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**BOND BETWEEN MAN AND NATURE IN AMITAV GHOSH'S 'THE HUNGRY TIDE':  
UNDERSTANDING ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS AND HUMANITY**

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**Abstract**

Through ages Nature both as a theme and as inspiration has been remain in literature. Literature radiates life, shapes, moulds and most prominently reflects .So the bond between Man and Nature is ancient in every aspects. Amitav Ghosh a writer of prolific sensibility remains always preoccupied with Nature in his writings.Simply he loves nature and he wants to save nature with utmost concern around the globe. His picture-postcard realism shows that how meticulously he observes .The Hungry Tide explores the bond between man and nature .With the development of the storyline both in past and in present Nature gets itself presented throughout the novel .The characterization has been designed through people like Fokir, Moyna, Horen, Kusum to highlight the close relationship of man and nature. The novel, The Hungry Tide is a fantastic tale of human emotions and man-nature relationship. The study of physical environment and literature is known as Ecocriticism that denotes relation of literature with nature. Environmentalism and humanism both have been approached in the novel keeping in mind the issues like conservation of nature, survival of humanity ecological justice and above all the harmony between man and nature. The bond between man and nature is key to this study.The present study aims to reveal the theme that conservation of nature should not stand against paralysed people and humanity should be of high concern and conservation policy should be readdressed thoughtfully to keep a balance between human and non-human objects..

Key words- nature, ecocriticism, environmentalism, humanity conservation

**Introduction**

Amitav Ghosh,a well-known personality in the field of Indian English writing has dealt with Nature meticulously to flourish the themes of the novel. "I Love not Man the less, Nature more"-this visionary statement seems to be in tune with Ghosh's writing that establishes his love, care and anxiety for nature to serve the humanity better. He

has dealt with Nature in present and in past the flora and the fauna of the locale in his novels that strike us most to think over the society in relation with Nature. The Hungry Tide is a tale of struggle of displaced people to live in and around Sundarban ,a delta covering large area of both India and Bangladesh .In this archipelago it seems an astonishing spectacle to witness that an entire civilization has sprouted suddenly in the mud .The

whole region is full with biodiversity. Sundarban is the another name of mangrove forest and the Royal Bengal Tiger. The whole area is a 'tide country', "bhatirdesh" where transformation is the rule of nature. This delta where rivers stray from week to week, island appear and disappear in days is an astonishment of Nature. This vast region is covered with mangroves. These trees are regenerate and recolonize in short time.

Environmental consciousness and the relevance of Nature have been remain important aspects in his novels to make the issue more prominent in third world nations. The Hungry Tide, a tale of nature and its people, their struggle against Nature their love with Nature have brilliantly been dealt in the novel. Sundarban, the easternmost coastal area of West Bengal is the locale of the novel. The overwhelming beauty of the rivers and the mangrove forest are everywhere in this delta and in the novel. Nature seems to be wrapped as much to the islanders so as to the storyline. Ghosh tries to explore another and far more unknowable forest and the rivers of this tide country and the depth of human psychology. The human endeavour to struggle limitless and the mystery of nature are weaved together for striking effect that demands more explanations for the past deeds.

The people of this settlement struggle every moment to live. Deadly tigers, crisis of existence and natural disaster are constant threats to them. The lives of Piyali, Fokir and Kanai coming from different world collide here. The novel at last explores humanism and environmentalism in association with Nature. Natural setting finds elaborate expression through the lips of the characters like Kanai and Piyali. The novelist tries to state that law of the forest must be maintained to keep the ecological balance and order intact: "All was well until human greed intruded to upset this order"

Through the episode of Bon Bibi the ecological justice has been presented. Water an important entity of Sundarban, the mangrove forest the flora the fauna and the wild life all with pictorial and graphic presentation have made the novel really a tale of Nature and Man that must be protected from the cruelty of society. At the sight of

magical light radiated from the glowworms Kanai and Piya found themselves charmed at such miracle of nature, rare one available only in and around the mangrove forest of this delta. Nature with so much biodiversity has presented itself beautifully.

