

## Deep Ecology and Environmental Sustainability: A Study of Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived*

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### ABSTRACT

*Ecocriticism, as a separate school of literary criticism, emerged during the 1970s to study the interconnection between literature and ecology from an interdisciplinary perspective. Deep ecology is one of the key concepts in ecocritical studies, advocated by the Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess, that foregrounds the promotion of ecological consciousness among the human community. The deep ecological principles also highlight the depletion of natural resources through excessive human interference and exploitative attitudes. This paper attempts to critically examine the deep ecological principles in Anuradha Roy's novel *All the Lives We Never Lived* (2018). Anuradha Roy is an Indian novelist, editor, and journalist, and her novels gained significance not only in India but also in several countries, making her one of the prominent voices of contemporary Indian Literature. This paper explores the need for humans to realise the inherent values of the non-human world and to promote harmonious coexistence with the environment by valuing the richness and diversity of life forms and utilising them only to satisfy their vital needs. It further examines the need for a decrease in population for non-human life to flourish and to reduce excessive human interference with the ecosystem. This paper reiterates the necessity to adhere to each deep ecological principle, accentuating the significant, transformative changes to be embraced to promote environmental responsibility for sustainable living. These aspects are elucidated through relevant instances from the chosen novel.*

*Keywords: Deep ecology; ecological consciousness; inherent value; harmonious coexistence; sustainable living*

### INTRODUCTION

The term “literary ecology” was first used by Joseph Meeker in his *The Comedy of Survival: Studies in Literary Ecology* (1974) to study the relationship between literature and ecology from an interdisciplinary perspective by analysing the literary texts that portray the environmental concerns and the representation of nature in literature. Philosophical ideas define the relationship between human beings and nature, which are often expressed or implied in literary works, revealing the historical beliefs and cultural ideologies of humans towards the natural world that have contributed to our contemporary ecological crisis. Analysis of literary representations of nature offers insights into the role of artistic expressions that have an impact on human survival and sustainability over time (Meeker, 1980, p. 29). Then, the term “ecocriticism” was introduced by William Rueckert in his essay “Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism” (1978) to study the relationship between ecology and literature. It advocates strong ethical aspects using literature as a medium to bring a change in human attitude towards nature.

Ecocriticism became a recognisable branch of literary and cultural theory in the United States in the late 1980s and in the United Kingdom in the early 1990s. Ecocriticism in the United States derives its origin from transcendentalists like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Margaret Fuller, whose works celebrate nature, wilderness, and other life forms. "Green Studies" is the preferred term for ecocriticism in the United Kingdom, which takes its origin from British romanticism during the 1790s, which appreciated nature and also warned us of the environmental threats that were caused by individual, governmental, commercial, and various other forces. However, it is still an evolving movement with no definite set of assumptions, principles, or procedures, which paves the way for an interdisciplinary perspective. It examines the role of literary texts in transmitting values with profound ecological implications and the various ways in which nature is portrayed in literature. Timothy Clark (2011, p. 202) considers that environmental criticism plays a significant role in affirming the natural world, which is more than the human world.

Ecocriticism or ecological criticism has been derived and influenced by insights from philosophy, sociology, feminism, Marxism, and many other disciplines working at the level of discourse and praxis. Literary texts are used to critically examine the human attitude towards nature and provide scope for addressing and rethinking our contemporary ecological problems. Because of its interdisciplinary nature, ecocriticism addresses various environmental issues from multiple dimensions to understand the dynamic relationship between human beings and the natural world in literary texts. Pramod K. Nayar (2010, p. 242), in *Contemporary Literary and Cultural Theory: From Structuralism to Ecocriticism*, views ecocriticism as "a critical mode that looks at the representation of nature and landscape in cultural texts, paying particular attention to attitudes towards 'nature' and the rhetoric employed when speaking about it." Ecocriticism, as Peter Barry (2017, p. 239) states in his *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*, is an emerging movement that does not possess a set of assumptions, doctrines, or procedures. Cheryll Glotfelty in her "Introduction: Literary studies in an age of environmental crisis" in *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmark in Literary Ecology*, believed that human actions against the environment have led to damage to the planet's life support system. She suggests a need for change in human attitude, or it may result in a global catastrophe, destroying the beauty of the natural world and also driving a number of species to extinction. (Glotfelty, 1996, p. xx)

