

Analysing Environmental Perspectives in Amitav Ghosh's *The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis*

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Abstract

The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis by Amitav Ghosh skillfully integrates environmental viewpoints into a story that cuts over time and space. The paper explores the intricate examination of environmental topics in Ghosh's writing. It also examines how Ghosh explains the relationship between historical settings, human actions, and ecological consequences through a close reading of the text.

It explores how colonialism, globalization, and environmental degradation are intricately related to one another in Ghosh's writing, highlighting the critical need for a paradigm change in how we view the earth. Through the use of literary analysis and environmental studies, the paper investigates the role that Ghosh's story plays in helping people comprehend the intricate environmental issues that our planet is currently facing.

Keywords: Environmental Issues, Paradigm Change, Historical Settings, Ecological Imbalance, Cultural Ecology

The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis, a literary masterwork by Amitav Ghosh, deftly interweaves environmental conscience with world concerns. Ghosh explores the intricate connections between humans and the environment in his pages, weaving together a tapestry of tales that go beyond traditional storytelling. Ghosh's writings shine as a light while the globe struggles with urgent ecological issues because they provide deep understandings and fresh viewpoints on the complex interactions between people, the natural world, and the shadow of impending environmental destruction.

We examine Ghosh's masterpiece in-depth in this study article, peeling back its many layers to reveal the environmental viewpoints it captures. Ghosh, a master of literary style, creates a story that is both entertaining and a powerful call to action for environmental stewardship by combining historical insights, cultural observations, and fictitious elements. We explore the complex aspects of environmental concerns via the lens of "The Nutmeg's Curse," looking at how Ghosh weaves themes of ecological imbalance, globalization, and colonialism together. Ghosh's story deftly negotiates the rough seas of colonial exploitation, revealing the past causes of environmental exploitation and its lasting effects on the environment.

Furthermore, by analyzing the parables weaved throughout the book that serve as warning stories for a planet on the verge of calamity, this study aims to unearth the allegorical importance

of Ghosh's storytelling. Ghosh encourages readers to consider the effects of human actions on the fragile balance of nature via his work, which connects with current environmental concerns.

We seek to establish connections between the harsh realities of today's world and the fantastical worlds as we explore the landscapes of Ghosh's literary works. Using a thorough examination, we want to derive a significant understanding of how *The Nutmeg's Curse* functions as a reflective mirror, highlighting the dangers of environmental deterioration and encouraging readers to ponder and initiate significant transformation.

The research paper presents a thorough analysis of the environmental viewpoints encompassed within *The Nutmeg's Curse*, to draw attention to Ghosh's evocative writing and thematic complexity. We hope to add to the conversation on environmental consciousness by dissecting the layers of Ghosh's tale and encouraging readers to take note of the lessons contained within this masterful work of literature. The story of *The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis* integrates environmental viewpoints in a sophisticated way. There are certain key points on environmental perspectives that have been analyzed.

Ecological Imbalance and Consequences

The paper explores the relationship between human activity and natural systems, explaining the consequences of ecological unbalance. Ghosh's work deftly examines the effects of human activity on the environment, highlighting the complex web of ecological interactions and the repercussions of upsetting this fragile equilibrium.

The term "ecological imbalance" describes how natural ecosystems are disturbed or changed as a result of human activity or other external events. Ghosh probably talks about how environmental disruptions are caused by things like industrialization, pollution, deforestation, and unsustainable farming methods. These disruptions frequently have negative effects on human cultures as well as the environment.

Biodiversity loss is one important effect of ecological imbalance. The destruction and fragmentation of habitats brought on by human activity frequently result in a decrease in the diversity of species. Ghosh may draw attention to how the loss of a species affects pollination, the nutrition cycle, and food chains. The inherent worth of different ecosystems is diminished by this loss, which also jeopardizes the stability of ecosystems that provide resources and services to humans.

