Precarity, Catastrophe and the Anthropocene: Reading Amitav Ghosh's *Gun Island*

Dr. Kankana Bhowmick
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4018-6343
Independent Researcher, Bongaigaon,

Abstract

The lack of adequate portrayal of the age of precarity in contemporary South Asian novels has prompted Amitav Ghosh to bring it to light in *Gun Island* (2019). More widespread yet less conspicuous trends of global displacement, as well as greater instability and dispersed situations of hardship and insecurity in the Anthropocene, have gained momentum as a result of neoliberal capitalism's influence on expanding discrimination throughout the globe, leading to the precarity that exists today. Neocolonial resource extraction from poor southern countries for the advantage of growing industrialised and capitalistic endeavours is a major contributor to climate change, both in terms of global warming and adverse environmental impacts. The most serious and unsettling issues of climate change-induced illegal migration and refugees underscore the fragile and uncertain social status that many members of the economically disadvantaged class or labourers around the globe now experience. The overwhelming concern for their security in situations of environmental catastrophes or the endless struggle to sustain their livelihoods in their native countries propels them to migrate, even though they may not be endorsed in foreign territories, further exacerbating their precariousness. Drawing from the discourses on precarity advocated by the writings of Anna Tsing, Dipesh Chakrabarty, etc., this paper analyses the impacts of the enforcement of neoliberal capitalistic ideology on this increasingly precarious society. It is argued that the novel is an exploration of the unconventional aspect of human vulnerability, shifting away from the typical focus on conflicts, war, and haphazard economy. Instead, it looks into how anthropogenic climate crises as well as the intricacies of neoliberal capitalism perpetuate life's insecurity. It also emphasises the heterogeneity of socially, politically, and ecologically conditioned human sufferings, their unique contexts, and their lived experiences that capture the diverse range of exploitation endured by migrant workers. This article, thus, examines Ghosh's novel through the lens of human vulnerability, drawing attention to the issue of human mobility in a highly disorganised state and their disempowerment in the transnational space as crucial to their resilience and existence in the face of the adverse conditions brought about by anthropocentric activities. Ghosh's oeuvre seems to challenge contemporary novelists' tendency towards resistance and troubled imagination in representing the climate crisis by situating it in the nexus of planetary precarity.

Keywords: Climate Change, Precarity, Anthropocene, Neoliberalism, Migration.

While the very inception of the idea of a new geological age called the Anthropocene describes the transforming dynamics of the planet and species relationship and dismantling and reorganisation of dominant socio-economic discourse, literary narratives about the experience of mobility offer critiques and help to envision the prerogatives assigned to human agency to confront any crisis engendered by real life experiences. In the current context, as the threat of the climate crisis becomes increasingly imminent and unforeseen disasters continue to wreak havoc globally, it is crucial to consider precarity as an interface between humans and nonhumans. *Gun Island* (2019) by Amitav Ghosh extends such a compelling perspective that projects how the intricate connections among climate-induced environmental flux, multispecies migration, and vulnerable living conditions are affecting human life by rendering it precarious. While Ghosh frames the migrants as climate refugees, the storyline also underscores the displacement of nonhumans as a whole. By doing so, Ghosh explores the global nature of the climate catastrophe and alludes to the need for and potential of cooperation across species and cultures in the ongoing struggle against climate change. Through a close reading of *Gun Island*, it becomes evident that the author is advocating for environmental justice on a global scale, addressing the urgent planetary crisis caused by the changing climate. His work indicates the need to consider the well-being of both humans and nonhumans in our efforts to combat the crisis.

Since both human and nonhuman bear the brunt of environmental inequity, the pursuit of justice for the marginalised is inherently bound up with the quest for equity for the nonhuman. As such, Ghosh is concerned with the historical, social, economic, and environmental trends that have had harmful effects, emphasising how colonisation by European nations and modern-day global capitalism have contributed to the worsening of the climate-related disasters, making life precarious. Extrapolating on Pierre Bourdieu's notion of social suffering, Schierup and Jørgensen (2017) assert that precarity is a multifaceted and ever-growing "weight of the world" surfacing through worsening working conditions, racialisation, and rupture of citizenship, more specifically "excessive human vulnerability" and migration (1). They call "precarity" as a "historical moment" strikingly manifesting through "the emergence of a new global norm of contingent employment, social risk and fragmented life situations – without security, protection or predictability" (3). This study intends, accordingly, to look into the gamut and invincible perils of contemporary environmental transformations and human struggle under an insecure living condition through the lens of precarity, as portrayed in *Gun Island*. Schierup and Jørgensen's analysis also points towards the fact that the onset of climate crises has transformed the human condition as a whole by making people more vulnerable to unfavourable circumstances brought on by manifold risks, and this precariousness is global in nature.

Judith Butler, through the Foreward to the book by Isabell Lorey (2015), states that transforming modern societies are characteristic of a pervasive sense of insecurity that leads to the consideration that "[P]recarity is not a passing or episodic condition, but a new form of regulation that distinguishes this historical time" (vii). Many recent novels written in English have focused on migration and displacement, displaying the hardships faced by migrants trying to enter Western nations illegally. The growing corpus of literary and artistic works, including works by South Asian writers, is responding to global migration and humanitarian crises spanning different genres and forms. For instance, Debendranath Acharya's novel *Jangam* (2018) explores the precarious circumstances faced by Burmese Indian peasants who migrated during World War II. It highlights their journey to Assam, outlining the formation of a community that has been overlooked by history. In her novel *The Story That Must Not Be Told* (2010), Kavery Nambisan focuses on the

lives of those residing in a slum area, describing the challenges faced by this precarious marginalised class and the stark contrast with the privileged elites. Such works often aim to challenge stereotypical media portrayals of marginalised communities, migrants, and refugees, which often represent them as emblems of crisis rather than depicting the precarious lives they lead. An overwhelming sense of instability and uncertainty has crept into our contemporary world as a result of numerous developments in economic, cultural, political, and social spheres. In the global South, perhaps, there has been a heightened awareness of global insecurities, vulnerability, and injustices following the rise of neoliberal globalisation. Hence, this paper analyses *Gun Island*, which depicts the harrowing experiences of refugees and migrants who flee social and specifically, ecological degradation in their native countries and ultimately reach the coast of Italy seeking refuge. Zooming in on the experiences of the novel's migrant characters, it can be argued that the prejudices of rightwing politics and sufferings endured by refugees are together a manifestation of their precarious existence.

