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# The Representation of Intersex Woman in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

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## Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation work to my family and many friends. A special feeling of gratitude to my loving parents, **Mr. Mohamad kassoussi** and **Mrs. Hayat Laouad** their words of encouragement pushed me for tenacity ring in my ears. My brother **Salah Eddine** has never left my side and to all my family. I also dedicate this dissertation to my many friends who have supported me throughout the process. I will always appreciate all they have done, especially **Soukeur Razika** who stands by me in difficult times. I dedicate this work and give special thanks to my best friend **Segni Djuhaina** and my dearest one **Zouaoui Imane** for her helping me in my master thesis. Both of you have been my best cheerleaders.

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## **Abstract**

The present research discusses another perspective of gender studies which is intersex. Hence, intersex people whose biology does not fit the same characteristics of male and female, where they suffered from social discrimination and harmful therapies. Arundhati Roy presented those intersex people through several dimensions as: socially, religiously and politically. With the character Anjum Roy addressed the struggle of intersex individuals. She studied every detail about their lives, their dreams, and their suffering in Indian society. This latter presented within the Hijra's community who are alienated by the society. The methodology used in the research is qualitative approach. Where the analyzing and description takes place on the novel and the on highlighted problem. The study of this issue we comes out with investigating that intersex is a sensitive subject and should be studied. Roy studied intersex in the novel through several areas and well addressed their suffering.

**Keywords:** Arundhati Roy, gender studies, identity crisis, Indian woman literature, intersex, patriarchal society.

## **Acronyms**

**DSD:** Disorders of Sex Development.

**DAM/ AGE:** A documentary about Arundhati Roy & the Narmada Dam Project. Directed by Aradhana Seth. Starring Arundhati Roy. 2002.

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# **General Introduction**



## General Introduction

Deviant genders have had their influence on modern literature. Literature dramatizes anxieties over redefining gender in the modern context by depicting male/female characters in particular as a metaphor for social change.

Arundhati Roy is one of those Indian English writers who occupy a typical place as a novelist in English literature. She is one of women writers who are working to create a new image for Indian woman writing. Her popularity as a novelist rests in her ability to portray sensitive aspects of human life and social relations. In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Roy gives a diagnosis of the dilemma of deviant gender and intersex women in particular.

The intersex refers to people whose biology does not fit the typical definition of male or female. Intersex traits comprise of variations in chromosomal patterns, reproductive organs, genitals and hormones, which enable us to assign their sex as male or female. Intersex woman are also considered as binary biological sex. She does not suite the exact definition of what is culturally considered as female.

The protagonist of Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is an intersex woman. Anjum is born with undeveloped genitals of both sexes. Her family wants her to be a boy, but she acts and dresses like women. Then, she is rejected by her parents and forced to live in a small house in cemetery.

Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is being hotly debated as it unravels unspeakable issue. The novel examines mainly the dilemma faced by intersex community in India. It is a simultaneous critique of the politics of subversion against hijras i.e. people of no or unclear sexual orientation. Roy evokes a number of concerns related to this community. She tries to depict their suffering, worries and hopes.

The present work is an attempt to approach the topic of the representation of intersex woman in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. The novel has a considerable attention since its publication on 2017. The topic is chosen at a number of personal and scientific reasons.

Personally speaking, speaking about unspeakable always attracts my attention. I sympathize deeply with people of unusual anatomy, for they are often oppressed by society. Particularly, intersex woman is doubly oppressed as being woman and at the same time being intersex. Consequently, I feel involved in exploring how they are moaning in despair.

The topic of the present work has debated along with number of scientific researches. Hopefully, tackling such topic would contribute to enhance knowledge about intersex people.

Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is a literary work with multiple dimensions. present work is an attempt to explore the way(s) Arundhati Roy deals with the issue of intersex women as it probes into the following questions:

1. To what extent can Arundhati Roy's portrayal of intersex women help creating a sympathising discourse on intersex community and intersex women in particular?
2. How does the author exploit the Indian social and cultural specificities in her portrayal of intersex women ?
3. In what way can the representation of intersex women affect our views on deviant sexual orientations?

This research deals with several objectives including:

1. Aims to highlight the impact of intersex issue on Indian society and how to deal with it.
2. Studying intersex issue through gender studies and how is treated among different concepts and theories.
3. Aims at analysing the novel through the representation of intersex from feminist point of view.

The work is confined to the study of intersex women in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. It includes a number of related issues like: women writing, feminism, gender and sexuality. It deals also with Indian women literature and how women of unusual anatomy are pictured.

The researcher intends to use to number of theories including gender theories, feminism and queer theory to create a framework of grounding the topic under study. The study of unusual gender identity involves investigating the context in which the novel is written. The research aims at extending research on the field of women literature to better localize his/her analysis.

The first chapter highlights a cultural background of Indian woman literature in order to justify the image of women in Indian English novels. It also throws light on the Arundhati Roy's life and her work. Also, gives an overview about *the Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Then the social context of Indian woman and intersex woman.

The second chapter is about concepts and theories that are related to the selected subject. The theories make an attempt to conceptualise intersex and how is taking a

position among them. This chapter held the gender studies that are addressed on the novel such as: gender, masculinity, femininity, sexuality, and intersex.

The third chapter is an attempt to analyse the novel through the discussion of the major themes of *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. It also states the characterization and analysing them through different aspects. It studies the representation of intersex woman through the character Anjum. At the end it discusses the literary aesthetics of the novel and how the author manipulates them with a mocking style.

Arundhati Roy's novel depicts both the sorrow and strength of Indian intersex people. Though, it gives a futuristic view on how can literature change public opinion about intersex. This latter paved the way of feminist studies could examine issues of gender studies and deviant sexualities from author point of view.

# **Chapter One:**

## *Cultural Background*

# **Chapter One: The Cultural Background**

## **Outline:**

1.1 Introduction

1.2 Cultural Background

1.3 About the Author

1.4 The Novel

1.5 Social Context

## 1.1. Introduction

The present study aims at exploring Indian woman literature. India is a country of multiple cultures, traditions, as well as different races and religions. The Indian society is a multicultural, multilingual, and socio-historical mixture. The nature of Indian society is clearly reflected in literature that is produced in both India and abroad.

Indian woman literature is a mirror to Indian woman life. Their literature gives them an outlet to man's oppression. The patriarchal set up in India treats her as secondary class. This latter gives a launching of woman's steps toward asserting her identity and seeking equality with man. Their literature sounds as salvation from patriarchal society.

