

Eco-Criticism and Socio-Political Issues through Literary Texts

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ABSTRACT

Nature can't speak for herself and thus time and again she retorts with calamities, making us vulnerable and impotent. This paper proposes to explore the various geopolitical and socio-political intricacies of man versus nature, which are portrayed by Indian English writers. The genuine concern for nature along with marginal demography and water habitats is the main focus around which Amitav Ghosh's (2016) 'The Hungry Tides' and Arundhati Roy's (1999) 'The Greater Common Good' revolves. The paper aims at establishing intertextuality between the two texts focusing on the concerns of both the writers over nature and also depicting vulnerability of humans in front of the wrath of nature. The texts lack literary similarities but the theme revolves around interference of human beings in the disruption of the ecological balance and about the sufferings of the marginal people being a part of the broader nature encompassed in its thrall. Both authors bring forward to the global community issues which can damage nature and human beings bringing out the hidden socio-political reasons along with environmental concerns. As the paper proceeds, we will explore the tangible yet profound manifold relationship between human and nature. The true meaning of symbiosis is established not in the society of civilization but through roots that penetrate into the soil sustaining life. These discussions will be done through the mentioned literary texts to provide a basic guidance to researchers and fellow environmentalists before they venture into the world of the 'other'.

Keywords : Socio-politics, Eco-criticism, Subaltern, Deforestation, Marginalization

I. INTRODUCTION

At present the world is solely concerned and is debating over ecological problems and India is no exception to it. Ecological problems are the changes in

the natural environment, which result in natural disasters or have some serious anthropogenic impacts, leading to the disturbance in the functioning and the structure of nature. Major environmental issues include pollution, global warming, climate change,

degradation of environment and depletion of resources. In the post-colonial era, the Indian environment has witnessed air pollution, water pollution, climate change, deforestation, biodiversity loss, ozone depletion damage in the natural environment, mining, ocean acidification, dam building, acid rain, overpopulation, greenhouse gas emission and some. Along with above mentioned issues the tendency of the government to harm nature in order to indulge in temporary development, is very harmful. This attitude of the government as well as the citizens has cost immense damage to nature which is irreparable. Various seminars and conferences have been organized by environmentalists to raise awareness among common people. Similarly, literary personnel also have been part of the same endeavor to portray Man and Nature through the various literary texts. Eco criticism, thus became the neoliterary cult. This form of criticism has gained a lot of attention during recent years due to higher social emphasis on environmental destruction and increased technology. It is hence a fresh way of analyzing and interpreting literary texts, which brings new dimensions to the field of literary and theoretical studies. Eco-criticism is an intentionally broad approach that is known by a number of other designations, including “green (cultural) studies”, “ecopoetics”, and “environmental literary criticism.” Earlier theories in literary and cultural studies focussed on the issue of class, race, gender, region are criteria and “subjects” of critical analysis. The late twentieth century has woken up to a new threat: ecological disaster. The most important environmental problems that humankind faces *as a whole* are: nuclear war, depletion of valuable natural resources, population explosion, proliferation of exploitative technologies, conquest of space preliminary to using it as a garbage dump, pollution, extinction of species (though not a human problem) among others. In such a context, literary and cultural theory has begun to address the issue as a part of academic discourse.

From Bhopal gas leakage to severe pollution in Yamuna river; the rampant usage of minerals, heavy mining, unethical constructions, the tendency to build dams on every river have disturbed the ecological balance and made the sustenance precarious. It is obvious and inevitable that any developmental project leads to the benefit of some out and sufferance of the others. Humans along with trees, rivers, seas, forest soil, animals are part of Nature and an important element of it. Making any of these elements suffer would eventually harm existence as nature would get damaged as a whole. It impacts the way humans conduct their lives.

