

ISSN:0976-8165



The Criterion

AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL IN ENGLISH

Bi-Monthly Peer-Reviewed eJournal

VOL. 15 ISSUE-1 FEB. 2024

15 YEARS OF OPEN ACCESS

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ISSN 2278-9529

Galaxy: International Multidisciplinary Research Journal
www.galaxyimrj.com

From (Post)colonial Crisis to Cosmopolitan Hope: Bridging the Human and Non-human Dichotomy in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10794739>

Article History: Submitted-28/01/2024, Revised-22/02/2024, Accepted-23/02/2024, Published-29/02/2024.

Abstract:

Evoking the aftermath of the deadly 2004 Tsunami in the Indian Ocean that devastated the entire area, the narrative of the novel *The Hungry Tide* by Amitav Ghosh takes place primarily in the Sundarbans, a massive mangrove forest that is split between West Bengal in India and Bangladesh. Containing tigers, crocodiles, and various other predators, it serves as a dramatic backdrop for Ghosh's story of the environment, faith, class structure and the complex history of India in terms of colonialism and sectarian conflict. This paper seeks to read the novel along the idea of cosmopolitanism as well as eco-cosmopolitanism finding the correlation between colonial and postcolonial, human and non-human, death and resurrection and, crisis and hope.

Keywords: cosmopolitanism, ecocriticism, environmental studies, postcolonial.

Abbreviation: *THT* – *The Hungry Tide*

Amitav Ghosh's novel, *The Hungry Tide*, weaves a captivating narrative around three central characters: Piya, Kanai, and Fokir. Alongwith their stories, the novel also delves into the parallel tale of an earlier generation's trio: Horen, Nirmal, and Kusum. Ghosh masterfully depicts the unique and unpredictable ecosystem of the tide country, an inhospitable place where nature and animals pose constant threats to human survival. One notable character, Sir Daniel Hamilton, a Scotsman, embodies the ethos of hard work he learned in school, "labor conquers everything" (*THT* 49). He comes to India in pursuit of a better fortune and, through his diligence, rises to become the head of a shipping company, amassing great wealth. While passing through Calcutta en route to Bengal, he is entranced by the mangrove-covered islands and contemplates the possibility of people living there once again. Driven by a cosmopolitan vision, he acquires ten thousand acres of the tide country from the British government. His idea

is all-inclusive, where people of diverse backgrounds, regardless of caste, creed, or financial status, are welcomed on his land. His vision is one of unity, as Ghosh writes, "Everyone who was willing to work was welcome, S'daniel said, but on one condition. They could not bring all their petty little divisions and differences. Here there would be no Brahmins or Untouchables, no Bengalis and no Oriyas. Everyone would have to live and work together" (*THT* 51).

People who were genuinely dispossessed and found nowhere else to go flocked to this place from northern Orissa, eastern Bengal, and the Santhal Parganas. Survival in the tide country, with its ever-present threat of tigers and crocodiles and shifting tides, was not easy. Still, they were drawn to Sir Daniel's dream, a vision to "build a new society, a new kind of country, run by cooperatives, where people wouldn't exploit each other, and everyone would have a share in the land" (*THT* 52). Sir Daniel provided amenities such as electricity, telephone services, and even a unique currency. His banknotes represented a cosmopolitan idea, stating, "The note is based on the living man, not on the dead coin. It costs practically nothing and yields a dividend of One Hundred Percent in land reclaimed, tanks excavated, houses built, etc., and in a more healthy and abundant life" (*THT* 53).

Following Sir Daniel's death in 1939, his nephew James Hamilton inherited the estate but lacked his uncle's dreams and vision. Nirmal and Nilima, compelled by circumstances, sought refuge in Lusibari, as Nirmal's leftist ideals put his life at risk in Kolkata. Lusibari, unexpectedly, became their permanent home. Nilima engaged in meaningful social work aimed at uplifting the native population in Lusibari, while Nirmal nurtured his poetic aspirations and revolutionary ideals.

