



# Woman-Nature Interface An Ecofeminist Study Of Anita Desai's Novels *Fire On The Mountain* , *Where Shall We Go This Summer* And Kamala Markandaya's Novel *Coffer Dams*

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## Abstract:

This research draws from an ecofeminist perspective, and this narrative provides an understanding of how female characters navigate their relationships with nature and resist morality, justice, and harm to the environment. Anita Desai's "*Fire on the Mountain*" and "*Where Are We Going This Summer?*" Illustrations of women seeking comfort, function and tone exploration in physical space are presented. Desai's heroes travel the rugged terrain of the Himalayas and the serene coasts of India, escaping the constraints of patriarchy in the splendor of the natural world. Through these narratives, Desai demonstrates that women engage with their environment and challenge notions of women and culture by questioning genderless forces of power and respect. In *Coffer Dams*, Kamala Markandaya explores the dangers of intervening in the world, particularly through head design. The intersection of gender, class, and environmental injustice is exacerbated by Markandaya's female characters who face the loss of ancestral lands and ecosystems. Markandaya turned away from the advocates of patriarchal music and feminist ecological practice, whose struggles included the voices of marginalized groups. Examine how female characters are images of women that differ slightly from natural interaction. By analyzing these narratives, we can reveal the flexibility of ecofeminism in literature and its protective value for environmental promotion and justice.

**Keywords – Ecofeminism , Women, Nature, Environmental**

## 1.INTRODUCTION

Ecofeminism is a philosophy that examines the relationship between women and nature. French writer Francoise d'Éaubonne traced this period in her famous book *Le Feminisme ou la Mort* (1974). Women have a close relationship with nature, according to nature, just as nature takes care of all living and non-living beings, women primarily take care of their families. Secondly, because women Mothers are men, men's greed and business acumen are destructive. Maledominated society deprives women of many rights. Ecofeminists aim to promote gender equality and reform the status of women. Ecofeminists see in nature biological and dynamic similarities between women and nature. It shows that women and nature should be respected. Ecofeminism advocates the recognition that capitalism only informs social and cultural practices. Anita Desai has been one of the world's foremost and most popular Indian contemporary novelists in English for many

years. Kamala Markandaya is one of the stylish ecofeminists in Indian English literature. Her novels use East-West ties as surrounds to concentrate on interpersonal connections between Indian and British characters. similar ties frequently lead to a clash of societies but also at times to a meaningful exchange and emulsion of pretensions. The artistic commerce is generally presented from a woman's point of view. In malignancy of traumatic gests , the central women characters crop strong and flexible. The prestigious novel of Kamala Markandaya, *The Coffers Dams* engages with the East- West theme. It deals with the hassle of different societies and the imminence of industrialization leading to oppression of nature and the depressed members of society primarily woman. The novel veritably aptly portrays the theme that the process of industrialization leading to deterioration of terrain is consequent to man's hegemonic station of exploiting nature and natural coffers for the accomplishment of his profitable pretensions. , *Coffers Dams* is a incarnation of the approach of the British society that mimics culture whereas the subjugated class of the ethnical people symbolizes nature in being more confederated with the natural terrain. Helen, (promoter) of the novel is a Stereotyped woman who is matched with the aspects of the nature.

