

## Concern for the Environment to Maintain Nature and Human Tie of Friendship -An Alternative Form of Cosmopolitanism in Amitav Ghosh's Selected Writings

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**Abstract:** Climate change and environmental crisis are considered to be the most devastating global issues at present, chiefly caused by the anthropocentric activities in this post-globalization era. Industrialization and globalization are the pivotal triggers in developing the culture of consumerism across the world among human beings. The global environmental crisis is threatening the ecological balance and forcing the humans to examine the complex intersections where the environmental problems merge with the humanitarian crisis. Excessive exploitation of natural resources leading to the extinction of indigenous cultural values and practices is one of the outcomes of such intersectional complexity. Nature has been reduced to a means of fulfilling human desires and greed. Amitav Ghosh has even gone so far as to say that the carbon driven capitalist global economy of this human-centric civilization has deteriorated the environmental conditions to such an extent that even if no carbon emitting fossil fuels are to be used henceforth, still some consequences are bound to hit the human communities. These human instigated environmental devastations have detrimental effects leading to abnormal temperature rising, extreme weather condition, constant rising of sea levels causing inundation of coastal regions, abrupt wildfires and many other world-wide cataclysmic occurrences as well. This paper attempts to argue how Amitav Ghosh in his selected fiction and non-fiction writings - *The Hungry Tide* (2004) and *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016) - on one hand, has shown the catastrophic consequences of the climatic and environmental crisis caused by 'anthropocentric' activities and on the other, has also attempted to portray his alternative cosmopolitan ideas through which the balance of nature and human tie of friendship can be maintained.

**Keywords:** Globalization, industrialization, capitalism, eco-criticism, anthropocentrism, alternative cosmopolitanism.

## Introduction

Climate change and environmental crisis are considered to be the most devastating global issues at present, chiefly caused by the human-centric activities in this post-globalization era. Industrialization and globalization are the pivotal triggers in developing the culture of consumerism across the world among human beings. These revolutionary transformations have made the humans to bring in materialistic characteristics in their lives to cope with the advancements in the field of science and technology. Amitav Ghosh, in his selected fiction and non-fiction writings, has focused on the glimpses of how the ecological degradations are causing fatal threats and often leading to global warming, migration and displacement both for the human and non-human creatures on this earth. For a long time, human rights and environmental principles have been assumed as two completely opposite concerns. But it is very much obvious that the claims of human rights are solely dependent on the prevalence of a life-sustaining ecological system and conducive natural resources. The global environmental crisis is threatening the ecological balance and forcing the humans to examine the complex intersections where the environmental problems merge with the humanitarian crisis. Excessive exploitation of natural resources leading to the extinction of indigenous cultural values and practices is one of the outcomes of such intersectional complexity. Moreover, without the presence of a healthy, secure and safe environmental condition the formation of a globalized cosmopolitan community is not possible. Ursula Heise (2008) has asserted that the development of a cosmopolitan environmental consciousness directs individuals to form a transparent understanding and strong connectedness among themselves and also with the surrounding natural environments. Similarly, Lawrence Buell (2007) has pointed out that environmental cosmopolitanism incorporates holistic ways of thinking for the well-being of this planet and utilitarian feelings for a sustainable global environmental.

Amitav Ghosh (2017) has asserted that this present environmental crisis arising out of the exponentially deteriorating climate change seems to have its root in the growing line of differences between human culture and natural elements. In this context, Andre Krebber (2011) has corroborated Amitav Ghosh's point of view by saying that the history of human civilization can be described as constant endeavours of the human beings for exploiting and subjugating all natural resources solely for the well-being of the human societies. Nature has been reduced to a means of fulfilling human desires and greed. Amitav Ghosh (2017) has even mentioned that these human activities have raised the carbon level in the air which in turn is damaging the climatic conditions on this planet. He has even gone so far as to say that the carbon driven capitalist global economy of this human-centric civilization has deteriorated the environmental condition to such a degree that even if no carbon emitting fossil fuels are to be used henceforth, still some consequences are bound to hit this human communities. These human instigated environmental devastations have detrimental effects leading to abnormal temperature rising, extreme weather condition, constant rising of sea levels causing inundation of

coastal regions, abrupt wildfires and many other world-wide cataclysmic occurrences as well. This paper attempts to argue how Amitav Ghosh in his selected fiction and non-fiction writings – *The Hungry Tide* (2004) and *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016)- on one hand, has shown the catastrophic consequences of the climatic and environmental crisis caused by human-centric activities and on the other, has also attempted to portray his alternative cosmopolitan ideas through which the balance of nature and human tie of friendship can be maintained.

