
Treatment of Ecofeminism in Arundhati Roy's Novels

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Abstract

This article is an attempt to evaluate Arundhati Roy's ways of dealing with how **the alliance of patriarchy and capitalism functions to dominate women and degrade environmentalism in the light of her two novels *The God of Small Things* (1997) and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017)**. As an eminent author endowed with a powerful sense of social responsibility and high moral obligation, Roy's works in general, present a vigorous criticism and valiant protest against all sorts of familial, social, political and economic injustices, discriminations, exploitations and so on. But being a feminist, environmentalist and social activist, Roy places gender and environmental issues at the core of her literary world. Roy deals with the problems of humanity and nature almost with equal significance and seriousness. And being an artist having 'more than usual organic sensibility', sharp political awareness and pragmatic bent of mind, Roy unearths those untold and unheard episodes of struggles, suppressions and exploitations of countless common masses which have always been ignored and buried deep into the black holes of darkness by the ruling, elite and capitalist classes. And so, precisely

speaking, this article also aims at considering Roy's feministic approaches of treating some major concerns related to ecofeminism and gender discrimination and class struggles in the social, political and economic frameworks of contemporary Indian society in her two novels which end in the depiction of a visionary world based entirely on the sublime values like justice, equality, unity, love and care for nature and peace.

Keywords: Ecofeminism, ecofeminist, environment, activist, degradation, ecology, nature.

Introduction:

Oxford dictionary defines Ecofeminism is "a philosophical and political theory and movement which combines ecological concerns with feminist ones, regarding both as resulting from male domination of society." And "ecofeminism, also called **ecological feminism**, branch of feminism that examines the connections between women and nature. Its name was

coined by **French feminist Françoise d'Eaubonne in 1974**. Ecofeminism uses the basic feminist tenets of equality between genders, a revaluing of non-patriarchal or nonlinear structures, and a view of the world that respects organic processes, holistic connections, and the merits of intuition and collaboration. To these notions ecofeminism adds both a commitment to the environment and an awareness of the associations made between women and nature. Specifically, this philosophy emphasizes the ways both nature and women are treated by patriarchal (or male-centred) society."¹ Ecofeminism also draws attention to the fact that women are disproportionately affected by environmental issues. In an ecofeminist conference titled 'Women and Life on Earth: A Conference on Eco-Feminism in the Eighties' — in March 1980, at Amherst, the connections between feminism, militarization, healing and ecology were explored. As Ynestra King, one of the Conference organizers, wrote:

"Ecofeminism is about connectedness and wholeness of theory and practice. It asserts the special strength and integrity of every living thing. For us the snail darter is to be considered side by side with a community's need for water, the porpoise side by side with appetite for tuna, and the creatures it may fall on with Skylab. We are a woman-identified movement and we believe we have a special work to do in these imperiled times. We see the devastation of the earth and her beings by the corporate warriors, and the threat of nuclear annihilation by the military warriors, as feminist concerns. It is the same masculinist mentality which would deny us our right to our own bodies and our own sexuality, and which depends on multiple systems of dominance and state power to have its way"²

Many scholars, thinkers and philosophers have examined the beliefs, values and sentiments associated with ecofeminism over the years and eventually, they have started advocating for it. Women such as Vandana Shiva, founder of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology, and Ecology, and Carolyn Merchant, author of *Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution*, are just two prominent names within this movement since its inception. Few more notable names like Val Blumwood, Greta Gaard, and Susan Griffin can also be mentioned in this context.

Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva point out "we could not, however, ignore the fact that 'modernization' and 'development' processes and 'progress' were responsible for the degradation of the natural world. We saw that the impact on women of ecological disasters and deterioration was harder than on men, and also, that everywhere, women were the first to protest against environmental destruction."³ And Carolyn Merchant states in the preface of "The Death of Nature" that "the linkage between women and nature has a long history, and their union has stubbornly persisted by means of culture, language and history."⁴

Arundhati Roy who is always highly sarcastic about the state-sponsored development projects, focuses her criticism not on the idea of development per se, but on the hierarchy of dualism that legitimizes random exploitation and merciless destruction of nature by men in general. Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, *The God of Small Things*, and many of her articles present numerous levels of narratives ranging from the ancient history to the present time through flashbacks. They investigate into various environmental and feminist issues and so, this paper focuses on how Roy addresses these issues in her major works. This paper seeks to put together all the major plots on a single platform and analyze them from the perspective

of ecofeminism and then, define how women and other humiliated characters struggle for happiness and survival in the patriarchal society where people are least concerned about the ecological sustenance.

Ecofeminism in Roy's first novel ' The God of Small Things':

Roy's love of nature is reflected in her choice of a small place called Ayemenem near Kottayam in Kerala to narrate the story of Ammu and her twins Esther and Rahel. She begins her narrative with the description of a picturesque landscape of Kerala in *The God of Small Things* as follows:

"May in Ayemenem is hot brooding month. The days are long and humid. The river shrinks and black crows gorge on the bright the mangoes in still, dust green trees. Red bananas ripen. Jackfruits burst. Dissolute bluebottles hum vacuously in the fruity air. Then they stun themselves against clear windowpanes and die, fatly baffled by the sun.....But by the early June the south-west monsoon breaks and there are three months of wind and water.... The wall streaked with moss, had grown soft and bulged a little with dampness that seeped up from the ground. The wild, overgrown garden was full of the whisper and the surrey of lives. In the undergrowth a rat snake rubbed itself against a glistening stone. Hopefully yellow bullfrogs cruised the scummy ponds for mates. A drenched mongoose across the leaf-strewn driveway."⁵ (Roy- *The God of Small Things*-1-2)

The Ayemenem house and its surroundings provide a macrocosm of all biological elements. We find humans co-habiting with the nonhuman beings. Roy introduces the house as located in typical countryside that aids the author to give away her ecological concerns. The busted jackfruits, the ripen red bananas, dust green mangoes, mossy walls, rat snake, bullfrogs, moths, dragon flies, spiders, temple elephants, ponds, the river, the riverside etc. are specific to the

countryside and we find all these non-living beings are enacting their roles like the human characters in this novel.

Roy's ingenious bonding of women to nature in her fictions is an extraordinary feature of her writing and it becomes pretty obvious in this part of the novel where Chacko gives history lessons to the twins in the following manner:

"...he told them about the Earth Woman. He made them imagine that the earth - four thousand six hundred million years old - was a forty-six-year-old woman.... It had taken the whole of Earth Woman's life for the earth to become what it was. For the oceans to part. For the mountains to rise. The Earth Woman was eleven years old, Chacko said, when the first single-celled organisms appeared. The first animals, creatures like worms and jelly- fish, appeared only when she was forty. She was over forty-five - just eight months ago -when dinosaurs roamed the earth."⁶ (Roy-*TGST*, 54)

Rivers have always played an important role in the cultivation of civilization and this is why they are regarded as the life-supporters and are intensely equated to women who have been bearing the key role in nurturing the offspring since the beginning of human civilization. The Meenachal River that passes through the Ayemenem has a strong bondage with the twin's mother Ammu. This river is a mother-figure to the fishermen in the Ayemenem village because she provides them with daily livelihood. But when she turns into a violent monster in the rainy season and takes up everything by her side she becomes the terminator of lives. Like the river, Ammu too, has a deceptive face that gives us the impression of calmness, but a sleeping volcano which is always ready to detonate, is also lurking in the depth of her inner self. Ammu used to spend hours in the banks of the river with her transistor. She pretended to be in peace, enjoying the beauty of the Meenachal but her

inner being was like a “suicide bomber”⁷ (Roy-TGST, 44).

Occasionally, when Ammu listens to songs that she loved on the radio, something stirred inside her. A liquid ache spread under her skin and she walked out of the world like a witch, to a better happier place. On days like this, there was something restless and untamed about her. As though she had temporarily set aside her morality of motherhood and divorcee hood. Even her walk changed from a safe mother-walk to another wider sort of walk. She wore flowers in her hair and carried magic secrets in her eyes. She spoke to no one. She spent hours on the river bank with her little plastic transistor shaped like a tangerine. She smoked cigarettes and had midnight swims⁸ (Roy-TGST, 44).

