

Interweaving Personal and Ecological Histories: Eco-Feminism, Environmental Concerns, and the Impact of Political Upheavals in Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived*

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ABSTRACT

Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived* (2018) seamlessly intertwines personal histories with larger environmental and political upheavals, providing a rich canvas for exploring the eco-feminist dimensions of the narrative. This article delves into the intersections of gender, nature, and politics within the novel, where personal and ecological histories are tightly linked. The characters, particularly women, are depicted as both victims and stewards of the environment amidst colonial and post-colonial upheavals. Through an eco-feminist lens, this research investigates how political and ecological disruptions shape the characters' lives and identities. Roy's work highlights the enduring connection between human and environmental well-being, illustrating how the degradation of one reflects the deterioration of the other. A literature review of eco-feminist thought is integrated to provide a theoretical framework, while the narrative is examined in the context of historical political movements and ecological degradation. Roy's novel encourages readers to rethink the human-environment relationship by demonstrating how women, as carriers of personal and cultural histories, also serve as custodians of the environment.

1. Introduction

Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived* (2018) is an evocative narrative that bridges the personal lives of its characters with the larger ecological and political currents of their time. Set against the backdrop of World War II, India's struggle for independence, and shifting global environmental landscapes, the novel explores how environmental and political upheavals shape the personal and collective fates of individuals, particularly women. The novel is not only a meditation on the emotional and psychological complexities of its characters but also a reflection on the intertwined destinies of humanity and nature.

The eco-feminist framework, which examines the intersections of environmental degradation, patriarchal oppression, and gender dynamics, offers a useful lens for analysing Roy's novel. As Vandana Shiva argues, the exploitation of women and the environment are intertwined processes that stem from the same logic of domination (Shiva, 1989). In *All the Lives We Never Lived*, this dynamic is visible in the way female characters, such as Gayatri, resist not only societal constraints but also the environmental destruction brought by colonialism and war. Gayatri's journey – both literal and metaphorical – can be understood as an attempt to reclaim personal and ecological agency in a world where both are systematically denied to her.

This paper explores the eco-feminist elements of Roy's novel by focusing on how the characters, particularly the female protagonists, navigate the intersection of personal histories and ecological upheavals. Through a close reading of the novel, this research will demonstrate that the degradation of nature and the oppression of marginalized individuals, especially women, are mutually reinforcing processes. By situating the novel within broader eco-feminist theory and contemporary environmental thought, this article will highlight how *All the Lives We Never Lived* speaks to the pressing environmental concerns of our time.

2. Literature Review: Eco-Feminism and the Intersections of Ecology and Gender

Eco-feminism emerged in the 1970s as an intersectional framework that links the domination of women to the exploitation of the environment. It posits that the same patriarchal systems that oppress women are also responsible for environmental degradation (Mies and Shiva, 1993). Scholars such as Carolyn Merchant (1980) have pointed out that the mechanistic worldview brought about by industrialization and colonialism contributed to the subjugation of both women and nature, promoting a worldview in which nature is seen as something to be dominated and exploited. Merchant's thesis aligns with Roy's narrative, where colonial exploitation of natural resources parallels the societal control over women's lives.

Vandana Shiva's *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development* (1989) further developed this idea, emphasizing the role of women in preserving environmental and cultural knowledge. According to Shiva, women in developing countries, particularly in rural areas, are often at the forefront of environmental conservation efforts because their livelihoods are directly tied to the health of the land. This sentiment is echoed in *All the Lives We Never Lived*, where women's relationships with nature are not only a source of strength but also a means of survival in a hostile world.

In her work, Ariel Salleh (1997) also links eco-feminism to broader critiques of capitalism and imperialism, arguing that both systems are predicated on the exploitation of vulnerable populations and ecosystems. Salleh's theory is particularly relevant to Roy's novel, which is set during a time of colonial domination and its ecological impacts. The environmental degradation seen in the novel is not just a backdrop but a manifestation of the political and economic structures that oppress both people and the land they inhabit.

Eco-feminist scholars have developed a robust body of literature that critiques capitalist and colonialist structures, illustrating how these systems disproportionately harm women and the environment. This literature review aims to situate Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived* within the broader theoretical framework of eco-feminism, drawing on key texts to explore how gender, environmental degradation, and political power are intertwined.