Nature is the prime source of everything in the lives of the islanders. The people of this delta are dependent on Nature. At the advancement of time and technology the ecological balance gets itself disturbed and the conservation policy adopted on the footprints of westerners does not help much to maintain the order of ecology. In ecological framework both human and non-human entities are important enough and cannot be sacrificed at the cost of others. Forceful eviction in the name of conservation has resulted in tragic deaths of many displaced people who are just the victims of partition politics in favour of independence of India.

Nature, the best translator of human senses has taught Fokir like people the skill of recognizing upcoming peril in form of tiger from far away. What Fokir has learnt Kanai could not as former one is in close contact with nature later not.

Nature gives scope to life always and after the partition unwanted the people found themselves in utter shock as where to go leaving their lush green lands, their rivers. So the islanders tried their settlement in this marginalized area 'bhatirdesh' as they found the atmospheric affinity accustomed with their ethnic tradition.

In this text Ghosh tries to present that link of these displaced folks with Nature providing the details of flora and fauna of these islands. Through the lips of Nirmal, the retired headmaster the novelist highlighted their choice of settlement: "rivers ran our heads, the tides were in our blood". The novel shows that marginalized people mostly live at the mercy of Nature that gives life to them and takes life too. Power seldom shows any respect to the struggle of their livelihood. Instead of sympathy the islanders got forceful eviction and economic blockade in the name of conservation to settle elsewhere completely different to their customs and ethnicity.

The novel is an exploration of a new world unknown to rest of the world in terms of Sundarban, the tide country which is itself a mystery. This vast coastal area, the tide country in the novel is indeed a cluster of islands mostly covered with mangrove forest where the borderline between life and death is very thin. The inhabitants are under constant threat of losing their lives by deadly tigers and crocodiles or by snake bite. The lives of the islanders are restricted to natural resources they could avail after hard toil by catching fish and crabs in the rivers. Nature saves them one hand and kills them in form of tide and storm. The tide is hungry for lives and the people starve to death being hungry or they are allowed to be killed by economic blockade. Partition has caused a great change in the social lives of Bengal giving birth to the tragic story of displacement of millions of people, The migration took place from their own homeland, from their rivers to hardship or nowhere to go actually. These settlers find themselves jeopardized being the victims of partition politics, and forceful eviction in the name of conservation of forest and wild life.

The Hungry Tide is not merely a study of environmentalism rather a complex one that tells a tale of displaced people to whom one day nature in form of tide, wild animal, storm or the poverty kill or they were allowed to be killed in terms of Marichjhapi massacre in 1979. The struggle of marginalized section or the subaltern people with Nature and with Power flags several pertinent questions on Humanity to be answered yet. The writer tries to show how the everyday life of the people like Moyna, Kusum, Fokir, Horen revolves with the nature. Happiness and misery come to their life like tide and ebb. Piyali, the cetologist after travelling a lot finds solace and happiness in Fokir, a man very close to nature who saves her life but dies while saving Piyali's life in untimely storm. The play of tides continues through ages amid birth and death ultimately. It is nature in form of tides remain hungry always. Nature is the all sources of experiences in moulding the senses in the lives of these islanders. Fokir a rustic man can feel fear but Kanai fails to do so. Through the portrayal of characters like Kanai, Fokir, Horen. Ghosh explores the truth that nature is able to search the inner perceptions of human

psychology. Lost paradise must be regained in order to survive peacefully. An ethical stands and commitment to the natural world play a pivotal role. The Hungry Tide a tale of existential crisis of human and non-human objects in an archipelago the tide country, Sundarban is the source of awareness to restore the balance and bond between man and nature. The crabs help the mangroves by eating the debris caused by the mangrove roots. The rare dolphin lives in this delta but they are also in danger as nylon, petrol are being used in the rivers. So nature must be respected to live peacefully for our better tomorrows and human beings should be treated in dignified way. The Hungry Tide is unique both in theme and presentation to reveal the bond between man and nature.

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