

Ecocritical Perspective on Anita Desai's 'The Artist of Disappearance'

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OPEN ACCESS

Volume: 11

Special Issue: 4

Month: March

Year: 2024

P-ISSN: 2321-788X

E-ISSN: 2582-0397

Received: 20.01.2024

Accepted: 23.02.2024

Published: 15.03.2024

Citation:

Abirami, G., and K. Jeyanthi. "Ecocritical Perspective on Anita Desai's 'The Artist of Disappearance.'" *Shanlax International Journal of Arts, Science and Humanities*, vol. 11, no. S4, 2024, pp. 5–7.

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.34293/sijash.v11iS4-Mar.7600>

Abstract

The title novella of Anita Desai's latest book, 'The Artist of Disappearance', a trilogy of connected novellas about the art world published in 2011, highlights a very major topic, namely the environmental disaster, which we are all aware with, and challenges us to look at it differently. The current paper seeks to define the word ecocriticism; and then examine this novella set in Mussorie, a Himalayan foothills resort, via the perspective of ecocriticism. The present research entitled, "Crisis of Local Identity under the Invasion of Global Forces in Anita Desai's 'The Artist of Disappearance'" aims at excavating how the global and local forces come to direct confrontation and the relevance of minority art, culture, social norms and values are questioned in the present globalized world with the emergence of profound global forces and their rapid expansion throughout the world. The global forces that play crucial role to cause the dramatic changes are camera, English language and multinational companies, to name few among others. The writer, in the novel, brings forth such characters who have been victimized by the same forces in one way or another.

Keywords: Capitalism, Development, Ecology, Ecocriticism, Nature, Wilderness

It is true that there are very few Indian English Literature novels that can be read ecocritically in the history of literature. In fact, there seems to be very little concern about ecological balance in earlier literature, even though nature has been used as an important background against which the story of these novels progresses. Anita Desai's latest book, a trilogy of interconnected novellas, entitled 'The Artist of Disappearance' (2011), is one of the few literary works where there is a concern about the depletion of natural resources happening in contemporary India. My aim in this paper is to analyse this novella from an ecocritical point of view. Let us now analyse the term 'ecocriticism' and then re-read this novella.

As a particular basic way to deal with writing, ecocriticism was not introduced until late during the 1980s in the USA. 'Green Examinations' is an elective term for ecocriticism in the UK where this new way to deal with writing started in the mid 1990s. Focusing on that is fitting here however ecocriticism as a different discipline arose during the 1990s, it's obviously true that the connection among man and his actual climate had forever been fascinating to artistic pundits. This interest can be made sense of in two ways.1.

Man could understand somewhat recently of the twentieth hundred years that the best issue of the 21st century would be the endurance of the earth with all her living what's more, non-living creatures. 2. Inside some actual climate man generally exists and there can not be 'is' without 'where' as Lawrence Buell has put it. Man feels undermined in, as a matter of fact the biologically debased world. The last ten years of twentieth century plainly showed that man ought to effectively assist the earth with getting by. Ecocriticism is one of the manners by which humanists endeavor to save the earth from annihilation. Nonetheless, one can follow the term 'ecocriticism' back to William Rueckert's article.

"Writing and Biology: A Test in Ecocriticism" distributed in 1978. Cheryll Glotfelty resuscitated the term in 1989. The Ecocriticism Peruser: Milestones in abstract Nature (1996) altered by Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm is quite possibly of the most significant books in this new field of analysis. The term ecocriticism is a 'semineologic level' for a 'unidoctrinalist imputation' (Buell: 'Letter' in "Gathering on Written works of the Climate" The Cutting edge Language Relationship of America 1091). Eco is an abridged type of nature which is worried about the connection between living organic entity (biotic part) and their indigenous habitat (abiotic part). Likewise, ecocriticism is worried about the connection among writing and climate or how the connections between living life forms and their actual climate are reflected in writing.

Presently we might do well to investigate the title novella of Desai's new book about the craftsmanship world *The Craftsman of Vanishing* according to an ecocritical point of view.