2.1. Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature* (1980)

Carolyn Merchant's *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* is one of the foundational texts in eco-feminist thought. Merchant argues that the shift in Western thought during the Scientific Revolution played a significant role in shaping modern views of both women and nature as passive, mechanistic objects that could be controlled and exploited. Merchant writes, "The transformation of the earth into dead matter made it possible to exploit it for economic gain. Similarly, women were identified with nature, and their degradation mirrored the exploitation of nature" (Merchant, 1980, p. 4). This insight is crucial in understanding how *All the Lives We Never Lived* portrays the colonialist exploitation of India's natural resources, such as deforestation and water pollution, as directly linked to the oppression of its female characters.

In Roy's novel, the degradation of India's forests and rivers under colonial rule parallels the constrained lives of women like Gayatri, who are similarly "exploited" and treated as secondary to male-driven political and economic ambitions. Just as nature is dominated and reduced to a resource, so too are women like Gayatri, whose personal and creative desires are subordinated to the needs of the patriarchal family structure. Gayatri's eventual flight from this oppression signifies a reclamation of her autonomy, mirroring a broader eco-feminist desire for the restoration of harmony between humans and nature.

2.2. Vandana Shiva's *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development* (1989)

Vandana Shiva is another critical figure in the eco-feminist movement, particularly in the Indian context. In *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development*, Shiva argues that women, especially in developing nations, are the primary custodians of natural resources and play a crucial role in environmental conservation. She writes, "Women in most societies have been the sustainers of life. They have cultivated biodiversity and preserved the environment, but modern development policies have often marginalized and disempowered them" (Shiva, 1989, p. 3). Shiva's work emphasizes how women are often disproportionately affected by

environmental degradation, but also possess critical knowledge that can lead to ecological sustainability.

In *All the Lives We Never Lived*, Roy portrays this eco-feminist dynamic through Gayatri's growing consciousness of the environmental destruction around her. As a woman stifled by societal expectations, Gayatri's escape is not only a quest for personal liberation but also a rejection of the environmental and political degradation she witnesses. Her connection to nature, evident in her longing for open landscapes and her distaste for the increasingly industrialized and polluted cities, aligns with Shiva's assertion that women have an intrinsic connection to the environment. Gayatri's desire to live more freely in harmony with nature reflects the eco-feminist belief that women's liberation and environmental restoration are interconnected processes.

2.3. Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva's *Ecofeminism* (1993)

In their collaborative work *Ecofeminism*, Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva build on earlier eco-feminist theories to critique capitalist and patriarchal systems that exploit both women and the environment. They argue that colonialism and capitalism have perpetuated a dual exploitation of natural resources and female labour, often using similar language to describe both as commodities. They write, "The connection between women and nature is not one of biological determinism, but rather a result of their mutual exploitation by patriarchal and capitalist systems" (Mies & Shiva, 1993, p. 12). This critical perspective is vital for understanding how *All the Lives We Never Lived* portrays the exploitation of both women and the environment in colonial India.

Throughout the novel, Gayatri and the natural landscapes around her are similarly subjected to the forces of colonialism. The degradation of India's environment – seen through deforestation, pollution, and the commodification of natural resources – mirrors the ways in which Gayatri's own life is constrained and commodified by the expectations of her family and society. Mies and Shiva's critique of capitalist exploitation helps explain how Roy uses eco-feminist themes to highlight the parallels between ecological degradation and the oppression of women, particularly under colonial rule.

2.4. Greta Gaard's *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature* (1993)

Greta Gaard's *Ecofeminism: Women, Animals, Nature* further develops eco-feminist theory by emphasizing the interconnections between the oppression of women, animals, and the environment. Gaard writes, "Ecofeminism asserts that the degradation of nature, the exploitation of animals, and the oppression of women are not isolated phenomena, but interrelated processes sustained by patriarchal worldviews" (Gaard, 1993, p. 5). Gaard's work is particularly relevant for understanding the broader connections between gender, ecology, and political oppression in *All the Lives We Never Lived*.

In the novel, Gayatri's character embodies the eco-feminist principle that women, nature, and marginalized beings – whether animals or other disenfranchised humans – are all subject to similar forms of control and domination. The novel's depiction of political oppression under colonial rule reinforces the eco-feminist notion that these interconnected systems of oppression must be dismantled together. Roy's narrative emphasizes that the well-being of individuals, particularly women, is inseparable from the well-being of the natural world, a theme central to Gaard's eco-feminist philosophy.