Ghosh may also highlight how ecological imbalance contributes to climate change. Global warming is made worse by the production of greenhouse gases, which is a result of ecosystem modification. Extreme weather, increasing sea levels, and disruptions in agricultural production are all consequences of changing climate patterns, which make living conditions for people more difficult and exacerbate socioeconomic inequality. Ghosh examines in *The Nutmeg's Curse*:

In addition, tastes had begun to change in Europe. Anxieties about sexuality led to the shunning of dietary items that were thought to overstimulate the body and create propensities for the "solitary vice."² The poet Percy Bysshe Shelley denounced spices as well as the spice trade as "harmful to the moral fibre" of the body and the nation.³ Upper-class Europeans, who had once relished spicy food, now began to take pride in the blandness of their cuisine. (98)

The book may also explore how ecological imbalance affects society and the economy. Communities are frequently uprooted as a result of water shortages, food poverty, and environmental deterioration. Furthermore, underprivileged populations are frequently

disproportionately affected by the uneven distribution of environmental hazards, which results in environmental injustice. To overcome ecological imbalances, Ghosh could support a comprehensive strategy that emphasizes the significance of sustainable habits, conservation initiatives, and legislative changes. Mitigating the effects of ecological imbalance might be achieved by eco-friendly technology adoption, ecosystem restoration, and the development of renewable energy sources.

Ghosh's examination of ecological imbalance and its effects in *The Nutmeg's Curse* probably acts as a wake-up call to the critical need to take action as a group to protect the fragile balance of our earth. The book challenges readers to consider their part in averting the disaster and promoting a more sustainable relationship with the environment by illuminating the complex relationships that exist between human behavior and natural systems.

Cultural Ecology

Amitav Ghosh analyzes the idea of cultural ecology, a complex framework that looks at the dynamic interaction between human cultures and their environs. Cultural ecology studies how surrounding ecosystems influence and are influenced by cultures, customs, and human behaviors. Ghosh's examination of this idea in his book is firmly grounded in the context of human civilization and the natural world, with a special emphasis on the effects of globalization and colonialism on the environment.

Ghosh combines stories and anecdotes, highlighting the complex interplay between culture and environment by relying on historical occurrences, folklore, and firsthand accounts. He investigates the significant effects of human activity on the environment and the environment's reciprocal influence on cultural behaviors via this perspective.

The impact of colonial exploitation on ecosystems and indigenous cultures is one of Ghosh's main topics. He considers how the colonial era's hunt for resources—such as nutmeg, spices, and other commodities—caused environmental damage and upended long-standing cultural customs. In addition to having an impact on the environment, the exploitation of natural resources also changed the social structures and cultural identities of the people who depended on them. Ghosh writes in *The Nutmeg's Curse*:

As far back as 1992, the Union of Concerned Scientists warned that humanity faced a stark choice between spending its resources on war and violence, or on preventing catastrophic environmental damage. The report was signed by 1,700 scientists, including the majority of Nobel Prize winners in the sciences.¹⁷ In 2017 the warning was reissued, and this time it was signed by more than 15,000 scientists: it concluded that the state of the world was even worse than before. The first UCS report attracted a good deal of attention; the second one passed almost unnoticed.” (112)

Ghosh also clarifies the effects of modernity and globalization on cultural ecology. Traditional ecological knowledge and practices are being lost due to the fast expansion of Western ideals, materialism, and industrialization. Amid these worldwide developments, indigenous communities—who are frequently highly attuned to their natural surroundings—have experienced difficulties in maintaining their cultural legacy and sustainable ways of living.

Ghosh challenges readers to reevaluate their relationship with the environment and to reassess society's norms and values through his investigation of cultural ecology. He supports an ecological conservation strategy that is more all-encompassing and combines conventional

ecological knowledge with cutting-edge scientific understanding. Ghosh highlights how crucial it is to recognize and absorb the sustainable methods of indigenous civilizations to confront the modern environmental issues that the entire world community faces.