Eco-Cosmopolitanism Explored in the Novel:

The central theme in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* revolves around the intricate relationship between nature and humanity. Ghosh intricately portrays the captivating and delicate ecosystem of the Sundarbans, frequently referred to as "the tide country" in the novel. The book's release created a global sensation among ecologists, with Ghosh's vivid depiction of a tsunami-like storm seen as "a warning – a premonition" to the world (Walia).

The narrative of this ecology-dominated novel showcases characters grappling with the challenge of harmonizing the forces of nature and humanity's yearning for survival, thus giving rise to what the esteemed critic and scholar Ursula Heise terms "Eco-cosmopolitanism." To simplify, it can be described as a fusion of 'ecocriticism' and 'cosmopolitanism.' While primarily

an Anglo-American concept, this fusion of ecocritical and postcolonial scholarship has broadened its scope globally. Ecocriticism serves as the umbrella term for the study of environmentally oriented literature. Scholars like Buell, Heise, and Thornber argue that it begins with the belief that imaginative arts, such as literature, can significantly contribute to understanding contemporary environmental issues, including various forms of ecological degradation afflicting the planet today (Buell, Lawrence, et al. 418). Ursula Heise advocates for a more cosmopolitan and less U.S.-centric approach to ecocriticism, introducing the term 'eco-cosmopolitanism.' This concept diverges from conventional topophilic sentiments, which are "affectionate ties to a specific environment or a deep connection to a particular place" (Tuan 113). While it is natural and widespread for individuals to form bonds with the places they inhabit, Heise contends that ecocritics may have overemphasized the importance of this connection in developing ecological knowledge and sensitivity.

In the postcolonial era, as various theories of globalization emerge, there is a growing need to establish connections with societies around the world. This shift has given rise to concepts like multiculturalism and 'deterritorialization.' In her groundbreaking work "Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of The Global" (2008), Heise emphasizes that focusing on a specific place alone is not the most effective way to cultivate a comprehensive understanding of the planet as a whole. In a world shaped by the forces of economic and cultural globalization, ecocriticism must evolve to become more cosmopolitan, acknowledging and embracing alternative, less place-centric methods of gaining ecological knowledge and sensitivity. Eco-cosmopolitanism blends environmental awareness with postcolonial psychology, supporting a broader understanding of biospheric interconnectedness. Unlike traditional cosmopolitanism, eco-cosmopolitanism is not confined by the limitations of human social experience. Instead, it

.....reaches towards what some environmental writers and philosophers have called the 'more-than-human world' –the realm of non-human species, but also that of connectedness with both animate and inanimate networks of influence and exchange. (Heise 87-88).

Alexa Weik succinctly summarizes that eco-cosmopolitanism derives its qualities of open-mindedness, inclusivity, and the promotion of human solidarity transcending national, class, race, and religious boundaries from traditional cosmopolitanism. Simultaneously, it draws its interest in connectivity that extends beyond the human realm, encompassing the

environment and animal life from ecocriticism (123). This form of eco-cosmopolitanism, as articulated by Heise and embraced by Ghosh in his novel *The Hungry Tide*, recognizes the profound interdependence between the human and non-human worlds. Notably, scholars like Rob Nixon and Graham Huggan criticize the limited environmental consciousness among postcolonial scholars and advocate for a fresh amalgamation of postcolonial and ecocritical approaches. Amitav Ghosh's non-fiction work, *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*, highlights writers' apathy toward climate change and ecological crises in their narratives. Ghosh is worried at the fact of the scarcity of literary works addressing global ecological problems in contemporary times (9). It is essential to acknowledge that ecological issues and their associated disasters are not confined to national boundaries but are experienced globally, garnering international attention. To effectively address the worldwide challenge of natural crises like global warming, Heise's concept of eco-cosmopolitanism offers a valuable solution, promoting unity among nations to confront the impending ecological crisis. It emphasizes the convergence of local and global perspectives and the fusion of experiential and abstract scientific knowledge. *The Hungry Tide* beautifully weaves together themes of ecological crisis, local and global politics, and the interactions between humans and animals, underscoring the importance of eco-cosmopolitan ideas.