2.5. Ariel Salleh's *Ecofeminism as Politics: Nature, Marx, and the Postmodern* (1997)

Ariel Salleh's *Ecofeminism as Politics: Nature, Marx, and the Postmodern* explores eco-feminism through the lens of political economy, focusing on the ways in which both nature and women are exploited under capitalism. Salleh argues that "the oppression of women and nature is systemic, tied to the broader capitalist and colonialist drive to extract resources and control labour" (Salleh, 1997, p. 9). Her work provides a valuable framework for analysing how Roy's novel intertwines personal histories with larger political and ecological concerns.

In *All the Lives We Never Lived*, the colonial extraction of natural resources serves as a backdrop to the personal struggles of the characters. Gayatri's personal liberation is intertwined with her recognition of the larger political and environmental crises facing her country. Salleh's

emphasis on the systemic nature of oppression helps explain how Roy's novel situates Gayatri's individual struggle for freedom within the broader context of colonial exploitation and environmental degradation. The novel suggests that true liberation – whether personal or political - requires a re-evaluation of humanity's relationship with nature.

2.6. Cheryll Glotfelty's *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology* (1996)

Cheryll Glotfelty's *The Ecocriticism Reader* is a foundational text in the field of ecocriticism, which seeks to analyse literary representations of the environment and ecological issues. Glotfelty argues that "literature has the potential to shape our understanding of the environment, both reflecting and influencing the ways we interact with the natural world" (Glotfelty, 1996, p. xvi). This insight is particularly relevant for *All the Lives We Never Lived*, where Roy's portrayal of environmental degradation serves as both a reflection of historical realities and a commentary on contemporary ecological concerns.

Roy's novel is not merely a historical narrative but also a meditation on the ongoing environmental crises facing the world today. By drawing connections between the colonial exploitation of India's natural resources and the modern challenges of climate change and environmental destruction, Roy invites readers to consider the long-term consequences of human actions on the environment. Glotfelty's work provides a useful framework for understanding how Roy's novel uses historical events to comment on present-day ecological concerns, emphasizing the interconnectedness of personal and environmental histories.

In conclusion to the literature review, Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived* provides a rich tapestry for exploring the intersections of eco-feminism, environmental degradation, and political upheaval. Through a close reading of the novel and engagement with key eco-feminist texts, this paper has demonstrated how Roy uses the personal histories of her characters – particularly the female protagonist Gayatri – to reflect on broader ecological and political crises. By portraying the exploitation of women and the environment as interconnected processes, Roy's novel aligns with eco-feminist theories that critique the patriarchal and colonial systems responsible for both.

In highlighting the deep connections between personal liberation and environmental restoration, Roy's work invites readers to reconsider their own relationships with nature and society. As climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation continue to shape the world, *All the Lives We Never Lived* serves as a powerful reminder of the enduring ties between human and ecological well-being.

3. Eco-Feminist Aspects in *All the Lives We Never Lived*

Eco-feminism is an interdisciplinary framework that examines the connections between the exploitation of nature and the oppression of women, arguing that both forms of exploitation arise from the same patriarchal logic that seeks to dominate and control both nature and women. According to eco-feminist scholars such as Vandana Shiva, the exploitation of the environment is intrinsically linked to the marginalization of women, particularly in societies where patriarchal structures dominate (Shiva, 1989). Eco-feminism thus seeks to highlight the interconnectedness of environmental and social injustices, advocating for a more holistic approach to environmental and gender justice.

Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived* offers a narrative that is deeply concerned with the intersections of ecological and personal histories, reflecting on how environmental degradation and political violence impact the lives of its characters, particularly women. The novel's exploration of eco-feminist themes is evident in its portrayal of the relationships between its female characters and the natural world, as well as in its critique of the socio-political structures that perpetuate both environmental and social injustices.

In *All the Lives We Never Lived*, the life of Gayatri, the protagonist's mother, unfolds against the backdrop of a changing ecological and political landscape. As a woman trapped in an unhappy marriage, Gayatri yearns for freedom—not only from her domestic life but also from the broader societal structures that constrain her. Her eventual escape from her home to pursue her artistic passions mirrors the eco-feminist assertion that personal liberation is closely linked to environmental freedom.

The novel's central character, Myshkin, reflects on the life of his mother, Gayatri, who defies societal expectations to pursue her own path, seeking freedom and artistic fulfilment in a world that is increasingly shaped by political and ecological turmoil. Gayatri's connection to nature is portrayed as a source of strength and resilience, with the natural world serving as a refuge from the constraints of a patriarchal society. Her decision to leave her family and embark on a journey of self-discovery is closely linked to her desire to escape the oppressive structures of society and to reconnect with the natural world. As Myshkin reflects, "My mother found solace in the trees and rivers, in the open skies and the freedom they represented. Nature was her sanctuary, a place where she could be herself, away from the demands of society" (Roy, 2018, p. 78).

