

## Beyond Language Mediation: The Hungry Tide by Amitav Ghosh

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### Abstract

*Ghosh's novel The Hungry Tide is a tale about the people of the Sundarbans, the Tidal Islands at the mouth of the Ganges, and how they have endured the relentless barrages of natural disasters and the equally brutal evolving tides of dependency politics in a region where such forces have had a continuous and often devastating impact as people have been forced to move away from their ancestral roots. The author attempts to relate the compelling stories with the broader story of the ecological and environmental forces acting on the world. Ghosh's new register, speech, writing, translation and description challenge forms of experience which resist language communication.*

**Keywords:** *Agony, Sundarbans, ecology, anguish, language, ancestral roots.*

Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* is a tale about the people of the Sundarbans, the coastal islands at the mouth of the Ganges and how they endured the relentless onslaughts of natural disasters and the equally brutal changes in post-freedom politics in an environment where these forces had an ongoing and often devastating impact as people were forced to move away from their ancestral history. The memoir aims to connect the human stories with the broader story of the ecological and environmental effects of gravity on the province. Ghosh's new register, speech, writing, translation and description challenge forms of experience which resist language communication because Piya Roy feels that "who speaks no Hindi or Bengali, but works in a remote part of India where few people speak English—must embrace the idea that she doesn't necessarily need a common spoken or written language in order to complete her work. She finds that visual cues are a far more effective means for communicating with others." (<https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-hungry-tide/themes/language>).

Reality often declines to be captured by any single representation, but here it does seem to utterly reject representation, downplaying that not everything between various cultures, let alone among various species, can be "translated" or mediated through language. One of the other characters that the narrative goes behind Kanai Dutt, Piya, Niljiri and Nilima are outsiders of the Sundarban Islands, the Bhata Desh or the Tide Country at the mouth of the Bengal Gangetic Delta.

The protagonists they try to portray, the natives of this oppressed community resist numerous attempts made by each of these privileged newcomers to reflect and describe everyone. In turn, they describe themselves only against additional and progressive forms of variation, the real and the mythical creatures with whom they express this landscape.

How is this pledge expressed in the text with the limits of representation? Kanai Dutt, the first character whose perspective the user expresses is a professional translator, based on the assumption that individuals can respond and be noticed through the variations that divide them. But this trust is defeated at important times. For instance, when Kanai Dutt asks Moyna, the ambitious trainee nurse he is drawn to, why she met Fokir, the uneducated crab-fisherman. He says he wouldn't comprehend.

It is the simple language equation with knowledge exposed by Kanai Dutt's response. Vocabulary has its position, but it is rooted in opinion and can not replace it. Later, when Moyna asks Kanai Dutt to warn Fokir of the dangers of an interference with Piya, she clarifies the essence of language, its function and its restraints. She tells her husband why she can't determine him, and an outsider can persuade him.

In this way, vocabulary is met with reality in this book. The naming and power it seems to provide for the scientist Piya Roy is continually overcome by the dynamics of the Tide country's people and environment. Her faith in scientific definition and her need to recognize and define the universe are continually being questioned and she is gradually forced to accept that she can only witness this disparity and not identify and manage it by calling it. As Fokir and Tutul take her to the shrine, she is drawn away from her normal characterizing position to that of a witness, an observer who can never be a vital part.

As she heard the name Muslim god's name she pondered if Fokir was a Muslim. But he doesn't feel he can be like a Muslim who doesn't bow to an image. Her defining mind is confused because it is not possible to settle the case into a set category. But then she goes beyond this need to evaluate. Including those who have lived their entire lives in the Tide State, the Calcutta-born couple Nirmal Bose and Nilima, remain outside the world in crucial ways that they've been struggling to grasp and structure. Nirmal Bose, the radical optimist, and poet rejects, through his own intimate experience of the Tide Country, the way the boatman, Horen Naskor, interprets the story of the Seventeenth century Jesuit traveller, Bernier.

And if a storm overtakes the priest and his Portuguese guides, Horen Naskor perceives it via the tale of Bon Bibi as a product of going over the line that separates Bon Bibi's land from that of the demon Dokkhin Rai. The philosophical description is brought about by the materialist Nirmal Bose.

Horen Naskor encourages the theory to communicate by silence, not by declaration. This is to defy that language alone is vital for mediation. Relatively, Fokir reacts through a similarly powerful silence to the wishes of the modern translator and language expert Kanai Dutt. Seeking Fokir to assist Piya Roy on her quest for the Irrawaddy dolphins, he talks to him in a polite manner. But it did not surprise Piya's view that Fokir had responded with what was his instinctive mode of reflex and was quiet.

