

Amitav Ghosh

Indian Novelist. Essayist. Climate thinker

PRESENTED BY:

The mentees of Dr. Krishna Das

Rupanjayee Mukherjee (179)

Sunami Das (170)

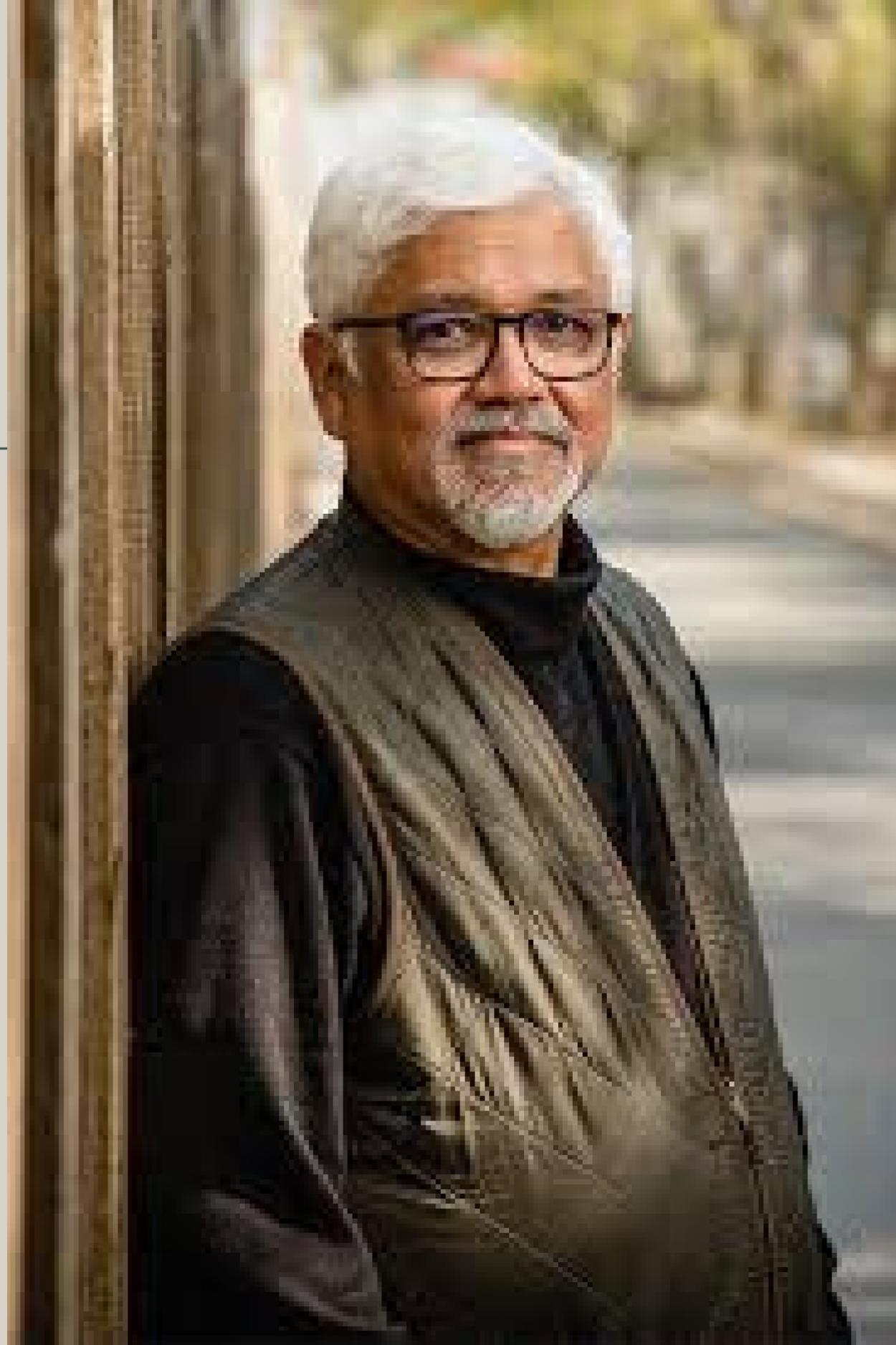
Sania Ahmed (185)

Gayatri Medhi (192)

Milita Narzary (193)

Anamika Brahma (221)

Adhisa Roy (231)





Biographical overview:

EARLY LIFE

- Born on 11 July 1956 in Kolkata, India (70 years old)
- Parents- Shailendra Chandra Ghosh, Ansali Ghosh
- Grew up in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka

EDUCATION

- The Doon School, Dehradun
- Studied at the University of Delhi
- D.Phil in Social Anthropology, University of Oxford.

