibited in the lines: ‘during a public lecture… no ‘one will … see my face’ and then of course ‘the men in line’ (RCP 86-89) behind the daughter is a very big ecological concern. Says John Elder: ‘…the transaction between humanity and nature may usefully be understood in the terms of
human sexuality… (The) right human relation with the earth is the high value he (Berry) places on fidelity.’ (Elder 60) ‘Fidelity’ though a human social attribute is seen by the ecocentric philosophers as a value to be nurtured. All this is to emphasize the relationship of the heart to earthly concerns.

Religious beliefs in different societies go a long way to inculcate environmentally friendly practices. We cannot help noticing the ironic stance of Ramanujan in the fourth and fifth sections of the poem. The fear of his ‘next’ life which would be based on his present ‘karmas’ revealed by his becoming charitable, when he is older (A tongue in cheek remark), and also being fair to all. With advancing age or religious dictates a person becomes charitable, especially in India, feeding the ants, the doves, or the blue jay etc. Such ecofriendly practices establish unsaid norms in society, but why should this awareness dawn only when nearing old age, is the question in the poet’s mind. Rebirth is again an ecological insight. However, looking for ‘karma’ in any unfortunate happening may serve as an excuse to cover up instead of being able to see the human shortcoming or limitation. The poet with a scathing irony is reflecting the need to be “grounded in responsiveness to others that dictates providing care, preventing harm, and maintaining relationships.” (Larrabee qtd. in Warren 110) Another of Ramanujan’s fears is:

not being dead
as a tree under wood-
peckers plucking
out worms like nerves (RCP 88)

Trees seem to fascinate this poet but he sees them with a different perspective every time. Here, it is ‘dead as a tree’, in a previous quote he wished that ‘a tree could shriek or
…writhe / like the snake…in the beak of the crow’ due to the pain caused by the woodpecker pecking at it and in yet another poem he attributes ‘desperation’ to trees. In some others, he takes us along with the body rising as the ‘sap’ of trees. There is an extrasensory perception about the ‘green growing things’ that his poems reflect and reveal his concern about.

The poem “Fear” highlights the ‘small’ fears like a lizard being crushed in the ‘crease’ of his ‘monkey cap’ under the weight of his sleeping head. The ‘dead snake mouth’, ‘dinosaur toes’, ‘flattened to a fossil’ are more horrifying than the ‘wound museums / of Hiroshima’. (RCP 132) He being responsible for the death of a creature rends his heart more than anything else. Maybe he sees the universe in a grain of sand in the form of that lizard. Else the distance from the events like ‘Hiroshima’ determines the lesser degree of ‘fear’.

Ramanujan is concerned also about his ‘unborn’ children ‘lest they choose to be born’ (RCP 42) since ‘the body is not easy to wear’. Nature has given ‘bodies’ to all existing entities, but it becomes tough for all in some way or the other to be embroiled in the struggle for existence. The despondency maybe due to poverty, being woman, being an animal, or even being a ‘tree’, as he says,

Despair is a strange disease.

I think it happens even to trees. (“Excerpts from a Father’s Wisdom,” (RCP 41)

It has now been scientifically proved that trees can feel ‘pain’ and respond likewise. So ‘despair’ also might be experienced by them when they face the evil designs and wrong actions of Homo sapiens. The poet is putting in his word of caution.
In “On the Very Possible Jaundice of an Unborn Daughter,” is a premonition that he expresses about this ill state of being of the ‘unborn daughter’ resulting from the inhuman treatment meted out to animals, plants/flowers and birds:

When Mynahs scream in the cages
…we pull grasshoppers’ wings
and feed red ink and lemon-peel
to dragon flies.
And if that daffodil too flaps all morning
In grandma’s hands, how can my daughter
help those singing yellows
in the whites of her eyes?(RCP 14)

