

Acceleration and Imaginative Crisis in the Anthropocene: Rapidification, Derangement, and Integral Ecology

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Abstract

This article advances an interdisciplinary framework that places Amitav Ghosh's concept of "derangement" in sustained dialogue with Pope Francis' notion of "rapidification" in *Laudato Si'* (2015), arguing that both diagnose the Anthropocene as a crisis of acceleration marked by epistemic fragmentation and moral lag. Rapidification describes the intensified tempo of technocratic modernity, in which economic and technological expansion outpaces ethical development. Derangement names the cultural and narrative failure to register planetary instability within dominant literary and historical forms. Through close textual analysis of *The Great Derangement* (2016), *The Hungry Tide* (2004), and *Gun Island* (2019), this study demonstrates how Ghosh critiques the probabilistic assumptions of modern realism, foregrounds multispecies agency, and exposes the colonial genealogy of fossil modernity. Read alongside Francis' articulation of integral ecology, these literary interventions reveal climate crisis as inseparable from social inequality, migration, and structural injustice. The article contends that overcoming the imaginative crisis of the Anthropocene requires narrative transformation and ecological conversion—an expansion of moral imagination capable of integrating planetary interdependence. By synthesizing environmental humanities and ecological theology, this study proposes that literature and moral philosophy together offer indispensable resources for confronting acceleration without succumbing to cultural paralysis. The Anthropocene emerges not solely as a material threshold but as a crisis of meaning demanding integrative, multispecies, and historically accountable forms of thought.

Keywords

Rapidification; Derangement; Anthropocene; Integral Ecology; *Laudato Si'*;

Introduction: Acceleration as Civilizational Rupture

The Anthropocene is increasingly understood not only as an ecological epoch but as a temporal condition—an era in which the scale and speed of planetary transformation exceed inherited cultural forms of comprehension. The most visible indicators of this condition include rising atmospheric carbon concentrations, intensifying extreme weather events, accelerating biodiversity loss, and expanding patterns of climate-linked displacement. Yet the deeper crisis is interpretive: the speed of these changes disrupts the moral, political, and narrative frameworks through which modern societies have habitually rendered reality coherent. In this context, Pope Francis' concept of "rapidification" and Amitav Ghosh's diagnosis of "derangement" can be read as complementary attempts to name the Anthropocene's distinctive pathology: accelerated change accompanied by imaginative and ethical lag.

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis (2015) describes contemporary experience as "the rapidification of changes" affecting both humanity and the Earth (18). His term does not merely denote speed; it indicates the compression of social time—"a more intensified pace of life and work" (18)—that shapes political decision-making,

economic logic, and everyday consciousness. Rapidification is thus a civilizational condition, one linked to the dominance of what Pope Francis calls the “technocratic paradigm,” which “tends to dominate economic and political life” (109). Under this paradigm, efficiency becomes a primary moral language, and growth is treated as an unquestioned horizon. The Pope’s critique is sharpened by a claim that sits at the heart of this article’s argument: acceleration in technology and economy has not been matched by acceleration in ethical discernment. He observes that the present moment has “not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience” (105). Rapidification names a structural asymmetry: material power expands faster than moral capacities to govern that power within ecological limits.

Amitav Ghosh’s *The Great Derangement* (2016) offers a literary and cultural analogue to this diagnosis. For Ghosh, climate change is “a crisis of culture” (p. 9), not because culture causes emissions in a simple causal chain, but because cultural forms—particularly the dominant conventions of modern realism—have proven unable to represent climate disruption as a central historical force. Ghosh’s question is pointed and programmatic: why has climate change become “virtually unthinkable” in serious fiction (p. 7)? His use of “unthinkable” is not rhetorical flourish; it identifies a breakdown in representation and a failure of narrative scale. While scientific discourse has produced increasingly robust models of planetary instability, modern cultural forms often remain attached to assumptions of normalcy, predictability, and bounded human agency—assumptions that climate change steadily undermines.

This article argues that derangement is the imaginative and cultural expression of rapidification. If rapidification names the accelerated tempo of socio-technical and economic systems, derangement names the accompanying disorientation: the inability of dominant narrative, ethical, and political frameworks to “catch up” to the pace of ecological transformation. The relationship between these concepts is not merely analogical. Rapidification intensifies the very conditions that produce derangement: short political horizons, extractive economic imperatives, and cultural attention economies that reward immediacy rather than sustained reflection. Meanwhile, derangement functions as rapidification’s cultural feedback-loop—normalizing denial, marginalization, and aesthetic avoidance as acceptable responses to catastrophe.

