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Article

Rooted in Ruin: Colonial Histories and Ecological Resistance in Ghosh's Select Work

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Abstract: This paper analyzes the environmental aspects of colonialism as illustrated in Amitav Ghosh's *The Nutmeg's Curse* and *Smoke and Ashes*. Ghosh's narrative lens traces the historical continuities between imperial extraction and the climate crises of today. He suggests that something in colonial domination was not simply or only political or economic. It was an event that shaped the ecology and changed Nature. Using ideas by Kishan Khoday (189–211) and D'Almeida & Ramachandran (312–319), the chapter examines how colonial logics of extracting resources, changing environments, and suppressing knowledge were revived in contemporary neoliberal development and technocratic governance. Ghosh highlights the impact of the empire on environmental collapse, theorizing ecological injustice as historically embedded, which lived on into the Anthropocene. The author's writings bring the consciousness of indigenous people and postcolonial critique to the fore. He has also challenged the Europe-centric paradigm. Further, the author has called for epistemic and ecological reparations. To decolonize the environment, we must recognize and dismantle the material and epistemic legacies of colonialism. We can think of literature as a site of ecological resistance that recovers erased histories, reimagines human–nature relations, and conjoins justice and memory to offer decolonial futures.

Keywords: Colonial ecology; Environmental justice; Decolonial ethics; Indigenous knowledge

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Introduction

The environmental crises faced by the world today are linked to histories of empires, conquests, and resource extraction. The colonial encounter was not only political or economic but also ecological. Landscapes were reconfigured, extractive economies institutionalized, and systems of Eurocentric environmental knowledge imposed to build a global order from which the Global South disproportionately suffers environmental harm. Amitav Ghosh's work, *The Nutmeg's Curse* and *Smoke and Ashes,* was an eye-opener as it makes one question how colonialism changed the environment and created lasting structures of ecological inequality.

This paper proposes that Ghosh's works reveal the deliberate project of violence indicated by colonial ecology, whose logics prevail today in environmental governance. Ghosh's work shows how the destruction of ecology and this work of extraction have a colonial connection, not just a capitalist one. His texts show how epistemic erasure, environmental transformations by force, and imperial ideologies of progress continue to shape climate vulnerability today and global ecological hierarchies.

This part examines how colonization and environmental exploitation come together in Ghosh's select works. Ghosh demonstrates how colonialism caused environments to change, how the ideology of modernity was imperial, and how colonial extraction still has links to climate change today. In the paper, Ghosh's narrative strategies, which work the most to portray the impact of colonialism on climatic conditions, have been studied through the theoretical frameworks given by scholars like Kishan Khoday (189-211) and D'Almeida & Ramachandran (312-319). Through this method, we can follow a pathway of ecological injustice that originates in the empire and is still carried on by neoliberal development and technocratic governance.

Discussion

The way we write about colonialism primarily focuses on politics, economy, and culture. However, the conscious reordering of ecologies—what may be termed ecological imperialism—is a central but often neglected element of Empire. The idea of ecological imperialism helps us understand how the colonizers changed ecosystems on purpose by bringing new species, changing the landscape, and establishing extractive agricultural systems (Crosby). Changing ecosystems for better functioning was not a by-product of colonial conquest, but one of its primary tools.

In *The Nutmeg's Curse* (Ghosh), he emphasizes this dynamic in thoroughly retelling the Dutch conquest of the Banda Islands. In 1621, the Dutch intentionally massacred the Bandanese people for control of the nutmeg spice from the Banda Islands. Simultaneously, the genocide was also an act of environmental transformation. According to Ghosh, the previously diverse and local ecosystems of the Bandanese were replaced by nutmeg monocultures using enslaved labor from elsewhere. Colonialism worked as an ecological force by replacing complex systems with extractive plantations.