EARLY CAREER

- Began his career as a journalist at the Indian Express
- Later worked in academia and research, influenced by his training in social anthropology.
- Published his first novel: The circle of Reason in 1986, marking the beginning of his literary career.

AWARDS

- Sahitya Akademi Award (1989)
- 54th Jnanpith Award (2018)
- Padma Shri (2007)

Literary career, writing style and major themes:

Amitav Ghosh is one of the most important contemporary writers in Indian English literature. His works combine history, culture, politics and human experiences often connecting India with other regions such as Asia, Africa and Europe. Through his novels, he explores issues like colonial history, migration, identity and environmental concerns.

Writing style:

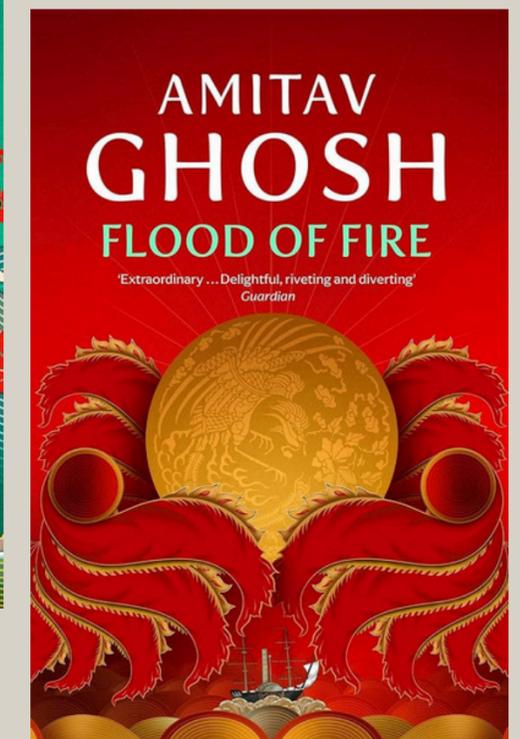
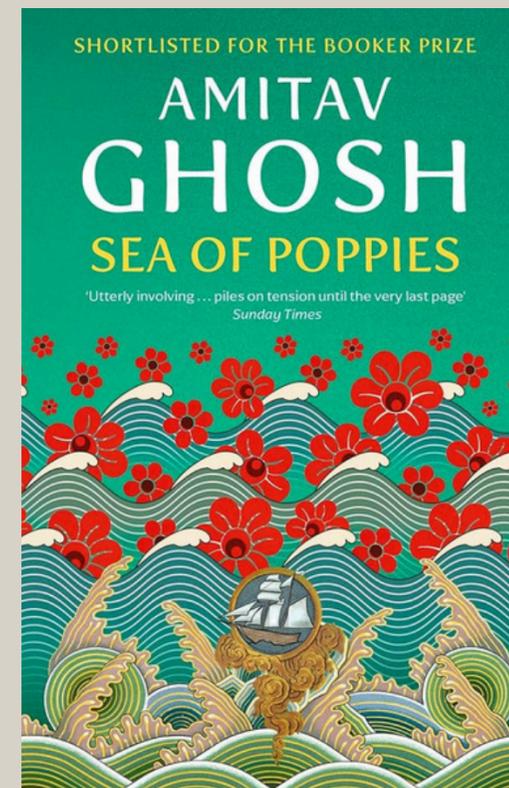
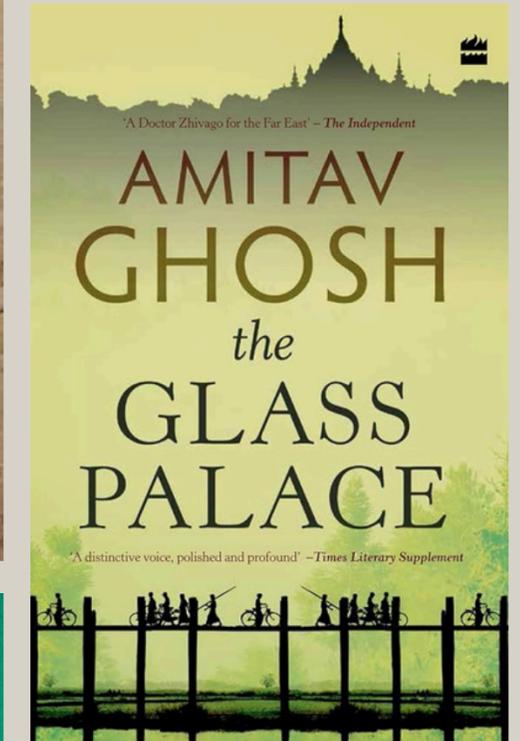
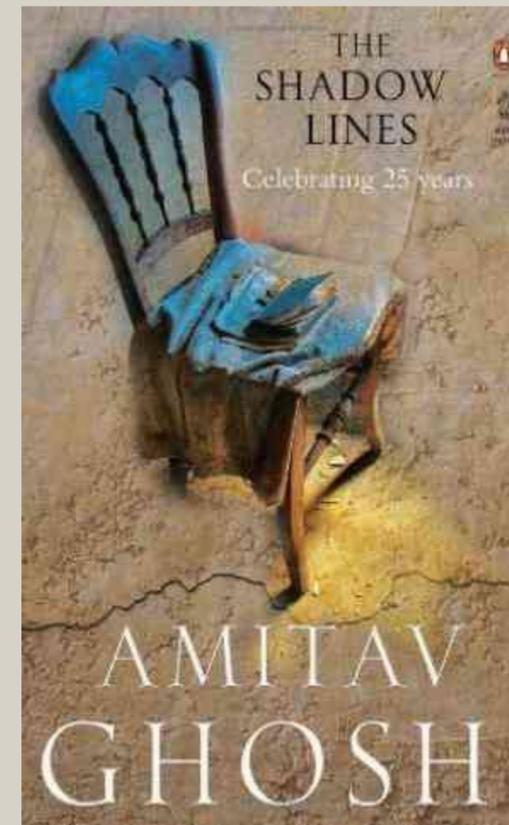
- Uses historical realism supported by strong research and detailed historical settings.
- Blends fact and fiction to create engaging narratives.
- Known for rich descriptions of places, cultures, and societies.
- Often presents multicultural perspectives with characters from diverse backgrounds and interconnected stories.

