

## THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY: THIRD-GENDER REPRESENTATION IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S THE MINISTRY OF UTMOST HAPPINESS

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### ABSTRACT

*This research explores how Roy's The Ministry of Utmost Happiness fictionalizes Indian history. From the standpoint of new historicism, the researcher makes the case that the author of the novel both explicitly and indirectly attacked Indian politics in the 1980s and the political elite of that era from 1980 to 2017. The researcher also makes an effort to convey the discontent and annoyance with the unstable Indian government due to its hegemony, politicians' greed, and exploitation of the poor. It is absurd that some political leaders mistreated them based on their gender, caste, and religion. Because Hiindutwa is widespread throughout the nation and she is prepared to give voice to those who lack it, the author supports Muslims. Additionally, her writing is convincing even though she exaggerated certain issues as if they were her problems. The paper concludes that the marginalized people, who should also be granted rights, liberty, and freedom have been left out of India's official history.*

**Keywords:** Marginalization, Dissatisfaction, Gender Discrimination, New Historicism, Indian Politics, Historical Context.

### INTRODUCTION

The research paper demonstrates their discontent with Indian politics and attempts to investigate Roy's aggression and how Muslims were treated by Hindus during the 2002 Gujarat riot. In the novel, the author discusses historical issues from the previous two to four decades, highlighting how religious bias affected the entire country rather than just one specific location. Her primary area of interest is the 1980s, Aftab, the protagonist of the book, later transformed into Anjum, a hermaphrodite who advocates for social causes and is also viewed as a social ill. The term "hermaphrodite" describes people who have both male and female sexual organs and other sexual traits, either naturally or as a result of an abnormality. Living in the political and personal

spheres presents many challenges for Anjum. Roy is well known for criticizing modern society and highlighting the main features of the corrupted society at the time. In addition, she gives political figures pseudonyms, such as Mr. Aggrawal for Arbindra Kejriwal and Gujarat ka Lalla for Narendra Modi. Since she never discusses happiness in The Ministry of Utmost Happiness, Roy presents the book in a very ironic way. The sorrow and grief of civilians permeate the entire book. Anjum, a fictional character in the book, represents the victims of the 2002 Gujarat riots, whose lives are treated by political leaders like toys. In a similar vein, social activists frequently target the fictional character of Major Amrik

Singh, who is based on the historical figure Indira Gandhi.

The plot centers on the political unpredictability that permeates Gujarat and Kashmir in India. Muslims in particular lack civil rights and are viewed as foreigners in their nation. To secure justice for their freedom and liberty, leaders misled the marginalized, oppressed, and revolutionary spark of the twenty-first century, as the novel portrays. The author is a keen observer of Indian society as a whole. The harsh realities of the lives of oppressed people, including Anjum, Revathy, and others, are depicted in the book. The novel presents Indian political history in a fictional manner. Historical fiction is a literary genre in which the past is interpreted through fiction and the story is set in the past. A literary critique that combines fact and fiction is called new historicism. The bitter reality is exposed through fiction. Sanjay Gandhi's 1988 scenario is strikingly similar to that of the main character, Anjum, who is objectified and viewed negatively due to her transgender identity (Hijra).

When Sanjay Gandhi and Anjum were being pursued by the police, things became problematic. It marked the end of Indira Gandhi's despotic reign when the bureaucrats actively exercised their authority. Sanjay Gandhi was apprehended by police in New Delhi while demonstrating against the previous administration. He fled in the direction of the flyover as they attempted to pursue him at that moment. Sanjay Gandhi peed in his clothes because he was so scared. When Anjum was a part of the Delhi movement, the condition was comparable. Police apprehended her and imprisoned her on the flyover. Anjum and Sanjay Gandhi were both in the same fantastic situation. When the police were pursuing them, they fled in their clothing.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* has been examined from various angles by various academics, demonstrating the novel's primary significance. Fiction depicts India's chaotic situation. In their review, "Arundhati Roy's long-awaited Novel Is an Ambitious Look at Turmoil in India," Michiko Kakutani discusses the social, political, religious, and cultural issues.

