

Voice of devoiced: Arundhati Roy as a writer

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Abstract

The paper seeks to throw light on Arundhati Roy's Marginalization and Political Corruption which is the major theme in the non-fictional works— a writer, Essayist and Activist. Roy in her non-fictional works exposes the frame work and pattern which makes the blood sucking imperial leeches and the forces of hegemony to remain active through different agencies in order to contain the subversive forces. The proposed research work therefore, aims at studying the fact that how “Well-Oiled” exploitative and oppressive machinery and the design of power dynamics, bring about discrimination, exploitation and the subsequent disintegration of the marginalized people.

Key words:- Hegemony, Legitimacy, Manipulating, Marginalization, subsequent disintegration

Introduction:-

Suzanna Arundhati Roy (24th November 1961) Shillong is an Indian writer, Activist, Essayist best known for her fiction. She came into the existence of literature in 1997. She has written many essays upon different themes, but with similarities the issues raised are of the people, for the people and to the people of India. She won Booker prize for her novel, *The God of small things* (1997). She is also a political activist involved in human rights and environmental causes. Arundhati Roy is outspoken critic of India's nuclear weapons testing. In the very first essay entitled “The end of Imagination” Roy writes that “Silence would be in defensible”. In the event of the Nuclear Tests by Pakistan on 28th May. The essay is an impassioned piece of writing which denounces the tests on several counts. It says that:

“We are pitifully behind the times- not just scientifically and technologically..., but more pertinently in our ability to grasp the true nature of nuclear weapons ¹”.

Roy emerges as a critique of Indian Governments Nuclear policies.

Arundhati Roy's life was full of sufferings. Her writing careers have consistently engaged with social and political issues of contemporary world and this is an attempt to find out the extent of focus on the discourse of justice particularly in their non fictional writings. Her ideological position is expressed in the use of language and images used both in her non fictional and fictional works. The works of Arundhati Roy are challenging and abundantly reward the researchers who explore their depth. She ingeniously expresses and denounces the politics of power and hegemony which not only stifles the individual freedom and social mobility but also represses the expression of body and the discourse of desire. She stands as a vociferous disparager who gives free play to her expressions when it comes to speaking against the state sponsored ills and evils which reduce

common masses to sub human beings. Her diatribe against American and European hegemony and the power structures they are manipulately controlling, left the readers flabbergasted and astounding.

Arundhati Roy begin to try and understand the endless conflict between power and powerlessness, which has remained the central theme of much of her writings. Roy is one of the most consistent writers who has not changed her beliefs, ideas and faith. She has only changed the form of writing by telling the story in different ways. She is the voice of the Devoiced. She uses her skill, imagination, resources and time to expose and unmask the veiled faces of the imperialist, capitalist and even of the state.

Roy's migration is intellectual, noble and honest to serve the cause of the marginalized. She is bold enough to face the consequences of telling the truth. Her aim is to make the powerless and the exploited aware of the injustice done to them by the powerful. To achieve this objective, she writes political essays which, she thinks, are easily accessible and credible to the masses, because people read political essays as facts based on relevant and actual data and statistics. This is the reason that pushes Roy towards the writing of political essays.

"Power Politics" 2001 is another essay where Roy brings alive Rumpelstiltskin a character in European folk lore to create an image of power hungry politicians and the corporate world. Through her prolific work she has acquired a reputation as one of the most intelligent by differentiating of contemporary English Novelist. Her reputation rested primarily on her status as a committed realist writer. His love for power and greed is sarcastically put in by Roy when she states that:

He has a bank account heart, a television eye and a news paper nose
in which you only see and read only what he wants you to read... It
range across seas and continents, sometimes majestic and universal,
sometimes confining and local².

Roy cites several examples where America's selfish designs get manifested in unsuspecting ways one such example is the speech delivered at the world water forum convention in Holland by Bill Clinton, the then President of America. Clintons speech touched upon women's Empowerment, Participation of People but the purpose of the meeting was to work out of a possibility for the privatization of the worlds water system. She is anguished at the thought of 'water' which is supposed to be one of the most available sources in the world is priced at market value.

Michelle Nijhuis discussed in his study that Roy return to the subject of the Narmada valley development project. She dissects the global economic forces under pinning the Maheswar Dam- The first private dam on the Narmada River- and animates those forces with a character she calls Rumpelstilkskin. "What kind of potentate is Rumperstiltskin?" she asks. "Powerful, Pitiless and armed to the teeth. He is a kind of king the world has never known before. His realm is raw capital, his conquests emerging markets, his prayers profits, his borders limitless, his weapons nuclear". For the same work Frederic and Mary Ann Brusset talks about Arundhati Roy in the book "*Spiritual Literacy*" states that "There is no easy way out of the spiraling mass of terror and brutality that confronts the world today it is time now for the human race to hold still, to delve into its wells of collective wisdom, both ancient and modern". The author has been on a crusade against the globalization of the world's economy in which poor people become pawns sacrificed in the economic chess game of the free market.

In this essay Roy rages with righteous indignation against the new empire being promoted in the United States and around the world by the Bush Administration. Roy laments the status of democracy in the United States, India, and South Africa. In each instance corporate powers seem to be in control, making deals, getting things to go their way, and controlling the media. She examines the rule of resistance movements that can make a difference and return dignity to the term democracy.

Theresa Wolfwood also discussed about the “*Power Politics*” in which she says that Roy argue that power companies seek not only the privatization of resources and infrastructure but, through the co-option of political elites, they want the privatization of the policy itself. Even as she divorce her considerable fame talent to citizen action against Dams, Government and Courts in India declare that those who oppose big development are terrorists. In all these endeavors of the capitalist game, the poor are the most affected and they are at the receiving end of the miseries caused by the rich and the powerful. Hence Roy calls for participation and activism to bring about changes in the system and anticipates revision of strategies and policies. She invites everyone to help bury Rumpelstiltskin once and for all.

In one of her essays Ordinary Persons Guide to Empire (2004):-

Arundhati Roy states that “The theme of much of what I write, fiction as well as non-fiction is the relationship between power and powerlessness and the endless circular conflict they are engaged in” (Roy 13). Roy believes that “The accumulation of vast unfettered power” by a state, country, corporation, institution or even a spouse, friend or sibling. Arundhati Roy writing is not really about nation and histories it’s about power³.

Roy looks at power and truth not from the point of the view of those who exercise power and define truth but from the point of view of those who are subjugated and imposed upon.

In another essay “Ladies have their feeling... shall will leave it to the experts?” Roy focus on globalization and how it has deepened the gap between the rich and the poor, a situation which terms as a mutant variety of colonialism which is digitally operated and remotely controlled by America.

In another essay “Instant mix of Imperial democracy: Buy one and Get one free,” She states that

“And you will see how beautiful it is to be gentle instead of brutal, safe instead of scared... Befriended instead of isolated... Love instead of hatred⁴”.

Thus the importance of Roy’s writing brings forth the unique interconnection between activism and writing through a weaving of her literary narrative through a representation and politics of language.

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