



The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy: A Suffragette Examination in the Framework of Postcolonialism

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ABSTRACT:

The God of Small Things by Arundhati Roy serves as the foundation for this essay's analysis of the aforementioned book. History, diaspora, hybridity, the position of women in Indian society, globalisation, resistance, and orientalism are some of the issues that can be discussed in this book. These ideas come from postcolonial thinkers Homi K. Bhabha and Edward W. Said. Due to the fact that TGST features various female characters, like Ammu, Rahel, and others, the role of women in Indian society is a prominent subject. In Ayemenem, economic prosperity brings about transformation. It develops into a world community. In the book, postcolonial resistance is a significant topic. Roy engages in a form of resistance against colonisation by speaking in English, which is a colonial language. Roy describes the kids' way of life as a form of resistance.

Keywords: Colonial discourse; Postcolonialism; Resistance; Diaspora; Feminism.

INTRODUCTION

According to the current researcher, it could be interpreted as a form of orientalism in TGST. According to Loomba's book Colonialism/Postcolonialism (1998), nationalist or anti-colonial groups have attempted to portray the nation as mother in order to create their own ancestors and to "control the activity of women within the imagined community." "Sons who may live and die for the nation" are encouraged to be born by these movements, according to 180. The country is designed as a family, with citizens acting as brothers and sisters and leaders taking on paternal roles. As an illustration, "the King was a Father to his people" (ibid., 81). The State and the Family were complete in themselves. The family, which denotes interior space, becomes the anti-colonial movement's symbol during colonialism (182). When envisaged colonial situations and invasions including appropriated families of colonised subjects, "the family will be symbol of resistance" (ibid.).

The memsahib is in opposition to the ideal woman in this situation. Brahminical ideas of feminine fidelity and self-sacrifice shape the ideal woman. An ideal gentlewoman is distinguished from their lower-class sisters, who are servants or sources of folk or popular music and tales, dramas, and humour, as this woman is being formed. Numerous facets of women's popular culture are marginalised in this situation. These genres utilised "powerful humour and sharpness to express the difficulty of women in a male-dominated society or sexual desire" (ibid). In every country, women make up half the population. Even we are unaware of the "widows themselves and the fact of their pain" (ibid., 185). The arguments surrounding these "widows" are particularly relevant to postcolonial theory since they "are the agency of the colonised" (ibid). In the conversation on self-immolation, the voices of women disappear. This lack of representation demonstrates the "intermixed violence of colonialism and of patriarchy" (ibid). According to imperialist and nationalist discourses, women are "real targets" (ibid).

In her book *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* from 1998, Loomba claims to have included "some writings of women for eminent scholars" (186). These publications operated on the periphery of nationalist and anti-colonial ideas, or in opposition to them. In the more feminist study, women's lives during colonial authority are resurrected, and it is revealed that "women as individuals are a potential collectivity" (Loomba 186). Earlier patriarchal rewrites of tradition were directed towards them. diverse anti-colonial movements have diverse stances on "female agency and women's rights" (ibid). Gandhi started a crusade against cooperation. "Proto feminist" is the name given to it (ibid. 187). Gandhi disregarded the rights of women and adhered to "the conceptions of the family and society" (ibid). Women's activism in India ran against intense political opposition. "Women" were not involved in "any public anti-colonial protests" in the nineteenth century, according to the same source. "The nationalist movement from the 1920s onwards" was made possible by the terminology created at that time, according to the same source. The broadening of women's duties in the home included being "caring," "subservient," and "nonmilitant" (ibid).

Some efforts "to restrict their agency" were made, according to the ibid. Additionally, women's reactions to these initiatives varied. The colonial wars saw the participation of many women. These women did not identify as feminists, and they did not perceive a conflict between their own difficulties and those of their entire community. They did work outside of only the home, and some of the women held leadership positions. New conceptual spaces for women were described by these women. In the sake of motherhood and family, they entered "public spaces" (ibid.). Additionally, Loomba says that:

After official independence, women still fight for equality, and they characterise postcoloniality. Anti-nationalisms endorsed women's participation in public life. Because of this nationalist history, postcolonial

nations are more likely than metropolitan ones to accept women's participation in politics. An effort has been made in recent years to capitalise on women's political engagement and even religious extremism. In many regions of the world, active women are participating in right-wing movements that are Hindu, Islamic, or Christian. Women manipulated the issue of religion cunningly. It has become apparent as a key element in women's interactions with the country and postcolonial politics. Many postcolonial systems violated the rights of women and reinforced their subordination through the use of religion. In Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, and Saudi Arabia, national identity was established as a result of the Islamization of civil society. The transformation of postcolonial identities and gender norms is heavily influenced by religion. Islam is thought to be the religion most susceptible to fundamentalist appropriation. Women in India who incite phobias of Muslim ferocity, like Sadhvi Rithambara and Uma Bharati, are crucial advocates for Hindu nationalism. Women are both the subjects and the objects of fundamentalist ideologies. The connection between women, the nation, and the community varies, both during and after colonialism. Feminism is complicated by colonial and anticolonial histories. Women made an effort to fight for democracy, anti-imperialism, and self-determination while also trying to redefine who they were. Women may have taken part in current nationalist battles, according to Amerita Base. (189)

In 1987, a national feminist conference was held, and 79% of the participants were involved in political movements related to race, labour, the working class, religion, and other issues. Women are more associated with working-class or anti-imperialist concerns than with white First World feminism. The movements for women have been segmented based on factors like politics, sexual orientation, geography, class, race, and religion. Although black women in the USA may adhere to white feminism's political views, independent feminists in India focus on themes of sexuality and feistiness. Questions of "women's sexuality or autonomy" have been devalued by "nationalist or class-based movements" (Loomba 190).

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Women's movements in India strive to address issues like domestic and sexual feistiness as well as equal pay for equal work. Totalitarian state repression, racism, patriarchy, better working circumstances, and choice of sexual direction have all been targets of postcolonial women's movements. The notion that postcolonial women's movements are influenced by their Western counterparts has been resisted by some of them. These movements adhere to their regional and indigenous roots. They expressed themselves by rewriting local histories and mythology that were supportive to colonialism. These movements must discuss "the dynamics of globalisation" and "the postcolonial nation-state" in the present (ibid. 191).

Additionally, Loomba points out that women's labour in the past either directly or indirectly supported the colonial apparatus. A lot of the time, "globalisation" reproduces "the general effects of colonialism" (ibid). There are "the receivers of drugs and contraceptives banned in the West" (ibid. 192), and these women's labours are currently being tested in medical studies. Fundamentalists hold the view that imperialist or Western powers are "responsible for all manner of evil, such as women's repressions" (ibid. 192). An "international women's development network" is created by globalisation, though (ibid). Governmental or feminist organisations seek to extend enlightenment from the West to the rest of the globe as well as "improve women's health" and "working conditions" (Loomba 192). In the postcolonial world, "global imbalances profoundly structure feminist agendas" (ibid). Women have actively participated in postcolonial politics in postcolonial societies, "from the traditional forms of political action to the new social movements like environmental programmers" (ibid).

METHODOLOGY

In this study, the author attempts to analyse the book using some postcolonial ideas. White, who considers history to be the name of the scientific discipline in the nineteenth century, is the foundation of hybridity. Migration and change among the many nations are constant in postcolonial areas. The new identities had been created as a result of the peoples' transformation. It produces a transcultural identity. The concept of hybridity gained importance in postcolonial studies. The current researcher tries to approach hybridity and diaspora from Bhabha's perspective. Both the author and the protagonist, Ammu, are female. The researcher is interested in the position of women in Indian society and they are members of the diasporic group. Resistance and orientalism are other ideas. Said worked on the final two ideas. Globalisation is the process by which the world gets smaller and becomes one location. In a complex society, this occurs. For globalisation, India strives to attract foreign investment.

DISCUSSION

1. Indian Women's Place in Society in the God of Small Things

Roy defies caste lines to confront the most heinous type of exclusion and lives on the periphery of Indian society. Women who do not fit the typical pattern of accommodating to wifedom and blending into the in-laws are not given many satisfying options by Indian society. Therefore, patriarchy views transgression as having insufficient capacity to upset the natural order, even while specific individual actions do have a small impact on societal reactions and exclusion/death remain the only truly serious penalties. However, Hindu women's worldview, which advocates passive resistance, is alarming. One could argue that this implies women have no option, yet Western interpretations cast doubt on this highly ingrained socioreligious myth. Indian women must be liberated from such stereotyping by Western women, and greater direct action must be encouraged. Moral superiority is unquestionably a fiction that could keep women far from themselves, judging other women, or even scared or demeaning of their male counterparts. Indeed, Indian women were capable of a wide range of human emotions and behaviours outside of clearly defined Indian conventional norms.