> The elimination of the Bandanese was brought about not just by targeted killings of humans, but by destroying the entire web of nonhuman connections that sustained a particular way of life. (Ghosh 41)

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> The widespread acceptance of Cartesian dualism, which separated humans from nature, only allowed ecological systems to become legible by their usefulness for human consumption. Ghosh argues that such a worldview helped the colonial empires commodify land, plants, and climates (Ghosh).
>
> To be "civilized" was to accept that the Earth is inert and machine-like and that no aspect of it, in principle, can elude human knowledge. On the other hand, a defining characteristic of "savagery" was the "belief in the vitality of natural and celestial objects. (Ghosh 87)

Khoday builds on this critique to suggest that contemporary environmental governance continues to be influenced by these colonial logics. Contemporary climate policies utilize similar frameworks (Khoday 193): strategies for carbon pricing, technology delivery, and finance for under-resourced Global South countries. The origins of this analysis are ultimately found within the colonial encounter, which delegitimized non-Western ecologies and replaced them with a generic, extractive land model.

Ghosh's account serves as history and a mode of resistance against environmental epistemologies derived from colonial violence. Ghosh dismantles the structures that environmentally dominate the Banda Islands by showing them as places of memory, trauma, and resistance.

Analysis

In *The Nutmeg's Curse,* Amitav Ghosh discusses the massacre of Bandanese people in 1621 A.D by the Dutch East India Company (VOC). This episode is a historic instance of colonial injury and a paradigmatic case of ecological violence. This event takes place within a broader context of imperial expansion defined by the intersection of biopolitics, environmental degradation, and capitalist accumulation. The nutmeg tree, Ghosh shows, was harnessed into the logic of colonial domination. Once an object of local culture, subsistence, and trade, the nutmeg was reconstituted as a commodity with a significance redefined in terms of imperial value and market logic (Ghosh 2021).

> The horror of the story of the Bandanese lies, in no small part, in the fact that the narrative of their elimination from their land revolves around a tree, a species of incomparable value, gifted to the islanders by the region's volcanic ecology. (Ghosh 31)

The Banda Islands deliberately and systematically made ecological changes. The Dutch killed the local population to monopolize the lucrative nutmeg trade and reorganized the archipelago ecology into a plantation monoculture. The method of growing only one crop changed soil chemicals, decreased the variety of plants and animals, and stopped old ways of growing foods. The establishment of monoculture was not merely an economic logic but a broader one about the empire and the environment, where an area was treated as an extractive zone and an ecosystem was fashioned for profit. When the British took over the Banda Islands in the early 19th century, they found a situation that daunted imperial logic. In this way, Nutmeg is not just a spice but a metonym for the colonial-capitalist venture, signalling the violence

that occurs when people and places become commodities. Ghosh's writing challenges traditional economic history thinking by showing how ecological violence is key to colonial expansion. Killing off the Bandanese was not only about taking control of the land but also about gaining access to the nutmeg resource and destroying the ties of local people with this place, too.

Gopinath reads Ghosh as utilizing a revisionist ecological historiography that refuses the sanitization of colonial narratives. Ghosh shifts the focus away from humans alone and brings back in plants and landscapes as actors. The nutmeg tree, as described by Ghosh, bears witness to centuries of ecological and epistemic violence (Gopinath 225). It is a representation of the violence that colonized people and colonized ecologies endured. Ghosh's approach is in sync with new materialist and post-humanist Ecocritical thought that ascribes agency and narrative centrality to the non-human.

In addition, the Banda Islands were also the site of epistemic violence. According to Ghosh in *The Nutmeg's Curse*, the plantation model was sustained by an ideology of scientific rationality that treated nature as quantifiable, divisible, and ownable. Western scientists employed a conceptual rubric of control for the tropics after the 1600s (Ghosh). The colonial powers considered plants and ecosystems as resources to redefine extraction as a civilizing mission. Ghosh does not dismiss science; he opposes the Enlightenment legacy's assumption that nature is indifferent and can be dominated. This criticism also resonates with postcolonial theorists, who paradigm Western Science as a "monoculture of the mind" (Shiva 4), erasing other ways of connecting and regulating the environment.

