
Unearthing Environmental Violence: Silenced Forests and Memory in Amitav Ghosh's The Glass Palace

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Abstract: This paper attempts to read Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* (2000) ecocritically. The reading aims at analysing the entanglements of imperial violence, environmental degradation, and cultural memory. Centring on the colonial teak industry in British-occupied Burma, the analysis offers insight into how Ghosh narrativises the ecological consequences of imperial extraction and its enduring epistemic legacy. The analysis adopts an interdisciplinary theoretical framework: Jason W. Moore's (2015) theory of "cheap nature" explains the commodification of land and labor under capitalist modernity; Rob Nixon's (2011) concept of "slow violence" captures the temporally diffuse and often invisible dynamics of environmental harm; and the environmental historiography of Ramachandra Guha and Madhav Gadgil (1993) reveals the mechanisms of state forestry and indigenous dispossession and displacement. Ghosh challenges anthropocentric historical paradigms and resituates the nonhuman world as both victim and witness through the representation of forests, elephants, and the devastations. The novel's postcolonial aesthetic functions as a literary counter-archive, retrieving suppressed ecological memory and demanding an ethical reckoning with environmental injustice. This paper contributes to postcolonial ecocriticism by demonstrating how literature serves as a witness to ecological violence and renders visible the *longue durée* of imperial environmental ramifications.

Keywords: Environmental Violence, Postcolonial Ecocriticism, Colonial Forestry, Nonhuman Agency, Ecological Memory

1. Introduction: This paper presents an ecocritical analysis of Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* (2000), with a focus on the entanglements of imperial violence, environmental

degradation, and cultural memory. Centring on the colonial teak industry in British-occupied Burma, the paper examines how Ghosh's narrative confronts the ecological consequences of imperial extraction and its lingering epistemic legacy. The analysis employs an interdisciplinary theoretical framework: Moore's (2015) theory of "cheap nature" illuminates the commodification of land and labor under capitalist modernity; Nixon's (2011) concept of "slow violence" articulates the temporally diffuse and often invisible character of environmental harm; and the environmental historiography of Guha and Gadgil (1989) reveals the mechanisms of state forestry and the dispossession of indigenous populations.

These frameworks offer a focused investigation into Ghosh's representation of the transformation of teak, from a sacred or communal resource to a commodified imperial asset, the redefinition of elephants from ceremonial beings to mere tools of extraction, and the marginalisation of indigenous ecological knowledge under colonial regimes. Rather than rendering these processes nostalgically, Ghosh depicts them as structural, violent, and enduring.

Through depictions of forest logging, community displacement, and nonhuman agency, particularly elephants and trees, *The Glass Palace* functions as a literary counter-archive. Ghosh's narrative reframes the colonial forest not merely as a site of material resource extraction but as an epistemic battleground in which silenced memories and archival absences contend. The novel's ruined plantations, overgrown forests, and photographic records all serve as indices of imperial afterlives, aligning with Nixon's (2011) assertion that literature can serve as a mode of witnessing slow violence.

While DeLoughrey's (2011) concept of "tidalectics" offers valuable insights into the novel's cyclical temporal structure, where historical and environmental rifts recur across generations, Chakrabarty's (2021) claim that human histories are inextricable from the planetary processes is propounded by the nonhuman agencies like rivers, forests, and monsoons as active agents and actors that surpass human temporalities. Ghosh decolonises the anthropocentric historical narratives by establishing the nonhuman world as both victim and witness of imperial violence, and thus calls for an ethical re-engagement with ecological memory and postcolonial responsibility.

Drawing on these theoretical and textual frameworks, the present paper examines the ecological aspects of *The Glass Palace* through the lens of literary representation and environmental historiography. While existing scholarship has addressed the novel's diasporic, historical, and political concerns, there remains a significant critical gap in exploring its ecological commitments and nonhuman agencies. By situating *The Glass Palace* within the broader discourse of environmental humanities in general, and postcolonial ecocriticism in particular, this paper seeks to shed light on the entanglements of empire, ecology, and narrative form. As such, the research is guided by the following two important questions:

- How does Ghosh represent colonial forestry as a mechanism of ecological violence and cultural erasure?
- In what ways does the novel mobilise nonhuman agency, particularly that of forests and elephants, as a means of bearing witness to imperial exploitation and historical memory?