Lawrence Buell (2005, p. 138), in *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination*, considers ecocriticism as "the environmentally oriented interpretative approach that focuses on art, literature and theoretical and practical level." Barry (2017, p. 246) talks about the four environmental areas, "the wilderness," "the scenic sublime," "the countryside," and "the domestic picturesque," which move from nature to culture. The separation of nature and culture is not always distinct as they are intertwined and depict the human relationship with the natural world. Nature becomes the major part of the subject matter as ecocritics re-read literary texts from an ecocentric perspective with a special focus on the natural world. Ecocritics make use of hybridised analysis deriving from various philosophical and literary theoretical sources (Garrard, 2012, p. 202). Ecocriticism in the early stage differs sharply from other forms of postmodern thought of environmental criticism (Heise, 2006, p. 507). The postmodernist ecocentric approach establishes a heterogenetic understanding of ecological principles through its relationality, diversity, and interconnectedness (Oppermann, 2006, p. 116). Cohen suggests that ecocriticism must seek opinions from other fields because of its interdisciplinary nature for a better understanding of ecological issues (Cohen, 2004, p. 27).

Anuradha Roy is a contemporary Indian novelist, editor, and journalist who has contributed to the realm of Indian English fiction in recent years. Her novels are translated into different languages and published in various countries. She has written five novels so far, which include *An Atlas of Impossible Longing* (2008), *The Folded Earth* (2011), *Sleeping on Jupiter* (2015), *All the Lives We Never Lived* (2018), *The Earthspinner* (2021). All of them have won various awards and were shortlisted and long-listed for a number of literary prizes. Her fourth novel, *All the Lives We Never Lived* (2018), won the “Tata Book of the Year Award for Fiction” in 2018 and was long-listed for the “Walter Scott Prize for Historical Fiction” in 2018. It was also shortlisted for many other awards like “The International Dublin Literary Award,” “The Hindu Literary Prize” and “JCB Prize.” It won India’s most prestigious literary prize, the “Sahitya Akademi Award.” Roy deals with diverse themes: nationalism, gender, race, class, individual longingness, loss, suffering, cross-cultural issues, violence, rural-urban conflict, east-west encounters, and various ecological issues.

*All the Lives We Never Lived* revolves around the life of Myshkin Chand Rozario, whose mother, Gayatri, leaves Myshkin and the family to move to Bali with a German artist to pursue her artistic passion for dance and painting as she yearns for a life of freedom and independence. She is unable to comply with the constraints that are imposed on her by her family and society. The events of the story are set in the fictitious towns of Muntazir and Bali. The backdrop of the novel delves into the political and historical context of Indian independence and the Second World War and their impact on the lives of the characters. The novel weaves between the past and the present life of Myshkin, then as a schoolboy and now as a horticulturist. Much of Myshkin's childhood is caught between the longingness and unidentified reason for his mother's abandonment and the impact of the socio-political condition of the period. Many years after the departure of his mother, her letters from Bali made him understand the real reason behind her neglect of the family years ago. This study employs a qualitative analysis of deep ecological principles in Anuradha Roy’s *All the Lives We Never Lived*.

The research problem addresses the nature of the deep ecological movement, which is criticised mostly as it does not address various major concerns such as race, class, and gender. Although it does not focus on such issues, it calls for a radical change in the relationship between human beings and the natural world. Deep ecological principles, though considered an ambiguous ideology, are helpful in the better understanding of the role of man towards having a harmonious existence in the natural world. The primary objective of this research is to critically evaluate Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived* through the lens of eight deep ecological principles. Additionally, this study aims to identify and interpret instances that reflect the development of deep ecological values.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The reviews of recent relevant literature are organised in such a way that they focus on the thesis and articles from socio-economic and colonial ideologies leading to environmental injustices, in general and ecocritical analysis of Anuradha Roy's novels, in particular. In addition, various research articles on deep ecological and ecosophical perspectives are reviewed. Finally, the need for the significance of the current research is addressed, which has an immense scope for future study.