### Literature Review

Amitav Ghosh (2017) has argued that the ‘anthropocentric’ socio-cultural practices are to be considered as solely responsible for the global climatic catastrophic threats. The whole world is undergoing the staggering consequences of the climatic devastations. Excessive exploitation of nature merely for bringing in some overrated luxuries in everyday life is what causing these serious threats and at times raising questions against the possibilities of existence of either the humans or non-human creatures on this planet. Even the very premise of Amitav Ghosh’s non-fiction, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016), is foregrounded on the reasons of this broken relationship between nature and the human beings. Ghosh (2016) has asserted that since the beginning of globalization human beings are driven to habituate with the practice of overconsumption. The propagation or advertising of the very idea of a ‘good-life’ is found to be at the very root of every human-centric activity. Though Amitav Ghosh (2016) has elaborated in detail on global environmental concerns yet specifically he has given references to the growing ecological imbalance in the South-Asian countries and the Sundarbans. He has given instances of how the natural habitat of the Sundarbans region is getting affected due to increased adverse climatic condition including cyclonic storms, overflowing and continuous deterioration of the coastal swamps. This inextricable interconnection between the aggravating disorder of the natural world and the aimless and irascible human actions are traced to be the prime concerns in Amitav Ghosh’s selected fictional and non-fictional narratives. In this context, Vescovi (2017 p. 123) has observed that the climatic abnormality can no longer be considered as any of the exclusive political or environmental issues rather he has called this change an imaginative failure. In his view the deficiency in the present generation’s imagining the cataclysmic disaster as a result of unprecedented climatic change misleads them in not taking sufficient measures to stop the inevitable catastrophe. According to Vescovi (2017), this very capacity of imagination is abstract in quality and therefore it is to be beyond the perception of the ordinary citizens. Hence, it was the responsibility of the writers, poets, novelists and other litterateurs to make these abstract global concerns perceivable to the ordinary people through their literary works which they had failed to do. Akin to Vescovi’s view, M. B. Cole (2021) too has stated that the writers through their ‘climate imaginary’, represented through conceptual narratives and symbolic references, could have promoted environmental

awareness among the common people. But now the future generation, along with blaming the policy-making politicians and bureaucratic personages, is to accuse the writers and artists as equally culpable of committing 'ecocide'.

However, Amitav Ghosh (2016 p. 68) has observed that though initially the genre of science-fiction tended to represent the climate crisis through its surreal interwoven narratives yet this genre had never been considered as being a part of the mainstream literature writing. Ghosh writes - "The Anthropocene resists science fiction: it is precisely not an imagined 'other' world apart from ours; nor is it located in another 'time' or another 'dimension'. By no means are the events of the era of global warming akin to the stuff of wonder tales...a universe animated by non-human voices" (2016 p.72-73). This growing difference between science and nature is now hustling faster to erase even the last reminder of the human beings' ever having any positive relationship with the nature. Therefore, in today's world climate disorder is no longer a hypothetical concern, rather its tangibility has become prominent through its interference with every sphere - socio-economic, political, ecosystem, humanity etc. - of human and non-human existence on this planet. Vescovi (2017) has mentioned that the earlier 'climate fiction' writing used to project some unreal apocalyptic vision of the climatic events but the 'climate fiction' of this present era have made the imminent devastating future much relatable to everyone's recognizing the global threats. Therefore, in Amitav Ghosh's alternative cosmopolitan vision in order to understand the interconnected bonding between nature and the humans, one needs to move beyond the Eurocentric individual cultural practice and should recognize and indulge in giving primacy to collective cultural interests. Ghosh (2016) has stated that people should realize their moral responsibilities and discover their 'conscientious' selves in their venture to save this planet from the uncanny repercussions of the climate crisis. Similarly, whether it is in *The Hungry Tide* (2004) or *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016), in both these fiction and non-fiction writings, Amitav Ghosh has portrayed the significance of collective and shared interdependency either between different human communities or among nature, humans and the other non-human creatures on this earth.