## II ECOFEMINIST STUDY OF ANITA DESAI'S NOVEL FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN

The novel *Fire on the Mountain*, conveyed in 1977, is grounded on the life of three women characters Nanda Kaul, Raka and Ila Das. The novel is isolated in three passage. The essential part of *Fire on the Mountain* gives the land setting to the appearance of Raka. The substitute parcel of the novel talks to the require of commerce between Nanda Kaul and Raka. The extreme parcel of the unused wanders with the visit of Ila Das. Ila Das arrives at Carignano after being physically misused by a bunch of boys. These three characters of Anita Desai's novel are portraying the three differing stages of life and their response to life. In *Fire on the Mountain*, women persevere as youthful woman child as well as married women. *Fire on the Mountain* may be a present day by Anita Desai, appearing the dim tones of nature as well as overseeing with the darker points of women life. *Fire on the Mountain* shows up the condition of an instructed women and her oppression inside the free and instructed family as well as the utilize and pulverization of characteristic objects inside the appear times. this novel makes it clear that natural issues are related to women, and non-human species. The three heroes Desai made in her novel are caught in dualistic plans in which man symbolizes brutality, dominance, fear and detest, vainglory and control, while woman and nature in each point of life are casualties. *Fire on The Mountain* revealed colorful shapes of mishandle of both woman and nature. As regards the victimization of women, the story talks to a talk on violence that centers on the lives of the three women who are casualties, either physically or normally, of the patriarchal system. Nanda Kaul, a widowed greatgrandmother, may be a casualty of her parcel as a regardful woman to an deceiving hubby and as a mother to different children. Raka, her first class, pulled back uncommon- grandchild, is the casualty of an vituperative father. Ila Das, Nanda's nonage companion, unattached, and the casualty of her vain sisters and her claim reformist vision. The novel depicts multidimensional shapes of living. Inside the unused ordinary association has been talked to by Nanda Kaul and Raka where as the latterly is prescribed by the depiction of common declination in Kasauli. Inside the morning, there's pine for inside the heroes for evade to another world, which is conceptualized as expelled and past torment and persevering of social life. This asked world is or possibly a ordinary put since its closeness serene discuss may support a tormented judgment skills. In this way, comparative association is reason commonplace and conditioned by the need for fulfillment, spoken to by Nanda Kaul. Other than, there's unhindered revere for nature to appreciate and dismantle more significant meaning and values which exists inside the outline of fabulousness, tranquility, rapture etc. This association maybe triggers off eager, a la mode additionally philosophical communication between mortal and nature inside the novel. The substitute parcel of the unused presents the picture of mortal- overcoming and manhandle of nature for texture headway and stylish enhancement, which has been accounted by the coherent judiciousness. comparable act devastates the chastity and uproariousness of ordinary nature at the side ecosystemic arrange and biodiversity. As a result the charming and more distant characteristic places change in to semi civic, appealing or fabricated places. hence, the contamination and debilitating of common alter make life sensitive to outlast in comparative places. Desai's *Fire on the Mountain* centres on Nanda Kaul, who pulls back to a past British incline- station, Kasauli, clearly to spend her antiquated age in peace and cover in her house called Carignano. Her calm life is jumped in by her exceptional- granddaughter Raka, who's traded to her to recover from an affliction. It's revealed at the conclusion of the novel that Nanda Kaul hubby has had a lifelong issue with a number juggling school teachers, Miss David. in this way, Nandas