Arundhati Roy represents Indian woman literature and produced by woman. Her experience as: writer, novelist, actress, political activist, and architecture paves the way to be among the pioneers of the Indian woman literature. She is the winner of the Booker Prize for her debut novel *The God of Small Things* (1997). After 20 years of her first novel, she writes her second novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017). The novel sheds light on intersex woman in India.

*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* reflects the Indian society through the intersex character Anjum. She is known as Hijra. It shows the sorrow experienced by intersex people in Indian. Anjum has to face the society as being intersex and a woman. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is a novel that holds many aspects such as: politics, religion, social issues and intersex woman in particular.

## 1.2. Indian Woman Literature

Literature reflects human action and life. It tends to inform, educate, and entertain. In literature, Readers explore many aspects in life through characters. For positive change, Literature directs the society's views towards needs of people. Tondon points out:

Literature is not mere fiction, but rather is an interpretation and complication of history, anthropology and a host of other areas. Thus the true literary artist reveals life more accurately and with more insight than other historical details, because he /she deals with the truth of human heart with realities of the man in society. (quid. in Duhan192)

What distinguishes Indian literature from other world literatures is the fact that Indian literature is a product of multilingual, multicultural and socio-historical mixture. Though, Indian literature reaches the zenith of creation with the contribution of regional and national writers. With the British occupation in seventeenth century, English impact on the Indian writing raised a new form of literature in India. Sake Dean Mahomet was the first Indian writer who wrote a book in English entitled *Travels of Dean Mahomet*. It was published in 1793 in England. Therefore, Indian English literature is the result of the historical meetings of Indian culture with Western culture. (Indian English Literature)

In Indian literature, the stalwart figure Raja Ram Mohan Roy inspired by the English education. He tried to bring new thoughts, and taking away the old stigma and typical rituals in all spheres of Indian society. He also worked for the emancipation of woman by changing her condition. His contributions helped promoting freedom of press, English education and social justice. His effort in society to support the dignity of



women and their rights; Roy invites Indian women "To come out of the four walls of their homes and acquire knowledge of the modern world."(quod in. Brahmane1).

With the involvement of Ram Mohan Roy, Indian woman voice raised in society as well as in the world. This latter it was step toward education, politics, religion, and more specific in Literature. Indian woman literature has the taste of woman salvation from patriarchal society, their awareness rose in all aspects of life. Indian Literature gives them an outlet from man's oppression. She was considered as fragile creature upon him from birth to tomb. Indian's view toward women is that she could not study, think, or able to make decisions; and to express themselves through speech, storytelling, art, and poetry. A. Sinha says: "Women in India are, by and large victim of social, economic, and political exploitation."(quod in. Brahmane 1).

Their literatures create woman's struggle to establish her own identity by her own perspective. Indian woman literature confines within the boundaries of class, race, and gender. In patriarchal Indian society, women have been given subordinate role. They do not have equal status with men. Women are subjected to humiliation, suffering at both physical and mental levels. However, Indian man literature presented woman as humble, submissive and weak; they never have been presented as bold, authoritative and domineering. (Gulbaro 2, 3)

Thus, gives a birth to woman Indian literature. Her literature revolts against man's and against value system of the present society dominated by man. Moreover, her literature aims to reflect the changed image of woman rebelled against the patriarchal set up of India. Also, shows a resistance of woman because of man's bad treatment. She transmits a message of making woman strong by finding her own identity. At the heart of Indian woman writing there is story to tell. This reflects the main feminist faithfulness to women talking for themselves as they explore such gendered realms of

experience as: identity, family, sexuality, motherhood, gender, race and ethnicity, politics and religion. (Brahmane 3).

By engaging with the creation of literature, Indian woman crosses boundaries to deal with taboos. The archetypal Indian mentality is ingrained deeply into the society. Thus, they want to represent the clear picture of woman and try to change society's view towards her. Their literature sounds of a number of themes such as resistance, suffering, identity, strength, struggle, and reasserting their existence in patriarchal society.

Literature needs artistic creativity. Women and literature are closely related to each other. When it comes to literature, women provide a good artistic creativity. Women writers in India used to create lyrics for songs, short stories, and small plays too. Also, plant the emotions in their literature. Novels written by modern Indian women focus on the issues are related to women, for example; rape, and other societal issues as well, such as corruption and injustice. However, most of their literary works deal with themes of unknown psyche of females, and we can touch a sense of sorrow of unlucky housewives are portrayed. (Zeeshan).

### **1.3. Arundhati Roy**

Suzanna Arundhati Roy is an Indian novelist and political activist. She was born in November 24, 1961 in Shillong, Meghalaya in India. Her mother from Keralite and rooted Syrian Orthodox Christian, and her father Ranjit is a Bangali Hindu works as tea planter. They lived in a hill village in the far north-east of India. Roy spent her childhood in Aymanam in Kerala in which her autobiographical book, *The God of Small Things*, tied with her childhood memories and things drawn from her personal experience. Roy's father was an alcoholic. Then, her parents divorced at the age of 2

years old. Her mother brought Arundhati back to the family home in Kerala with her older brother, Lalit. (India Times, Famous Authors).

Arundhati partly was influenced by activist spirit from her mother Mary Roy who is well known as women's right activist. At the age of 16, she left home and enrolled in an architecture college in Delhi where she met architect Gerard da Cunha. The two lived together in Delhi, then in Goa, and then broke up. She returned to Delhi and worked at the National Institute of Urban Affairs. In 1984, Arundhati acted as village girl in her second husband's film *Massey Sahib*. Her second husband is a filmmaker, Pradip Krishen. They worked together on television series on India's independence movement. After that, she disenchanted with the film world, and did various jobs such as, running aerobics classes at a five- star hotel. Eventually, Roy and Krishen split up. (India times, Stars Unfolded).

At the age of 37, Arundhati Roy won the Man Booker Prize of her book *The God of Small things* which is translated into 42 languages, has sold more than 8 million copies world wide and joined the ranks of the classics. Then, she stopped writing fiction novels and began writing excoriating political essays highlighting the Corruption of Indian Government and the human cost of the country's race. Roy again wrote a television serial, *The Banyan Tree*, and DAM/ AGE documentary Arundhati Roy film 2002. She was granted the 2004 Sydney Peace Prize, in the 2006 she was awarded by the Sahitya Akedemi from Indian Academy of Letters. (Britannica)

With her literary production consists of political non-fiction literature. In addition to her effort to protect human rights, Roy received the 2002 award of Cultural Freedom Award. She deals with the problem of her motherland in the era of world capitalism.

Her publications include *Power Politics* 2001, *the Algebra of Infinite Justice* 2002, *War Talk* 2003, and *Public Power in the Age of Empire* 2004. (Britannica).

