

CHAPTER-4

Conclusion

The study attempts to explore the worldview of Arundhati Roy as represented in her award winning novel *The God of Small Things*. Arundhati Roy, who became immensely popular with her only novel *The God of Small Things*, has grabbed more attention recently with her non-fictional writings, polemic interviews and public orations. She has been denoted by the term ‘writer activist’ and one may wonder if it is an aberration to be an activist through writing. Arundhati Roy is a much celebrated writer activist who has blended demands of a conscious citizen and that of a creative writer. Her career graph may not seem very impressive if we judge her by the standards applied on creative writers. She has only one literary work in the form of a novel to speak of. Her other writings though register an impress of her literary skills are still too meager to be judged for literary merit. Still this dissertation developed on the felt need by the researcher to trace the development of Arundhati Roy as a writer who dared to come out of the cosy solitary retirement of a writer and adorn the role of an activist.

Arundhati Roy’s life can catch attention for the sheer vivacity. Moreover her achievements in the field of writing entertain a serious student of literature to prosecute the underlying meaning in Roy’s literary pursuit. This fact may be read differently by critics who describe Roy’s activism as a great loss to literature. Others may describe her as a dabbler. The present study stays clear of such inchoate views on Arundhati Roy. It attempts a serious and objective study of Arundhati Roy’s works and tries to unravel the reasons behind the enigma of Arundhati Roy as a writer.

The aim of the researcher was to pay attention towards the writings of Roy in which she writes about the social issues, religion, justice, war, environmental problems and about the sufferings of common people. The researcher applied critical tools on her writings.

The researcher traces the life, concerns, preoccupation and writings of Arundhati Roy. The researcher also writes about Roy's works *The Algebra of Infinite Justice*, *War in peace* and about *Democracy*. These are all about violence. The researcher found that Roy is against the testing of nuclear bombs. She talks about the devastating effects of nuclear bombs. Roy is against the testing of nuclear bombs in Pokhran and making nuclear bombs. She thinks about the destruction, which will be caused by nuclear bombs. It will affect our environment also. She takes it as a political agenda. Our politicians are in favor of these tests only because of their benefit. The researcher found social commitment, concern for common people and nation in her writings. As a committed writer she thinks about the life of common people. She talks about people who suffered a lot because of the violence and war. During Gujarat violence and Iraq-America war women suffered a lot. The violence affected them. In September 1998 her article "The End of Imagination" appeared as a response to the testing of nuclear weapons in India. The article demonstrates both a fervent appreciation for the natural beauty of the country and a respect for the fragility of life in a world containing bombs that could destroy everything in a matter of seconds. Roy calls for those who agree with her about the evils of nuclear warfare to join her in public denunciation of it. The writer is always concerned about the environment and the effect of environment on the people. The writer's personal fame has drawn attention and donation to these controversies, with some criticism from all sides of the political spectrum.

The researcher discusses the three generations of oppression in *The God of Small Things*. This novel is based on the life of Ayemenem a place in Kerala. *The God of Small Things* is an autobiographical novel. As the novelist herself says it is the experience of thirty seven years of her life, her own fears with which anyone could agree or disagree with. She adds, “for me the book is not about what happened, but about how what happened affected people.”(Wilbur, 46)

The oppression that is mentioned even from the beginning of the novel is the oppression of women. The women are described as doomed from the day they are born; even when they are innocent, they are treated badly by patriarchal society. In brief, the women are oppressed first by their father, later by their husbands, and finally by society in general, which also includes the women who think it is wrong to break the social norms. Roy tells about women’s suffering in this novel.

The women are oppressed because of the social norms laid down by men, and the oppression is handed down from generation to generation. Roy presents a story of three generations through the characters of Mammachi, Baby Kochamma, Ammu and Rahel in her novel *The God of Small Things*. Though the oppression changes from generation to generation, being very hard in the first two generations, it is reduced in the last generation.

Arundhati Roy’s socio-political criticism as reflected in the novel essentially moves round three main points; the caste system, Patriarchal hierarchy and environmental issues in this novel. The novel is related to Kerala - Its society, politics, culture, economy, environment, caste question and so on.

The novel deals with a hackneyed subject matter a high caste woman falls in love with a low caste man. The result is obvious class discord, secret rendezvous, arrest and annihilation. It is not that the novel is any one of these, rather it is a combination of all

these, the private and the public. She says, “writing (the novel) was a fictional way of making sense of the world I lived in, and the novel was the technical key with which I did it”(Swami, 106-7).

The God of Small things appears to come under the third-person narration, where the point of view seems to be that of the seven-year-old twins Estha and Rahel. The twins and their point of view occupy large spaces of the book. To this effect we have Donald Eichert saying about the ‘age-old theme’ of the book, that it is “told enduringly through the stream of consciousness of a small girl.”(7) Much of the action when they all go to the airport at Cochin to receive Sophie Mol and her mother, is seen through the point of view of the twins. Though the major point of view is that of the twins, the author also shifts the point of view from character to character according to the action from time to time.

Arundhati Roy gives the account of Ammu’s failed marriage, her father’s sadism, Mammachi’s pickle venture, Baby Kochamma’s early life her love for father mulligan, her stint as a novice at the Roman Catholic Convent.

Roy appropriates the English language by bringing it under the influences of the vernacular. Appropriation is part of her attempt to destroy the power structure colonial and patriarchal. She defamiliarizes the language by making it carry the burden of the indigenous culture. Untranslated words are used to insert a truth of culture into the text. Malayalam words embedded in the English text seem to carry the oppressed culture, just as the English words, that surround them may be seen to be tainted by its colonial origin. The process of decentring of male domination is achieved through a dislocated and deviant style that often resists a mimetic reading.

In January 1999 Arundhati attended a reception in her home state of Kerala organized by the Dalit Sahitya Akademi. There she spoke out in support of the cause of the untouchables in India and made clear her solidarity with the Dalit Struggle for justice and equality.

The writer worked for the Dalits of her society and she declared herself an advocate of their cause. She helped Dalit writers to tell their stories to the world. Roy has put her talents and states to use as an activist for several of the important issues facing India today.

Arundhati Roy has actively intervened in a great many social issues and fought for the cause of the voiceless grassroots. The problem of Kashmiri separatism, Sardar Sarovar project, War in Afghanistan, US foreign policy, global nuclear weaponization, Indian Parliament attack, the Muthanga incident in Kerala, the stance of Israel regarding Palestine, issues of Tamil people in Lanka, Naxalite- Maoist insurgency , the 2008 Mumbai attacks etc, are a few of the issues she has actively involved in.

Roy has evinced a well defined sensibility in the selection and organization of her fictional materials. She upholds the values of folk art and culture to reinforce her battle against the evils of urbanization and technocratization. Roy's environmental concerns endorse her affinity towards a simple and uncorrupted life.

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