2. Review of Literature: Over the past two decades, *The Glass Palace* (Ghosh, 2000) has garnered sustained critical attention across various domains of literary studies, including historical fiction, ecocriticism, the environmental humanities, and postcolonial studies. Much of this scholarship is focused on the novel's engagement with colonial history, cultural identity, and the environmental consequences of colonialism and capitalism. Scholars have examined Ghosh's representations of subaltern voices, his investigation of aesthetic form, and his criticism of imperial ideologies through layered historical narratives. Within these discourses, ecocritical approaches have emerged gradually as significant interpretive frameworks, illuminating how Ghosh's treatment of environmental degradation, dispossession, and the entanglement of nature and culture under colonialism. The following scholarship demonstrates this evolving body of criticism and provides the critical foundation upon which the present study is built.

Berkani (2022) offers a comprehensive ecocritical reading of social and environmental exploitation in South and Southeast Asia under colonial rule. Drawing on postcolonial ecocriticism and zoocriticism, the work examines Ghosh's depiction of the simultaneous degradation of ecosystems and the marginalisation of subaltern communities. The analysis is particularly valuable in addressing the ethical complexities encountered by colonised characters who, under imperial coercion, became complicit in the ecological harm.

Gandhi (2019) explores the formation of hybrid and fractured identities in the wake of British imperialism. The concept of "cultural cannibalism" is used to analyse the intergenerational internalisation of colonial subjugation. Although the primary focus is on psychosocial and cultural identity, the work offers important insights into the enduring affective conditions of empire, which in turn enrich ecocritical interpretations of the novel's thematic and ethical terrain.

Su (2011) examines Ghosh's aesthetic strategies with the critical philosophies of the Frankfurt School. He argues that Ghosh reclaims Enlightenment classifications, particularly beauty, as forms of ethical resistance against capitalist modernity. Navigating between Kantian universality and Adornian scepticism, Su asserts that aesthetic expression in *The Glass Palace* functions not as mere detachment but as an instrument of defiance and utopian imagination, suggesting an alternative to the rationality of imperial modernity.

Bera (2020) explicitly foregrounds the ecological dimensions of the novel by arguing that colonialism alters natural landscapes into commodified terrains motivated only by profit and imperial expansion. Bera emphasises the capacity of fiction in resisting environmental

degradation by recovering the silenced ecological narratives that imperial discourse intends to erase.

While this body of scholarship addresses multiple aspects of *The Glass Palace*, including postcolonial identity, aesthetic resistance, and ecological devastation, there still remains a notable lacuna in interdisciplinary approaches that integrate ecological theory, environmental historiography, and postcolonial criticism. More specifically, no extant study synthesises Jason W. Moore's (2015) concept of "cheap nature," Nixon's (2011) theory of "slow violence," and the environmental historiography of Guha and Gadgil (1989) in reading *The Glass Palace* as a literary counter-archive. This study addresses this gap by foregrounding the *longue durée* of imperial ecological violence and by tracing the narrative strategies by which Ghosh bears witness to environmental injustice and reclaims silenced ecological memory.

3. Theoretical Framework: The entanglement of environmental degradation and colonialism has become a central concern within postcolonial ecocriticism, as scholars increasingly examine how imperial formations and expansions shaped ecological memory and extractive regimes. This study adopts an interdisciplinary theoretical framework to analyse *The Glass Palace* as a literary archive of ecological violence and historical remembrance. The analysis draws from Rob Nixon's (2011) concept of "slow violence," Jason W. Moore's (2015) theory of "cheap nature," and the environmental historiography of Ramachandra Guha and Madhav Gadgil (1989), among others.

Rob Nixon (2011) defines slow violence as a form of environmental harm that is "incremental and accretive," occurring gradually and often invisibly across time and space (p. 2). His formulation highlights how ecological damage, particularly in the Global South, is frequently rendered invisible and unnoticeable by dominant political and media discourses. Nixon's emphasis on "the environmentalism of the poor" offers a compelling lens to read Ghosh's portrayal of colonial forestry and the dispossession of forest-dependent communities in Burma. His framework proves especially pertinent for interpreting postcolonial literature that bears witness to ecological loss obscured by the temporal logics and epistemologies of empire.

Jason W. Moore's (2015) eco-Marxist approach offers a world-ecological perspective that dissolves the binary between nature and capital. In theorising capitalism's reliance on the abstraction and appropriation of "cheap nature," Moore critiques how ecological systems and human labour are rendered expendable under the regime of value extraction. His conceptualisation is particularly relevant to Ghosh's depiction of elephants, teak, and forested space in *The Glass Palace*, where colonial Burma is represented as a landscape systematically appropriated as imperial commodity zones. Moore's argument that capitalism depends on the production of "cheapness" (p. 53) significantly resonates with Ghosh's narrative portrayal of ecological violence.