II. MAN VS ENVIRONMENT

In ‘*God of Small Things*’, Arundhati Roy [2] raised her voice against the marginal and she portrayed the relationship of nature with man through various symbols. Sometimes she took the help of metaphors and sometimes of metonymy. She fought for the right of the marginals and also concerning the condition of nature through her literary works, ‘*God of Small Things*’ and ‘*The Greater Common Good*’ [3] are examples of that. Similarly through the various works of Amitav Ghosh [4,5,6], it is seen that environmental issues along with climate change is one of the major concerns. His famous Trilogy which is the ‘*Shadow Lines*’ (1988), ‘*The Hungry Tides*’ (2016) and ‘*The Great Derangement*’ (2019) deals with the topics of ecology in the post-colonial era. There are writers like Frank Schätzing [7] whose novel ‘*The Swarm*’ critically noted the reasons behind water pollution. Poisoning the water of the sea can kill millions of people and that the author shared in his book. Another very important novel is ‘*The Man With The Compound Eyes*’, which is written by Wu Ming-Y [1] talks about the terrific Tsunami and discusses the reasons behind it. In his book he talks about the man-made reasons behind natural calamities. His work has a lyrical beauty which includes reality fantasy and dystopian environmental tales. The connection of the

history of imperialism with climate change is seen in the style of Amitav Ghosh's writing. According to Ghosh, only focusing on a major Monday in life would be very unrealistic in this age. Because frequent disasters related to climate floods in various places of India increase in the frequency of earthquakes deforestation pollution of the water bodies are current issues which should be there in literature as they are affecting the lives of people.

This chapter bases its discussion of climate change along with other environmental issues which are reflected in the literary texts of Amitav Ghosh's (2016) *'The Hungry Tide'* and Arundhati Roy's (1999) *'The Greater Common Good'* issues regarding water pollution, poisoning river waters, snatching the livelihood from the marginal people are the main key points of Arundhati Roy's (1999) *'The Greater Common Good'*. While issues regarding climate change, deforestation, National calamities, vulnerability of humans in front of the wrath of nature are presented in Amitav Ghosh's (2016) *'The Hungry Tide'*. They deal with how environmental issues, cultural issues concerning the environment and attitudes towards nature are presented and analyzed. One of the main goals in ecocriticism is to study how individuals in society behave and react in relation to nature and ecological aspects which is the focal point of the mentioned texts.

III. RIVER AND LIFE: A DISCUSSION OF THE GREATER COMMON GOOD AND THE HUNGRY TIDES

Shortage of drinking water was a common issue during the post-independence era. To address that issue the government decided to build many dams on Narmada river. According to the government, dam building will eradicate the issues of water shortage and irrigation problems. All these were decided without the consent of the people who were going to get affected due to the dam building. In this essay, the author Arundhati Roy captures her vehement

resistance. To the dam building as it could affect nature badly as well as it would cost many marginal people's residences. According to Nandini Oza [8] in her book "The Struggle for Narmada: An Oral History of the Narmada Bachao Andolan" it was not just a fight to save the valley of the river, rather it was a fight to claim justice for those helpless poor people. This essay vividly portrays how in the name of development a state runs autocracy and harm nature as well as its elements. This essay starts with the speech of Jawaharlal Nehru where he said "If you are to suffer you should suffer in the interest of the country". (Jawaharlal Nehru, speaking to the displaced villagers for the creation of the Hirakud dam). This clearly shows how the marginal people have nothing to do except accepting the orders of the higher authority. This essay also sheds light on the harmful sides of the dam building which could damage nature on a larger scale. "Development" is a favorite tool of the Indian ministers and using it they actually serve their own interest and never think about the common people and their needs. This essay was a very important tool as it gave 'Narmada bachao' andolan a different outlook. The project of the Sardar Sarovar dam was a very complex one which involved the price of immense damage to the environment, displacements of the tribal and marginal people and the Economic development of developing India. The river and ecosystems wreck which was about to come through the dam building were not considered by the government.

Humans are elements of nature specially the tribal people as they are closer to nature. This Sardar Sarovar Dam building uprooted those people from their own homes destroying their livelihood and prospects of the coming future. They were left with nothing. Irrigation, hydropower, navigation, recreation are the prime selling points for those political and economic elite class people, whose main agenda was to follow western development building without realizing if it would be fruitful in the Indian soil. The dam proponents claimed the affected people

would get improved lifestyles But they failed inevitably to think about the fights of the ancestral land owners within that developmental zone. In the name of development people were being tortured by the government. A curfew-like situation was created where it was forbidden to gather more than five people. Farmers were not given proper compensation against their forcefully taken lands. Many scholars and historians have criticized the writer for being unrealistic and over emotional, the Supreme Court even sentenced her one night jail and fine of ₹2000 for raising voice against the courts judgment. The writer's stand was still the same and she stood by the poor people against the government.

