

Chapter I

Introduction:

John Steinbeck and Easterine Kire - Naturalism and Deep Ecology

John Steinbeck— Life and Works

John Ernst Steinbeck Jr. (1902–1968) was born in Salinas, California. He was raised with modest means and from his early age developed an appreciation for the land, particularly the Salinas Valley of California. He was the only son amongst the four children and his involvement with books was passed on to him by his parents. His father, John Ernst Steinbeck (1862–1935), who apart from being the manager of Sperry Flour Mill, a private tradesman, and a publicly elected treasurer of Monterey County was also working as a bookkeeper at the Spreckels Sugar Refinery. Steinbeck's mother, Olive Hamilton Steinbeck, used to be a teacher in a school and had played a massive role in stirring the intellectual cords in John Steinbeck. His intellectually determined mind is clearly furnished in the Introduction to Steinbeck's *To a God Unknown* where Robert DeMott writes:

His bookish side, however, was colored by a sensitivity—passed down from the Hamiltons—towards ghostly apparitions and paranormal reality; throughout Steinbeck's work, beginning with *Cup of Gold*, detachment exists side by side with an attraction for archetypes, visionary experiences, and mythic patterns. (viii–ix)

Enrolling himself at Stanford University in 1919, but finding it tough to keep himself with university life, he finally dropped out in 1925 without a degree. However, Steinbeck's zeal

for learning made him read the ancient classics in their translated form along with the literature of the world, mostly American literature. He was well versed in other disciplines too, like philosophy, anthropology, mythology, history, and scientific learning. Steinbeck started as a freelance writer, a construction worker, and a newspaper reporter, and then he finally returned to California for which he had all his fascination. It was in California, where he began his writing career. Steinbeck's writing went through rough phases with his initial works being rejected as something so immaturely written. *Tortilla Flat* (1935) was one acclaimed work of Steinbeck then, which brought him laurels as a successful writer, exceeding his earnings to above a thousand dollars.



Fig. 1 Steinbeck receiving Nobel Prize for Literature in Stockholm, 1962, from R. Sandler (Royal Academy of Sciences).

He had a lot of concern for the land and this affection made his fictional works act as a strong base for the integration of the environment along with the portrayal of the social and economic issues of that time. He had unfathomable affection for Salinas Valley of Monterey County, California and was highly taken by the valley's rusticity. The Salinas Valley with its encompassing hills housing wide ranches and fertile farms, the green canopy of fields, and the pretty looking little towns with hardworking townsmen, all these were deeply rooted in his heart and soul which inspired him to put his valley in his fictional works. This affection for his country and his bold step to write it down placed his valley at a higher position in the world of literature. In 1939 he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his novel *The Grapes of Wrath*, and later in 1962 he received the Nobel Prize in Literature for the same.

John Steinbeck's forty years of writing career marked him with thirty books, including sixteen novels, six non-fiction books, and two collections of short stories. Most of his books are the meticulous portrayal of scores of events which had taken place in America which he brought to wide display. Some of his notable masterpieces include *Cup of Gold* (1929), *The Pastures of Heaven* (1932), *To a God Unknown* (1933), *Tortilla Flat* (1935), *In Dubious Battle* (1936), *Of Mice and Men* (1937), *The Red Pony* (1937), *The Long Valley* (1938), *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), *The Forgotten Village* (1941), *Sea of Cortez* (1941), *The Moon Is Down* (1942), *Bombs Away: The Story of A Bomber Team* (1942), *Cannery Row* (1945), *The Wayward Bus* (1947), *The Pearl* (1947), *A Russian Journal* (1948), *Burning Bright* (1950), *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* (1951), *East of Eden* (1952), *Sweet Thursday* (1954), *The Short Reign of Pippin IV: A Fabrication* (1957), *Once There Was a War* (1958), *The Winter of Our Discontent* (1961), *Travels With Charley: In Search of America* (1962), *America and Americans* (1966), *Journal of*

a Novel: The East of Eden Letters (1969), *Viva Zapata!* (1975), *The Act of King Arthur and His Noble Knights* (1976), and *Working Days: The Journals of The Grapes of Wrath* (1989).

Easterine Kire— Life and Works

Easterine Kire (1959–) born to an Angami Naga family has authored around thirty-one books which include her novels, children's books, short story books, non-fictional works, folktales, and poetry collections. She is also a jazz poet and performs with her band Jazzpoesi. She is born to Joshua Kire who had devoted himself towards the agricultural growth of his region by mixing varieties of paddy seeds as a part of his experimentation. Her mother, Joyce Kire, was a teacher and a storyteller from whom Kire derived a lot of first-hand information about the pre-war and post-war Nagaland. *A Respectable Woman* (2019) was written out of the account, about the post-war environment, obtained by Kire from her mother. Completing her schooling from Baptist English School, Kohima, and graduating from Shillong's Lady Keane College she did her post-graduate diploma in journalism in the year 1979 from the University of Delhi. From 1981 to 1983, she worked as an Editor in the Department of Publicity, Government of Nagaland. 1985 to 2005 were the years when she took to lectureship both in the Nagaland University, Nagaland, and the North Eastern Hill University, Meghalaya. Even before being awarded the Doctorate in Philosophy by the Savitribai Phule Pune University, Kire had manuscripts of her novels already prepared for publishing.