In *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016), Amitav Ghosh has highlighted how the climatic predicaments have been fuelled by the 'deranged' human-centric activities across the globe. Frequent occurrences of floods, rising intensity of the cyclonic storms, increased melting of the ice shelves are the evidences of the growing changes in the global climate conditions. Interference of world-wide irresponsible human activities have altered the geophysical structure of this planet resulting in drastic environmental crisis. In this non-fiction, Amitav Ghosh has referred to the exponential ecological devastations of the Sundarbans: "The great mangrove forest of the Bengal Delta, the Sundarbans, where the flow of water and silt is such that geological processes that usually unfold in deep time appear to occur at a speed where they can be followed from week to week and month to month...sometimes taking

houses and people with it” (2016 p.7). Ghosh (2016) has also mentioned about the rising salt water intrusion into the coastal cultivating lands of the Sundarbans islands and turning them into barren stretches. In this context, Dipesh Chakrabarty (2009) has called the human beings of this present era as the ‘geological agents’ who are causing transformations in the natural geophysical processes of this earth. On the other hand, Szeman and James (2010) have observed that in the absence of necessary socio-political initiatives concerning the global climatic catastrophe, ‘consumerism’ has emerged to provide dreams of a ‘good life’ to the global citizens. Similarly, Reusswig and Lass (2010) too are of the opinion that the ‘anthropocentric’ activities for pursuing a good lifestyle in this post-globalization period can be identified as the driving force behind the present ecological disorder.

Amitav Ghosh (2016) has stated that globalization has changed the cultural needs. The increased aspirations to have good vehicles, highly digitalized houses and gardens have become the leading socio-cultural forces behind the emergence of the global ‘carbon economy’. In an interview with Steve Paulson, Amitav Ghosh (2017) has elaborated on how the excessive usages of fossil fuels have been induced by the ‘anthropocentric’ cultural practices and how that in turn has changed the natural landscape of this planet. Here Amitav Ghosh has even articulated the altered cultural interests of the people of the Middle East countries and some parts of Australia. People of these regions suffer from sufficient potable water but they have cherished desires of having luxurious lawns and for maintain those lawn they are using excessive fossil fuels for making purified water from the salty sea water. While analyzing this change in cultural practices, Amitav Ghosh (2016) has taken into account the associated invasive socio-economic factors of capitalism as well. Murray Bookchin (2006) has agreed with Amitav Ghosh’s inferences and asserted that the corporate capitalist interests have expanded processes of industrialization and intense excavation of natural resources leading to ultimate environmental disturbances. Again, Amitav Ghosh (2016) has aligned the event of global warming with the imperial motives of the European capitalism. In this context, Adams and Mulligan (2003) have critically analyzed the ‘cornucopian’ Eurocentric notion of socio-economic engagement with nature. Pondering over the impacts of environmental disaster, Amitav Ghosh (2017) comments that those consequences are the ‘fingerprints’ of the ecological crisis occurring all over the world. Critiquing Amitav Ghosh’s observation on the sheer lack of interest among the human beings to discuss over initiatives to be taken to stop the impending catastrophe, K. Rao (2016) states that Amitav Ghosh in this context has compared this ecological disorder with death as everybody ignores to talk on this issue. In concurrence with this approach, George Marshall (2015) argues that people usually cherish a yearning to live in a normal and safe world and hence they do not want to get reminded of the lethal global threats. They tend to consider any natural catastrophe as a very rare event, the greatest ‘taboo’, ever to happen in their life. Adding to Amitav Ghosh’s ‘anthropocentric’ accusation over the climate change, VrajindraUpadhayay (2014) asserts that two socio-

economic forces can be identified as the chief contributors to this phenomenal event of environmental derangement, one is abundant production and the other is overconsumption.