To develop this claim, the article stages a dialogue between ecological theology and environmental humanities. It reads Pope Francis’ critique of technocracy and his proposal of “integral ecology” (Francis, 2015, 137) alongside Ghosh’s critique of realist probability, his historical account of fossil modernity, and his literary experimentation across genres. The aim is not to collapse theology into literature or vice versa, but to show how these discourses illuminate shared structural problems: acceleration without ethical integration, and imagination constrained by modern forms of plausibility. The approach is comparative and interpretive, grounded in close textual analysis of *The Great Derangement* (Ghosh, 2016), *The Hungry Tide* (Ghosh, 2004), and *Gun Island* (Ghosh, 2019), and anchored in *Laudato Si’* as a normative moral text articulating a framework of responsibility and relationality.

The conceptual stakes become clearer when one attends to how Ghosh describes the disruption of “probability” in the climate age. He argues that contemporary climate events were once judged “so improbable” as to seem impossible (Ghosh, 2016, p. 24). Realist narrative conventions tend to exclude such events as melodramatic, implausible, or sensational. Yet climate change is increasingly experienced through precisely these “improbable” intensities: fire seasons that exceed historical baselines, floods that redraw coastlines, storms that rupture infrastructure, and migrations that reconfigure demographics. The Anthropocene, in this view, is a crisis of realism: the world behaves in ways that conventional narrative probability was designed to bracket out. Derangement, then, is not simply denial; it is formal incapacity—an inability to narrate, imagine, and ethically metabolize a world in which the nonhuman acts decisively within history.

Here the theological critique of *Laudato Si’* complements Ghosh’s literary diagnosis. Pope Francis frames the ecological crisis as inseparable from a crisis of meaning and relationship. He insists that the climate is “a common good” (23) and that environmental degradation falls most heavily on the poor (48). Rapidification intensifies this dulling by accelerating consumption, shortening attention, and encouraging solutions that remain within the same technocratic logic that produced the crisis. In such a setting, the demand for “ecological

conversion” (Francis, 2015, 217) can be read as a call not only for personal virtue but for civilizational reorientation—an expansion of moral imagination capable of perceiving interdependence and acting within it.

The comparative readings that follow are guided by three interlocking claims. First, modern literary realism participates in derangement insofar as it systematically marginalizes planetary agency and treats extreme ecological events as narrative exceptions rather than historical norms (Ghosh, 2016). Second, rapidification has a colonial and fossil genealogy: the acceleration of extraction, trade, and development emerges from imperial histories that reorganized land, labour, and nature into resources and commodities (Ghosh, 2016; Neethu & Bhuvaneshwari, 2024). Third, integral ecology provides a conceptual bridge between literature and theology by insisting that environmental, social, and economic crises form “one complex crisis” (Francis, 2015, 139). When read through this lens, Ghosh’s fictional worlds—especially the deltaic instability of *The Hungry Tide* and the transcontinental migrations of *Gun Island*—become narrative laboratories of integral ecology: spaces where ecological volatility, political violence, and moral responsibility converge.

2.1 Rapidification and the Technocratic Paradigm

Pope Francis’ concept of rapidification must be read within the broader framework of his critique of the technocratic paradigm. In *Laudato Si’*, he observes that contemporary societies experience “the rapidification of changes affecting humanity and the planet” (Francis, 2015, 18). The term is not merely descriptive but diagnostic. It names a structural acceleration in production, communication, extraction, and decision-making that reshapes human perception and moral reasoning. Rapidification compresses time and fragments responsibility.

The Pope insists that technological progress has “not been accompanied by a development in human responsibility, values and conscience” (105). This asymmetry is central. The ecological crisis is not simply a matter of increased emissions; it is the result of a disjunction between expanding technical capacity and stagnant ethical imagination. Acceleration becomes dangerous when detached from moral discernment.

The technocratic paradigm, Pope Francis argues, “tends to dominate economic and political life” (109). This domination manifests in the prioritization of efficiency over relationality and of growth over ecological limits. The paradigm assumes that problems generated by technological systems can be solved by further technological intervention. Yet such solutions often remain within the same extractive logic that produced the crisis. The underlying anthropological assumption is one of mastery: humanity as controller and nature as resource.

Rapidification thus produces not only ecological degradation but epistemic narrowing. The faster systems operate, the less space there is for contemplative judgment. The Pope critiques what he calls the “myth of progress” (78), suggesting that modern societies equate innovation with moral advancement. Climate instability exposes the fragility of that equation.