The Hungry Tide seamlessly blends the local and the global, as we witness the convergence of two distinct worlds. Piya, a semi-nomadic American cetologist of Indian origin, and Kanai, a business-minded translator from Delhi, venture to Lusibari, an island in the Sundarbans in the Bay of Bengal. Meanwhile, residents like Nilima, Nirmal, Fokir, Moyna, and others call Lusibari their permanent home, creating a fascinating interplay between these two groups of outsiders and hosts. Despite their apparent disparities in concerns, knowledge, and ways of life, these two groups effortlessly meld together, forming a remarkable and unusual fusion of local and global influences. Notably, the collaboration between Piya and Fokir stands out as a prime example of this synergy. Piya, a scientist, embarks on research related to Orcaella brevirostris, a species of river dolphin, in the Sundarbans. While her roots lie in Bengal, she predominantly communicates in English. In contrast, Fokir is a local fisherman with no English proficiency, yet possesses a deep understanding of the ecological intricacies of the tide country and the nuances of river navigation.

Kanai's blunt observation that "he is a fisherman, and you're a scientist" showcase their seemingly incongruent backgrounds (*THT* 268). Nonetheless, Piya and Fokir prove to be a dynamic duo, uniting Fokir's grounded, place-based ecological knowledge with Piya's

cosmopolitan and well-traveled perspective. This amalgamation results in remarkable achievements, showcasing their ability to communicate effectively despite language barriers. Piya successfully conveys her mission of studying river dolphins, while Fokir offers invaluable guidance on their whereabouts. Sitting in Fokir's boat, he with his coil of crab-catching line and Piya clutching her GPS device, she reflects:

It was surprising enough that their jobs had not proved to be utterly incompatible—especially considering that one of the tasks required the input of geostationary satellites while the other depended on bits of shark-bone and broken tile. But that it had proved possible for two such different people to pursue their own ends simultaneously – people who could not exchange a word with each other and had no idea of what was going on in one another's heads – was far more than surprising: it seemed almost miraculous. (*THT* 141)

As the story unfolds, Piya gradually develops a profound connection with Fokir. To the extent that she finds solace, confidence, and an invigorated spirit in his presence. This deep bond is rooted in their shared passion for and expertise in dolphins, the intricacies of waterways, and their profound appreciation for nature.

The novel presents Piya as a 'migrant cosmopolitan'. As a second-generation immigrant in the United States, her life is marked by continuous displacement, primarily due to her research work as a cetologist specializing in marine mammals. This nomadic lifestyle has left Piya without a true sense of home, a place to call her own. Piya succinctly describes her existence when speaking to Kanai: "I have no home, no money, no prospects. My friends are thousands of miles away, and I get to see them maybe once a year, if I'm lucky" (*THT* 302). However, the events she experiences, especially Fokir's tragic death caused by a fierce storm, awaken a profound sense of responsibility and concern in Piya. This newfound connection extends not only to Fokir's family but also to the entire region. It comes as no surprise when Piya decides to remain in Lusibari for an extended period to continue her research. In doing so, she discovers a sense of belonging in the Sundarbans and, with both good humor and sincerity, expresses to Nilima toward the novel's conclusion: "for me, home is where the Orcaella are" (*THT* 400).

Broadly speaking, within the novel, Fokir and Piya can be viewed as symbols representing the topophile and the cosmopolitan, respectively. The central theme of the story revolves around the interconnectedness of these two-character types. This interconnectedness

serves as a solution to the fundamental issue of disconnection between the state government and local concerns. The local government, regrettably, often neglects the "place-based needs of its own citizens and vulnerable ecosystems" (Weik 125).

It's worth noting that none of the main protagonists in "The Hungry Tide" were originally from the tide country. They all fit the category of 'postcolonial migration.' Nilima and Nirmal fled to the Sundarbans to escape religious fundamentalists in Kolkata, while even Fokir, despite finding a sense of home there, is not a native. Kusum gave birth to Fokir somewhere near Dhanbad in Madhya Pradesh. Pablo Mukherjee describes this situation as a world characterized by "mobility, migrancy, uprootedness, (150)" and this mobility extends to the land itself. The very territory upon which the characters gather and traverse is constantly changing due to the unique ecological system of the tide country forming in respect to rising sea levels and continuous tides. Here existing islands are submerged in water and new islands get formed every day.