The plantation system required the constant manage-ments of the ecology. When a type of crop is grown for a long time, it creates disease. Similarly, it also requires external inputs. These inputs could be chemicals. Further, it is resistant to disease and natural rejuvenation cycles. Similarly, the plantation system also required constant ecological maintenance. Colonial authorities implemented strategies to manage the environment, such as cutting down forests, establishing irrigation systems, changing soil, etc., to make crops grow fast and effectively. Ghosh's story examines how they did this and what was needed for the empire to run. Moreover, the environmental violence that accompanied the Banda massacre is evident in today's agribusiness. Ghosh in *The Nutmeg's Curse* draws a direct link between colonial plantations and today's agro-industrial monocultures; in other words, the logic of extraction remains structurally intact within global capitalism. Many people have shifted away from their livelihoods and bits of knowledge due to the conversion of diverse ecologies into monocultures. Gopinath asserts that it continues in the name of development and food security. Looking from this angle, we can take the Banda Islands as a forerunner for the constant commodification of the biosphere (Gopinath 225-226).

The nutmeg tree's symbolic power grows when understood through larger discourses of climate justice. The plantation economy not only exploited human beings but also started a trend of deforestation, soil exhaustion, and loss of biodiversity, causing the ecological instability of the Anthropocene. Many believe industrial agriculture is a new thing. Ghosh shows the colonial experimentation to exploit nature,

resulting in industrial agriculture. Destruction of forests was not just an economic phenomenon; it also resulted in the loss of carbon sinks, disruption of hydrological cycles, and extinction of local species.

> Bandas was entirely consistent with its role as a pioneer of capitalism: the system that it put in place in the archipelago was an early form of industrialized agriculture, "combining capital, land, labor, and technology in a rationalized mix, to achieve large- scale, profitable agricultural production." (Ghosh 118)

Khoday states that today's environmental governance is still a colonial legacy. According to Khoday (194-195), the currently dominant development paradigm prioritizing technocratic solutions leads to agriculture based on capital-intensive and extractive logic used in colonial plantations. Ghosh's narrative is caught up in a historical-catastrophic account and a diagnosis of Indian ecological injustice. Hence, it exposes deep structures and critiques for their dismantling.

By looking closely at *The Nutmeg's Curse*, it can be seen that the nutmeg tree serves many purposes: as a historical, ecological, and literary device. It steadies the narrative while allowing wider reflections on violence, memory, and justice. Ghosh expresses a decolonial ecological ethical stance that demands recognizing environmental harm and restitution through reviving hidden knowledge systems and restoring ecological diversity. Ghosh's account of the Banda Islands thus resists closure. The massacre is seen not as a done deal but as something that continually happens. Environmental matters are no longer recognizable to us. In other words, destruction took place when people saw it as necessary. Ghosh seeks a rethinking of ecology not as a technical problem to solve but as a historical injury connected to not-so-distant episodes. He links these incidents with contemporary patterns. This narrative also implicates the environmentally damaging consequences of something as positive as progress. It looks at ecological collapse as a deliberate political economic act, not an unintended consequence of progress. The damage inflicted upon the land was not incidental; it was intentional. The Banda Islands show how the transformation of the environment was one way of control, disciplining, and profiting.

Ultimately, the environmental violence represented in *The Nutmeg's Curse* is more than just tree-cutting or soil-leeching. It is a profound restructuring of ecological, cultural, and knowledge life. Ghosh's writing leads to a well-rounded understanding of this violence, which goes over boundaries between disciplines and demands that history, ecology, and power intermingle. A silent nutmeg tree is a conversation partner for an adept Ghosh with a witness to the violence of empire and an ecological reparative potential.