The Meenachal River too, has this duality in her appearances. At times she pretends to be “a little church going *ammoma* (grandmother), quiet and clean...Minding her own business. Not looking right or left”⁹ (Roy-TGST, 210) but in reality she is a “wild thing”. Kuttappen rightly warns the twins about her wilderness “I can hear her at night- rushing past in the moonlight always in hurry. You must be careful of her...She minds other people’s business”¹⁰ (Roy-TGST, 210).

Both Ammu and the Meenachal River are the two pathetic figures in the fiction who struggle to survive. Ammu has been a victim of patriarchy like the three generations of women depicted in the narrative. She is the daughter of wealthy and educated parents of a Syrian Catholic family in Ayemenem. Her etymologist father showers his anger and frustration on little Ammu whenever he gets a chance. Ammu is forbidden from attending college because he feels that it is waste of money to teach girls. When Ammu tries to find a solace and comfort in her marriage and her twins, she is betrayed by her husband who asks her to appease the sexual hunger of his English boss. When it goes beyond her endurance, she takes up her kids and

runs back to home, hoping that her parents will accept them. But again, she has to face the harsh realities of life and she feels bedeviled by the indifference of her family members who treat her as an unwanted bug.

On the other hand, Chacko, her brother who has a similar status of a divorcee is given many privileges by the family. His mother showers her love for him by making arrangements for the factory women to enter Chacko’s room without bothering the other family members. When they come to know about Ammu’s relationship with Velutha, they try to hush up the whole thing. They lock up Ammu and chastise her severely, they have even conspired to kill Velutha and eventually, they have succeeded in it. After the death of Velutha in the police custody, Ammu leaves her house and comes to Allepy where she met her tragic death in Bharath Lodge. Roy depicts the predicament of Ammu vividly with a view to presenting the extent of predicaments that the women in a typical male-dominated society usually undergo and of course, condemning the patriarchal dominance in the society.

What patriarchy has done to Ammu is similar to what modernization has done to the Meenachal River. The Meenachal River that flows through the locality of Ayemenem has been an epitome of horror and beauty. Once the river was “Grey green with fish in it. The sky and trees in it. And at night, the broken moon in it”¹² (Roy-TGST, 203). Twenty-three years ago, she was unpredictable, destructive and the most powerful but now she has turned out to be a mere shrunken ribbon “it greeted her with a ghastly skull’s smile, with holes where teeth had been, and a limp hand raised from a hospital bed”¹³ (Roy-TGST, 124). It is nothing but human selfishness to get more harvests from the farmland that gradually caused the death of this river. “Down river, a salt water barrage had been built, in exchange for the votes from the back waters that opened into the Arabian Sea. So now they had two harvests a year instead of

one. More rice for the price of a river”¹³ (Roy-*TGST*, 124). The river is now flooded with industrial waste and domestic waste. The river “smelled of shit, and pesticides bought with World Bank loans. Most of the fish had died. The ones that survived suffered from fin-rot and had broken out in boils”¹⁵ (Roy-*TSGT*, 140).

The green riverside that was once full of trees, is now invaded by human settlements. The children defecate in the muddy banks of the river making it equally filthy and despicable. But like the capitulated woman Ammu, who once lost her life and love at the whims and fancies of the caste and class-conscious society and patriarchy, the river panted with all the filth and merges to the sea. The plight of all of the female characters in the novel is similar to the butterflies that the entomologist John Ipe used to pin up in his cardboard. These forlorn female characters after being denied of their dreams and identities by the rules and norms of male dominancy, flutter around aimlessly for freedom, life, love, recognition, acceptance and happiness throughout the plot.

