

## ECOLOGY, EMPIRE, AND CULTURAL DISPLACEMENT IN *THE HUNGRY TIDE* BY AMITAV GHOSH

*Dr. Charuchandra Bhalchandra Patil*

*Bhavan's College Andheri (W) Mumbai, India*

### **ABSTRACT**

*The Hungry Tide* is a landmark work in contemporary postcolonial eco-fiction that intertwines environmental precarity, imperial legacies, and the displacement of marginalized communities in the Sundarbans delta. This paper examines how Amitav Ghosh constructs a complex ecological narrative in which nature is neither a passive backdrop nor a romanticized wilderness but an active, unpredictable force shaped by colonial history, state power, and global capitalism. Through the intersecting journeys of Piyali Roy, Kanai Dutt, and Fokir, the novel foregrounds conflicts between conservation and livelihood, scientific rationality and indigenous knowledge, and bureaucratic governance and subaltern survival. Drawing on ecocriticism, postcolonial theory, and subaltern studies, this paper argues that *The Hungry Tide* exposes the ecological violence embedded in imperial and postcolonial environmental policies, particularly through the historical erasure of the Morichjhapi massacre. The study demonstrates that cultural displacement in the novel is inseparable from ecological instability and that Ghosh ultimately proposes an ethics of ecological humility grounded in relational coexistence rather than domination.

**KEYWORDS:** Ecocriticism; empire; Sundarbans; environmental displacement; subaltern communities; Morichjhapi; conservation politics; postcolonial ecology etc.

---

### **Article History**

**Received:** 18 Oct 2025 | **Revised:** 21 Oct 2025 | **Accepted:** 25 Oct 2025

---