The Nutmeg's Curse is a powerful call to action that encourages us to understand the complex relationships that exist between nature and culture and to work toward fostering a more peaceful coexistence of people and the natural world. In addition to educating readers, Ghosh's story encourages them to reconsider their role in determining the destiny of the earth by highlighting the value of ecological sustainability and cultural variety in fostering a more resilient and balanced global community. Ghosh writes:

“The end of the world is seen, as Tennyson puts it, as the “far-off event” that allows Man to realize his true self, as pure Spirit, disencumbered of all fleshly and earthly ties. These ideas may appear deranged, but they continue to constitute a vital substrate of contemporary imaginaries. Signs of this substrate are everywhere around us: in the evangelical Christian idea of the “Rapture”; in the apocalyptic visions of ecofascists; in the dreams of those who yearn for a world “cleansed” of humanity; and in the fantasies of the billionaires who, having grown tired of this surly Earth and its sullen inhabitants, aspire to create a tamer version of it by terraforming some other planet. Their dream may be wrapped in futuristic cladding, but it is nothing but an atavistic yearning to put in motion once again the processes of terraforming by which settler-colonials turned large parts of the Earth into “neo-Europes. (*The Nutmeg's Curse*, 212)

Colonial Exploitation and Environmental Degradation

The paper is also a provocative analysis of colonial exploitation and its grave environmental consequences. In this study, Ghosh explores the complex interrelationships of colonialism, exploitation, and environmental degradation, illuminating the significant influence of past occurrences on the ecological problems we face now.

The brutal extraction of resources from colonized areas, frequently motivated by the financial interests of colonial powers, was a defining characteristic of colonial exploitation. The methodical exploitation of natural resources in these areas resulted from the unrelenting search for precious commodities like as timber, minerals, and spices. Particularly, the book tells the tale of nutmeg, which was formerly a highly valued spice during the colonial era. Ghosh disentangles the complex network of environmental destruction and exploitation that surrounds its production in areas such as the Banda Islands.

Local ecosystems were altered by exploitative systems established by the colonial powers. The colonists frequently used force to seize land, remove forests, and replace native agricultural methods with monoculture plantations that were only interested in making as much money as possible. This change resulted in soil erosion, a decline in biodiversity, and the breakdown of ecosystems that had flourished for ages.

Furthermore, the exploitation of natural resources was not the only aspect of colonial exploitation. Additionally, it involves forcing indigenous communities to work in exploitative labor arrangements. Ghosh draws attention to the suffering of the local populations who were forced to work long hours under harsh circumstances, hence causing their lands to deteriorate environmentally. He writes *The Nutmeg's Curse*:

This is the great burden that now rests upon writers, artists, filmmakers, and everyone else who is involved in the telling of stories: to us falls the task of imaginatively restoring agency and voice to nonhumans. As with all the most important artistic endeavors in human history, this is a task that is at once aesthetic and political—and because of the magnitude of the crisis that besets the planet, it is now freighted with the most pressing moral urgency.” (221)

The long-term effects of this exploitation have an impact on the current ecological issues we are facing. The loss of biodiversity, deforestation, degraded soil, and climate change are all direct results of millennia of exploitation. Ghosh’s story serves as a powerful reminder that our current environmental situation is still shaped by the deeds of the past.

The Nutmeg’s Curse is a cautionary story that challenges us to consider the environmental effects and historical legacies of colonialism. As we engage with the environment, it calls for thoughtful consideration of the necessity of fair and sustainable methods, highlighting the significance of honoring traditional ecological knowledge and indigenous knowledge. Readers are encouraged by Ghosh’s writing to recognize the connections between environmental degradation, exploitation, and history. It calls for a reassessment of our relationship with the environment, a more sustainable and equitable future for everyone, and more deliberate use of resources and responsible environmental management.

Local Knowledge and Environmental Stewardship

The paper explores the complex connection between environmental stewardship and indigenous wisdom. Acclaimed for his ability to skillfully integrate history, culture, and environmental concerns, Ghosh adeptly navigates the intricacies of our ecological dilemma via an assortment of writings that emphasize the need for conventional wisdom in tackling modern environmental concerns.