A female heroine leads a life that is wholly at odds with conventional standards. The story suggests that women are beginning to think differently and that old ways of living are changing. It is dismantling stereotypical representations of some aspects of Indian family life and the cultural factors that influence it, such as the strict interpretation of the Vedas, long-standing sexism, a limited family budget in a culture that still values dowries, and the notion that a Hindu woman belongs to her husband's family. The novel shows the ability of literature to create awareness and sensitivity of the struggles that the main woman character faces as a result of the changing times, particularly the inner workings of her mind, her personal perplexities, and social confrontations as an individual growing into themselves. This is done through the process of construction and deconstruction of the woman protagonist. This issue was resolved upon in this section of the book by Amm's brother, Chacko, regarding Ammu's relationship with Velutha.

The isolation of the individual soul, particularly that of the woman, is the main goal of TGST, with political reasons serving as a secondary goal. The book aims to define the various perspectives of the formerly marginalised other and stake out a cultural identity for women. When not overtly rejected, women's selfhood has been devalued and subordinated. Exploding cultural preconceptions that define a self in terms of others by positioning India on the other side of the tradition vs. modernity dichotomy is a crucial step in realising the linkages between the local (India) and the global (diasporic).

The term "hybridity" is defined in TGST as simply the merging of two cultures, done so in the name of social justice and individual advancement. For Indian women who are interested in challenge patriarchal/traditional Indian behaviour and thought, conservative Hindu propagation that establishes monolithic cultures has worrisome ramifications.

In the postcolonial discussion, the woman occupies a position in the middle that "allows for much diversity and flexibility in identity" (Bhabha 1994: 211). Hybrid groups are excluded from criticism of colonialism based on ideology and the colonizer/colonized distinction. However, hybrid groups that emerged as a result of colonialism are a clear indicator of oppression and exploitation. Between the two cultures, these women must forge their own identities. Given that they do not identify either as Anglo or Indian, racial hybridity is crucial. They assert their own space and subjectivity in opposition to total identification with the Indian and the British. They have a sizable cultural area in which they are free to act as individuals. "New signs of identity" and "innovative sights of collaboration and contestation in the act of defining the idea of society itself" can be found in the in-between places, according to Bhabha (1994: 2).

In particular, the construction of third-world or post-colonial women is challenged by TGST. Indian women are described as being oppressed, underdeveloped, illiterate, and religious fanatics. A postcolonial Indian writer and feminist argues that in order to participate in cultural reproductions that reduce women's lives to a specific fixed patriarchal pattern and to avoid over creating binary oppositions between oppressed, poor, traditionally bound third world women and modern, educated, free, Western women, one must critically engage with the historically specific and dynamic location of women in India. Roy writes against patriarchy in an effort to reclaim and write against the stereotype of third-world women as the exoticized other. However, she writes in the context of a society or community whose members, albeit lacking the luxury of reading and writing, serve as these women's representatives and voice.

The cross-cultural undercurrents in Roy's novel, which has its setting in India, give a new perspective on Indian women that appeals to Western sensibilities while also partially reflecting Indian women's attempts to understand themselves, a process that would not have been impacted by the specific sociocultural context. In the book, Indian women who rebelled against Hindu traditions are accused of breaking the strict patriarchal norms of Indian families and are thus sentenced to ostracization or even death.

The postcolonial diaspora is a continual reminder that pre-colonized people remain in the colonisers' territory since they were in their own homeland, but it is not just immigration into Great Britain or other countries from other places. Immigration specifically violates Western British notions of rigid limits and casts doubt on the cultural homogeneity of the White Englishman or Englishwoman. It is most likely viewed as a threat to the unity of the British country. Indian diasporic women's choices represent hybridity as well as colonisation in reverse and the voice of the other. This multicultural book battles patriarchy. Diasporic women have the impulse to distinguish themselves from the nation that came before them as well, so they don't have to identify themselves only in terms of how they differ from the majority population in their places of birth. This urgent desire to flee occurs in the context of differentiating and creating a space for the Indian woman author. The prevalence of numerous contradictory and complex ideologies in diasporic groups is particularly what makes the works of Indian women so valuable for questions about the identity and existence of women at a micro level from consistent analyses of family life. The cross-cultural undercurrents in Roy's novel, which has its setting in India, give a new perspective on Indian women that appeals to Western sensibilities while also partially reflecting Indian women's attempts to understand themselves, a process that would not have been impacted by the specific sociocultural context. In the book, Indian women who rebelled against Hindu traditions are accused of breaking the strict patriarchal norms of Indian families and are thus sentenced to ostracization or even death.