Similarly Amitav Ghosh in his' *The Hungry Tides*' has tried to portray the bond between nature and man. This book is also a part of eco-criticism, which according to Sanders [9] in "A Short Oxford History of English Literature", analyzes the importance of awareness regarding environmental issues. The novel starts with Piya Roy who is a young Indian American biologist who has come to Sundarban in search of an endangered river dolphin, which is very rare. On her way she falls off a boat into crocodile infested river and later is saved by Fokir, a fisherman. Piya and Fokir did not understand each other's language yet they were attracted towards each other. Piya seeks help from Fokir in order to complete her research and find Kanai who is also a businessman. The whole area is settled in sundarbans. Kanai's uncle was killed in the massacre and his aunt Nilima is still very impacted by his uncle's death. Also the change in the environment and physical properties is something which caught Kanai's attention as he is visiting the island after a long time. On reading his uncle's personal notebook Kanai discovers about the socio-political mysteries of the island. Kanai understood that his uncle Nirmal tried and fought to protect the refugees who hid in the island to protect themselves from the government. Piya, Fokir and Kanai set off on their journey along with Horen, Nilima and Nirmal's friend who has a large boat. Suddenly the boat's

engine died and had no other option but to take shelter in a village. That night the locals of that village capture a tiger, Piya tried to protect the tiger but Kanai stopped her making her stand in front of the question, if the locals live here are less to her than the tiger! One day, Kanai and Fokir to observe the dolphin, to go to an island nearby which is in Fakir's village, protected by 'Bon bibi', a local goddess.

On being unable to adjust in the village atmosphere Kanai decided to leave but the leader of that area disturbs him the most; later he encounters a tiger and joins the rest of the gang. A major cyclone was approaching that would leave them drowning but Horen and Kanai decided to leave and return back but they could not find Piya and Fokir and could not wait all night as they wanted to save themselves. They left that island and came back to Lusi Bari. As the cyclone approached Piya and Fokir tied themselves with a tree where a flying object hit fokir and somehow Piya navigates back to Lusi Bari, where she stayed for few more weeks and decides to name the project after Fokir's name. The whole story revolved around Sundarbans, discerning its dreadful part, also presenting the socio-political incidents that shaped the island into the present Sundarbans. The story also showed the vulnerability of human beings in front of the wrath of nature. Also man digging his own grave by destroying nature is portrayed here.

In Arundhati Roy's (1999) *'The Greater Common Good'* to build Sardar Sarovar dam, 57.6% of the total people who were mainly tribal were displaced. The government backed a national rehabilitation policy. It was announced that 30 dams would be constructed on river Narmada and among them Sardar Sarovar dam would be the largest. For that 3, 20, 000 people would be displaced with little or no compensation. At first the World Bank funded 450 million dollars in the project, later when 'Narmada Bachao' was in full swing, the World Bank backed off. 30 big dams, 135 medium sized dams and near about 3000 minor dams were proposed by Jawaharlal Nehru on Narmada river among all Sardar Sarovar Dam was the largest

structure which was to be built. The advisors who were 57.6% of the total population displaced for the construction of the dams were provided with nothing. They were deprived of everything, even their shelter and livelihood were snatched by the government. Similarly in ' *The Hungry Tide*' we see Amitav Ghosh to portray the suffering of the refugees who took shelter in Marichjhapi. No exact numbers are disclosed like how many refugees were there on that island or how many got killed by the police. But several articles, journals predicted that more than 40,000 refugees took shelter in that island and more than 7000 men, women and children were killed in the massacre. Many refugees were forcibly evicted and the number would be more than 10,000 people. Pal [10] in his book "Marichjhapi-Chinno desh, chinno itihash" narrates how rape, assault, were common in the refugee camps and most of them came from the government personals according to some of the witnesses. The suffering of the common people or the marginalized are common in both the texts along with the Mentality of the government. And nature plays a key role in both the texts. In '*The Greater Common Good*' government approach and deeds went against nature whereas in '*The Hungry Tide*', in the name of protecting the environment the government damaged the lives of marginal people.