Roy is also involved in various environmental and human rights issues which put her in conflict with the judicial system and the middle class in India. She criticized her support of Maoist group that Naxalite had. She summarizes her point of view as book that corresponds to *Comrades* (2011). While Roy attempted to stop the construction of dams in Narmada, supporters of the project accused her of attacking them at a protest in 2001. Though, the charges were dropped, she was convicted of contempt of court the next year after her petition for dismissal of the charges offended Supreme Court judges with its vituperative tone. She was fined and sentenced to a day of imprisonment. (Britannica).

In June 2017, Arundhati Roy's second novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*; published by Penguin India and Hamish Hamilton in UK. Her novel was written through 20 years, the work is a combination of personal stories with topical issues as it uses a large cast of characters; including intersex woman and a resistance fighter in Kashmir, to explore contemporary India. (Clark).

Arundhati Roy is a pilot of world literature, politics, cinema, and history of India. Roy's successful career made her a celebrity. She presented a successful Indian woman and was able to conquer life in all areas. She is an author, novelist, political activist, actress and a critic. Roy is one of those who left a story to tell to the next generations. Her experience as a pioneer of the Indian feminist movement was evident in her literature. (Clark).

#### 1.4. The Ministry of Utmost Happiness

Arundhati Roy is one of the celebrated authors of India, her debut novel is *The God of Small Things*. The novel won the 1997 Booker Prize for fiction, in which talks about how small things in life can affect people; and her childhood, her memories, and glimpse of her experience. In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Roy weaves two narratives together and she combined them at the end of the book. The novel deeply goes through modern Indian history and culture. On the other hand, she includes an incident, 2002 Godhra train attack and the ongoing fighting in Kashmir.(Keith).

With shrewdness of Arundhati used a diverse group of characters from across Indian society. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* explores the cultural clashes and interpersonal conflict that exists in Indian modern society. However, the intersex woman or hijra, an architect clashes with society and a landlord with second life in the intelligence services. After twenty years the fiction novel takes place with Arundhati, *the Ministry of Utmost Happiness*; is noble in its vision and ambitious in its scope. It opens the door to the words such as secularism, Muslims, reservation, and poverty, where are becoming unwelcomed in that time.(Lahiri).

Anjum, Tilo, Musa and Saddam are the main characters of the novel. All of them cross the threshold in the story with his characteristic identity; they rise and fall in a tide of events surrounding them. The story starts with Anjum or hijra who is rejected by her family and goes to live in another house of other people who live outside the western male and female dichotomy. Hijra is a community that catch all intersex and transgender people, often it is located in south Asia and recognized as a third gender. Anjum born was as Aftab, the son of Jahanara and Mulaqat Ali. She was born with undeveloped genitalia of both sexes, her parents want her to be a boy,

but she feels herself is a female and lives openly dressed like any woman. (Sparknotes).

At time that Muslim rising and religious bigotry in India. From early her adolescence, Anjum has lived in Khwabgah, which can mean, the home or the palace of dreams. This latter, for her was the space of liberation and self-expression. At the age of thirty, Anjum was a mother figure of little girl named Zaineb and raised her till adulthood. (Sparknotes).

As soon as she visited a Gujarati shrine, she was caught-up in a massacre of Hindu pilgrims and subsequent government reprisals against Muslims. When she leaves khwabgah because of Gujarat trauma, she moves into local cemetery, where she transformed into a guesthouse and named it Jannat, or Paradise. She lives in graveyard where she is depicted like a tree, that she is a part of the natural world and opens a funeral service company for marginalized and persecuted groups. One day, she found a little girl at the age of three years, in observatory in Delhi. Then takes her and tracks her down into the house of woman who took her. (Sparknotes).

Estranged from Syrian Christian mother, Tillotama known as Tilo is student at the architecture school. The story dwells in her seminary days where she becomes a colleague of three men. An old bureaucrat named Biplap Dasgupta who loves Tilo secretly. The other is a journalist called Naga who eventually married Tilo. The last is Musa Yewsi architecture student, who is very close to Tilo at the university. They reconnected after the death of his wife and his daughter, but Musa involved into a Kashmiri separatist movement in favour of Muslim's independence region at the border of Pakistan. (Sparknotes, Keith)

Commander Gulrez a Musa's friend raises the attention of Indian bureaucrats led by the ruthless Major Armik Singh. Singh known for his torturing, and that time he captures Musa and Gulrez. Musa planned to escape, but Gulrez was killed as Tilo watches. After that, Tilo decides to be safer and married Naga and they lived together fourteen years, subsequently they divorced. Tilo rents an apartment from Biplap Dasgupta and they reconnect. But she soon disappears with the baby from the observatory, the baby where Anjum found her in the manifestation of Jnatar Mantar. She has named the baby Miss Jebeen the second, after Musa's slain daughter. Anjum finds her and invites both of them to move into the Jannat guesthouse with her. (Sparknotes, Keith)

The narrative flashed to event how Miss Jebeen the First died, in the conflict of 1990s Kashmir. She and her partner Musa, Arifa, were shot by soldiers on Major Singh's orders. Though, Major Singh later tried to compel a harmony with Musa, but he angrily rejects him and goes undercover. We also see most of the night of Gulrez died, revealing that Tilo was pregnant while she escaped Kashmir and married Naga. However, she chooses to have an abortion. Returning to the present, Jannat residents celebrate Zainab's wedding to her fellow resident with Saddam. (Sparknotes)

One day, they receive a letter written by Miss Jebeen the Second's mother. A member of the Communist party, Comrade Maase Revathy was raped, and although she could not care for her child, she revealed her name to Udaya. The residents of Jannat agree to name the child Miss Udaya Jebeen, to honour both parents' wishes. The book ends as Biplap Dasgupta reads through Tilo's documents, realizing that he now sides with her on Kashmir. Musa arrives at his apartment, and they talk about Kashmir, with Musa saying that the conflict will make the country explode one day. Musa joins Tilo at

Jannat for the night but leaves to rejoin the fight in Kashmir, where he is killed. In the last scene Anjum takes Miss Udaya Jebeen for a walk around Delhi in while a small dung beetle observes the world around it. (Sparknotes)

Arundhati Roy, in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, takes us in an intimate journey across the subcontinent of old Delhi to the new city and the mountains and the valleys of Kashmir where peace and war in struggle. Also, she gives us a view about hijra's life, how they are faced society and life as well, and thus depicted through the character Anjum. Roy was smart to combine the diversity of stories to be converted into one story shared by everyone at the end. (Penguin Random House).