The following two literature reviews present how socio-economic conditions and colonial capitalism lead to ecological injustices. Pal and Pannikot (2023) in "Ecological crises of the Capitalocene: A study on Colleen Murphy's *The Breathing Hole*" examines the impact of socio-economic and ecological injustices inflicted by colonialist and capitalist pursuits on the natural world and the Indigenous communities. The findings of the paper illustrate how the playwright addresses contemporary ecological injustices through the lens of indigenous eco drama. Rabani and Mishra (2023), in their study "Andaman Island and the historicity of colonial violence: An ecocritical study of Uzma Aslam Khan's *The Miraculous True History of Nomi Ali*", analyse the role of colonial capitalism in the exploitation of land and resources as well as the indigenous community in Andaman Island. The outcomes of this study unveil the ongoing environmental catastrophes on Andaman Island because of the lasting repercussions of colonial violence.

Further, the following articles focus specifically on the deep ecological and ecosophical aspects in the works of O.V Vijayan, Mahasweta Devi, and Amitav Ghosh. Some of the recent studies that focussed on the deep ecological aspects in Indian English Literature include Pavithran and Sivakami's (2023) "Exploring Ecosophical tenets of Posthumanism through O.V Vijayan's *The Infinity of Grace*", in which they investigate the new ecosophical dimensions of posthumanism using Rosi Braidotti's theoretical concepts in analysing O.V Vijayan's novel and further exploring how a deep consciousness of nature and our position in relation to it are an integral part of Indian spirituality. The findings of this study accentuate the role of Vijayan's works in advancing the philosophical discourse that challenges the centrality of human beings and embraces the interconnectedness of all life forms within the ecological realm. Darshana Pachkawade's (2021) "Deep Ecological Reading of Mahasweta Devi's *The Book of The Hunter: An Eco-Conscious Approach*" examines the prominent features of deep ecology that promote an ecological consciousness observed in Mahasweta Devi's *The Book of The Hunter*. The core findings of the study feature how the novel skilfully incorporates and interweaves various principles and concepts from Deep Ecology to promote ecological mindfulness and sensitivity towards the environment. Sandhya (2018), in her article, "Deep Ecological Perspective: Metaphysical Holism in the Novels of Amitav Ghosh", focuses on the need for a harmonious relationship between man and nature based on Carolyn Sigler's third model in select novels of Amitav Ghosh. The research findings suggest the need to neglect the anthropocentric attitude and pave the way for a harmonious existence of man and nature through the novels of Amitav Ghosh.

The literature review below indicates the focus of various researchers in their articles and theses on Anuradha Roy's novels from an ecocritical point of view. Poornima (2018), in their thesis entitled "Interrogating Ecofeminism in the Select Novels of Anita Desai, Namita Gokhale, Kiran Desai, and Anuradha Roy", foreground the interconnection of women and nature in terms of Eastern and Western philosophies and also justify how ecofeminism works to dismantle the binaries and embraces the need for interconnectedness and interdependence. Biderci Dinç (2023), in "Anthropocentrism and Nature in an *Atlas of Impossible Longing* by Anuradha Roy", analyses the text from a postcolonial ecocritical perspective. The results of the study draw attention to the dominant anthropocentric attitude of human beings toward the natural world, which is the main cause of various exploitations and discriminations. Augustus and Gnanadurai (2023), in their "An Explication of Anthropogenic Climate Change in Anuradha Roy's *An Atlas of Impossible Longing*", examine the serious anthropocentric and anthropogenic attitude resulting in the crisis of climate change, a threat to human existence. The outcome of the study prioritises the concept of climate change for sustaining nature.

From the above literature review, it is evident that only a few researchers have worked from the deep ecological perspective in the novels by other writers. Still, there is a dearth of critical attention given to deep ecological principles in Anuradha Roy's novels, which has been identified as a research gap. Hence, the present article attempts to analyse Anuradha Roy's novel *All the Lives We Never Lived* from a deep ecological perspective, focusing on the eight deep ecological principles in detail and their representation in the novel. It further highlights the need to inculcate the required attitudinal changes among human beings for a sustainable environment in which to live.