Contrary to introducing a single protagonist to represent a new (dangerous) "class", as the term "precariat" was employed by Guy Standing (2011), Ghosh explores several forms of precarity experienced collectively by the inhabitants of the Sundarbans from a global perspective by centring on the ecological and socio-economic shortcomings that are affecting the current politics of the nations beyond borders. While these variants of precarity take on multiple forms across various regions, dimensions, and socio-economic settings, they seem to be connected by a predominant feature of conditionality and an underlying tendency towards unpredictability because of the relentless hegemonic neoliberal imperatives that are focused solely on the present-day profit-driven exploitation of both humans and the ecological systems. Whenever this transpires, it particularly harms the most disadvantaged humans and beyond. In this case, the refinery scene in the novel calls into question the extent of certainty about Rob Nixon's (2011) emphatic claim that an "intensified resistance" is the most probable outcome of a neoliberal era's "intensified assault on resources" (4) – resources that the people of a region rely upon for their livelihoods. Nixon strongly asserts that resistance materialises either "through isolated site-specific struggles or through activism" that has transcended national borders to reach a larger audience. Whereas, establishing "transnational alliances" can be equally challenging, especially when disadvantaged human and/or nonhuman and insignificant activists find themselves without a powerful voice amidst turbocapitalistic activities that show little regard for resource depletion. The novel shows how slow violence has permeated the lives of the native islanders of the Sundarbans, both human and more-than-human species, who are deeply affected by a form of slow violence that is also gradual. One of the main culprits of this harm is the refinery mentioned by Piya, the Indo-American cetologist. The refinery is poisoning the water bodies of the Sundarbans by "dumping effluents into the rivers" (*Gun Island* 96). As a consequence, dead zones are expanding even in rivers, and there is a significant decline in fish population, unsettling the delicate ecological balance. In this area, the indigenous fisherman community's business spanning generations has eroded due to dwindling fish catches, leading them to come to terms with the unpredictability of lived experiences. This crisis has spiralled out of control largely because of institutional inertia, even though Piya and Dinanath Dutta or Deen, the novel's leading protagonist, have voiced protest against the contra-environmental activities practiced by industrial establishments without active governmental intervention to regulate violations of ethical ecological norms. Ghosh has knotted together in a single narrative thread multidimensional interconnected crisis that are agitating the plinth of global politics; vulnerable life forms are trapped amidst this widening gyre created by deleterious elements involving economic exploitation, ecological extractivism, climate change,

multi-species migration, human trafficking and a rising tide of exodus of the refugees to the European countries.

Being "an unmistakably global novel" as specified by Edwin Gilson (2022), *Gun Island* makes extensive use of symbolic analogies to establish the commonality of its divergent settings – "the Sundarbans delta in the Bay of Bengal, Los Angeles and Venice" (270) – so that the interconnections among these apparent geographically distant locations in the Anthropocene might be better recognised. Even more visibly, the Brooklyn-based antiquarian book trader, Dinanath, confronts uncanny circumstances as he travels extensively across continents in the course of the novel, witnessing striking signs of the climate catastrophe at every juncture. The unexpected revelation of Dinanath's knowledge about the Sundarbans' swift erosion of the coastline and frequent cyclonic wreckage, his encounters with soaring wildfire incinerating Los Angeles, a massive tornado heaving in Venice, and also a flash-flood, all point to the emergence of "a new world" that is hostile to humanity. Astoundingly, a "new" world, one that bears the traces of the ever-present widening of wealth disparity between rich and poor nations, contradictory international policies, the politics surrounding eco-disasters, and, more significantly, the progressive consumerism that entices a large number of the population to embark on perilous internal or cross-border migration in pursuit of better living standards. Climate change thus serves as the sustained backdrop that allows Ghosh to connect diverse geographies and histories across the globe, highlighting the persistent tendency of human mobility driven by an assortment of existential factors affecting living conditions throughout history. Gilson's (2022) analysis exhibits that brooding on the ecological and atmospheric upheavals of the Anthropocene and, in the end, instilling a sense of planetary consciousness in both his characters and readers, Ghosh intends to communicate a deeper message by using "earth-wide environmental flux through his localised spatial descriptions" (270). Through its expansive geographical reach, *Gun Island* portrays the multifarious effects of the climate crisis alongside global injustices and acknowledges the personal and societal merits of shifting our focus from the local or national to the planetary consciousness. It follows that any concerted effort to alleviate the climate crisis and the worldwide disparities it is intensifying must adhere to a transnational politics based on ethical and humanitarian perspectives. As regional literature frequently brings attention to national affairs, it also often subtly alludes to international insecurities, and Ghosh's novel further expands upon the historical and symbolic significance of the Sundarbans to comment upon the planetary state of affairs.

Ghosh braids the 7th century Bengali folkloric legend of the Gun Merchant or the Banduki Sadagar and his own contemporaneous storyline, drawing parallels between the 'Little Ice Age' perturbing the 17th century through alarming fluctuations of global atmospheric temperature, epidemics, and famine, and our current period of environmental vagaries. As the storyline unfolds, the legend and the key plot of the novel grow nearly identical and intricately entwined. As Dinanath gains more insight about the harrowing journey of the Banduki Sadagar, the more he realises that it is based on the turbulent portents of the real catastrophe of the 17th century, not just "a kind of wonder tale about fantastic places and people – something that had no connection with reality" (*Gun Island* 137). Although the legend may appear very unlikely, it is intriguing to consider the historical plausibility of the outline of the mythical account, as affirmed by Cinta, an Italian historian and acquaintance of Dinanath. Popular belief holds that the legendary merchant sets sail to travel overseas to dodge the fury of Manasa Devi, the goddess of serpents, since he refuses to pay deference to the forces presented by her. However, it is more likely that he does so because his home in eastern India is hit hard by floods and famines caused by the Little Ice Age's

climatic disruptions. In any case, he decides to recoup his fortune after losing everything, including his family. Ghosh obliquely uses, then, the Gun Merchant's quest for accumulating wealth as a metaphor for the ceaseless pursuit of profit. *Gun Island* taps into the dynamic functioning of globalisation as it strides invincibly through the widespread use of digital technology. Additionally, the accessibility of mobile devices with internet connections has undoubtedly made it easy to get in touch with traffickers, facilitating the process of human trafficking, resulting in mass migration following climatic disasters. The novel's plot offers two interwoven parallels, one following the terrible journey of two youths named Tipu and Rafi from the endangered Sundarbans to Venice, while the other follows a contemporary interpretation of the historical plausibility of the Gun Merchant's expeditions through the initiatives undertaken by Cinta and Dinanath, who decoded the myth. Ghosh adeptly creates a resemblance between contemporary migrant experience and that of the Gun Merchant of the legend. In addition to that, he points out the instrumentality of the ubiquitous access of geospatial satellite data and view and share visually enticing images of foreign nations via the internet, which, in Tipu's words, serves as "the migrants' magic carpet" kindling the desire of migration (*Gun Island* 61). *Gun Island*'s explorations of the issue of climate-induced migration highlight the push and pull forces that are responsible for such exodus, while also showing the overall increasing trends of anthropogenic climate change and globalisation that mainly facilitate the push factors by overshadowing geographical borders and making lives more interdependent beyond such borders.