We pluck beautiful flowers from the garden little realizing that we cut short the life of these beauties the moment we do so. Nature will have its retribution and the poet feels that the jaundice of his ‘unborn daughter’ may be the result of this uncaring behaviour of humans. Ramanujan is distressed also by his own ‘tribe, incarnate/unbelievers in bodies’ (exist in bodies but don’t believe in the physical body—that is highly ironic) who would not allow the extraction of any part of his body after death. It will either be cremated or buried, but it will certainly not be part of the soil:

My tissue will never graft
will never know newsprint,
never grow in a culture,
or be mould and compost
for Jasmine, eggplant
and the unearthly perfection

of municipal oranges. (RCP 136)

It is disturbing to the poet because he feels himself to be so much a part of the soil as none other would. This oneness, his spiritual leaning, having become a part of his psyche, only has positive outflows towards the whole of existence.

Every creature is significant in existence, from the smallest ‘bacteria’ to the largest ‘whale’. Humans, with their developed brains do not have the right to finish off other life forms at will or whim. So, when Shivanna, in “A Minor Sacrifice”, asks the first person ‘I’:

‘Wouldn’t you like to rid the world

of scorpions, if you could?’(RCP 145)

he sows the seed of his own death. He encourages the two young kids to make a sacrifice of ‘one hundred live grasshoppers’, with wings removed, to please ‘the twelve-handed god of scorpions’, so that all the scorpions would come to fall in the sacrificial fire lighted by them. The kids do his bidding only to learn later that Shivanna became sick with a ‘strange /twitching disease…he clawed and kicked the air/ like some bug / on its back?’ Nature has its Nemesis finally. There can be no escape from it. One’s ethical actions with regard to the nonhuman world cannot be directed only towards ‘preventing the suffering and ensuring the flourishing of the higher animals’ (Worldviews 203). This lop-sided ‘ethic of care’ would be detrimental to the well-being of the Earth since it has been ascertained that the ‘ecological value’ (value for sustaining the ecosystem) of even the ‘scorpions’ and ‘grasshoppers’ is much more than that of ‘humans’. Knowing fully well that we, humans will also die like the animals and the plants and trees, we still tend to overlook this fact. Ramanujan in “Saturdays” sees ‘a Dutch elm dying against a redbrick wall’ and is
reminded of his mother who ‘died in the kidney wing’, a brother’s heart failed with a pipe between his teeth on an ominous Saturday.

See yourself as another…

The body we know is an almanac…

Turn around

And see the older man in the sage

Blue chair turn around

to walk through the hole in the air,

his daily dying body

the one good omen…(RCP 150-152)

How often do we see ourselves as ‘another’ on the deathbed? Very rarely can we put ourselves in that position. Here is the poet not only placing himself in the dead human face and body but also in the place of the ‘dying tree’ reflecting his ecological awareness. Death comes to humans as stealthily as to plants and animals. He observes ‘the older man in the sage /blue chair’, ‘walking through the hole in the air’ and becomes conscious of ‘his daily dying body’. This is another measure of Ramanujan’s awareness of mortality which we may choose to experience every moment, every day, seeing it in our body and in every living being around us and be less anthropocentric.

“Zoo Gardens Revisited” talks of a host of animals in the zoo, discomposed and ill humanely treated by the ‘so-called’ humans. The poet begins with his former association with animals as appearing like humans, but this is no longer possible now. Since, humans have fallen to a level which is much lower than ‘mankind’. There are such demoniac ‘visitors’ who set fire to the tail feathers of the Ostriches, or feed bananas with ‘small
exquisite needles in them’ to the ‘ring-tailed monkeys’. Then with ‘cross-breeding’
becoming the norm and bane of this ‘scientific age’, Tigresses, made to copulate with un-
willing Lions, ‘go barren’, whereas the potency of the Tigers remains unutilized. What a
waste and disrespect of natural energy all this becomes is unimaginable. The underlying
mindset of such behaviour is the human beings’
‘dominionist assumptions behind Zoos, and his (Malamud’s) survey is
valuable for depicting a widespread sense of unease surrounding the welfare
and politics of wild animals in captivity. (Garrard 151)