Complementing these theoretical insights, Guha and Gadgil (1989) extend critical environmental historiography that reveals how British colonial forestry introduced technocratic and bureaucratic regimes prioritising timber trade over ecological balance and indigenous knowledge. Their research demonstrates how forest landscapes were reshaped into controlled zones of extraction, displacing local communities and altogether dismantling long-standing reciprocal relationships between people and forests. These dynamics are vividly dramatised in *The Glass Palace*, where the imperial teak industry not only devastates the ecosystem but also reorders social hierarchies and their livelihoods.

While *The Glass Palace* is not a maritime novel per se, Elizabeth DeLoughrey's (2007) theorisation of "tidalectics" offers a prolific framework for interpreting the novel's engagement with cyclical, relational models of space and time. Particularly, her emphasis on "archipelagic thinking" confronts the linear temporality of empire and foregrounds the mnemonic power of interstitial geographies. Ghosh's descriptions of marshes, riverbanks, and forest edges function as haunted landscapes, bearing sedimented histories of displacement, resistance, and trauma. These liminal spaces resist colonial rationality and also register ecological memory embedded in terrain.

Dipesh Chakrabarty's (2021) notion of planetary history further expands the scope of ecocritical inquiry. Chakrabarty's call for a reconceptualisation of historical consciousness in light of the Anthropocene is particularly important in its emphasis on the need to account for geological and planetary processes. Although Ghosh's novel is rooted in colonial temporality, his motifs of monsoon failures, soil depletion, and arboreal decay direct toward a planetary horizon. These narrative elements reckon a broader rethinking of historical agency, one that integrates both nonhuman forces and geologic timescales within the imperial archive.

Taken together, all these theoretical frameworks offer a robust foundation for interpreting *The Glass Palace* as a postcolonial ecocritical intervention. While Nixon's (2011) and Moore's (2015) concepts have reshaped contemporary ecocriticism, their application to Southeast Asian colonial landscapes, especially in fiction, remains relatively underexplored. Similarly, Guha and Gadgil's (1989) historiographical insights are rarely integrated with literary analysis attentive to metaphor, affect, and narrative structure. This study bridges these gaps by synthesising materialist, historiographical, and narrative-oriented approaches to unearth how Ghosh embeds ecological critique within historical fiction.

Although existing scholarship has explored *The Glass Palace*'s political and diasporic dimensions, its ecological subtext has often been marginalised. This study addresses that critical void by applying a composite ecocritical framework that foregrounds environmental violence, epistemic erasure, and the commodification of nature. By doing this, it situates *The Glass Palace* as a literary counter-archive, an imaginative reclamation of

silenced ecological memory and an ethical confrontation with the enduring legacies of colonial forestry.

4. Methodology: This study employs a qualitative, interpretive methodology grounded in literary ecocriticism, with close reading as its central analytical approach. It draws on interdisciplinary perspectives from postcolonial theory, ecological philosophy, and environmental history to examine Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* (2000). The analysis focuses on the narrative structure, imagery, and representations of nature, nonhuman agency, and imperial infrastructure to unearth how the novel registers ecological violence and cultural memory.

To frame this interpretive lens, the study employs several key theoretical frameworks: Jason W. Moore's (2015) concept of "cheap nature," Rob Nixon's (2011) formulation of "slow violence," and the environmental historiography of Ramachandra Guha and Madhav Gadgil (1989). These approaches illuminate the ways and methods by which imperial regimes commodified landscapes and displaced indigenous communities. Additionally, the study incorporates Elizabeth DeLoughrey's (2011) theorisation of mnemonic landscapes and Dipesh Chakrabarty's (2021) exploration of planetary time to analyse the novel's temporal and ecological imaginaries.

This integrated methodology enables a layered reading of *The Glass Palace*, treating the colonial landscape not merely as an inert background or historical setting, but as a dynamic and contested archive of ecological degradation, resistance, and epistemic survival.

5. Analysis: Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* (2000) can be read as a layered narrative in which environmental violence is not a peripheral subject but central to the logic of empire. The depiction of the colonial teak industry in British-occupied Burma demonstrates how ecological degradation is interwoven with colonial infrastructure and epistemic domination. The forest is not just an inert backdrop but a contested terrain of extraction, resistance, and memory. In this manner, Ghosh contributes to Chakrabarty's (2021) claim of "planetary history," wherein ecological and political processes are deeply entangled.

