



SOCIO-POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF POST-INDEPENDENT INDIA: AN ANALYSIS OF ARUNDHATI ROY'S THE MINISTRY OF UTMOST HAPPINESS

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ABSTRACT

The novel The Ministry of Utmost Happiness (2017) addresses numerous current concerns and their solutions. The work is like a magical realism that perfectly balances history with realism. It covered a wide range of topics, including the Kashmir insurgency, the Hindu-Muslim pogrom in Gujarat in 2002, the humiliated and battered lives of transsexual people, and the horrific Dalit experience.

KEYWORDS: *Post-Independent, India, Socio-Political, Arundhati Roy's, Analysis, Happiness*

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INTRODUCTION:

The novel tells the love story of Anjum, a transgender woman who used to be Aftab, and Musa, a Kashmiri militant, and Tilo, a modern girl. The author asks a lot of questions about whether we are in a postcolonial state or if our own people have colonized us. The truth is revealed by her characters' experiences and memories. Because the so-called Duniya was unsuitable for her, Anjum was compelled to live in a cemetery. She was beaten like a tree, stoned, humiliated, and exploited. The so-called Duniya's "cultural ideology" does not adequately describe her. She was beyond language, beyond gender identity, and beyond explanation. "All things, not just living things, but all things – carpets, clothes, books, pens, and musical instruments – had a gender," Jahanara Begum was

aware. Man or woman, everything was either masculine or feminine. An individual can't live in a vacuum, s/he really wants a social character. Yet, Anjum has no personality. She and all of the "hijras" experience this crisis. They are not educated or educated at all; They are confined to a "balcony" only to observe the school-going "normal" children. Roy depicts Anjum's experience, but this is the transgender community as a whole. Women in our society are "double colonized," enslaved by both patriarchy and colonialism, whereas transgender people are enslaved by a tripartite colonial system. They have no legal rights, no jobs, and must survive on begging, a meager allowance from the government and non-governmental organizations, or "badtameezi - bad behavior." The novelist illustrates the anxiety of all transgender people by depicting Anjum's. Through Anjum's narration, Roy conveys her mental anxieties:

She is a woman trapped in man's body... She never knew which box to tick, which queue to stand in, which public toilet to enter (Kings or Queens? Lords or Ladies? Sirs or Hers) ...She, augmented by her ambiguities... (p. 122).

Roy criticises Hindu mythology, in which transgender people are regarded as "lost ones." When Ram, Sita, and Laxman went to the forest for fourteen years in the Ramayana, the citizens decided to accompany them and arrived on the outskirts of Ayodhya, where the forest began. 'I want all you men and women to go home and wait for me till I return,' Ram declared to the crowd (p. 51). The transgenders were present as well, but Shree Ram just urged the men and women to return, leaving out the transgenders. They waited at the forest's edge for fourteen years. As a result, they are regarded as "forgotten ones" not only in the past, but also in the present. Through her spokesperson,

Roy conveys the current political turmoil through her compelling narrative. She presents the actual history through Anjum's memories of the Gujarat riot and the "Flyover Story," which occurred during India's first Emergency, which was declared by the government at the time. Fundamental rights were suspended, newspapers were censored, and the country was shrouded in police atrocities by the declaration of an emergency. For the sake of populace control, individuals were strongly sanitized. The Maintenance of Internal Security Act, a new law passed by the government, allowed anyone to be arrested on suspicion. Without a trial, the opposition leaders crowded the jail. The Indian Constitution and Democracy became puppets under political leaders' control. Zainab was shown the "Flyover Story" by Anjum, but the actual event was much more bitter. Their driver was captured and thoroughly tormented by the police. The transgender people were told to "...run all the way home if they did not want to be arrested for prostitution and obscenity" (35). This was a very strong instruction. Ironically, the author asks if this is "democracy or demon crazy" when transgender people don't have any rights or respect as human beings and ordinary people are being tortured for controlling intolerance. Sikh bodyguards murdered Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the prime minister at the time, in 1984. Her supporters brutally tortured the entire Sikh community. The wrongdoing of a few men cost the community

as a whole a lot of money.