IV. PROPOSITION OF THE OBVIOUS IN LIGHT OF MARICHJHAPI MASSACRE AND NARMADA BACHAO ANDOLAN

There are many similarities between Arundhati Roy's '*The Greater Common Good*' and Amitav Ghosh's '*The Hungry Tide*'. Both the text shows concern for the environment and climate change is a very pivotal issue in the text. Both the text through various symbols depicted the environmental concern. The title '*The Hungry Tide*' itself carries a symbol, rivers are portrayed to be the central symbol of the text. '*The Hungry Tide*' title is the combination of many rivers which are small and large in size, tides bring both life

and death in Sundarbans first stop so here the title gives the glimpse of both life and death. In Sundarbans, tides- a natural disaster take the lives of many people. Also, it creates lives and supplies the power of livelihood to the people residing here. Here the river carries the symbol of humans' duelist and complicated relationship with nature. Through tiger the text symbolized the extraordinary natural power of the environment. Tigers are a representation of the deadly Sundarban. Sobhrajani[11] in her book, "Forest of tides, the untold story of Sunderbans" brings into light how the local people treat the tiger with fear and respect and the text claim, sundarbans must be represented with that fear and respect and that would save the landscape from degradation. The use of 'Gamccha' has a motive which later turns out to be a mode of savior, as during the cyclone it protected both piya and his uncle and Horen and it is associated with preservation and safety. In Arundhati Roy '*The Greater Common Good*', everyone confined sarcasm motives but very less numbers of symbols are present in this text. To start with symbols the dam is a symbol itself. Dam building symbolizes both life and destruction. Small dams represent life whereas dams larger than fifteen meters from its foundation represent destruction. It is cost efficient and unrequired and damages nature. The title of the text is sarcastic. The title says "*The Greater Common Good*", and in that greater word certainly the poor, marginal and adivasi people are not included because the Sardar Sarovar Dam project did nothing good to them, rather they took their everything from shelter to food to livelihoods. Another sarcasm was presented in the text where the judgment of the supreme court was talked about. The writer sarcastically wrote that the supreme court's only concern was to seek whether the displaced children got any playground in their re-settled colony or not! This is very disturbing, where millions of millions people were asked to Vacant their lands which made them lost not only their homes also they lost their means of livelihood and for government their sacrifice was nothing. The

government ordered the displaced poor people must live for the interest of the country. It clearly indicates that ministers take deconstruction for their own interest not for the wellbeing of the country. Both the text have the theme, Man vs Environment. Amitav Ghosh shows the wrath of nature when something is done against it, whereas Arundhati Roy puts more attention on the injustice against nature and its elements, the theme of both the texts in somewhat relatable as both has eco-criticism in it along with socio-political scenarios, including the debatable issues like climate change, water habitats, debrutation dam building and Ecological imbalances made the writers choose the topic and create text like the hungry tide and the greater common goods. Both are connected to each other through the line of environment and its well-being along with its elements. Also both the texts have got some solid humanitarian grounds, which makes them connect to the reader on a larger scale, beautifully.

V. SOCIO-POLITICAL ASPECT: LAW V/S COMMON MAN

The primary reason to write '*The Hungry Tides*' and '*The Greater Common Good*' was the ecological concerns. Another major reason behind the texts is to bring in front the socio-political issues of that time. Arundhati Roy was deeply shocked with the government's ignorance towards the wellbeing of the marginal and poor people of the river valley. In this context "Narmada Bachao Andolan" is very important. It is a social movement led by native tribes, environmentalists, human right activists and farmers, against the dominance of the government. It was said that 30 major, 135 medium sized dams and 3000 small dams will be built on Narmada river, in order to eradicate the issues of drought and lack of drinking water. Sardar Sarovar dam was the tallest among all of the dams and building it became very troublesome as a great unrest among most of the citizens was perceived. Narmada river has passed through Gujarat,

Madhyapradesh, Maharashtra and the main aim to build this dam was to provide electricity and irrigation to people of these states. In the process people who lived in the river valley were asked to leave their homes for the greater interest of the country. Even the environmentalists and the forest department of the government checked the project and as it did not fulfill the basic environmental conditions. This project lacked proper planning and detailed studies which were other reasons for the scholars to protest. Arundhati Roy focused mainly on the humanitarian grounds and in her essay mainly the sufferings of the poor people is echoed along with various protests against the government. She condemned the government for ruining the lives of the poor and marginal people and of the adivasis. She advocated against the government's hypocrisy and the mentality to put focus on temporary development. Even the writer gave all her man-booker prize money which she got for her novel '*God of Small Things*', to this 'andolan'. Arundhati Roy had to spend a night behind the bars for raising her voice against the government asking for the rights of the poor.