In his non-fictional work, Ghosh addresses the larger "imaginative and cultural failure" that writers face when trying to negotiate with the norm of the wild, which causes them to be oblivious of the contemporary disturbances in climate systems (*Great Derangement* 10). When representing the theme of climate change, conventional fictional writings encounter an unusual kind of resistance that impedes their development into "serious fiction" (Ghosh, *Great Derangement* 11). Adam Trexler (2015) endorses a similar opinion that the articulation of the heterogeneous terrain of the climate crisis needs formal literary innovations to counteract the crisis of imagination, since the issue is often "constrained by existing cultural narratives" when portrayed (24). The problem of representation arises due to the particular quandary presented by the Anthropocene to the assumptions and practices of the arts and humanities. Navigating the intricate nuances of the technical language, which acts as a writer's primary interface for understanding climate change, becomes more specifically complex (Ghosh, *Great Derangement* 12). In a nutshell, the corpus of fictional writings and critical approaches is insufficiently prepared to translate the complex planetary perceptions and experiences of this catastrophic phenomenon into the medium of the writer's creative imagination. Ghosh departs from following the conventional practices of writing fictional works that align with the process of "rationalization" prevalent in modern bourgeois society. In this fashion, the fictional narrative is structured along "a continuum of probability", which he agrees is a "manner of conceiving the world constituted without our being aware of it" (*Great Derangement* 21). As a result, the extremely 'improbable' is banished, and exceptional moments are concealed from the novelistic universe. The narrative pleasure is rationalised – that is, reduced to a world of "few surprises, few adventures, and no miracle at all" – through the detailed description of mundane lives or 'fillers' (to use Franco Moretti's term) (Ghosh, *Great Derangement* 25). The creative process undergoes a stage of reductive rationality against the extraordinary manifestations of climate catastrophes; hence, the portrayal of planetary cataclysmic events is governed by the capitalistic rationality of mankind's freedom to shape its own destiny by dominating nature and its ideological mechanism that worlds are conjured up solely through everyday details. The planetary repercussions that accompany the climate crisis

appear mostly improbable within the context of a carbon-economy based bourgeois regularity that downplays the fictional depiction of highly improbable phenomena like sea level rise, flash floods, cyclones, tornadoes, heat-waves, droughts, and the melting Arctic ice-caps; realities that define our age. *Gun Island* manages to engage the colliding dynamics of anthropogenic climate change and its consequences and succeeds in representing the world in its entirety, despite the constraints imposed by serious prose fiction's uniformitarianism. The narrative of the novel highlights a renewed cognition of such planetary consciousness, which includes both human and nonhuman elements. It aberrates from the normative rationality of the act of narration that refrains from incorporating events triggered by climate change and employs environmental uncanny.

Ghosh distinguishes environmental uncanny from supernatural uncanny by emphasising the former's connection to nonhuman forces and beings (*Great Derangement* 42). As the plot of the novel unfolds, Dinanath becomes unnerved due to a series of uncanny events he becomes witness of: unexpected tornado, hailstorm, and wildfire at different locations; his repeated encounter with non-native snakes and spider; Tipu's seizures and premonitions; surprising mobility of animals; and in the penultimate chapter, a bizarre phenomenon during which a halo of birds circles the sky above and creatures of the sea like dolphins and whales below, swirl forming a *chakra* surrounded by an unusual green glow leading to the miraculous settlement of the Blue Boat issue. Like other climate fictions, in this multilayered novel, Ghosh invites interpretations from the readers through the exploration of meaningful relations between "self, story, and reality" (Milkoreit 187). By blurring the boundary between "reality" and "imagination", he strives to make it plausible for readers to envision alternative realities. One interpretation of this strategy is that it is a sort of defiance that undermines the aforementioned norms of orderly rationalisation of bourgeois life by regulating the course of the narrative, which embraces the improbable and uncanny. Capitalism's logic of preconditioning has resulted in a crisis of fictional representation of the uncanny due to the prevalent dichotomy between lived realities and the methodological abstractions that shape these experiences. This makes the planetary and universal realities obscured and does not allow them to make it into the "compound multi-optic vision" that *Gun Island* employs to undermine the "exclusivism of human modes of perception" (Thieme 158). Every viable alternative appears to have been engulfed by the spectre of capitalist realism, which has ensnared the dominant cultural productions.

The author adeptly employs tropes such as coincidences, age-old myths, and ciphers to vividly paint the reality of the inextricable link that exists between anthropocentric activities and the exacerbating climate catastrophes (Pancholi and Mishra 8). Furthermore, this link influencing each other is embodied by the core conflict in the Gun Merchant legend, and the clash between capitalism and the realm of nature. Even though the incorporation of elements from ancient legend into the contemporary novel seems to be at odds with a realist attempt to reflect upon present quotidian experiences, it empowers Ghosh to critique a capitalistic culture for its insatiable focus on profit at the expense of environmental considerations. Ghosh has implied that the allegorical voyage of the Gun Merchant captures in every turn of movement the essence of the present condition: the deep-seated conflict between the greed of mankind and the preservation of nature. Both these conflicting elements are signified by the Banduki Sadagar's confrontation and the goddess Manasa Devi's power to mediate and establish a harmonious order between the human and nonhuman world. From this perspective, Ghosh's depiction of a smoke-engulfed megacity, Los Angeles can be regarded as a symbolic representation of a disaster-ridden homeland, much like the Gun Merchant's tale. The fierce wildfires constitute a manifestation of nature's retribution,