Sociocultural issues are a complex yet integral part of human life (Javaid et al., 2024; Ramzan et al., 2023). They can range from challenges related to cultural integration (Umar et al., 2024, social inequality, and systemic discrimination to issues surrounding gender norms, identity, and generational conflicts (Akram & Abdelrady, 2023), trauma, or personality disorders (Javaid et al., 2024; Ramzan et al., 2023). Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach that includes psychological (Sohail & Akram, 2025), emotional, social (Al-Adwan et al., 2022), and environmental interventions (Akram et al., 2022; Javaid et al., 2023). Understanding the underlying factors and offering practical solutions can significantly enhance an individual's quality of life and overall well-being (Javaid et al., 2024; Ramzan et al., 2023; Ma et al., 2024).

The Kashmiri separatist movement, and the pitiful state of India at the time. She says:

"She collected scraps of stories and inexplicable memorabilia that appeared to have no purpose. There seemed to be no pattern or theme to her interest, "No doubt Roy, who has spent much of the last two decades immersed in politics (she became a vocal supporter of the Kashmir separatist movement, and a critic of Hindu nationalism) means for the many fragments and digression to open out her story into a panoramic mosaic of modern India, and the countless, social, political, religious and cultural issues rolling just below the surface of everyday life. There are two national tragedies in the unending "supermarket of sorrow," like the Bhopal toxic gas disaster of 1984 and the Gujarat riots of 2002 and the multiplication of alarming anecdotes involving murder, rape, torture, and mutilation as well as more mundane episodes of loss and grief." (Kakutani 2017: 4)

Historical evidence of India's rise in poverty, billionaire wealth, crime against women, religious intolerance, and human degradation is included in the novel. Similarly, it mirrors the evolving global landscape in which elites continue to expand at the expense of the majority disappearing under the shadow of survival. Even though the British Raj was over, colonization was still being carried out today. Insiders want to impose rules on them and

attempt to colonize them. Many political leaders are trying to force their will on others.

### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To highlight the issues of transgender through analyzing the selected texts
- To present the role of Indian politics over the less privileged social classes
- To project the harsh realities of life of downtrodden people in India

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- How has Arundhati Roy the issues of Hermaphrodite in her novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*?
- How do theories of New Historicism validate this research study?
- How does Arundhati Roy relate the Indian political elements in her political novels through political novels?
- How the patriarchal and societal pressures are addressed in the novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*?

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The nature of this study is qualitative. Using Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* and Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance of Self Fashioning* as theoretical frameworks, the researcher applies theoretical insights from new historicism to examine the novel's problems. A literary criticism approach known as "new historicism" highlights the text's historicity by connecting it to the structure of society, power, or ideology at a particular period. It is a method of simultaneously examining literary and non-literary texts in light of the circumstances and historical setting in which they were created. It demonstrates the connections between literature and history by combining them. Meanwhile, English literature is extremely important for expanding our knowledge of human experiences and world issues, including ecological concerns (Akram, 2020; Amjad et al., 2021; Ramzan et al., 2023), because of its rich history and diversified body of work (Li & Akram, 2023, 2024; Ramzan et al., 2021). Its universality enables it to cut across cultural divides, offering a forum for considering and addressing urgent environmental

issues (Ahmad et al., 2022; Abdelrady & Akram, 2022; Ramzan et al., 2020).

By analyzing how the author's time influenced the work as well as how the work reflects the author's time, New Historicism examines literature in a broader historical context while acknowledging the influence of contemporary cultural context on conclusions. This literary theory, which was developed in the 1970s, aims to determine how text and cultural systems are related.

### DEFINING NEW HISTORICISM

Greenblatt says:

"A simple definition of new historicism is that it is a method based on the parallel reading of literary and non-literary texts, usually of the same historical period. This is to say that, new historicism refuses to privilege the literary text: instead of the literary foreground and historical background and practices as a mode of study in which literary and non-literary text are given equal weight and constantly inform or interrogate each other." (Greenblatt 2017: 172)

According to John Brannigan: "New historicism is a mode of critical interpretation which privileges power relation as the most important context for the text of all kind" (Brannigan 1993: 7). He explains that everything is infected with the influence of ideology and power. The mode of representation has the power to modify reality. It produces that version of reality that is a vehicle of someone else's vested interest. The reality is revealed using fictional discourse.