### Critical Textual Analysis

#### **The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable (2016)**

Amitav Ghosh's non-fiction, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016), begins as a collection of a series of lectures which was delivered at the University of Chicago in 2015 and the collection was titled as Randy L. and Melvin R. Berlin Family Lectures. The causes and consequences of environmental degradation as well as the intercontinental historical position of Asia in the world have contextualized the very premise of this non-fiction. Here one of the main concerns of Amitav Ghosh is to draw interconnections between imbalance in the global economy and destruction of the ecological order of the environment. The idea of 'greening postcolonialism' introduced by Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin (2015) can be traced as well partly casting its narrative reflections in this non-fiction. Amitav Ghosh, in this text, has offered a completely different method of eco-criticism in comparison to the conventional postcolonial notions of eco-activism or eco-tourism. In Alexandre Leskanich's (2017) view, the agencies of materialistic profit gaining affairs and their hollow promises of environmental preservation highlighted through the Eurocentric postcolonial rhetoric are confronted with stark criticisms in Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement* (2016). The first chapter of this text is titled "Stories" which he starts by confessing the collective failure of the literary community, in which he has included himself as well, in not considering the climate issues as the prime subject matters of the serious literary pieces. He focuses on the gradual submersion of the Sundarbans islands due to rising of the sea levels along with the global cities, such as Kolkata, Bangkok and New York, turning into uninhabitable places because of the drastic climate alterations. Amitav Ghosh questions whether the readers and lovers of literature and artistic works would ever focus on the premonitions of the legacy of an altered future world. He continues saying that the upcoming future generation is to conclude that the art and literature of this present time had hidden the actual crisis by suppressing people from recognizing the reality. He is sure that the future inheritors of this planet are to call this era as an era of great 'derangement'. In his view the survivors of this climatic disaster would be like the survivors of some 'post-apocalyptic' event who had denied to succumb to the deadly interference of the nuclear weapons to the natural environmental order. In this first chapter, Amitav Ghosh is found to have used astonishing literary narrative technique to mediate between the description of actual natural scenario and the classical features of the genre of science-fiction writing. He concludes that this event of ecological crisis is such a grave issue that this cannot be treated with the refined linguistics of fiction writing. He says that the vocabularies, such as tar, bitumen, fossil fuels, naphtha, petroleum etc., are sure to generate

repulsions in the readers' mind while reading about the climate change. He looks forward towards the creation of some 'hybrid' linguistic forms of writing which would change the very method of the readers' reading any text. In this context, Amitav Ghosh has criticized his own failure to deal deftly with this event of climate change in his fictional narratives. He has recalled one of his personal memories that involved his mother, who had denied to leave the flood prone area where she used to live because: "To abandon the homes that have given our lives roots, stability and meaning, is nothing short of unthinkable" (2016 p.65). This incident had led him to his epiphanic realization that his life too is eventually like 'the vast majority of human beings' (2016 p.54) which is devoid of any guidance from reason and run by the 'inertia of habitual motion' (2016 p.54).

In the second chapter, titled "History", Amitav Ghosh has traced capitalism as being the main force behind climate change. Away from any Eurocentric notion, Amitav Ghosh comments: "the continent of Asia is conceptually critical to every aspect of global warming: its causes, its philosophical and historical implications, and the possibility of a global response to it" (2016 p. 87). For this he has given references to many stark instances for example, because of the excessive exploitation of the Indus it has ended up losing its way to merge with the sea and has resulted in the inundation of million acres of cultivated lands of Pakistan with salty sea water. In India high threats of overflowing for over six thousand square kilometres of land may destroy the most fertile agricultural lands of this country and may even force over fifty million people to migrate to some other countries. In Bangladesh it may even reach to the migration of over seventy-five million people. One quarter of the total fertile lands of India has already turned into deserts and China also is facing this same threat of desertification of agricultural lands and it has already caused China's an 'annual loss of \$65 billion' (2016 p.89). Amitav Ghosh (2016 p. 89-90) has focused on the increased water crisis in Asia because this continent is inhabited by 47% of the world's total population. He has asserted that there are differences between the two incidents of the drying up of the Ogallala Aquifer both in US and in north China. He has further mentioned that whereas just two million people of US are dependent on the Ogallala Aquifer, in China over 214 million people are dependent on this underground water table. He refrains from mentioning the Water Diversion schemes formed to change underground water dependency in the North and also to decrease the growing degree of barren lands in that region. Instead, he has given particular emphasis on the supposed impacts of the two dams in the lives of the people dependent on them. These are the mere consequences of the global warming prevailing over the whole world. Amitav Ghosh (2016) underscores that since the very beginning of industrialization in Asia in the 1980s climate crisis started to engulf the whole continent: "every family in the world cannot have two cars, a washing machine and a refrigerator...because humanity would asphyxiate in the process. Asia has also laid bare, through its own silence, the silences that are now ever more plainly evident at the heart of global system governance" (2016 p. 92).

