

NEW FACE OF INDIAN WOMEN IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the design of female portrayal and their journey from submissiveness to independence within the subjugation of male-dominated India which makes space for women and enables them to grow as new face. It can be described as a new face of self-awareness for female characters that will ultimately facilitate their journey on the path to self-independence. The study scrutinizes the novel *The God of Small Things* through female characters who are curving emancipation in the realm of patriarchal oppression. Most Indian women face current risks stemming from traditional gender roles. The worst social and economic conditions for Indian women were described in this way by Arundhati Roy. As a divorced woman, the life of Ammu with her parents and brother was not comfortable, and they treated her and her children in an awful way. Instead of these ill-treatments, some women desire to be emancipated from existing prejudice social norms. The study forms a pragmatic combination with feminist theory that seeks to understand the response to the subjugated obstacle of patriarchal society posed by

female characters. The protagonist expresses her anger and frustration at the difficulties they face in maintaining the boundaries of social space in which they can make limited progress. The study examines how the female characters eventually make emancipated by their self-consciousness and how female characters emerged as new icons in the existing subjugated patriarchal society.

INTRODUCTION

The female protagonists in this study show anger and frustration in order to cope with the difficulties they face when maintaining the boundaries of the social space in which they can make limited progress. The characters are categorized by the merits of reflection, introversion, and rejection of the tasks that effect their individual selves. The novel shows an honest concern about the issues of anxiety and psychological adjustment that threats to a person's identity require. As far as their social, economic, and cultural life is concerned, these characters endure embarrassment, but they still find themselves able to strive, compromise, and understand their true selves/identities (Attwood, 2011). They are behaving according to their own will and defying the social system's traditional codes (Alam, 2015). Since they no longer consider themselves inferior and ready to fight, they can easily handle the given labels. These traits are introduced as a new face by this self-esteem in the female characters, which gradually simplifies their journey on the path to self-independence. For this article, *The God of Small Things* (1997) by Arundhati Roy, the novel of contemporary literature is selected to analysis. The study explores the justification of Indian female oppression and submissiveness through the analysis of female characters. Moreover, all the female characters have made themselves independent eventually by their self-consciousness. In the novel, the female protagonists try to stay in the social system, thus questioning their irrational existence through the power of self-consciousness. Such traits are presented as a new face through this self-confidence of the female characters, which gradually simplifies their path to self-independence. The aims of this study are to look at how the female characters in the novel show their new face behind the economic problems and social repression. This paper primarily examines the extent of the patriarchal Indian socio-cultural status of subjugated female characters and how the protagonists question the patriarchal system of a society for their own emancipation.

For the study, textual analysis makes a pragmatic combination with the philosophy of radical feminism, which attempts to demonstrate through the character analysis of the chosen novel the subjugated impediment of

patriarchal society. Feminism is a philosophy that rejects the political, economic, and cultural demotion of women in inferiority positions (Brahmin, 33) and is indistinguishable from the promotion of the emancipation of women, which is the special norm of radical feminism as an outpouring of feminism the second wave. The “second wave” after the 1960s gradually struggled for women’s rights of re-employment, education, politics, and culture, and went up to the discussion of the nature of women and culture. By questioning traditional social norms and structures, radical feminism seeks to free every woman from an oppressive society. Indian feminism differs from Western feminism in that Indian society has always been highly hierarchical. There is a lot of hierarchy within the family based on age, sex, and ordinary place; a bright and fine bond, or within the group based on caste lineage, schooling, occupation, and relationship with the governing power, etc. This study, therefore, aims to show that by awakening self-consciousness, women could gain their dependency and identity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a long established culture in the Indian Subcontinent that is primarily viewed as patriarchal submission. Women are seen in the subjugated patriarchal society as a subtle creature who is dependent on the man for everything from the beginning of her existence to her livelihood (Brahmin, 2016). The man assumed a dominant position in all areas of life as a western characteristic, while women were characteristic of the east as weakness and submission (Lone, 2008). In India, certain types of male-dominated culture have been established in which women are affected in many ways by the system of patriarchal power structures between family and society. The inferior position and status of women in Indian society, as reflected in sociocultural conventions of power, has led women to acknowledge and accept their inferior status since. When it came to doing something intellectual or artistic, she was considered good for nothing. The struggle of a woman in a male-dominated society can be easily calculated in such a situation (Islam, 2019).