### **1.5. The Social Context**

In social set up of India, male is the dominant in all aspects of social activities such as politics, religion, and ethnics. Thereby, led to women's capitulation where to become in place of utter subordination, a secondary place and the insignificant. (Mahajan 200).

About the status of women in India, in historical perspective, Mahajan stated that:

In India, the situation was entirely different from the West. Indian woman was subjugated since ages. She was under the authority of man. Medieval India was not women's age and it was supposed to be the 'dark age' for them. The Hindu moral code known as "The Laws of Manu" denies woman an existence apart from that of her husband. (200)

Also she confirms woman's repression and man's dominance, saying that:

[...] In Indian patriarchal society, a husband was considered God, however, cruel and in different he may be. She had been taught since her childhood that she has to obey her husband and family. Her parents offered her no chance to think



about her identity. Different factors were responsible for woman subjugation.

They can be categorized as social, cultural, traditional, and so on. (200)

A woman in Indian society was treated as secondary class, sexual desire for man, a silent housewife, and has duties more than has rights. However, after many contributions as feminism movement; which made the betterment of Indian woman status in many spheres such as: education, seeking equality and rights as man, held political activities, and standing to assert her identity as Indian woman and as woman.

Intersex people whom biology does not fit the typical features of female or male characteristic. In south Asia intersex persons identified as hijra, is the term that gathers the transgender and intersex people into community. Also, hijra is third gender. However, for centuries they were seeking for performing their blessings and ceremonies with their respect to religion has not protected them from modern-age discrimination. Also, hijras find difficulties to have stable homes and they are often guided to live in communes on the fringes of society. (Mok and Lining)

Within these communes, the hijras lived in love and nurturing in which they find security and safety and they welcomed the young hijras who have been ostracized by their families. However, some individuals who adopt hijra's identity live through bragging, menial jobs, and sex work. Though, the Supreme Court of India give them economic and political rights to Third Gender and Hijras community; while discrimination and ignorance ingrained in the society that threaten their lives. (Mok and Lining)

## 1.6. Conclusion

In Indian society, women have been given a secondary position, while achievements and ambitions are held by men. Though, through history woman proved her identity, and her presence was traced in politics, education, and literature. Indian woman literature held the sense of struggle, resistance, passion, and strength. Thus, the Indian woman established her identity through literature.

With Arundhati Roy's second novel, we discover many aspects of Indian society and events. However, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, deals with many dimensions as: politics, religion conflicts, the hijra's life through the characters Anjum, Sadam Husein, and Tilottama. Roy presented herself through Tilottama life, in which sharing some of her experiences. Arundhati was smart to combine all the events and cultures of Indian Society.

The dominant theme in *the Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is intersex, which is described with the character Anjum. Roy studied this category as long as was ignored in the society. However, intersex people are facing biological problems since birth and that latter creates a discrimination and rejection. The novel tackles many angles such as: feminism, gender, masculinity, femininity, and sexuality in which all round in the intersex.

# **Chapter Two:**

## *Concepts and Theories*

## **Chapter Two: Concepts and Theories**

### **Outline:**

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Gender

2.3 Masculinity

2.4 Femininity

2.5 Sexuality

2.6 Intersex

2.7 Conclusion

## 2.1. Introduction

The present chapter covers a number of concepts and theories related to the term intersex. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* includes the community of Hijra. This latter, is discussed in this chapter and loosely defined. Hijras are highlighting the deviant gender identity. However, the intersex is the dominant aspect in the novel.

Gender is one of the busiest terms in sociology disciplines. Its discourse starts at the time of birth and a process which constructed by society. It tells us about the context of region, religion, and ethnic group that construct the gender identity of the individual. However, gender refers to the cultural categories of femininity and masculinity in which it refers to the society's expectation as gender roles. Thus, it involves the acceptance that a particular kind of behaviour is appropriate to each gender.

Sexuality stands for attraction to others that is shaped at early age. It is a varying attraction from one to another. Sexual identity is defined as an inner sense of oneself as sexual being. In addition, the sexual orientation spotlights on different attractions like heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexual, and asexual.

The intersex refers to people whose biology does not fit the typical definition of male or female; in which can make anyone unable to assign their sex. Thus, intersex people face discrimination in the society and harmful therapist that led to psychological trauma to the intersex persons.

## 2.2. Gender

In the late of 1960s, feminist theory led to the emergence of gender studies. However, its development was evoked by second wave feminism, thus; in the field of second wave feminist critiques were interesting in number of disciplines that go through social

sciences, arts and humanities. As a result, scholars start to pay increasing attention to gender. Although, feminist theory defines the concept of gender as socially construction where the idea of masculinity and femininity takes place and loosely defined. (Whelehan and Plicher ix, Kamalakkannan and Manason 44).

According to Unger, gender is not biological dimension but socially constructed whether to be male or female as he says: "The term gender may be used to describe those non-physiological components of sex that are culturally regarded as appropriate to males and females." (Unger108). However, gender is also a socio-cultural construct and it refers to masculine and feminine qualities, behaviour patterns, related roles and responsibility. In addition, gender roles are learned and it is variable and changes under the influence of time, geographical and socio-cultural settings. (UNESCO, Unger.108).

Gender roles can be modified by systems of social differentiation such as class, ethnicity, political status, physical and mental disability and age. However, the concept of gender is spirited where social analysis takes place. It occurs in many cultures where women's subordination and man's domination is socially constructed. In other words, the decision to be male or female is taken by the members of society. For example, the characteristics like to be dominant, aggressive, and brave are attached with male, whereas, to be timid, emotional, passive are attached with female identity.( kharbe104, UNESCO).

In addition, there is slight difference between gender role and gender stereotype. Gender stereotype deals with the psychological traits and characteristics of activities that fit to man and woman, while gender roles deal with behaviours of male and female. In a way or another, they are related to each other. Therefore, gender roles furnish the material of gender stereotype. In addition, gender stereotypes are more powerful

because they impact on conceptualization of man and woman and establishing social categories of gender.(kharbe105).

Then, the components of gender that is socially constructed and describe gender identity and gender roles are femininity and masculinity. According to Hoftsde Masculinity stands with society in which gender and social roles are clearly distinguished that man must be firm, focused on material success and life. While femininity is socially constructed in a way woman should be modest, tender, and timid. Whereas the same of male and female characteristics could be shared by both. So that masculinity and femininity are unstable and depend on the human environment.(Kamalakkannan, Manason43).

### **2.3. Masculinity**

Masculinity is one of gender identity elements and is not biological product. It is socially and historically constructed, affected by many features such as age, ethnic origin, socio-professional status and religion. According to Vonarx, "Masculinity may be defined as an identity or an individual's sense of being a man as determined by what one knows about this gender and what one's society says on this subject." (Qtd in. Gender in Practice 2). Masculinity diversifies according to social and cultural context. It reveals in different ways and places and developed over time.