In his work *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and Beyond*, Ghosh painstakingly illustrates the potential future challenges humanity may face due to climate change and global warming. He also highlights the difficulty of convincingly portraying such catastrophic incidents in fictional works. *The Hungry Tide* effectively conveys the sensitivity of regions like the Sundarbans to the significant rise in sea levels over the past two decades. Ghosh strongly suggests in *The Great Derangement* that cities like Kolkata, New York, and Bangkok are at constant risk of being submerged by water. The novel offers a vivid portrayal of the catastrophic tsunami that struck Southeast Asia on December 25, 2004, resulting from an earthquake and claiming more than two lakh lives in fourteen countries, particularly Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, and Thailand.

In the wake of the aforementioned tsunami in 2005, television broadcasts displayed horrifying images of islands engulfed by surging walls of water and desperate individuals fighting for their lives. These natural calamities emphasized the urgent need for special protection and relief efforts in vulnerable areas. Ghosh, who visited the tsunami-affected island of Car Nicobar, highlighted in his work *Incendiary Circumstances* (2005) how the failure of the administration in Car Nicobar and other affected regions to provide proper relief to the victims resulted from what he termed a "leak of democracy and popular empowerment (10)". Drawing inspiration from Amartya Sen's research on famines, Ghosh exposed the inadequacies in our democratic structures concerning preparedness and response to natural disasters. He

pointed out the political apathy towards the victims, emphasizing that there were no elected representatives advocating for these marginalized people (*Incendiary Circumstances* 11).

In *The Hungry Tide*, the hypocrisy of political leadership becomes glaringly evident through flashbacks and accounts of Morichjhapi as recorded in Nirmal's notebook. It becomes apparent that the shelters for the island inhabitants were established not by the government but through the vision of Nirmal, a disillusioned cosmopolitan who played a key role in constructing a shelter on the top floor of the hospital run by Nilima's Badabon trust in Lusibari. Nirmal's leftist ideals had led him to leave Kolkata in 1950, and he, along with Nilima, sought refuge in Lusibari, where he served as the headmaster of the Lusibari school. Despite burying his revolutionary dreams deep within, Nirmal's encounter with Kusum, who arrived in the Sundarbans from somewhere in Madhya Pradesh with her five-year-old son Fokir after becoming widowed, rekindled his aspirations. Through Kusum, Nirmal learned about the events at Morichjhapi, which he documented in his notebook, to be discovered by Kanai two decades later. Morichjhapi, like Lusibari, was a tide country island and became a haven for thousands of impoverished and landless Bangladeshi refugees displaced by partition. The government had resettled these refugees in Dandakaranya, deep forests in Madhya Pradesh. However, the resettlement proved to be more like a prison to them due to the rocky soil, unfamiliar environment, and language barriers that made them feel alienated. Additionally, they faced mistreatment from the local population and security forces. In 1978, a group of these refugees managed to break free from the government settlement camp and set out for Morichjhapi in the Sundarbans. At that time, West Bengal was under the governance of the Left Front, and the refugees expected support from this government since the Left Front had endorsed their cause when they were in opposition two years earlier. However, the authorities took an opposite stance and declared Morichjhapi a protected forest reserve, showing no mercy to the settlers or refugees. This situation led to a series of confrontations between the settlers and the government forces (*THT* 118-119). The final and tragic clash occurred in mid-May of 1979, a dark chapter now remembered as the Morichjhapi massacre, during which several individuals lost their lives. This tragic event can be traced back to two fundamental issues. First, from the perspective of the settlers, their only desire was to acquire a small piece of land on which to live. However, their voices went unheard, or rather were deliberately suppressed because, as Ghosh explained, "In Bangladesh, they had been among the poorest of rural people, oppressed and exploited both by Muslim communalists and by Hindus of the upper castes"

(*THT* 118). These impoverished and marginalized people, who were often from the dalit community, held no significance in the eyes of the authorities.