Central to Ghosh's narrative is the commodification of teak, which operates as a symbol of imperial appetite. The appropriation of living forests into quantifiable imperial assets reflects the colonial logic of reducing nature to an economic abstraction. This appropriation aligns with Moore's (2015) concept of "cheap nature," which explains that both ecological and human labour are devalued to sustain the circuits of capitalist expansion. The novel's thick description of logging operations and imperial bureaucracy exposes the reduction of biodiverse landscapes into extractable resources. Elephants, sacred in many local cosmologies, are reduced to just labouring bodies, stripped of symbolic and ecological significance and reconfigured as mere tools of extraction (Ghosh, 2000).

Ghosh's ecological narrative also resonates with Nixon's (2011) theory of "slow violence," which maintains that environmental harm is gradual, cumulative, and largely invisible within conventional temporal frameworks. The novel dramatises the long-term ramifications of colonial deforestation and habitat disruption, illustrating how ecological damage affects across generations. Characters frequently encounter overgrown ruins, degraded forests, displaced communities, and spectral geographies that serve as reminders of an imperial past whose ecological aftershocks persist. These temporal lags reinforce the notion that environmental violence is not always visible and immediate but may haunt the landscape, in Nixon's (2011) terms, "the attritional lethality" of imperial modernity (p. 2).

Guha and Gadgil's (1989) critique of colonial forestry aligns with Ghosh's foregrounding of the bureaucratic appropriation of forested lands and the erasure of indigenous lives. The imposition of scientific forestry displaces local communities and delegitimises vernacular ecological knowledge. The Glass Palace explains this process, not only as a historical event but as an enduring condition, wherein postcolonial spaces remain marked by ecological vulnerability and socio-cultural dislocation. The novel thus positions environmental degradation within a longer history of epistemic and material dispossession. Photography, used recurrently throughout the narrative, operates as a dual metaphor. On one hand, it acts as a colonial technology of documentation and surveillance, and on the other, it serves as a means of counter-archival resistance. The camera, thus, becomes a symbolic instrument that both objectifies landscapes for imperial purposes and also preserves ephemeral ecological images. Through these visual fragments, Ghosh foregrounds nonhuman witnesses like forests, elephants, rivers, and monsoons as carriers of ecological memory. By doing this, the novel challenges anthropocentric historiography and expands the archive to include nonhuman actors (DeLoughrey, 2007).

Ghosh's cyclical use of natural imagery, rains, foliage, and elephant resistance aligns with DeLoughrey's (2007) concept of "tidalectics," a mode of temporal and spatial storytelling that reflects the ebb and flow of trauma, resilience, and renewal. The reiteration of environmental motifs establishes a rhythm that mirrors both ecological cycles and historical recurrence. This temporal layering blurs the boundary between human time and geological time, promoting Chakrabarty's (2021) argument that human history must be re-situated within planetary scales.

By centring on these ecological aspects of imperialism, The Glass Palace functions as a literary counter-archive. The novel unsettles the developmentalist narratives of colonial modernity by reclaiming the elephant, the forest, and the monsoon as historical agents. Ghosh's novel thus suggests that the legacies of empire did not disturb only society or politics but fundamentally ecology itself. By doing this, it questions the silences of official, documented history and appeals for a more expansive historiographic practice, one that integrates both environmental degradation and cultural memory.

6. Discussion: Building upon the earlier proposed theoretical and analytical groundwork, this section explores how *The Glass Palace* (2000) constructs a nuanced narrative of environmental violence through a series of interlinked thematic strands. The novel does not isolate ecological degradation from historical or political processes; it rather frames colonial modernity as an inherently extractionist project that reshapes both landscapes and lifestyles. Each of the following subthemes foregrounds a specific aspect of this violence, collectively arguing that the novel functions as a literary counter-archive of nonhuman testimony, environmental memory, and planetary crisis:

1. The Forest as Frontier: Empire's Extractionist Logic
2. Elephants as Witnesses: Nonhuman Testimony and Exploitation
3. Slow Violence and the Ruins of Empire
4. The Ruins of Memory: Photography, Silence, and Landscape
5. State Forestry and Indigenous Displacement
6. Global Modernity and the Crisis of Recognition

6.1 The Forest as Frontier: Empire's Extractionist Logic: In *The Glass Palace*, the colonisation of Burma is both spatial and ecological. Ghosh foregrounds teak as a central symbol of imperial power and capital accumulation. Rather than romanticising nature, he presents forests as a contested space subjected to imperial appropriation. Rajkumar's success in the timber business illustrates how the empire commodifies both land and labour:

“The British occupation had changed everything: Burma had been quickly integrated into the Empire, forcibly converted into a province of British India. Courtly Mandalay was now a bustling commercial hub; resources were being exploited with an energy and efficiency hitherto undreamt of” (Ghosh, 2000, p. 66).