While *The Nutmeg's Curse* focuses on the environmental and epistemic violence of the spice trade, Ghosh's *Smoke and Ashes* looks at another imperial commodity, opium. It shows us a similar story of ecological devastation and colonial control. *Smoke and Ashes* (Ghosh) examines the ecological aspects of colonial capitalism in *Smoke and Ashes*, where the British Empire's opium trade takes centre stage. The story shows how opium was not just a diplomatic or economic issue, but at the core of colonial efforts to

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change environments. The British changed the agrarian ecologies in India and riverine systems across the Indo-Pacific through forced cultivation and structural manipulation.

> So strict and punitive were the laws of the Opium Department that farmers were essentially trapped within a net of legal obligations and debt bondage. Even in times of famine, they had no recourse but to grow poppies in order to slake the British Empire's inexhaustible appetite for opium. (Ghosh 58)

Under British colonial rule, Indian farmers were forced by contracts and pressure to grow poppy instead of food crops. Switching over to monoculture had serious ecological effects. According to Paul, the farming of poppy resulted in a loss of soil, reduction in biodiversity, and higher water demand. Changing food-growing regions to drug-producing regions (a monopoly) exemplifies the intertwining of imperialistic commerce and ecosystemic destruction (Paul 345-346).

Also, the environment was harmed through the logistical setup of the opium trade. According to Ghosh, the Ganga was actively used to transport opium from Bihar to Calcutta, and subsequently, this led to pollution of the river and disruption of traditional sharing agreements. The ecology of the Ganga basin changed, and the river culture was marginalised because of this.

According to Batra, the colonial trade routes acted as "ecological corridors of extraction," facilitating the flow of resources from the periphery of empires to the imperial metropole, leaving behind a trail of devastation to thrive upon (Batra 323). In other words, this book promotes the opium economy as a transnational system of ecological violence that linked Indian fields, Chinese markets, and British profits in a closed loop of degradation.

The narrative shows that imperial control of labour and knowledge accompanied ecological manipulation. British officers not only regulated farmers' crop selection but also discredited indigenous agronomic practices. They introduced systematized models of production that prioritized homogeneity over resilience. The way knowledge drawn from local agricultural practices was suppressed was systemic. This supports Ghosh's argument that colonialism was as much a project of mental conquest as that of territory or economic need (Ghosh).

Colonialism has caused long-term ecological consequences that impact the environmental vulnerabilities of the Global South today. Areas that were previously extraction colonies—whether for spices, timber, opium, or metals—are now ecologically fragile, economically dependent, and politically marginalized. Ghosh makes a more explicit connection between colonialism and contemporary ecological crises in *The Nutmeg's Curse*. Ghosh argues that ecological degradation was not an unintended consequence of colonialism but rather a structural consequence of its logic. Khoday uses the term "ecological apartheid" to refer to the spatial and racial inequities produced as a result of centuries of exploitation of the environment (Khoday 207). The availability of resources and wealth in the Global North (whose colonists devastated the peripheries) and the dispersal of environmental harms to the South produce this condition (Khoday 201-202). Although industrialized countries are still profiting from

more than a century of unsustainable growth, many countries in the South are already suffering the consequences – increased sea levels, food insecurity, droughts, floods, and biodiversity loss, but lack the capacity and resources to respond.

Smoke and Ashes (Ghosh) provides a concrete historical case of this dynamic through the forced cultivation of opium in Bihar. Under British rule, vast tracts of arable land were converted to opium production, disrupting food systems and causing soil exhaustion. British economic needs dictated what was grown, how it was transported, and who bore the risks. Local farmers had little agency in this system, prioritizing imperial profits over ecological health or community well-being. Paul describes this as a deliberate use of environmental degradation for subjugation and control (346–47). The system was, therefore, coercive to its core: not only did farmers have to engage with the ever-looming threat of violence, but they also had no choice other than to plant poppies because the Opium Department stipulated that nothing else could be grown on land that had been earmarked for that purpose. Farmers could be evicted if they planted any other crop, and since most poppy growers were 'tenants at will', they were in constant danger of losing their land. (Ghosh 58)