Amitav Ghosh is an ardent follower of ecocriticism which "redefines our relationship with the environment and literature" as defined by David Daiches[12] in his book on literary theories "A Critical History of English Literature". and in most of his books, nature plays an important role. '*The Hungry Tide*' is a very renowned book by the author and this book has a deep socio-political background which makes the story even more mysterious and interesting and in this regard, 'Marichjhapi Massacre' is very important. Mukherjee[13] in his book "Hungry Bengal-war famine riots and the end of empire" refers to the incident where hindu dalit refugees forcibly occupied the reserved forest land and those lands were legally protected and situated at Marichjhapi island of Sundarbans. This incident took place in 1979. It also depicts the death of some refugees and policemen due to the violent actions, gunfire and disease. Through Nilima and Nirmal's

characters the subsequent time of the massacre is clearly depicted in the novel. The government of that time which was the Communist Party of India came in force and refugees across the neighboring countries started to come in large numbers to India. Some of the refugees who claimed to be Hindu dalits, started to live in Marichjhapi island. They established a colony there and named it "Netaji Nagar". In fear of losing a reserve mangrove forest, the government asked the refugees to evacuate the lands, which the latter disobeyed. As a result, violent activities took place. There are reports that Ananda Margis of that region started cross border arms smuggling and that had been caught by the police. Thirty police started patrolling the place to prevent illicit activities. The group of Ananda Margis attacked those policies and killed ten of them. Then the police retaliated and open-fired and killed thirteen people. The remaining refugees were brought to the police launch of Hasnabad. This incident was depicted in the novel through the characters of Fokir's father (as a refugee) and Nirmal (as a supporter of the refugees). On the other hand, Nilima represents the left government as she was in support of them and their ideologies.

The role of court and state: The above discussions on both the texts have made it very clear that the role of court and the state were not satisfactory. The state must strive towards the wellbeing of all the inmates and law must treat every citizen equally. All decisions of a state must include the welfare of the citizens of the country. But law is not impartial and most often it talks in favor of the majority or it speaks for the rich people. On the other hand, the state lacks the ability to think about the marginal people and this is reflected in the text vividly. In "*The Greater Common Good*" lack of resettlement planning for the millions of people who were displaced from their lands, shows that incompetency of the government only. The government and law work for the rich and influential people. Environment, its damage, marginal poor people and their wellbeing are never considered by the government. Same cycle is noticed in Amitabh

Ghosh's "*The Hungry Tide*". Deep Halder[14] in his book "The Blood Island" depicts Marichjhapi as a tragedy without proper planning and infrastructure where the state indulged in a massacre in the name of saving the environment. The irony in both the texts is - the law and the state in the name of doing good to nature and to develop the country, actually harm them the most. Human beings are part of nature, specially the tribal people and the marginals. Harming them is a form of destruction of the environment indirectly. Poor and marginal people have always been very helpless in front of the prowess of the state. Most of them are illiterate and barely understand law, diplomacy and their rights. As a result they are exploited the most and they are deprived of every governmental facility. Rather these poor people are the one that suffer the most because of the government's ill planned projects. This irony is established thoroughly in both the texts very gracefully. Both the writers have raised their voices against this injustice. Amitabh Ghosh said it in subtle form and Arundhati Roy said it aloud.

Sustenance of Man vs Environment: Humans have a very deep relationship with mother nature from the time of creation. From their birth, they are cradled in the lap of nature. Nature nurtures humans with food, clothes and shelter since the time immemorial. But the more civilized society became, the more it started to destroy nature. As a result their lives are at stake. In Arundhati Roy's "*The Greater Common Good*" essay, the writer has given the details of the controversies regarding Sardar Sarovar Dam on Narmada river. The main aim of this paper is to shed light on the inner politics of that time. Also, it reflects the writer's immense concern for the environment. According to Arundhati Roy, the dam was not made for the wellbeing of the countrymen; it was rather made to satisfy the hidden political interests of the concurrent government. Jawharlal Nehru insisted the villagers to suffer for the betterment of the country. It clearly indicates these marginal people were not included in Nehru's perception of countrymen.

