Between Human Dominion and Ecological Consciousness: Anthropocentric Conflicts and Ecocentric Visions in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*, *The Jungle Nama*, And *Gun Island*.

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***Abstract*—The growing ecological crisis has encouraged literary scholars to reconsider the relationship between human beings and the natural world. Amitav Ghosh's literary works offer a significant contribution to this discussion by challenging anthropocentric assumptions that position humanity as the central authority over nature. This article examines the conflict between human dominion and ecological consciousness in *The Hungry Tide* (2004), *The Jungle Nama* (2021), and *Gun Island* (2019). Drawing on ecocriticism, postcolonial environmental criticism, and the concept of the Anthropocene, the study analyses how Ghosh represents the vulnerability of ecosystems, the consequences of human intervention, and the interconnectedness of human and non-human life. In The Hungry Tide, the Sundarbans emerge as a dynamic ecological environment in which conservation policies, human survival, and animal protection frequently come into conflict. *The Jungle Nama* reinterprets the Bon Bibi legend to foreground the ethical obligations that govern human relationships with the forest and its inhabitants. In *Gun Island*, climate change, migration, and environmental instability demonstrate that ecological disturbances transcend geographical and political boundaries. Through these works, Ghosh questions the assumption that nature exists primarily to serve human interests and advocates a relational understanding of ecological existence. The article argues that his literary imagination moves beyond a simple opposition between humanity and nature, presenting ecological responsibility, social justice, and interspecies coexistence as interconnected ethical imperatives.**

***Index Terms*—Amitav Ghosh, Ecocriticism, Anthropocentrism, Ecocentrism, Environmental Justice.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between humanity and nature has become one of the most pressing concerns in contemporary literature. Industrialisation, deforestation, biodiversity loss, climate change, and the exploitation of natural resources have exposed the limitations of worldviews that privilege human interests over ecological stability. Literature has increasingly become a space in which such assumptions can be questioned, particularly through narratives that represent the consequences of environmental destruction for both human and non-human communities. Ecocriticism, which examines the relationship between literature and the physical environment, provides a critical framework for investigating these concerns.

Amitav Ghosh occupies an important position in contemporary environmental writing because his fiction connects ecological instability with colonial histories, economic inequality, migration, and cultural memory. Rather than treating nature as a passive background to human experience, Ghosh represents the environment as an active force that shapes human relationships, social structures, and historical developments. His literary works repeatedly challenge the distinction between human civilisation and the supposedly external natural world.

Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* explores the complex relationship between human communities, wildlife, and conservation in the Sundarbans. The novel

presents an ecosystem in which tides, storms, mangrove forests, and animal populations influence the lives of those who inhabit the region. The author's official description of the novel emphasises the unstable boundaries between freshwater and saltwater, land and sea, and the continuous transformation of the Sundarbans landscape ("*The Hungry Tide*"). These environmental conditions challenge the assumption that nature can be permanently controlled through human knowledge or political authority.

In *The Jungle Nama*, Ghosh revisits the Sundarbans through a verse adaptation of the Bon Bibi legend. The work draws upon a traditional narrative involving Bon Bibi, Dokkhin Rai, Dukhey, and the forest, presenting ecological coexistence as a matter of ethical obligation rather than unlimited possession.

In *Gun Island*, the ecological concerns associated with the Sundarbans expand into a transnational narrative of climate disruption, displacement, and the unexpected connections between distant geographical locations.

Although the three works differ in genre, narrative form, and historical setting, they share a central concern: the consequences of placing human ambition above ecological relationships. This article argues that Ghosh exposes the contradictions of anthropocentric thinking while developing an ecocentric vision grounded in interdependence, environmental responsibility, and social justice. It further contends that his ecological imagination does not demand the exclusion of human beings from nature; instead, it calls for a reconsideration of humanity's place within the larger living world.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: ANTHROPOCENTRISM AND ECOCENTRISM

Anthropocentrism refers to a worldview that places human beings at the centre of moral, intellectual, and practical concerns. Within an anthropocentric framework, nature is frequently valued according to its usefulness to humanity. Forests become timber resources, rivers become sources of commercial power, and animals are evaluated according to their economic, cultural, or recreational significance. Although human survival inevitably involves the use of natural resources, anthropocentrism becomes problematic when human convenience is treated as sufficient justification for ecological destruction.