In the third chapter, titled “Politics”, Amitav Ghosh (2016) has elaborated on the failure of the literary communities in addressing the climate crisis with a serious stance. He has mentioned that only few writers, including Doris Lessing, Cormac McCarthy, Ian MaEwan, Kurt Vonnegut, J.G. Ballard, Margaret Atwood, Barbara Kingsolver and T. Coraghessan Boyle, have shown endeavours in their writings for changing the present climatic predicament. He has expressed his regret over the fact that in the South Asian region the concern for climate change has gained less importance as a political issue in contrast to any of the religious, caste or gender identity related questions. It is because people have got “trapped” (2016 p. 135) themselves in the nasty and ‘deranged’ game of individualizing politics in place of shouldering collective moral responsibility. Ghosh has emphasized how the Europeans in United States were busy with, some of them denying and the rest of them supporting, arguing over the climatic imbalance. Many politicians at that time tended even to believe that any kind of excessive importance to these climatic concerns were to hurl attacks to, “our way of life” (2016 p.137). So, this default false belief had made them desperate and driven them to use fossil fuels beyond all limits especially in countries like Maldives, Europe and Bangladesh and therefore, turning this climatic argument into a quasi-political debate devoid of any practical applicability. Amitav Ghosh has pointed that among the deniers of climate change were centres like White House and Pentagon in United States who were the major funding agencies of scientific experiments. American military organizations knew that climate change might cause grave threats to the security networks of the US Pacific Region. In Admiral Samuel J. Jocklear III’s words, who was the then military head of the US Pacific Command, this climate crisis seemed to, “cripple the security environment” (2016 p. 139). James Clapper, who was the director head of the US intelligence at that time had been more specific, bearing testimony to the Senate agreement done in 2013, in pointing out that: “extreme weather events will increasingly disrupt food and energy markets, exacerbating state weakness, forcing human migration, and triggering riots, civil disobedience, and vandalism” (2016 p.140). Now, when America, once the greatest consumer of fossil fuels, is propagating and investing in alternative renewable energy production, this may apparently seem bigger initiative on America’s part. But in reality, America continues to maintain its dominance by transforming its military ventures into neo-liberal yet capitalist networks of unbridled consumerism. Amitav Ghosh’s *The Great Derangement* (2016) is a ruthless analysis and investigation into the impending catastrophic future of the world which concludes with no practical answer to any of his queries of whether we are really ‘deranged’ or whether we are petrified either by ‘impotence or inertia or horror or terror’ (2016 p.191). Amitav Ghosh (2016) has postulated that the people of this world know well the kind of probable apocalyptic future lying ahead and to be shared by them. In his view the horror of this imagined catastrophe is so overwhelming that the creators of art and literature have found it impossible to reflect those nightmarish thoughts through their artistic and literary creations.