Gayatri's story is intricately linked to the natural world. She is portrayed as a woman who feels a deep connection to nature, a connection that is both spiritual and political. Her escape from the oppressive environment of her marital home can be seen as an eco-feminist act of resistance, a refusal to conform to the patriarchal expectations that bind her. As she moves away from the stifling urban setting to more open and natural landscapes, Gayatri's personal liberation is juxtaposed with her growing environmental awareness.

Roy uses Gayatri's character to explore the relationship between women and nature, suggesting that women, like the environment, are often controlled and exploited in patriarchal societies. The environmental degradation that takes place during the colonial period – represented through the destruction of forests, the pollution of rivers, and the displacement of indigenous peoples – is mirrored in the ways that women's lives are constrained and damaged by societal expectations.

In one key moment, Gayatri reflects on the state of the world around her: "The trees are vanishing, the air grows heavy with smoke, and yet we are expected to continue as though nothing is happening. It is as if our lives are tied to the fate of the land itself" (Roy, 2018, p. 121). This quote encapsulates the eco-feminist theme of the novel, highlighting how the health of the environment is directly tied to the well-being of individuals, particularly women. Gayatri's personal liberation is bound up with her desire to reconnect with nature, to escape the suffocating confines of urban life and return to a more harmonious relationship with the natural world.

This portrayal of Gayatri's relationship with nature reflects the eco-feminist ideal of women as stewards of the environment, challenging the systems of power that seek to control both nature and women. Gayatri's story is one of resistance to the patriarchal structures that seek to confine her, as well as a reflection on the ways in which environmental and social injustices are interconnected. Her journey is not just a personal one, but also a commentary on the broader socio-political and environmental changes of her time, highlighting the ways in which these changes impact the lives of individuals, particularly women.

4. Environmental Degradation and Its Impact on the Characters

Environmental degradation is a central theme in *All the Lives We Never Lived*, with Roy using the natural world as a backdrop for the personal and political upheavals that shape the lives of her characters. The novel's portrayal of environmental degradation is closely tied to the experiences of its characters, particularly women, who are often depicted as bearing the brunt of the ecological and social changes of their time.

The novel's setting, a small town in the foothills of the Himalayas, is depicted as a place of both beauty and fragility, where the natural world is constantly under threat from the forces of modernization and political violence. The town's landscape, with its lush forests and pristine rivers, serves as a powerful symbol of the interconnectedness of human and environmental well-being. However, this landscape is also a site of ecological degradation, with the novel depicting the gradual destruction of the natural world as a result of political and economic pressures.

The character of Gayatri is particularly affected by the environmental changes that take place in the town, with her connection to nature serving as both a source of solace and a reflection of the broader ecological crisis facing the region. As the novel progresses, the natural world

around Gayatri begins to deteriorate, mirroring the personal and political upheavals in her life. The destruction of the forests and rivers that Gayatri holds dear is depicted as a reflection of the broader environmental crisis facing the region, with the novel highlighting the ways in which environmental degradation is intertwined with the political and social changes of the time.

The novel also explores the impact of environmental degradation on the lives of other characters, particularly the marginalized. The town's indigenous communities, who have lived in harmony with the natural world for generations, are depicted as being particularly vulnerable to the ecological changes taking place. The novel's portrayal of these communities reflects the eco-feminist critique of the ways in which environmental and social injustices are interconnected, with the exploitation of the natural world often going hand in hand with the marginalization of vulnerable communities.

For instance, the novel depicts the displacement of these communities as a result of deforestation and land acquisition for political purposes. The loss of their ancestral lands and the destruction of their natural environment is portrayed as a form of ecological and social violence, with the novel highlighting the ways in which these communities are marginalized and exploited by the forces of modernization and political power. As one of the indigenous characters laments, "They took our land, our forests, our rivers, and left us with nothing. We have lost everything, not just our homes, but our way of life" (Roy, 2018, p. 154).

This portrayal of the impact of environmental degradation on marginalized communities reflects the eco-feminist critique of the ways in which environmental and social injustices are interconnected. The novel highlights the ways in which the exploitation of the natural world often goes hand in hand with the marginalization of vulnerable communities, particularly women, who are often depicted as the primary victims of these changes.