Major themes

- **Colonialism and Postcolonial Identity** – impact of colonial rule on societies.
- **Migration and Diaspora** – movement of people and cultural hybridity.
- **History and Memory** – relationship between past events and present realities.
- **Cultural Interaction** – encounters between different communities and traditions.
- **Environment and Climate Change** – especially discussed in *The Great Derangement*.
- **Global Trade and Power** – influence of trade and imperialism on world history.

important works:

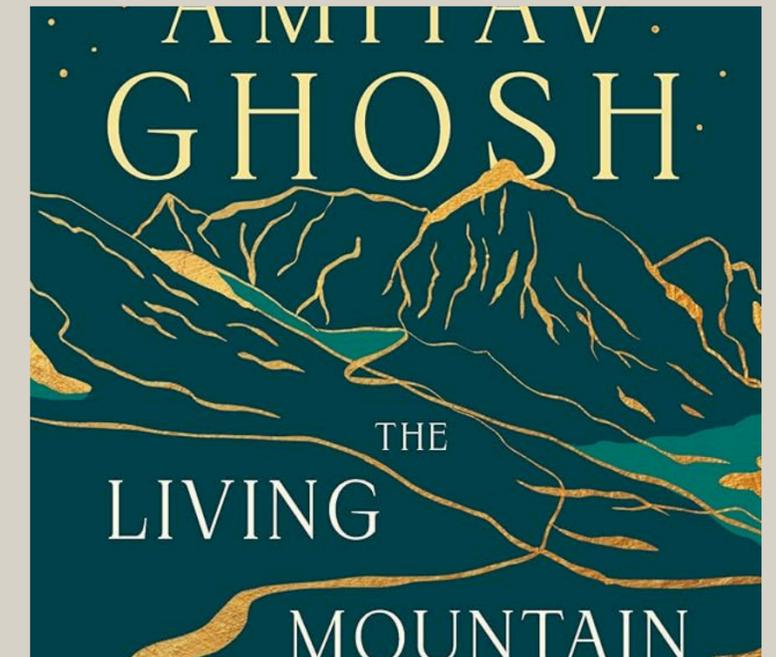
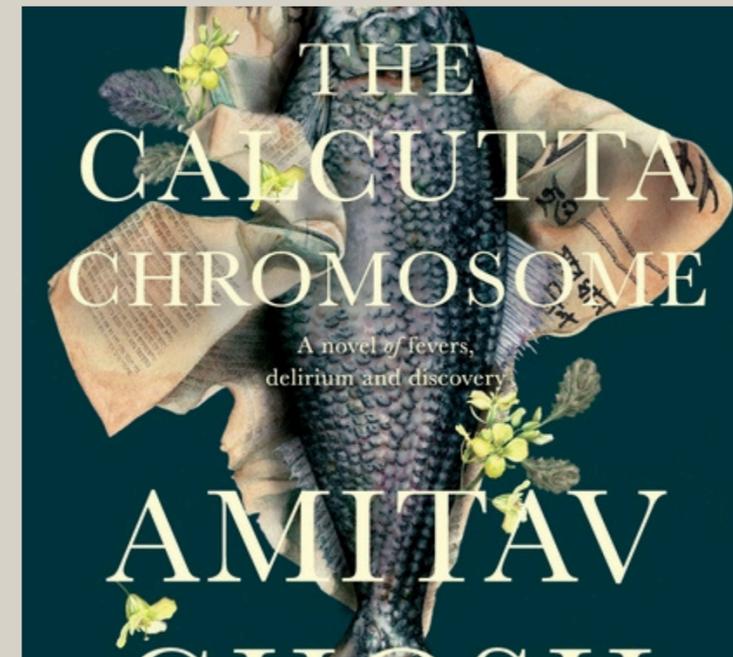
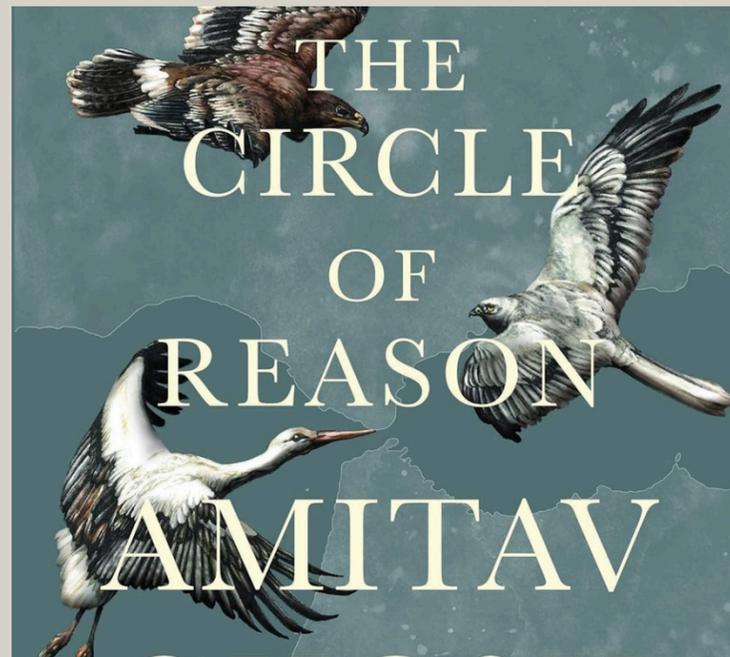
- The Shadow lines
- The Glass Palace
- Sea of Poppies
- River of Smoke



Major fictional works of Amitav Ghosh:

Amitav Ghosh is a prominent Indian English writer whose novels explore history, culture, and human relationships. His fiction often connects the past with the present, showing how different societies and cultures interact across time and place. Through detailed storytelling, he presents important historical events and social issues while highlighting the connections between people, places, and history.

Some of his important works include *The Circle of Reason*, *The Shadow Lines*, and *The Calcutta Chromosome*. He is also well known for the Ibis Trilogy, which includes *Sea of Poppies*, *River of Smoke*, and *Flood of Fire*.



Non-Fiction Work: The Great Derangement

The Great Derangement: Climate Change and the Unthinkable (2016) by Amitav Ghosh is a non-fiction book which discusses climate change and humanity's failure to properly understand and respond to it.

According to Ghosh, modern society has ignored or underestimated the seriousness of climate change, which he calls "the great derangement."