Ecocentrism offers an alternative perspective by recognising the intrinsic significance of ecological communities and the interdependence of their constituent elements. It challenges the assumption that non-human life matters only because it supports human existence. From an ecocentric perspective, animals, forests, rivers, and other ecological systems possess significance beyond their immediate usefulness to human beings.

Cheryll Glotfelty's introduction to The Ecocriticism Reader establishes ecocriticism as the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment (xviii). This approach encourages literary scholars to examine how texts represent nature, environmental degradation, and the ethical responsibilities associated with human relationships to the non-human world. Lawrence Buell similarly develops environmental criticism through attention to the representation of the physical environment and the ways literary works challenge human-centred assumptions about the world.

Postcolonial ecocriticism further complicates this relationship by examining how environmental exploitation intersects with colonialism, poverty, displacement, and unequal access to resources. Rob Nixon's concept of "slow violence" describes forms of environmental harm that develop gradually, often invisibly, and disproportionately affect vulnerable populations (2). His argument is particularly relevant to Ghosh's representations of ecological vulnerability because environmental destruction frequently unfolds through long-term processes rather than spectacular, immediately visible catastrophes. These theoretical perspectives establish the foundation for the present analysis.

Anthropocentrism and ecocentrism are treated not as absolute categories but as competing ethical orientations that emerge within the selected works. Ghosh's narratives reveal that environmental conflicts cannot be understood exclusively through the opposition between humans and nature. They must also be examined in relation to social inequality, political authority, economic exploitation, and the unequal distribution of ecological risks.

III. THE HUNGRY TIDE: HUMAN SURVIVAL, WILDLIFE, AND THE POLITICS OF CONSERVATION

3.1 The Sundarbans as an Uncontrollable Ecological World

In The Hungry Tide, the Sundarbans function as much more than a geographical setting. The mangrove ecosystem shapes the narrative's atmosphere, influences the characters' decisions, and determines the conditions under which human and non-human life coexist. Its shifting waterways, tidal movements, and unpredictable weather challenge the human desire to establish permanent boundaries and exercise complete control over the environment.

The novel's representation of the Sundarbans destabilises the conventional opposition between civilisation and wilderness. The landscape is neither an empty space awaiting human occupation nor a static natural environment that exists independently of human history. Instead, it is a dynamic ecological system in which human communities, animal populations, water, and vegetation remain interconnected. This representation challenges the anthropocentric assumption that nature is fundamentally passive. Human beings may attempt to map, classify, and regulate their surroundings, but their knowledge cannot eliminate the ecological uncertainties that govern the region. The landscape continually exposes the limitations of human authority.

The novel's title itself suggests an environment characterised by movement and instability. The tide is not simply a natural phenomenon but a reminder that ecological processes operate according to rhythms that human institutions cannot fully command. The Sundarbans repeatedly demonstrate that the environment is not a possession securely controlled by human beings but a changing world within which they must learn to live.

Adam Trexler's discussion of *The Hungry Tide* identifies the novel as a significant text for understanding the relationship between climate change, scientific knowledge, and literary representation (205–24). His analysis helps establish the novel's importance within environmental criticism. Ghosh's narrative similarly demonstrates that ecological knowledge must emerge through encounters between scientific observation, local experience, and the material realities of the landscape.

3.2 Piya Roy and the Ethics of Scientific Knowledge

Piya Roy, a cetologist studying aquatic mammals, represents a scientific approach to the environment. Her research on the endangered Irrawaddy dolphins reflects the importance of systematic observation and empirical knowledge in understanding threatened species. Through Piya, Ghosh acknowledges the value of scientific research in identifying ecological vulnerability and promoting wildlife conservation.

Nevertheless, the novel complicates the relationship between scientific knowledge and environmental responsibility. Piya's professional expertise does not automatically provide her with a complete understanding of the social conditions in which wildlife conservation takes place. Her encounters with local inhabitants reveal that ecological research is embedded in relationships involving livelihoods, cultural knowledge, and competing claims to environmental resources.