Indian political ideology is criticized in Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. She exposes the obscure political discourse in India. Preaching about India's unity at the same time as preaching about "Secularism," "Hinduism," "Minority," and "Dalit" issues is the mission of some political parties. The author asks, "Why do political leaders have different populism that causes riots?" if we are united. Their overarching totalitarian views of democracy, liberty, equality, and fraternity captivate the public. But is there fraternity or equality between Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Sikhs? She despises the jingoistic patriotism of Bharatiya Janata Party that causes Gujarat revolt in 2002. The riot's victim, Anjum, was a broken survivor. She left the so-called "Duniya" because of the riot's brutality. Gujarat ka Lalla never attempted to appease Hindu chauvinism during the massacre of 66 pilgrims in Akshardham by Muslims; however, he unofficially declared that "every action would be met with an equal and opposite reaction" (45). So the 'response' was the horrible 'Godhara' occurrence. Everything was destroyed by the devil dance of the criminal. The Hindu right-wing mobs that were clearly nationalist and had "steel talons and bloodied beaks – all squawking together:" Mussalman, my friend! Pakistan, Qubristan!" The Mussalman can only live in one place! Pakistan or the graveyard" Hospitals, shops, homes, and places of business all witnessed the massacres. The mob also included the police. During the riot, they did not report any missing dairy products. Despite the brutal murder of Zakir Mian, Anjum was spared for the sake of traditional belief. "nahi yaar, mat maro, Hijron ka maarna apshagun hota hai" (62), "prospect of bad luck" is the only thing that can placate them. Brother, don't kill her because killing Hijras brings bad luck. They 'collapsed men and unfurled ladies' (62) yet they left Anjum "alive. Un-killed. Un-hurt. not folded or unfolded at all so that their good fortune might be a blessing to them During the riot, the Muslims disguised themselves as Hindus by shaving their beards and holding red thread in their hands. Anjum chanted the Gayatri Mantra ever since she got back from Gujarat, and she even helped Zainab recite it because she was afraid that "Gujarat could come to Delhi any day" (48). No area of the country is safe for people. Despite the massacre, "Gurjat ka Lalla" won the election and was predicted to take over as head of the Central Government.

Anjum comprehends the center issues of life. The hyper patriotism makes India a grave. Anjum is worried about the possibility that that Gujarat can come anyplace quickly. Saddam Hussain believes that really it won't come however it exists. The entire India resembles a Gujarat. Some time they (political pioneers) repudiate ranchers from their field and hand over their fields to the coalminer, at some point they uproot individuals from riverside and make there dams with next to no recovery, and remove the hammer inhabitant from the city, -

High rises and steel production lines jumped up where woods used to be, waterways were packaged and sold in stores, fish were tinned, mountain mined and transformed into a sparkling rockets. Huge dams illuminated the urban communities like Christmas trees. (98)

Jantar Mantar was the spot for political elites who weep for 'defilement free India', 'rank free India', 'boorish India,' this and that forward. Roy assaults the craftiness legislators and pseudo social laborers. They cause individuals to accept that they are just battling for the reason for poor people. Yet, in actuality they just do to come to the spotlight. She reprimanded Anna Hazare, 'a tubby old Gandhian, previous fighter turned-town social-specialist' who quick for the 'fantasy of a defilement free India'. She deprecated his thought by ordering it as 'dream' however this fantasy would stay unfulfilled in light of the fact that "His fantasy of a general public liberated from debasement resembled a cheerful knoll in which everyone, including the most bad, could touch for some time" (102). The most debased money managers, lawmakers subsidized for his battle. The creator penetrated the embellishment of his battle. The elderly person was adequately tricky to comprehend that it wouldn't be productive to adhere to just a single subject like defilement, he associated pseudo nationalistic philosophy and declared that "he was driving India's Subsequent Opportunity Battle" (102) to stand out enough to be noticed. He upheld the 'Hindu pettiness' and when Muslims were disappointed, he set up for a little while by Muslim film star who sat next to him. At the point when Dalit were burst into fierceness, the board organized a sweeper young lady who is dressed well and that young lady serves his drinking water to 'underline the message of Solidarity in Variety'. For the patriots he cried, "Doodh maangoey to kheer dengey! Kashmir maangoey to chiir dengey!" ("Request milk, we'll give you cream! Request Kashmir we'll tear you open crease to crease") (103). The politically incomparable class of individuals need to gather populace with normal interests, and they are emphatically ready to play it with patriotism. Along these lines, ethnic legislative issues is valued and ratiocinated and it promotes that they are building this state not so much for their own confidential interest but rather for their ethnic gathering. What's more, their authoritarian discourse hypnotized individuals. There were such countless battles. A Gandhian lobbyist made quick for the benefit of thousand ranchers and native ancestral of West Bengal. Yet, she was not covered by media like the wily 'elderly person'. Other than the elderly person's 'against debasement development', there were Manipuri Patriots requesting the withdrawal of the Military Unique Powers Act. Tibetan outcasts were calling with the expectation of complimentary Tibet. The Relationship of Moms of the Vanished, whose children were missing, accompanied their pennant. Their banner was not captured by any television camera. The concept of Kashmiri women's protests and freedom for Kashmir grew bold to them. The TV station yelled at them, and the cops yelled back, "Muslim terrorists do not deserve Human Rights!" (115). For a long period, victims of the Bhopal Union Carbide Gas disaster demanded justice. DAW Chemicals was now the company's name. Dr. Azad Bharatia, the author's spokesperson, poses the following questions:

But these poor people who were destroyed by them, can they buy new lungs, new eyes? They have to manage with their same oldorgans, which were poisoned so many years ago. But nobody cares, (130).

The service of most extreme joy is the ideal opposition against India's instilled standing framework that is constantly invigorated by the ideological groups. The lower standing individuals are corrupted by the upper rank Hindu as well as by the police, the preserver of regulation. The creator portrayed the egregious experience of Saddam Hussain. The police barbarities and embarrassment constrained him to repudiate his religion. He was a Dalit however later he leaned towards Islam. He was supporting a vindictive mindset for the lynching of his dad by the Hindu horde. He personally changed his name as 'Saddam Hussain' in light of the fact that he was energized by the gallant/bombastic passing of Saddam Hussein, the Leader of Iraq. His endlessly father companions were lynched by the horde before the police headquarters. The supreme government generally teaches that individuals ought to comply and make conviction on rule of peace and law of the country. However, where could the rule of law be? Here the police need their 'cut' and assuming they are disappointed, they will surrender the apparently denounced to horde. The little Saddam, his dad and his dad's companions were getting back from gathering the remains of cow, they halted at Dulina police headquarters to pay the 'slice' to Sehwat, Station House Official. The official requested more on that day yet they had not much cash. The official locked them on the charge of 'cow butchering'. They (police) spread the talk that they were 'cow executioner'. The hordes who were stimulated by the Hindu philosophy of 'Gau Rakhsha', butchered the men based on talk. Saddam was excessively little to grasp the situation. He was additionally blended with the crowd, "I was essential for the crowd that killed my dad" (89). Saddam was frightened by the sight, "Everyone watched. No one halted them (89). The blood of his dad was streaming "as though it were water, how the street seemed to be a road in the old city upon the arrival of Bakr-Eid" (89) The public authority make the 'Heavenly Cow' public symbol and the 'Gau Rakshak Bahini' get sufficient ability to use their monstrosities. Individuals who ate hamburger were pounded into the ground by the horde. Their ruthlessness was clear when Anjum advised the occupants of Memorial Park to drive away the old cows (to evade the claim of cow butchering) in light of the fact that "If they (cows) bite the dust here - not if, when they pass on - they'll say you killed them and that will mean the demise of all of you...You must be very careful"(402). Saddam communicated his unfortunate mentality "If they want to kill you, they will kill you whether you are careful or not, whether you have killed a cow or not, whether you have even set eyes on a cow or not." (402) S. Murugesan, a soldier, experiences racial conflict and humiliation in the novel. He was killed by an explosion. He was from lower station and consistently treated with embarrassment by his kindred troopers. Indeed, even after his demise, the high station didn't permit his body to pass their home. As a result, the government's attempt to produce a documentary film about him as a grand narrative about the bravery and sacrifice of the army became pointless. He was unable to earn respect as a result. In any event, when his sculpture was raised toward the start of the town, some higher position individuals could have done without "an Unapproachable Man's sculpture set up at the entry" (318). The statue was dismembered and beheaded a few days later. How absurd it is that a soldier who gave his life for his country and

served his country is disgraced and honored solely because he is of a low caste! The 'stupendous portrayal' about the penance of a trooper and his significance don't prevail with regards to getting any regard for him.