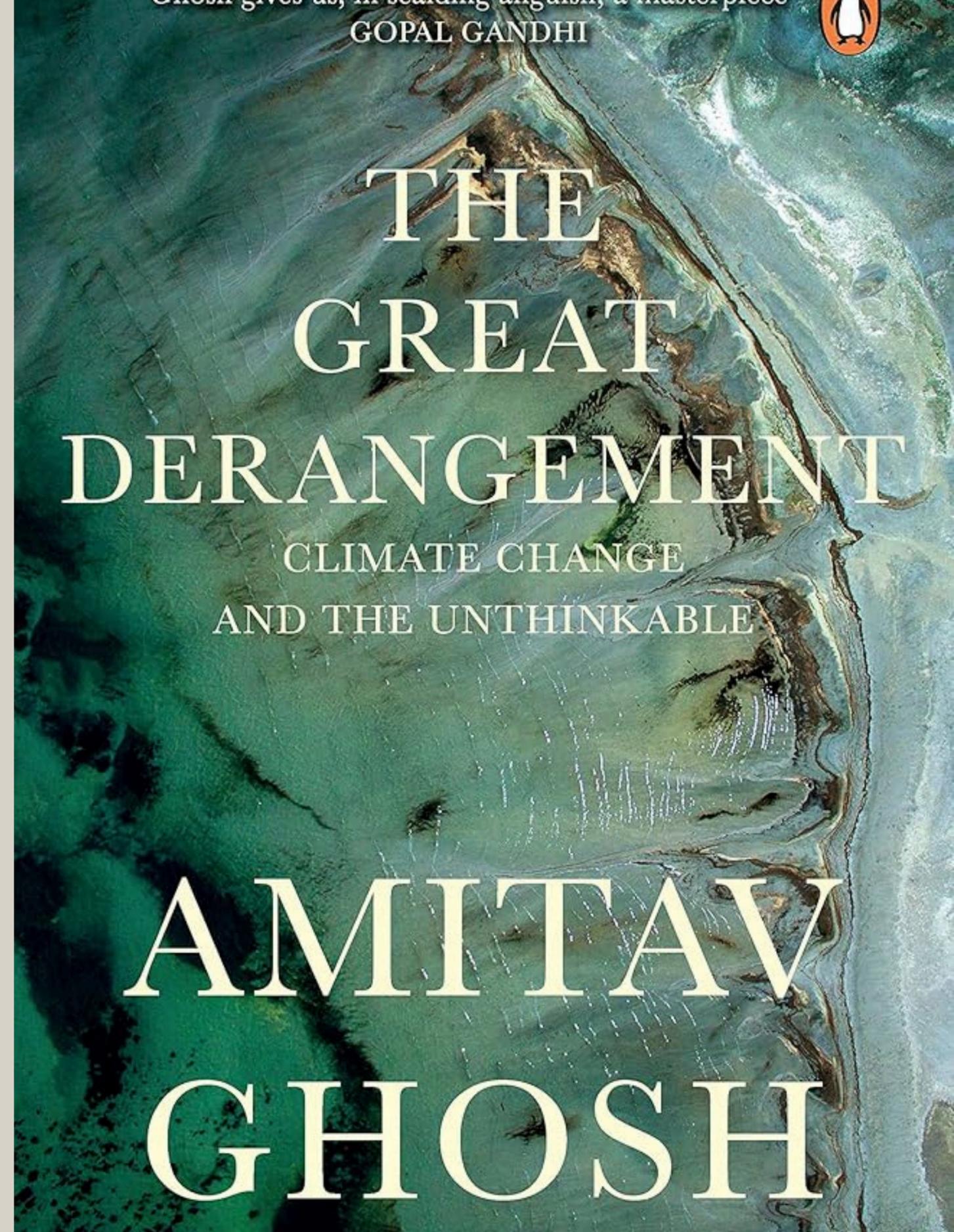
The book is divided into three main parts:

Stories – Examines the role of literature and storytelling in the age of climate change. Ghosh argues that contemporary novels often focus on ordinary everyday events and avoid extraordinary natural phenomena such as floods, cyclones, or earthquakes.

History – Explains the historical roots of climate change, linking it to colonialism, industrialization, and the global use of fossil fuels.

Politics – Discusses the political response to climate change and criticizes governments and political institutions for their slow and inadequate actions in dealing with the crisis.

In conclusion, "The Great Derangement" emphasizes the importance of imagination in understanding climate change. Ghosh believes writers and artists should help society imagine environmental crises through literature which ultimately encourages readers to rethink the relationship between literature, history, politics, and the environment.