Pappachi (John Ipe) bestows his patriarchal dominance over the docile, submissive, ungrudging wife Mammachi. Mammachi’s conjugal life becomes invariably turbulent and restless. She has been a mere puppet in the hands of her so-called educated husband. Pappachi is seventeen years older than her and this often triggers sexual jealousy in his mind. He is not less than a narrow minded, possessive, egotistic, jealous, true patriarch who takes out his physical power over his hapless wife and daughter. He stops his wife’s violin lessons when her tutor makes good comments on her and goes to the extent of breaking her violin and throwing it into the river. Finally, to escape from her abusive husband, Mammachi starts her business the Paradise Pickles and Preserves. Like Ammu who searches for comfort and solace in the river, Mammachi too, is discovering a new life

with her pickle factory that preserves natural products finding her link with nature.

Baby Kochamma is another female figure who finds solace and comfort in nature. She never faces any physical subjugation from any of the male characters in the fiction but is emotionally tortured by the thoughts of Father Mulligan whom she falls in love with. Baby Kochamma tries everything possible to get Father Mulligan. She embraces Roman Catholicism and takes vows of nunnery hoping to get chance to be with Father Mulligan. She leaves the convent as an attempt to get closer to him which in reality ends in frustration and disappointment and finally, she decides to go to United States of America to study Ornamental Gardening.

After returning from the U.S.A, Baby Kochamma shows one kind of new vitality and energy in her activities She turns the discarded front yard of Ayemenem House into a beautiful garden which gradually becomes a centre of attraction for many visitors from distant places. “Baby Kochamma turned it into a lush maze of dwarf hedges, rocks, and gargoyles. The flower she loved most was the anthurium.... Their single succulent spathes ranged from shades of mottled black to blood red In the center of Baby Kochamma's garden, surrounded by beds of canna and phlox, a marble cherub peeped an endless silver arc into a shallow pool in which a single blue lotus bloomed. At each corner of the pool lolled a pink plaster-of-Paris gnome with rosy cheeks and a peaked red cap.... Like a lion-tamer she tamed twisting vines and nurtured bristling cacti. She limited bonsai plants and pampered rare orchids. She waged war on the weather. She tried to grow edelweiss and Chinese guava.¹⁶ (Roy-*TGST* -26-27). Roy tries to connect all of the female characters to nature or creatures in nature, when they are disturbed. Right from her birth, Rahel has been the sufferer of undeserved despair and desolation and has been a victim of “Pappachi’s moth”¹⁷ (Roy-*TGST*, 49). Roy adeptly employs

the image of moth to implement Rahel's sense of insecurity. The moth symbolizes vulnerability as they are obsessed with light that leaves them open to predators. Rahel feels herself exposed like a moth whenever she feels threatened or insecure. Roy describes Rahel's fear as "A cold moth with unusually dense dorsal tufts landed on Rahel's heart, where its icy legs touched her, she got goose bumps on her careless heart"¹⁸ (*Roy-TGST*, 112).

Thus, Roy often very masterfully draws parallelism between the inner psychic world of the characters and the external physical world of nature and shows how the simultaneously ongoing processes of destruction and degradation in our social life and in the life of nature are interrelated and are caused by almost the same members of the society. And at the end the combined evil forces of these two demonic processes bring about devastation for women, for our environment and for the entire humanity in general.

Ecofeminism in her second novel 'The Ministry of Utmost Happiness'.

It's pretty obvious that the self and the society are deeply interrelated and different issues of varied layers of meanings and significance define this relation of interdependence between them. A flashback mode of narration is applied in this novel to delineate the condition of a society where women are denied of their rights and freedom. And notably the behavior of the transgender people like Anjuman is not in conformity with the established gender norms. Roy casts light on the history of these people inquisitively. Through the struggles of Anjum a transgender character with both male and female organs, Roy shows that self-discovery of an individual is in some ways more important than the structure of normality. Like majority of the parents of the society, Anjum's Jahanara Begum expected a son and more shockingly, Anjum's father Mulaqat Ali attempted to convert her sex organ into a male one. Anjum's

father might have an indistinct desire to accept her hermaphrodite identity at the beginning, but as time went on, it gradually appears to be something ominous to him and at one stage this idea starts hanging so heavily on his consciousness that his attitude and behaviors towards Anjum changes completely and he rather accepts that all these are against the law of nature. Mr. Ali's relation with his son is quite normal whereas even when he comes across Anjum on the street, he doesn't even care for exchanging greetings with him, he at best casts empty looks at him!