Similarly, Harold Aram Vesser, introducing an anthology, *The New Historicism* (1989), noted some key assumptions that continually reappear in new historicism they are:

"Every expressive act is embedded in a network of material practices, that every act of unmasking, critique, and opposition uses the tools it condemns and risks falling prey to the practice it exposes, that literary and non-literary texts circulate inseparably; that no discourse, imaginative or archival, gives access to unchanging truths, nor expresses inalterable human nature;.....that a critical method and a language adequate to describe culture under capitalism participate in the economy they describe." (Vesser 1989: 11).

New historicism became influential with the works of prominent new historicist, Stephen Greenblatt, who first of all took it to analyze particularly the works of the renaissance period. Regarding this, Nota Bene makes the following remarks:

"New historicism changes its view of history as objective, monolithic, linear, causal, static, and authentic and equally views that every text is the product of socio-economic, political, and cultural context. Thus, new historicist takes history as a matter of interpretation, and perception and it is subjective. So, new historicism, in this way breaks all the traditional facts and proceeds by taking history as heterogeneous, unstable, and progressive." (Bene 2017: 65)

A Literary text is embedded in its context. It is in constant interaction and interchange with other components inside the other network of institutions. It believes in cultural power relations and practices.

### TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

Roy highlights the transgender/women character in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* who struggles against the discriminatory society and travels from place to place in pursuit of freedom. In this narrow-minded society, she has never established her own identity as a woman. The patriarchal society severely dominates the character in her book. The majority of Roy's characters are victims of the society in which they live. "The female is objectified to fulfill the sexual desire of males. So, the writer challenges dominant social norms and values regarding women." (Zubair, 2021). However, women are forced to deal with the problem of a stereotyped identity that society has imposed upon them. Throughout the entire book, women are objectified and used as a tool for men's interest. "Characterization is the key aspect of the mass appeal to enlighten and empower the women in their society that constructs the meaning, and norms and exercises them" (Zubair, 2020). In a similar vein, in *The Dramatic Decade*, Pranab Mukherjee made history as a politician and a decision-maker during the Indira Gandhi Years, a decade that brought about both political and economic transformations. Pranab Mukherjee is

one of the most astute observers of the players in this momentous decade, and his observations are priceless. Mukharjee paints a remarkable picture of a complicated country by drawing on important secondary literature, personal diary excerpts, and conversations with significant figures from the 1970s. He declines to reveal the secrets, as do all decent Indian politicians. It's dull and straight. Even the history of India and Pakistan's 1947 separation is included by Mukherjee. In 1947, British India was divided into two nations: India and Pakistan (east and west Pakistan). The British Raj, which ruled the Indian subcontinent, came to an end with the partition. The insurgency that was imposed on civilians between 1975 and 1977 is also thoroughly examined in the book. People were a hindrance to the sterilization campaign, which was being used to control population growth at a crucial moment. They received the same treatment as goods. The revolution was the result of politicians' lack of sympathy for them. The weight of the past, humiliated by its current state of slavery and stagnation, was confronting the harsh realities of the present and the daunting obstacles of the future. That was India's period of transition. In his book, Mukherjee emphasized Indira Gandhi's brutal treatment of civilians. His writing is primarily concerned with political philosophy.

Similarly, in Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* Revathy is represented as suppressed as people were being scapegoated at the time of Emergency (1975 to 1977). Especially commoners whose civil rights were snatched and even they had to beg door to door for food. Likewise in Roy's novel the character Revathy a young girl and low-caste from a rural area of India, always excels in school but lacks the resources to pay for her education. She was good at her education. "I wanted to be a lawyer" (TMUH 420). Due to poverty and low-caste, she joined Government College where she was radicalized by Maoist communists and dedicated her entire life to the communist cause. "After passing Intermediate I sat for Medical entrance and got selected but had no money for fees. So, I joined Government College in Warangal. Their movement was very strong. Inside forest outside also" (TMUH 420). She got recruited in Maoist

troops where she devoted her whole life to development by making revolution. There happened a heinous crime with Revathy, she was caught by some of the police and was tortured and brutally raped. Though she escapes she realizes she is pregnant which devastates her. She is ill throughout her democracy. "I was looking like a mad person. All the cigarette burns were bubbles on my face, breast, nipples, and stomach. My whole bed was blood" (TMUH 423). Roy points out the pathetic situation of Revathy about how she was treated by society. There was gender discrimination and she was also from the low caste. Roy too shows the relationship with Indira Gandhi (the emergency period) and how commoners were badly treated by political leaders, bureaucrats, and elite members.