a response from the snake-goddess. Back in the 1990s, Mike Davis (1999) also made a visionary call about the rapid environmental collapse of the "Land of Sunshine" due to climate disasters like floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, and wildfires, making Los Angeles as the capital of fear. He argued that "rampant, unregulated private development" contributed to these crises, as it created chronic wildfire corridors that led to violent American apocalyptic imagination (62). Davis asserts that "rampant greed" of mankind and "market-driven urbanization has transgressed environmental commonsense" by obscuring perspectives of the degrading local landscape (9). The decimation of several plant and animal species is yet an additional sign of the embedded tension between the human and nonhuman world. The devastating consequences of the "reign of terror" following unrestrained environmental degradation driven by the interest of capitalisation of resources are glaringly apparent in Los Angeles. The metropolis is plagued not only by destructive wildfires but also by hazardous smog, toxic algal blooms, pollution, and other threats to public health and the environment. In addition to these regional effects, the novel suggests that the wealthy national governments of the North need to implement policies that are beneficial for the holistic consideration of the planet and realise that the underprivileged nations of the South are currently shouldering the greater share of the ramifications of their emission-intensive practices if we are to achieve climate justice on a global scale. A universal perspective is a prerequisite to fully grasp the complex global dynamics of the climate crisis, as the novel connotes. It is also crucial to figure out and substantiate challenges to specify underlying injustices and environmental degradation rooted in neoliberal capitalistic pursuits, which are eventually adding to increased vulnerability or precarity in human lives.

Ghosh emphasises the interconnectedness of Venice, Los Angeles, and the Sundarbans to support his conviction about the magnitude of impact that human-induced planetary modifications have on every corner of the earth, rendering humanity to survive completely "at the mercy" of varying extremes (*Gun Island* 232). These varying extremes elicit heterogeneous responses from internationally dispersed people of the world. To mitigate the impact of hazardous circumstances and economic injustice on the vulnerable population, it is only reasonable for governments in both the North and the South to enact protective regulations and re-evaluate current national initiatives. It is crucial for international policy-makers and organisations to take into account the most prominent reactions that emerge following climate hazards. One reaction is the tendency of people from the global South to migrate to affluent nations seeking a secure life, while another is the mindset of people from the global North to capitalise on disastrous situations. *Gun Island* testifies analogous instances as it shows on the one hand the plight of a bunch of residents of the Sundarbans fleeing their homeland to migrate to Venice following frequent climate hazards, meanwhile, international delegates participating in an academic conference hosted at a museum in Los Angeles that Dinanath also attends manoeuvring almost indifferently around raging wild land fires that are incinerating the nearby hills. The director of the museum keeps reassuring the delegates that there is "absolutely no need to worry" in this alarming circumstances by adding that the authorities have opted for an alternative venue for the conference by making only "a few minor adjustments" (*Gun Island* 125). The decision to evacuate the museum is nearly an act of precaution. Regardless of the approaching tsunami of smoke, the proceedings of the conference remain unaffected. While the conference's erudite speakers express deep concern about the upshot of the series of climatic events from the past and the present, also inferred by Cinta that the "Little Ice Age is rising from its grave and reaching out to us", the museum-director's contradictory call of defiance amidst external forces of nature symbolises the hubris of power-rich nations seeking to manipulate any situation to their advantage (*Gun Island* 125). As most of the conference participants and the

director grapple with holding onto their agential supremacy in hazardous circumstances, their determination seems less aligned with the realities of the outside world. The director's declaration that "we've got to show Mother Nature that we're not quitters" reflects a mindset that prioritises establishing dominance over the natural world (*Gun Island* 125). The obvious discordance between the current reality and the way people are responding highlights Ghosh's stance about the perceived self-regulatory activities of powerful Western nations, which will crumble down in no time as the climate emergency intensifies. This is exemplified by the novel's inclusion of the devastating Los Angeles wildfire scene, which turns the bustling metropolis into an "inferno-like landscape" (*Gun Island* 132).

Conforming to what Gilson (2022) calls "transnational continuities" of planetary vulnerability, *Gun Island* stands against spatially delimiting perspectives and the intolerance and prejudice that coincide with it; for instance, European anti-migrant sentiments lead to a vehement protest against the entry of a boat carrying refugees into the Venetian coast. In light of this authorial tendency, *Gun Island* displays and criticises a risk culture that fosters hierarchy and discrimination, which Isabell Lorey (2015) argues, promotes "precarization"; a term that implies "living with the unforeseeable, with contingency" that encompasses "whole of existence" (1). The unforeseeable nature of climate catastrophe and the inadequate response from governments further exacerbate the injustice of social exclusion experienced by a specific segment of the world population. As a complex challenge to established norms of hegemonic governance and provincialised outlook, the implementation of compromised political-economic instruments by governing bodies has perpetually disrupted the stabilising dynamics of security and has often triggered "collective counter-behaviour and struggle" (Lorey 38). Following Lewis and Waite's (2015) observation about the production of forced labour, precarity can be described as "the rise of casual, flexible, sub-contracted, temporary, contingent and part-time work in a neo-liberal economy"(51). According to them, precariousness can be considered as "a condition or experience of (ontological) insecurity and as a platform to mobilise against insecurity" (51-52). They present hyper-precarity as a means of understanding the various insecurities that lead to encounters of forced labour, specifically among migrants in the global northern parts. The plight of migrants, caught between the challenges of precarious job prospects and uncertain refugee status, potentially represents an extreme state of hyper-precarity. Ghosh's novel addresses the precarious circumstances faced by a set of migrant characters, showcasing the limited choices available to them when seeking a means of survival in extremely hostile conditions. These circumstances often force them into exploitative work that fulfils the criteria for forced labour as defined by international standards. Lewis and Waite further argue that "when coupled with over-restrictive welfare and immigration regimes, the combination of precarious work and compromised immigration status creates an environment that favours unscrupulous employees and allows workplace abuses to flourish"(63). Neoliberal governing, which emerged with the dismantling of the welfare state policies, legitimises the "greatest possible insecurity" of not only employment but life in general, while also making migrants' lives more precarious because of the exposure to contingency is generally regarded as a "nightmare" (Lorey 1). The migrants from the Sundarbans confront the insecurity of living conditions in their native land and the uncertainty of their future in European nations as they seek to migrate. Unfortunately, they are met with intense xenophobic hostility from Italian right-wing anti-immigrant activists, who express extreme intolerance and cry for the closing of borders to prevent the entry of the boat, as there looms a possibility of it being boarded by commandos or attacked by drones (*Gun Island* 264). *Gun Island* offers a critical look into the inconsistent neoliberal politics that purportedly advocate for globalisation and international solidarity, only to

witness these ideas disintegrate under the pretext of threatened national security when a migrant boat arrives. In a different scenario, a similar feeling of insecurity petrifies Dinanath when a sudden flash-flood in Venice compels him and Cinta to get stuck on a wooden pier searching for help to prevent their falling into the water. This incident makes him realise how "helpless" and "alone" they are even in this most civilised of cities, as the expected protection from the catastrophe is nowhere to be found (*Gun Island 232*).