This pattern is not confined to history. Similar logics of historical development persist in the contemporary era. Big hydroelectric dams, mining sites, and one-crop forests keep pushing out local people and ruining delicate environments across the Global South. As Ghosh shows in his work, the tales that rationalize these interventions, "progress," "modernization," and "economic growth," are imperial. Former colonial countries gained an ecological surplus due to imperialism. They are now preventing further development of countries of the 'Global South' (i.e., post-colonial countries) through environmental and sustainability standards. Developed countries impose limits on infrastructure funding and create conditions for indebtedness, granting them licensing rights and actual polluting licenses.

Ghosh's approach works well by joining the historical dots between imperial exploitation and contemporary ecological governance. In his two works, *The Nutmeg's Curse* and *Smoke and Ashes*, colonial regimes' environmental control structures are with us today in institutions, policies, and discourses. Ideas sanctioned by scientific experts, favouring export-oriented agriculture, turning marginal areas into resource frontiers—the afterlife of empire in global ecological relations is manifested in such dynamics.

> Opium provided the template that other dangerous industries would use later to forestall regulation; fossil fuel companies are still using similar tactics about climate change. The difference is that in the case of opium, these tactics were employed not by a corporation but by a government that was then the world's most powerful state. (Ghosh 272)

Ghosh states that dealing with climate change without addressing colonialism is not merely inadequate but reinforces the same structures of inequity that created the crisis. Khoday makes the same point, claiming that decolonizing the environment does not just mean representation or inclusion, but a rethinking of international environmental law and governance (Khoday 208-209). In essence, former Colonies

need not be enforcers of the North, but agents who determine the terms of global ecological futures.

A rich understanding of culture complements Ghosh's critique of the law and policy. Through his stories, we see how environmental injustice affects people, how ecological destruction takes away losses of emotion and culture, and how stories need restitution. In this context, literature becomes a way of seeing and remembering—an important part of reparative justice. Colonialism brought ecological violence beyond taking away lands and exploiting labour; it involved a serious erasure of knowledge. Many colonial regimes replaced the local knowledge systems with European systems through the conquest of knowledge. This has been termed as the "epistemic colonization" alongside physical conquest. The epistemological aspect is foregrounded in *The Nutmeg's Curse* and *Smoke and Ashes*. The control exerted by colonial powers restructures the landscape and legitimizes the knowledge produced. Ghosh critiques the systematic de-legitimization of indigenous cosmologies as superstitions by the colonizer, who deemed them unscientific. However, these cosmologies were deeply rooted in sustainable practices and spiritual relations with the environment. In the Banda Islands, for instance, nutmeg was cultivated in ecological time by the Bandanese using community-controlled ways while also recognizing constraints of land and the spiritual value of non-human life.

The plantation system that the Dutch East India Company introduced not only ruptured land use, but it also ruptured knowledge. The cultivations of the Bandanese were replaced by standardized monocultures for export, and their spiritual and ecological understandings were subsumed to economic logics of empire. By this process, we see epistemic diversity, or reducing the world of many different types of knowledge to one imperial epistemology.

> The predicament the East India Company now faced had also bedevilled its rival, the Dutch VOC, when it sought to impose monopolies on spices like cloves and nutmeg in the preceding century. The trouble with monopolizing a botanical commodity is that it is difficult, if not impossible... However, the policy was undermined not only by indigenous resistance, but also by the trees themselves: they grew in such abundance in the forests of Maluku that they were impossible to extirpate. (Ghosh 106)

Ghosh's story motivates us to recognize and respect the colonized people's deep comprehension of the environment. Ghosh works to overturn the assumption that ecological knowledge can only be produced by Western scientists through historical reconstruction and literary imagination.