### **The Hungry Tide (2004)**

The very setting of Amitav Ghosh's fiction *The Hungry Tide* (2004) is contextualized from the analytical perspective of the issue of climate change. The Sundarbans is the region, which is located in the delta area at the confluence of the Ganga and the Brahmaputra rivers merging with the Bay of Bengal sprawling across the two nations, India and Bangladesh. In Gayathri Prabhu's words (2015), the Sundarbans is the region of a large group of islands and which is also the location of the world's largest tropical mangrove forest situated in an estuary. The Sundarbans also nourishes the unique ecosystem consisting of tidal waterways and riverine islands that are home to a large variety of plants and animal species, which also includes a great population of the Royal Bengal Tigers. K. Mahadevia and M. Vikas (2012) have proposed the probable reasons behind Amitav Ghosh's choosing this particular region as for the backdrop of his novel, *The Hungry Tide* (2004): "with rising sea levels, islands are disappearing and the increasing salinity in the water and soil has severely threatened the health of mangrove forests and the quality of soil and crops...serious disturbances to hydrological parameters and change in fishing patterns...frequent cyclones and erratic monsoon raining patterns are damaging ecology and humanity" (2012 p.7). Constant rising of the sea levels and gradual destruction of the tropical mangrove forest of the Sundarbans can be seen as direct consequences of the climate threats. Linking with this notion Alexa Weik (2006) too is found to have observed that the mangrove forest of the Sundarbans functions like an irreplaceable safeguard against any devastating forces of the cyclonic storms that frequently hurl attacks in the coastal areas. Pointing at the biodiversity of this Sundarbans region Amitav Ghosh, through the protagonist of *The Hungry Tide* (2004), Piya, has observed that, "there are more species of fish in the Sundarbans than could be found in the whole continent of Europe" (2004 p.124). The contribution of this forest in maintaining the regional ecological balance is incomparable. Amitav Ghosh has described the Sundarbans as a very unique and strange region where the eco-system is always in the process of continuous changing. Piya, when she is seen on a boat in one of the forest rivers of the Sundarbans, thinks: "staring it now...there was such profusion of shapes, forms, hues and textures, that even things that were in plain view seemed to disappear, vanishing into the tangle of lines like the hidden objects in children's puzzle" (2004 p. 150). In Divya Anand's (2008) words, the perpetual topographic changes, one of the inherent features of the Sundarbans, make it very difficult for Piya to distinguish the particular landscapes according to her laid out plans.

Similarly, Suhasini Vincent (2018) has stated that the mangrove forests of the Sundarbans, with the fluctuation of the water levels due to the flows of ebb and tide in the rivers, at times appear and in the very next moment disappear from one's eyes. This constant game of merging and submerging of the Sundarbans landscapes both surprises and also disrupts the usual human lifestyles of that region. As Amitav Ghosh has described, "the currents are so powerful as to reshape the islands almost daily"

(2004 p.7). This natural mutability of the Sundarbans landscapes had been accepted both by Kanai and Nirmal, the inhabitants of that region. Where Kanai has uttered, “the boundaries between land and water are always mutating, always unpredictable” (2004 p.7), Nirmal has asserted that, “But here, in the tide country, transformation is the rule of life: rivers stray from week to week, and islands are made and unmade in days” (2004 p.224). During an interview with Vescovi (2009), Ghosh acknowledges that even after writing ten such novels like *The Hungry Tide* (2004) he would not be able to express the actual magic and beauty of the place when one goes out there under the moon at night, sees the changing tidal waves and hears the growling of a tiger nearby, the whole landscape starts to appear very elusive in front of one’s eyes. Amitav Ghosh has observed that just as life is very fragile in the Sundarbans, due to its drastic natural unpredictabilities similarly, the forests of the Sundarbans too are very fragile which is needed to be protected from the destruction of the human-centric activities. There are many examples of climate change throughout this novel. One such example is, when Nilima is surprised to hear that Kanai, her nephew, has chosen to come to Lusibari on way through Canning. When Kanai asks her why she is so surprised, Nilima tells him that: “because of the river...it’s changed” (2004 p.23). Nilima’s husband, Nirmal, too observes signs of the climatic changes and degradation of the environmental condition in the Sundarbans and he says that: “Now it was as if I could see those signs everywhere... the birds were vanishing, the fish were dwindling and from day to day the land was being reclaimed by the sea...to submerge the tide country?” (2004 p. 215). Similarly, Piya, the cetologist, during her conversation with Kanai admits that the dolphin population in the rivers of that region has really been reduced than what it was in the past. She also adds that whenever any such drastic changes in the natural habitat of the marine mammals occur, it should be understood that some kind of environmental deterioration must have happened. In Piya’s words, “it means something’s gone very, very wrong” (2004 p. 267). As Divya Anand (2008) has rightfully said that the unique ambivalent characteristics of this place lies in its being both the subject as well as the object and becoming the victim and also the victimizer with regular intervals. The natural landscape of the Sundarbans, consisting of the mangrove forest, has become a victim of deforestation and the consequential climate change. Similarly, the local residents of the Sundarbans too are becoming the victims of irregular flows of tides, cyclonic storms and they are also losing the means of their livelihood because of the scarcity of fishes in the forest rivers due to the climatic upheavals.