This passage transcends metaphor, revealing the violent transformation of ecological systems into imperial assets. Jason W. Moore's (2015) *Capitalism in the Web of Life* offers a significant analytical framework here. His argument that capital thrives on appropriating “cheap natures,” which include labor-power, food, energy, and raw materials, finds relevance in Ghosh's dramatization of this process, particularly by the depiction of the sacred forests of Burma, which are redefined and reduced to mere reservoirs of teak, while elephants and mahouts are conscripted into the imperial economy's extractivist logic.

6.2 Elephants as Witnesses: Nonhuman Testimony and Exploitation: Ghosh presents elephants not merely as imperial instruments but as sentient beings or actors endowed with memory and agency:

“Yet until the Europeans came none of them had ever thought of using elephants for the purposes of logging. Their elephants were used only in pagodas and palaces, for wars and ceremonies. It was the Europeans who saw that tame elephants could be made to work for human profit” (Ghosh, 2000, p. 74).

In this context, elephants become both literal and symbolic victims of imperial extraction. Yet rather than idealising animal life, Ghosh poses elephants as nonhuman witnesses to ecological devastation. This aligns with Nixon's (2011) argument that empires often function through "structural invisibility," affecting vast ecologies at the same time, remaining unacknowledged by distant publics. Ghosh disrupts the colonial narrative of dominion by recounting an elephant's act of resistance, a fatal rampage that kills a supervisor. This moment exemplifies Moore's (2015) argument that "cheap nature" is not entirely passive.

6.3 Slow Violence and the Ruins of Empire: Nixon's (2011) concept of "slow violence," incremental, often invisible harm that unfolds over time, is a pertinent lens to analyse the novel's depiction of the ecological aftermath of the empire. Arjun's disillusionment during the Japanese invasion and Dinu's photographs of forested ruins illustrate this latent devastation:

"When he crossed the stream, after bicycling through the estate... it was when he crossed back into the monochrome orderliness of the plantation that he felt himself to be passing into a territory of ruin, a defilement much more profound than temporal decay" (Ghosh, 2000, pp. 335–336).

This sensory dissonance again illustrates Nixon's (2011) claim that ecological violence is often masked by the appearance of order or modernity. In the novel, the decaying palaces, haunted forests, and elephant corpses serve as ecological archives of imperial violence and cultural loss.

6.4 The Ruins of Memory: Photography, Silence, and Landscape: As the narrative progresses to postcolonial Burma, Dinu's camera becomes a tool for documenting both architectural decay and historical erasure. His photographic archive serves as a form of counter-history:

"The Glass Palace is the only place in Yangon where you can see things like this... works of contemporary art... Books, magazines... these are very hard, almost impossible to find here, because of the censors. This is one of the few places where they are to be found. People know, so they come..." (Ghosh, 2000, p. 508).

The silent forest enduring imperial ruins speaks more eloquently than official records. DeLoughrey's (2007) concept of "tidalectics" captures this layered temporality in which the landscape itself becomes an archive of resistance and remembrance. While the novel's geography is largely inland, its liminal landscapes, marshes, forest margins, and riverbanks operate analogously as zones of ecological recursion and memory.

6.5 State Forestry and Indigenous Displacement: The introduction of scientific forestry under British colonial rule was aimed at rationalising and controlling access to forest

resources. Guha and Gadgil (1989) argue that this system dispossessed local communities and marginalised customary rights. Ghosh represents this dynamic vividly, particularly in the mechanistic violence of tree-felling:

“The killing was achieved with a girdle of incisions, thin slits, carved deep into the wood at a height of four feet and six inches off the ground (teak being ruled, despite the wildness of its terrain, by imperial stricture in every tiny detail). The assassinated trees were left to die where they stood, sometimes for three years or even more. It was only after they had been judged dry enough to float that they were marked for felling” (Ghosh, 2000, p. 69).