Easterine Kire started residing in Norway after she was invited as a guest writer by the University of Tromsø and was teaching, at the Arctic University of Tromsø, the post-colonial poetry in 2008. International Cities of Refuge Network (ICORN) at Tromsø Kommune, Norway, made her the coordinator from 2010 to 2014 and since then she has resided in Norway and has

devoted herself to being a storyteller of her people back in Nagaland. Her writing career began as a translator decoding over two hundred oral poems of Tenyidie into English. Her writings are mainly based on the lived realities of the people of Nagaland showcasing the real situation being experienced by the inhabitants in the wake of battles which arose between the Japanese force and the Indian Army, the displacing away to the forests and woods for safety, and the survival strategy, people had learned, by mingling with nature. She brings to light the violence, loss, struggles, and survival of the people as they started transitioning to globalization. Her writings have connected reverence for her land as she focuses on the indigenous inhabitants and their historical, political, social, and cultural bearings. Prof Emeritus Paul Pimomo quoted about Kire, in an endorsement on the back of the jacket of Easterine Kire's *Bitter Wormwood*, mentioning her as "...the keeper of her people's memory, their griot. She is a master of the unadorned language that moves because of the power of its evocative simplicity" (Pimomo).

The first book of Naga poetry to be published in English was her *Kelhoukevira* (1982) and the first novel to be written in English by a Naga writer was her *A Naga Village Remembered* (2003) which was, in 2018, reprinted and renamed as *Sky is My Father: A Naga Village Remembered*. Some of her notable and acclaimed works include *Folk elements in Achebe* (2000), *The Windhover Collection* (2001), *A Terrible Matriarchy* (2007), *Naga Folktales Retold* (2009), *Mari* (2010), *Bitter Wormwood* (2011), *Forest Song* (2011), *Life on Hold* (2011) *Once in A Faraway Dorg* (2011), *Dinkypu* (2012), *The Log-drummer Boy* (2013), *Thoughts After Easter* (2014), *When the River Sleeps* (2014), *The Dancing Village* (2015), *Son of the Thundercloud* (2016), *Don't Run, My Love* (2017), *Sky is My Father: A Naga Village Remembered* (2018), *A Respectable Woman* (2019), *Walking the Roadless Road: Exploring the Tribes of Nagaland* (2019), *The Rain-Maiden and the Bear-Man* (2021), *Journey of the Stone* (2021), and *Spirit*

Nights (2022). Apart from *Kelhoukevira* (1982), *The Windhover Collection* (2001), and *Jazzpoetry* (2011), her other collection of poetry includes *Ah...People of Tromsø* (2006), and *A Slice of Stavanger* (2011).



Fig. 2. Writer Alexander McCall Smith, presents The Hindu Prize, 2015, to Nagaland writer Easterine Kire at the Lit for Life festival in Chennai on Saturday (Hamid).

Easterine Kire's works have been presented with prestigious awards. Kire was awarded the Hindu Prize for her novel *Bitter Wormwood* and the Free Voice Prize by Catalan PEN Barcelona in 2013. In the year 2015 her novel *When the River Sleeps* won The Hindu Literary Prize. The Tata Literature Live awarded her novel, *Son of the Thundercloud*, with the Book of the Year Award title in 2017. She also received the Bal Sahitya Puraskar by Sahitya Akademi for the novel *Son of the Thundercloud* in 2018, and the Governor's Medal for excellence in Naga

literature in the year 2011. The Gordon Graham Prize for Literature (fiction category) was awarded to Kire in the year 2018 for her novel *When the River Sleeps*, making her the first receiver of this award. Many of her works have been translated into German, Croatian, Uzbek, Norwegian, and Nepali getting her a wide intercontinental audience.

Naturalism and Deep Ecology

Naturalism

Naturalism is a worldview which is scientific in its undertakings and only those elements which can be judged through scientific observations and experiments are taken as true. Reality is not something that is subjective, rather natural world is real only when scientific understandings prove its subjectivity. Stewart Goetz and Charles Taliaferro in their work *Naturalism* define it as “the philosophy that everything that exists is a part of nature and that there is no reality beyond or outside of nature” (6). The philosophical turn to naturalism thus gave importance to natural sciences, especially physics, to prove anything in nature to be real only if proved on scientific lines. Naturalism, based on scientism, became a very strict philosophical theory that started to profess that anything, in order to be a part of the nature around us, should be explained only through an ideal science. Naturalism thus focused on reality as against imagination because the naturalist based their belief on the reality and truthfulness of anything that existed and still exists on an authenticated explanation. With the method of realist explanation, this philosophy started to penetrate into different subjects but most particularly the literary men started to use it as a weapon against the ills and the ill-doers of the society.

It was during the first half of the last century, after debates in America associated with providing the definition for the rightful usage, the term Naturalism started to be seen in the way

it is discussed today. The Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century, no doubt was a blessing with new developments springing one after the other, raising the living standard of the people, but it brought along with it varied shares of disappointments leading to rampant poverty amongst the working-class section of people. Brian Nelson in his *The Cambridge Companion to Emile Zola* cites, “[I]ndustrialization brought with it urban poverty and prostitution, class conflict, the rise of mass movements, the birth of a consumer culture, and the struggle between the forces of secularism and religion” (1). Lower strata of the society now were taken to be hand-driven carts that were under the mercy of the rich capitalist. During that time there were writers who, in their works, started to display the gripping reality of life and living. Though they can be termed as realists, Naturalism was slightly different for it focused on the three agents behind the pitiable condition of man, viz., heredity, circumstances, and his environment.

