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Nutmeg's Curse is a non-fictional narrative authored by Amitav Ghosh, where the perspectives of environmentalism, climatic concerns, colonization and geopolitics are intermingled. The narrative could emphatically cover the aspects such as the impact of covid 19 on the world to climate change with the history of nutmeg. The author could successfully make the readers travel from Dutch East India Company to Bandha Island in Indonesia. This narrative in turn is suggestive of the colonization that is persisting in another mode of capitalism in the modern world, even after getting liberated from the clutches of colonization of East India company. People have a tendency to believe that they won't be affected, but someone else. The reality is that everyone will be affected. The climatic change is about the geopolitical inequalities also.

Biopolitics deals with the logical decision making and systematic organisation of social life. Foucault views biopolitics as a modern form of exercising power, a paradigm shift in Politics. Having a discontinuity in the practice of politics, biopolitics highlights a modern form of exercising power. Agamben used the term to connect it to the core of the sovereign practice of power.

Ghosh starts his narrative with a comparison between the appearance of the Nutmeg and its similarity to the structure of planet's atmosphere. "Like a planet, the nutmeg is encased within a series of expanding spheres"(10). The first layer of "...the fruit's matte-brown skin, a kind of exosphere ...the pale, perfumed flesh, growing denser toward the core, like a planet's outer atmosphere" (10). Then inside that outer cover, there is a ball wrapped in mace, "...what could be a stratosphere of fiery, crimson cloud" (10). "Stripping off the mace reveals yet another casing, a glossy, ridged, chocolate-colored carapace, which holds the nut inside like a protective troposphere" (10). Hence, he writes that taking a nutmeg out of it's fruit is like unearthing a tiny planet.

In the ancient era, all the entities of the earth coincided as a symbiosis. Since people began to exploit the planet's flora and fauna, the world became increasingly anthropocentric. The nations competed between each other to become the superpowers of the globe. This motive accelerated the journeys of discoveries and exploitation of natural resources which in turn led to colonization. "...the voyages of Christopher Columbus and Vasco de Gama, ran a tightly controlled monopoly on the European spice trade" (9) along the many spice routes, which is also called the spice race. Spices can be regarded as the first commodity to obtain unexpected consequences. The colonization of the New World was one among those consequences, when Christopher Columbus went in search of spices and unexpectedly reached the Americas.

Spices such as pepper, ginger, cloves, nutmeg, mace, cinnamon, saffron, anise, zedoary, cumin, cloves, cassia, cardamom and turmeric found in abundance in the orient and exported them worldwide. Apart from their culinary uses, they were valued for their medicinal properties. In Europe they became the symbol of high social status and luxury as it is affordable only to the elite people. The flow of spices from one part to other parts of the world accelerated the globalization process; exchange of goods, cultures, beliefs, cuisines and so on. Thenceforth, plants were transported to different countries. For instance, as Pranjali states that the Portuguese transported coffee from Africa to South America, clove plants to Moluccas, pepper and cinnamon plants from India to Brazil. Even though cinnamon was commercially successful on plantations, pepper was less successful. Then the foreign powers forcefully ruled over the natives which later turned into their colonies.

Before the eighteenth century, Bandas was the birthplace of every nutmeg and mace was available on the earth. As Ghosh writes, Nutmeg was exorbitant that a handful of nutmeg could buy a

house or a ship in Europe during the Middle ages (9). The nutmeg itself became the game changer in the colonial history; “The Europeans -first the Portuguese and Spanish, then the Dutch - have more than a hundred years insistently pursued the goal of establishing a monopoly over the islander’s most important products”(13). Europeans who came to the Banda Islands had only one intention; “a treaty granting them an exclusive right to the islands’ nutmegs and mace”(12). In order to achieve that “the islands must be emptied of their inhabitants”(13), aftermath “Dutch forces have systematically destroyed villages and settlements across the islands”(23), killed Bandanese, enslaved and sent to Java and Sri Lanka, some died through disease and only few managed to escape. This event was considered as one of the early modern genocides.

Australian anthropologist Michael Taussig writes in his work, *Palma Africana* (2018) about the “strange invocation of ‘agro-genocide’ is set in the palm oil plantations gouged into Colombia’s rainforest, with their own potent mix of European conquest, Indigenous dispossession, slavery, and American intervention”(qtd in Falconer 26).

The Indigenous people considered the Earth as Gaia, as a living, a vital entity on the other hand whites had the view that “...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”(87). The colonizers considered ‘others’ as ‘savages’ because they were irrational, superstitious or mystical. “A defining characteristic of savagery was ...the belief in the vitality of natural and celestial objects” (87). In fact, indigenous people all around the world was intrinsically related themselves as a part of nature, not seen nature as inert. Colonizers considered all the non-human entities of the Earth as mere ‘resources or raw materials’ that could be harnessed to prosper themselves. Even non-whites were never treated as humans. The whites believed that the earth has to be purified by “...being violently emptied of their inhabitants” in order to create “perfect societies” and “alternative worlds built on supposedly “empty” spaces” (217). This “was an instance of “racial capitalism”; an early form of industrial agriculture, enveloped within a racially stratified society in which a small number of Euro- descended planters ruled over a majority population of enslaved workers”(218). Darwin wrote in *The Descent of Man*: "At some future period not very distant as measured in centuries. The civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate and replace throughout the world the savage races” (qtd in Ghosh 79).

Repopulating of the Banda Islands was the first step they adopted in creating a new social order. “...Starting with the handing over of sixty-eight newly created nutmeg estates to Dutch-descended perkeniers (planters)” (218). “...Indentured laborers, convicts, migrants and enslaved workers were brought...” into Banda islands from many distant places. “...530 captives were brought back, not as the original owners of the land, but as enslaved people, to teach the art of nutmeg cultivation to the very settlers with whom they had been replaced” (218).

Climate crisis can be seen as a result of the globalization of the resource curse. The root cause of climate change lies “...precisely within the gap that modernity created between nature and culture, human and nonhuman” (167). “The planetary crisis...represents the earth's response to the globalization of the ecological transformations that were set in motion by the European colonization of much of the world” (167).

Humanity today lives as colonialists once did-viewing the Earth as though it were an inert entity that exists primarily to be exploited and profited from, with the aid of technology and science. Yet even the sciences are now struggling to keep pace with the hidden forces that are manifesting themselves in climatic events of unprecedented and uncanny violence (57).

Corona virus is an active non-human agent which alarmingly spread across the world making humans fragile and vulnerable. Unseen microscopic virus “...intervening in everyday life in ways that completely transform the meaning of ordinary events” (15). This contradicted the western view of non-humans as inert and devoid of agency in making history. The nutmeg’s curse vehemently criticizes

this western view and portrays the different ways through which the world history is created by various non-human forces. Amitav Ghosh also warns the humanity that the oppressed and exploited (whether humans or non-humans) have started protesting against the oppression and exploitation. Resource curse has set a disastrous cause for climate change, which can drastically affect the Earth. Climate change, natural disasters and the pandemic are some of the major problems that we face today, which make the 'planet in crisis. Ghosh's work calls for action, in order to save the planet; humans should focus on ecology rather than economy.

Works Cited

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