Piya's interactions with Fokir, a local fisherman, are particularly significant. Fokir possesses an intimate understanding of the waterways and their ecological patterns, even though his knowledge does not necessarily conform to formal scientific methods. His familiarity with the landscape demonstrates that environmental understanding can develop through practical experience, inherited knowledge, and everyday interaction with non-human life.

The relationship between Piya and Fokir therefore challenges the assumption that scientific expertise alone possesses authority over ecological knowledge. Ghosh does not simply oppose science to traditional knowledge; rather, he demonstrates the limitations of treating either as sufficient in isolation. Effective environmental understanding requires an engagement with different forms of knowledge. This tension is central to the novel's ecocentric possibilities. Nature cannot be understood exclusively through abstract scientific categories or reduced to the experiences of those who depend on it economically. Ecological responsibility requires an awareness of the relationships connecting scientific inquiry, local livelihoods, and the survival of non-human species.

3.3 Conservation and the Dispossession of Marginalised Communities

One of the most significant anthropocentric conflicts in *The Hungry Tide* emerges through the tension between wildlife protection and human survival. The novel explores the moral complications of conservation policies that prioritise the preservation of endangered animals while failing to adequately recognise the needs of economically vulnerable inhabitants.

The tiger becomes a particularly important figure in this conflict. As an endangered animal, it represents the importance of protecting biodiversity. However, for communities whose livelihoods are closely connected to the forest, the tiger may also represent a direct threat to human safety. These contrasting perceptions reveal that environmental ethics cannot be separated from the material circumstances of those who inhabit ecologically vulnerable regions.

Ghosh's treatment of the Morichjhapi episode further demonstrates the relationship between environmental regulation and political violence. The historical displacement of settlers from Morichjhapi reveals how the language of conservation can become entangled with state power, exclusion, and the denial of human rights. The novel does not suggest that wildlife protection is inherently oppressive. Instead, it exposes the injustice that arises when conservation becomes detached from social responsibility.

Jana María Giles argues that *The Hungry Tide* develops an ecocentric perspective by connecting environmental experience with postcolonial politics and the marginalisation of vulnerable communities (223–42). This interpretation illuminates the novel's refusal to present ecological preservation as a morally uncomplicated project.

The central issue is therefore not whether humans or animals deserve protection. Rather, it is whether environmental policies can recognise the significance of non-human life without reproducing the inequalities that expose marginalised people to suffering. Ghosh challenges both unrestricted human exploitation and forms of conservation that ignore human vulnerability.

3.4 Fokir's Death and Ecological Interdependence

Fokir's death during the cyclone represents one of the novel's most powerful demonstrations of human vulnerability. The storm exposes the inadequacy of human attempts to control the natural environment and reveals the devastating consequences of living within an unstable ecological system.

The cyclone should not be interpreted merely as an external force that interrupts human activity. It demonstrates how human lives are embedded in environmental processes that exceed individual intentions and institutional power. The natural world is neither a benevolent protector nor a deliberately hostile opponent; it operates through forces that can sustain life while also producing destruction.

Fokir's death also complicates the relationship between ecological knowledge and survival. His familiarity with the waterways does not provide complete protection against the storm. The event reveals that local knowledge, scientific expertise, and human courage remain limited in the face of certain environmental forces.

Piya's subsequent commitment to supporting conservation work in the region suggests a movement away from detached observation towards a more ethically engaged relationship with the landscape and its inhabitants. Ecological consciousness emerges not from the belief that nature can be mastered but from the recognition that human existence is inseparable from environmental vulnerability.

Through this narrative, *The Hungry Tide* presents ecocentrism as a form of humility. It requires human beings to recognise that their survival depends on ecological relationships they neither wholly understand nor completely control.