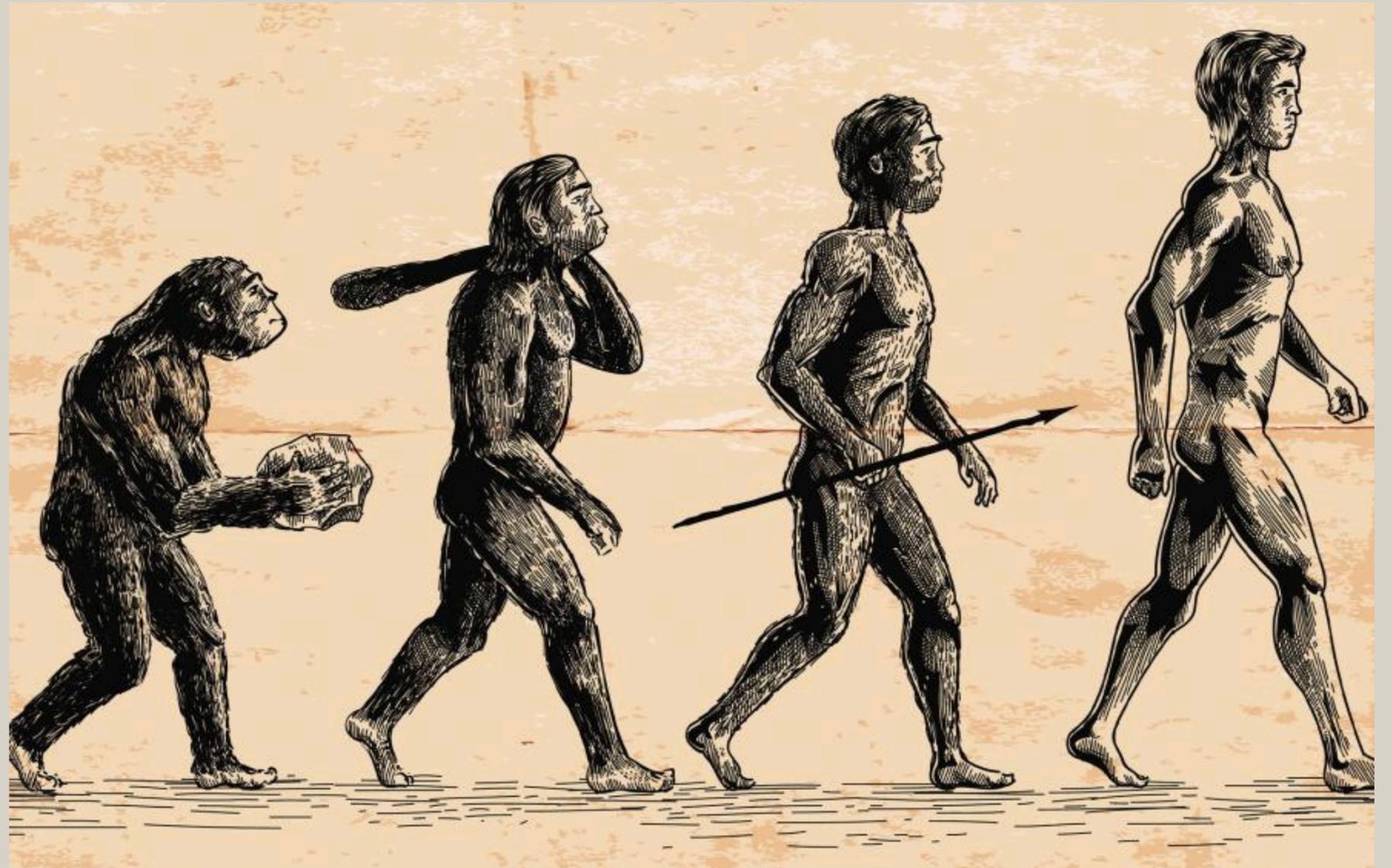
AMITAV GHOSH AS AN ANTHROPOLOGIST

Amitav Ghosh is widely known as an Indian novelist and essayist, but he also has a strong connection with anthropology. Anthropology is the study of human societies, cultures, and the ways people live and interact with each other. Amitav Ghosh studied social anthropology at Oxford University, and this academic background influenced the way he observes and writes about different cultures and histories.

Because of this, many of his works go beyond simple storytelling and try to explore the lives, traditions, and historical experiences of different communities.