Irena Bartáková in her diploma thesis *Naturalism in the Selected Works of John Steinbeck* while discussing about the naturalists’ states:

The aim of naturalists was truthfulness and they were aware of the fact that they could achieve it only by careful observation and recording of fact. They were determined to give a precise and detailed record of the phenomena they chose. (8)

Naturalism as a literary concept was first propounded by Emile Zola, a French novelist in the 1870s, and thence the impression of Literary Naturalism took its ground and from there spread to other regions like, in the American literature Frank Norris, an American novelist, is acknowledged for its incorporation. Zola’s observation of the harshness that was encompassing the lower strata of the living world, due to the growing selfish greed of the capitalist class, was one greatest problems of the century which made him and his followers bring to light the quandaries of the people through these writings as was also expressed by Erich Auerbach in his

work *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. Naturalism, the term, was brought to literary criticism by Emile Zola when he wrote the preface to the second edition of *Thérèse Raquin* in 1867.

Donald Pizer in his book *Twentieth-Century American Literary Naturalism An Interpretation* exclaims, “From the early attack on naturalism as ‘mere photography’ to the recent call for a fiction of ‘fabulation,’ the aesthetic validity of the naturalistic novel has often been questioned” (ix). The attack was however on ideological lines which was due to the incorporation of the depraved living conditions, in the fictional works of the Naturalist writers, that was posing a severe threat to the existence of the rich capitalists. Zola as a naturalist believed in the presentation of human life, and the state of existence as conditioned by the material influences surrounding humans. The ills of the social and biological conditions need to be brought to light, and only a novelist can do justice by revealing the truth.

Even though Literary Naturalism faced a lot of traditional opposition it was flourishing, particularly in America. It was from 1865 to 1900 that Literary Naturalism started flourishing thus giving idealism a setback because the Naturalist novel, with its scientific technique of observation and by focusing on rightful documentation, attempted to bring to light the reality using experimental techniques. It was always expected that the characters should undergo the extremes of anything terrible that could have ever happened to them. This gave a strong plotting to the novels. Following harsh realism, the theory suggested the intermittent force of “heredity, milieu and moment” (Furst and Skrine 71) in shaping the character of man because man’s present and future are imposed on him and his free will does not exist anywhere, anymore. He is reduced to the level of an animal. Their deplorable state needs an analysis and naturalist writers do this picturing in their works of fiction. Emphasizing on the scientific conditioning of life, the

definition as found in the *Webster's Dictionary of the English Language* clearly states the belief of Naturalism as:

A mode of thought (religious, moral, or philosophical) glorifying nature and excluding supernatural and spiritual elements close adherence to nature in art or literature, esp. (in literature) the technique, chiefly associated with Zola, used to present a naturalistic philosophy, esp. by emphasizing the effect of heredity and environment on human nature and action. (qtd. in Zhang 195)

Following Charles Darwin's theory of evolution famously promulgated in his fifth edition of *On the Origin of Species*, which is renowned for the explanation concerning the survival strategy where only those who can adjust to the environment and the conditions around can thrive for a successful living, and characterizing Naturalism with determinism and pessimism, "the American literary naturalists...attempted to achieve extreme objectivity and frankness, presenting characters of low social and economic classes who were dominated by their environment and heredity" (Zhang 195). It was through the work of literary art that Naturalism got prominence in each work of the Naturalist writers.

Literary Naturalists crafted their fiction with three distinguishing features viz., form, subject matter, and method. The Literary Naturalist used novel writing as the best form of plotting the state of man due to the conditions surrounding him. They used novels to trace the beginning of man's evolution to the present state because of the circumstances and the environment that conditioned his existence. Race, milieu, and moments, these three elements shaping men, fabricated the novel of the Naturalists. Naturalist novels thus were the result of realist institutions and scientific inventions. Working-class people were the subject matter of Naturalism and

[t]he Naturalists chose poverty, deprivation and squalor for their themes, wanting to face up to reality. They were conscious of the misery of people living in slums and there was often an element of moral indignation that provoked the writers and provided them with an inspiration. However, the Naturalists did not write only about working classes, middle classes were also subjected to their analysis. It shows that all people are fundamentally alike; that determination applies to all levels of society. (Bartáková 9)

Lilian R. Furst and Peter N. Skrine in their work *Naturalism*, while deliberating about the subject matter of naturalist novel, state:

The heroic is alien to the scientific view of man: freedom of choice and responsibility for his actions are implicitly denied to a creature determined by forces beyond his control. (51)

Naturalism, being a philosophy based on scientific explanation behind the truth of any object or situation, Literary Naturalists applied the technique of objectivity, observation, and documentation. These Literary Naturalists took upon themselves the responsibility of presenting the facts of living, the appalling human condition, as it appeared in front of their eyes. They wanted the readers to see the real situation without being misguided. The pros and cons of the society were given true documentation. Considered to be amoral and hence attacked, this Naturalist movement, however, has started to be given high accord on grounds of the literary qualities it possesses and disseminates to gain concerns of the ties between the socio-physical reality and the human world owing to the presentation of the awful societal situations.

