

In Shadows of Casteism & Politics: Human Relations in the Fictional Works of Arundathi Roy

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Abstract

In a fundamental sense, none of us is any different from the other. The same species, which is referred to by its scientific name, Homo sapiens. But in the real world, there are almost an infinite number of things that can serve as barriers between people. These things include the color of someone's skin, the town in which they were born, the religion that they follow or do not follow, the gender that they identify with, the age group that they are a part of, and the type of work that they do. These divides are very impossible to prevent; nevertheless, issues develop when they are allowed to get out of hand and become unmanageable. All of the low caste communities in India, which were persecuted for centuries, all of the African Americans who were enslaved and sold, the thousands of Jews who were slaughtered mercilessly, and the manner in which women were (and still are) tortured in an endless variety of ways were all victims of the widespread discrimination that existed at the time. In addition, all of these atrocities were committed against women. Even in the 21st century, these causes that cause division in human society are still very much a part of everyday life, and it is hard for anybody to state with absolute confidence that they will disappear in the not too distant future.

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INTRODUCTION

Suzanna Arundhati Roy, better known by her pen name Arundhati Roy, is an acclaimed Indian novelist who was born on November 24, 1961 in Shillong, Meghalaya, India. Her full name is Arundhati Suzanna Roy. Her work "The God of Little Things," which was first released in 1997, is mostly responsible for her widespread recognition. This novel was given the Man Booker Prize for Fiction in 1997, and it went on to become the best-selling book published by an Indian author who did not live outside of India. Both of these accomplishments took place in the same year. In addition, she is a political activist who is involved in the struggle against issues relating to the environment and human rights.

When Roy was a very young kid, his Christian Syrian mother and her Bengali tea planter father divorced, ending the union they had shared since the beginning of Roy's life. The tea planter that Roy's father was hails from Bengal, where the family first settled. Roy was brought up by her mother, who, in addition to that responsibility, ran an unauthorized school. Her mother was of Christian descent and

successfully litigated against India's inheritance regulations, arguing for the right of Christian women to have an equal share of their father's estate. Her mother was a Christian. Her mother was of Christian origin. At the age of sixteen, Roy ran away from her family and headed to New Delhi. There, she lived in a squatter's colony and earned a money by selling empty beer bottles to passers-by. She ended up enrolling at an architectural school in Delhi, and it was there that she met her future husband, Gerard Da Cunha, who was also a student there.

Roy's debut novel, which was titled *The God of Small Things* and was published in 1997, was met with a great deal of acclaim as soon as it was made available to the public. The semi-autobiographical novel broke away from the typical narratives and breezy style that are seen in big sellers. This is because the novel is written in the first person. The narrative is lyrical in style and takes place in South Asia. It tracks the development of both persons and ideas originating from that region over the course of time. In 1998, the novel that Roy had written was given the Man Booker Prize for Fiction, and it went on to become the best-selling book that had been published by an Indian author who had never left India. Roy had never left India.

ROY'S POLITICAL SENSITIVITY

Discussion of political issues in written form. Because her words symbolize the injustices that have been committed against the oppressed population, each of her utterances gives the impression of telling a complete story filled with sorrow and suffering. In an article that was published in 2002, Roy made a reference to Narendra Modi and stated that if you are a steadfast butcher or prefer to be a genocidist while still having the title of being a politician, then you are hopeful and have a purpose to it. Roy was referring to the fact that Modi still holds the position of politician even though he is a genocidist. Roy was making a reference to Modi. She made a bold allusion to Modi, who was the chief minister of Gujrat at the time and led anti-Muslim riots that resulted in the deaths of more than a thousand people. She also made a reference to Modi.

On the most recent elections that were held in India, Roy is dissatisfied with the results of those elections. She lives in constant fear that the "brazen message of Hindu supremacy" would result in yet another massacre. Although though the name Narendra Modi isn't brought up at any point in Arundhati Roy's second novel, *"The Ministry of Utmost Happiness"* (2017), the minister's staunch adherence to Hindu dogma is evident in many different aspects of the book. At the middle of the book, she makes a remark that might be paraphrased as follows: "I shouldn't say this, maybe, but if a novel can have an opponent, then the adversary of this novel is the concept of "One Country, One Religion, One Language." In the interim, this statement serves as the philosophy of Hindutva's slogan (Earle, 2019).