The novel dramatically starts with a prologue of Anjum. His dignity as a human being gets completely shattered by the extreme hostility of the society and out of sheer dismay, he cries out:

"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?"¹⁹ (*Roy-The Ministry of Utmost Happiness-5*)

Here Roy's analogy between the old people and the old birds arouses our prick of conscience sharply. But our pathos reaches a new height when we come to realize that the collective perverted cruelty of the society not only drives the transgender out of the society but also deprives him of the world of pleasures.

Roy's depiction of her profound concern for the vultures of Delhi which are the pathetic victims of the merciless use of diclofenac, makes us aware of the unspeakable damage that we are causing to our environment! The chemical named diclofenac is being commonly applied in cows these days to extract more milk from them and in Delhi it is also used in the production of ice cream and thus it gets introduced into our ecosystem.

Roy's sharp ironical criticism finds expression in this way: "Not many noticed the

passing of the friendly old birds”²⁰ (Roy- *TMUH*), as people have so much to look forward to.

Anjum, a true nature lover lives in complete harmony with nature, her relation with nature is based on mutual nurture, love and dependence. Her free spirit always interacts and intermingles with nature spontaneously. She is one who upholds and preserves the finer values, sentiments and enthusiasm which are being destructed by a multi-generational society obstinately. And thus, through Anjum who is in a sense the mouthpiece of Roy, she develops an approach or perspective which can be identified as ecofeminist approach. And Roy’s masterful integration of Tilo’s school, Saddam’s marriage, a vegetable garden, a swimming pool and Zainab’s little zoo- ‘Noah’s Ark of injured animals’ with the sanctuary, awakens our intuition and evokes profound realization about the author’s key philosophy in this novel. Roy, in this way, illustrates an opposite image of the Garden of Eden and goes on establishing and developing her concept of paradise and this paradise of her epitomizes the essence of human experience and symbolizes peace, permanence and unity. This, in the course of time, becomes a perfect shelter for all the rejected and subjugated souls and the author places Anjum at the centre of it. At this stage, we cannot help recalling the concept of organized experience that we find in William Blake’s *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. The author examines the utmost brutal ways we modify other fellow human beings, animals and our environment only to gratify our unbridled greed and to perpetuate the vicious, unfair and extremely unkind process of domination and exploitation and thus cause hindrance to the course of evolution. And Roy doesn’t forget to warn us about the fact that this utmost brutality will cause nature’s outrage and bring about the ultimate downfall and destruction of humanity. And the flood of these

horrific devastations washes away Anjum’s sexuality and ecological being like straw.

On the other hand, S. Tilottoma or Tilo who represents modern women also undergoes miserable situation and faces social stigma apparently because her hesitancy to marry Mr. Naga who at one stage, like innumerable husbands of this so-called modern world, slaps his wife Tilo at the suggestion of one of his friends who opines:

“What she needs, I’m sorry to say, is two tight slaps. This modern approach of yours doesn’t always work. At the end of the day, we’re all animals. We need to be shown our place”²¹ (Roy- *TMUH* 232).

This is how the novelist represents the treatment of women in the so-called educated society and shows how pathetically we have failed to learn the art of restrain from our education, training and value systems and as a result, our sentiments and emotions remain completely raw and unbridled and our sense of justice never gets sharpened by all these factors and at one stage it becomes dull, dim and almost dead. Thus, the question that if by disturbing the creative processes of evolution in human world and also in the world of animals, we are pulling back the wheel of progress of this civilization becomes so crucial to us. And this way the author keeps on dealing with ecological issues with prime significance and makes us feel and realize the gravity of the issues.