IV. *THE JUNGLE NAMA*: ECOLOGICAL ETHICS AND THE WISDOM OF FOLK TRADITION

4.1 Reimagining the Bon Bibi Legend

In *The Jungle Nama*, Ghosh shifts from the realist narrative of *The Hungry Tide* to a poetic retelling of a traditional Sundarbans legend. This change in literary form is significant because it enables ecological concerns to be expressed through folklore, spirituality, rhythm, and collective cultural memory. The work adapts the Bon Bibi narrative, in which the forest is governed by powers that demand ethical restraint from human beings.

The central figures include Bon Bibi, the protective guardian of the forest; Dokkhin Rai, associated with the tiger and the dangers of the wilderness; Dukhey, a vulnerable boy; and Dhona, a wealthy merchant whose ambitions threaten the established moral order.

Through these figures, Ghosh explores the relationship between economic desire, human vulnerability, and ecological limits.

The legend challenges the idea that the forest is an unrestricted resource available for commercial exploitation. Dhona's ambition reflects a familiar anthropocentric tendency: the desire to acquire wealth without adequately considering the consequences of human actions. In contrast, the ethical framework associated with Bon Bibi establishes limits on human possession and demands respect for the forest's inhabitants.

Ghosh's adaptation is particularly significant because it draws upon a cultural tradition in which human beings do not occupy an entirely separate moral universe from the natural environment. The forest is a living presence, and the relationship between humans and non-humans is governed by obligations that cannot be reduced to commercial calculation.

Ashwarya Samkaria's study of Jungle Nama identifies its ecological significance in the relationship between storytelling, embodied experience, and non-human agency (203–17). This approach supports the interpretation that Ghosh's work does not merely describe environmental responsibility as an abstract principle; it invites readers to imagine a world in which ethical relationships with nature are embedded in cultural practices and collective memory.

4.2 Dhona and the Anthropocentric Desire for Possession

Dhona's pursuit of wealth establishes one of the central conflicts in *The Jungle Nama*. His commercial ambition represents an attitude that evaluates the forest primarily according to the opportunities it offers for material gain. Such a perspective transforms ecological space into an object of possession and treats non-human life as subordinate to economic interests.

This conflict reflects the broader logic of anthropocentrism. When wealth and personal advancement become the primary measures of success, ecological limits are regarded as obstacles to be overcome rather than conditions necessary for collective survival. Nature is consequently reduced to a commodity, while the ethical obligations associated with its preservation are marginalised.

Ghosh's representation of Dhona does not merely criticise individual greed. It exposes a broader conflict between extractive economic thinking and the ecological relationships that sustain life in the Sundarbans. The forest cannot be understood exclusively as a commercial opportunity because its continued existence depends on relationships that exceed the calculations of profit and ownership.

The figure of Dukhey offers a contrasting perspective. His vulnerability exposes the unequal distribution of power within human society and demonstrates how the ambitions of wealthy individuals can endanger those with fewer resources. The conflict therefore connects environmental exploitation with social inequality. Those who possess economic power may pursue their interests, while vulnerable individuals bear the consequences.

This connection between social and ecological vulnerability is crucial to Ghosh's environmental vision. Ecocentrism cannot be reduced to the protection of forests and animals without considering the human relationships that shape environmental access, resource distribution, and survival. An ecologically responsible society must challenge both the unrestricted exploitation of nature and the social structures that allow powerful individuals to impose disproportionate risks on others.

4.3 Bon Bibi and the Ethics of Ecological Restraint

Bon Bibi represents an alternative ethical orientation to Dhona's acquisitive ambition. Her association with the forest establishes a moral framework in which human beings must recognise the limits of their claims over ecological space. Rather than treating the forest as a possession, the legend presents it as a domain in which human survival depends on respecting forces beyond human authority. This framework differs from a purely instrumental approach to environmental protection. Nature is not valuable only because it supplies food, shelter, or commercial resources. The forest possesses a significance that requires human beings to exercise restraint, acknowledge vulnerability, and accept obligations towards other forms of life.

The spiritual dimension of the Bon Bibi legend also challenges the assumption that legitimate environmental knowledge must originate exclusively in modern scientific institutions. Folklore and religious traditions can preserve ethical understandings of ecological interdependence, even though such traditions should not be treated as automatically free from hierarchy or exploitation.