Deep Ecology

It was in 1933's English language article, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement: A Summary" that Norwegian philosopher and environmentalist Arne Dekke Eide Naess coined the term Deep Ecology. Naess did not approve the human-centric approach towards the detailing of the nonhuman nature. Shallow Ecology, to Naess, was anthropocentric which gave nonhuman nature importance only because of the value that could be of help to human life like the way in which conservation of wilderness or the harnessing of wind for energy generation, etc. are only for the human benefit alone. Going in contradiction of the Shallow Ecology, Naess came up with his philosophy of Deep Ecology which strictly focused on the non-anthropocentric view of the ecology which represented a "psychologization of environmental philosophy" (Keller 206). Keller's writing titled "Deep Ecology" in the *Encyclopedia of Environmental Ethics and Philosophy* pronounced Deep Ecology to refer to

an egalitarian and holistic environmental philosophy founded on phenomenological methodology. By way of direct experience of nonhuman nature, one recognizes the equal intrinsic worth of all biota as well as one's own ecological interconnectedness with the lifeworld in all its plenitude. ("Deep Ecology" 206)

Arne Naess was of the belief that Deep Ecology favored an approach that treated nature from a deeper spiritual view through a sensitive understanding of the nonhumans enveloping us. In *The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess*, editors Alan Drengson and Bill Devall brought to the understanding Naess and his Deep Ecology stating:

Naess sees the deep ecology movement as one of many international grassroots liberation movements of the twentieth century for social justice, peace, and ecological

responsibility (i.e., freedom from tyranny and inequity, from war and violence, from pollution of our bodies, and from destruction of our home place). (4)

Considering Naess's composition of the term Deep Ecology, it appears to be a way where, keeping away the human-centric approach, the progressive thriving of the earth along with all who live in it is sought after. Deep Ecology investigates several claims. Anthropocentrism and instrumentalism, which claim that in nature only humans are with the value of ethics and morals and the physical world that surrounds human are only to meet human needs and demands respectively, is opposed because Deep Ecology claims for the intrinsic values inherent in all the entities of the world, human as well as nonhuman. Deep Ecology is against the belief of individualism which confers human beings to be starkly different from the nonhuman nature because of their higher intellectual claims. This does not mean they do not develop a relationship with the other world but the relationship is a dominating individual who is not guided by other elements. Deep Ecology leaves behind individualistic claims as one survives only because of the other in mutual coexistence. This professes the ethics of considering the ecology to be the center of importance "for the deep ecologist the ecosystem or "life as a whole" is the unit of value, and not each particular human or animal taken as an individual possessor of rights" (7) as was claimed by David Landis Barnhill and Roger S. Gottlieb in their *Deep Ecology and World Religions: New Essays on Sacred Grounds*.

Deep Ecology firmly believes that all the entities of nature like earth, rocks, trees, rivers, humans, etc. are holy and are to be revered. By doing so the wilderness will not be harmed because the curse out of harming any of these sacred elements, in which resides the mystic, will not be easy to be borne. They look for the preservation of everything that makes nature. This led to following the two central norms of Deep Ecology: firstly, "self-realization" (Devall and

Sessions 66) whereby every human being must identify themselves with the living as well as the non-living things of nature and, secondly, keeping mutual predation in mind, every specie has its own intrinsic value forwarding “biocentric equality” (Devall and Sessions 66), in other words, the biocentric egalitarianism, in the ecosystem.

It was in 1984 when Arne Naess and George Sessions were camping in the Death Valley of California, they articulated the eight principles of Deep Ecology. Through the eight principles, they forwarded the values inherent in all the entities of nature on which depends the wellness and the growth of both the human and the nonhuman life forms. Man is to refrain from destroying these entities for his selfish gains. Human interferences have already changed the face of the nonhuman world and this has led to the worsening of the situation. One must have a mutual existence with the external non-living world keeping aside the greed for claiming a high living standard at the cost of damaging the surrounding elements of nature.

It is essential that all living communities, particularly the human nature, are to understand and act in accordance with these principles if one wants to survive long. A sense of belongingness is to be developed taking care of nature with no self-centered assessment. Selflessness is the key quality one has to build if one wishes to thrive because, unless one starts regarding the elements of nature as equal partners, mutual coexistence will be impossible and will be a far cry from being achieved. The nonanthropocentric approach is to be adopted. Deep Ecology, thus, is the way forward.

Comparative Literature

Elmas Sahin discusses the background of the origin of the term Comparative Literature in his article, “On Comparative Literature.” According to Elmas Sahin

the word 'comparative' derived from Latin *comparativus*, from *comparare* is an observation or judgment of similarities or dissimilarities between two or more branches of science or subjects of study such as comparative literature, comparative religion, comparative language and so on. (6)

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw the use of 'comparative literature' in France. It was in 1848 when the phrase "comparative literature" was for the first time, in English, used by Matthew Arnold while translating Ampère's use of "histoire comparative" (Wellek and Warren 38). It was, however, after the Second World War, Comparative Literature saw its development as a discipline in Germany, the US, and Europe. The politico-historical changes, following the Second World War, added dimension to the study of nations which was to be taken up by Comparative Literature.

Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek in his book *Comparative Literature Theory, Method, Application* discusses about Comparative Literature being a method of studying literature in two essential ways. He states that the two ways are

[f]irst, Comparative Literature means the knowledge of more than one national language and literature, and/or it means the knowledge and application of other disciplines in and for the study of literature and second, Comparative Literature has an ideology of inclusion of the Other, be that a marginal literature in its several meanings of marginality, a genre, various text types, etc. (13)

Over time different schools of comparative study of literature sprang up owing to the geographical distance between countries, and also because of different comparatists having their own individual opinion in terms of the subjects to be included in Comparative Literature. The

French school laid emphasis on the comparative study of literary history and of the spiritual connections. Manu Mangattu writes, in his “Comparative Literature An Overview” about the French School, stating, “The French critics see comparative literature as a historical and positivist discipline concerned with the study of the INFLUENCE or RECEPTION to an author or authors abroad” (2). Asserting about the American School of Comparative Literature ascribing importance to aesthetics and universalism, he further states, “The American critics see comparative literature as an aesthetic discipline concerned with the study of ANALOGIES or PARALLELS in literature, beyond the confines of one particular country” (Mangattu 2). Likewise, the Canadian School, Chinese School, and the Indian School of Comparative Literature too originated with their own views of study. In the words of Rene Wellek, “comparative literature is a study of relationships between two or more literatures” (Wellek and Warren 40). A comparatist studies the similarities, differences, and the various growths and developments in the culture, customs, the traditions of nations which the literary texts assemble without any border restrictions. It is only when a comparative study of different cultures is explored, that the value and characteristics of one’s own culture also gets a thorough understanding.

Literature Review

Naturalism and Deep Ecology

Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962) brought a revolution towards modern ecological concern by putting an alarm on the harms meted to the environment, particularly wildlife, due to the unprecedented use of pesticides. The book talks about the interrelationship that exists between the living and non-living world, i.e., ecology.

Twentieth-Century American Literary Naturalism (1982) by Donald Pizer draws the condition that led to the growth of Literary Naturalism in American literature. The book is divided into three stages of American Naturalism beginning from the 1890s. Six novels by six well-known naturalist writers are discussed including John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*.

In his book, *The Literature Of Naturalism: An East-West Comparative Study* (1983), Kenshiro Homma attempts a comparative study of the American Naturalism and the Japanese Naturalism which was influenced to a greater extent by Emile Zola. Zola incorporated science into literature according to which humans are the outcome of the conditions of their heredity and their surroundings. Zola rose against the deplorable social conditions which was based on his deterministic view of the external forces. Japanese Naturalism is brought to light, some in lines with "Zoalism" (Homma 7), while some not in terms with it.

Bill Devall and George Sessions' work *Deep Ecology Living As If Nature Mattered* (1985) discusses the principles, the norms of Deep Ecology, how technocratic societies are harming the environment, and the need for its management from the perspective of Deep Ecology. People are to wisely be conscious of the earth they are living in and "we need to accept the invitation to the dance – the dance of unity of humans, plants, animals, the Earth. We need to cultivate an ecological consciousness" (Devall and Sessions ix). Ecotopian visions are presented to affirm the bond of man with the Earth so that our vision can see what has been done to the Earth by the techno-industrial craze and what the Earth should have been.

Phillip Fisher's *Hard Facts: Setting and Form in the American Novel* (1985) is a stimulating work in which he brings to the forefront patterns of setting, space, and place. Inhabiting the varied social environments, people observe and take in varied social experience which in one way or the other conditions the living of the inhabitants.

Ecology, Community and Lifestyle (1989) of Arne Naess translated and edited by David Rothenberg discusses the basic principles which focus that solving and finding solutions to all the environmental issues and problems is only at the hands of people who are to understand the intrinsic value that each entity holds. It forwards the principles of Deep Ecology and brings to the fore that the term 'Ecocentrism' (Naess 15) is deeply equivalent to Deep Ecology which is centering on the ecosphere. 'Biorights' of Naess is expressed in this book.

Deep Ecology for the 21st Century: Readings on the Philosophy and Practice of the New Environmentalism (1995) edited by George Sessions is a compilation of thirty-nine articles discussing the philosophy of Deep Ecology, its origin as a persuasive social-political-philosophical movement in the 1960s, its relation with other ecological theories like the Greens, Ecofeminism, etc. Forwarding the varied tenets and beliefs, this book brings to light the chief characteristics of Deep Ecology stating it as a strong move towards ecocentrism from anthropocentrism. The conferring of inherent value to all the nonhuman life forms is the ideology of Deep Ecology which is the non-anthropocentric value. The spiritual connection of the individual to the cosmos is only because of the intrinsic value which is inherent in all the elements of nature. It is only when the elements of the non-living world are revered, that nature and self get to become one.

The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology (1996), edited by Cheryll Glotfelty and Harold Fromm was the first contribution to literary ecology. This book explores the relationship that exists between literature and the environment which is brought to light through writing.

John Parham's *The Environmental Tradition in English Literature* (2002) is the first-ever collection of ecocritical essays to reevaluate some of the British authors by assessing the

acknowledgment given to the environment in their work of literature. This book also brings forth some of the approaches to literary ecocriticism like ecofeminism, eco-spiritualism, etc. The incorporation of scientific aptitude in studying ecology has been discussed in the essays.