## PRINCIPLES OF DEEP ECOLOGY

One of the striking features of ecocriticism is its rapid expansion because of its interdisciplinary nature and theoretical diversity. The evolution of ecocriticism broadened its horizon to various other fields like Ecology, Environmental Studies, Geography, Anthropology, Philosophy, History, Sociology, Psychology, Economics, Political Science, Environmental History, Natural sciences, etc. The multi-dimensional insights from these fields, in combination with literary analysis, enrich the field of ecocriticism from a wider perspective. As a transdisciplinary research field, it includes various key concepts like anthropocentrism, biocentrism, ecofeminism, postcolonial ecocriticism, eco-Marxism, apocalypticism, and ecocentrism. This paper focuses on one of the key concepts called "Deep ecology." Deep ecology remains a significant underpinning in challenging the anthropocentric attitude in human beings and understanding the role of humanity within the ecosystem for sustainable living. Deep ecology, with its philosophical tenets, has shaped the ecocritical approach through its theoretical foundation for evaluating human relationships with the natural world. This paper examines the literary representations of deep ecological principles in Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived*.

The term "Deep Ecology" first appeared in the article "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement: Summary" by the Norwegian Philosopher Arne Naess in 1973, which later became one of the foundational texts of environmentalist philosophy. Deep ecology is considered one of the most radical ecological philosophies that address various environmental issues. This term deep ecology is contrasted with shallow ecology not only rhetorically but also on a conceptual basis. Deep ecologists believe that both human and non-human life forms possess intrinsic values. Meanwhile, shallow ecologists claim that nature is valuable only when it serves human interests based on its instrumental value. In Deep ecology, as pointed out by Timothy Clark, the "self" should include the entire non-human world, and it "affirms an understanding of life in which the thinking of the "self" must already include other organisms, and all that supports them, as part of one's own identity" (Clark, 2011, p. 23).

Deep ecology, as a philosophy, signifies the interconnectedness of all life forms in the ecosystem, and it also emphasises the need for a shift in attitude from human-centredness to eco-centred one. The eight deep ecological principles lay a foundation for understanding various environmental challenges and also suggest significant ethical actions to be taken by human beings that may lead humanity towards a more sustainable and harmonious coexistence with the natural world. There is a series of criticisms of the deep ecological movement and its principles. Some major aspects are highlighted, and the critics of deep ecology point out that the movement gives a lot of importance to mystical and spiritual approaches towards nature rather than a rational approach to solving environmental problems. Social ecologists and ecofeminists argue that Deep

ecology as a philosophy does not address or lags in addressing certain issues like race, class, and gender. Timothy Clark (2011, p. 24) quotes Timothy Luke's criticism that "without more detailed and practicable ethical or legal thinking, deep ecology at best offers the traditional solution, changing the self to change the society." Lynch argued that deep ecology calls for a new ethic that is distinguished from the other previous ethics by appreciating a moral concern (Lynch, 1996, p.152). Deep ecology widens the appreciation not only for humans but also for the goodness, creativity, beauty, intelligence, harmony, power, and vitality of the whole of nature (Drengson, 1987, p. 225).

In 1973, seven basic principles of deep ecology were enumerated by Naess, and later, in 1984, it was superseded by Naes and George Sessions in their eight-point principle platform, with a few variations from those of the 1973 formulations. This eight-point platform became the definitive principle of deep ecology. These eight basic principles of Deep ecology brought out a revolutionary change in human attitudes toward nature. Based on Spinoza's theory of "self-realisation," Devall states that there is a Utopia in deep ecology, a Utopia not based on man's continued and intensified conquest or domination of non-human nature but based on questioning for self-realisation (Devall, 1980, p. 322). Devall and Sessions's collaborative work "*Deep Ecology: Living As if Nature Mattered*" (1985) emerged as a definitive deep ecological text in the 1980s, as it appeared during the crucial period in the evolution of ecophilosophical ideas. It was a period when deep ecology as a movement gained its importance over its philosophical dimensions. Sessions and Devall (1985, p. 65-66) claim that deep ecological consciousness permits the understanding of the dominant world views and the dualisms: human over non-human, masculine over feminine, powerful over the powerless, and West over the non-West. Deep ecological consciousness creates an awareness to witness these erroneous and dangerous illusions. Capra (1987, p. 29) advocates the need for a shift in attitude to the paradigm of deep ecology for the well-being of human survival. Such a need is crucial in the current scenario for sustainable living. Luke (2002, p. 184) also acknowledges the changes in the deep ecological consciousness and, at the same time, asserts the continuation of abuse and pollution.