Ghosh further illustrates the ecological control through a scene of cloned tree plantations:

“Most of our trees are of a clonal variety called Avros—developed by the Dutch in Sumatra in the twenties. We pay a lot of money to make sure that we get reliable clonal seed. But let me show you something” (Ghosh, 2000, p. 232).

These examples align with Guha and Gadgil’s (1989) argument that colonial forestry was driven more by extraction than conservation, resulting in both social conflict and ecological degradation.

6.6 Global Modernity and the Crisis of Recognition: Chakrabarty (2021) writes, “the background is no longer just a background”; humans have become a geological force capable of reshaping planetary futures (p. 7). This awareness is reflected by Ghosh through his depiction of recurrent environmental upheaval. Rajkumar recalls:

“When I was very young, I used to work on a boat, a Chittagong sampan... One day we were caught in a storm. We were on the open sea and the storm came up very suddenly, as they do off the coast of Bengal” (Ghosh, 2000, p. 156).

This recollection explains the novel’s planetary temporality, linking individual memory to climatic and ecological systems. DeLoughrey’s (2007) “tidalectics,” building on Kamau Brathwaite, further undermines linear, colonial time and space. In *The Glass Palace*, forests, tides, and weather systems serve as witnesses to human conflict and imperial disintegration. Empires rise and fall, but these ecological actors endure, bearing sedimented histories of survival and trauma.

The Glass Palace thus offers a profound literary intervention into the ecological and epistemological legacies of the empire. Through the ecocritical approach, Ghosh foregrounds the agency of forests, elephants, and climate as co-actors in the drama of imperial exploitation. The novel historicizes environmental degradation while destabilising the anthropocentric paradigms. Forests are not passive; they archive. Elephants are not merely victims; they resist and are, in fact, sentient actors with agency. Photography does not merely

depict; it resurrects. By drawing on Moore's (2015) "cheap nature," Nixon's (2011) "slow violence," DeLoughrey's (2007) "tidalectics," and Chakrabarty's (2021) "planetary history," this discussion thus situates Ghosh's novel at the nexus of literary form, historical consciousness, and ecological justice. Ultimately, *The Glass Palace* affirms the capacity and supreme power of literature to bear ecological witness and to envision futures rooted in resistance, remembrance, and relational ethics.

7. Conclusion: Rob Nixon (2011), in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*, contends that "imaginative writing can help make the unapparent appear" (p. 15). Amitav Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* (2000) exemplifies this function of narratives by rendering visible the diffuse, temporally extended forms of environmental violence engendered by imperial extraction and ecological dispossession. Through its depictions of the colonial teak trade, the commodification of elephants, and the silencing of forest-dwelling communities, Ghosh constructs a literary counter-archive that reinstates ecological memory and critiques the epistemic violence of empire. Interpreted through Jason W. Moore's (2015) world-ecological approach, Nixon's (2011) theory of slow violence, and the environmental historiography of Ramachandra Guha and Madhav Gadgil (1989), *The Glass Palace* transcends conventional historical representations to offer an ethical call to remembrance and resistance.

In Ghosh's narrative, forests are not inert backdrops or passive landscapes, but sentient witnesses, bearing the marks of extraction, resisting imperial erasure, and mourning the ecological loss. Trees, elephants, and monsoons function as active nonhuman agents in a shared history of violence, giving voice to lifeworlds that are marginalised by both colonial systems and modern ecological policies. By foregrounding the entanglement of human and nonhuman destinies, Ghosh disrupts anthropocentric historiography and reimagines literature as a powerful form of ecological testimony.

In the context of an escalating climate crisis and relentless environmental degradation, the novel's relevance is striking. Ghosh reminds us that the ecological legacies of the empire persist, not only in degraded landscapes but also in collective memory and the global inequalities of resource access and environmental vulnerability. *The Glass Palace* not only unearths these buried histories but also participates in shaping an emergent planetary ethics, one that demands historical accountability, reciprocal recognition of nonhuman agency, and justice for both nature and humans.

Ultimately, Ghosh's *The Glass Palace* reaffirms the enduring capacity and power of literature to serve as an ecological witness, disrupt dominant narratives, and intervene in the politics of memory. In doing so, it appeals to readers to imagine a more just and attentive relationship with the Earth and its histories, one in which forests remember, elephants resist, and narrative becomes a conduit for ecological truth.

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