



# Navigating Ecological Crisis: Themes Of Climate Change And Environmental Resilience In Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement* And *The Hungry Tide*

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**Abstract:** This abstract gives an account of the essence and teachings of the provided material. It starts with looking at how ecological changes have occurred over time with a sense of urgency to tackle 21st century climate change. Amitav Ghosh's "*The Great Derangement*" is used as a centre point to criticize society's denial and inaction towards climate change and where we should be heading. Ghosh uses his analysis to explore the cultural and psychological barriers that hinder efforts to address climate change, focusing on fiction's lack in this regard. Further, the abstract covers issues concerning climate change including environmental disruptions, social and economic inequalities driven by anthropogenic factors like greenhouse gas emissions. The concept of environmental resilience includes ecosystem and community capacity to endure and adapt to environmental changes. Through powerful descriptions of humans' relationship with nature in Sundarbans, "*The Hungry Tide*", one work by Ghosh highlights because environmental resilience matters most. These two books underline that human destinies are interlinked with planetary ecosystems hence calling for courage, empathy, imagination when it comes to climate change.

**Keywords – ecocriticism, environment, nature, ecosystem.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

As an opening, it gives a clue of the changes that have taken place over time in terms of ecology. The main focus is on quick and fast changes that are happening in the world today particularly in this century. Amitav Ghosh, in his book "*The Great Derangement*," talks about what might become of our world one day and the things it will undergo. Writers haven't written fiction about global warming and climate change; hence, there is no perspective on earth's future. As he observes that the planet appears to be increasingly unsafe, Amitav Ghosh wonders how unpredictable its future is becoming. Today many countries experience regular natural calamities such as floods, earthquakes and landslides but moreover the biggest global problem which is affecting the fate of the Earth through climate change has continued to worsen. Surprisingly, there is no imaginative framework for understanding or portraying this whatsoever. This is probably the overarching issue in contemporary literature especially in relation to imaginative representation because it is almost absent from fiction or art at large. In short, he refers to it as "*The Great Derangement*".

Amitav Ghosh: A Voice on Climate Change Amitav Ghosh is hailed as “perhaps the foremost literary chronicler of the Indian Ocean in our time” and “outstanding and influential, one of the most brilliant contemporary novelists writing in English”. Ghosh was born in Calcutta, India, in 1956 and spent the majority of his youth wandering in various regions and cultures throughout the Indian subcontinent. His novels, essays, and nonfiction have a distinctive tone that incorporates an awareness of the relationship between human society and nature. The ideas of migration, identity, and ecological awareness underscore Ghosh’s contribution to understanding climate change and environmental debate, which neatly folds back into his book “*The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*”. In this eye-penning treatise, Ghosh maintains that the inadequacy of the literary imagination to immerse itself in the practical situations of earth’s evolution is based on cultural predisposition and cognitive dissociation. In the course of referencing history, science, and literature, Ghosh believes that the human mind lacks the capacity to understand that it faces a dire and existential menace in climate change. He refers to this situation as “derangement” as the scale of the crisis is unimaginable.

In the midst of norms and conflicting thoughts Ghosh’s fictional stories delve into the complexities of climate change and resilience, in nature grounding ideas in the real-life experiences of a diverse cast. “*The Hungry Tide*” (2004) unfolding in the Sundarbans—a sprawling mangrove region known for its wildlife and delicate environment—serves as a reflection on the intricate relationships between humans and nature. Amidst rising sea levels and environmental decline Ghosh tells a story of survival and adjustment following characters as they navigate the waters of the Sundarbans while facing struggles and societal expectations. Across both “*The Great Derangement*” and “*The Hungry Tide*,” Ghosh challenges prevailing narratives that contribute to harm and exploitation of resources. Through storytelling and astute observations Ghosh prompts readers to confront the realities of climate change and consider new paths toward environmental care and resilience. By blending knowledge with storytelling Ghosh transcends academic boundaries presenting a comprehensive view of the ecological crisis and advocating for collaborative efforts, towards positive change.

In the face of accelerating climate change and the proliferation of geopolitical conflicts, Ghosh’s novels are reminders of the connectedness of human destinies and planetary lifeforms. The prevailing narratives of contemporary societies, as humans seek solutions to the environmental challenges and learn to balance earthly and sustainable accounts, those narratives uncovered stakes and threats that abound Ghosh’s literature. Thus, the juxtaposition of cultures, traditions, and narratives, as well as the interlace of environmental and social aspects in Ghosh’s literature, instills the reader with responsibility, care, and compassionate understanding of the world, where earth and life form have to become the harmonious unity. In his creative work, Ghosh encourages the pursuit of the melting pot of human experience and environmental health, thus ensuring fair access for the future generations. The novels have several linkage and interconnections in the focus of the issues explored by Amitav Ghosh in “*The Great Derangement*” and “*The Hungry Tide*”. Regardless of the type of inequality he illuminates, Ghosh uses his work to warn people of the apocalyptic threat of climate change and ecological destruction. Ghosh ignores political and cultural boundaries in an attempt to reach people in different countries. In intriguing people with the themes of apocalypse and crash, warning of the inevitability and scale of the disaster, Ghosh subconsciously reminds people of the need to reassess their relationship to the environment and attitude towards environmental problems. In addition, personal history is used by Ghosh as a way of representing what people should feel through the stories of people who are culturally or geographically alien to readers under the influence of the threatening force of climate change. Indeed, even his writing, which aims to instill a sense of activism with respect to climate change, inevitably tends.