Second, the international Project Tiger, aimed at the conservation of the Royal Bengal Tiger, generated significant monetary resources and global concern. Faced with pressure, the authorities chose the more expedient but inhumane path: they did not advocate for these poor and oppressed settlers but instead resorted to brutal violence. Once again, the underlying cause of these tragic events lay in the disconnection and discord between local and global interests. The government declared the settlers' presence illegal, citing concerns that this influx of people could be detrimental to the fragile ecosystem of the Sundarbans. The settlers' occupation of Morichjhapi was viewed as a violation of the Forest Acts, as it is part of the Sundarbans Government Reserve Forest, as noted by Mallick (107). Nilima, in her conversation with Nirmal, also supported the government's policy, stating that if people continued to arrive in this manner, "the whole forest would disappear" (*THT* 213). In response, Nirmal presented the true situation and countered her argument:

Morichjhapi wasn't really forest, even before the settlers came. Part of it were already being used by the government, for plantation and so on. What's been said about the danger to the environment is just a sham, in order to evict these people, who have nowhere else to go. (*THT* 214)

The entire situation presents an unimaginably complex dilemma. On one hand, a deep ecological consciousness promotes the preservation of nature and the safeguarding of the Royal Bengal Tiger from extinction. Simultaneously, it cannot be denied that hundreds of human lives fall victim to these predators in the Sundarbans forests every year. Nilima informs Kanai that 4218 men were killed by tigers between 1860 and 1866, as documented by J. Fayrer, the English naturalist who coined the phrase 'Royal Bengal Tiger' (*THT* 240). Over the years, the preservation of this endangered species has consistently taken precedence over the protection of the local population, not solely due to the availability of international funds for the former but notably because of the operation of a false dichotomy. The marginalized remain just that—marginalized. Alexa Weik aptly points out, "Their needs remain on the margins of the equation, and so discussion does not revolve around how to balance the various needs of the ecosystem" (132).

According to the only authentic source of information about the Morichjhapi massacre, Ross Mallick, in his article, on January 26, 1979, the West Bengal government initiated an

economic blockade of Morichjhapi. He reports that the settlers were not only prevented from obtaining essential supplies, including fresh water, but also that "the community was tear-gassed, huts were razed, and fisheries and tube-wells were destroyed, in an attempt to deprive refugees of food and water" (*THT* 108) However, when this news reached Kolkata newspapers, citizens' groups filed petitions, and "the high court ruled that barricading the settlers was illegal" (*THT* 260). Nonetheless, the police continued to patrol the island. Finally, on May 14, 1979, the state government ordered the forceful evacuation of the residing refugees, resulting in the deaths of several hundred people, with their bodies being disposed of in the Ganges. Following the massacre, the Left Front government maintained that the eviction had been an ecological necessity. What becomes evident here is the cynicism and detachment of policy-making from both ecological contexts and the people who inhabit them. The plight of the impoverished settlers of Morichjhapi is powerfully conveyed in one of the novel's most intense passages, evoking a deep sense of empathy and concern. When stopped by the police from leaving the island, a group of settlers on a simple rowing boat cry out in unison, "'Amrakara? Bastuara.' Who are we? We are the dispossessed," (*THT* 254) a slogan that deeply unsettles Nirmal.

This vividly captures the spirit of (eco)-cosmopolitanism as it connects the settlers, Nirmal himself, and all of humankind. Through Nirmal, Ghosh appears to express his own views that the dispossessed settlers are not isolated entities on the planet; instead, they are interconnected with all other human beings worldwide. Notably, as Pablo Mukherjee also highlights, Nirmal's understanding of the refugees' plight undergoes a transformation through his direct engagement with the local people. Initially, he failed to comprehend the political and ideological betrayal of refugees by the government, unable to consider various other factors that shaped the power dynamics in this specific context, such as the high caste/class composition of the 'Marxist' government, the international politics surrounding the refugee crisis in Bengal, and the conflict between local landed and landless rural 'vote-banks' (Mukherjee 152).