Ghosh's adaptation creates a space in which inherited cultural narratives can contribute to contemporary environmental thought.

The poetic form of *The Jungle Nama* reinforces this ecological vision. Its verse structure draws attention to rhythm, repetition, and the relationship between storytelling and shared cultural experience. Through its formal qualities, the work suggests that ecological consciousness can be cultivated not only through scientific information but also through imagination, cultural memory, and emotional engagement.

Consequently, *The Jungle Nama* presents ecological restraint as an ethical necessity. The forest cannot be governed by the unrestricted ambitions of any individual because its ecological relationships exceed the boundaries of private ownership. Ghosh reimagines the Bon Bibi legend as a narrative of coexistence in which the preservation of life depends on recognising the limits of human dominion.

4.4 Folk Narratives as Ecological Knowledge

The significance of *The Jungle Nama* extends beyond its critique of greed. By adapting a regional legend for contemporary readers, Ghosh demonstrates how traditional narratives can contribute to environmental awareness. Folk stories preserve cultural memories of encounters between humans and non-human life, offering alternative ways of understanding the natural world.

In dominant modern economic frameworks, nature is frequently represented through measurable resources, market values, and management strategies. The Bon Bibi legend introduces a different mode of understanding in which ecological relationships are shaped by cultural obligations, spiritual beliefs, and the recognition of vulnerability.

Ghosh does not suggest that folklore can independently resolve contemporary environmental crises. Rather, he expands the range of perspectives through which those crises can be understood. The legend encourages readers to reconsider the assumption that human progress requires the unlimited appropriation of nature.

The work's ecological contribution lies in its capacity to imagine a relationship between humans and the forest that is neither based on complete domination nor on the romantic idealisation of wilderness. It presents coexistence as a negotiated relationship requiring humility, restraint, and awareness of interdependence.

V. *GUN ISLAND*: CLIMATE CHANGE, MIGRATION, AND TRANSNATIONAL ECOLOGICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

5.1 From the Regional Environment to a Planetary Crisis

In *Gun Island*, Ghosh extends the ecological concerns explored in his earlier Sundarbans writing into a transnational narrative. The novel follows Deen Datta, a dealer in rare books, whose engagement with a Bengali legend leads him into a wider network of environmental, cultural, and geographical connections. His journey links India with locations including Los Angeles and Venice, revealing the interconnected nature of contemporary ecological instability.

The geographical movement of the narrative is essential to its environmental argument. Ecological crises cannot be contained within national borders because atmospheric changes, oceanic processes, species movements, and human migration connect distant regions. The novel consequently challenges the belief that environmental destruction is a problem confined to particular landscapes or communities.

The publisher's description of *Gun Island* emphasises displacement, transition, and a world undergoing profound change ("*Gun Island*"). These themes establish the novel as an exploration of how environmental instability transforms both physical environments and human relationships.

The novel also questions the tendency to separate climate change from other historical and social processes. Environmental disruption intersects with migration, economic inequality, cultural memory, and the uneven distribution of global power. As a result, the ecological crisis cannot be explained exclusively through individual decisions or isolated natural disasters.

In The Great Derangement, Ghosh argues that contemporary literature and political thought have struggled to imagine the scale and significance of climate change (2016). His fictional narratives respond to this problem by placing ecological instability at the centre of storytelling rather than treating it as a peripheral concern. *Gun Island* particularly demonstrates how environmental processes can reorganise the movement of people, the meaning of place, and the relationship between past and present.

5.2 Deen Datta and the Limits of Rational Control

Deen initially approaches the world through habits of rationality and scepticism. His identity as a dealer in rare books reflects his familiarity with texts, historical knowledge, and the classification of cultural objects. However, his encounter with the legend of the gun merchant gradually unsettles his confidence in established explanations. This transformation has ecological significance because it challenges the assumption that modern rationality provides a complete framework for understanding reality. Deen must confront events and connections that resist easy categorisation within his existing worldview.

The novel does not require readers to abandon scientific reasoning in favour of supernatural explanations. Instead, it questions the assumption that modern scientific and secular frameworks exhaust every possible way of understanding the world. Ecological phenomena often expose the limitations of established categories, particularly when environmental change produces unfamiliar patterns of movement, behaviour, and displacement.