This dynamic is also in *Smoke and Ashes,* where Ghosh shows how British colonial officials disturbed India's indigenous agrarian systems. Before the British came, farmers in India had their ways to keep the soil fertile, water it, and more. Using intercropping, crop rotation, and organic fertilizers was a standard and successful practice. However, after colonization, these methods were ignored, and farmers were pushed to grow poppies under very rigid conditions to maximize opium and export it to China. Ghosh

shows us that this did not happen after a local failure of knowledge. It was a case of imposed ignorance where contrary systems were willfully distorted because they clashed with imperial interests.

D'Almeida & Ramachandran argue that Ghosh's literary project performs "decolonial ecology," which resists the homogenization of nature in global environmentalism and foregrounds a plurality of nature that is relational and place-based. Ghosh puts forth in this view that indigenous knowledge should not merely be an addition but instead must be re-centered as the starting point of an ethical and sustainable environmental future (D'Almeida and Ramachandran 317)

This engagement is as important for environmental theory as for policy. Indigenous knowledge systems are important for conservation, climate adaptation, and biodiversity protection. Research has shown that lands managed by Indigenous people have better ecological resilience and more biodiversity than state-led land management. Ghosh's work further strengthens these findings through its historical embedding, revealing the violent erasures through which colonial science came to occupy the dominant space in the first place. So, it is also important to note that Ghosh never romanticizes or essentializes. He does not portray indigenous communities as immutable, eternal stewards of nature. He depicts these groups as flexible and dynamic while contextualizing them historically so that the indigenous people can adapt creatively. He challenges the 'savage' stereotype upheld by colonialism as well as the 'noble ecologist' stereotype caricatured in post-colonialism, instead presenting indigenous agency in its complexity and nuance.

The Nutmeg's Curse and *Smoke and Ashes* show that colonial suppression of indigenous ecological knowledge has had lasting impacts on environmental destruction. Ghosh argues that ecological ethics must be plural, historical, and decolonial by recovering and validating the knowledge systems of the Global South. Ghosh's work invites readers, scholars, and policymakers to the diversity of often poorly acknowledged epistemologies that can inform more just environmental futures that challenge the monopoly of Western science.

> Blessed by empires, Linnaeus's system became the foundation of a way of knowing that would claim, from very early on, a monopoly on truth, discounting all other knowledge systems and their methods. However, secretly, Western science was often dependent on other ways of knowing. (Ghosh 95)

Amitav Ghosh shows how environmental history is a literary art form through his carefully chosen narrative styles. His writings do not notice disciplinary boundaries: memoir, travel writing, political commentary, historiography. This form of hybridism is essential for decolonizing environmental discourse. Ghosh disrupts genre expectations to challenge dominant ways of making knowledge and open spaces for multiple understandings of ecological relationships.

In *The Nutmeg's Curse*, Ghosh shifts between reconstructing the past and speculating on the future as the past interacts with the present. Ghosh says the plants,

animals, and landscapes can act as witnesses to acts of violence that might have been committed.

Ghosh's narrative technique, as D'Almeida and Ramachandran describe, enacts a form of "narrative decolonization," reclaiming suppressed histories and reconfiguring the human-nature relationship through mutual reciprocity instead of dominance (D'Almeida and Ramachandran 318). This literary method not only helps to recover voices that have been marginalized but also to highlight the moral failures of modernity, which is itself a product of the Enlightenment's rift between nature and culture.

In Ghosh's *Smoke and Ashes*, the author uses personal travelogues and archival material to show how empire, commerce, and environmental change are entangled. The text describes the opium deal as something that is worldwide rather than a political agreement or war, but an ecological disruption and transformation of culture. He criticizes today's environmental politics for how global institutions continue to reproduce imperial logic. Approaches to mitigating ecological degradation are often top-down and divorced from the ecological damage's cultural or historical context. Ghosh's work asks people to create ethics that are accountable, situated, and mindful of the long memory of colonialism.