Masculinity is an outcome of different social references. Hence, masculinity labels men and shows their roles to play in society; their way of being and living such experiences, behaving in different situations, and expressing their emotions. Masculinity indicates the conception of identity that expresses the feeling of man. In addition, masculinity associated with male characteristics such as: physical strength, self-control,

aggression, courage, power, and intelligence, this latter held the meaning of dominant masculinity (qtd in. Gender in Practice 2).

#### **2.4. Femininity**

Femininity signifies the social outcomes of being female. Thus, being woman, girl, or female as well refers to feminine characteristics and traits. As Basu says that: "[...] Femininity as what women usually are/ do." and what can be expected from girls and women to possess. Furthermore, femininity is socially and culturally constructed of what it means to be a girl or woman. It related to roles and responsibilities for example, mother, wife, and childrearing. (What is Gender Studies? 32, 34, Rahbari and Mahmudabadi 2, Basu 25)

Femininity is attached with traits and characteristics that differentiate it from masculinity. However, those traits are associated with emotion, gentle, caring and nurturing, having capacity of self- sacrifice, compassionate, loving, sympathetic, sensitive and fragile. Moreover, girls and women take care of their physical appearance such as, clothes, make up, hair, and taking time to make themselves beautiful. (What is Gender Studies? 34)

Gender indicates what is known by male and female. People sometimes call man more feminine than the other. Others may describe women more masculine. Thus, masculinity and femininity are used to describe and compare human behaviour and characteristics in accordance with social expectations. However femininity and masculinity are more complex than stereotypes. They are cultural intersection of one's sex, gender, and sexuality.



## 2.5. Sexuality

Sexuality is a sensitive and intimate feature of human life. People protect their sexual reserve so carefully. Thus, partners do not share all their sexual experiences or their desires and dreams together but after long-term relationships. However, others sometimes hesitate to confess that because they feel kind of arousal and pleasure; in which they find it somehow, strangely and inappropriate. Recently, people acknowledge and open to the world where they discuss subjects like sexuality (The Origin of Sexuality, Sexual knowledge11).

Sexual Orientation is an attraction to others often. It takes place in the age of ten. Though, sexual orientation falls on the attraction to only man or woman with different degrees of attraction. It refers also to one's erotic, romantic, and affectionate attraction to the opposite sex heterosexual, to the same sex Homosexual, to both sexes Bisexual, and attraction to either man and woman is Asexual. Those types of sexual orientation represent sexual identity that reflects individual's sense of sexual being (Understanding GS8, Daley and Mason, Human Sexuality).

Sexuality broad complex concept and contains physical, emotional, moral, social, and spiritual aspects. Besides the afore-mentioned components, sexuality can be defined as: a lasting activity starting from birth and function of one's whole personality. It is about who you are and what you feel of being a man or a woman. It is about how you connect with members of the same and opposite sex with sharing intimacy. Human sexuality is the way you think, feel and behave. Sexuality is the function of individual's personality; it is a lifelong process. Moreover, sexuality is how the world looks at you as a man or as a woman (Ruchismista).

As World Health Organization explains that:

Sexuality is a central aspect of being human throughout life and encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. (Qtd in Ilkkaracan and Jolly 9).

It illustrates more about the dimensions of sexuality: "While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, ethical, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors" (Qtd in Ilkkaracan and Jolly 9). Sexuality shows psychological response linked with manliness and femininity and influence on behavioural reactions. These are further dependent by cultural heritage of the individual and social norms.

There is a difference between sex and sexuality. According to Lee et.al: "Sex is biological determination. Our sex is based on anatomy and genetics." Therefore, sex assigned at birth and biological construct back to chromosomes, external and internal genitals, reproductive anatomy, and hormones. While, sexuality is much broader term and sex is among the component of sexuality. Hence, sexuality contains gender identity, sex, and sexual orientation. (Lee et.al 3)

Sullivan states that "[...] in the late of 19<sup>th</sup> century writings of Karl Ulrichs who believed that homosexuality was the result of some men being born with strongly female souls, and vice versa" (qtd in Callis 222). Sexualities are normative and others are deviant, and can be social construct (Sameluis and Wagberg.11, qtd in. Callis 222).

Yet, the queer theory particularly has a line up with homosexuality. Queer theory provokes the notion of normative sexualities, and it emerges from gay, lesbian studies. However, gay and lesbian questioned and focused on homosexuality, where categories of normative and deviant sexual behaviour raise its attention within social construction. Furthermore, Callis argued that, "Foucault's theory of sexual construction shows itself as able to explain the rise of the homosexual, and eventually, the creation of gay and lesbian identity." (Callis 223).

The term queer holds the meaning of odd, peculiar, and out of the ordinary. Queer theory deals with any forms of sexuality that are odd. Then with the normative identities and behaviours that determine what is queer, by being their opposites binary. This theory extends the field of its analysis to all types of behaviours, including those that are gender bending and those which involve queer non-normative forms of sexuality. Queer theory urges on all sexual behaviours, all concepts related to sexual behaviours and sexual identities. All categories of normative and deviant sexualities are social constructs, and a collection of signifiers that create particular types of social significance ( Katberline and Harris 1).

## **2.6. Intersex**

Intersex is a term generally used for variety of conditions in which the individual is born with a reproductive or sexual anatomy that does not fit typical definitions of being male or female. Though, the person might be born seeming to be female on the outside, but having on the inside typical male anatomy. However, individual's cells XX chromosomes and others have XY chromosomes. Although, intersex people born with genitals that appear to the onlooker to be in-between male and female types (Sameluis and Wagberg12).

In fact, that some intersex characteristics are identified at birth while others until puberty or later in life, they discover that are intersex. Beside, intersex people are more common in the society; experts estimate that 1.7 are born intersex traits according to the same number who are born with red hair. Besides, being intersex means being associates to biological sex characteristics, and differs from person's sexual orientation or gender identity. Thus, the intersex may be straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and asexual. Though, they may identify as female, male, both or neither. (Interact Advocates1, Unfe.Org)

Intersex traits are sometimes described as Disorders of Sex Development, or DSDs. However, a dignified proportion of individuals born with intersex characteristics reject this wording as pathologies and some have adopted Differences of Sex Development as an alternative meaning for the DSD abbreviation; some prefer to use the name of their specific condition as opposed to an umbrella term. Despite, others grasp the term intersex as an identity, while some do not. Children may lack adequate language to explain their identities to caregivers. (Intersex Patients 3)

According to Gerald and Callahan argued:

Standard practice usually excluded the child and the parents from the decision-making process. The physicians made the choice of boy or girl and did what they could do to ensure that the child would walk that path for the rest of his or her life. Physicians believed they knew best and that the input of others was unnecessary. (Gerald and Callahan 7)

In consequence to that creates a problem lately to those patients. They will blame their parents and both will pay the cost of doctor's decision. As they explain here: "They believed that the fewer who knew about what had happened at birth, the less likely it was that someone might raise the veil so carefully woven and placed by their hands."(7).