Edited by Brian Nelson, *The Cambridge Companion to Emile Zola* (2007), discusses in length and breadth about Zola and his Literary Naturalism. He was a science enthusiast and favored scientific determinism and promoted literature with the scientific view thus shifting art and literature from romantic idealism to realism which he called 'Naturalism.' His *Thérèse Raquin* (1867) is the propagator of Literary Naturalism which brings into the open Zola's two interconnected aims of letting fiction show the scientific ideas about how human behavior is conditioned by the environment and the heredity, and the representation of a society that is shown through heredity. "Zola's fictional naturalism becomes a kind of surnaturalism, as he infuses the material world with anthropomorphic life, magnifying reality and giving it a hyperbolic, hallucinatory quality" (Nelson 7).

Stewart Goetz and Charles Taliaferro in the book *Naturalism* (2008) started with the philosophy of Naturalism as conceived by different philosophers over time. Naturalism is roughly discussed to be "everything that exists is a part of nature and that there is no reality beyond or outside of nature" (Goetz and Taliaferro 7). The book discusses Naturalism as "strict naturalism" which takes all the existence to be only in nature and these are to be measured through scientific underpinning, particularly physics. This also says about "broad naturalism" which puts forth the mind-body dualism because as children of nature, we have subjective and conscious experiences as we live in this nature of great value. The book, however, assesses the rejection of theism by the Naturalists because there does not exist anything spiritual or

supernatural reality unless these are scientifically proven to be real. Naturalism proposes about anything that exists to be made up of physical mechanisms only.

The Ecology of Wisdom: Writings by Arne Naess (2008) edited by Alan Drengson and Bill Devall is an anthology of Naess's essays which have seeded influence amongst the contemporary environmentalists in the present era of economic globalization and the transformation of cultures which is taking place at an unprecedented rate. The book brings forth Arne Naess's Ecosophy which is "derived from the word *ecology*, "the study of interrelationships," and *sophia*, "wisdom" (Drengson and Devall vii). It brings forth the long-range Deep Ecological movement with the realization that human existence is only because of the interdependence of humans with their living and non-living surroundings.

Lilian R. Furst and Peter N. Skrine's book *Naturalism* (2018) studies that the growth of Naturalism, as a theory in literature, sprang from ancient philosophy to denote materialism, and was influenced by the poet's admiration towards nature leading to a romantic representation of nature. However, from that it started to take roots in fine arts with the painters giving the right imitation of the real form of nature and then, finally, the term was brought to literary criticism by Emile Zola in his preface to the second edition of *Thérèse Raquin* (1867). The Industrial Revolution affected the Naturalist writers whereby Naturalism started to see man as an entity affected by the social conditions of man's genetic heredity, his surrounding milieu, and the moments of his living existence.

Elder in his journal article "Is deep ecology the way?" published in the *Alternatives* (1988), examines the arguments negating Deep Ecology as a forerunner of biological egalitarianism and the preserver of wilderness which negates the importance of urban situations.

Fritjof Capra in his 1995 study, "Deep Ecology: A New Paradigm" considers Deep Ecology as a paradigm shift born out of new environmental thoughts. In this wide web of life, human being is just a thin strand and Deep Ecology, as a theory, studies this. A non-anthropocentric theory of value can only let the human world regard the nonhuman forms of life with respect to the values inherent in them.

Christian Diehm's "Arne Naess, Val Plumwood and Deep Ecological Subjectivity: A Contribution to the "Deep Ecology- Ecofeminism Debate" in *Ethics and the Environment*, 2002, discusses the arguments and the counter-arguments that led to the forwarding of the main beliefs of Deep Ecology. An individual's identification is wholly related to the nearness one feels with the Supreme Being. One must seek the growth of others. He discusses that Deep Ecologists' see the vital needs of the ecosystem and others as their own, and promoting others should be free of any selfish conflict of interest.

D.W. Lauer in his "Arne Naess on Deep Ecology and Ethics" (2002), explores Arne Naess' stands on the value of Deep Ecology stating that from an early childhood the closeness to nature must be instilled in the minds of children. This would allow them to appreciate nature, and voice against its subjugation by human activities. Naess stood firm on the importance of technology as it brought along innumerable opportunities, but he favored to be conscious and be in harmony with nature. Only when man is in a mutual relation with nature, will there be satisfying joy.

Brian Railsback's review of "The California Crucible: Literary Harbingers of Deep Ecology" *Steinbeck Review*, 2011, raises a variety of questions on deep ecological studies by providing a fine summary of placing Deep Ecology in the extensive field of ecocriticism through the works of John Muir, Mary Hunter Austin, Robinson Jeffers, John Steinbeck, and Gary

Snyder. Arne Naess always believed in the capability of an artist and a writer to be the persuading advocate of Deep Ecology and Rainsack gives light to this belief.

Sandip Kumar Mishra in his “Ecocriticism: A Study of Environmental Issues in Literature” *BRICS Journal of Educational Research*, 2016, deals with the importance of suggesting how Ecocriticism in literature beautifully deals with the congenial interconnection that exists between nature and man by concentrating on the moral fact that no one is superior to the other and nature must be given all liberty to grow in its original way. Ecocriticism in literature tries to bring a shift in the mindset of humans, a shift from ego-consciousness of man to eco-consciousness in humanity towards nature.