> What was truly novel about it was that it invented abstract frames of reference, such as 'laws of the market', that served to eliminate all the ethical guardrails that had previously constrained trade and commerce.... the laws of the market, which overrode every consideration of humanity, ethics, and justice. (Ghosh 214)

Gopinath argues that Ghosh's literary voice fills a significant void in environmental discourse by merging ecological grief with historical excavation, reimagining climate futures through storytelling (Gopinath 226). His writings do not just record environmental decline; they trace its genealogies, excavate its non/absence, and reimagine its future. Ghosh engineered a framework for decolonial ecological thought while critiquing colonialism as it exists.

Ghosh's reference to indigenous knowledge and alternative worldviews challenges colonial epistemologies, but critics may argue that he is too idealistic or romanticized. Critics may note the danger of essentializing indigenous cultures or overlooking the varied, modernist paradigms and political entanglements within indigenous cultures. Also, they are not converted to policy or structure when rendered in. However, it is important to mention that Ghosh is not trying to present indigenous systems as unquestionable solutions but rather reclaim subaltern episteme and bring about an important ethical (and historical) reorientation. This way, he creates a space for thinking about ecological futures founded on justice and plurality rather than technocratic solutions or capitalist greenwashing.

Conclusion

Ghosh's *The Nutmeg's Curse* and *Smoke and Ashes* are major literary interventions in the histories and futures of environmental injustice. Ghosh's detailed historical engagement, formal experimentation, and ethical reflection map the continuity between colonial extraction and contemporary ecological degradation. Ghosh's works

demonstrate how the environmental crises we see in the global south today are no coincidence, but structural inheritances from centuries of imperial plunder.

The analysis in this chapter shows that colonialism was not just a system of political domination. It was also one of the ecological transformations. Colonialism replaced biodiverse landscapes with monocultures, diverted river systems, erased traditional ecological knowledge, and turned nature into a set of extractable resources. These were engineered, rapid, and left scars on the planet's ecological health.

Thus, we must view ecological inequity historically. Without the empire's material and epistemic legacies, it is impossible to overcome present imbalances in climate vulnerability, resource access, and ecological resilience. As Khoday argues, decolonizing the environment means decolonizing the structures that govern it, which still reflect colonial power (Khoday 193–94).

Ghosh's view holds that ecological restoration must involve financial and policy reparations and cultural and epistemic justice. The texts discussed here are archives of loss and possibility. They show the harmfulness of global environmental systems while providing alternative ways of thinking, being, and relating to Earth. Ghosh's work serves decolonial environmental ethics, which are urgently needed in the Anthropocene by emphasizing indigenous knowledge, redressing the noiselessness of the non-human, and critiquing imperial modernity.

Ghosh's writing highlights that colonial ecology results in three legacies: epistemic erasure, ecological commodification, and structural inequity. One example of epistemic erasure of indigenous peoples is the way colonial regimes dismissed indigenous cosmologies and ecological practices and privileged an extractive logic over one based on symbiotic knowledge systems. The second form of ecological commodification is the conversion of nature, from spice and opium cultivation to deforestation, as an object of control, trade, and profit. As an outcome of colonial transactions, present-day communities in former colonies are more vulnerable to climate hazards. The author, Ghosh, connects the past and future legacies through his literary work, suggesting that there is more to fixing the climate crisis than with technology. It requires a serious look at our histories and ethical repairing of the system.

In this way, literature becomes an important space for ecological resistance. It makes connections that policies often hide and invoke memories, emotions, and dreams in ways scientific discourse cannot. Ghosh's work exemplifies how a narrative can be monopolized by nonconcentric hegemonies and enable an ethical re-orientation for ecology. Ghosh also calls for contemporary climate adaptation and ecological governance strategies to centre indigenous knowledge systems, environmental memory, and decolonial ethics.

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