Ghosh’s investigation centers on the identification of native or regional knowledge systems. He emphasizes how crucial a role they play in comprehending and controlling ecosystems. These traditional knowledge systems, which have been passed down through the years, frequently contain insights into resource management, sustainable behaviors, and the mutually beneficial interactions between communities and their surroundings.

Ghosh challenges the prevailing narratives that emphasize centralized or technological solutions to environmental problems. Rather, he advocates for the notion that local groups, being deeply ingrained in their surroundings, have a close comprehension of their ecosystems. Their centuries-old experience and accumulated knowledge provide other viewpoints and answers that are frequently disregarded in the mainstream environmental conversation.

The book draws attention to situations where indigenous methods have been ignored, resulting in environmental deterioration and biodiversity loss, to illustrate the negative effects of disregarding traditional knowledge. Ghosh stresses how important it is to recognize these traditional methods and include them in more modern approaches to environmental preservation. Ghosh also emphasizes the concept of environmental stewardship, which is a duty shared by local communities as well as governments and other organizations.

He supports a cooperative strategy that honors and incorporates conventional wisdom with cutting-edge scientific techniques. According to Ghosh, this cooperation can open the door for more comprehensive and successful environmental stewardship.

Ghosh challenges people to reconsider their opinions on environmental concerns with thought-provoking ideas and gripping stories. He challenges us to reevaluate the information sources we use and advocates for a more inclusive strategy that respects and incorporates the expertise of regional communities. Essentially, *The Nutmeg's Curse* makes one consider how local knowledge and environmental management are related. The depth of wisdom found in indigenous cultures is something that Ghosh's work provides as a reminder of, as is the pressing need to acknowledge, value, and use this knowledge in our pursuit of a sustainable future.

Globalization and Environmental Challenges

There is an exploration of the intricate relationship between environmental issues and globalization, illuminating the effects of human activity on the ecosystem. In addition to significantly boosting economic growth, globalization—which is defined by a greater interconnection and interdependence across nations—has also seriously aggravated environmental problems.

The book emphasizes how natural resource exploitation has increased due to globalization, frequently with little consideration for long-term sustainability or environmental effects. To maximize profits, people have been recklessly depleting natural resources such as water, minerals, and forests, which has resulted in habitat loss, deforestation, and contamination of waterways. Furthermore, the carbon footprint has been increased due to globalized supply chains and consumption patterns, large transportation networks, and increased industrial activity. This has intensified the effects of climate change, including extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and disruption of ecosystems.

In the context of globalization, Ghosh probably investigates the uneven distribution of environmental costs and benefits. While certain areas or groups within society may gain disproportionately from globalization, developing countries, disadvantaged populations, and indigenous peoples are frequently the ones that bear the environmental costs. Due to the operations of multinational corporations, these communities frequently bear the burden of environmental deterioration, enduring health problems, loss of livelihoods, and relocation.

The Nutmeg's Curse may discuss how laws and rules might help with these issues. Ghosh may talk about how inadequate current international frameworks are in reducing the negative environmental effects of globalization. The book may advocate for stricter laws, international collaboration, and a change in economic paradigms that prioritize sustainability and conservation. It could support encouraging a more egalitarian approach to development that prioritizes environmental preservation alongside economic progress, reconsidering consumerism, and supporting renewable energy sources.

In the end, the book probably acts as a wake-up call, asking readers to understand the complex connections between environmental issues and globalization. It highlights how urgent it is for everyone to get involved and for society's principles to be reevaluated to build a more just and sustainable future. Ghosh's narrative approach, which frequently incorporates vivid storytelling and historical connections, may provide an engaging and thought-provoking examination of these important topics.