All of these visitors come to realize in time that language can not completely convey let alone reproduce the conceptual reality of the Tide Country an empirical reality that can be interpreted, if at all, only in the ephemeral and fluid signs of verbal expression and story that

are constantly changing and expanding like the river and its islands. So the role of mediation through language in a sense limited when people with linguistics and social backgrounds are put in a situation to communicate there is something more than just a language which is normally demarcated to an area of region. And the thing according the novel is silence which is capable of doubling – up to communicate complex ideas.

Like Nirmal Bose, Kanai Dutt and Piya Roy need to re-examine their language formation and how it applies to and reflects knowledge. This is a radical revision that shifts from the need to remember the silenced human beings they meet to the need to listen to and consider the Tide country's many other quieted institutions. Those also provide all the beings and powers represented in the Bon Bibi tale myth, the human's typically quieted realms, and the non-human, the animals, and the plants that together make up the Tide country's universe. To Nirmal Bose, the young Fokir becomes the medium by which he can express his own increasing awareness of the strength of the land and its sounds, which can only be noticed when listened to in receptive passivity.

Nirmal Bose takes the young Fokir to the badh (the tidal dike) and asks him to hear. He notices the crabs' sound, crabs burrowing into the badh and ultimately causing it to crash down as the tide flows. Recognizing the animals causes Nirmal Bose to start listening to other people's voices and finding his mankind not in its exclusiveness and continuity but in its stability with the impermanence and formative procedures of the human experience.

The novel explores the shortcomings of the elite literal depiction's ability to accept the truth of the Sundarbans' subaltern inhabitants. The instances like the acknowledgement by Kanai Dutt of his failure to interpret the sung version of the Bon Bibi story from Fokir as the phase when he views himself through other's eyes. The critical understanding of this event is when Kanai Dutt understands the purpose of taking Fokir to the Bon Bibi shrine. This is the shrine to which Fokir has clearly brought Piya Roy to herald that her dolphins are not only the river dolphin species that are scientifically called and so commanded, but also the emissaries of the magical realm of Bon Bibi. The shrine reflects the endless struggle that forms the basis the entire natural world, a struggle that requires recognition of the balance of catastrophe and victory, of natural forces that at the same time kill and build, and that demands that human beings acknowledge their own weaknesses and the role that these larger forces perform in individual existence.

Perhaps previously in the book, this idea was foretold in Kanai Dutt's childhood introduction to the play of Bon Bibi when he discovered that Bon Bibi split his domain, enabling Dokkhin Rai and the forces of devastation to intermingle a space.

Mukherjee is appropriate in saying that the narrative seeks to doubt the norm and see it as having to be rejigged over any region of any area. The researcher's point of view would certainly desire to go past Mukherjee's problem to replace older critiques of the global with a more comprehensive interpretation of which makes the world alive.

The unique seems to me less worried with this social revisionary goal, than with taking a look at the issues that underpin post humanist concepts, which say that the exclusivity of the very classification of the human has been made use of to underpin a difference from all other living beings that permits the exploitation of the animal world, and also the natural resources of the plant world, the forests and the plant life on which all life on

the planet depends. This larger motif is shown in several areas in the novel and each of the personalities move in the direction of a more clear sense of this connection of all life.

Nilima's view that values all life but which prioritises human lives represents probably the standard liberal, altruistic position where and against which all the other placements of the outsiders are calibrated. All the views of these outsider characters whose inner reflections control the narrative are also put versus the broader and a lot more communalist voice of the repressed beings of the Tide Country, whose utmost voice is shared in the narrative of misconception and in their enacted, not stated, connection with the rhythms of the all-natural world they live in and the animals with whom they share it. Their partnership keeping that globe is not defined by abstracted concepts such as preservation, when it comes to them the natural world is one with which they stay in mutual dependence, fishing it and when required defending themselves against it. It is this - but in a manner more profound- relationship with the natural that Piya Roy needs to accept when she is compelled to realise that Fokir is not an person of her suitable understanding and preserving nature.

Since she has actually assumed that he would certainly share her ideas, when Fokir participates in the slaying of the entrapped tiger that has actually struck the citizens she is surprised and dissatisfied. When Fokir reproduced to her his the way the occasion happened that when a tiger enters into a human arrangement it desires to die, she decreases to hear it along with really shut ears. In short, she knows that her rejection of the villagers point of view of the tiger positions her in the exact same camp as the foresters, when she sees the very same corrupt guard that she had actually encountered on her trip to Lusibari on his manner to beat along with bully and acquire wealth from the town for its self-preservative action.

The tiger elimination causes the most explicit conversation of the issue of preservation and its human results in the story. Kanai Dutt claims that these disputes may be the outcome of people like you who made a push to protect the wildlife here without regard for the human costs.

Piya Roy represents the statement at the core of the post-humanist approach. It was by believing that some humans were not human that they could validate their exploitation and brutalizing. In these murderous moments of history, therefore, the concept of man is itself involved.