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The life of an Indian woman who is reevaluating and rebuilding her identity is depicted in the book. Each woman seeks to establish herself in the centre because she feels marginalised in her own sociocultural setting. Due to

the effects of British colonialism, Indian women today reside outside of their country of origin, where they have various viewpoints on postcolonial issues and raise distinctive voices that are forcefully articulated in defence of themselves.

In actuality, the development of postcolonial Indian women's fiction was a process that gained momentum as political independence was attained and cultural decolonization accelerated. Indian women's writing could be seen as writing back to the dominant English in an effort to assert woman cultural authority, given that women's writing in English has developed substantially for apparent historical reasons. English promotes Western culture among the colonised and has an ideological purpose. However, Indian women writers have shown how language, with its connotations of authority, can be taken from the dominant culture. Roy elevates marginalised cultural women's identities while writing from intercultural or cross-cultural perspectives. One of the societal issues influencing the writer's work is the development and destruction of hybrid diasporic women identities related to caste and gender.

This potent written tribute exemplifies how writing and reading may liberate women from the constraints of a constrictive real-life environment. The author uses her own voice to describe her own experience. Her struggles with striking a balance between her femininity and independence, Hindu traditions and Western modernism, are evident. Her writing undoubtedly expresses her dissatisfaction with the officially recognised construction of proper behaviour, conscious of the issues of traditionally organised disadvantages, and both a woman and a racial minority in the receiving/host community.

Roy criticises the old networks that continue to exist in India and actively restrain the thoughts, urges, and emotions of women in both conscious and unconscious ways. Although shared by Indian feminist writers, her writing in English is clearly an introspective reflection as well as a personal liberation from Indian socio-cultural and political restrictions.

In a piece, a woman writer harshly criticises particular types of women. For instance, the spinster aunt, an elderly woman, is the most terrible character in TGST. She is utterly evil, almost monstrous in her wickedness, and she is the main cause of most catastrophes. An author who is a woman will occasionally make an effort to speak positively about women. Roy is excellent at illustrating how socio-cultural institutions place women across all classes and generations. It doesn't excuse her horrible actions, but Roy paints a very complex picture of the dynamics that interact between cultural constraints and personal choice. Even this aunt, Baby Kochamma, is very bitter as a result of her own history, and we are shown precisely how she came to be the way she is.

2.The God of Small Things's depiction of postcolonial resist

The term "colonisation" describes a tribe or group's hegemony over another's land and possessions. Colonialism is a historical phenomenon that describes the hegemony of various European powers over other parts of the world. In essence, colonialism refers to the time between the late fourteenth and the twentieth centuries. This idea has roots in the evolution of humanity. The colonised population's quality of life was impacted by the colonial authorities. These kings had the idea that they were superior and had been given the authority to control the colonised people. Labour and human resources were in abundance in the colonies. The British Empire colonised countries all over the world, including Australia, America, Canada, and India. The British colonisation had an impact on Indian literature, culture, and society. New genres, concepts, and identities are produced by literature. Some authors or poets, like John Donne, include imperialist themes in their works. Literary works can challenge prevailing ideologies. Additionally, throughout the British colonial period, numerous English books about India were published. British literature of the nineteenth century portrayed imperialism as a significant aspect of how the English perceived England's culture. The relationship between literature and colonialism also includes the prevailing critical ideologies that are upheld in educational systems. For colonial administrators trained in Western literature, Britain transformed literary studies into a field of study in British universities. Literature and colonialism have a connection.

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The topic of postcolonialism is up for discussion in modern literary and critical studies. This is the situation when colonialism was formally ended. This has its roots in the West. It depends on Western philosophy, sometimes known as Eurocentric philosophy. It is a sophisticated phenomenon that is overly jargonized and promoted as the newest catch-all phrase to impress academics. The ethos of many regional literary genres is

reflected in postcolonial Indian English fiction as a whole. In the postcolonial research, the idea of a nation gave rise to an intriguing discussion. At least three generations of Indian English-language writers have appeared in postcolonial Indian literature. Third-generation ancestor Arundhati Roy. She created the framework in a global setting. Indian English fiction was successful in winning practically all prestigious literary awards worldwide. The family, which denotes interior space, becomes the anti-colonial movement's symbol during colonialism. The household will stand for resistance. Anti-colonial nationalism is created by oppressed peoples to serve as a symbol of selfhood under colonial control. The metaphor of the nation as a mother represents both the strength and the plight of women. While this mother protects her son from colonial robberies, she has also been severely damaged by colonialism and is dependent on her son's safety. "Brahminical notions of female self-sacrifice and devotion" are what define the ideal woman in Indian society, according to Loomba (p. 183). Women's fighting was met with intense political interaction in Indian culture. Gandhi disregarded the rights of women and upheld social and familial norms. The colonial wars saw the participation of many women. They weren't feminists, and they didn't perceive a conflict between their own issues and those of their entire community. In the interest of their families and mothers, they entered public areas. After official independence, women still fight for equality, and they characterise postcoloniality. Because of this nationalist history, postcolonial nations are more likely than metropolitan ones to accept women's participation in politics. In several regions of the world, active women are taking part in the right-wing movements of the Hindu, Islamic, or Christian faiths. Women manipulated the issue of religion cunningly. Many postcolonial systems violated the rights of women and reinforced their subordination through the use of religion. Women in India who incite phobias of Muslim ferocity, like SadhviRithmabara and Uma Bharati, are important advocates for Hindu nationalism.