Eco-criticism and Literary Analysis

In Amitav Ghosh's writing, particularly in *The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis*, "Eco-criticism and Literary Analysis" refers to the examination of environmental topics, human-nature connections, and how ecological problems are portrayed in literature. In *The*

Nutmeg's Curse, famous author Ghosh—known for his perceptive storytelling—dives into the complexities of ecological disasters, employing literary devices to deliver critical environmental concerns. Using eco-criticism as a framework, readers may examine how Ghosh combines environmental concerns with narrative to highlight the intricate interactions that exist between people and the natural world.

The book uses metaphor, symbolism, and allegory to emphasize how environmental deterioration affects communities. By illustrating the effects of human activity on ecosystems and communities, Ghosh offers a comprehensive perspective of ecological problems through various literary techniques. A potent metaphor, *The Nutmeg's Curse* makes connections between historical occurrences, colonial exploitation, and modern environmental issues.

Furthermore, the characters provide focus areas for eco-critical examination because of their relationships with the environment. Ghosh emphasizes the complex interaction that individuals have with their surroundings by deftly incorporating ecological factors into character development. This method enables readers to consider how human activity affects the environment and the larger ecosystem.

The narrative form itself frequently uses fractured tales or nonlinear storytelling to mimic ecological systems or environmental deterioration, as well as broken ecosystems or strained human-nature balance. Ghosh's language selections and literary style greatly influence the text's eco-critical discussion. Emotional reactions are sparked by vivid descriptions of ecosystems, landscapes, and their decline, which helps readers develop empathy for nature. By encouraging readers to consider their ecological imprint and relationship with the ecosystem, these language devices enhance the ecological themes already present in the story. Ghosh explores in *The Nutmeg's Curse*:

For many Indigenous groups, landscapes remain as vividly alive today as they ever were. "For Indian men and women," writes the anthropologist Peter Basso, of the Western Apache of Arizona, "the past lies embedded in features of the earth—in canyons and lakes, mountains and arroyos, rocks and vacant fields—which together endow their lands with multiple forms of significance that reach into their lives and shape the ways they think."¹³ Stories about the past, built around familiar landmarks, inform every aspect of Apache life. Through these stories, features of the landscape speak to people just as loudly as the human voices that historians bring to life from documentary sources. (258)

By acting as a call to action, *The Nutmeg's Curse's* eco-criticism goes beyond traditional literary critique. Ghosh challenges readers to consider their responsibilities as stewards of the environment and promotes a reexamination of cultural norms and attitudes that support environmental deterioration. The work demonstrates Ghosh's skill in incorporating eco-critical viewpoints into literary study. The book serves as a testament to the power of writing to encourage change, increase public knowledge of environmental concerns, and foster a feeling of responsibility for the environment and its ecosystems. Ghosh invites readers to critically interact with the pressing ecological issues of our day by skillfully weaving together the domains of environmentalism and literature.

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is an issue that is deeply intertwined. Ghosh investigates how human activity affects the environment, paying special attention to the underprivileged groups

impacted by ecological deterioration. When it comes to environmental policies and the allocation of environmental benefits and responsibilities, environmental justice refers to the equitable treatment and participation of all people, regardless of their race, color, or economic status. Ghosh explores this idea in detail by showing how vulnerable communities are disproportionately affected by environmental challenges, which frequently exacerbate already-existing socioeconomic inequities.

Ghosh raises awareness of the predicament of underprivileged populations whose livelihoods are in danger due to environmental deterioration brought on by businesses or more significant geopolitical decisions through eloquent narrative and perceptive parables. He emphasizes the necessity of fair solutions that put these communities' welfare first in addition to addressing ecological issues. Ghosh writes in *The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis*: "It is a grave error to imagine that the world is not preparing for the disrupted planet of the future. It's just that it's not preparing by taking mitigatory measures or by reducing emissions: instead, it is preparing for a new geopolitical struggle for dominance."(97)

The book invites readers to consider how social justice and environmental degradation are related. In support of inclusive methods of environmental preservation that take into account the interests and rights of all people, especially those who have historically been disenfranchised in environmental decision-making processes, Ghosh's narratives serve as a powerful call to action.