Ramanujan further tells about a paralyzed chimpanzee that couldn’t ‘lift his chipped blue
enamel mug to his lips … nor puff at his cigar’. The society of Animal Lovers would sit in
shifts to babysit the chimp ‘Subbu’, but on the third day he bit one of the ‘protectors’ since
they were unable to understand his need of freedom. “Liberationists claim that zoo
confinement is cruel, which may be true in some cases, but an ecocritical perspective is
more concerned with the politics of representation implied by the zoo experience.”
(Garrard 150) A.K. Ramanujan seems to be advocating both the ‘liberationist’ ideology as
well as the ‘ecocritical perspective’ here, when at the end of the poem he invokes Lord
Vishnu to engulf all the animals ‘whole’ in order to protect them ‘in the zoo garden ark of
your belly’. He assumes that in the ‘belly’ of Lord Vishnu, all the animals will be both
‘free’ and ‘protected’.

“At Forty” is all about what ‘culture’ and ‘civilization’ does to ‘Nature’. Jatti , the
palace wrestler was adjudged as the ‘best’ in Mysore city. So, his hair is trimmed, ‘all body
shaves’ and ‘massages of iguana fat’, ‘no sex’, sporting a ‘yellow moustache’ etc. civilizes
him to no end. Next when he is taken to the ‘red arena’ he is defeated easily by ordinary
opponents. Humiliated, he goes back to the gym to improve his performance, but is soon dejected and returns home only to be a ‘sulphurous foreman in a matchstick factory’. What an irony, the ‘Iron Man’ is trimmed off all his honors simply because society ‘colonized’ him into becoming ‘civilized’ rather than continue with his former style of practice and ‘life’. He was bred in a natural way which he was made to shun once glory came to him. Now all connection with ‘nature’ has been severed and there is no going back for him, he can at best be a ‘sulphurous foreman in a matchstick factory’.

The “Love poem for a wife and her trees” is an encompassing tribute to woman kind in her indefinite roles as mother, wife, sister, daughter etc. ‘Her Trees’ are the upside down ancestral tree, the nervous system of the physical body, whose roots are the brain, which is again at the top, and the main stem is the ‘spinal cord’ branching out till the last tips of fingers and toes. That is “…the human spinal cord is itself a tree-like formation inside the body.” (Dharwadker xx) The one tree that is not inverted is the ‘apple tree’ from which the wife plucks the perfect apple ‘for dessert’. Right from the beginning of the poem the reader learns about the balance that the wife has to maintain between being a wife and a mother, ‘lest I collapse into a son’ or confuse the whole lot of ‘Dravidian kinship’ enumerated by the anthropologists, since the word ‘mother’ is used for one’s genetic mother, her sister (Mausi), father’s sister (Bua) and also for husband’s sister (Nanad) in common parlance in the Southern states. The wife also reminds him not to be over-protective about her like he would be towards his ‘unborn daughter’ or ‘lock you (her) deep in my male and royal coffers’ try to keep her ‘in the safe custody of an anti-septic bubble’ which would destroy the source of her energy, ‘your spinal cord will wither’ whose branching is also akin to a tree. He is also able to see the difference between them,
the husband and wife, and bereft of hierarchical misgivings is able to respect it. Ramanujan is occasionally reminded of the reality that

…you’re not me but Another, the faraway

Stranger who’s nearby…

… seasoned and alive

with leaf, bud, monkeys, birds, pendant

bats, parasites

patch of blue scilla lilies in its shade; (RCP 182)