## II. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

Climate change, a phenomenon involving the long-term changing of temperature and weather patterns, is primarily caused by human activity, known as anthropogenic causes. The leading cause is the release of GHGs into the atmosphere produced by burning oil, coal, or natural gas for energy usage. Carbon dioxide produced from combustion, methane, and nitric oxide are three of the GHGs that act as heat absorption inhibitors that lead to increasing heat and global warming. The burning and eradication of trees for agriculture, logging, and city growth, as well as the eradication of the world’s carbon dioxide absorption, are contributing factors. Additionally, the production of industrial materials such as cement and chemicals releases GHGs and contaminants into the surrounding environment.

Other human activities, such as agricultural practices, livestock farming, and fertilizer use, lead to methane and nitrous oxide generation. The use of open burning techniques and landfill decomposition for waste management also release GHGs into the atmosphere. These human-induced activities have increased the atmospheric GHG quantity since the industrial age began and have contributed to various climate-related effects, such as raising temperatures, extreme weather occurrences, and declining biodiversity. To mitigate these effects, emissions must be reduced, power and resources must be derived from non-polluting sources, ecosystems must be conserved, and adaptive actions must be implemented for the most affected populations.

Climate change is characterized by a variety of interconnected effects that cascade through ecosystems, societies, and economies around the world. The most obvious human-induced phenomenon is the constant rise in temperature: glaciers and ice caps are melting, with most glaciers losing mass throughout the year, sea levels are increasing, disrupting coastal communities through frequent flooding and erosion. Natural calamities, such as hurricanes, droughts, floods, and wildfires, become more common and intense as ever before, causing billions in damage to infrastructure, agriculture, and human life. Changes in precipitation patterns and loss of biodiversity sicken agricultural systems and water security in many of the world's most vulnerable parts. Ocean acidification, driven by the increasing consumption of CO<sub>2</sub> by the seas, threatens marine life and fisheries, reducing biodiversity and influencing the world's most important coastal economies.

In addition, such environmental shifts have dire social and economic implications, leading to increased disparities, compelled displacement, and overutilization of resources and infrastructure. Taken together, the impacts of climate changes threaten the very existence of natural and human systems, and the urgency of the situation calls for concerted global measures to reduce emissions, embrace high adaptation strategies, and build resilience as the climate keeps changing. Specifically, environmental resilience is defined as the ability of ecosystems, communities, and socio-ecological systems to endure and bounce back from disruptions, uncertainties, and stressors while retaining the capacity to retain essential structures and arrangements. It refers to the natural and human systems' ability to cushion, acclimate, and bounce back from environmental shifts and hurdles, particularly climate-change effects, anthropogenic activities, and calamities. The key components of environmental resilience are the resilience of ecosystem health and functioning, developing adaptive capacity via flexible management schemes and social learning, the connectivity of social and ecological systems, resource use efficiency and conservation, social equity and inclusiveness, effective governance and policy, and risk reduction and preparedness. Through the integration of these elements, resilient systems can become more resistant to changes and disturbances in the environment, ensuring sustainability and prosperity for human and natural systems in the conditions of uncertainty and change.

### III. ECOLOGICAL INSIGHTS FROM THE HUNGRY TIDE AND THE GREAT DERANGEMENT

Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement* offers a remarkably insightful perspective on our collective failure as humans to adequately recognize and respond to the existential challenge of climate change. The book forces us to sober up and escape the delusion of safety and the sleep of reason, shedding light on the dark truths about our ecological plight and the countless cultural narratives that cement societal denial and inaction. Ghosh's work revolves around the following common topics: human responses to climate change and collective denial. Ghosh explores the way in which the path dependence of climate change has given rise to psychological, social, and cultural brakes that have left us unable to take adequate massive action. The narratives of progress, growth, and human exceptionalism we have put forward have left us in such a collective state of "derangement" that it is impossible to fathom the true extent of the catastrophe. Through an examination of historical events such as the European Enlightenment or the Petro cultures from which Western hegemony arose.

Furthermore, Ghosh delves into the cultural and literary narratives that shape the imagination gap. According to Ghosh, the lack of imagination shows much greater cultural predispositions and otherness, maintaining two predominant themes of culture presenting insurmountable odds, and manifests brutality and incapability regarding resistance inside growing ecological challenges. In this way, "*The Great Derangement*" is a plea to readers to become uncomfortable with the agonizing situations of climate change and reject the cultural narratives that inhibit climate and action. In his stirring criticism and his passionate plea for environmental justice, Ghosh encourages his audience to a position of moral courage, compassion, and empathy, and active challenge in the globe. Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* takes readers into the intricate and fragile ecology

of the Sundarbans, a large mangrove delta between India and Bangladesh. The author conjures up vivid images and complex characters to create a gripping story of how people can adapt and bounce back even in the face of formidable natural challenges. Throughout the novel, Ghosh focuses on two interrelated themes, viz. the natural phenomena of the human experience with the Sundarbans. It is the intricate web of human-nature relationships and their dual nature of cooperation and conflict that Ghosh seeks to explore through his characters' trajectories.