Arundhati Roy portrays in her novel that her 'new woman' represents Anjum is trying to search for her identity and wants to create for herself a new place in society. She firmly asserts that these women are there have the guts to raise their voices against it, hence creating awareness for the rest. Current women are trying to seek self-willed and discover the true self-identity crisis of women where they struggle to gain as human beings in all senses through their willpower. They even try to challenge these forces of societies who bind her in the chain and reject her as a comparison to the human being. In previous women thought that their identity was linked with their men but in today's context, they are trying to maintain their identity and avoid relational identities. In today's context, they understand the duplicity of this identity imposed on her by society. So, they are trying to challenge the mainstream and formulate a new convention. To build up their own identity in society. They tried to provide the message that society is not only based upon patriarchy but also on matriarchy. Even women can do what men do at this time because no one is superior or inferior based on gender. "Women's plights become double or even triple when they get married." (Zubair, 2018)

In Parul Sehgal the review, of Arundhati Roy's *Fascinating Mess: Being an Activist and an Artist Tricker than it Sounds*. Arundhati Roy's in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* reveals as:

"It tours India's fault lines, as Roy has from the brutal suppression of tribal population to Gujarat. Just about every resistance movement is embodied in a character, and the lines and struggles of these characters intersect. The queer, addicts, Muslims, orphan, and other casualties of the national project of making India great again find one another and form a raucous community of sorts." (Sehgal 2017: 5)

There was suppression among people. People have forgotten the value of humanity. They formed the religious traits that led to the bloodshed environment. The community was so conservative that there was the slogan "Musalmano ka ek hi sthan! Qabristhan ya Pakistan!" (Only one place for the Musalman! The graveyard or Pakistan!) (TMUH 62). For instance, the transition from old India to new India is presented by changing the perception of foreign media that shows the picture of the society in different ways. They have changed the old exotics in favor of the younger generation. The major character moves from one location to another location melting into local histories. Anjum's personal history melts into national history. Anjum travels to Gujarat where she becomes a victim of communal riots that shook India. She represents herself as a sufferer of communal in Gujarat attacks. Roy presented the cultural and spatial conflicts that constitute multiple facets of the new Indian Identity. The conflicts can be drawn from the geopolitical space of Gujarat. In 2002, the riot of Gujarat was led by the Chief Minister of Gujarat Narendra Modi. So, Roy called him Gujarat Ka Laalla he was the suit gate for political leadership in Gujarat. In this novel, Roy portrays the violent scenario of Gujarat when Anjum went there for hiding because she had left Delhi. After all, it was the place where no right for women/ transgender was given, and were treated badly by society. "The process of changing patterns in his life brings physical difficulty and psychological torture" (Zubair, 2021). She saw the massacre of ethnic cleansing, especially Muslims under restriction. "Muslims have felt targeted because of their ethnic and religious identity thereby fueling discussion on Arab/Muslim identity in this new light." (Zubair, 2018). Ahmadabad, the capital of

Gujarat where a lot of Muslims were made to sleep under the rail track. Modi was represented as god himself. "In faraway Gujarat, Gujarat Ka Lalla recognized the appearance of the old man-baby as a sign from the god. With a predator's unerring instinct, he accelerated his march to Delhi. By the fifth day of the old man's fast, Lalla was (metaphorically speaking) camped outside the city gates" (TMUH 81).