The book *Comparative Literature: A Very Short Introduction* (2018) by Ben Hutchinson discusses the ethics and methods of comparative literature for deftly comparing literature as forwarded by Hutchinson as a “...reciprocal study of at least two forms of writing” (2). The book talks about the way of reading literature in its length and breadth whereby it is only when one has intellectual determinations and the curiosity to grasp information, with an open-minded attitude, one can make comparisons by viewing into genres of literature. It is further stated:

To look at literature comparatively is to realize just how much can be learned by looking over the horizon of one’s own tradition; it is to discover more not only about other literatures, but also about one’s own; and it is to participate in the great utopian dream of understanding the way cultures interact. (Hutchinson 5)

John Steinbeck

Sunita Jain in her 1979 work *John Steinbeck’s Concept of Man: A Critical Study of His Novels* analyses Steinbeck’s fiction by dividing his sixteen novels into three groups which show

similarities within themselves but variations amongst the other two groups. Though all these fictions show man's struggle to achieve dignity being an individual as well as a group animal, yet the struggle and process to achieve the same is strikingly different.

Woodburn O. Ross's 1949 work "John Steinbeck: Naturalism's Priest" studies John Steinbeck's understanding of the term Naturalism, and as a Naturalist how Steinbeck, through his fictional works, furnished human conduct and attitudes in accordance with the laws of the natural world by examining Steinbeck's work namely *The Grapes of Wrath*, *In Dubious Battle*, *Of Mice and Men*, and the pamphlet *Their Blood is Strong*.

Howard Levant in his "John Steinbeck's "The Red Pony": A study in Narrative Technique" (1971), examines the techniques of narration employed by Steinbeck in his novel. Howard forwards that Steinbeck employed objectivity which led to allegorical thrusting. The device of ironic reversal is highlighted.

Roger Caswell in his work "A musical journey through John Steinbeck's *The Pearl*: Emotion, engagement and comprehension" published in the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 2005, lay emphasis on how music has helped to understand many of the environmental concerns. *The Pearl* by John Steinbeck has been explored by Caswell in its emotional engagement making its reading comprehensively related to life and the environment around it.

Craig R. Allen's "Sprawls and the Resilience of Humans and Nature: An Introduction to the Special Features" in *Ecology and Society*, 2006 examines John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charley* as the anthropocentrism of human greed due to the destruction of habitat owing to growing sprawls.

“The Steinbeckian Land Ethic: Environmentalism and *The Red Pony*” by Derek Gladwin in the *Steinbeck Review*, 2007, discusses John Steinbeck’s *The Red Pony* from the standpoint of environmental interconnectedness, and Aldo Leopold’s concern covering the ethical standpoint for the environment called ‘land ethics’ (65). Ethical consciousness towards nature is given prominence.

Fredrik Eliasson’s *Naturalism and Friendship in Of Mice and Men* (2010) stresses John Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men* as a portrayal of Naturalism showcasing the American dream. The concept of social criticism which leads to failure and friendship is laid stress upon.

Rodney Rice in the “Circles in the Forest: John Steinbeck and Deep Ecology” (2011), talks of Del Ivan Janik’s *Deep Ecology for the 21st Century* in connection with John Steinbeck’s *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* and *The Grapes of Wrath* providing a strong argument regarding the role of literature in creating a strong environmental consciousness in humanity for a holistic ecocentric philosophy thereby replacing anthropocentric thoughts. The non-teleological thinking of Steinbeck accelerating the interconnectedness of all in nature is sufficiently provided in *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* and *To a God Unknown*.

Rahat Ullah, Kifayatullah Khan, and Tammanna Salih Shah in their article “Steinbeck’s *The Pearl* as Marxist Critique to Capitalism” (2012), discuss the capitalist’s greed for material possessions and by taking the stand of Marxism place a critique on the capitalist way of exploitation and grueling of the lower sections.

Sam McNeilly in his study “Visions from the Tide Pool: John Steinbeck’s Interdependent Migrant Community” (2018), studies Steinbeck’s travel narrative *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* and *The Grapes of Wrath* as ‘Cooperative Ecology’ (31) which is the way in which a community

is to cooperate with the natural and social environment in order to accomplish strength and harmony.

Easterine Kire

Edited by K. B. Veio Pou, *Keeper of Stories: Critical Reading of Easterine Kire's Novels* (2023), is a compilation of sixteen works on Easterine Kire's fictional and non-fictional writings. The book talks about the anglophone literature which is getting ears in recent times showing how Easterine Kire has given a different facade of vibrant culture and the natural world of the northeastern region of India which is otherwise overestimated due to violence. From an understanding of Naga cosmology to narrating Naga history of battles and conflicts to oral traditions, Pou has given a broader view of the Naga cultural heritage through his compilation.

Prajna Paramita Ray in her "Terror Tales: The Naga Insurgency in the Writings of Temsula Ao and Easterine Kire" (2016), examines the harm meted to the natives by the armed struggle in Easterine Kire's novel *Bitter Wormwood*. The compassionate obsequiousness of the Naga female is brought to light. Kire's monologic narrative style is examined. Ray, through this paper, seeks for the approval of adding this work of Kire as an informative and stirring part of the literary world rather than keeping it as just a material to be looked into when discussing the subalterns.