Roy has never desired to be "some lovely woman who wrote a book," from fiction to the demanding political realities, and she does not want to be the ambassador of India promoting culture and the new emerging of India in the 21st century. Both of these aspirations are incompatible with Roy's current state of mind. Her usual sphere of competence does not include any of these positions. At this stage in her career, she is more well-known for her work as a political activist than she is for her novels at this point in time. She served time for instigating a riot and then subsequently joined the Maoist movement in India when she was released from prison. Her work of non-fiction, *"My Seditious Heart,"* is a

masterwork in which she details those terrifying events for the reader (Sehgal, 2017). In 1994, Roy provided a review of the movie *Bandit Queen* that was not particularly positive. Shekhar Kapur was the film's director. Under the context of this review, Roy discussed her political beliefs. She voiced her opposition to the filming of a lady by referring to it as "The Great Indian Rape Trick," and she demanded with vehemence to know whether he had obtained her permission before re-enacting the rape of a woman who is still alive. She referred to the filming as "The Great Indian Rape Trick." She felt that it was an improper use of Phoolan Devi and her life, which was depicted in an erroneous manner. Moreover, she considered that it was used in an unsuitable manner (News, 2002). In the book "The God of Small Things," the events that take place are not accidental, and the plot itself is not just a made-up fiction; rather, each situation has a symbolic significance that contributes to the overall theme of the book. Even more so, when we study the characters in *The Ministry of Utmost Bliss*, we notice that they present a fictionalized version of the Hindutva worldview. This is especially true when we consider the fact that the novel is set in India.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LITERATURE AND POLITICS

To the degree that the author's personality has been influenced by the social and political environment of his or her period, each piece of literature is, at least in part, a result of sociological or political aspect. This is the case regardless of the genre. The connection between literature and politics is analogous to that of a multilane motorway on which traffic moves unimpeded in both directions. On the other hand, significant works of literature or entire literary movements have had profound effects on society by establishing or destroying taboos, conventions, and social prejudices, and by contributing to shifts in values, which have in turn brought about shifts in both social and political structures. In this way, significant works of literature or entire literary movements have had profound effects on society by establishing or destroying taboos, conventions, and social prejudices. When we are dealing with particular writers, there is a good chance that we will have documentary evidence detailing the development of their ideas. Yet, when we want to analyze the influence that these concepts have on society, we are dealing with amorphous masses of individuals whose behavioral patterns are affected by a number of different causes. This presents a challenge for our research. When we want to research the effects that these concepts have on society, we are dealing with individuals, the patterns of whose behaviors are dictated by the issues in question. Because of this, we make an attempt to examine the influence that literature has on politics; yet, this places us in the area of conjecture, and any conclusion that we arrive to may be faced with disagreement from other people. (John D. Lindberg)

The two main characters in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* are the one socially outcast Anjum, who was born as Aftab, a rare example of "Hermaphrodite" with her dual identity, and carves a little niche of her own within the mesh of a hostile and brutal world. Anjum was born as Aftab. Anjum was born as Aftab. Anjum was a rare example of "Hermaphrodite" with her dual identity. Tilottama, usually referred to simply as Tilo, is the second character. She is a political outsider and used to be an architect, but she changed careers and is now an activist. When under the influence of Ganesh beedis, she possesses the power to enchant not one, but three men: Garson Hobart, Musa, and Naga. Roy brings these two women together through an abandoned baby in a litter-filled crib and interlinks their stories with the stories of other characters threading through the episodic history of the Partition of India, the Making of Bangladesh, the assassination of Indra Gandhi and the resultant massacre of Sikhs, 9/11,

Gujarat racial riots, and the freedom movement in Kashmir. As a result, Roy manages to weave a gripping narrative of love, state-sponsored violence, language and identity, as well as power politics.