People, who were asked to vacate their lands were mostly farmers, adivasis and from very poor backgrounds. In every riverside belt, farming is very famous, so are small scale industries and fishing. D'Souza [15] explains his perspective in "The Narmada Dammed: An inquiry into the politics of development" as unjust, where asking to vacate the lands of those poor people would make them say goodbye to their livelihood as well. These people could not afford to start their lives from scratch. For a country's betterment development is very important as it helps the country to evolve and progress. But harming poor people by snatching away their livelihood from them in the name of development is pathetic and shameful. India has witnessed lots of developmental projects post independence era, and most of them were harmful to nature. These issues induced various protests, gatherings, and rallies in the country. These are clear indications that the countrymen were not happy with the project. The picture of helpless people of the valley is very well described in this essay. In this regard 'Chipko Movement' of Uttaranchal, or 'Narmada Bachao Andolan' are very crucial. These movements were done to protect nature as well as to raise a voice against the injustice of the marginalized people. Various theories are already there to show the harmful effects of deforestation or dam-building. Theories also show when a country steps towards deforestation, poisons the water of rivers and seas, or builds unnecessary dams it can be fatal as it might cause natural calamities. In the name of globalization, people tend to harm nature which can be compared to digging one's own grave.

We must remember the verses from Hayford's [16] "Genesis: promises and beginnings":

"For dust you are
and to dust you
shall return".

(Genesis 3:10)

Nature is considered as God, and harming it will endanger human's existence. For the temporary

developments damaging this planet indeed is an ugly act as it can lead to permanent damage to nature. It is the habit of the government to suppress the voices of the minorities and to impose law and order of the state on the minors. The sufferings and hidden tears of those people were always unheard to the government. And these acts of the government made the writer visit Gujarat.

With the help from the internationals the government imposed military rule on the land so that the voices of the oppressed did not come out. The whole country decided for their own benefit, and the marginals had to suffer. The Supreme court's diction was in the favor of the government. It did not care to give justice to the poor people. The sufferings and tears were ignored by the people who used to earn from that river. The motto of the project was to bring water to the barren lands. In the whole process the government failed to cater the needs of the environment as this project has entailed huge flooding of various villages and fertile lands which were considered to be productive. These activities of the government adversely impacted nature. Downstream fishing was immensely affected by it. It was considered a great threat to wildlife's natural habitat. Morse Reports of 1992 has found it to be a threat to waterlogging, salinization of water, deforestation and silting of the riverbed. Morse Reports also condemned the fact that there was nothing such a resettlement plan to the government for the people who were to be replaced. The World Bank at first invested in this project, later after several protests, criticism from the environmentalists and for the lack of proper planning they withdrew from this project. Another important adverse effect of this dam was suspected to be climate change. The ecological damage was something Sardar Sarovar Dam did to India, plus its effectiveness was questionable.

Due to this project, land submerged in Madhya Pradesh was near about 20,822 hectares, in Maharashtra it was near about 9590 hectares and in Gujrat it is about 7112 hectares. And most of these

lands were fertile. Negative impacts of big dams are numerous. Dam wall blocks the migration of fishes, it changes the physical property of a river, it also adversely affects the ecological property of the river. Aquatic plants and animals are not habituated with the artificial reservoir habitat and it changes their system. Some reports also suggest that there were many forest areas in the riverbed which submerged. Arundhati Roy tried to focus on all these above-mentioned points in her essay.

VI. HYBRID CONTEXTUALIZATION OF NARRATIVE AND POETIC PERFORMANCE OF ARUNDHATI ROY AND AMITAV GHOSH

The relationship between two human beings is one of the prime highlights in both the texts. Fokir's unconditional help to Piya expresses the uncomplicated simple mindset of the rural islanders. This part is beautifully depicted in *'The Hungry Tides'*. In the essay *'The Greater Common Good'*, the activists, environmentalists, social workers, farmers, marginal and the deprived stood together to help each other in order to save their home. This tells us about the humane bond that binds us together in the face of adversity. The innate urge to stay as a social being in communities rising above the segregation of caste and creed, color and status just like Piya and Fokir.

In *'The Greater Common Good'* power resembles the institutional law and the seat of rule, i.e the government which took away everything from the poor people in the name of development. In *'The Hungry Tide'* the left government took the lives of refugees in the name of preserving and conservation which they did not perform later. Even today, Marichjhapi remains a curious blot on the canvas of Bengal politics and civilization. Both the writers through their texts deal with unmasking the hypocrisy of power and corruption.