However, people were suffering a terrific situation as from 1975 to 1977, Indira Gandhi imposed an emergency on how Sanjai Gandhi had recruited thugs and hooligans for the sake of position and power. For example, in 2002 Chief Minister of Gujarat said the religiously discriminated civilians were chopped as radishes and carrots. Roy who brought turbulence and upheaval in the scattered people to reunite opened the eyes of people for liberation progressive-minded in humanistic culture. She brought an idea of civilization and progress worldwide, not to quarrel amongst the inside people.

Different scholars have analyzed the term from several perspectives. Among them, little has touched the perspectives of new historicism. Hence the new issues I have raised are researchable by the way of New- Historicism. According to Stephen Greenblatt,'

"New Historicism is a literary theory, it is based on the idea that literature should be studied and interpreted within the context of both the history of the author and the history of the critic. It is based on the literary criticism of Stephen Greenblatt. It is influenced by the philosophy of Michel Foucault. New historicism acknowledges not only that " a work of literature is influenced by its author's times and circumstances, but the critic's response to that work is also influenced by his environment, belief, and prejudice." (Greenblatt 2001: 14)

In the novel, Roy figures out the character Major Amrik Singh as compared to Indira Gandhi because of their cruel character and thinks people are only to be ruled. So many rules were imposed upon people to follow. Same as in the novel The Ministry of Utmost Happiness Amrik Singh shows the cruel behavior towards commoners in Kashmir. Singh has created a bloodshed environment where he shoots people randomly

and like a madman. New historicism is a blend of fact and fiction of the past. Roy characterized Amrik Singh as a tyrannical ruler like Indira Gandhi.

"Amrik Singh certainly had the full measure of the dystopia he operated in one whose populace had no borders, no loyalties, and no limits to the depth to which it would fall. As for the Kashmir psyche, if there was indeed such a thing, Amrik Singh was seeking neither understanding nor insight. For him, it was game, a hunt, in which his quarry's pitted against his own. He saw himself more as a sportsman than a soldier, which made for a sunny soul. Major Amrik Singh was a gambler a daredevil officer, a deadly interrogator, and a cherry, cold-blooded killer. He greatly enjoyed his work and was constantly on the lookout for ways to up entertainment." (TMUH 336)

This above-mentioned line shows the brutal murderer of common people. Major Amrik Singh has made a dystopian environment where lots of unwanted acts were taken such as murder, rape, kidnapping, and the use of vulgar words to commoners.

Dystopianism refers to an imagined state or society in which there is great suffering or injustice, typically one that is totalitarian or post-apocalyptic. Amrik Singh enjoys the pain and suffering of common people. Like, Indira Gandhi she also brutally abducted the rights of civilians and murdered their feelings and identity during her period of working. Roy mentioned the brutal act of Indira Gandhi as "A new law maintenance of Internal Security Act allowed the government to arrest anybody on a whim" (Roy 2011: 34). Both Indira Gandhi and Major Amrik Singh have abducted the rights, security, identity of civilians and they are also the cold-blooded murderer of commoners and have made the act to arrest anybody from anywhere. This shows the demise of democracy in a democratic country.

The novel only can be interpreted by readers when they deeply understand the meaning of the text. The historical and contemporary situations should be linked in the text and the text should also be derived as perspectives of the historical and contemporary situation, then only the reality can be revealed. The novel captures the political,

social, and cultural issues where different have different issues. The transition phase such as the emergency in India, the Kashmir insurgency, the Gujarat riot, Godhra train burn, took several lives of people. Somehow their relatives are still in trauma from losing them. This shows the satire to the country that it's only looking for the high class and superior people and inferior are going down the drain. The novel recounts the character Anjum, a transgender who is taken in a negative sense. A biological defect is taken outside of any work. "Was it possible to live outside language? Naturally, this question did not address itself to her in words, or as a single lucid sentence. It addressed itself to her as a soundless, embryonic howl" (TMUH 8). This question, whether it's possible to live outside the control of language, outside of the circumscribed categories, the binaries that don't for many of us, recurs throughout the book, growing louder and louder as the book explores the conflict in Kashmir.