In the novel, the migration of foreign species of animals coincides with the migratory voyage of Tipu and Rafi. Their frequent appearance in unusual locations challenges existing norms of inhabitation, reaffirming the impact of environmental flux. This includes the unexpected discovery of a venomous non-native yellow-bellied sea snake at Venetian Beach and Dinanath's encounters with a foreign breed of deadly spider. Ghosh implies that human indulgence in the modification of ecology has resulted in large-scale migration of both human and nonhuman. This reality tends to exist beyond the reach of human perception and hinders the general public's understanding and the author's sound representation of the profound ecological disruption wrought by climate change by making all living conditions precarious. Through *Gun Island*, Ghosh magnifies on the hardships of migrant labourers eking out an uncertain life in foreign nations and locates precarity at the intersections of planetary consequences of anthropogenic climate change and capitalism, while stressing that the former has emerged as a challenging factor making life precarious than ever before. Stretching his imagination beyond concentrated critique of the social institutionalisation of class hierarchies, religious belief, caste stratification, gender-specific norms, and politics that influence the growth of precarity in the global state of affairs, Ghosh focuses on a more obscured and underrepresented precarious subject – climate refugees. In order to illuminate human vulnerability and the pitfalls of insecure life, the novel hinges on the portrayal of precarious refugee experiences in a transnational context. Insecure working conditions, as well as uncertain life conditions that reflect unpredictable circumstances, both give impetus to the production of precarity. It is identified in, as Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (2015) puts it, a "life without the promise of stability" that ensues from a multitude of unpredictable encounters like contingent job conditions, extinction of biodiversities, climate catastrophes, and unrestrained dreams of modernisation and progress to name a few and embody a condition of life in the absence of "collaborative survival" of both human and nonhuman (20). The existential state of vulnerability attributed to precarity is often referred to as precariousness. Judith Butler (2009) draws a clear line of distinction between the concept of "precariousness" – the generalised bodily vulnerability that all life forms, including the privileged, share – whereas, "precarity", which involves political conditioning under which specific individuals experience an insufficiency of social and economic networks of support, leading to varying levels of exposure to physical injury, violence, and even death. These populations face an increased risk of illness, destitution, hunger, displacement, and exposure to violence without the assurance of protection. This vulnerability is particularly imposed upon those who are economically disadvantaged, marginalised, and affected by war and environmental catastrophes. The vulnerability of the human body serves as both a common ground and a point of distinction: all individuals face the threat of physical pain, violence, injury, and mortality (precariousness), yet certain individuals are blessed with greater protection while others are more susceptible to vulnerability (precarity) (*Frames of War* 25). This study, hence, focuses more on the capitalistic endeavours that trigger precarity by being determinant of the climate-induced vulnerability of migrant's condition, rather than centring on the biopolitical premises. A counterargument to the idea that precarity is a recent development of neoliberal capitalism can be drawn from Marx and Engel's theories about the reserve army of labourers who are increasingly

exposed to the risk of being assimilated into the "surplus population" of the jobless and underemployed. This shows that precarity has persistently been bearing the legacy of exploitation throughout the evolving history of capitalism (Jonna and Foster 4). A reserve army of refugees and migrants finds themselves facing a differential mode of precarity "delimited by racialised boundaries and conflicts" that ensure their exposure to violence, harassment, and hyper-exploitation in the labour market (Carl-Ulrik Schierup 208). Irregular migrants, often regarded as the precarious reserve army of neoliberal globalisation, epitomise the "essence of precarity" due to their exceedingly vulnerable existence (Schierup and Jørgensen 10). In this context, "precariat" has emerged as a neologism that denotes a novel social subject, a new "class in the making", characterised by neoliberal labour conditions, including migrant workers who collectively constitute a significant portion of the world's precariat (Standing 90). In their fight for economic security and better living conditions, this precariat class is becoming the principal target of global neoliberal politics, which have demonised and scapegoated them for problems that are not created by them (Standing 90). In his book, Guy Standing (2011) classifies a new group of migrants – "environmental refugees" as precariats. These people are impacted by environmental degradation, which includes multiple manifestations of climate disaster. This trend in migration is on the rise and changing the nature of migration in ways that are increasing security threats and placing a large portion of the population in precarious situations (Standing 93). The implications of anthropogenic climate change have a direct effect on both human and natural systems. This, in turn, contributes to environmental upheaval in a time of increasing globalisation and these factors lead to the intersection of precarious labour conditions of migrants and existential encounters of precariousness through "insecure employment and exploitation at work, insecure livelihood, and everyday discrimination or isolation" ensuring suspension of rights (Bates-Eamer 7). The adverse impacts of the anthropogenic climate crisis are producing a group of individuals who are burdened by a state of vulnerability, characterised by defencelessness, exploitation, and exposure to stress and shock.

An unplanned meeting with Tipu and Rafi in the Sundarbans amidst an array of climate-induced ecological degradation redirects the trajectory of Dinanath's journey and ultimately, he makes it to Venice. While in Venice, he bumps into Rafi again and countless other refugees who migrated to Europe with a dream of better standards of living, but found themselves forced into manual labour under dangerous circumstances. Rafi informs Dinanath about the perils that Tipu and Rafi experienced on their journey to Europe, and how they were separated at the Turkish border while dodging the open gunshots by the border guards. Rafi also mentions the Blue Boat – a fishing trawler full of refugees – that is, sailing across the Mediterranean heading towards the Italian coast, with Tipu, one among the refugees on board. In order to ensure their rescue from an aggressive Italian population and navy, Dinanath, Cinta, Piya, and some other humanitarian activists board a migrant rescue boat and head towards the location where the Blue Boat showed up. But unbeknownst to them, the Italian navy, alongside a flotilla of charter boats carrying right-wing anti-immigration groups backed by transnational supporters, are also rushing to the same spot to prevent the Blue Boat's entrance. The refugees are eventually safeguarded after a string of fortunate events favouring them against their precarious status and the nearly miraculous interference of natural phenomena.