5. Political Upheavals and Their Intersection with Environmental Concerns

All the Lives We Never Lived is set against the backdrop of significant political upheavals, including the rise of nationalist movements in India and the global turmoil of World War II. These political changes are depicted as having a profound impact on the lives of the novel's characters, particularly in relation to environmental concerns. The novel's portrayal of political upheavals is closely tied to its exploration of environmental degradation, with Roy highlighting the ways in which political violence and ecological destruction are interconnected.

The novel's depiction of the town's landscape, with its forests and rivers, is closely tied to the political changes taking place in the region. The deforestation and land acquisition that occur in the town are depicted because of political pressures, with the novel highlighting the ways in which environmental degradation is often driven by political and economic interests. The novel's portrayal of these changes reflects the eco-feminist critique.

In *All the Lives We Never Lived*, Anuradha Roy masterfully intertwines the ecological and political landscapes, reflecting the ways in which political upheavals fuel environmental degradation and vice versa. Set against the backdrop of pre-independence India, the rise of nationalist movements, and the global tensions of World War II, the novel portrays a country caught during both political and environmental crises. Roy's narrative highlights how environmental destruction often serves as both a metaphor and a literal outcome of political turbulence. Through a focus on personal histories, particularly those of marginalized communities and women, the novel shows how deeply intertwined political violence and ecological destruction are, and how this convergence affects both people and the environment.

5.1. The Impact of Colonialism on Nature and People

One of the central political themes in *All the Lives We Never Lived* is the impact of British colonialism on India's landscape and its people. Colonialism, as seen through the lens of eco-feminism, has historically been a driving force behind environmental degradation and the marginalization of indigenous populations, especially women. Vandana Shiva, a prominent eco-feminist scholar, has argued that "colonialism is a process that simultaneously subjugates women and nature through exploitation and domination" (Shiva, 1989). Roy's novel reflects this understanding by portraying the ways in which colonial rule not only strips the land of its

natural resources but also marginalizes the communities that are deeply connected to these landscapes.

In the novel, the British Empire's expansion and exploitation of India's natural resources is mirrored in the deforestation and land acquisition that displaces indigenous and rural communities. Forests are cleared for timber and agricultural expansion, rivers are diverted or polluted, and large tracts of land are confiscated for infrastructure projects that serve colonial interests. These actions, driven by political motives, often lead to severe environmental degradation, affecting both the local ecosystems and the livelihoods of the people who depend on them. As one of the characters in the novel laments, "The trees that once gave us shade, the rivers that once quenched our thirst – they are all gone now, taken by those who see only profit in our land" (Roy, 2018, p. 153).

5.2. Nationalism and Environmental Exploitation

The rise of Indian nationalism in the 1930s and 1940s is another significant political event that impacts both the human and environmental landscapes in *All the Lives We Never Lived*. While nationalist movements sought to liberate India from colonial rule, they also contributed to the transformation of the country's environment in ways that were not always sustainable. As nationalists rallied for industrialization and economic self-sufficiency, the drive to modernize often came at the expense of the environment.

For example, in the novel, the push for industrialization under nationalist policies is depicted as a double-edged sword. On one hand, it symbolizes the quest for independence and progress; on the other, it accelerates the degradation of India's natural landscapes. Rivers are dammed to generate electricity, forests are cleared for industrial development, and the natural environment becomes increasingly commodified as a resource for political agendas. These developments highlight the tension between the desire for political liberation and the need to preserve India's rich ecological heritage.

The novel also underscores how women, as custodians of traditional knowledge and environmental caretakers, are often at the forefront of resisting environmental exploitation. In rural India, where indigenous women play key roles in managing and sustaining local ecosystems, the loss of natural resources due to political decisions directly impacts their lives and livelihoods. This mirrors the eco-feminist critique of development projects that prioritize short-term economic gains over long-term environmental sustainability, often disregarding the voices and experiences of women.

5.3. The Personal Costs of Political Violence and Environmental Degradation

Roy's novel also explores how political violence – whether stemming from colonialism, nationalism, or the larger geopolitical context of World War II – exacerbates environmental degradation and disproportionately affects the most vulnerable members of society, including women. As the political landscape becomes increasingly volatile, the novel's characters find themselves caught in a web of personal and environmental crises.