Deen's developing awareness also reflects the difficulty of recognising ecological connections that remain invisible within ordinary experience. Environmental change may occur gradually across distant locations, yet its consequences can eventually transform individual lives. His journey encourages readers to reconsider the separation between personal experience and planetary processes. Through Deen, Ghosh represents ecological consciousness as a process of intellectual and ethical transformation. Understanding the environment requires more than accumulating information; it also demands a willingness to reconsider assumptions about human exceptionalism, geographical boundaries, and the relationship between cultural narratives and material reality.

5.3 Climate-Induced Migration and Environmental Injustice

Migration is one of the central concerns of *Gun Island*. The novel connects the movement of people with environmental instability and the unequal conditions that shape opportunities for survival. Those who migrate do not necessarily leave their homes through unrestricted personal choice. Their decisions may be influenced by economic insecurity, changing environmental conditions, political vulnerability, and the absence of viable alternatives.

Such circumstances expose a fundamental injustice in the distribution of ecological risk. Communities that possess limited economic resources may have fewer opportunities to adapt to environmental disruption, while wealthier populations can often access safer housing, transportation, and alternative livelihoods. Environmental change therefore intensifies existing inequalities rather than affecting every individual in the same way.

Rob Nixon's concept of slow violence provides a useful framework for interpreting this dimension of the novel. Nixon explains that environmental harm can unfold gradually, often escaping public attention until its cumulative consequences become difficult to reverse (2). In Ghosh's narrative, ecological disruption must be understood not only through dramatic disasters but also through the long-term pressures that transform the conditions of human survival.

Migration also challenges the assumption that national borders provide meaningful protection against ecological instability. People may move across geographical boundaries, but the environmental forces shaping their movement do not conform to the political categories through which migration is regulated. The resulting tension reveals the limitations of systems that treat ecological disruption as an exclusively local or national problem.

Ghosh's representation of migration therefore connects environmental responsibility with questions of justice. A genuinely ecocentric approach must recognise non-human life while also addressing the unequal human consequences of ecological destruction. Environmental protection cannot be separated from the social conditions that determine who is most exposed to environmental harm and who has the resources to respond.

5.4 Animals, Legends, and Non-Human Agency

The animal figures and recurring mythological motifs in *Gun Island* challenge the assumption that non-human life exists merely as an object of human observation. Animals appear within a wider network of ecological relationships, cultural narratives, and environmental transformations. Their significance cannot be adequately understood through a framework that values them only according to their usefulness to human beings.

The novel's engagement with the gun merchant legend also establishes a relationship between folklore and ecological knowledge. The legend connects cultural memory with contemporary environmental experience, suggesting that narratives inherited from the past may acquire new meanings under changing ecological conditions. This interaction between myth and modernity complicates the conventional opposition between rational knowledge and traditional belief. Rather than presenting the past as irrelevant to the present, Ghosh suggests that inherited stories may provide imaginative resources for recognising relationships that modern social and economic systems frequently overlook.

The non-human world, in this context, is not simply a symbol of human anxieties. It possesses an ecological significance that cannot be reduced entirely to human interpretation. Such a perspective is central to ecocentrism because it encourages readers to acknowledge that human beings share the world with other forms of life whose existence is not dependent on human recognition.

By linking animal agency, myth, and environmental change, *Gun Island* expands the scope of ecological imagination. The novel asks readers to move beyond the assumption that humanity is the sole source of meaningful action and that nature is merely the setting in which human history unfolds.

VI. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS: FROM ANTHROPOCENTRIC CONFLICT TO ECOCENTRIC VISION

6.1 Three Texts, One Ecological Concern

Although The Hungry Tide, *The Jungle Nama*, and *Gun Island* employ different narrative forms, they collectively question the assumption that human beings possess an unquestionable right to dominate the natural world. Each work presents ecological relationships as complex, unstable, and inseparable from questions of power and responsibility. Through their representations of environmental conflict, cultural memory, and human vulnerability, Ghosh's works challenge anthropocentric perspectives and promote a more inclusive understanding of ecological existence.