Postcolonial literature not only reveals how politics are viewed and the hidden discourse of dominant ideology, but it also assists individuals in standing up to exploitation. In order to become clean and pure, upper caste people always require the assistance of lower caste people, but they never acknowledge their contribution. They are humiliated in return. When his people protested against exploitation and humiliation, Saddam Hussein abandoned his plan for retaliation. They were made aware of the exploitation by the recurrence of the incident, similar to Saddam's father. When they returned from collecting cow carcasses, five Dalits were humiliated. They dissented and denied to work for upper station Hindus. Saddam renounced his plan of retaliation and was enchanted by the Dalit revival: "My people have risen up! They are at war! What is one Sehrawat's purpose right now? Nothing!" (407).

Arundhati Roy strongly disagrees with the military insurgency in Kashmir. She was also accused of sedition for her vehement criticism. However, she also criticizes the pedant Maulanas and Maulabis, in addition to the military. She calls the Kashmiri concept of "jihad" "inbuilt idiocy." Pakistan and Afghanistan introduced this concept to Kashmir. The Moulanas propagate intolerance through religion. A state based on Islam is their goal. They declared the liquor store and cinema hall to be "un-Islamic." Kashmiri militant Aijaz joined Lashkar-e-Taiba rather than Hizb and JKLF. He joined Lashkar-e-Taiba because the other militant groups from Kashmir respected the political leaders who "cheated and betrayed us... made their political careers on the bodies of Kashmiri." Roy records Kashmiri's miserable situation. In the circular cell of Jeremy Bentham, they behaved like prisoners and were always under the watchful eye of an invisible guard, either an Army or a militant. At the point of a gun, the people are constantly threatened. We can understand their miserable condition when the Army officer, Armik Singh, uttered that sometimes they knocked on villagers' door "pretending to be militants from Pakistan asking for shelter. If they were welcomed, the next day the villagers would be arrested..." (335) The author's heart cries for the impoverish condition of the villagers:

How are unarmed villagers supposed to turn away a group with guns who knock on their doors in the middle of the night? Regardless of whether they are militants or military? (p. 335).

It is enough to produce another militant like Musa and Aijaz through such severe torture. Musa was detained by the police because he was so composed at his wife and daughter's funeral. His wife and his three-year-old daughter Miss Jebeen were shot to death. The crystal-clear Valley was filled with the ubiquitous death. Here the individual isn't perceived by their character, rather by their 'ID card', "our cards are a higher priority than we most definitely are presently. The most valuable thing anyone can have is that card" (p. 343). The Military faculty like Major Amrik Singh, Ashfaq Mir and ACP Pinky were sufficient to make the existence of individuals terrible. The Kashmiri was

assisted in getting to Jannat by Major Amrik Singh, who posed as "jannat express." "Gambler, daredevil officer, deadly interrogator, and cherry, coldblooded murderer" were some of his characteristics. The men, including Amrik Singh, want to extend the conflict in Kashmir. Aijaz made it clear that he had received his training in Kashmir. He never went over the wider area. Everything was his in Kashmir. It was shocking to learn that the Army, which was tasked with maintaining peace, provided the militants with arms. Through his revelation, Aijaz revealed the bleak reality, yes, they (army) don't want the militancy to end. They don't want to leave Kashmir. They are happy with the situation as it is. Everybody on all sides is making money on the bodies of young Kashmiris. (228).

The Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Department presents the Valley as a "paradise" on earth, where indigenous people are forced to sit on white snow covered in warm clothing while yelling "Jammu and Kashmir" in an exhilarating voice. Thus white. So just. So, energizing' (90) however as a general rule "Passing was all over the place. Everything was death. Youngness itself the act of dying became just another way to live. 314) According to Barry, 86, the tourism department's "hyperreal" presentation of the valley blurs the distinction between "reality and imagined," "reality and illusion," and "surface and depth." The influence of images from movies, television, and advertisements actually contributed to Baudrillard's association with "the loss of real." Arundhati Roy tries to figure out how the media misrepresents the depth of the surface. She tries to break down those aspects of media in this book.

The truculence of the police was not limited to Kashmir. The same cowardice also befell the indigenous people of Central India. Roy describes the Maoist and Naxalite revolt in the Bostar district. The police sexually abused the female and tortured the men. It is told through the activist's perspective of Comrade Revathy. A few little kids and young men rose against the double-dealing by the 'Class Foe'. In 2009, the government at the time announced Operation Green Hunt. The "police, Cobras, Greyhounds, Andhra Police" and Paramilitary Forces inundated the forest. They set the village on fire and killed the adivasis. "They take everything, burn everything, steal everything...They want adivasi people to vacate forest so they can make a steel township and mining," they said of the villagers, who were plundering their possessions (p. 421). Six police officers raped Comrade Revathy unintentionally after he was illegally taken into custody. They caused her to become pregnant. They fought for the root and the rights of the poor, but the government labeled them as Maoists or revolutionaries. Therefore, the government can use them however it pleases. The government never attempts to assess their actual issue, which is their precarious situation.

