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Title: *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*

Author: Amitav Ghosh

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Amitav Ghosh's stature as a great writer of fiction is indisputable and much acclaimed. He has brought to the imagination of the readers unforgettable characters and locales. In his recently published non-fiction work, *The Great Derangement*, we meet the author himself recounting various events that have happened in his own life, in recent past or long gone eons of time. This is not a book of numbers, this is a book of ideas; ideas that will force you to think about climate change in very many different ways. The book is divided into three parts: Stories, History and Politics. These are the parameters on which Ghosh examines the issue at hand. These are the disciplines which have been implicit in this Great Derangement and shall be held culpable by the future generations for the failure of the imagination to assess the magnanimity of the crisis.

Ghosh double emphasises through his non-fiction work why fiction (novel) has been failing to record the changes happening around us? To sum up the reasons he gives for the failure of this imagination of the literary fiction to capture the gradual deterioration of the climate is the highly improbable nature of the climate events, their "unthinkable magnitude" and last but not the least, its resistance to language itself. Ghosh showcases his rich knowledge about the literary forms and geological reasons for various climatic events and he inter-relates them in such a coherent manner to explain that a new literary form would be required to address the issue of climate change but it is only fiction which can salvage the world out of this crisis.

Similarly, Ghosh outlines a brief history of the present climate crisis through the prism of imperialism, capitalism and industrialisation. His writing is lucid, scientific and immediately valid. It's an eye-opener to the events occurring in our surrounding of which we are aware of but not able to fully comprehend. Ghosh shows that modernity cannot be emulated and adopted by all the humanity as it will asphyxiate

in the process. In the history of India, Mahatma Gandhi emerges as the only leader who could have led the country towards a greener future with his emphasis on rural industries. Interestingly, Ghosh gives credit to imperialism to have stalled the carbon emission for a while and the controversial one-child policy of China as well for reducing release of carbon and green-house gases by effectively reducing the number. It is still debatable which should be given most priority- social justice or climate change.

In the arena of politics, the continuous shifting of blame has resulted in deferment of reaching a conclusion. Asian countries where number is the rule should wake up to the disaster that mad race after economic development has caused. They may be better adapted to the discomfitures and shortages than the rich countries but the victim will still be poor people whose contribution to carbon economy has been minimal. The power game rather than economic position of a country controls the negotiation for mitigation of climate change which threatens the present power axis of the world. Ghosh argues that it will not be beyond reason for the powerful nation-states to be willing to maintain the status quo and this shall have major consequences for the whole world. In this integrated globalized world, the fate of all humanity is intertwined and hence only a collective solution can help in avoiding the final denouement.

Such a frank and well-researched assessment of the present situation by a leading author of the country is a major contribution to literary world. Ghosh posits his hope in literature to wake up to the magnanimity of the event and find ways to look at it clearly escaping the derangement that occludes the present. Literature will have to transform and rediscover its ties to its past kinship with other beings to bring the collective energy to the rescue. Though Ghosh cannot imagine what such literary form will be like but he is hopeful that a hard struggle for action against climate change would give birth to one and the process itself shall dictate its structure and content. It doesn't seem far-fetched as the role of literature in society has been precisely to find patterns of life in order to create something new. What that 'something' will be is yet to be seen. Meanwhile, Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement* is a great food for thought.