In the Indian subcontinent, the emergence of feminism has led to the questioning of the old patriarchal supremacy of prominence. The women of today refuse to be marionettes in men’s possession. The portrayal of women has thus, undergone a dramatic shift. In the Indian subcontinent, there is a lateral established culture that is primarily used as patriarchal submission. Women are seen in the subconscious patriarchal society as a subtle creature who is of man for everything from the beginning of his existence to our own (Brahmin, 2016). In all living conditions, the man assumed a political exchange position as Western trust, which was characteristic of women as well as submission for the East (Lone, 2008). In the Indian society, the male-dominated cultures are well established, in which women usually derive patriarchal power by the system of family and society. The inferior position and status of women in sociocultural codes of power have included the fact that women recognize the inferior

position and relate to which they belong since childhood (Islam, 2019). Like all other social movements, feminist movements in India have numerous opposing, frequently warring factions. There are variations in views, origins, places, tactics, and even what seems like a feminist future and unity. Samita Sen mentions in these cases, the condition of Indian women is implicit in the modern women's movement that arose in the late 1970s and early 1980s (4). Since its launch in India, feminists have been struggling. Chatterjee states that, unlike the women's revolution in Europe and America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the fight for the new concept of womanhood was fought at home in the period of nationalism (133), rapidly recognizing women's political inclusion only as representatives of one or another supposedly organic group... to question patriarchal assumptions (Sinha, 2008). A more diverse, progressive, and nuanced criticism of patriarchy began to be expressed by women, reaching into a modern and more politicised identity of gender (Sen, 2000).

The feminist movement in India was characterized during the first wave of feminism by the generation of educated women who struggle against child marriage, the burning of widows and child murder of women, and attempts to empower women. Gender policy has only affected upper-caste and upper-class women (Islam, 2013). Although this was a remarkable time for the rights of women and Indian women in general, it led to profound changes in the education, employability, political participation, development, and modernization of women (Chatterjee, 1993).

In the second wave of feminism that began in the mid-1970s, educated middle-class women played a central role and they were active in many social movements like students, youth, workers, peasants, tribal societies, and other facets of civil liberties. They abhorred the paternalism of the charitable and philanthropic social work of benevolent males and upper class women and proclaimed themselves fighters for women's rights. The third wave essentially encompasses viewpoints from those disadvantaged or removed from previous feminism 'waves': tribal women and women of colour, postcolonial women, young women, women of various skills, women of racial and religious minorities, and women of alternative sexuality. The new feminism have been seen to embody and represent consumer-centered, individualistic, and entrepreneurial arrangements of middleclass Indian women in the metropolis (Gilbertson, 2018) centered on gender awareness (Sen, 2000), the individuality of women, and the realization of rights. Women of the modern generation have been fighting to emancipate themselves from male patriarchy, against the disparities posed by the feminist voice of protest-throughout history, legal, economic, and social.

Even feminist concerns transcend all boundaries of class, race, and religion. Noor Fatima posits one of the main concerns of contemporary literature around the world has been highlighted the plight of women, their growing problems, and their physical, financial, and emotional exploitation. Simon de Beauvoir declared that a woman is not born, but

one becomes woman (Islam, 2015). The new woman expresses a touch of anger as she raises her voice about patriarchal culture. The women will attain their status today, their silenced voice no longer remains. The feature characters of the selected novel undoubtedly deal with the notion of certain styles of reaction that have increased the Indian Society's expression of their problems and consciousness (Fatema, 2012).

NEW FACE OF WOMEN IN THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS

The God of Small Things, a novel by Booker Prize-winning author Arundhati Roy, focuses on the role of Indian women. It depicts women's unwavering fight against ongoing abuse and suffering. Ammu, the heroine, is a woman who strives to rebel against Hindu ideals and India's patriarchal structure. She cannot accept her husband's terrible attitudes and acts, unlike her mother, and would sooner divorce than stay married. Ammu is also an example of a member of society who defies Indian communal norms.

The God of Small Things is one of the most influential novels that portrays Indian society's family realism in an inventive way by radiographing the harsh facts that were the largest impediment on the Indian route. Society's prosperity and peaceful development. It vows war on these societal problems that have caused so much injustice to the oppressed class. Roy continues to struggle with the government and social authorities for the impoverished and depressed, and she announces the same war against society's tyrannical class (Chopra, 2018).

In the novel, the female protagonist Ammu breaks the walls of society that and threatened her most. Thus, from the feminist process to the stage, she moves on relocation and identity of oneself. As a new woman, she comes out to escape the dictates of patriarchy, contours more prominent. It is amazing for an Indian woman's choices to divorce as the only way to recover her missing life. "She told him that she needed her own space.... She asked him for a divorce" (Islam, 2014). Which is the picture of a new face of women in India. Ammu is not a woman who can be the subject of a fallen when it hurts to see her husband's failure to maintain his self-esteem and decides to leave him. When her husband accepts his boss's plan to sleep with Ammu, otherwise he will be fired at work, which inevitably leads to a divorce. Since divorce is a great burden on a woman, the tragedy it leads is placed in the context of family and traditions. For example, the novel describes the attitudes of his own family and neighbours as "a constant, high, whining mewls of local disapproval". But instead of obeisance, she returns to the same dark cellar, she used to run away from, Ayemenem. She welcomes her to the position of eternal misery once again. This represents the sensitivity of a new woman who tolerates anything only for the sake of her won freedom.