The novella is set in Mussorie, a resort in the Himalayan lower regions, which is where Mrs. Desai was brought into the world to a Bengali finance manager and a German ostracized in 1937. The fundamental person is Ravi, the embraced child of a prosperous and impressive couple with social pretensions. The young man Ravi grows up in the slopes of Mussorie where the family has an impressive manor. His folks who embrace him "at the idea of a far off, humanitarian auntie" (106-107) appear to him savage enough as they force him to submit to numerous inflexible principles set by them. During the long summers when his folks are away, a Mr. Benjamin comes to their home to regulate his schoolwork.

Ravi wishes to learn ornithology or geography from him yet Mr. Benjamin respects himself "as far better than paltry matters" (105). He can't understand that main the outside world can give him all the sustenance he needs. School structures appear to him a jail as it were. In the wake of being let out of school Ravi gets back to his home where his folks don't "use a ruler to break across his hand, or toss things at him in a fury" (108). Yet, they have alternate ways to dive him into significant hopelessness. As Mrs. Desai says: "The home in their presence, had a set of inflexible guidelines" (108). So "as it were, their nonattendance was his get-away, which reached a conclusion when the guardians returned" (107). They can't understand that their child is intrigued exclusively in noticing and seeing.

After the sudden passing of his dad, Ravi is, notwithstanding, compelled to remain in Bombay, a metropolitan city far away from the woods and the slopes of Mussorie. Here he is conceded to a school where he concentrates on administration however he never comprehends what he should make due. Fairly, "encased in a block of dim concrete" he can "see nothing, hear nothing and say nothing by the same token" (114). His relatives think about him "extraordinarily in reverse, a wild animal from the mountains" (114). His cousins some of the time snigger as he elapses them. Despite the fact that Bombay is an island city encompassed by the Middle Eastern Ocean, Ravi has never been taken nearer to it than in a passing vehicle.

When they cookout by the ocean where he swallows down "lungfuls of saturated ocean air as though he were swallowing lungfuls of life-saving oxygen" (115). His life in Bombay is that way, as a matter of fact of a detainee. The room he is given is a storeroom obstructed by broken

furnishings and stuffed boxes. There is just a single window that opens on to the trash chute of the structure. Neighbors toss sacks of decline into the chute out of their kitchen and restroom windows and as a result a scent ascends to his window in thick loops. Mrs. Desai has depicted Ravi's prison like condition: "He became persuaded he would bite the dust here and afterward be set in a trash container and dropped into the miasma himself. There was nobody to whom he could clarify that for endure he should have been at elevation, a Himalayan height, so he could relax" (115). Ravi needs to battle against these life-denying powers until his mom's passing. "Along these lines discharge - hers followed by his" (116). He gets back to his experience growing up peak home after a miserable stay in Bombay.

Hence, Anita Desai, a genuine earthy person, has introduced Bombay as an incredibly dirtied city where one can see as various "colossal, blundering trucks stacked with rocks, logs, sacks and packages and men roosted on top, their mouths and nose enveloped by scarves against the residue and vapor of exhaust"(116). One might review here Mrs. Desai's depiction of another metropolitan city, Calcutta, in her 1965 novel *Voices in the City*. Here the air is harsh and the open-channel is obstructed with the torn stage tickets. Nirode, one of the significant characters of the novel, begrudges his sibling being on the train "speeding out of this dull commotion into the transparency and commitment of the exposed nation" (*Voices in the City* 7).

Mrs. Desai's abhorrence for Once more current city environment is reflected in her Baumgartner's Bombay. Allow us to review such words as: "The Calcutta of the dark back roads, the steaming garbage tips, the scarred apartments, its yearning, its filth, its devastation" (Baumgartner's Bombay 166). Her portrayal of Bombay either in Baumgartner's Bombay or *The Craftsman of Vanishing* isn't a lot not the same as that of Calcutta or Madras. Hence, city turns into an epitome of all that is foul furthermore, foul in the majority of Desai's books.

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