The postcolonial researcher Partha Chatterjee sees that, "the picture of lady as goddess or mother ties her to a type of subjection that is the activity of predominance without authority" (Nyla Ali Khan, *The Lady Question in the Subcontinent*). Arundhati Roy, a postcolonial writer, also reveals how patriarchy oppresses women. In contrast to those dominance, she projected Tilo. She does not instill in her the traditional femininity. Another way Tilo challenged

patriarchy was through her insouciant lifestyle, her refusal to be a mother, her bravery in loving a Kashmiri militant, and her composure during Army interrogation. By limiting women to the trough of motherhood and assimilating them with a nation's territory, the nationalist narrows the scope of women's participation in the larger spectrum. She must therefore require protection. In this novel when Musa left Tilo at long last he likewise recommended her to remain not the only one since it's risky for a lady to live alone - "you really want cover". Why does she require a cover given that she is a woman? But it's hard to question the idea. A woman must exhibit the traditional virtues of patriarchy. In the event that she attempts to go past, she ought to be viewed as a shifty, flirt ladies, and effectively accessible item to anybody. The "lewd suggestions" of a retired army officer were going to disturb Tilo while she worked in an architectural firm. Intoxicated, the man knocked on her door at midnight. But because "she was a lone woman," she never dared to complain about the man (p. 364). The entire society needs to show ladies how to dress, how to live and how to act. She must repeatedly answer Tilo's cruel question, "How many men do you fuck at the same time," if she dares to deviate from the norm. page 381), and the words are burning hot. Therefore, if you are deemed "indecent" or "immoral," you will forfeit all of your legal rights to protest. Because of this, the smuggler Anwar Bhai did not dare to complain to the police when the prostitute Rubina's eyes were missing from her body. The author wonders if women have any freedom. Gayatri Chakraborty Spivak argued in her groundbreaking essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" those women are always viewed as "subaltern." According to Spivak, a "subaltern" cannot speak and is only "ventriloquised," or spoken for, by either the colonial master or the current postcolonial master.

Arundhati Roy is an insightful commentator on "Neocolonialism" and European-American imperial policy. Kwame Nkrumah was the first person to describe neocolonialism. Using this term, he suggests that former colonies that have been decolonized have a small economic dependence. The First World nation or super-national organizations (which are essentially under First World nation control) are in charge of their economic policies. Like privatization, ASPs, FDI, NATO, and other policies, these nations are also influenced by the First World. The best strategy for the First World nations to maintain control over their previous colonies is as follows: Through mining and low-cost labor (sweat shop), the former colonies' natural resources are still being exploited. According to TPSD, 115, "western models of dressing, eating, and social interactions process begin to acquire a tenacious hold in the post-colonial nation." Economic control is frequently accompanied by cultural imperialism. As a result, imperialism paved the way for orientalism, which is based on the apparent cultural superiority of the West over the East. Roy criticizes Indians' anglophile mentality, in which natives sleep on the street and American Army dogs reside in air-conditioned rooms of five-star hotels. The author refers to capitalism as "poisonous honey" that entices individuals. People's minds were colonized by "e-colonialism" through the media. In this way, "English paper and the most up to date brand of skin brightening cream (selling by ton) said: Now is our time. Kmart was on its way. Walmart and Starbucks were coming..." (p. 97) The Indian has become what Bhabha referred to as a "mimic man" due to his

tendency to favor Western culture.

P.K. Nayar writes, "Neocolonialism is furthered in the former colonies through the involvement of the elite...The elite, who may be considered, not without cause, as advocates of globalization, also fill the spaces vacated by the former European masters,". They formed the new ruling classes..." (TPSD, 115). Hence, the author's explanation of the novel's hidden ugly aspects of American imperialism, neocolonialism, the failure of the postcolonial ambition of constructing undivided India, and the terrible plight of untouchables, dalits, adivasis, and transgenders is clear. The novel highlights the horrible situation of colonised Indians in postcolonial India. India is become a neocolonial state.

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