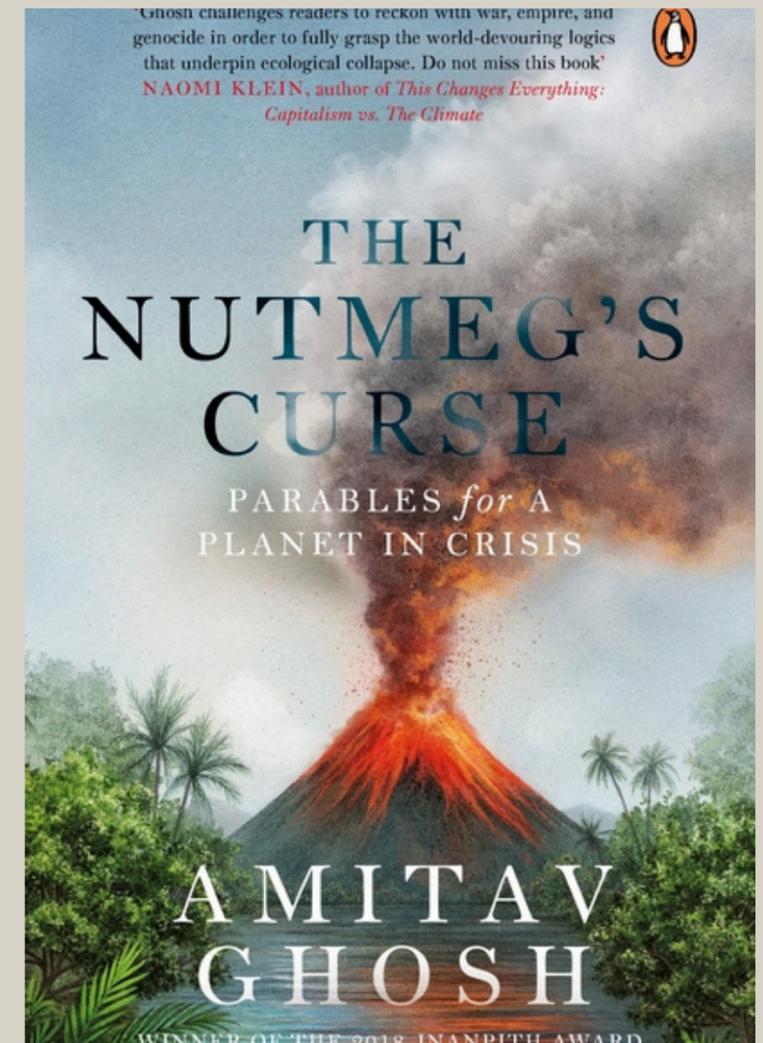
One of the best examples of his anthropological approach can be seen in his book *In an Antique Land*. In this work, Ghosh combines personal experience, historical research, and cultural observation. The book is based on his fieldwork in a village in Egypt where he studied the everyday life, customs, and beliefs of the people living there.

Through this work, he also shows the historical connections between India and the Middle East through trade and cultural exchange. In this way, Amitav Ghosh uses both literature and anthropological ideas to help readers understand human cultures and their shared histories.



ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY THROUGH LITERATURE

Amitav Ghosh is a distinctive climate activist who raises awareness about the environmental crisis through storytelling rather than protests or politics. He argues that climate change is a “crisis of human imagination,” meaning that people struggle to truly understand its scale and urgency. In works like *The Great Derangement* (2016) and *The Nutmeg's Curse* (2021), he connects the climate crisis to colonialism and capitalism, explaining how centuries of exploitation of nature and indigenous communities led to today’s ecological problems. Ghosh believes that literature and culture must help society rethink its relationship with nature and act out of a moral duty to future generations. His powerful climate writing has earned global recognition, including the Erasmus Prize (2024) and the Park Kyong-ni Prize (2025).



Conclusion

Amitav Ghosh is not only an outstanding novelist but also an important intellectual voice of our time. Through his fiction and non-fiction, he explores history, culture, migration, and the urgent issue of climate change. As a writer, his novels blend storytelling with deep historical and cultural insight. As a climate activist, especially in his non-fiction work *The Great Derangement*, he warns about humanity's failure to address climate change in literature, politics, and society. His anthropological perspective allows him to examine human relationships with nature, culture, and colonial history in a thoughtful way. Therefore, Amitav Ghosh's works are significant because they encourage readers to rethink history, environment, and our responsibility toward the planet.