Arundhati Roy has been fascinated with a variety of concerns that have served as the inspiration for her novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, ever since the release of her ground-breaking book, *The God of Small Things*. She uses these themes as the backdrop for her novel. Arundhati Roy's life and the concerns that have kept her up at night are both depicted in this work. The story also reflects the life that Arundhati Roy has experienced. It is a narrative about our modern world, of India and Pakistan, portrayed through the microcosm of individuals living through the never ending and terrible struggle in Kashmir, and the periphery communities of foreigners in Delhi. The story is depicted through the lens of our current world. This tale is recounted through the prism of the modern world that we live in today. It begins with the observation of vultures being eliminated through the use of poison, which serves as a metaphor for the way in which Indian society has been poisoned by a history of corrupt and venal politicians, religious hatreds, and the overflowing rivers of blood and death that have been denied justice. A variety of other subjects, including mourning, love, and loss, as well as divisions based on nation, gender, and religion, are discussed in this book.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand how human relations are affected due to Caste system and political system.
2. To understand the outcome of broken -marriage, inter-caste marriage ,inter-religious marriage and its effects on relations thereafter.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The proposed research work is important for understanding human relationships in families, social communities, religious communities, and political communities; maltreatment meted out to people as a result of the caste system or politics; to understand the emotions of love and hatred of humans that develop as a result of caste and politics; and to examine the conflict both external and internal of characters which may result in crime and becoming a criminal with a feeling of revenge or repentance. The author is committed to researching how casteism and politics contribute to the development of taboos, banned laws, and other forms of societal limitation, all of which have an impact not only on the lives of individuals but also on the lives of others who are related to those individuals. In addition to this, the author intended to investigate the role that politics and power politics play in the caste system.

DATA ANALYSIS

The narrative revolves mostly around the concept of identity. The distinctions that exist between the many identities belonging to different castes are presented as unquestionable facts of Indian culture and religion. Velutha is an untouchable, while Ammu and her family are members of the top caste in Hindu society who just converted to Christianity and became Brahman Christians. Velutha is one of the untouchables. Despite the fact that they have converted to a new religion, they are not yet willing

to give up their superior Hindu identity, and they continue to follow the guidelines of that caste system. In the book, Velutha is referred to as a "untouchable," which refers to a person who is considered to be of the lowest caste in Hinduism and whom others would not even touch. Roy paints a picture of Syrian Christians who are aware of their upper-caste backgrounds and how those backgrounds led them to convert to Christianity. Pappachi and Comrade Pillai are revealed to despise Velutha due to the fact that he is of a lower caste than themselves.

These Brahman Christians continue to view Velutha and his caste-fellows as untouchables. The characters who lived at the time of Velutha's grandfather, Vellya Paapen, are shown to have come to terms with their identities and to have learned to live within the constraints of the social caste to which they belonged. On the other hand, it appears that Velutha and Ammu's generation is beginning to challenge these accepted practices. Velutha is actively pursuing a change in his identity, as evidenced by the fact that he is a member of the Communist party and is having an affair with a touchable.

The brother and sister, Ammu and Chacko, are presented as defying the conventions of the old castes by making their own choices in life. This acts as a form of rebellion against the caste system. Ammu is revealed to be breaking convention when she marries without the approval of her parents, when she divorces, which was unheard of for a woman in her family, when she displays a yearning for love after the divorce, and when she falls in love and has a relationship with an untouchable. Her brother Chacko weds a woman outside of his caste and from the United Kingdom, but they eventually got a divorce from each other. He also married of his own free will. Yet, while sharing very similar life experiences (being divorced after marrying outside of their caste of their own free will), Chacko and Ammu are dealt with extremely differently by their parents and other relatives as a direct result of their respective gender identities. "Old female relations with incipient beards and multiple wobbly chins made overnight journeys to Ayemenem to mourn with her about her divorce," writes Roy about how Ammu was sympathized with after her divorce. "Old female relations with incipient beards" They exerted pressure on her knee while gloating. She resisted the impulse to hit them across the face."