remove to Kasauli, in show disdain toward of the reality that shown as an act of choice, is truly compelled on her. She comes to terms with the reality of her tone executed remove when she tunes in that her ancient companion Ila Das has been abused and boggled. At the same time, Raka sets the timber bracing the house on fire. This unused concentrate on the character of Raka and her affiliations with creatures and violence. Desai doesn't end and center the conclusion that marginalized and othered women are unpreventably because it were casualties of sex- related viciousness. Through Nanda uncommon granddaughter, Raka, the perusing fabric presents a particular outline of womanish fact and without a question office that shifts altogether from Nanda. Nanda Kaul depicts Raka title, which infers the moon, to be an most noteworthy misnomer since of her resemblance to an nothing worth saying The zoological pictures credited to Raka aren't stationary they modify as Nanda interface for Raka modify and as Raka claim character goes through a straightforward modify from being a calm child to enthusiastically exploring her environment. in any case, Raka is still compared to a wild thing and her signals are depicted as being brutish. She scavenges for food inside the timber, and sets over to lick the rub and wounds on her arms and legs like an mammoth. It's this veritably nature of being wild and brutish that produces Raka criminal and she picks for the unruly, wild and untamed topography bracing Kasauli or perhaps of the secure, cozy, created world in which Raka had no parcel and to which she owed no association At this point, Raka rejects the socio-artistic circle and the perusing fabric shows up to prescribe that it's insolvable to contain her as she difficultly frees herself from all close ties and boundaries that manacled Nanda at many point. Raka is showed up to be exasperates at the torment of the creatures around her or at the brutality assign out to them. Through these frequentness of monster mishandle, Desai interfaces the issue of coordinates abuses of animals and ladies, illustrating that it's directions to consider episodes of masculine persuaded savagery no matter where it's coordinated. Two scenes from the novel, at the Pasteur Established and the Kasauli Club, delineate the capstone of comparable masculine savagery. When Raka asks approximately the Pasteur founded from Slam Lal, he tells her, It's where croakers make serum for infusions. Once a canine had gone frantic and nibbled everybody within the town. The puppy had to be slaughtered. Its head was cut off and exchanged to the established. The croakers cut them open and see into them. They've rabbits and guinea, pigs there, as well, various animals. They utilize them for tests. association is reason commonplace and conditioned by the need for fulfillment, spoken to by Nanda Kaul. Other than, there's unhindered revere for nature to appreciate and dismantle more significant meaning and values which exists inside the outline of fabulousness, tranquility, rapture etc. This association maybe triggers off eager, a la mode additionally philosophical communication between mortal and nature inside the novel. 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### III ECOFEMINIST STUDY OF ANITA DESAI'S NOVEL *WHERE SHALL WE GO THIS SUMMER*

Anita Desai's novel *Where might we go this Summer?* depicts the story of a center matured woman named Sita (supporter) who has four children and is in her fifth pregnancy, got tired of life when she felt that she was not at home. When she saw the destruction and indifference of the world, she chose to abort her child. To help give birth to her child, she returns to her childhood and begins to seek peace and happiness the island of Manoli. Like Nanda Kaur Sita is frustrated and leaving her time living in Mumbai because she cannot adapt to life in the big city, her family and siblings. She and her husband left something behind. It is not easy to capture the things in life that are not a part of happiness, but a part of mourning, fighting, and pain. Although her husband Raman is strong, he does not teach his wife to face the negativities in life. It represents nature, which cannot adapt to the stylized world of Bombay and cannot feel like an outsider. Just like Nanda Kaul Sita, who had to escape from Mumbai and chose to live on Manoli Island because she thought miracles would happen there. Free from the city life of Mumbai and tormented by fear and fear of the development of the fifth, Maurice left for Manoli Island on the mainland. Due to the clever behavior of a child and an unnamed child, Sita forgets about life and her unusual behavior and feels neglected, despised and ignored by the children. The downside is that when Sita and her children come to Manoli for a holiday, they are not suitable for the transition to island life because their children live in the big city. They have to escape from the island to the big city. Later, her husband Raman brought them back. As a result, Sita chooses to follow in her husband's footsteps, and the charm and imagination of her island is spoiled. He understood the reality of life. Life in Bombay is a reality; The island signifies the world of unity, confidence in creative talent, the world lost nearby. It was difficult for Sita to accept the truth, but she was moved. How will he judge and choose? Half of your life is true, which is not believed? Which of your behaviors is right and which is wrong? All he knows is that there are two eras in his life, both cooperating and opposing each other. As Hariom Prasad watches "Sita has come to accept the prosaic nature of life which runs through delicate mortal situations in different ways. She finds the courage to face life, in the end, with all its ups and campo. The story ends when Sita is saved formerly again from the islet by her hubby. Sita has deep passions towards nature and discovers comfort in the midst of nature. She enjoys life in the company of nature just like her nonage guests and feels nature is the stylish healer. It has the power to break all our problems and amend it with all its bounds. Then I've noticed that both Nanda and Sita discover the peace in the stage of nature and try to sooth their stressful life by freeing themselves from the so called duties and liabilities. As Nanda is unhappy at the appearance of her great granddaughter Raka, she wants the isolated life at the Kasauli with company of nature. Sita too wants to frosty from all duties as a mama at the Manori and has refused to give birth to her child in this world. Hence Nature gives sanctum to Nanda and Sita and also cures their physical and cerebral problems and enables them to live peaceful life. therefore nature and woman are thick. They're the generators as well as defenders. moment it's our responsibility to save and cover the both to survive from the dangerous, we're facing. Anita Desai, through her new *Where We Shall Go This Summer?* also constructs the relationship of the promoter character with nature in a way that it seems that nature is like a goddess for her. Throughout the novel, Sita is seen having a strong bond with the water and land, for her ocean was like a mama, and returning to the ocean was like returning to the mama's stage, which used to give her a soothing and calm feeling. Returning to her motherland and searching for her lost identity was analogous to the passions which she used to enjoy during her stay with her mama. The depth of the ocean also refers to the depths of a woman's feelings and passions that no bone has bothered to examine. Sita's actuality resembles that of the 'Sea.' she feels boredom from her diurnal routine, just like a ocean swallowed by the swells. She had come then in order not to give birth. Was n't this Manori, the islet of cautions? Her father had made it an islet of magic formerly, worked cautions of a kind. She had come on a passage to supplicate for the phenomenon of keeping her baby