The logic of endless growth is grounded, Pope Francis argues, in “the lie that there is an infinite supply of the earth’s goods” (106). This formulation is particularly significant. It frames ecological exploitation as a moral distortion rooted in metaphysical presumption. Rapidification intensifies this distortion by normalizing short-term gains and externalizing long-term costs.

In this light, rapidification is not neutral acceleration; it is acceleration embedded within fossil capitalism and colonial histories. It is structurally tied to extraction, commodification, and disposability. The ecological crisis therefore reflects not isolated policy failures but the cumulative effects of a civilizational tempo oriented toward expansion without limit.

2.2 Derangement and the Crisis of Narrative Probability

Amitav Ghosh’s concept of derangement can be understood as the cultural corollary to rapidification. If rapidification describes the speed of material systems, derangement describes the inability of cultural forms to

register that speed coherently. In *The Great Derangement*, Ghosh argues that climate change represents “a crisis of culture, and thus of the imagination” (Ghosh, 2016, p. 9). The crisis is interpretive: it concerns how reality is narrated, categorized, and aestheticized.

Ghosh’s critique centers on modern literary realism. He asks why climate change has become “virtually unthinkable in the literature of serious fiction” (p. 7). The phrasing is precise. “Unthinkable” signals more than avoidance; it suggests structural incapacity. Realist conventions emerged within historical contexts shaped by fossil expansion and bourgeois stability. Their emphasis on probability, interiority, and domesticity encodes assumptions about environmental continuity.

One of Ghosh’s most penetrating observations concerns the status of improbability. He writes that the kinds of events now associated with climate change were once treated as “so improbable as to be virtually impossible” (p. 24). Modern realism tends to exclude such improbabilities as melodramatic or sensational. Yet climate change produces precisely these “improbable” intensities: record-breaking storms, unprecedented wildfires, once-in-a-century floods occurring with alarming frequency.

The Anthropocene destabilizes the statistical logic underlying realism. Probability itself shifts. What was exceptional becomes recurrent. Derangement emerges when narrative forms fail to adjust to this transformation. The result is a cultural landscape in which climate catastrophe is either displaced into genre fiction or marginalized within mainstream literary production.

Ghosh’s critique extends beyond aesthetics. He suggests that narrative marginalization mirrors political and economic denial. When climate change appears implausible within fiction, it risks appearing implausible within moral consciousness. Cultural form shapes ethical attention.

In this sense, derangement is not merely the absence of climate fiction; it is the persistence of narrative frameworks inherited from an era of fossil confidence. It reflects what might be called imaginative inertia: the continuation of representational habits formed under conditions of perceived environmental stability.

2.3 Acceleration, Colonial Extraction, and Fossil Modernity

To understand the full depth of rapidification and derangement, one must situate them within the *longue durée* of colonial extraction. Ghosh (2016) argues that climate change arises from “the very patterns of life that are most highly valued in modernity” (p. 124). These patterns—industrial growth, global trade networks, fossil dependency—are inseparable from imperial expansion.

European empires reorganized land and labour into extractive systems designed for accelerated accumulation. Port cities constructed in deltas and estuaries became hubs of global commerce. Today, many of these cities face heightened vulnerability to sea-level rise and storm surges (Seidler, 2018). The infrastructures of empire become sites of ecological risk.

Neethu and Bhuvaneshwari (2024) emphasize that colonial regimes did more than exploit land materially; they transformed it ideologically. Land was reconceived as property, resource, and commodity. This shift embedded extraction within legal, economic, and cultural frameworks. Acceleration was normalized as progress.

Rapidification, then, cannot be understood as purely contemporary intensification. It is the culmination of centuries of fossil-fueled expansion and colonial restructuring. The Capitalocene—an alternative term proposed by scholars to emphasize capitalism’s role in ecological crisis—captures this historical dimension. Fossil modernity’s acceleration is not accidental but systemic.

Pope Francis (2015) acknowledges this historical injustice when he notes that environmental degradation disproportionately burdens the poor (48). The acceleration of wealth accumulation in some regions has produced ecological precarity in others. Climate change is therefore entangled with colonial legacies and global inequality.

When read together, rapidification and derangement reveal a layered crisis:

- Material acceleration (industrial growth, fossil extraction)
- Historical extraction (colonial reorganization of land and labour)
- Narrative inertia (realist forms unable to represent planetary volatility)
- Moral lag (ethical frameworks failing to match technological power)

The Anthropocene is not simply an environmental threshold; it is a crisis of modernity's tempo and imagination.