Through the prism of the world's radical interconnections and globalisation, the novel looks into the consolidation of global imaginaries of climate crisis and the precarity experienced by migrant and often refugee populations, who are called problematic and found under duress. Set

in the mangrove forests of the Indian territory of the Sundarbans, the early chapters of the novel present a conglomeration of deleterious ecological factors that have endangered the delicate order of mutual relationship and dependency between the local population and its ecology. The majority of the people who inhabit this muddy swampland of erratic tides are farmers, fishers, and gatherers of bamboo and honey from its jungles. The land and water bodies both have become increasingly inhospitable to their means of livelihood due to factors such as the constantly rising sea level, mutating traits of animals, rivers, and forests, and a decline in freshwater flow caused by saltwater intrusion. During a conversation with Dinanath, Tipu alludes to multiple crises, including "fish catch is down", "land's turning salty", "storm that blows everything to pieces" and "animals are moving", all of which have detrimental effects on freshwater habitat and soil productivity (*Gun Island* 60). Cyclones, which are becoming even more frequent, exacerbate these problems by wiping away miles of embankment and flooding large tracts of once fertile land with salty sea water, rendering them "uncultivable for a generation" (*Gun Island* 48). For instance, after a devastating cyclone called Aila in 2009, another unforeseen repercussion was that, following the mass evacuation of local people to the safety zones, the evacuees, who were forced to be uprooted from their own villages, chose not to return to those place, fearing that "their lives always hard, would be even more precarious now" (*Gun Island* 48). The hazards are echoed through the endless despair of Moyna, Tipu's mother, as she witnesses the growing animosity of "both the land and water" affecting those "who lived in the Sundarbans" (*Gun Island* 49). The unfavourable oscillation in the immediate and long-term environmental conditions and the cumulative occurrence of climate-induced disasters are ruining their usual standard of living, prompting them to abandon their native land in search of better employment opportunities, often by migrating to a presumed safer place. In light of these events, Dinanath contemplated the ultimate consequences: the "communities had been destroyed", "families dispersed", "young had drifted to cities" by overcrowding the slums and elders "begging on the streets" (*Gun Island* 48-49). To be specific, Tipu and Rafi, who were both already cognizant of the growing unpredictability of survival there, resorted to the illegal means of migration by crossing multiple borders, which are becoming typically favoured routes for the human traffickers or "connection-men". These Traffickers are already equipped with the facilities provided by digital globalisation. The narrative sustains the tension within experiencing precarity implied through the interconnected web of relationships portrayed in the symbolic journey of the migrants to Europe and the lives led as manual labourers there without a secure identity. Tipu would have ended up as just another such labourer, had he not been separated from his companion while running away from indiscriminate gunfire by the guards at the Turkish border. Tipu narrowly escaped death, but the gunshot wounded him badly, and he stayed behind; although reluctantly, Rafi managed to make it to Venice. In an attempt to reunite with Rafi, Tipu pursues a different route that takes him to Egypt, from where he boards the blue migrant boat bound for Italy.

In Venice, the merciless turn of events makes Rafi a refugee; this classification places him outside the country's legal protection or national laws and deprives him of basic rights that are readily granted to the citizens of the nation. Whereas, immigrants like Rafi provide this place with multiple services that no Italian performs anymore, allowing this megalopolis to thrive. In his essay, Dipesh Chakrabarty (2012) extends upon Homi K. Bhabha's classification of such new subaltern classes that have emerged today. These classes consist of human subjects such as minorities, "the stateless", refugees, immigrant workers, and those who seek asylum as they exist in what he calls their "undocumented lifeworlds" which lack formal protection and status (5). Being "new subalterns of the global capitalist order", they are stuck in a limbo that emblematises

"a complex and contradictory mode of being or surviving somewhere in between legality and incivility" (Chakrabarty, "Postcolonial Studies" 5). Many migrants like Rafi, Bilal, Palash and Lubna are involved in works like strenuous construction works, cleaning the urban trash, washing dishes in restaurants; they also "make the pizzas for the tourists, they clean the hotels, they even play the accordion at street corners", serve as waiters in café or vendors of chestnuts and ice-creams (*Gun Island* 146, 163).

In the novel, a series of violent events unfold that shed light on the endangered lives of migrants in the contemporary world. Whether it is the random gunfire from Turkish border guards on fleeing migrants, planned attacks by goons to rob the migrants of their money as happens with Rafi, the mysterious deaths of migrant-activists like Munir (a Bangladeshi migrant-lady Lubna's husband) while fighting for refugee rights, or the atrocious attitudes of right-wing anti-immigrant groups toward the migrants on the Blue Bloat; these events collectively portray the migrant figure resembling what Georgio Agamben (1998) called as "*homo sacer*" – literally translates as "sacred human" (9). In archaic Roman Law, "*homo sacer*" denoted a person who could be killed with impunity and without it being considered murder, and they would not even be sacrificed as their deaths held no religious or ritual implications. Under the control of sovereign power, these individuals are reduced to mere biological entities, devoid of any status or identity. They are intentionally dehumanised, making them vulnerable to being tortured or even killed by anyone. Patricia Owens (2009) claims that the refugee conditions are becoming more vulnerable as they are facing circumstances similar to this particular mode of violence. The "suspension of the law", "creation of emergency conditions that legitimise torture", "killing without punishment" all cause death or violence on a refugee's body that is "not honoured, mourned or memorialized" (Owens 572). The existence of the migrants' lives is built upon a continuous denial of basic rights, as they are subject to the enforcement of laws only when it comes to taking legal action against them, rather than ensuring any form of protection for their safety.

In neoliberal capitalistic order, the metropolis exploits its 'precariat' agency to maintain its opulence with cheap labour, but in doing so; they subject this vulnerable population to violence and death by reducing them to the status of "*homo sacer*". The novel's representation of refugees living precariously, the bare lives of exclusion in European nations, serves to reify that migration and cross-border assaults are becoming more commonplace in our lived ecology in this century (Wilson 262). It appears that the biological and political existences of the Sundarbans' residents are just as precarious as the fragility of its ecosystem. A looming planetary predicament is signified by the state of existence of the islanders in the Sundarbans and, subsequently, by their vulnerable lives in the Venetian metropolis, reaffirmed through Dinanath's observation of their common anxiety that "bespoke an existence of precariousness" (*Gun Island* 155). For example, Dinanath noticed after a sudden masonry accident at the construction site in Venice that any "untoward" complaint against the refugee workers about the incident to the authorities may cause "the unravelling of their lives" (*Gun Island* 155). The most abhorrent decision taken by the valued citizens of the European nation is depicted in the novel's Blue Boat scene, where their merciless outcry announces the arrival of migrants similar to invasion and Italian warships attempt to force them back, leaving them to drift amid waves that could at any moment cause the overcrowded boat to capsize. They found themselves trapped in a paradoxical limbo, swaying between optimism and despair, anxiously waiting for the decision that would determine their future course of life. The tragic sinking of such immigrant boats and the bodies washing ashore make sensational headlines in today's news media outlets.