To achieve this or make it through an effort to act on this principle, we should always be interested in the kind of agreement that Nilima has actually lived— dramatizing the political leaders in Delhi in her visits and also her meetings with Prime Minister Morarji Desai. The inability of Nirmal Bose (Saar) to render this compromise— having actually turned his back into the bars of control— has rendered him and his fellow educators unable to effect any shift in the mentality of the federal government in the direction of the Morichjhapi devastation, and even unable to save the few people they actually took off.

But while this belongs to the resolution, it seems to me that The Hungry Tide asks us to assume more broadly, to take into account not only the issue of environmental preservation, but also precisely how it can be accomplished, however, the question of how we can begin to recognize the variety of human beings, not just as a re-adjustment between different types of human society and values. This wider sight, which unites the wild globe without words and also the utmost sign of culture, language and cultivation, is foreshadowed

in many moments when the eighteen tides of the human inhabitants or visitors to this globe interact across the boundaries of types and also of speech.

The animals continued to destroy the water around us all the time our watercraft went to that spot. What was it that kept them there? Which prompted them to stay? I couldn't picture it. Next came a minute when one of them with his head broke the surface and stared at me correctly. I saw at the moment that Kusum considered it so unsubstantiated that these creatures were something other than them. For where she really saw a Bon Bibi sign, I saw the poet's look instead. If he was telling me, it was like that.

For Kanai Dutt, it is a minute when the delta itself is viewed as a fusion not only of rivers yet of cultures, but also of languages consisting of those forms whose language is, for the moment, unreducible to human speech. It is the message for Fokir and Kusum that Bon Bibi stands for, the larger pattern of misconception in which all numbers are inscribed in both human, pet, and spirit. Such analyses are not incorporated yet, but rather used to discover the conflict that should always occur as language and human thought tries to establish its boundaries, boundaries that by definition constantly need to be breached and restored for expression, structure and human consciousness to be at all be realised, because it is unique only in questioning a boundary and in achieving it.

Since these issues are put below in the very form that the text seeks to challenge and describe, language, development and in a sense literature and confusion as the meaning of the tale and narrative, it is perhaps in the continuous referencing of the idea of make-up of the poet Rilke, conjured up in Nirmal Bose, that this vital issue is positioned. As quoted in Human alienation from nature: intertextual links from The Ethics of Representation in the Fiction of Amitav Ghosh:

The thematic similarities between *The Hungry Tide* and *Duino Elegies* are quite striking. Rilke writes about the alienation of human beings from nature and animals. As with Ghosh, one dividing factor seems to be language: in Rilke's view, humans are not at home in their—translated world. However, Rilke's idea of nature as something unreachable by humans does not come through in the short excerpts that are located in Nirmal Bose's diary. (p. 77)

Nirmal Bose is a poet and a political friend. Therefore, his failure as a revolutionary is his success as a person capable of transcending the brutal materialism that enables his visionary colleagues, now successful social leaders, to remind him that for true revolutionary people must be put below ideology. In describing Nirmal Bose, the researcher would say that Ghosh comes very close to identifying the procedures of his own letter, not that Nirmal Bose stands for Ghosh, but both are figures in the novel who try to find a way to write their experience, even if that writing is invariably a failure, shed in the storm of the river, or in the impossible fusion of different languages and experiences.

In an attempt to discuss Nirmal Bose with Piya Roy Kanai Dutt he notes that Nirmal Bose loves the poet Rilke for his belief in change and that Nirmal Bose is a person who has lived through poetry. Accordingly, his Marxist belief that the underlying material globe shaped every small thing led him not to celebrate the domination of nature by man and the exploitation of nature by industrialization, but to feel that every thing acts to change and to alter every little thing and to be transformed in its turn.

### Conclusion:

It shows the very own story-telling of Ghosh in many respects. Each of the characters reflects one of the many facets of the world, the verbal, the quiet, the living, and the nature's great pressures that form their environment. The narrative brings facts together to draw them, the influence of language turns them into a single story— of a kind. So the unusual all at once testifies to the inability of language to completely integrate knowledge ever before, while its true nature as a language continually expresses the need to struggle against this limitation. In the reality of the novel's existence, the pessimism that sometimes seems to colour the protagonists' sights as to the language's failure is eventually addressed, making the special one that speaks for the silenced, even though it understands just how difficult and incomplete such expression must always be. It is true that the amount of mis-communication that keeps happening around the world is a towering evidence that language alone cannot compensate for the mediation among humans and nature. That's why human beings are often deaf to the disasters around even though a lot is being communicated. This disability of any language in the light of Ghosh's novel is a harbinger to throw light on the aspects that are beyond language communication. Perhaps, only then through that silence which is stronger and more meaningful and contextual, human world can leave peacefully with the right kind of mediation.

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