

RESEARCH PROPOSAL (CONCEPT NOTE)

WORKING TITLE:

"Whispers of the Mangroves: Unveiling Ecocritical Ethos in 'The Hungry Tide'"

Abstract:

This dissertation explores how Amitav Ghosh's novel "The Hungry Tide" depicts the relationship between humans and nature. It focuses on the Sundarbans, a vulnerable region in India, and uses environmentalism and ecocriticism to analyze the book's characters, settings, and themes. By applying concepts from environmental studies and literary criticism, the research investigates how the novel addresses environmental conservation, cultural attitudes toward nature, and human responsibility. Through a detailed examination of the story, this study aims to contribute to discussions about environmental literature and encourage a greater understanding of the interconnectedness of life on Earth.

Introduction:

In literature from ancient times to today, authors often explore the relationship between humans and nature, discussing topics like environmental responsibility and the connection between ecology and morality. Amitav Ghosh's "The Hungry Tide" is a notable example, set in the Sundarbans, a large mangrove forest between India and Bangladesh. The novel reflects the rhythms of the Sundarbans and the complexities of human life. The Sundarbans, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is crucial in Ghosh's novel, representing both the setting and a character itself. It's a place where traditional ways meet modern challenges, highlighting the delicate balance between human society and the environment, which faces increasing threats like climate change and habitat loss. In "The Hungry Tide," characters like Piya Roy, an American studying endangered river dolphins, and Kanai Dutt, an Indian translator reconnecting with his roots, grapple with their roles in the changing environment. Through their experiences, Ghosh prompts readers to consider the connections between humans and nature. This dissertation examines "The Hungry Tide" through the lenses of environmentalism and ecocriticism, exploring its themes and narrative complexity. By analyzing the text and characters, we aim to uncover its deeper meanings regarding human relationships with nature, contributing to our understanding of literature's role in shaping our views on the environment.

Methodology:

1. Qualitative Textual Analysis:

This study uses a method called qualitative textual analysis to closely examine selected passages from Amitav Ghosh's "The Hungry Tide." This approach involves a thorough reading and interpretation of the text to understand its themes, characters, and storytelling techniques, with a focus on human-nature relationships. Qualitative textual analysis is ideal for this study because it allows for a detailed exploration of the novel's complex themes. By closely analyzing specific passages, we can identify recurring motifs, symbols, and narrative techniques related to environmentalism and ecocriticism. This helps us gain valuable insights into the depth of the novel's themes and its portrayal of human-nature connections.

2. Thematic Coding:

To help with our analysis, we're using thematic coding, which is a method for identifying and organizing recurring themes and motifs in the text. By categorizing passages based on themes related to environmentalism and ecocriticism, we can track how these themes develop throughout the novel and how they connect with the characters' experiences with nature.

3. Character Analysis:

At the heart of this study is a detailed examination of key characters in "The Hungry Tide" and their connections to the Sundarbans. Characters like Piya Roy, Kanai Dutt, and Fokir are analyzed to understand how they interact with and perceive the natural environment. By closely studying their motivations, actions, and conversations, we aim to uncover their underlying attitudes and beliefs related to environmentalism and ecocriticism.

Chapter 1: Nurturing Nature's Symphony

In Amitav Ghosh's "The Hungry Tide," the Sundarbans emerge not merely as a setting but as a living, breathing character in its own right. This chapter embarks on a journey through the Sundarbans, unraveling its ecological tapestry and celebrating its status as a vibrant landscape where nature and humanity intertwine seamlessly.

Exploring the Sundarbans:

- A Sanctuary of Life: Unveiling the Ecological Significance
- Biodiversity Extravaganza: Delving into the Richness of Species
- Cultural Threads: Understanding the Sundarbans' Symbolism
- Dance of Coexistence: Human-Nature Relationships in Harmony

Chapter 2: Footprints on Fragile Ground

In "The Hungry Tide," Amitav Ghosh paints a stark picture of human impact on the Sundarbans, where the actions of individuals reverberate through the delicate balance of nature. This chapter delves into the shadows cast by human presence, examining the scars of environmental degradation and the complexities of navigating a landscape caught between conservation and development.

Exploring Human Footprints:

- Timber Trails: Tracing the Effects of Logging and Deforestation
- Silent Struggles: Poaching, Wildlife Trade, and Ecological Imbalance
- Smoke Signals: Industrialization, Pollution, and Nature's Resilience
- Echoes of the Past: Colonial Legacies and Contemporary Challenges
- Balancing Act: Conflicts, Conservation, and the Quest for Harmony

Chapter 3: Guardians of Tradition

"The Hungry Tide" not only tells a tale of the Sundarbans' natural wonders but also celebrates the wisdom of its indigenous communities. This chapter immerses us in the rich cultural heritage of the Sundarbans, where age-old knowledge and sustainable practices serve as guiding lights in the journey towards coexistence with nature.

Exploring Indigenous Wisdom:

- Roots of Knowledge: Unearthing Ethnobotanical Treasures
- Guardians of the Forest: Community-Based Management in Action
- Thriving in Adversity: Adaptation, Resilience, and Survival
- Passing the Torch: Intergenerational Transmission of Ecological Knowledge

Chapter 4: The Heart's Compass

In the tangled web of human-nature interactions depicted in "The Hungry Tide," questions of ethics and responsibility loom large. This chapter delves into the moral quandaries faced by characters navigating the Sundarbans' challenges, urging readers to contemplate the deeper implications of their actions and the collective duty towards environmental stewardship.

Exploring Ethical Terrain:

- Crossroads of Conscience: Navigating Ethical Dilemmas
- Tides of Change: Embracing Responsibility and Accepting Consequences
- Harmony in Diversity: Understanding Interconnectedness and Respect
- Seeds of Justice: Cultivating Fairness and Environmental Equity
- Rays of Hope: Finding Redemption and Transformation amidst Adversity

Chapter 5: Echoes in the Tides

As the journey through "The Hungry Tide" draws to a close, reflections on the novel's themes resound like echoes in the vast expanse of the Sundarbans. This concluding chapter invites readers to ponder the profound connections forged between humanity and nature, celebrating the novel's role in igniting conversations about environmentalism, cultural resilience, and the imperative of fostering solidarity with the natural world.

Reflecting on the Journey:

- Threads of Resilience: Environmentalism and Ecocriticism in Dialogue
- Cultural Kaleidoscope: Identity, Resilience, and the Sundarbans' Spirit
- Waves of Justice: Environmental Advocacy and Solidarity in Action
- Legacy of the Tide: Insights, Impact, and the Everlasting Call to Care