In difference lies the beauty of a relationship. The other is also as ‘alive’ as he himself is with all the creativity and capability of being at home with other different beings. He refers to his wife as ‘Exotic who inhabits my space’, who is now with him but one whom he cannot take for granted for she might, any day ‘call a taxi /and go away’ to ‘Panamas of another childhood’. Hence he calls her a foreign body, which knows a great deal about the land they have been nurtured in, its languages and its ‘underground faults … mushrooms /for love and hate’ and is able to pick up the best in everything, ‘the perfect pomfret’ or the ‘red apple’. The last paragraph says it all, that he knows that she can be a ‘Jewish mama, (controlling and over-protective and indulgent) /sob-sister, daughter who needs help… even the sexpot next door’ or simply a ‘plain Indian wife /at the village well’ so that he ‘can play son, /father, brother, macho lover, gaping /tourist and clumsy husband.’ The epithets that the poet has given for his wife reveal the fullness of womanhood in all spheres. So, she is like the branching of the trees in various possibilities, and with “this mutual penetration of body and natural world” (Dharwadker xx), Eco feminists would proclaim that if the earth is to be saved then emulate such a relationship.
Next is “Looking for the Centre”, here the poet switches from the physical to the metaphysical, the pictures of the internal structures of the body to the web spinning of ‘a Zila spider’ where the ‘first person’ says:

Intoxicated…

I spin enormous webs…

unaware

in my ecstasy I’m not at the centre (RCP 185)

Mankind has been and still is ‘intoxicated’ by itself and spinning ‘enormous’ webs, little realizing that he is not at the centre, it is somewhere else. This web is the world of ‘Maya’ which makes one oblivious of a higher reality; one may also call it ‘nature’. The web has ‘gaps’ through which another reality (‘moth’ here) can pass and multiply to create havoc, ‘make more holes in royal brocades’. These moths could be ‘human blunders’ which one tends to overlook and then the whole ‘royal brocade’, of the illusion of the human mind spread of being the masters of all existence, is shattered. Thus, the ‘connections’ between ‘man’ and ‘nature’ are ‘severed’, and then

. . . unburdened

of history, I lose

my bearings, a circus zilla spun

at the end of her rope, dizzy,

terrified,

and happy (RCP 185)

He is ‘terrified’ because he is unable to locate the centre of ‘being’ and ‘happy’ either in his foolishness or his realization about the ludicrousness of the whole search. Here he is
speaking of his natural, deeper ‘self’ that becomes the ‘watcher’ and is as ‘cool as fires in a mirror’ whereas his external ‘self’ seems to ‘lose his bearings’ and is ‘terrified’. So, says Vinay Dharwadker, about this poem:

Such surreal moments of revelation and transformation dance between two disparate conceptions of the body-nature relationship: that the solid body of flesh and bone somehow contains the largely empty, mineral heavens, and that the human body, which can never transcend its life in culture, can still be exchanged with the insect or animal body in nature. (Dharwadker xx)

The human body cannot ‘transcend its life in culture’ because ‘culture’ is a human imposition, whereas amazingly enough the human body can be seen substituted with that of an ‘insect or animal body in nature’, just as in “Connect”:

the mango grove unfolding leaf and twig
for the zebra-striped caterpillar
in the middle of it,
waiting for a change of season. (RCP 178)

Such a symbiotic relationship is the hallmark of existence and characteristic of ecological living. The ‘waiting for a change of season’ is as important as the ‘leaf and twig’ in which the caterpillar is enfolded. ‘Waiting’ time may vary and at times be unusually long, as in the following example.

“Foundlings in the Yukon”, a poem from ‘The Black Hen’ section in The Collected Poems of A.K.Ramanujan, is an unusual tale of ‘creation’, following ‘hibernation’ of certain seeds for at least ten thousand years. The tiny grains, after being exposed to sunlight etc. sprouted into saplings within forty eight hours and proved that the sustenance
power of ‘plant life’ is much more than humans, the most developed species on this planet. The seeds, having formed ‘ten thousand years’ before, were ‘older than the oldest /things alive’ and ‘younger … than all their timely descendants,’ having sprouted much ‘after their time’. The ‘sprouting’ is the formation of ‘body’ in the appropriate environment wherein ‘time’ is immaterial and mysterious when it comes to preservation by ‘nature’. However, the poem also shows that there is a “mutual interdependence of body, nature, culture, and time … (which covers) an immense span of human and natural history”. (Dharwadker xxvii)