It was on the 14th of June, 2023, a blue fishing boat named *Adriana* with an estimated more than 700 migrants aboard capsized in the Mediterranean Sea- just off the Southern Greek coast, departing from the coast of Libya, the ship was bound for the Italian coast. There are allegations that Greek authorities did not adequately respond to the sinking trawler carrying hundreds of migrants and refugees. The overcrowded vessel was transporting migrants, including men, women, and children from various regions, including South Asian countries such as Pakistan and Afghanistan, as well as other nations like Egypt, Syria, and Palestine. The accurate number of casualties from the tragedy remained uncertain, but official reports had approximated it to be more than 500 people who were declared "presumed dead". It was confirmed that the traffickers charged a huge amount of money from each passenger for this illegal migration. The tragedy stands as a grave humanitarian disaster in the Mediterranean in recent times. A report after investigation by Alaa Ragaie, a BBC reporter, informs that the "Four people who survived the migrant boat disaster off the coast of Greece say the actions of the Greek coast guard caused the crowded fishing vessel to sink" (n.p.). The authorities of Greece initially debunked this accusation, asserting that "when they tried to tie a rope to the boat to come aboard and assess the situation, people on board tried to remove it, saying they wanted to travel on to Italy" (Ragaie, n.p.). Meanwhile, the statement of an Egyptian survivor affirms that the coast guard forcefully pulled them, resulting in the boat capsizing. Although the BBC's investigation and the Greek authorities' explanation may require further inquiry, their differing perspectives provide insight into the precarious circumstances faced by people migrating from the countries in the global South seeking refuge in Europe. By including another BBC report by Nick Beake, Rakibul Hassan Khan (2024) in his article highlights "The negligence and disdain with which migrants are often treated in the West" (1). *Gun Island* hinges on this central predicament; the migrants, who are aboard a remarkably identical Blue Boat, are just as desperate and, if they had not been noticed, might have met a similar tragic ending as the real-life victims. However, their lives are ultimately saved through a timely rescue mission. This idea of crisis transcends all man-made borders and boundaries, as the basic idea of a border becomes meaningless when the entire globe is at risk due to environmental degradation. The novel, Rakibul Hasan Khan contends, not only constitutes the concern regarding "multispecies justice" but also favours the ecological justice of underprivileged people, particularly in the global south.

Tipu, as a refugee at sea, faces constant threats from the authorities. Likewise, Rafi, a refugee construction worker in a foreign land, lacks any form of protection. The precarity of such a situation forces those who are subjected to politically motivated conditions of arbitrary state violence while appealing to the very state for protection that they require protection from. This is why Butler (2009) says that "to be protected from violence by the nation-state is to be exposed to the violence wielded by the nation-state" (26). Their reliance on the nation-state for security against aggression, which essentially amounts to exchanging one probable form of violence for another, places them in a paradoxical condition where their precariousness is maximised. The uneven distribution of precarity across political orders, involving economic and social institutions, is both a material and a subjective matter. Butler claims that those individuals, whose lives are not considered valuable, and therefore not "potentially grievable", are forced to endure the hardships of starvation, underemployment, legal disenfranchisement, and varying levels of exposure to violence and death (Butler, *Frames of War* 25). The ubiquitous risks of violence and exploitation, the struggle for survival while navigating these risks, and the existential crises that brought people like Rafi to this state all expose the permeation of precariousness and precarity into their lives through biological vulnerability and politically framed insecurity, respectively. In this context, the

socio-politically conditioned precarity shapes human condition and manner of being by becoming a defining characteristic of the human experience.

Reflecting on how the human condition has changed profoundly in tandem with the anthropogenic climate crisis, Dipesh Chakrabarty (2012) argues that humans are now more than just the dominant species on the planet; they have emerged, collectively, as a geological force that conditions the planet's climate, threatening civilisation as a whole. Chakrabarty perceives 'the human' in contradictory registers: "as a geophysical force and as a political agent, as a bearer of rights and as author of actions; subject to both the stochastic forces of nature (being itself one such force collectively) and open to the contingency of individual human experience"; pertaining to multiple historical scales encompassing the planet, species, and societies ("Postcolonial Studies" 14). The Anthropocene accords agency to all humans, which has allowed them to become "a geological agent" on the planet (Chakrabarty, *The Climate of History* 32). This has led to the emergence of this new geological era in which humans are the major environmental determinants. But, as humans have evolved into a geophysical force on Earth, they have built a sort of existence that collectively extends beyond ontological boundaries, involving both human and nonhuman (Chakrabarty, "Postcolonial Studies" 13). Following this line of speculation throughout its narrative, *Gun Island* maintains the aesthetic and logical balance of representing both human and nonhuman experiences in a world primarily conditioned by human choices.

In the novel, the upheaval created by the climate crisis is twofold. Unpredictable ecological changes have far-reaching effects on both the natural world and human lives. From the constant threat of rising sea levels invading the islands of the Sundarbans, to the devastating cyclones like Bhola and Aila, the alarming growth of dead zones in water bodies, mass beaching of marine animals, animal migration, and the changing nature of the biome; the environment is in a state of disruption. Meanwhile, people are forced to adapt by seeking alternative professions for living, facing the dangers of human trafficking and international migration, and experiencing increasing levels of precarity. Ghosh shows the art of subtly combining multiple outcomes accomplished through the interplay of improbable happenings, serving as an inevitable backdrop. The human perception seeks to make sense of reality and finds contentment in reducing the uncanny to thoughts and laws, but it fails to perceive the natural world as an entity distinct from humans possessing its own inherent unifying principles (Withy 38). Climate catastrophes and additional crises, such as precarious existence, are not prominent themes or representable in conventional fiction due to the structural conceptualisation of fundamental reality and the depiction of everyday familiarity; thus, a progressive episteme must exist to incorporate the uncanny.