On the other side, Chacko's ex-wife was invited into the family home and cared for by the extended Chacko clan throughout her time there. After her divorce, Ammu was treated poorly by the prejudiced culture that she lived in. The characters are also influenced by their post-colonial identities, which is another aspect of their identities. The previous generation, which includes Ammu's father, Pappachi, is depicted as having an unwavering regard for the English language. When Pappachi's own daughter informed him that an Englishman had requested her husband to send his wife to him for the night, Pappachi did not believe her because he had such a high regard for the English. Pappachi's daughter also said that Pappachi did not believe her because he is so fond of the English. Pappachi was unable to fathom how a person of English descent could have such a questionable morals.

The second generation of Indians born after the split had less colonial attitudes than the first. Ammu, Chacko's sister, made fun of his "read aloud" method of speaking because he had attended Oxford and attempted to speak with an English accent. Chacko was attempting to sound like an Englishman. In the depiction of the third generation, Rahel is shown to have married an American and relocated to the United States. This demonstrates the transfer in influence in the world from Britain to the United States. Issues pertaining to one's gender identification also feature prominently in Roy's body of work. The

author has demonstrated her point of view on the prevalent realms of patriarchy by addressing the issues associated with the contemporary woman's struggle for identity through her portrayal of three generations of Indian women: Mammachi, Ammu, and Rahel. This has allowed the author to show her perspective on the prevalent realms of patriarchy (Bose, 2015). Women are portrayed as the givers in traditional Indian folk tales. The same may be said of many religious practices. Every time women speak up against any kind of inequality in the society, it is assumed that they are being influenced by Western culture (Jackson, 2010).

Ammu, the protagonist of Roy's work, is a defiant person who goes against the standards that the author has established. that Ammu, as a postcolonial woman, has articulated, via her acts, her rebellion against the subjugations she has undergone at the hands of the society standards. This is something that Ammu has done during the course of her life. if we compare the characters of Margaret, Chacko's ex-wife, and Ammu, it is not just a comparison of two female characters but a case of the postcolonial identity covering the gender identity. This is the argument that is made when we compare the characters of Chacko's ex-wife Margaret and Ammu. In this current generation, the British ex-wife is accorded a respectful treatment, whereas Ammu is stigmatized due to her divorce and her affair. Estha, the boy, is submissive and silent, whilst Rahel, the girl, is defiant and extroverted. Nevertheless, in the following generation, Ammu's children Rahel and Estha do not conform to traditional gender norms. Arundhati Roy is pointing out a potentially more complicated view of these identities in light of the current socio-cultural aspects by introducing these new roles. She is doing so in light of the modern socio-cultural variables. Postcolonial studies on Roy's novel say that it deals with a great deal of material pertaining to postcolonial identities.

As a primary indicator of her postcolonial identity as an author, Roy makes extensive use of the Malayalam language, which is used in South India, however she does not always explain the meaning of the phrases in English. This language trait is identified as a significant postcolonial element of thewho is also a well-known critic of Roy's work. In addition, Roy shows that Pappachi and his family are falling farther and further under the sway of their colonial overlords. This is done as a representation of the diminishing impact that colonization has had on earlier colonies The reader learns that Pappachi was a devout follower of British values, that his son Chacko went to Oxford but that his sister Ammu made fun of him for his imitation of the British accent, and that in the third generation, Rahel, who is Ammu's daughter, chose to study in the United States rather than in Britain. It has been pointed out by Chu (2006) that Roy takes a further step toward demonstrating the resurgence of colonial influence by highlighting the transition from colonialism to imperialism as the source of the shift in power. "we (Indians) are people who are driven into an anglicized pattern of thought and practice," and this is made possible by the public school curriculum that was founded by the colonial authorities .A second point that he makes is that the fact that Estha had an Elvis Presley haircut when he was nine years old is an illustration of the aforementioned colonial influence. "the novel appears to recognise both [communal and subjective modes of postcolonial resistance". As an illustration, Tickell cites the twins' "playful inversion of Anglophile writings." Identity is a complicated, multi-faceted phenomena that may simultaneously be impacted by a great number of neighboring circumstances, as most analysts would agree. Therefore, it is possible to assume that when Rahel and Estha were growing up there were still some remnants of the colonial influences, as suggested by Rajeev (2011). On the other hand,

however, people had started to grow out of the impact of the colonizer as well, as shown by the fact that Rahel and Estha are now adults. suggested by Tickell.