Through the eyes of Tilo, Roy shows us the miserable life of the animals in Delhi Zoological Park where Tilo identifies the dilemma of the gibbon which is living on a tree because of the unbearable condition in the cage while the hippo swimming in the polluted water of pond is being constantly teased by the visitors. The novelist subtly mocks at the insensible, stupid and savage attitudes of the visitors in particular and those of human beings in general, towards the animals merely for the sake of a kind of silly entertainment. Through the voice of Tilo who ridicules a group of

unruly people by saying “congratulated them for the courage it must require to feed a caged hippo razor blades”²²(Roy - *TMUH* -235). But the insensitive people start abusing her with derogatory names like this: “Oye! Hapshie madam! Hey! Nigger Madam!” And if we take into consideration Tilo’s dark complexion, we cannot ignore their racist attitude. This is how Roy unmasks us through our interactions with animals in a sarcastic way.

Our verbal expressions and speeches, precisely speaking our languages are nothing but weapons to exploit other animals. When we call other living beings ‘animals’ to mark their inferiority, we don’t take into consideration the fact that we are also ‘animals’. Joan Dunayar writes “We view them as inferior and we feel entitled to dominate them, just as we have done to marginalized human groups”²³ (Roy- *TMUH* -11).

They call Tilo ‘Hapshie’ and most of their abuses are used to mark her ugly or unattractive only because her dark complexion and this filthy racist attitude is pervasive in every corner of our society. Thus, we manipulate our languages to show our superiority over others species and to suppress women and other minor groups of people.

The author’s bitter criticism of the anthropocentrism and the modernism, becomes obvious when we find her referring to the incident of Hauz Khas, in this incident of South Delhi, “where “a cow that had died – burst – from eating too many plastic bags at the main garbage dump”²⁴(Roy- *TMUH* -264) The dense population, polluted environment and contagious atmosphere of urban areas leave nothing but plastic bags for other non-human species to eat.

Roy’s sharp criticism of the indiscriminate and all devouring development policies which provide no space to the non-human species and compel them live in toxic environment. This once again we see through the eyes of Tilo who notices a weird, but

curiosity-arousing scientific phenomenon when two bulls “appear quite normal but at night they grow tall...When they piss, they lift their legs like dogs...are they bulls or dogs? Or wolves?”²⁵ (Roy- *TMUH* 298). The strange changes that take place in the cows are nothing but the results of the experiments done on them with pain Tilo perceives the people of poultry industry injecting the hens “to increase the efficiency of egg production”²⁶ (Roy- *TMUH* -299). The novel also focuses on the inhuman practices of testing the lethality of toxic chemicals on the animals in the laboratory and the devastating degradation and suppression of the natural species by the factory farming. Unscrupulous processes of modernization and urbanization are causing collateral damage to our environment. Greta Gaard severe criticism on this progress is quoted here:

“these hazardous chemicals are often initially tested on laboratory animals to determine levels of toxicity; this practice, together with the enormous environmental costs of factory farming and meat eating, demonstrate the linkages between environmental degradation and the oppression of nonhuman animals (speciesism)”²⁷(Gaard 5).

The novel casts light on the modern people who get tormented by the stereotypes of social norms, customs and biases. Roy marks, evaluates and criticizes the overall treatment of women in this society where most of the people believe that it is justified to correct or rectify the women by certain kind and amount of violence. This society like most of the societies of the world is characterized by extremely rigid gender roles and the women carry out their passive roles and men often have violent means to demonstrate their active roles. Women’s status is determined by marriage and motherhood to a great extent. Through the husband-wife relationship the manipulative propensities of the patriarchal society have been

exposed and proven that men's evolutionary process is not yet complete and are still standing in the same line with other animals and even the emergence of women as rebellions against the domination, exploitation and exploitation of men, is often weakened and marred by some 'inevitable' compromises that women make for the sake of the existence and solidarity of families. Thus women's productivity, creativity and talents never find a favorable atmosphere to flourish rather they are forcibly doomed to remain passive and dormant and ultimately perish away in silence.