It is the recognition of this interdependence that is the backbone of ecological orientation. In the process, we drift from the ‘plant world’ into the ‘animal kingdom’ again, in “Dream in an Old Language” (RCP 198). The language might be ‘old’, since the dictates of nature cannot be over ruled, yet the perception is certainly new. The ‘food chain’ is in a state of action here. The ‘tree frog…he struggles / in the mouth of the snake’ desperately trying to free himself from the clutches of the snake which is ‘too old to swallow’, too hungry to let go /of his prey…’ With the illumination of dawn ‘he’, (mark that the poet does not use ‘it’ for the animal) the frog is finally able to escape from one terror but lands into others like the ‘cat and crow, /a terror of creepers and ropes.’ In ‘1951’, this moving from ‘safety to danger to safety’ (UCP 4) can be seen in the life of a serpent ‘he moves /in no hurry /at all’, in spite of all the lurking dangers of ‘beak, boot or stick’, from one tree to another, crossing a road. The poet persona, however, on the other hand, in a great hurry moves from ‘safety to safety’, in fear without learning the lesson of ‘composure’ from the reptile. In pursuit of ‘safety’ mankind has lost contact with its natural self and in spite of being endowed with the capacity to feel and analyze more than the other entities is unable
to see the inseparable connections with nature. Similarly, in “Death in Search of a Comfortable Metaphor”, (RCP 273) he talks of ‘Scorpions’, ‘who eat, grow, sting, / multiply’ and then die to ‘become feasts /of fodder for working /ants, humus for elephant…’ in turn to contribute to the food-chain. Everything or being in nature is thus related to another. There are fears lurking everywhere around for all beings and non-beings as well which have to be overcome with patience and faith. This fear-driven, cyclical existence is uncovered in poem after poem of Ramanujan.

…we, of all things, flee in panic
yet wish for, work towards,
build ships and shape whole cities with? (“Salamanders” RCP 202)

With our conscious minds, we know that all our work and drudgery would end in ‘nothing’ since each of us has to die one day, hence the ‘fear’. We are always in a hurry to move from one ‘protection’ to another, from ‘camouflage /to camouflage’. The difference is that we humans ‘scurry away’ in anticipation of danger whereas the animals stoically face it. In “Some Relations”, the daughter has kept ‘turtles’ in a jar. These creatures are confused, being away from their habitat, just like ‘the daughter’ herself who is weaned away from her original home in India. The turtles try to ‘hibernate’ in the jar itself, being helpless otherwise. However, retaining the ‘Habitat’ is an important ecological concern which is exemplified by Ramanujan here.

We live more in the future, our ‘imagination’, than in reality, in the present. So we encounter this visible world of maya, the stars that we see are ‘light years away’, and ‘Oceans swirl around earthlings’ like us,

The Earth itself has layers of time,
shelves of fossils that carry traces
of anything that will leave a trace… (RCP 204)

that gives a ‘past / and a family tree’ to the human race in order to carve out its bearings.
This poem is an eye-opener exploring the unfathomable vast and the insignificant human beings which leave similar traces as the other living beings and non-living objects.

The elements of nature play a vital role in the cyclical existence, for instance ‘Fire that can burn / the house down, maybe the whole neighbourhood, Simla and California’ (“Fire”, RCP 205), revealing the puniness of mankind. In the same context, he talks of ‘death’:

…Is it a dispersal
of gathered energies
back into their elements,
earth, air, water, and fire,
a reworking into other moulds
grass, worm, bacterial glow
lights, and mother-matter
for other off-spring with names
and forms clocked into seasons? (“Birthdays” RCP 207)

The human body is one ‘mould’ which may transform into another after death, maybe into ‘grass’, ‘worm’ or anything else in existence. Can we still disregard ‘nature’ where we find ‘apple trees / that recycle the seasons’? (RCP 206)