Jintu Hazarika's work "An Ecocritical Reading of Easterine Kire's *When the River Sleeps*" (2017), in the *International Journal of English Language, Literature in Humanities* examines the text keeping in mind the tenets and aspects of ecocriticism like ecofeminism, untamed landscape, wilderness, and pastoral setting. The nature-culture dichotomy is expressed by highlighting on Easterine Kire's use of metaphorical symbols.

“An Ecological Discourse on Naga Spiritual Cosmology: Defining Through Oral Narratives and Easterine Kire’s Select Novels” (2017) of Medongunuo Ngone and Imwapangla Imsong examines the strong spiritual significance of the divine manifestation in nature. Taking into study Easterine Kire’s *Sky is My Father: A Naga Village Remembered* they highlight the importance of taboos, dreams, and rituals related to nature, the Supreme, the Eco-consciousness of the Nagas, and aim for a ‘neo-ecoconsciousness’ (24) to thrust people to shoulder responsibilities of bringing back Nature for the harmonious existence of the human and the non-human world alike.

Neena Kishor in her “Nature in Easterine Kire’s *When the River Sleeps: An Ecocritical Reading*” published in the *International Journal of Language, Literature and Humanities*, in 2017 discusses the inter-dependence of man on Nature as being protected by nature and of Nature as being guarded by man. The expression of Kire’s use of natural symbols as used by the natives is discussed forwarding the notion of cultural pastoralism.

In the 2017 *The Hindu* review “He was a beautiful creature: *Don’t Run My Love* by Easterine Kire” Krithika R. laid emphasis on the simple and intriguing narrative technique as adopted by Easterine Kire in her novella *Don’t Run, My Love*.

Hansda S. Shekhar in his review of “Easterine Kire’s “Don’t Run, My Love” is about Magic. No, about the Supernatural. No, about Consent” (2018) discusses the simplistic and straight-forward prose style of Easterine Kire. He stresses on the supernatural entities and magic as the essence upon which all the behavioral and social issues, prevalent in the society, get their roots from.

T. Jeevan Kumar studies in his “Easterine Kire’s *When the River Sleeps: A Perspective*” published in the *Research Review International Journal of Multidisciplinary* in 2019, the magic realism and supernaturalism embedded in the life of natives. An ecocritical understanding between nature and people is also discussed.

Research Gap

The overview of the literature review of John Steinbeck and Easterine Kire shows that most of the work has been done on ethics and narrative styles and some random studies on ecocriticism. John Steinbeck and Easterine Kire have been studied separately to bring out their individual beliefs and their respective visions, which they furnished through their works of fiction, but a comparative study of both has not been explored. More so, a convergence between Naturalism and Deep Ecology, interpreting the two novelists has not been attempted so far. Therefore, the study aims to bring to light a comprehensive comparative study of John Steinbeck and Easterine Kire, to closely read the selected novels of the two authors, and to study how Naturalism and Deep Ecology have an interplay in their works.

Objective of the study

Primarily the study would ponder deeper into the novels of John Steinbeck and Easterine Kire to find out if there exists any convergence in the thought process and the writings of both Steinbeck and Kire. There will be an attempt to analyze how Naturalism and Deep Ecology have a connection in their works by making a comparison and thereby concluding that a non-anthropocentric approach is required to see the relationship that exists between nature and man. This work will delve into the essence of the nonhuman entities as the provider of identity to the

individual and the society. The following selected texts of John Steinbeck and Easterine Kire have been used for the study:

The selected texts of John Steinbeck:

To A God Unknown (1933), *Of Mice and Men* (1937), *The Red Pony* (1937), *The Moon Is Down* (1942), *The Pearl* (1947), and *Burning Bright* (1950).

The selected texts of Easterine Kire:

Mari (2010), *Bitter Wormwood* (2011), *Son of the Thundercloud* (2016), *A Respectable Woman* (2019), *Songry* (2021), *Journey of the Stone* (2021), *The Rain-Maiden and the Bear-Man* (2021), and *Spirit Nights* (2022).

Methodology

The methodology applied for the study will be the theoretical concepts of Naturalism and Deep Ecology as propounded by Emile Zola and Arne Dekke Eide Naess respectively. The Comparative Literature of Ben Hutchinson in analyzing different cultures as represented in literature will be taken into consideration. For the purpose of understanding how these concepts work hand in hand a close reading of the selected texts of John Steinbeck and Easterine Kire will be taken up. The ninth edition of the Modern Language Association stylesheet is made use of for the research methodology of formatting in-text references and bibliography.

Chapterization

The title is *Milieu, Memory, Mysticism: A Comparative Study of Naturalism and Deep Ecology in the Selected Novels of John Steinbeck and Easterine Kire*. The study is divided into the following five chapters:

Chapter I: Introduction: John Steinbeck and Easterine Kire - Naturalism and Deep Ecology

Chapter II: Milieu: Towards the Centre of Valued Identity

Chapter III: Memory, Music, and Healing

Chapter IV: Mysticism and Obedience to the Entities of Nature

Chapter V: Conclusion: Convergences and Exchanges in John Steinbeck and Easterine Kire

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