In The Hungry Tide, ecological conflict emerges through the interaction between wildlife conservation and human survival. The novel exposes the limitations of environmental policies that disregard the circumstances of marginalised communities. The conflict between protecting endangered species and safeguarding human livelihoods demonstrates that conservation cannot be separated from questions of social justice. Through the experiences of Piya and Fokir, Ghosh highlights the importance of combining scientific knowledge with local ecological understanding. The novel consequently presents ecological coexistence as a process that requires respect for non-human life while acknowledging the material needs of vulnerable human communities.

In *The Jungle Nama*, the central ecological conflict arises from commercial greed and the desire to possess and exploit the forest. Through the Bon Bibi legend, Ghosh challenges the assumption that nature exists primarily as a resource for human consumption. The ambitions of Dhona represent an anthropocentric attitude that prioritises wealth and personal advancement over ecological responsibility. In contrast, the ethical framework associated with Bon Bibi emphasises restraint, cultural memory, and respect for the forest and its inhabitants. The work therefore presents ecological responsibility as a moral obligation that limits unrestricted human exploitation and encourages coexistence between human and non-human life.

In *Gun Island*, Ghosh extends his ecological concerns beyond the Sundarbans to explore the global consequences of environmental instability. The novel connects climate change with migration, cultural memory, and economic inequality, demonstrating that ecological crises transcend geographical and political boundaries. The movement of people across regions reveals how environmental disruption affects communities unequally, particularly those with limited resources and opportunities for adaptation. Through this transnational perspective, Ghosh challenges human exceptionalism and emphasises the interconnectedness of ecological systems and human societies. The novel consequently advances an ecocentric vision grounded in environmental awareness, interdependence, and social justice.

Taken together, these three works demonstrate the development of Ghosh's ecological imagination across realist fiction, verse narrative, and transnational storytelling. While *The Hungry Tide* foregrounds the tensions between conservation and human survival,

The Jungle Nama emphasises ethical restraint through folklore, and *Gun Island* explores the interconnected consequences of global environmental change. Their different approaches reveal that ecological consciousness cannot be achieved through the protection of nature alone; it also requires an examination of the social, economic, and political structures that influence human relationships with the environment. Ghosh's ecocentrism therefore does not simply reverse the hierarchy between humans and nature. Instead, it challenges the assumption that human interests and environmental protection can be considered independently, advocating a relational understanding in which ecological sustainability, social justice, and the recognition of non-human life become interconnected ethical responsibilities.

6.2 Nature as an Active Force Rather Than a Passive Resource

A central feature of all three works is the representation of nature as an active presence. In The Hungry Tide, tides, storms, and animal populations shape the possibilities of human survival. In *The Jungle Nama*, the forest is governed by an ethical and spiritual order that limits the ambitions of those who seek to exploit it. In *Gun Island*, environmental changes connect distant places and influence the movement of people and animals. These representations challenge the conventional literary tendency to treat nature as a decorative background to human experience.

The environment in Ghosh's works does not merely reflect human emotions or provide a setting for social conflict. It participates in the production of events and influences the development of the narrative itself. This approach corresponds with the ecocritical understanding that literature can challenge the conceptual separation between human society and the material environment. As Glotfelty argues in her introduction to The Ecocriticism Reader, literary criticism must extend its attention beyond exclusively human concerns to the relationship between texts and the physical world (xviii).

Ghosh's ecological narratives develop this principle by representing human lives as embedded within systems that cannot be entirely controlled through technology, economic power, or political authority. Nature is neither an inexhaustible resource nor an enemy that must be conquered. It is a dynamic presence with which human communities must negotiate their existence.

6.3 Environmental Justice and the Limits of Ecocentrism

A significant strength of Ghosh's ecological vision is its recognition that environmental protection can itself become problematic when separated from questions of justice. The conservation conflict in *The Hungry Tide* demonstrates that protecting endangered species does not automatically guarantee ethical treatment of vulnerable human populations. Similarly, the commercial exploitation represented in *The Jungle Nama* reveals that environmental destruction and social inequality can emerge from the same structures of power.