RIGHTS IN THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS

The various forms of oppression that exist in Indian culture are brought to light in Roy's literature, illustrating how even the most powerful members of society are forced to fight for their basic human rights. "in Roy's picture of Kerala in the novel," argues Olsson (2011), "there are numerous levels of oppression emanating from colonialism, patriarchy, religion, and caste" (p. 6). Negation of rights conferred on the basis of caste is one of the most prominent topics in "The God of Little Things." This segment of the population in Indian society is referred to as "subhuman," and as a result, they are denied the constitutionally guaranteed rights to equality. According to Komalesha (2008), Roy has provided a powerful voice to this sort of tyranny that is deeply ingrained in Indian society. Roy's work may be found here. The rights of Dalits have been actively violated and exploited with Roy's portrayal of these practices. According to the words of the narrator, "Pappachi did not permit Paravans to enter the house. Nobody would. It was very forbidden for them to touch anything that had been handled by the Touchables. Caste Buddhists, Caste Muslims, and Caste Christians" (Roy, 1997, p.73). Velutha is represented as an untouchable, which means that he is forbidden from physically touching any touchable, who are persons who belong to castes that are higher on the social order than the Dalits. It is forbidden for him to establish relationships with people outside of the group of untouchables, thus he is unable to go to school or receive a professional education alongside the children of the touchables. Because the Dalits are denied their rights to education and work, they continue to live in a state of economic deprivation and social subjugation without any influence in society. As Velutha falls in love with Ammu, who is a touchable Christian and a lady from an upper caste, he defies these rules and violates them. He is wrongly accused of rape and the police torture him to death, denying him his fundamental rights to a fair trial or even a hearing. He dies from his injuries. The terrible end that befell Velutha should serve as a lesson to other untouchables to discourage them from deviating from the norms and becoming involved in relationships with touchables, and it should also "reconfirm the unchangeable status of 'untouchability'". This line of reasoning may be refuted by pointing out that it was never intended for Dalits to be the readers of a work that was initially published in English. English is the language that is exclusively taught at India's most prestigious educational institutions.

Roy (1997) chose to communicate her message against the caste-based oppression to the educated class in India (the expected audience of Roy's English novel in India), and she is not trying to warn the Dalits, the very people whose oppression she is giving voice to. Instead, she chose to communicate her message through the medium of fiction. Another aspect of rights that are discussed throughout the book is whether or not they should be provided based on a person's gender. The way in which women are discriminated against in the judicial system is demonstrated by Roy. The author brings up the subject of the rights to which women are entitled under the constitution, but which they are not allowed to enjoy in practice due to the patriarchal nature of society, which is emphasized throughout the text. Ammu, a woman who has been divorced, has her right taken away since she is unable to submit a complaint, and when she makes an effort to do so, the police harass and threaten her.

Yet, despite the fact that Ammu and her brother Chacko are both divorced, their mother's pickle business is handled jointly by the two of them. Nonetheless, Chacko is the only legal owner of the plant because Ammu has no legal rights over the property. In contrast to her brother, who was given the opportunity to graduate from Oxford in another country, Ammu is denied the chance to an equal education. It is forbidden for Ammu, who is a woman living in a patriarchal culture, and Velutha, who is considered an untouchable, to have a love relationship: "Where they truly lived." The place where the Love Laws determine who ought to be loved. And how; and to what extent" Nevertheless, when they violate the standards set by society, they are forced to pay a high price for their actions. In addition to this, Ammu's father often abuses his wife, Mammachi, who is a victim of domestic violence but has no one to turn to for aid unless and until their son Chacko is old enough to intervene.