Thus, evidence is increasingly showing the harms of surgeries performed without informed consent, which include pain, loss of sensitivity, scarring, and even sterilization, as well as psychological consequences and the risk that the sex assigned will not match one's gender identity (Interact Advocates 1, Gerald and Callahan 8).

One of intersex patient has a harmful experience during therapist and medical doctors, Marissa Adams avows that:

There have been occasions where I have told different therapists or medical doctors that I have had traumatic experiences early in my life due to different medical exams, and the way I was informed of having PAIS [Partial Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome]; there have been doctors that have said I can't have trauma from something that was part of a medical recommendation. (quid in. Intersex patients 08)

She is clearly confessed her psychological crisis and says: "This was so wrong to say because medical trauma and intersex-specific medical trauma is very real [...] Having medical providers invalidate my trauma was one of the worst experiences ever". (quid in. Intersex patients 08)

Intersex people are frequently subjected to discrimination and abuse from the moment they knew that are intersex. However, the anti-discrimination laws do not typically forbid discrimination towards intersex persons; they face vulnerability in a range of discriminatory practices. For example, access to health services, education, public services, employment and sports. Furthermore, health-care professionals face the absence of training and understanding in how dealing with specific needs health care of intersex individuals, and supply them with appropriate health care, also should respect their autonomy and rights in a way of physical integrity and health. (ohchr.org, unfe.org)

## 2.7. Conclusion

Individuals are mainly divided into two genders: male and female. However, gender is socially constructed. It is independent of sex and is biological determination. Our sex is male or female based on anatomy and genetics. Whereas, a biological male can choose to express female gender known as transgenderism, therefore, gender is evolving in culture specific.

Yet, gender held the meaning of masculinity and femininity that used to describe and compare person's mannerisms and features based on social expectations. However, masculinity and femininity are more complex than stereotypes. They are cultural attributes of the crossroads of one's sex, gender, and sexuality. In addition, sexuality is composed of our sexual activities with and attraction towards other individuals. Sexuality is complex subject and is intertwined with gender. At last some intersex people suffer from social discrimination and harmful medication surgeries that affect negatively on their psyche. Intersex is sensitive subject that influence in many dimensions of the person, social, religious, political, and more specific psychological.

*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, overcomes all those concepts and pictured on each character spirit and desires. Yet, many cultures also recognize a fluidity of gender identity or even third gender. A discussion of Hijras of India, individuals alternately thought of as men who became women or distinct third gender. Thus, this chapter is an introduction to many issues more thoroughly reviewed in subsequent. Masculinity and femininity, gender, and sexuality; in which all of them are projected on each part of the novel and well addressed among the characters too.

# **Chapter Three:**

## *Analysis of the Novel*

## **Chapter Three: The Analysis of the Novel**

### **Outline:**

3.1 Introduction

3.2 The Ministry of Utmost Happiness' themes

3.2.1 Sexual Identity

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3.3 Characterization

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3.4 The Representation of Intersex Woman in the novel

3.5 The Literary aesthetics

3.6 Conclusion



### 3.1. Introduction

The Booker Prize awarded Arundhati Roy for her latest novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. The novel was emerged after a gap of 20 years and deals with trouble of the Indian subcontinent. On Booker's long list again, it rides the dual scopes of politics and literature. In that it nourishes the writer's political philosophy in her powerful narrative expressed in fertile language and a mocking style. The author will study Hijras community in the novel, and try to set their alienation within gender particular literary discourse.

Intersex people ; known in India as Hijras, are considered as neither man nor woman and are being subjected to social neglect and alienation from time to time. These people are avoided by both family and society. They face identity crisis as they could not define themselves as typical male and female boundaries. They are marginalized and forced to live a life of the other. Their education as well as public area is confined or they themselves decide to live a life of isolation due to certain limitations.

The Kashmir case has been an apple of conflict between India and Pakistan since the division of the country in 1947. People have suffered due to politics because of the involvement of terrorism. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* has political dimensions as it evokes a number of political issues.

Arundhati Roy catches every glimpse of worsening condition of environment and describes the horrible picture of ecological crisis in all her writings. Roy in her recent novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* shows an inconspicuous way to demand a severe and instructional observation for readers.

### **3.2. The Ministry of Utmost Happiness's Themes**

At the first, the analysis will be about the themes touched on by the novel and related to the chosen aspect intersex, characters, and the influential social Indian environment.

#### **3.2.1. Sexual Identity**

Anjum has a complex gender history. She is born as an intersex boy Aftab. But has a tendency toward being effeminate. Since he is the first boy of the house, his parents decided to treat as boy him and to prevent his feminine traits. His father blame him when he join Hijras. Then he is ignored by his father. Being accepted in Khawabgah, he faced emotional trauma. He decided to have surgery because he was upset by his masculine organs. A quack doctor performs the surgery to remove his masculine organs. But the female organ he creates does not work. After he became Anjum, he realizes that he could no longer experience an orgasm. Finally, he realizes that others controlled his sexual identity and create his internal conflicts (Ruchika).

#### **3.2.2. Identity Crisis**

Another theme of this novel is an identity crisis. Many characters feel a traumatic identity in a way or another. Anjum is conflicted due to her struggling with her status as intersex which got disrespected in India. Musa is dedicated to the people of Kashmir, fighting for freedom, whereas the government considers his fighting as terrorism. He is labeled as terrorist, but he believes that he is a free fighter. Tilo becomes embroiled with Musa as she is caught harbouring an enemy of the state, which is technically seditious activity. (Ruchika)

### **3.2.3. Struggle to Fit the Normal**

The main characters of this book, Anjum, Tilo, Musa, tried to find a place that could be considered normal. Anjum is intersex who feels emotionally drained due to the absence of love in her life. Tilo feels neglected by her mother and rejects to acknowledge Tilo as she is her biological daughter. The warrior Musa tries to live like a normal person, but is conflicted due to his empathy with Kashmiri that led him to become a terrorist. None of these characters have feeling that he is a part of the world, looking for a place where they can live, be accepted and be happy. (Ruchika)

### **3.2.4. Freedom**

The notion of freedom is brighted throughout the story. It is manifested in Musa fight for freedom in Kashmir and Anjum as he tries to avoid the Duniya's rules of the world. She came from Hijras community to live in graveyard so as not to obey anyone's rules. Tilo tries to be released form marriage and attempts to free herself from the thwart for being a friend with a terrorist. (Ruchika).