Tilo's mother who remains unmarried and expenses her priceless life for teaching, is an perfect example in this regard. Although she earns some fame for her unique teaching methods, which in Roy's words are "...articles spanned a period of several years- some were about her school, its teaching methods and its beautiful campus, some were about the social and environmental campaigns that she led or the awards she had won"²⁸ (Roy- *TMUH*- 239). Roy presents her as an ideal feminist character in the novel and adds every glory to the struggles she undergoes for the sake of her survival in an ultra-conservative society. Due to Maryam's having an affair with a 'Paraya', she is expelled from her family and sent to an orphanage where she leads a pitiful life there until she becomes a mother.

She remains unmarried, endures all the bullies of the society, but also succeeds in earning some admiration from the same patriarchal society. She becomes an iconic figure of inspiration to those women who aspire to fulfill their ambitions and desires. But at this stage, Roy's criticism of a society where a mother is compelled to abandon her child because she was born out of the bondage of wedlock, touches its peak. Maryam rejects the society which approves the motherhood of the married women only and disapproves that of the single mothers. Even the infertile married women who become mother through artificial

reproductive systems are prioritizes over the unmarried single mothers in this society. In this way, Roy goes on disclosing the ultimate rottenness, hollowness and meaningless of the fundamental values and norms which apparently function as the foundation of this society. Roy doesn't stop here rather she moves forward and shows us how radically the children of single mothers and the adopted children of homosexuals have changed the concept of motherhood. This is how Roy re-determines and redefines the role of women in the structure of ecology and the framework of creative evolution.

Finally, Roy, through a number of Adivasi characters delineates the extraordinary possibilities of the creative process of evolution and emphasizes on the immense need of revolution in a society which is essentially based on numberless inequalities, injustices and oppressions. This becomes evident to us when we see the characters like Revathy and Comrade Masse being deeply influenced by Marxism and Leninism join the Maoist party. She shows us how the Adivasi people are being exploited, marginalized and deprived of their fundamental rights by the elite class. The author, at this concluding phase of the novel generates the rays of hope through these invincible tribal or aboriginal people who make their ways in revolutionary movements. Though we see the most heart-rending scenes of destruction, rape and suppression here, but a light of hope and optimism provide us some sort of relief from the nerve-wracking stress, ever prevailing melancholic atmosphere and unbearable weight of pessimism and the horrific restlessness of an all-devouring anarchy which have been oppressing our consciousness ceaselessly throughout the entire canvas of the novel. We observe the pangs and griefs of the people this invaluable soil watching how the fertility of there is being decoyed by modern technology, how the outsiders are occupying their land raping their

women. The brutality of those outsiders who detained Revathy forcibly since she was working for the PLGA1 and the ways she was raped by a number of officials fall short for any existing language of our world, to quote Revathy... "cutting my skin with a knife. 'So, you think you are a great heroine?'...two are holding my hands and two are holding legs. 'We want to give you a gift for your party'...they all raped me many times"²⁹ (Roy-*TMUH*- 423). This can be termed as the ultimate catastrophe because nothing worse than this can most probably take place in this planet.

And finally, the process of catharsis gradually starts in a relatively lighter state of our consciousness and we observe that Roy's most feminist characters showing unfeminine ventures and tendencies. Particularly after the execution of rape which is the ultimate weapon of exploitation for men, the process of destruction and degradation becomes complete. And at this critical juncture of time the radical process of regeneration or reconstruction gets underway in the hands of these desolate, destitute and fearless men and women and feminist author unmistakably hands over the banner of a revolutionary movement for complete emancipation and empowerment of women and thorough restoration and preservation of our environment and nature in general. This extraordinary movement can defy and defeat all the suppressions, exploitations and oppressions of the patriarch, landlords, industrialists and the capitalists and place women in the most dignified place in the

fundamental structures of ecology and creative evolution and thus, this earth along with all the living and non-living objects on it, will move towards a more progressive, creative, peaceful and harmonious era.

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