The hostile nature of the Sundarbans rivers has been exposed through many instances in this novel. One such example is when Piya fell down into the crocodile infested river from the boat where she and Fokir were on board and she failed to see anything under water except darkness: “rivers like the Ganga and Brahmaputra shroud this window with a curtain of silt: in their occluded waters light loses its directionality within a few centimetres of the surface” (2004 p. 54). She would have drowned there on that day had

she not been saved by Fokir. Fokir being a local inhabitant was well acquainted with the riverine meanders of the Sundarbans forests and he guided Piya to trace the location of the specific river dolphins called *Orcaella Brevirostris*. Piya and Fokir are the two different cultural embodiments. Whereas Fokir embodies the local, marginalized and indigenous culture, Piya on the other hand embodies the science and technology driven globalized cosmopolitan culture. By bringing these two different cultural flows together and portraying their interactions with the untamed natural environment, Amitav Ghosh has attempted to show that in order to retain undisturbed cultural existence every culture should be complementary to the other. Fokir had natural experiences and Piya had scientific knowledge and through their collaborative endeavours they became successful in finding out the natural habitat of the river dolphins. Amitav Ghosh (2004 p.295) has also described an event where the villagers had killed a tiger by setting the whole stable on fire where the tiger had entered. Piya was shocked in seeing such mob-violence for killing a tiger. When she tries to go for preventing that violence, Fokir stops her and tries to make her understand that these are quite natural practices for the people of that region. Kanai is found to convince Piya that Fokir can never be considered an ecologist as he kills fishes and other natural marine creatures to run his livelihood. But Piya is seen as completely disillusioned from any such doubts about Fokir. But still, through Kanai's question, as Terri Tomskey (2009) observes, Amitav Ghosh has attempted to shed some light on the agency of the marginalized people. Through Nilima's words it becomes quite clear that many people are killed by the tigers in the Sundarbans and the concerned authorities do not even maintain any proper records of such deaths. These tiger attacks constitute another aspect of natural hostility in the Sundarbans. As Divya Anand (2008) observes that no effective government initiative has been taken to prevent such unexpected killing. Through Kusum's glimpses, who is a refugee in the Sundarbans, Amitav Ghosh has shown how people had sacrificed their lives during the Marichjhapi massacre occurred in 1979. To protest against the eviction policy declared by the then West Bengal government in the name of protecting animal rights and preserving the natural environment of the Sundarbans thousands of migrants had sacrificed their lives. Shakti Jaising (2015) has stated that through this contextual narratives Amitav Ghosh has criticized the nasty environmental politics played at the cost of human lives. Ghosh (2004) writes, "It seemed to me that this whole world had become a place of animals, and our fault, our crime, was that we were just human beings, trying to live as human beings always have, from the water and the soil" (2004 p.262). Referring to this incident Divya Anand (2008) observes that Amitav Ghosh has successfully shown that the conservation model that had been introduced in imitation of the Eurocentric notions of environmental preservation policy, for gaining some political advantage, was an utter failure and had resulted in death and violence.

**Conclusion:**

Therefore, Amitav Ghosh in his alternative cosmopolitan vision, projected through his selected fiction and non-fiction writings, has shown his concern for any violence either against the environment or against the animals and the humans of this planet. He has also critically addressed the unrestricted expansion of industrialization and urbanization of this era. He has portrayed a generalized view of the jeopardized condition of the whole human race whether they belong to the South-Asian countries or to some other parts of this world. Amitav Ghosh has pointed out that the level of carbon emission has increased over times which is causing disruptions to the process of sustainable development. Whether it is through his non-fiction, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable* (2016) or through his fiction, *The Hungry Tide* (2004), Amitav Ghosh has shown some exclusive concern for the Sundarbans. He addresses the reasons, affecting the biodiversity of the largest mangrove forest and leading to the destruction of the eco-friendly environment of the Sundarbans. Through his narratives, Amitav Ghosh has also criticized the failure of the writers, political governing bodies and most of all the ordinary population in understanding and imagining the catastrophic future as a result of their irresponsible anthropocentric activities. In his view to fight against the consequences of catastrophic climate change there should be a reconnecting bonding of friendship between nature and the human beings and it is the responsibility of the humans to preserve this natural environment with all their might and conscience.

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