



Eco- Feminism in Arundathi Roy's the Ministry of Utmost Happiness: A Critique

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Abstract— *Eco-feminists believe strongly that nature and women have a bond as they share patriarchal oppression. Social-feminists differ from Eco-feminists in that Eco-feminism focuses on the role of gender in political economy. Eco-feminism emerged during the second wave of feminism in the United States between the 1970s and 1980s. Women perceive an interrelationship between classism, sexism, racism and environmental damage. Just as feminists struggled to eradicate gender discrimination, there is a need to overcome the challenges that climatic change has on humanity.*

Human oppression is linked with the exploitation of nature, hence it is considered a feminist issue. Eco-feminism uses the basic tenets of feminism to achieve equality between genders. Eco-feminists are of the idea that nature has to be maintained with mutual care and co-operation. Eco-feminism is an academic and activist movement which tries to eliminate exploitation of nature by human beings and any kind of exploitation of any kind.

Some contemporary Indian novelists not only investigate female oppression, but also the biological, psychological, and social environment. Arundathi Roy is a contemporary Indian English writer who is acclaimed as a political activist and eco-feminist writer. In this paper, an attempt is made to unravel the demise of some birds and animals due to unethical modernization through scientific technology and also through re-habitation in Roy's second novel, The Ministry of Utmost Happiness. This paper also traces how embracing nature can change the issues of gender as well.

Keywords— *Eco-feminism, Patriarchy, Environmental, Gender issues, Indian Novelists.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Arundhati Roy is a social and political activist, along with being a writer par excellence. In 2002, she won the Lannan Cultural Freedom Award; the Sydney Peace Prize in 2004; and the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2006. She has serious concern over the environmental or ecological crises that are happening in society. In 1997, she received The Booker Prize for fiction for her debut novel, *"The God of Small Things."* Twenty years later, in 2017, she has written *"The Ministry of Utmost Happiness,"* which portrays eco-feminism.

II. ECO-FEMINISM IN INDIA

Even before eco-criticism emerged in the academic spheres of the west, activism to safeguard the environment and movements connected to the environment were in vogue in India, South Africa, and many other countries in South Asia to protect the environment. Some noted eco-feminist movements in India emerged as early as the eighteenth century. "The Movement of Bishnois" took place in the year 1731 and The Chipko Movement in the year 1973. Women here created awareness to improve nature and considered it as a fundamental duty of human beings who survive on the Earth. Women also fought against environmental exploitation.

III. EMERGENCE OF ECO-FEMINISM

Academic and professional women conducted many workshops and conferences on the modern eco-feminist movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s in the United States of America. Eco-feminist theories assert a feminist perspective. There is no dominant group, it is only a collaborative and egalitarian society. As a result, green politics emerged. Eco-feminism grew from cultured and radical feminism in the background of the dominance of men in feminism. Twenty years later, in the year 2017, she has written "*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*." To maintain peace and harmony in society, women and nature are equally required and this finds its expression in Arundhati Roy's novels. The feared novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, is explored here to observe the relationship between women and the natural world.

IV. EMERGENCE OF ECO-FEMINISM IN THE WEST

The term Eco-feminism was coined by a French writer named Françoise d'Eaubonne in the year 1974 in her book *Le Feminisme Ou la Mort*. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, some ecology movements emerged in the west to establish peace and peace and to fight against exploitation of women and nature. This situation emerged during the second wave of feminism and was against the anti-war and anti-nuclear war stances. Ecofeminism is both an apolitical activism and an intellectual critique. Thus, bringing together environmentalism and feminism, eco feminism fights against the oppression of women and the exploitation of the environment, which are looked upon as the consequences of capitalism and patriarchy.

Eco-feminism theories urge human beings to examine the world's degradation and react constructively to it. Eco-feminism argues that women have to be understood in connection with nature, that they are related to each other. Their boundaries are feminism and have become a subfield of the western literary world and its cultural shades. In the year 1980, scholars worked to establish it as a genre. The western literary association tried to relate to the nature of writing and develop it as a fictional literary genre. In the USA, especially coloured women, are affected by global problems such as climate change, ecological degradation, and contention. It's not just seen as an environmental problem that has to do with science and scientists. Instead, it's seen as something that affects institutions. People of color, white people, and both men and women are put in a position of oppression by their race, class, and gender. There are subbranches of eco-feminism such as vegetarian feminism, material eco-feminism, and spiritual feminism.

V. ECO-FEMINISM EXPLORE

There are multiple issues connecting the self with society. There is a flashback mode of narration in which the condition of women is explored in which women are denied freedom and rights. There are transgender people like Anjuman whose behaviour is different from the formal gender norms. Roy traces their complex history. Anjum has both female sex organs and a male. Hence, self-discovery as opposed to the structure of normality becomes important. Her mother, Jahanera Begam, expected a son. Her father, Mulaqat Ali, tries to change Anjum's sex organ into a male one. He came to her to accept her merphodite and felt that it was a black mark on their family. All these are against the law of nature; they seize to hire in the normal way. He is close to severing all ties with his son. He never met Anjum's... Occasionally they would pass each other on the street and would exchange glances, but never greetings.

In the prologue of the novel, Anjum is turned into pieces by social forces, and hostility is expressed to Imam: "You tell me where old birds go to die?" Do they fall on us like stones from the sky? Do we stumble on their bodies in the street? Do you not think that the all-seeing, almighty one who put us on this earth has made proper arrangements to take us away? Old people are rejected just as old birds are in society. Anjum, the transgender, is rejected by society. She shows great concern for the demise of Delhi vultures. Roy expresses ironically in terms of birds, "Not many noticed the passing of the friendly old birds [Roy] white people in the pleasure of eating ice cream. She also is against the contamination of milk and the chemical—diclofenac. Anjum cannot find paradise in the ordinary life of society. She finds solace in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* in the graveyard.

Humanity has historically been considered a masculine activity. In science, the killing of animals for God Roy is sensitive towards the animals on whom the experiments are conducted. Roy described A beagle who had either escaped from or outlived his purpose in a pharmaceutical testing lab He looked worn and rubbed out, like a drawing someone had tried to erase... The drugs were tested on him. Anjum chemise watches the wandering dog. Anjum poured some tea... He slurped it up noisily. He drank everything.

VI. CONCLUSION

After investigating certain things about nature and females, the researcher came to know and reveal a great conclusion. Thus, the female contemporary writer Arundhati Roy's

novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* finds the interconnectedness of nature and women. Using eco-feminist views, she has searched for how nature can be welcomed to modify gendered problems; they are established to mute women and other non-human life. The female writer, Roy, has tried to uncover the cruel fact that nature and women are taken as resources to fulfil men's needs as is usual in the existing society. Both have suffered a lot and have been brutally raped in their own ways. Therefore, both have to be eliminated to end the suffering. Eco-feminism treats women as having the potential to create sustainable modification. It can be seen as alluring women by stressing their close association with nature. The female writer, Arundathi Roy, through her literary work, was able to uplift and make women become the typical modification. She has enclosed all the issues beautifully in her current literary work and skillfully enlightens the unsure of the great and wonderful mutuality between nature and women in contemporary society. In this article, the differences are openly mentioned by the realistic manner of implementation that was done by the researcher with his great analysis.

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