The connection between women, the nation, and the community varies, both during and after colonialism. Women attempt to fight for self-determination, democracy, anti-imperialism, and a new self-perception. Totalitarian postcolonial women's struggles have been "against state repression, rape, racism, patriarchy, or better working conditions and for choice of sexual direction" (Loomba 191). The movements for postcolonial women adhere to their regional and indigenous roots. They manifested themselves by rewriting local histories and mythology that were supportive to colonialism. These movements now need to discuss the postcolonial nation-state and the mechanisms of globalisation. According to *ibid.*, "Globalisation frequently reproduces the general effects of colonialism." An international women's development network is made possible by globalisation. In addition to attempting to spread "enlightenment from the West to the rest of the world," "the governmental or feminist organisations" also aim to enhance "women's health" and "working conditions" (Loomba 192). Women have participated in all facets of postcolonial politics in postcolonial societies, "from the more established forms

of political action to the social movement" like environmental programmers (ibid.). Medical research tests the work of women, and there are recipients of medications and contraception that are prohibited in the West.

CONCLUSION-:

Because there are various female characters in TGST, including Ammu, Rahel, and others, it can be concluded that a significant concern is the place of women in Indian society. In Ayemenem, economic prosperity brings about transformation. It develops into a world community. In the book, postcolonial resistance is a significant topic. Roy engages in a form of resistance against colonisation by speaking in English, which is a colonial language. Roy describes the kids' way of life as a form of resistance. According to the current researcher, it could be interpreted as a form of orientalism in TGST. The conclusion, the last item, contains the findings. A key component of postcolonial works is history. White, in *Postcolonial Studies Reader* by Ashcroft et al. (2006), claims that history aspires to "the title of scientific discipline in the nineteenth century mould" (17). The history of the Syrian-Christian community in South India, the history of the caste system in Hinduism, Velutha, the Hindu god, Krishna, kathakali dance in Kerala, the Communism Party in Kerala, and the Naxalites in Kerala are just a few of the historical layers included in TGST. A complicated community exists in Kerala. Kerala is a place where people of various religions reside. In Kerala, communism was considerably more successful. Because in communism, everyone must be on an equal footing. Thus, in Kerala, the lower class adopts it.

Diaspora is a crucial topic that played a vital role in TGST. The history of India contains many levels of diaspora. Most diasporas have occurred during times of movement and change. In communities with a large diaspora, like Kerala, hybridity is inevitable. Kerala had a complicated and multicultural society. Hybridity describes a transitional state. According to Bhabha (Bhabha 1994:211), the in-between space "allows for much diversity and flexibility in identity". In TGST, there were linguistic, cultural, and biological hybrids. The character of Ammu fell due to her illicit relationship with Velutha, and that of the twins declined due to their incest (adultery between close relatives) towards the novel's conclusion, leading the researcher to assume that hybridity is harmful. Due of their cultural hybridity, these characters declined.

The work questioned fixed ideas about identity, particularly how postcolonial women were conceived. In addition to other societal issues, Roy tried to relate to gender and caste as a lady of hybrid diaspora. She made an effort to speak in her own voice while expressing herself. She spoke out against colonialism directly using Western terminology. It is a form of opposition. In order to further its economic emancipation in the early 1990s, India brought in foreign capital. The plan had considerable impact on Kerala. The economic growth made by

this plan. Kerala also expands internationally. Roy thought that social inequality in India has grown as a result of globalisation. India's rural and urban areas are now drastically divided as a result of globalisation. India's future is dependent on its diversity and political options. The diaspora created in the various historical strata is what is presented in this book. Additionally, hybridity is a byproduct of diaspora. Hybridity is also risky because two characters in the book experience character degeneration. India's future lies locally rather than globally. Political options should be available to the Indian government.

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