Peter Hay (2002, p. 42), in his *A Companion to Environmental Thought*, addresses the distinction of the term deep ecology as a movement and as a philosophy. Deep ecology as a movement is mostly treated as synonymous with ecocentrism, which is in opposition to anthropocentrism. Deep ecology is given philosophical attributes as the key influencers, and prominent spokespersons are philosophers. Garrard considers Gary Snyder to be the "Poet Laureate" of deep ecology. Shallow ecology, which is often contrasted with deep ecology, believes in the protection and preservation of natural resources for the sake of human beings based on their instrumental value. On the other hand, deep ecology approaches preservation in terms of intrinsic value. It demands a co-existing relationship between humans and the ecosphere. The dualistic attitude in distinguishing humans from the natural world is considered the major aspect of anthropocentric beliefs and practices, as many deep ecologists suggest (Garrard, 2012, p. 23). Robin Attfield (2018, p.8) comments that Naess' approach to the Deep ecology movement supports biological diversity as he believes that the cultivation of such diversity will not only foster non-human life but also enrich human life. The eight-deep ecological principles serve as a theoretical framework for this paper, as it attempts to critically evaluate the relationship between the human and non-human worlds as portrayed by Roy in *All the Lives We Never Lived*.

The eight-point platform of deep ecology affirms the intrinsic value of both human and non-human worlds. It appreciates the richness and diversity of all life forms, essential for the flourishing of human and non-human lives on Earth. It also points out that humans should only

reduce this richness and diversity to meet their vital needs as present human interference with the non-human world is excessive and worsening. It suggests a substantial decrease in human population for the flourishing of non-human life forms and advocates for the significant changes in economic, technological, and ideological policies and structures of the society. This ideological change appreciates the quality of life by fostering a profound awareness of the difference between big and great. The final principle calls for an obligation to act in implementing the necessary changes while subscribing to the above points.

## METHODOLOGY

The main data collection method is done through a close reading of the primary source to bring out a better understanding of the relevant instances pertaining to deep ecological principles from the novel. The chosen primary text for this article is *All the Lives We Never Lived*. Through a close reading of the text, instances that align with deep ecological principles are recorded through the note-taking method, and further, they are critically analysed. This article employs the deep ecological principles formulated by Naess and Sessions as a theoretical framework based on which the critical interpretations of Anuradha Roy's novel *All the Lives We Never Lived* are carried out. Deep ecological principles address the major concerns that are needed for such coexistence with the natural world. This includes the understanding of the inherent value of the non-human world, appreciating the richness and diversity of life forms, and using them only to satisfy vital needs. There is a need for a decrease in population for non-human life to flourish with limited human interference and the required policy change for a better quality of life with a final call for the obligation to act. The mainstream methodology for this article is ecocriticism, and the theoretical framework is narrowed down to deep ecological doctrines. The researcher has used qualitative analysis of the text to identify different aspects of deep ecological principles in the primary text.

## DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The first principle of deep ecology focuses on the inherent value of human and non-human lives in the ecosphere. Non-human life forms should not be valued based on their utility to human needs; they are independent of their usefulness for human purposes (Naess, 2008, p.111). Myshkin Chand Rozario, a horticulturalist, is concerned about his place and also acknowledges the worth of non-human life forms, especially in planting and protecting trees. Once, he said, "A few saplings I still need to plant even if I don't live to see them grow into trees" (Roy, 2018, p.14). His attitude towards the natural world remained the same even after years. Once, when he went for a walk, he was able to spot a few trees at the other end of the road and exclaimed, "I knew every tree, and the trees would know me" (Roy, 2018, p. 214). The trees are elevated to the level of humans when Myshkin says they know each other. Myshkin's attitude towards the natural world was always protective, and he was also a man who understood the inherent worth of non-human life forms. Myshkin reminds humanity of its obligations towards the natural world for the betterment and sustainable living of future generations. It essentially rejects the anthropocentric attitude and asserts the flourishing of human and non-human worlds. Thus, the first principle of deep ecology promotes a biocentric egalitarian approach that recognises the inherent value of both human and non-human

lives on the Earth and also the need to ensure that the existence of non-human life is not based on their usefulness for human purposes but on their ability and right to be independent on the Earth.