While Ammu is an educated divorcee in the middle class with two children, she is not welcome on her return. She is oppressed by her own

brother Chacko, a kind of establishment leftist. But Ammu is a brave woman; she is not submissive to the stresses of family and society. She indeed, rebels against certain social systems and threats. Though, she becomes an epitome of all subalterns, especially women, who question the structures of power of the social order. Thus, Ammu defies social and political processes that are hierarchical and authoritarian. Even if she doesn't a valiant effort to realize her dreams is successful in bringing about some measurable improvement (Chatterjee, 1989).

While women are inferior, some face internal tensions that need to be changed and others seek to challenge existing social differences in order to bring about change. Women question the current local and global differences that prevail in society rather than the lack of eloquent voices from representatives of other communities in Indian society. The female figures of Arundhati Roy are thus torn between conventional borders and contemporary free zones. She brilliantly claimed through her novel that a woman is also a living being and not a man's appendage. She is an independent being who has the right to find her own way to salvation. Here Roy speaks by the voice of Simone de Beauvoir who addresses in her famous work "The Second Sex" as "One is not born' but rather becomes, a woman". Roy's portrayal of the subordinate woman became more diverse by simply introducing the many profiles of women who, despite their oppression and marginalization, are not without agency and duty (Mohanty, 2015).

The novel offers numerous possible alternatives for the silenced and neglected woman, through the new women. The novel's plot aims to deliver a positive message in that Ammu, the protagonist who is an oppressed individual in a foreign world, manages to fight against the odds and succeeds. Here the novel makes the female characters' rising phase. Based on the critical feminist approach, this study aims to show that women can gain their dependency and identity through awakening and subjectivity of self-consciousness, the characters of Ammu, which show us as the best example writer.

Besides the character of Ammu, Roy depicts the other two generation of women to picture out new face of Indian women. All three generations of women fight to be self-independent in the male dominated Indian Society. The Mammachi character epitomizes the first generation of women married to Pappachi, the imperial entomologist (Poorman, 2003). When her husband retired, she started her own business in her village, producing banana jam and tender mango pickles. Mammachi was invited to produce some of her famed banana jam and tender mango pickle for the Kottayam Bible Society's exhibition. It rapidly sold out, and Mammachi found herself with more requests than she could handle. She was so pleased with her success that she decided to keep making pickles all year. She is described as a talented and diligent individual. The narrative is focused on Mammachi's pickle business and his ability for becoming a concert violinist. Her violin teacher describes her as "exceptionally talented" (Chamberlain, 2017).

Rahel is the last generation of women, Ammu's daughter, depicted in *The God of Small Things*. As part of the novel, she is one of the most significant characters, narrated from Ammu's perspective as a seven-year-old child. Along with her brother, Estha, who is portrayed both in childhood and adulthood, she is the only character and he describes her as an insensitive girl. When Rahel is suspect of the death of Sophie Mol. She boldly refuges it and says "her funeral killed her". Although Rahel is a complex character, his description is synchronized with the story of his brother Esthappen (Hooks, 1989).

We see that Rahel turns her into a rebel after the family breaks up. This provocative behavior is demonstrated by discovering that she is being thrown out of school for misconduct for decorating dung heaps with roses (Patel, 1985). Every female character, primarily because of laws and customs, is living her own tragedy. These traditions leave women facing a fateful future and at the mercy of other people. This definition is represented in the novel by Rahel who says that "they all broke the rules. They all crossed into forbidden territory. They all tampered with the laws that lay down who should be loved and how. And how much" (Heitzman, 1989).

CONCLUSION

Indian women endure not only through sacrifice but also through retaliation and reaction to society, religion, and community with their achievements. The author brought out the plight of women in her novel's plots. Through the voices of the female protagonist and other female characters, the novel conveys the struggle, survival, and successes of women's lives that illustrate the key claims of Spivak and Beauvoir. In most of the circumstances in the novel, the act of breaking down those barriers is depicted. We recognize instances of defiant female characters by raising their voices and embracing each other. The study asserted the importance of interpreting literary texts in relation to the liberation of Indian women through the approach of the radical feminist view. In addition, the study finds the power to inspire female characters to reproduce them in a real spirit that is their awareness of being emancipated from the discriminations of the subjected patriarchal society since there is no positive concern regarding women's rights from patriarchal subjugated society. The point of significance is that because literature relates to actual events in the present analysis, finding becomes useful in evaluating the relationship between fiction and fact. The female characters attempted to go steadily against the norms and endured dreadful sufferings by patriarchy.

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