Climate Change and Adaptation

One of the main themes of the book is climate change and adaptation. Ghosh explores the complex interplay between human activity and the environment, emphasizing the difficulties brought on by climate change and the pressing need for adaptation. It makes its way through parables and anecdotes that highlight the effects of environmental deterioration brought on by human activity. Ghosh provides examples of how ecosystems are disrupted, livelihoods are put in jeopardy, and society is impacted by climate change. She highlights the necessity of adaptation techniques to lessen these consequences.

Ghosh challenges readers to reconsider their relationship with nature and the need to adjust to a changing environment through his story. To solve these issues, he examines how many global problems are interrelated and how communities, governments, and people need to modify their policies, practices, and technological advancements. It is a moving reminder of how urgent it is to accept and act upon the facts of climate change. Ghosh's examination of adaptation in the context of environmental catastrophes inspires readers to consider how they might contribute to the creation of a future that is more robust and sustainable.

Socio-economic Dimensions of Environmental Crisis

The paper delves deeply and perceptively into the socio-economic aspects of the environmental catastrophe. Ghosh explores the complex interrelationships that exist between the environment, economics, and society, emphasizing how these relationships affect and are shaped by one another. He discusses how the environmental problem has been exacerbated by historical and modern socioeconomic processes. Due to commercial motivations, the exploitation of natural resources has severely harmed and imbalanced the ecosystem. Ghosh highlights how certain economic models put profit before sustainability, which results in habitat loss, climate change, and the depletion of natural resources.

The book also explores how socioeconomic inequalities heighten the effects of environmental catastrophes. The most vulnerable populations are those that are marginalized, economically impoverished, and face environmental deterioration. Ghosh talks about how these areas suffer from disproportionately high rates of health problems, job loss, and displacement, which exacerbates already severe socioeconomic divides.

Ghosh also emphasizes how intertwined the world's economies are and how they affect the environment. The book explores the intricate relationships between global business practices, consumer trends, and international commerce that sustain the environmental disaster. The examination of the socio-economic aspects of the environmental catastrophe by Ghosh in "The Nutmeg's Curse" highlights the pressing requirement for a comprehensive strategy that incorporates social, economic, and environmental factors to successfully handle these difficulties.

Hope and Solutions

Within stories that mirror the problems affecting our world, the paper introduces Ghosh's idea of hope and answers. He investigates the relationship between historical legacies, ecological concerns, and human behavior. The book contains a call for practical answers and an underlying tone of hope despite the dismal reality it portrays. Instead of just focusing on issues, Ghosh asks readers to think about and discuss possible solutions. The book promotes taking the initiative to confront the issues we face, whether by looking at past examples, rethinking social systems, or supporting sustainable activities.

The stories are laced with hope, highlighting moments when people, groups, or communities have changed the world. Ghosh highlights the possibility for positive transformation and the strength of group effort via these examples. He encourages readers to picture a day in the future when working together, solutions are not just possible but also attainable. Instead of offering a pessimistic view, "The Nutmeg's Curse" inspires readers to be optimistic by acknowledging the seriousness of the problem and maintaining faith in our ability to contribute significantly to the creation of a more just and sustainable society.

Examining environmental viewpoints it is clear that the writer deftly integrates a variety of complex subjects to provide a moving analysis of how humans interact with the natural world. With the use of narrative and parables, Ghosh's work goes beyond the confines of conventional environmental discourse to shed light on the intricate interactions between ecological issues, history, and culture. He emphasizes the need to respond to ecological problems urgently and promotes a more comprehensive strategy that incorporates historical context, cultural awareness, and environmental consciousness via vivid tales. Ghosh's insightful investigation is a powerful call to action for a group reassessment of our behavior, imploring us to cultivate a closer relationship with the natural world and to create sustainable paths that would lead to a peaceful cohabitation with it.

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