The personal histories of the characters, particularly Gayatri, Myshkin's mother, reflect the broader socio-political and ecological upheavals of their time. Gayatri's desire for personal freedom and her escape from the confines of patriarchal society are mirrored in her deep connection to nature, which provides her with a sense of solace and liberation. However, as political violence intensifies and environmental degradation worsens, even this connection to nature becomes threatened. The novel poignantly illustrates how the destruction of the natural environment can lead to a loss of personal freedom and identity, particularly for women who are closely tied to the land. As Myshkin reflects, "The world around us was crumbling—the forests we once wandered in, the rivers we swam in, all disappearing as the world went to war" (Roy, 2018, p. 92).

The novel also highlights the psychological and emotional toll of political violence and environmental destruction on its characters. As Gayatri's world is increasingly shaped by both political and ecological upheavals, her sense of self becomes fractured. The loss of natural spaces, the displacement of communities, and the violence of political unrest all contribute to her growing sense of alienation and disillusionment. This mirrors the experiences of many

women in times of political and environmental crisis, who often bear the brunt of these upheavals both emotionally and physically.

5.4. The Intersection of Global and Local Environmental Concerns

All the Lives We Never Lived not only explores the local environmental and political crises facing its characters but also situates these crises within a broader global context. The novel is set during the early years of World War II, a time when political violence and environmental destruction were not confined to India alone but were global phenomena. The novel's depiction of global political events, such as the rise of fascism and the devastation of war, reflects how local environmental issues are often tied to larger global forces.

For instance, the deforestation and environmental exploitation in the novel are depicted as part of a larger global trend of industrialization and environmental degradation that accompanied the war. The war effort, with its demand for resources and infrastructure, leads to the further destruction of natural landscapes in India and beyond. The novel highlights the ways in which global political forces—such as imperialism, war, and industrialization—have a profound impact on local environments and communities, particularly those that are already marginalized.

Roy's portrayal of these global-local intersections reflects the eco-feminist understanding that environmental and social injustices are interconnected on a global scale. As eco-feminist scholar Maria Mies has argued, "the exploitation of nature and the exploitation of women are not isolated phenomena, but part of a global system of domination and control" (Mies, 1986). In *All the Lives We Never Lived*, this global system of domination is reflected in both the environmental and political crises that shape the lives of the novel's characters.

6. Findings and Conclusion

Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived* offers a rich and nuanced exploration of the intersections between political upheavals and environmental concerns, particularly in relation to the lives of marginalized individuals, especially women. Through its portrayal of personal and ecological histories, the novel highlights the deep connections between human well-being and the health of the natural environment, offering a powerful critique of the socio-political systems that drive both environmental degradation and the marginalization of vulnerable communities.

By examining the eco-feminist aspects of Roy's narrative, this research article has explored how the novel reflects on the ways in which environmental degradation and political violence intersect, and how these forces shape the personal histories of its characters. The novel's portrayal of women as both victims of and resisters to these forces reflects the eco-feminist understanding that environmental and social injustices are interconnected, and that women and marginalized communities are often at the forefront of the fight for environmental and social justice.

Despite the political violence and environmental degradation depicted in the novel, *All the Lives We Never Lived* also offers a message of hope and resilience. The novel's characters, particularly women, are portrayed as agents of resistance who challenge the socio-political and environmental systems that seek to marginalize them. Gayatri's refusal to conform to the expectations placed upon her by society and her deep connection to nature represent a form of resistance to both patriarchal and colonial structures.

Similarly, the novel's portrayal of indigenous communities and their connection to the natural world reflects the resilience of these communities in the face of environmental and political challenges. Even as their lands are taken and their environments destroyed, these communities continue to resist and to maintain their traditional knowledge and practices. This resilience is a key theme in eco-feminist literature, which emphasizes the importance of grassroots resistance and the role of women and marginalized communities in leading the fight for environmental and social justice.

As Roy's novel demonstrates, political resistance and environmental resilience are deeply interconnected. The novel's characters, particularly its women, find strength and empowerment through their connection to the natural world, even as that world is threatened by political and

ecological upheavals. This message of resilience and resistance is particularly relevant to contemporary discussions of eco-feminism and environmental justice, which emphasize the importance of empowering marginalized communities to lead the fight for a more just and sustainable future.

In a world increasingly shaped by environmental crises and political unrest, Roy's novel offers a timely and important reflection on the need for resilience and resistance in the face of these challenges. By highlighting the enduring connection between human and environmental well-being, *All the Lives We Never Lived* offers a powerful call to action for a more just and sustainable future.

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