The second principle of deep ecology gives importance to the richness and diversity of life forms, including the simple and primitive species of landscapes, plants, trees, and animals (Naess, 2008, p.111). The richness and diversity of Bali is portrayed by Gayatri in her letters to Lisa and Myshkin:

My mother described villages, dances, medicine men, rainforests, mountains, and strange flowers. "It is a storybook land," the second letter said, "one day you will come here, and you will see ... There are foxes that can fly." She made postcard-sized paintings of her surroundings to show me what she meant. Thatched huts among circles of green fields. The fields were painted in thin, emerald-green strokes and surrounded by tall trees.

(Roy, 2018, p. 154)

Gayatri, who abandons the family to pursue her passion for music and art, moves to Bali. In most of her letters to her son, she writes about the richness and diversity of the natural world in Bali, emphasising every minute detail of the places through description and sometimes through sketches. This passage on Gayatri's letters describes the significance of the various life forms that existed in Bali, highlighting their intrinsic value. The descriptions of the villages, dances, medicine men, rainforests, mountains, and strange flowers refer to the natural world brimming with rich life and diversity. It also foregrounds the interconnectedness of all living beings. The phrase "foxes that can fly" indicates a deep appreciation for the minute details and uniqueness of the life forms. The simple, lower, or primitive species of flora and fauna are to be valued as they contribute to the richness and diversity.

Similarly, the richness and diversity of life forms are expressed through Walter Spies, where he tells us that "... he'd much rather sit under a tree & watch the birds & leaves or count the ants on a window ledge than waste life at an easel" (Roy, 2018, p. 238). Though Walter Spies is a great artist, he finds greater value and satisfaction in observing and appreciating the simple elements of the natural world. This alludes to the idea that simple acts such as sitting under the tree, watching the birds and leaves, and counting the ants give a sense of pleasure and happiness to the human world. Thus, wealth and diversity do not lie only in great things but in simple life forms as well. Cherishing and valuing the simple life forms is a way of appreciating the differences and rejecting the single standard of excellence. The second principle promotes an ecocentric perspective, which values the richness and diversity of the ecosystem that is essential for the well-being of both human and non-human worlds. Hence, as per the second principle of deep ecology, the recognition of the richness and complexity of various life forms and their values is essential for a harmonious existence.

The third principle of Deep ecology emphasises the idea that humans have no right to reduce the richness and diversity of the natural world except to stay within their limits and to satisfy their vital needs (Naess, 2008, p.111). There is a difference between the satisfaction of needs and the actual need itself. In *All the Lives We Never Lived*, "Rai Chand joined Wilson's wild band of hard-drinking loggers and hunters, living by hunting, fur and musk exports, and taxidermy, and by acting as guides to British mountain travellers" (Roy, 2018, p.48). This incident reflects the reduction and destruction of animal and plant species in extremes, which, in due course, may lead to the extinction of certain species. This attitude of human beings, where they do not just stop with the satisfaction of their basic needs but possess greed towards the natural resources, leads to the act of exploitation.



Similarly, when the British began the construction of railways, which required wood for the sleepers, Wilson turned to logging, which resulted in killing deodars and the number of trees in the forests:

These trees took centuries to grow to their two hundred feet ... He felled them in their thousands and floated the logs downriver to Haridwar. In time, he became a local potentate who minted his own coins. Some said he was more powerful than the Raja of Garhwal.

(Roy, 2018, p.48)

Wilson's logging had a devastating impact on the deodar forests, which are home to some of the oldest and tallest trees which took centuries to grow. He felled the trees for his own personal gain without considering the long-term consequences of his actions on the natural world. This engenders the idea that the richness and diversity of the natural world have been destroyed for many centuries for the sake of human greed and to establish an individual's supremacy. Thus, the third principle of deep ecology emphasises the idea that humans have to stay at their limit in using natural resources as they have no right to reduce their richness and diversity except to satisfy their essential needs.

The fourth principle of deep ecology instructs about the need for a decrease in population, which will enhance the compatibility of human and non-human lives (Naess, 2008, p.111). With the increase in population, certain changes are made for the betterment of the society. In Muntazir, there was a need to build a flyover across Atkinson Avenue, which is a reference to an increase in population that requires a change from normal roads to flyovers for the well-being of the people. But this leads to the destruction of the natural resources:

A few years ago, when the municipality decided to build a new flyover across what used to be called Atkinson Avenue, they sentenced to death forty-four neem trees along both sides of the road. I (Myshkin) had planted them decades before ... it was not easy at that time to protect the saplings ... old bricks from a demolished house ... protected those saplings.