2.4 Toward an Integrated Interpretive Framework

The dialogue between Pope Francis and Ghosh reveals a striking convergence. The Pope diagnoses a technocratic acceleration that fragments responsibility. Ghosh diagnoses a cultural derangement that marginalizes climate within narrative imagination. Both identify a structural mismatch between planetary transformation and human response.

Integral ecology, proposed by Francis, offers a conceptual bridge. He argues that environmental, economic, and social crises are “one complex crisis” (139). This insight resonates with Ghosh's insistence that climate change is not isolated from history, politics, or culture. Rather, it permeates them.

Integral ecology demands relational thinking: recognition that ecological systems, social justice, and economic structures are interdependent. Derangement fragments these connections; rapidification intensifies fragmentation. The task of ecological imagination is therefore integrative.

The sections that follow will test this theoretical architecture through close readings of *The Great Derangement*, *The Hungry Tide*, and *Gun Island*. By analyzing narrative probability, tidal temporality, mythic return, and climate migration, the article demonstrates how Ghosh's literary practice both exposes derangement and gestures toward narrative forms capable of resisting it. Simultaneously, the ethical vision of *Laudato Si'* will function as a normative counterpoint, articulating the moral orientation required to confront rapidification without succumbing to imaginative collapse.

3.1 The “Unthinkable” and the Limits of Literary Form

Amitav Ghosh's *The Great Derangement* opens not with climate science but with a literary provocation. He asks why climate change has become “virtually unthinkable in the literature of serious fiction” (Ghosh, 2016, p. 7). The formulation is deliberately unsettling. The term “unthinkable” signals a breakdown not in data but in imagination. Climate change is measurable, observable, scientifically modeled—yet culturally marginal.

Ghosh clarifies that this marginalization cannot be dismissed as oversight. Rather, it reveals something structural within modern narrative form. He insists that climate change represents “a crisis of culture, and thus of the imagination” (p. 9). The phrase “crisis of culture” reframes environmental catastrophe as an aesthetic and epistemological event. It is not merely that culture responds inadequately; culture itself has been shaped by assumptions that render planetary volatility narratively implausible.

Central to this critique is Ghosh's analysis of probability. Modern realist fiction, he argues, depends on a particular calibration of the probable. Events must conform to recognizable social norms and statistical expectations. Within such frameworks, extraordinary climatic disruptions appear melodramatic or excessive. Ghosh writes that the kinds of events now associated with climate change were once considered “so improbable as to be virtually impossible” (p. 24). Realist fiction internalized that assumption.

The problem, however, is that the Anthropocene alters the calculus of probability. Storms intensify beyond historical baselines; floods occur with increased frequency; wildfires exceed seasonal expectations. What realism once coded as exceptional becomes structurally recurrent. Narrative conventions shaped by fossil-era stability falter when confronted with climate volatility.

This is not merely a literary concern. As Ghosh implies, narrative plausibility influences moral plausibility. If extreme ecological events are perceived as aberrations rather than systemic manifestations, they remain peripheral to ethical deliberation. Derangement, therefore, involves a failure to recalibrate narrative expectation in light of new planetary realities.

3.2 Realism, Interiorization, and the Privatization of Experience

Ghosh's critique extends beyond probability to the interior focus of modern fiction. He suggests that literary realism privileges individual psychology and domestic space over collective or planetary forces. The realist novel often centres what he describes as the "individual moral adventure" (Ghosh, 2016, pp. 10–11). While such interior depth remains aesthetically powerful, it narrows narrative scale.

Climate change, by contrast, exceeds the frame of individual interiority. It operates across temporalities that span generations and across geographies that transcend national boundaries. The traditional realist emphasis on localized causality and personal agency struggles to accommodate distributed systems like atmospheric circulation or oceanic warming.

This mismatch produces a peculiar displacement. Climate change is often relegated to genre fiction—particularly science fiction—where improbability is permitted. Ghosh observes that serious literary fiction frequently avoids climate catastrophe, while speculative fiction embraces it. The boundary between "serious" and "genre" writing becomes an index of derangement.

Here the convergence with Pope Francis' critique of technocracy becomes evident. The technocratic paradigm narrows ethical reasoning to what is instrumentally manageable. Similarly, realist fiction narrows narrative reasoning to what is socially plausible within fossil modernity. Both frameworks resist the disruptive scale of climate crisis.