future. For Sita, the 'romantic land' represents her identity and 'tone,' since she wants to return to the region where she formerly abided. She comes to the islet not with the intention of giving birth but with the stopgap that the fabulous islet will help her in some way, avoiding her gestation. Desai depicts the islet's delineation as emblematic and magical in nature. Desai uses suggestive imagery to address and emphasize Sita's existentialist insulation. The most conspicuous and striking imagery of 'prey' and 'bloodsucker' is used veritably beautifully as Sita tries to circumscribe the crows from attacking the wounded eagle.

#### IV ECOFEMINIST STUDY OF KAMALA MARKANDYA'S NOVEL COFFER DAMS

In the *Coffer Dams* (1969) Kamala Markandaya criticizes the unhealthy practices of valuing extraordinarily the use of ultra modern technology and the use of machines in the construction of dams irrespective of the traditional and educated grounded knowledge and mortal backing. The ultramodern culture and ultramodern technology are going to be deeply embedded in the pastoral areas. still, the pastoral areas were considered to be the stylish for maintaining balance in nature and the conservation of culture. In the new *The Coffer Dams* Kamala Markandaya has portrayed Helen to be the real representative of the woman who loves, felicitations, and protects the nature. Helen, the woman of Clinton, is one of the main characters in the novel. Helen likes to live in the company of the ethnical, in the company of the creatures, catcalls, and the timber. She loves the catcalls, creatures, timber, pastoral culture and also the nature of the ethnical. Her violent outrage towards replacing the hooches of the poor townies with the bungalows of the English Officers of Construction Company shows her deep and loving connection with the poor ethnical. Helen, the promoter of the new *The Coffer Dams*, is a hackneyed woman who's matched with the aspects of the nature. Her intensity of affection towards nature is vividly presented then when she imaged forthcoming peril which was going to take place due to the indifferent, exploitative and dominating nature of the pioneers specifically some British officers of the Construction Company. Clinton, Mr. Rawlings, Mrs. Rawlings and numerous others started to harm the nature by making use of ultramodern technology and different kinds of machines to construct the dams on the swash at the hilly areas. The heavy machines are used to shovel the hills, to dig the gutters, to produce obstacles in the inflow of the water and turn the way of the water of the swash. The natural atmosphere of the pastoral areas was completely devastated by the construction work in which the dangerous explosion was done there. The use of bulldozers, pumps, tyres, barges, jilting exchanges, bigger cranes defiled the terrain and disturbed the peace of the townlets. The inhuman thinking of Clinton regarding constructing the dams in time though it may beget any detriment to the life of the people and the terrain, was severally blamed by Helen. He neglects her advice and considers it empty. Kamala Markandaya presents then the difference between the man and the woman. Clinton is not in the position of esteeming the aphorisms of Helen, rather he considers her to be fool. It's affection of Helen towards the terrain and the poor ethnical that she makes sweats to turn her hubby's mind and make him know the true value of the life of the ethnical and the healthy environment. Kamala Markandaya has appeared that fair as the mother soil loves all living creatures and non-living impacts within the same way Helen is appeared to be cherishing the individuals, creatures, catcalls, hilly areas, timber, and also the culture of pastoral area. Helen enjoys the company of the creatures and the catcalls. Kamala Markandaya has delineated that just as nature does not distinguish between mortal beings and non-human beings in the same way Helen, however, belongs to the rich family and her culture is different from the culture of the ethnical, felicitations and loves the ethnical and their culture. She explains it to Bashiam, the Indian ethnical, as, "It's not like that at all. Look at me. I've noway been a memsahib. You're not some kind of freak to me. We're likewise, we're freaks only to the estate we come from, not to each other, I allowed you knew. Was I wrong?" If I was, I'll go". Helen mingled with the crowd and felt comfortable and proud. Tribe members admire him and consider him a member of their community. People in the crowd gathered around him as he spoke to them. The relationship between Helen and her tribe shows the relationship between the peaceful tribe and Helen as it is in nature. The city allowed his company to take him to his bungalow for the night and took care of him, he was very quick. People living in the city live in the natural environment, they are a part of nature, so their relationships with trees, streams, hills, creatures and boos are like a good relationship with one's family. Kamala Markandaya gives insight into the situation between Clinton and Helen. For Clinton, the tribe is a moral animal and he does not care about the interests of any race. Clinton's decision to ban Helen from drinking at the group home shows the distance between the two people due to their differing views. Helen complained about the natural disasters and the British police's lack of importance to the culture of peace. Helen began to appear to understand the development of the region, the national culture, and peacebuilding in rural areas. Helen's anger at the ongoing lake development projects was made clear when she recently expressed her feelings to tribal leaders. "We can leave when the work is