(Roy, 2018, p. 157-58)

These trees grew for decades without human intervention as the human population was less, but the current increasing human population has imposed the decision to cut them down in huge numbers. Such decisions are often influenced by cultural values and attitudes which prioritise urban development over the preservation of the natural world. The destruction of forty-four neem trees is a huge number which has a negative impact on both humans and the environment. There must be a change in this attitude, or it will result in a substantial decrease in the richness and diversity of the natural resources and an increase in the rate of extinction of species. If a resultant change is observed in the behaviour of humans towards ecological responsibility, the non-human life forms have the possibility to flourish, which will reduce the unsustainable pressure on the Earth's resources.

The fifth principle of deep ecology deals with the excessive interference of human beings towards the natural world, which indicates the deteriorating situation (Naess, 2008, p.111). An instance where Myshkin addresses:

At the riverbank, I found a power plant, its four monstrous chimneys throwing out smoke that drained the sky of colour. The mansion in Hafizabagh was still there, although half of it had become a pile of fallen masonry and what stood was blackened by time, wind, rain.

(Roy, 2018, p. 21)

Here, the power plant at the river bank has polluted the entire area. The construction of the power plant is the reflection of human interference with the non-human world, which in turn has a negative impact on the environment and human lives. The polluted water and air from the power plants cause harmful effects on crops, livestock, human health, and land and aquatic ecosystems. In the name of development and modernisation, excessive human interference disrupts natural cycles that are harmful to the environment, resulting in environmental destruction and climate change. Humans have modified the Earth for their convenience with excessive interference, resulting in the depletion of natural resources. Hence, there is a need to focus on the ecological functions of the wilderness areas and reduce excessive human interference.

The sixth principle of deep ecology talks about the need for change in the current socio-political situation, which affects the basic economic, technological, and ideological structures (Naess, 2008, p.111). It promotes a sense of global responsibility towards individuals and society to take necessary actions that consider the well-being of the entire planet for a sustainable future. If such a change is observed, it may result in the interconnectedness of all living things. When Myshkin:

I got an appointment with the district magistrate and told him our town deserved more than a mere municipal department that watered the parks and planted bougainvillea; a horticultural division was required for the whole district. The work involved ecology, city planning, botany, and water management: it was a science that needed someone qualified.

(Roy, 2018, p. 16)

Myshkin's suggestion for the establishment of a horticultural division requires expertise in multiple fields such as urban ecology, botany, water management, and city planning, and also the mention of "science that needed someone qualified" propounds the systematic approach on advocating a science-based approach for the long-term well-being of future generations. The big changes may be observed by thinking globally and acting locally where such an act is initiated by Myshkin. Such an idea of Myshkin expects a change in attitude, which would require a change in the economic, technological, and ideological structure. Establishing a new horticultural division for the whole district is not an easy task, and it involves a lot of planning, execution, and cooperation from the people as well as the government. The resulting change, in Myshkin's words, "... brought with me drawings and city plans that showed how our town could be transformed into a green oasis of tree-filled beauty, how its outlying areas could be turned into watersheds. By the end, I was exhausted by my loquaciousness" (Roy, 2018, p.16). This is achieved through Myshkin's self-determination and efforts to bring in significant factors in achieving the policy change. The sixth principle of Deep ecology states that the current dominant socio-political systems are inherently unsustainable and must, therefore, be replaced with more sustainable alternatives.

The seventh principle of deep ecology appreciates the ideological change in human beings to look for a life of quality by dwelling in situations of inherent value rather than sticking to a high standard of living (Naess, 2008, pp. 111-12). Myshkin works for ideological change as propounded in the seventh principle. He did not choose a life of high standards, though opportunities favoured him; rather, he opted for and wished to be a gardener in his town. He exclaims:

My horticultural work took me to tea gardens in Assam and orchards in Himachal; once, I was a consultant at a butterfly park; another time, an ecological advisor at a national park, but I always came back to my own job, a glorified gardener in a small town.

(Roy, 2018, p. 16)

Myshkin's diverse experiences working in various ecological settings, including tea gardens, orchards, a butterfly park, and a national park, provided him with various opportunities in different places, but he chose to remain a gardener in his own place. This emphasises the belief that local actions can contribute to global environmental consciousness and responsibility. Human attitudes towards the appreciation of quality of life and the consideration of change as improvement promote a satisfactory way of living.