An apple tree will be planted on the spot where ‘this dog I walk’ would be buried, says Ramanujan. It will ‘burst into blossom in April, / to be eaten as a red-green apple / in a
windfall’. (“One more on a Deathless Theme” RCP 209) The body will die, change its form, is re- incarnated, the life energy, however, is not extinguished with it. Hence, it is ‘deathless’ and will be available in some form of nature, an animal, an insect like ‘praying mantis’ or anything else. However, one fact is certain that

Everyone in this street

will become cold, lie under stones

or be scattered as ash

in rivers and oceans. (RCP 210)

We may become part of the same oceans and rivers which we have the audacity to pollute in the present. Animals too have a lot to convey if our perception is open and clear; they ‘bring us tranquility. Cats /sleep through a war. Dogs… forgive betrayals and rations’. Such like qualities that can be observed in animals, if emulated by this, so-called, higher species, called ‘man’, the world would be more at peace, suggests the poet in “On Not Learning from Animals”(RCP 217). Ramanujan is also acutely conscious of environmental hazards like ‘acid rain’. He is perturbed all the more because as humans, who know and understand such things, we still tend to overlook the reasons and possible remedies. This Earth ‘house’ seems to be ‘on invisible fire’ which is reducing the real self ‘to black skeletons in the orange /glow, and then to charred flesh and ash’ (“Pain: trying to find a metaphor” RCP 235) yet the ecological self around whom this macabre ritual is being executed, is ‘absurdly alive and well’. The poem “A Meditation” takes the reader along when the persona imagines himself to be a ‘black Walnut tree’. A rainstorm topples this tree, to be taken away as usable ‘wood’. The carpenter works on it to make ‘a butcher block table and…chair.’ Finally, the paper factory crushes ‘the bark and the leaves into a
pulp’, to bleach and roll it out into paper ‘with a logo in a watermark’. The poet feels that he is now writing upon himself:

… my living
hands moving
on a dead one, a firm imagined body
working with the transience
of breathless
real bodies. (“A Meditation” RCP 239)

The inter changing of bodies by the life energy is something to reckon about. The reality of this ‘meditation’ is juxtaposed with the present reality as Molly Daniels-Ramanujan would like to say it:

For Ramanujan, the real and the imaginary are as inseparable as the Yeatsian ‘Dancer’ and ‘the dance’… For him (Ramanujan), the ‘dance’ itself remembers the ‘dancer’. (RCP281)

Thus, the poet finds himself ‘writing on my (his) head… (and) torso, my living hands moving on a dead one’. He calls the present reality of his body, ‘a firm imagined body’ writing on the ‘breathless real bodies’, the paper. Yet again this extraordinary perception urges us inadvertently; perhaps, to care for the ‘non-human’ that we so often tend to ignore, since they could be ramifications of our own selves. One is here reminded of ‘The Council of All Beings’ ritual narrated by Pat Flemming and Joanna Macy. Here the group of people were engaged with certain group exercises that helped to ‘remember our bio-ecological history… relax into our bodies, into our intuitive knowings … “and let yourself be chosen by the life-form that wishes to speak through you”. (Seed 80) Then each of them
donned the mask of a particular life form or an ‘ecological feature’ like the mountain, particular animals, weeds, and the rainforest etc. One by one each of them spoke of what they were going through. The rainforest said:

You destroy me so carelessly, tearing down so many of my trees for a few planks, leaving the rest to rot or burn... I can’t stand your screaming machines which tear through my trunks, rip my flesh, reducing hundreds of years of slow growth to sawdust and furniture. How dare you!

Standing up, majestic in his anger, Rainforest continues.

Your greed and folly shortens your own life as a species... Don’t you know that it is from me that you have come? Without my green world your spirit will shrivel... (Seed 86)

This is the shriek of only one ecological form with the others in toe. Then each of them explain what and how they enrich our planet. After that they held hands to form a circle and it felt like that they were all one being, the Gaia, the sea of waves but ‘Waves are nothing but water, so is the sea’. (maaber.org)
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