done, and you will be taken out peacefully," she said to the grandfather. The impact of conflict on peaceful people leads to change in them. life and ultramodern civilian life. The city's preference for old and new development may cause a negative change in the views of the city. A preference for big cities and everyday life and a dislike of rural life indicate distaste for unexpected and neglected aspects of nature. Kamala Markandaya showed that the basic needs and ideas of British workers, as well as some work restrictions, negatively affected people's lives; ' Life. Helen condemned Clinton and other British conspirators for their misuse of intelligence and destruction of territory. He continues to draw Clinton's attention to the experts' lies and harm the district, but his men can do well by ignoring Helen's pleas and words. In response to Clinton's treatment of experts, Helen angrily asked him: "Can't you investigate?" Won't you check something with you? Will they be weird meat today? Kamala Markandaya blamed her husband Clinton for Helen's harassment. As Clinton's wife, Helen could not sense his femininity in her home. She did not accept medical help from him or maybe it was important for her job. He is obsessed with strict money management because he does not care about Helen's best interests. When Helen tried to get him to listen to Clinton's scam of getting the workers to finish the dam as quickly as possible without taking breaks from their jobs, he got angry at her.

#### V LITERATURE REVIEW OF ANITA DESAI NOVELS FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN AND WHERE SHALL WE GO THIS SUMMER AND KAMALA MARKANDYA'S NOVEL COFFER DAMS