In this regard, we can draw a parallel between Nirmal's and Piya's experiences. Nirmal only corrects his political views after engaging with the local realities of Morichjhapi, and similarly, Piya develops a profound solidarity with the place Lusibari and its impoverished inhabitants after her confrontation with the storm at Garjontola.

The profoundly challenging tiger-human dichotomy in the Sundarbans is poignantly reflected in the conversation between Piya and Kanai when Piya is horrified by the sight of a tiger being killed by villagers, including Fokir. To comfort her with his arguments, Kanai asserts, "Isn't that a horror too - that we can feel the suffering of an animal, but not of human beings?" (*THT* 300) However, these killings, whether of animals or humans, are shown to be unjustifiable, as Piya rightly argues that nothing in the universe grants us the authority to take the lives of others. She posits that if we were to cross the imaginary line that allows us to decide that no other species matters except ourselves, the consequences would be dire. Piya questions whether such a mindset would stop at animals, emphasizing that it would eventually extend to human beings, particularly those who are poor and unnoticed.

Piya's suggestion is that this ruthless killing of others, whether human or animal, is a consequence of emotional and intellectual disconnectedness. This disconnectedness is strikingly illustrated by the mass killings during the Morichjhapi massacre, which claimed the lives of many hundreds of victims, including Nirmal and Kusum. Alexa Weik appropriately concludes that this inhumanity towards "others," encompassing both humans and animals, results from a lack of connection with both fellow humans and the natural environment. Weik emphasizes that eco-cosmopolitanism advocates the opposite stance, underscoring the interconnectedness and inherent value of all human beings, irrespective of their racial and cultural distinctions (Weik 135). It also stresses the connection between humans and their natural environment. Reading *The Hungry Tide* from an eco-cosmopolitan perspective, we gain an understanding that environmental justice necessitates a balance between the needs of both humans and non-human entities. This concept contributes to the broader idea of cosmopolitanism, encompassing human and environmental sustainability. It can help foster "a different idea of the universal," one that embraces and accommodates differences rather than rejecting them, as highlighted by Mukherjee (151).

The Hungry Tide beautifully portrays the accommodation of differences on various levels, including religion and faith. Nirmal, as expressed in his notebook, had distanced himself from religious devotion, viewing it as a byproduct of 'false consciousness.' His experiences during the partition and his role as a schoolmaster led him to eschew religious beliefs.

However, Nirmal's perspective undergoes a transformation when he attends a Bon Bibi puja, a religious ceremony dedicated to the local deities Bon Bibi and Shah Jangoli, considered protectors of the tide country. During the puja, he is astonished to hear Horen recite Arabic

invocations, even though the rhythm and atmosphere of the chanting resemble that of a traditional Hindu puja. The verses recited are a mix of Bengali, Arabic, and Persian. Nirmal also discovers that a book about Bon Bibi, "Bon Bibir Karamoti," opens from right to left, akin to Arabic texts, rather than from left to right as in Bengali. This religious and cultural syncretism in the tide country reflects cosmopolitan ideals that embrace and make room for differences. This merging of differences results in something truly wonderful, as exemplified by "Bon Bibir Karamoti." It illustrates that accommodating different religions, cultures, and languages is an intrinsic characteristic of the tide country. The narrative eloquently describes the linguistic diversity of the region, where rivers of language flow, including Bengali, English, Arabic, Hindi, Arakanese, and more. The faith of the tide country is akin to a great roundabout where people from various directions, countries, and faiths can come together, showcasing the region's ability to foster unity among diverse elements.

Piya, Kanai and Nirmal: their cosmopolitan transformation:

In *The Hungry Tide*, two cosmopolitans emerge as central characters: Piya and Kanai, representing different facets of cosmopolitanism. Piya hails from the urban first world, while Kanai comes from the urban third world. Both of them are foreign to the unique ecology and way of life in the tide country. Cosmopolitanism, in this context, refers to having a broad or global outlook, as opposed to a parochial or narrow perspective.