Gun Island stands out as a genuinely distinctive novel by breaking away from the conventional approach of writing creative fiction and by giving its author a larger voice to deal with contemporary reality. It addresses not only the matter of aesthetics in narrative representation but also public affairs with great zeal. The novel itself offers a stark reminder that we must not consider the vulnerability of the human condition merely through the prism of social unrest, war, political conflict, or economic collapse. Instead, it aims to show that humanity, which once enjoyed a warm and nurturing connection with the planet, is now chiefly conditioned by materialistic impulses following the dawn of neoliberal capitalism. Ghosh portrays that anthropogenic climate change is one of the manifold negative outcomes of human extractivism that has intensified the already precarious conditions that both human and nonhuman encounter. This study, thus, maintains and aims to establish that the inclusion of climate refugees in the novel provides it a varied spectrum to depict additional phases of precarious experience resulting from the confluence

of human-centred cultural patterns that lead to the planetary outcomes of climate crisis, exploitative labour circuits, and the dynamics of globalisation apropos capitalism. This paper also argues that the present state of environmental crisis is triggered and worsened by neoliberal capitalism's manipulation of natural systems, extraction of resources, uncertain working conditions, and the curtailment of social protections and rights, which are represented structurally through the precarious condition of existence. Since climate change is global in nature, rather than local or national, the legitimate concern is how to establish social and ecological interactions that allow for and promote the coexistence of both similarities and diversity within and between communities and species, rather than how to establish boundaries that homogenise and separate. Resolving the plethora of crises that accompany precarisation requires re-evaluation of the underlying matrix of capitalistic relationships with the environment and enfranchisement of individuals and communities to celebrate and negotiate their identities rather than repudiating them.

Works Cited

Acharya, Debendranath. *Jangam*. Translated by Amit R. Baishya, Vitasta, 2018.

Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Translated by Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford UP, 1998.

Bates-Eamer, Nicole. "Border and Migration Controls and Migrant Precarity in the Context of Climate Change." *Social Sciences*, vol. 8, no. 7, 2019, pp. 1-17. *MDPI*, doi:10.3390/socsci8070198.

Butler, Judith. Foreword. *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious*, by Isabell Lorey, Translated by Aileen Derieg, Verso, 2015, pp. vii-xi.

---. *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable?*. Verso, 2009.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age*. University of Chicago Press, 2021.

---. "Postcolonial Studies and the Challenge of Climate Change." *New Literary History*, vol. 43, no. 1, 2012, pp. 1-18. *Project Muse*, doi:10.1353/nlh.2012.0007.

Davis, Mike. *Ecology of Fear: Los Angeles and the Imagination of Disaster*. Picador, 1999.

Ghosh, Amitav. *The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable*. 2016. Penguin Random House India, 2017.

---. *Gun Island*. Penguin Random House India, 2019.

Gilson, Edwin. "Planetary Los Angeles: Climate Realism and Transnational Narrative in Amitav Ghosh's Gun Island (2019)." *Comparative American Studies An International Journal*, vol. 19, no. 2-3, 2022, pp. 269-288.

Jonna, R Jamil, and John Bellamy Foster. "Marx's Theory of Working-Class Precariousness: Its Relevance Today." *Monthly Review*, vol. 67, no. 11, 2016, pp. 1-23.

Khan, Rakibul Hasan. "Amitav Ghosh's Gun Island: The Climate Crisis and Planetary Environmentalism." *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, 2024, pp. 1-15, https://doi.org/10.1080/00111619.2024.2314094.

Lewis, Hannah, and Louise Waite. "Asylum, Immigration Restrictions and Exploitation: Hyper-Precarity as a Lens for Understanding and Tackling Forced Labour." *Forced Labour and Human Trafficking*, special issue of *Anti-trafficking Review*, no. 5, 2015, pp. 50-68.

Lorey, Isabell. *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious*. Verso, 2015.

Milkoreit, Manjana. "The Promise of Climate Fiction:Imagination, Storytelling, and the Politics of the Future." *Reimagining Climate Change*, edited by Paul Wapner and Hilal Elver, Routledge, 2016, pp. 171-191.

Nambisan, Kavery. *The Story That Must Not Be Told*. 2010. Penguin Random House India, 2012.

Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Harvard UP, 2011.

Owens, Patricia. "Reclaiming 'Bare Life'?: Against Agamben on Refugees." *International Relations*, vol. 23, no. 4, 2009, pp. 567-582.

Pancholi, Nupur, and Sanjit Kumar Mishra. "The Era of Environmental Derangement: Witnessing Climate Crisis in Amitav Ghosh's Gun Island." *Rupkatha Journal on Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2021, pp. 1-10.

Ragaie, Alaa. "Greece Boat Disaster: Survivors Blame Coastguard for Tragedy." *BBC News*, BBC, 30 June 2023, www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-66073307. Accessed 15 July 2024.

Schierup, Carl-Ulrik. "A Toxic Embrace: Migration, Labour and the Rainbow Nation's Neoliberal Pact." *Migration, Precarity, & Global Governance: Challenges and Opportunities for Labour*, edited by Carl-Ulrik Schierup et al., Oxford UP, 2015, pp. 197-219.

Schierup, Carl-Ulrik, and Martin Bak Jørgensen. "From 'Social Exclusion' to 'Precarity'. The Becoming-Migrant of Labour: An Introduction." *Politics of Precarity: Migrant Conditions, Struggles and Experiences*, edited by Carl-Ulrik Schierup and Martin Bak Jørgensen, Brill, 2017, pp. 1-29.

Standing, Guy. *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class*. Bloomsbury, 2011.

Thieme, John. *Anthropocene Realism: Fiction in the Age of Climate Change*. Bloomsbury Academic, 2023.

Trexler, Adam. *Anthropocene Fictions: The Novel in a Time of Climate Change*. University of Virginia Press, 2015.

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton UP, 2015.

Wilson, Janet M. "Narrating Precarious Lives: Refugee Tales, African Titanics, and the Year of the Runaways." *Representing Poverty and Precarity in a Postcolonial World*, edited by Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp et al., Brill, 2022, pp. 261-280.

Withy, Katherine. *Heidegger on Being Uncanny*. Harvard UP, 2015.

Bionote

Dr. Kankana Bhowmick is an independent researcher hailing from Bongaigaon, Assam. She did her M.A. from the Department of English, Bongaigaon College, under Gauhati University, Assam. She has been awarded the Doctorate Degree by Bodoland University, Assam. She has more than six years of working experience as a teacher and faculty member in various schools and a college. Her research articles have appeared in UGC-Care Listed Journals like *Caraivéti*; *English Forum: Journal of the Department of English, Gauhati University*; etc**.** Her research interests include South Asian Fiction, Cultural Studies, Literary Theories, Climate Fiction, Gender Studies etc. She has been exploring current issues related to these topics from different perspectives in both her research and other practices. She can be reached at bhowmick.kankana08@gmail.com

ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4018-6343/

Open Access:

Conflict of Interest Declaration:

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest about the research, authorship, and publication of this article.