Man and nature is the ancient of all relationships. As far as we can trace the existence of humanity backwards, we have been on the receiving end of

bountiful nature. This innate relationship is depicted in every page of both the texts. We are made out of nature, the elements in it. So, it is one of our primary duties to protect the mother who nurtured us with care. In both the texts it is seen that a section of our civilization, who are categorized as minority or the deprived are fiercely taking up their oath to preserve the surrounding. This can be seen as a symbiosis of the root to our root. They are the primordial beings dependent on the bounty directly to sustain their livelihood. Whereas the urban 'developed' beings, the man in power tends to usurp everything that is natural only to paint the sprawling concrete canvas of urbanization and development. Multiple instances from the texts explicitly examine the bane of development. *'The Greater Common Good'* and *'The Hungry Tides'* thus bring forth a mirror reflecting the subconscious of man. We get a glimpse of our darkness, projecting through the hunger in our eyes in the name of greater common good.

"Beauty is nothing but the start of terror we can hardly bear, and we adore it because of the serene scorn it could kill us with...". This line from Amitav Ghosh's *'The Hungry Tide'* depicts the situation of Sunderbans and its environment. Aruna and Devabalane [17] beautifully described in their paper "Human v/s non-human: Environmental Issues and Concerns in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*." the relationship between human and non-human here. The island is very beautiful with its landscapes, serene rivers, beautiful environment, natural vegetation, and mangrove forests. Basu [18] also depicted similar bond between man and nature in "Exploring the bond between Man and Nature in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*". This beauty is protected by the islanders along with some natural caretakers of the island, who are the royal Bengal tigers and crocodiles and snakes. Any predator who wants to harm the nature and the environment of Sunderbans, need to face the terror lying there in the form of animals. Even the rivers and the currents in it along with the tides play a very important role in preserving the

covered area. Crocodiles swimming in the rivers stop the poachers from doing any harm to the island. Singh's [19] book titled "Oceanography" describes how nature uses its own mechanism to protect itself and its elements, that is beautifully presented in the novels. Amitav Ghosh with his immense wit, graceful writing, and huge concern and advanced knowledge has written the story. The key issues are presented in such a way that the readers will get a clear picture of the concurrent situation. Along with that the neo political aspects which are presented by the author, will make the readers understand the ongoing socio politics of the land and time. The text is written in a manner, where the reader will not suffer from monotony and rather it will melt their souls. Similarly Arundhati Roy (1999) in her *'The Greater Common Good'* and other texts critically writes about the marginalized, about their rights, their sufferings along with environmental concerns - in both her fiction and nonfiction, the same self voice is echoed. She speaks for the people who are pushed to the periphery of our society. Also, her concerns for nature are expressed on many occasions. Her books speak for her care regarding ecological balance. Her book *'The Greater Common Good'* starts with Jawaharlal Nehru's quote "If you are to suffer, you should suffer, in the interest of the country." From this line the intention of the government is exposed. Nehru's concurring government take on dam building shook the entire country. With the chanting of 'development', the government was actually indulged in the damaging of the nature. And that made the writer condemn the government's act through her works.

'The Greater Common Good' is an essay with detailed statistics on Sardar Sarobar dam and all other previous and future dams which were proposed to be made on river Narmada. The adverse effects of dam building are given in the work along with the detailed data from authentic sources. At the end, the writer has concluded with the sufferings of the marginalized communities whose voice remains under the rock. The government didn't stop, nor did it think about

the future of the displaced poor people. The marginal did not get any benefit; rather they were the ones who suffered because of the government's unplanned, lack of research project.

VII. CONCLUSION

The suffering of the subaltern is present in both the texts, *'The Greater Common Good'* and *'The Hungry Tide'*. In her paper Eco critical study of Amitav Ghosh's *'The Hungry Tide'*, Shree [20] explains Fokir's death at the end of the Hungry tides as a symbol of pain and suffering of the marginals. The title is justified through the death though unjust, as the hunger of the river is finally satiated through Fokir's sacrifice. Thus, ensuring the establishment of balance in the eco community of river and people. The river restores goes back to being the benevolent mother only after calming the mayhem. Thus, Fokir's death becomes the synecdoche in the bigger scheme of things, where suffering becomes the purgation in interest of the country. In *'The Greater Common Good'*, Arundhati Roy (1999) has presented their facts through analysis and lucid interpretation, but Amitav Ghosh (2016) expressed their life through meticulous symbolism and well knitted words.

India is rich in biodiversity; is rich in Flora and Fauna and hence it is reflected in the literary works of many celebrated writers. Mother earth has infinitely generated various problems, which is an inductive reminder to safe guard the earth. Literature acts as a tool and a medium to link nature and man and also strives for effective commencement of actions to mankind.

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