The novel showcases the spirit of cosmopolitanism through dialogues and interactions between the locals, such as Horen, Fokir, Moyna, and Kusum, and the cosmopolitans, including Piya, Nirmal, and Kanai. These interactions lead to transformative changes in both the locals and the cosmopolitans. For Nirmal, his views and ideology gain clarity through the grim realities he encounters at Morichjhapi and his interactions with Kusum and Horen. This experience connects him with the fate of humanity as a whole, making him more aware of the plight of the poor and marginalized settlers of Morichjhapi. Kanai undergoes a transformative experience when he is stranded on Garjontola by the fisherman Fokir. Initially, Kanai exudes an air of superiority due to his belief in his worldly knowledge and affairs. He possesses an intimidating aura that reflects his bourgeois authority. However, his experience on Garjontola changes his perspective significantly. He transitions from being self-centered to acknowledging the presence of "others." Piya, as an American representing the first world cosmopolitan, initially benefits from her foreignness, which offers her some protection from unwarranted behavior. However, her journey to the Sundarbans challenges her sense of security, as she

encounters mistreatment from the local guard and boatman. Her sense of safety and well-being is primarily established through her interactions with Fokir, who saves her life on multiple occasions. Piya's work aligns well with Fokir, who possesses intimate knowledge of the Gangetic waterways and the habitats of river dolphins. Her research is progressing smoothly until the devastating storm claims Fokir's life while he attempts to save Piya. This tragedy shatters Piya, leaving her feeling responsible for Fokir's death. After some time spent with her relatives in Kolkata, Piya regains her hope and determination for the future. She reveals her plans to Nilima, expressing her intent to undertake a significant research project on the river dolphins of the Sundarbans. Her goal is to bridge her global knowledge with local expertise and provide employment and financial support to the local fishermen. She intends to name the project after Fokir to honor his remarkable knowledge of the region's waterways. Additionally, Piya has already raised substantial funds to purchase a house for Fokir's wife, Moyna, and provide college education for their son, Tutul.

Kanai, too, is inspired to restructure his company by establishing an office in Kolkata. He plans to write a story based on Nirmal's notebook, which, although lost in the storm, remains etched in his memory. These transformations in Piya and Kanai demonstrate the impact of postcolonial cosmopolitanism, emphasizing the need and ability to connect global knowledge with local concerns. This cosmopolitan consciousness seeks to bridge gaps and create meaningful connections between different worlds and perspectives.

Hope for the better:

The Hungry Tide makes a compelling case that in the world we live, "the global positioning and the imbrications derived from it" matter more than ever before both on the level of action, word and meaning (Moraru 180). Ursula Heise contends to the same, "Advocacies of the local can play a useful political and cultural role in one context and become a philosophical as well as pragmatic stumbling block in another" (59). The novel demonstrates that both actions and words are influenced by the global context, reinforcing the idea that global issues matter more than ever before. As the global and the local become increasingly interconnected, it's crucial to understand the complex dynamics at play. *The Hungry Tide* exemplifies how environmentally oriented cosmopolitanism, or what can be termed "world environmental citizenship," plays a vital role in addressing global environmental concerns. This perspective encourages us to engage with the global imagination of the environment, exploring its boundaries and limitations at the local and national levels. The efforts of

characters like Piya and Kanai in the novel offer hope for the present and future. Their success lies in their ability to bridge the local and national with the international and global. Piya's fundraising for Moyna and Tutul becomes possible because she shares the story of the Sundarbans' waterways and the resulting tragedies with people worldwide through the internet. The funds are drawn from international sources, emphasizing the interconnectedness of global communities. Likewise, Kanai's intention to share the story of the Morichjhapi massacre and raise awareness about the sensitive ecology and politics of the tide country suggests the potential for more sensible policies. By bridging the local with global perspectives and vice versa, there is hope for addressing the needs of the local population and preserving the ecosystem of the tide country within the context of global configurations. The novel highlights the importance of global environmental citizenship and the role it can play in finding solutions to complex global issues.

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