### **3.2.5. Feminism**

In Indian society the patriarchal, misogyny, and violence against woman erupting from time to time in merciless brutality. The main characters are Tilo and Anjum are very independent and not afraid to believe on themselves even though the cost of culture marginalizes them or disempowers women. (Mitchel)

## **3.3. Characterisation**

The coming analysis is about the major characters in the novel. Where their experiences create the events of the story. The analysis will focus on their gender, behaviour, life, religious tendencies, and their environments.

### 3.3.1. Anjum

Anjum is the protagonist of the novel. Her story took two chapters to dwell. She is described as clown without circus and a queen without a palace. Anjum with her complex gender story emerged from suffering to strength to face a brutal society. The story opens in graveyard where Anjum lives. Place full of flying foxes, crows, bats and sparrows. Then the story shifts of the day of her birth in Delhi with much celebrated birth after three girls, Roy says that: "[...]born on a cold January night, by lamplight (power cut), in Shahjahanabad, the walled city of Delhi. Ahlam Baji, the midwife who delivered her and put her in her mother's arms wrapped in two shawls, said, 'It's a boy.' Given the circumstances, her error was understandable." (Roy11). Here, the story begins and the doubt rises. The mother grope her baby but she remarks something uncommon, the writer indicates the questioning of gender. Roy points out:

In Urdu, the only language she knew, all things, not just living things but all things – carpets, clothes, books, pens, musical instruments – had a gender. Everything was either masculine or feminine, man or woman. Everything except her baby. Yes of course she knew there was a word for those like him – *Hijra*. Two words actually, *Hijra* and *Kinnar*. But two words do not make language. (11)

Aftab was born in Shahjahanabad. from Muslim parents, he had both boy parts and girl parts which left his mother terrified. Born a hermaphrodite, not technically a Hijra a female trapped in a male body, as a doctor in the novel describes it. Anjum's mother raises her as boy, and her father starts a cultural project of planting masculinity on her. The home environment is trying to raise her like a boy.

When aftab was at the age of ten, he joined the musical school. Where he faced such discrimination from his colleagues because of his soft voice, as Arundhati

denotes that: "He could sing Chaiti and Thumri with the accomplishment and poise of a Lucknow courtesan. At first people were amused and even encouraging, but soon the snickering and teasing from other children began: *He's a She. He's not a He or a She. He's a He and a She. She-He, He-She Hee! Hee! Hee!*" (Roy13)

Despite of his parent's efforts the child Aftab finds himself wanted to be a woman. But one spring morning Aftab sees what appears to be a woman, Bombay Silk, in bright lipstick and gold high heels. He follows her to Khwabgah, the House of Dreams. A group of eight Hijras live there together with their guru Ustad, and eventually Aftab is able to insinuate himself into their lives. Finding a sense of belonging makes Aftab unbelievably happy. At the age of fifteen Ustad Kulsoom Bi gives her the name of Anjum. When she reaches her eighteenth birthday Kulsoom Bi prepares a great ceremony. Arundhati mentions that : " [...] Hijras gathered from all over the city, some came from out of town. For the first time in her life Anjum wore a sari, a red disco sari, with a backless choli. That night she dreamed she was a new bride on her wedding night." (Roy 20)

The story continues and Anjum feels sorrow about herself, Roy says:

She awoke distressed to find that her sexual pleasure had expressed itself into her beautiful new garment like a man's. It wasn't the first time this had happened, but for some reason, perhaps because of the sari, the humiliation she felt had never been so intense. She sat in the courtyard and howled like a wolf, hitting herself on her head and between her legs, screaming with self-inflicted pain. (20)

Anjum contradicts with herself and her body rebelled to develop into Adam's apple. Thus, her outsides are not aligned with her internal sense of identity. She forms a strong unhappiness. Despite of these obstacles she will be a famous Hijra in

Delhi. She is mother of a daughter whose name is Zainab. She finds her crying on the steps of mosques and who immediately trusts her. Anjum her feeling to be mother embraces Zainab for years.

After years Anjum caught up in 2002 Gujarat Riot. Where her friend killed there and she survived due to her gender condition; claiming that killing a Hijra is a curse. Roy writes: "They left her alive. Unkilled. Unhurt. Neither folded nor unfolded. She alone. So that they might be blessed with good fortune." (Roy 36)

So terrible was Anjum's own experience during the riots that she refuses to talk about it. What first drives Anjum out of the Khwabgah and live in the graveyard is trauma. She takes up residence in a graveyard that is called Jannat House. Where she finds freedom and far from Duniya. Over the years, her home there gets bigger and bigger until it becomes a guesthouse that she rents to down and out travellers. She meets a friend, a Dalit who has taken the name Saddam Hussein and live with her.

### **3.3.2. Saddam Hussein**

Saddam Hussein belongs to Dalit; low caste man. He had converted to Islam after the brutal murder of his father by a Hindu mob for supposed cow killing. He intends to avenge the death of his father by killing Sahrawat. Saddam works odd jobs such as: a bus conductor, morgue attendant, a security guard, and a shop helper among others. He changes his name into Saddam Hussein after seeing the manner of defiance of the Iraqi dictator at the time of his death in a video. At the end of the novel he marries the adopted Anjum's daughter Zeinab. (Chege, Ruchika)

### 3.3.3. S. Tillotama

The second part of the story is about with S. Tilottama, called Tilo. She is a love child of a high-caste Syrian Christian mother and a low-caste man her mother fell in love with. After treatment as adoptive child from her biological mother, she grows distant from people. She is an architect with a personality like smoke: beautiful, scattered, attractive. Being a lover with a Kashmiri insurgent, she becomes an observer of, and even a participant in the battle time. Her strident unconventionality is writ all over her. Her darkish complexion, laconic nature, alert presence and each breath she takes is burdened with layers of meaning. She is courted by three men, Biplop Dasgupta, Nagraj Hariharan and Musa Yeswi. ( Chege, Ruchika)

As Dasgupta describes her:

Behind her plain, unfashionable spectacles, her slightly slanting cat-eyes had the insouciant secretiveness of a pyromaniac. She gave the impression that she had somehow slipped off her leash. As though she was taking herself for a walk while the rest of us were being walked – like pets. As though she was watching considerately, somewhat absent-mindedly, from a distance, while we minced along, grateful to our owners, happy to perpetuate our bondage. (Roy 78)