Myshkin's notion of wealth for the descendants is different from that of others in the town, which reflects the entire society's opinion about the high standard of living, "Where other people have fixed deposits and money and houses to bequeath their descendants, I point to avenues of trees and say, 'I am leaving you those'" (Roy, 2018, pp. 16-17). This brings out the difference between big and great, where the former adheres to the high standard way of living, and the latter creates an awareness of the need for ideological change by appreciating the life of inherent worth of the natural world. Thus, the seventh principle of Deep ecology encourages a sense of global responsibility from individuals and society to recognise their role in the global ecosystem in preserving the natural world rather than promoting a higher standard of living at the expense of nature.

The eighth principle of deep ecology highlights that to subscribe to the foregoing seven principles of deep ecology, enthusiastic participation is required to implement the necessary changes by accepting the roles humans played towards nature and also by taking necessary steps to transform the dominant and exploitative attitude (Naess, 2008, p.112). Myshkin, in this novel, stresses the importance of biophilic existence. Myshkin's attitude towards the natural world is a reminder that nature cannot be taken for granted, wherein he says, "Leave those buds alone. Let the flowers bloom!" (Roy, 2018, p.17). This also advocates the need for less human interference with the natural world for the well-being and flourishing of the non-human world, such as plants and flowers in their own form, not just for human use or aesthetics. His attitude towards animals is the same when he says, "Oh, monkeys, birds. Frogs. Many animals. I always thought nature was the best thing, jungle the best place of all" (Roy, 2018, p.114). This portrays a sense of reverence for nature, particularly towards the diverse inhabitants of the jungle and the richness and complexity of the ecosystems. The eighth principle of deep ecology calls for action from individuals and societies to carry out necessary steps to protect and restore the environment for a harmonious co-existence with the natural world for a more sustainable and ecologically responsible way of living.

## CONCLUSION

The aforementioned discussion on deep ecological principles in Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived* delineates the ethical and philosophical understanding of human activities toward the natural world. Ecocriticism examines the ecological dimensions and implications of literary texts, understanding the nuances between human beings and the natural world to increase the awareness of human impact on the natural world. The core principle of deep ecology emphasises a shift from a human-centred to a nature-centred approach. The mutually reinforcing eight deep ecological principles elucidate the need for a profound change in the mindset of human beings towards the treatment of the non-human world to maintain a long-term environmental equilibrium. Through the eight deep ecological principles and the deep changes that each of them emphasises, Roy portrays the necessity to re-value the non-human world. There must be a sense of belongingness

that the human world should share with the non-human world, which is the basic premise of the deep ecological principles. It encourages a profound shift in attitude from anthropocentric to ecocentric one that would guide humanity in providing a better environment for future generations. The bond of reciprocity between nature and human beings is essential for the amelioration of society and the natural world. This brings out Roy's efforts to create eco-consciousness among the readers through her novel *All the Lives We Never Lived*. Deep ecological principles, though ambiguous, pave the way for a better understanding of the role of man towards the natural world for a still better sustainable and harmonious co-existence.

Deep ecology is relevant today as it is believed to be an alternative to anthropocentric philosophies by rejecting human supremacy over nature and promoting the intrinsic value of human and non-human worlds. It confronts overconsumption and exploitation of resources by human beings because excessive human interference with the natural world results in environmental issues like climate change, global warming, biodiversity loss, deforestation, melting glaciers, ocean acidification, soil degradation, and pollution. It advocates developing an ecological consciousness for a more sustainable way of living by respecting ecological limits and prioritising the well-being of the ecosystem. The ethical stance of deep ecology extends its moral consideration to non-human entities and provides a philosophical foundation for environmental decision-making and policies that prioritise ecological preservation. Deep ecology emphasises the fundamental shift in economic, technological, and ideological structures of society for a better result in global movements advocating environmental protection, conservation, and sustainability. A holistic understanding of ecological systems is crucial because it resonates with a current scientific understanding of ecosystems and their complex interdependencies in developing comprehensive environmental management policies and conservation strategies. These aspects of deep ecological principles align with the contemporary goals of creating sustainable communities.

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