3.3 History, Agency, and the Shock of the Nonhuman

Ghosh also argues that climate change compels a rethinking of history itself. He contends that it challenges "our ideas of history and agency" (Ghosh, 2016, p. 63). Modern historiography, like modern realism, centers human intentionality. Nonhuman forces—storms, rivers, glaciers—are treated as backdrop rather than actors.

In the Anthropocene, however, nonhuman agency intrudes decisively into historical narrative. Hurricanes alter political trajectories; drought reshapes migration patterns; sea-level rise redraws coastlines. These processes destabilize anthropocentric assumptions embedded in narrative and historiography alike.

Derangement thus operates at the level of ontology. It reflects an inherited worldview in which nature is inert and subordinate. Pope Francis (2015) similarly critiques this orientation, warning against an "excessive anthropocentrism" (116). Both thinkers insist that ecological crisis demands a reconfiguration of agency.

Ghosh's insight here is subtle yet powerful: climate change exposes the inadequacy of narrative forms that exclude planetary agency. If literature cannot represent nonhuman forces as historically consequential, it cannot adequately narrate the Anthropocene.

3.4 Imagination as Ethical Faculty

For Ghosh, imagination is not decorative but ethical. If climate change is a "crisis of the imagination" (2016, p. 9), then imaginative renewal becomes a moral imperative. Literature must expand its scale, recalibrate probability, and integrate nonhuman agency.

This imperative resonates with the Pope's call for "ecological conversion" (Francis, 2015, 217). Conversion implies transformation of perception and desire. Both thinkers identify imagination as a site of moral reorientation.

Derangement, in this framework, is the refusal or inability to undergo such transformation. It is the persistence of fossil-era narrative habits within an altered planetary condition.

3.5 Transition: From Theory to Fictional Embodiment

While *The Great Derangement* articulates the critique in essayistic form, Ghosh's novels embody the problem narratively. *The Hungry Tide* and *Gun Island* experiment with scale, probability, and agency in ways that resist realist constraints.

In the sections that follow, the analysis turns to these fictional texts as laboratories of narrative adaptation. The Sundarbans' tidal instability in *The Hungry Tide* destabilizes territorial permanence. The mythic resurgence and climate migration in *Gun Island* disrupt probabilistic realism. Together, these works dramatize the imaginative recalibration that Ghosh calls for explicitly in his nonfiction.

4.1 Myth as Epistemic Counter-Acceleration

If *The Hungry Tide* locates ecological instability within a deltaic microcosm, *Gun Island* (Ghosh, 2019) expands the imaginative field to a transcontinental scale. The novel moves from Bengal to Venice to the Mediterranean and Los Angeles, tracing pathways shaped by climate disruption and migration. At its center lies the legend of Bonduki Sadagar, a merchant who attempts to evade the goddess Manasa and is pursued across oceans.

Ghosh notes within the novel that certain stories "outlive others of their kind" (2019, p. 58). This observation functions as more than literary reflection; it gestures toward myth as an epistemic resource. In a world destabilized by rapidification, myth re-emerges as interpretive framework. The rationalist confidence characteristic of fossil modernity falters when confronted with planetary volatility.

In *The Great Derangement*, Ghosh (2016) criticizes the marginalization of myth within modern literary culture. He suggests that modernity relegated myth to superstition, privileging secular realism as the appropriate mode of representation (pp. 11–12). Yet climate crisis disrupts this hierarchy. The improbable intensities of the Anthropocene resemble mythic scale more than realist moderation.

In *Gun Island*, myth does not displace science but coexists with it. Dinanath Datta, the novel's skeptical protagonist, begins with rational dismissal of the Bonduki legend. Yet as climate-linked anomalies accumulate—venomous snakes appearing in Venice, unprecedented wildfires in California—the boundaries between rational explanation and mythic resonance blur. The novel does not resolve these tensions into supernatural certainty; instead, it foregrounds interpretive multiplicity.

This return of myth functions as counter-acceleration. Rapidification compresses time and prioritizes efficiency. Myth slows perception, deepens historical memory, and situates present crisis within longer narrative arcs. Francis (2015) similarly urges a recovery of "ancient lessons" (71), suggesting that tradition can resist the narrowing effects of technocracy. Myth, in this context, becomes a mode of relational imagination rather than escapism.

4.2 The Critique of Anthropocentrism

A central dimension of integral ecology is its rejection of excessive anthropocentrism. Francis (2015) cautions that when humanity places itself at the center, it "ends up acting against itself" (116). Anthropocentrism narrows ethical vision, reducing nonhuman life to instrumental value.