## DISCUSSION

In the book, *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir* Prem Nath Bazaz also presents a connected history of the freedom movement of the people in Kashmir from the dawn of civilization to our times. The book also analyses the long history of the Kashmiri movement in the quest for rights and justice. The nexus of the history and the present of Kashmiri is mentioned. Till today people are being the scapegoat of some elites and bureaucrats. Similarly, Roy has also picked up the same issue of the Kashmiri riots where not only terrorists are massacred but commoners are also brutally tortured and massacred. History can also be revealed through literary text which shows the socio-cultural, historical, and linguistic, in a wider form. The historical background is led by literary and non-literary texts. The title depicts not only the sarcasm of contemporary politics but it provides a message of past society and some of the parties such as Rashtriya Swam Sewak Sangh (RSS) still in trend of making discrimination, inequality, and so on. It shows the intimacy with the time of emergency (1975-1977). It also portrays how people are colonized by their country people. Perry Anderson's book, *The Indian Ideology* has observed that "the Indian

Ideology, a nationalist discourse in a time when there is no longer a national liberation struggle against an external power, and oppression where it exists has become internal, obscure against an external power, or avoids such issues". (Anderson 2016: 3) The real characteristics of India are the violence that structures the country's history, politics, and gender issues. She points out a clear picture of the problems behind the Hindus and Muslims that prevail in India during non-violence as the main source for many contemporary Indian writers like Arundhati Roy. Roy points out the picture of non-violence because she walks in the path of non-violence. Roy repeated her stance by questioning the 'Mahatma' status of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi whom she called a complex man and political genius but a racist at the core. She cited the student unrest in Ghana that ended with the removal of the statue of Gandhi from a university campus and his association with the elite class in Durban. However, people revolted against his racist behavior.

Inder Malhotra who wrote the biography of Indira Gandhi reveals as:

"Still too young to be able to follow her mother to jail, Indira joined other women members of the family in nursing the victims of police volleys and lathi-charges (beating up with long staffs) who were brought to her previous home, now renamed Swaraj Bhawan and turned into headquarters of Indian National Congress. The Nehru family, in the meantime, had moved into another house, also called Anand Bhawan, which was Motiwala's home but which turned out to be no less palatial and opulent than the original ones." (Malhotra 1991: 81)

Indeed Roy points out the living house of Anjum, The Jantar Mantar at Old Delhi but when the riots began and several people were killed and abandoned she frequently shifted to Gujarat which was also not a suitable place for living because that place was also full of aristocratic ruling and Muslim and Hindu began the religious riot, where she had to lose her friend and got several tortures. Though the place was good it was worse to live in because it had taken the lives of several people. Similarly, the book *India After Gandhi* by Ramchandra Guha explains India's independence in 1947 from the British. Indira Gandhi daughter

of Jawahar Lal Nehru holds the ministry post for twelve years. She was a tyrannical ruling prime minister who imposed the emergency and abducted the rights of commoners. Guha insisted that "the time 1975 -1977 was the emergency phase in India by Indira Gandhi where a lot of evil practices take place. Even today people don't want to remember the worst period which abandons them from their houses. Many more people were caught for the sterilization campaign which was led by Sanjai Gandhi" (Guha 2007). Muslims were dragged into vans and kept in prison. Muslims were humiliated and were given a lot of trouble and as a result, Indira Gandhi was shot by her bodyguards (religious minorities) in 1984. By which India continues to be increasing global power. Guha clearly shows the revolution of the downtrodden people. He shows a better chance of a prosperous society among the middle common and minorities, numbers of middle-class people began to climb the tower of development. Inder Malhotra in his book *Indira Gandhi A Personal and Political Biography* states about Indira Gandhi "I have been acutely aware that a personal and political biography of Indira is also a history of India at least for the two decades during which she dominated the Indian scene, whether she was in power or out of it" (4). Inder Malhotra clearly shows the aristocratic behavior of Indira Gandhi whether she remains in power or not but she destroys the ethics of commoners.