The males of the first and second generations are represented as stereotypical patriarchs who mistreat their wives but put up a good front in front of the rest of the world. This demonstrates the hypocritical behavior of patriarchal males, who have distinct moral and societal standards for men and women, as demonstrated by the fact that this situation exists. In a cruel twist of irony, women contribute to the patriarchal system of oppression by assisting males in acquiring further rights while simultaneously denying women the same rights. Mammachi and Baby Kochamma are sensitive to Chacko's 'needs,' and they assist Chacko in inviting ladies into the house by using a hidden entrance (Thakur, 2013; Roy, 2009). On the other hand, these same ladies despise Ammu since she married the man of her choosing and then divorced him later. Even Kochu Maria, the housekeeper, admonishes Estha and Rahel, telling them that they should leave and go to their father's house (Bee, 2014; Stockdale, 2008). As a result, Roy suggests that gender rights are more of an issue for women of a more mature generation than they are for women of a more recent generation, with males and other women serving as oppressors..

DUTIES IN THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS

The majority of the book focuses on the infringement of various rights, which leads to the inquiry of whether or not one's responsibilities are being met. The many occurrences that take place throughout the book may be used to piece together Roy's perspective on the responsibilities. People in positions of authority, particularly men and members of the upper classes, fail to fulfill the civic and legal responsibilities that they have for other members of society. It is presented that law enforcement officials are not fulfilling their responsibilities under the law. It is ironic that police officers, whose major purpose is to protect civilians and enforce the law, are the ones who harass women and kill the untouchable while they are in jail. When Ammu goes to visit Velutha, the police officer who harasses her there goes unnoticed by anybody else in the busy police station where they are both. In a cruel twist of irony, the sign behind him reads: "Velutha, the untouchable figure in the novel, is treated terribly throughout: false charges of rape and incarceration lead to torture and murder in police custody." Velutha is the untouchable character in the novel. The following passage from the narrator serves to depict Velutha's pitiful state while he was detained at the police station: "He [Velutha] was nude, his dirty mundu had fallen undone. Blood streamed from his cranium like a secret. Because of the swelling in his face and head, he looked like a pumpkin. His head was far too big and heavy for the thin stem it had grown from. This case demonstrates how the police officers fully break their code of behavior, do not fulfill their obligations, and misuse the authority that they have over those who are vulnerable. The civilization that is depicted in the book establishes a variety of fictitious civic

obligations that each citizen is expected to carry out. Although though Comrade Pillai held political power, it is clear that he did not fulfill his responsibilities as the head of the party.

Friedman (2005) makes the case that as the leader of the party, Comrade Pillai should have rescued Velutha when he was in prison. Despite this, he made the decision to keep quiet since he believed that this would work in his favor and prevent him from getting into a disagreement with certain prominent people. In addition, contends that the responsibilities that exist in the society that is portrayed in Roy's work are intricately connected to the norms that are bound by patriarchy and that are determined by caste. When Ammu and Velutha act against the bounds established by patriarchy and caste, one of them is punished by being put to death, while the other is punished by being socially isolated. Arundhati Roy's work depicts the state of civic and legal responsibilities in Indian society, as well as their defiance, in light of the arguments presented above, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the situation of civic and legal duties in Indian society is described by Arundhati Roy..

CONCLUSION

Hence, achieving harmony between the fictional tools of post-modernism and the fact consciousness of the realism novel is not a simple task. When Ahmad asserts that Arundhati Roy's realism "folds into itself all the plenitude of narrative techniques that the twentieth 176 century has spawned and she is too deeply committed to Realism to take flight into Magic Realism....", he makes an important point. This also amply speaks about the potential originality of the novelist, who is typically characterized by a compassion for the underdogs and an understanding of the issues which trouble the larger mass of people in India. In addition to the novel, she has written two articles titled "The Larger Common Good" and "The Death of Imagination," both of which just reinforce the previous assumption that we made. She becomes the advocate for those who are unable to fight for themselves; she becomes a voice for those who suffer in silence at the hands of the heartless institutions of the state and the political maneuverings of the powerful and influential

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