Ghosh's fiction systematically destabilizes anthropocentrism. In *The Hungry Tide*, tigers and dolphins exert narrative agency. In *Gun Island*, snakes intrude into urban space and wildfires reshape landscapes. These nonhuman forces are not decorative; they alter plot trajectories and redistribute agency.

This redistribution aligns with Francis' affirmation that "each creature has its own value and significance" (76). By granting narrative presence to nonhuman actors, Ghosh enacts an imaginative de-centering of humanity. The novels resist derangement by refusing to treat ecological forces as background.

The Anthropocene reveals that anthropocentrism is both epistemically flawed and materially dangerous. Climate instability exposes humanity's embeddedness within planetary systems. Integral ecology names this embeddedness normatively; Ghosh dramatizes it aesthetically.

4.3 Beyond Anthropocentric Modernity

The Anthropocene exposes the insufficiency of anthropocentric modernity. For centuries, Western political and economic systems operated under assumptions of human centrality and environmental subordination. Nature functioned as backdrop, resource, or passive stage upon which human history unfolded. Climate disruption destabilizes this arrangement.

Pope Francis (2015) cautions that humanity is “not God” (67). This theological assertion carries ecological implications. It challenges the illusion of mastery that underwrites technocratic acceleration. When humans assume absolute dominion, they distort both ecological balance and moral perception.

Amitav Ghosh's literary practice enacts this critique narratively. In *The Hungry Tide*, the tiger's sudden violence disrupts human presumptions of control. In *Gun Island*, snakes infiltrate Venetian spaces historically insulated from wilderness. These nonhuman presences redistribute agency. They function not as symbolic ornamentation but as material actors shaping human destiny.

Such narrative strategies resist derangement by refusing to marginalize planetary agency. They remind readers that climate change is not abstract atmospheric chemistry; it is lived entanglement with multispecies systems.

The Anthropocene confronts humanity not only with environmental instability but with a crisis of temporal experience and imaginative adequacy. Acceleration defines the epoch. Atmospheric carbon accumulates at unprecedented rates; sea levels rise with measurable urgency; migration patterns shift in response to ecological disruption. Yet the defining feature of this acceleration is not simply speed—it is asymmetry. Technological and economic systems expand rapidly, while moral and narrative frameworks lag behind. Pope Francis (2015) names this asymmetry “rapidification” (18), while Amitav Ghosh (2016) identifies its cultural symptom as “derangement” (p. 9). Together, these concepts illuminate the Anthropocene as a rupture in civilizational coherence.

Derangement, as theorized in *The Great Derangement*, names the imaginative incapacity to register climate crisis within mainstream cultural forms. Ghosh (2016) argues that climate change has become “virtually unthinkable” in serious fiction (p. 7), reflecting a deeper “crisis of culture” (p. 9). Modern realist conventions—structured around probability, interiority, and environmental continuity—struggle to accommodate planetary volatility. What was once “so improbable as to be virtually impossible” (p. 24) now defines lived experience. The collapse of probability destabilizes narrative expectations.

Conclusion

This article has argued that derangement functions as the cultural expression of rapidification. Acceleration fragments moral attention and shortens political horizons; narrative inertia reinforces denial and marginalization. Together, they produce a structural mismatch between planetary transformation and human response. Simultaneously, the historical genealogy of fossil modernity reveals that rapidification is not an accidental feature of late capitalism but a cumulative outcome of colonial extraction. Climate crisis arises from “patterns of life” valorized by modernity (Ghosh, 2016, p. 124).

The convergence between Ghosh and Francis lies in their shared recognition that climate crisis is as much a crisis of meaning as of material systems. The Anthropocene disrupts inherited assumptions about stability, agency, and progress. Rapidification without ethical integration leads toward what Ghosh warns may become “self-annihilation” (2016, p. 162). Narrative without planetary recalibration perpetuates derangement.

Acceleration must be tempered by reflection; extraction must give way to reciprocity; anthropocentrism must yield to relational ethics. The Anthropocene, therefore, is not solely an era of decline. It is also an invitation—

to rethink, to reimagine, to reorient. If derangement signals imaginative breakdown, it also signals the urgency of renewal. If rapidification compresses time, it intensifies responsibility.

The future of ecological survival depends not only on technological innovation but on narrative transformation and moral imagination commensurate with planetary interdependence. Literature and theology, far from peripheral to climate discourse, become essential arenas in which the meanings of acceleration are contested and reconfigured. Acceleration without imagination leads to collapse. Acceleration accompanied by integral imagination may yet lead to ecological reorientation.

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