

Trauma, Memory and Reconstruction in Anuradha Roy's *All The Lives We Never Lived*

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores trauma, memory, and reconstruction in Anuradha Roy's *All the Lives We Never Lived*. The novel is narrated by Myshkin, who looks back at his childhood to understand why his mother Gayatri left his family. Her absence becomes the central emotional wound of his life. Roy shows that trauma does not always come from violence alone, but also from silence, emotional distance, and unfulfilled dreams. Gayatri's desire for freedom and creative expression clashes with the expectations placed on her as a wife, and a mother. Through memory, Myshkin slowly begins to see his mother's life differently, moving from confusion and pain toward understanding. The story is set during India's freedom struggle and the Second World War, and this political unrest reflects the tension within the family. By

retelling the past, the narrator tries to give meaning to loss and absence. The novel suggests that even if some lives remain incomplete, they can still be understood and respected through memory and reflection.

Keywords: Trauma, Memory, Reconstruction, Emotional distance, Loss and absence.