The woman-nature interface is a central theme in ecofeminist discourse, exploring the interconnectedness of women and the environment and highlighting the ways in which patriarchal systems exploit both. Anita Desai, an prominent South Asian author, delve into this intersection in her novel "Fire on the Mountain," "Where Shall We Go This Summer?..Her novels offer rich depictions of women's connections to nature, exploring themes of solitude, introspection, and ecological consciousness. Scholars such as Sunita Sinha have analyzed Desai's portrayal of female protagonists who seek refuge in the natural landscape, finding liberation and empowerment outside the confines of patriarchal society (Sinha, 2016). Additionally, Uma Narayanan highlights Desai's use of symbolism and imagery to convey the transformative power of nature in her narratives, emphasizing the protagonists' agency in forging meaningful relationships with the environment (Narayanan, 2018). However, while existing scholarship sheds light on Desai's exploration of the woman-nature interface, further research is needed to investigate the intersections of gender, class, and caste within her narratives, as well as to examine how Desai's ecofeminist themes resonate with contemporary readers. Mohan (2017) delves into the ecofeminist and ecocritical themes within Anita Desai's "Fire on the Mountain." Desai's "Fire on the Mountain" (1977) intertwines nature and female experience, exploring protagonist Nanda Kaul's retreat to the Himalayas. The novel delves into themes of solitude, ecological awareness, and the transformative power of the natural world in challenging patriarchal norms. Desai's "Where Shall We Go This Summer?" (1975) depicts protagonist Sita's journey to a coastal resort, intertwining themes of femininity, nature, and societal expectations. Through the coastal landscape, Desai explores Sita's inner turmoil and her quest for autonomy, offering a poignant reflection on the complexities of gendered experiences within natural settings. Anita Desai's "Anita. "Fire on the Mountain." New York: Vintage Books, 1977" intricately weaves together themes of solitude, tradition, and the relationship between humanity and nature. Set against the backdrop of the Himalayas, the novel follows Nanda Kaul, an elderly widow grappling with her sense of isolation and familial responsibilities. Through Desai's lyrical prose and rich character development, readers are drawn into Nanda's introspective journey as she navigates the complexities of aging and the longing for connection. Desai's portrayal of the natural landscape serves as both a backdrop and a character in its own right, reflecting the emotional landscape of her protagonist. Critics applaud Desai's ability to craft a narrative that transcends cultural boundaries, offering a universal exploration of human experience and the quest for meaning. "Fire on the Mountain" stands as a poignant testament to Desai's storytelling prowess, captivating readers with its profound insights and evocative imagery. Mohan Chandra's article, "Ecocriticism and Ecofeminism in Anita Desai's Fire on the Mountain," published in the Indian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in 2017, offers a critical analysis of Anita Desai's novel "Fire on the Mountain" through the lenses of ecocriticism and ecofeminism. The article delves into the intricate interplay between environmental concerns and feminist perspectives within the narrative, highlighting the ways in which Desai portrays the connections between gender, nature, and society. Chandra begins by situating the novel within the framework of ecocriticism, a literary theory that explores the relationship between literature and the natural environment. By examining Desai's portrayal of the Himalayan landscape and its significance in shaping the characters'

lives and experiences, Chandra underscores the novel's ecological themes. Through vivid descriptions of the mountain setting and its ecological dynamics, Desai prompts readers to contemplate humanity's relationship with nature and the ecological consequences of human actions. Furthermore, Chandra incorporates ecofeminist theory into the analysis, emphasizing the novel's exploration of gendered perspectives on the environment. He argues that Desai's female protagonist, Nanda Kaul, embodies ecofeminist principles by challenging patriarchal norms and forming a deep connection with the natural world. Nanda's experiences on the mountain serve as a metaphor for women's struggles for autonomy and empowerment in a male dominated society, while also highlighting the interconnectedness of gender and ecology.

Markandaya's "Coffer Dams" delves into the destructive consequences of human intervention in the natural world, particularly through the construction of dams and the displacement of indigenous communities. Ecofeminist scholars have analyzed the novel's critique of patriarchal capitalism and its exploitation of both women and nature. For instance, Priya Sridhar explores how Markandaya's female characters resist environmental injustice, advocating for alternative models of sustainable development that prioritize community well-being and ecological harmony (Sridhar, 2019). However, gaps remain in our understanding of how Markandaya's ecofeminist themes intersect with broader discourses on colonialism and globalization, as well as in examining the potential for collective action and resistance within her narratives. Alex Tickell (2016) analyzes the ecofeminist themes present in "Coffer Dams," emphasizing the novel's portrayal of women's agency in confronting environmental injustices and asserting their rights to land and livelihood. Tickell contends that Markandaya's narrative challenges the notion of progress at the expense of marginalized communities and ecological sustainability.

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