## FINDINGS

In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Roy has raised concerns regarding humanity's suffering, social stratification, and classism. In the novel, she voices the rights of "have-nots", the exploitation of lower classes by the capitalist system. She engages a political discourse in her novel and highlights the atrocities of the Indian Army in Indian-held Jammu and Kashmir. Hindutva, the ideology of Hindu hegemony especially in terms of religious radicalism, which is also called "Hinduness", has risen to an alarming degree in the previous few decades' especially extreme right-wing government in India which is also highlighted through the novel. The hegemony of politics, religion, and caste is there in the novel. The a loss of humanity in some

politicians who are always ready to torture people by engaging with bureaucrats. In the novel, Musa Yewsi, needs help from S. Tillotama to be free from grief. S. Tillotama had an affair with Musa to take her revenge because she was a sufferer of tribal. "He held her hand and kissed her silver ring" (TMUH 371). Indeed Muslims of Kashmir got frustrated with the government because soldiers fired at anyone's house and claimed terrorism against civilians especially Muslims which resulted in the loss of several lives and houses. The genocide of Kashmiri Pandits began in 1990. They do not have a fixed destination for their housing and survival either. Likewise, the novel *The Case of Freedom* by Arundhati Roy describes what Kashmiris want for true democracy and questions the disregard of the hardship faced by Kashmiris and the evasiveness of Indian Intellectuals on this issue. Kashmir the valley that was once considered a paradise changed into a disputed region. For Kashmiris, Freedom means Kashmir. Roy elucidates what Freedom means to Kashmir while questioning India's liberal democracy. She criticizes journalists, and politicians for raising their voices against the human abuses against Kashmiri people by Indian security forces. Different political leaders and bureaucrats were too cruel that they made the house vacant "Moreover 700000 Indian soldiers, the valleys of four million Muslims are exposed to extrajudicial, exception, rape, and torture, with such barbaric variations lives electric wires inserted into penises" (Roy 2011: 1). Due to the over torturing of civilians, the result has become so dangerous that nowadays people hold arm and ammunition and are being trained. Every teen holds the stone in their hands to fight with the government.

New -Historicism is a method of literary criticism that emphasizes the historicity of the text by relating it to the configuration of power, society, or ideology in the given time it associates both history and literature together to know their interconnections, new historicism focuses only on discourse, power, and truth but equally on marginal issues. It critically analyzes the narrative of high politics deconstructs the hierarchy existing in history and foregrounds the suppressive hierarchical narratives of marginalized groups



such as women, poor, working-class people, and so on. The historical narratives of some groups are becoming more and more numerous such as those of women and people of color. Saddam, Revathy recognizes the problem of the caste system, the novel explores the caste problem through time. Though the novel was written in 2017, it holds the essence of the caste which is reflected using time. The problem of the caste is still an issue in India, Roy is deeply involved in seeking freedom, and justice against the political agendas.

Arundhati Roy is a feminist writer, she paints a sorrowful and painful picture of a female in the novel, a rape victim Revathy a low-caste girl. The rape of Revathy symbolizes the violence against women. Mainly different characters Revathy, S.Tilottama, Saddam Hussain, Musa have joined the Naxalite, which is the worst condition of the country which led to terrorism inside the country. Revathy believes in bringing justice, to the poor, and eradicating political, social, and economic inequality. Roy presents in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* the sarcasm of the then society. Revathy a victim of rape presents the whole chaotic condition of women to whole over the country. She wanted to be as free as other girls and society to be liberal. Revathy figures out the situation in her fort but she makes assure of freedom. She joined the Maos to get the freedom she reveals as the party is everything to her. "My party is my mother and father, Many times it does many wrong things. Kills wrong people. Women join because they are revolutionaries but because they cannot bear their sufferings at home" (TMUH 425). She describes the cruel, pathetic situation of the people in Kashmir, and how the others become the sufferers of the revolution. The revolution led by soldiers turned into the massacre of several people.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has examined the fictionalization of Indian history in Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* from the perspective of new historicism. This study claims that this novel critiques Indian politics during the 1980s and indirectly criticizes the political leaders from 1980-2017 to give voice to the downtrodden people. They were badly treated by some political

leaders in the name of caste, gender, and religion which is ridiculous. The writer is in favor of Muslims because Hindutwa is all over the country and she is in favor of marginalized, downtrodden people as she is willing to provide a voice to the voiceless people. Moreover, her writing is convincing though she has exaggerated some issues she seems to have felt them as her problems. In this manner, this study sheds light on the official history of India, which has excluded marginalized communities.

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