In *Gun Island*, these concerns extend to displaced populations whose lives are affected by environmental instability and unequal access to resources. Across the three works, Ghosh challenges the idea that environmental problems can be resolved through technical interventions alone. His approach also complicates an uncomplicated celebration of ecocentrism. Human beings cannot simply withdraw from the environment, nor can all forms of human intervention be regarded as inherently destructive. Scientific research, conservation policies, economic activity, and local knowledge may all contribute to ecological well-being when they operate within ethical limits.

The crucial question is how environmental decisions are made, whose interests they serve, and whose suffering they overlook. An ecologically responsible framework must consider the intrinsic significance of non-human life while acknowledging the material needs and political rights of vulnerable communities. This is where Ghosh's environmental imagination intersects with postcolonial criticism. Ecological damage is frequently associated with historical patterns of exploitation in which certain populations and territories are treated as expendable. In The Great Derangement, Ghosh connects the difficulty of imagining climate change with the historical relationship between empire, economic power, and environmental transformation (2016). His fictional works extend this concern by showing how ecological instability is experienced through unequal social relationships.

6.4 Genre, Cultural Memory, and Ecological Imagination

The three works also demonstrate that ecological consciousness can be developed through different literary forms. *The Hungry Tide* employs a realist narrative to explore the relationships among scientific research, local knowledge, conservation, and human vulnerability. *The Jungle Nama* uses verse and folklore to foreground ethical obligations towards the forest. *Gun Island* employs transnational movement and mythological references to connect environmental change with contemporary global experience. These differences are not merely formal. They influence how readers encounter the natural world and understand their relationship with it. Realist fiction exposes the practical and political consequences of environmental conflict, while verse narrative draws upon cultural memory and ethical imagination. Transnational fiction, meanwhile, reveals how ecological processes exceed national boundaries and connect distant communities.

The relationship between these forms suggests that environmental awareness cannot be produced through scientific information alone. It also depends on cultural narratives that enable people to recognise their interdependence with other forms of life. Ghosh's literary practice makes this relationship especially visible by bringing ecological questions into dialogue with folklore, history, migration, and social inequality. The resulting ecological vision is neither exclusively scientific nor exclusively spiritual. It combines an awareness of material environmental processes with a recognition that human relationships with nature are shaped by cultural assumptions and ethical choices.

VII. CONCLUSION

Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*, *The Jungle Nama*, and *Gun Island* offer a sustained critique of anthropocentric assumptions that place human ambition above ecological responsibility. Through their different narrative forms, the works demonstrate that the natural environment cannot be reduced to a passive resource awaiting human exploitation. Forests, waterways, animals, and changing climatic conditions participate in the relationships through which human life becomes possible.

In *The Hungry Tide*, Ghosh exposes the moral complexities of conservation and demonstrates that environmental protection must account for the survival of both non-human species and economically vulnerable communities. *The Jungle Nama* challenges commercial greed through the ethical framework of the Bon Bibi legend, presenting ecological restraint as a condition of coexistence. *Gun Island* expands these concerns into a transnational context, showing how environmental disruption connects migration, cultural memory, and global inequality.

Taken together, the three works suggest that ecological consciousness requires more than a rejection of environmental exploitation. It demands a reconsideration of the values through which human beings understand progress, ownership, knowledge, and survival. The environment cannot be protected adequately when it is treated as separate from the social and political conditions that shape its use.

Ghosh's ecocentric vision therefore does not seek to eliminate human agency. Instead, it calls for a form of human responsibility that recognises the limits of human control and the significance of non-human existence. Such a perspective requires scientific knowledge to engage with local experience, conservation to recognise social justice, and cultural memory to contribute to contemporary environmental thought. These works present ecological responsibility as an ethical recognition of interdependence.

By challenging the division between human history and natural processes, Ghosh demonstrates that the future of humanity cannot be separated from the future of the ecosystems within which it exists. His literary imagination encourages a movement away from dominion towards coexistence, from unrestricted extraction towards restraint, and from human exceptionalism towards a more inclusive ecological consciousness.

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