*The Hungry Tide* also illustrates the significance of environmental resilience during the times of ecological crisis. Ghosh portrays that the resilience and adaptability of the indigenous people provides a model for the sustainable coexistence with nature; in addition, *The Hungry Tide* indicated the need for the environmental stewardship and joint effort to preserve at-risk ecosystems for posterity. In *The Hungry Tide*, Amitav Ghosh welcomes the readers to journey to the midst of human existence, the Sundarbans.

#### IV. COMPARISON AND ANALYSIS

Thus, *The Great Derangement* and *The Hungry Tide* both closely examine the human-nature interactions from different angles. The former book delves deeply into the societal and cultural-level barriers preventing communities from adequately responding to climate change. The latter book focuses on human-nature interactions within one specific ecological system of Sundarbans. Both books involve the criticism of human societies' denial of and inaction in the face of the ecological challenges. *The Great Derangement* criticizes the reinforcement of climate change denial through psychological, social, and cultural barriers. *The Hungry Tide* focuses on the characters' experiences with the aftermath of environmental damage, making a parallel between the messages of resilience and adaptation. Despite the difference in the narrative alignment, both books could offer a profound call for action.

The cultural and societal dimensions of climate change constitute the major focus of *The Great Derangement*, while "*The Hungry Tide*" concentrates more on specific ecological challenges that its characters face within Sundarbans. In examining socio-cultural response to climate change, *The Great Derangement* tends to encompass a wider view with examples from history and various cultures. Conversely, in *The Hungry Tide*, this perspective is localized as it goes into the details of how humans relate with the Sundarbans ecosystem. Consequently, "*The Great Derangement*" can be classified as a non-fiction work that incorporates historical analysis, cultural criticism and personal reflection, while on the other hand "*The Hungry Tide*" falls under fiction category which uses vivid imagery, well-developed characters and evocative storytelling to explore ecological themes.

In the novels "*The Great Derangement*" and "*The Hungry Tide*," the authors have explored the themes of grave import

ance in relation to today's global ecological conversations. The books demonstrate how people respond to climate change, show how society denies and does nothing, and illustrate how humans interact with environment. Therefore, they point out that we must face ecological challenges boldly, respectfully and vividly by examining human relations with nature while also critiquing social denial towards it. Amitav Ghosh's incisive analytical style coupled with his ability to tell a story challenges readers to realize some of the uncomfortable truths surrounding our environmental crisis as well as conceive future environmental resilience projects that could help mitigate this problem.

#### V. CONCLUSION

To sum up, Amitav Ghosh's works, such as "*The Great Derangement*" and "*The Hungry Tide*", offer valuable understandings into the way humans relate with our environment and the current issues of climate change. By employing sharp analysis and engaging narratives, Ghosh sheds light on cultural, psychological, and ecological dimensions regarding our collective reaction to environmental emergencies; thus, compelling his readers to face the uncomfortable truths that surround environmental challenges and come up an alternative way forward towards resilience and sustainability. Notably, Ghosh's research indicates that there are widespread cultural narratives as well as psychological barriers which sustain climate change denial while hampering effective responses to environmental problems.

In addition, by critically examining historical events alongside cultural forces, Ghosh unveils what underlies societal inaction hence calling for societal values and priorities to be re-evaluated. The two novels examine human-nature interrelations in detail thereby showing how interconnectedness is a characteristic of human destinies against ecological systems. Consequently, the characters portrayed by Ghosh find themselves struggling with outcomes of environmental degradation that has culminated into ecologic uncertainty where they must adapt to ensure their existence beyond this point becomes sustainable. Ghosh underlines the significance of ecological adaptation in relation to climate change and other environmental challenges. However, Ghosh suggests that one can find a way out through stories of resilience and adaptation, which point to sustainable coexistence with nature. He does this by focusing on traditional knowledge, community-based methods and collective action as drivers for resilience and sustainability.

Climate change awareness and advocacy would significantly be impacted upon by the works of Amitav Ghosh. In a bid to make his readers understand that there is need for valuing courage amidst complexity, Ghosh confronts societal denial and inaction while investigating human-nature connections. Ghosh's incisive analysis coupled with his passionate style of storytelling provokes readers into engaging with the ecological crisis, where they question existing narratives as well as visualize alternative ways of maintaining environment's healthiness or ability to recover from changes made on it. As a result, what comes out in the novels are powerful calls for support to fight against the devastating effects caused by climatic shift; this is only possible if all people are ready to face their fears on such situation without hiding away from them hence working towards an equal future regardless of gender or race

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