Tilo was secretive and mysterious girl, her friends felt a maze to know about her life. Dasgupta says: " From stray wisps of conversation I gathered that her mother was a single woman whose husband had left her, or she had left him, or he was dead – it was all a bit of a mystery. Nobody seemed to be able to place her. There were rumours that she was an adopted child. And rumours that she was not." (78)

Tilo, a dark-skinned, smart woman, had been close to architecture student Musa Yeswi at university. Whereas an old bureaucrat Dasgupta Biplap, Tilo called him

Garson Hobart as his name in the play and loves her secretly. Naga is a mainstream journalist whom she eventually marries. Years later, Tilo married Musa and involved with him in Kashmiri conflict. Tilo, an artist, activist and lover of a Kashmiri militant wanted by the government because of Musa's terrorism, in which considered as seditious activity. She has an abortion after her separation from Musa. Then, she marries Naga to be in safe. But they separated after fourteen years. Tilo rents an apartment from Biplap. They reconnect, but she soon disappears again with the baby. She sees abandoned baby in a trash heap during a protest. She has named the baby Miss Jebeen the Second, after Musa's slain daughter. (Ruchika, Study Guide)

#### **3.3.4. Musa Yeswi**

Musa was sent by his father to study architecture then he avoids him being dragged in the Kashmir insurgency of 90s. After his wife and daughter were killed in gunfire in the army, he disappears and becomes terrorist. Musa, a quiet and sensitive man forced by circumstances to respond intensely to the insane situation in Kashmir. He is classmates with Tilo in Architecture School and then they married. (Chege)

#### **3.3.5. Biplap Dasgupta**

Biplap dasgupta is Brahmin. He was the part of college theatre group in which Tilo and Musa acted. He is smitten by Tilo, but is careful of her personality. He helps her later after she is imprisoned in Kashmir by using his power as a senior officer in Information Bureau. Tilo continues to call him Garson Hobart as his name in the play where they acted together with Naga and Musa. Later Biplab is appointed as government servant of India in the Intelligence Bureau and married a Brahmin woman who works in the Foreign Service. He is sent to Srinagar, a city in the Kashmir Valley, for several years as Deputy Station Head for the Bureau. Biplab's



political views, liberal, but moderate ones. He is slightly different from his conservative colleagues, whose are closeted Brahmin. Whom do not seem they could distinguish between religious faith and patriotism and want a sort of Hindu Pakistan. He takes a midnight call from Major Amrik Singh who killed Musa and arrested Tilo. (Felicelli, Ruchika)

### **3.4. The Representation of Intersex Woman in *The Ministry of utmost Happiness***

*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* takes us on affectionate journey of many years across the Indian scenery. The story moves from the cramped neighbourhoods of Old Delhi and the roads of the new town to the mountains and valleys of Kashmir and beyond. Arundhati Roy pictured the suffering of the marginalized people. They are struggling to live in society full of mess and brutality ingrained there. But mostly ordinary people excluded and broken by the world they live in.

The first chapter, *Where Do Old Birds Go to Die?* Anjum intersex woman settled in a graveyard near her relatives' burial sites. Where she lives and depicted as tree like a part of the natural world, unspeaking, trying to avoid others. The tree could mean a natural growth. It could also signify her desire to live against all the forces. She defies the vultures which climb in the high branches of the tree. The vultures try to defeat her through poison acts. It reflects the way Indian society is poisoned by history of corrupt and venal politicians, religious hatreds, bloodshed, death and denial of justice. (Roy 9)

When we move forward, we come across different names Majnu, Romeo, Anjum, that she is called by. The history is affect on her through different names but she is least bothered about it. Anjum says: "It doesn't matter. I'm all of them, I'm Romi and Juli, I'm Laila and Majnu. And Mujna, why not? Who says my name is

Anjum, I'm Anjuman. I'm a mehfil, I'm a gathering. Of everybody and nobody, of everything and nothing." (9). As we discover more and notice that Anjum really becomes a mehfil for all. Her Jannat Guest House acted as a residence for multi-faith and multi-caste people.

Anjum's life was a struggle to be what she wants to be. She survives to fit the normal like any individual whereas she is abandoned, ignored, face discrimination from society and her family too. Aftab is another intersex character, who abandons his male identity and embraces his femininity to later become Anjum, was subjected to schoolroom jeers of: "He's a She. He's not a He or a She. He's a He and a She. She-He, He-She, Hee! Hee! Hee!"(Roy 13)

She is born as boy Aftab and her parents wanted to raise her as boy. The manliness is ingrained in Indian society as Roy says: "He cut down on household expenses and drew up lists of people and relatives from whom he could borrow money. Simultaneously, he embarked on the cultural project of inculcating manliness in Aftab. He passed on to him his love of poetry and discouraged the singing of Thumri and Chaiti." (Roy15)

When Aftab reached puberty, he decided to be really Anjum. So he left home and moves to live in a hijra community, which is obviously a bad thing in India. In second chapter, we find Anjum in Khwabgah, the resort belonging to the transgender as their safe-zone. Hijras are transgender, intersex, or third gender people. They are considered a holy people, accepted as part of the community, and yet they are considered as a matter of differentiation. Arundhati states that: "[...] Aftab eventually managed to insinuate himself into the Khwabgah. Finally the day dawned when he was allowed in. He entered that ordinary, broken-down home as though he

were walking through the gates of Paradise." (Roy 17). The Khwabgah is a sleeping hostel or house of dreams for the hijras. The latter, for her is a place of relief and self-expression.

Arundhati Roy made from Anjum as symbol to many others who struggled throughout their lives to make a living for themselves. They are not just neglected for not belonging to any particular gender, rather, are targeted and mocked for their existence. These narrow mindsets of Indian society that make the life of people like Anjum even more difficult. She lives her life away from her home and creates a new house for herself which has no knowledge about the outside world.

Later on she asked Imam that how the last ceremonies of the transgender are performed when they died. Are they buried or cremated, who bathed their bodies. Roy points out the reality that humans in Indian subcontinent subjected so broad to follow a specific religion, gender and even sexuality that they forget the fact that the humanity dies a hundred times with cases like these. Anjum bravely reply to this, she says: "You tell me...You're the Imam Sahib, not me. Where do old birds go to die? Do they fall on us like stones from the sky? Do we stumble on their bodies in the streets? Do you not think that the All-seeing, Almighty One who put us on this Earth has made proper arrangements to take us away?" (Roy 10)

She gets the attention of journalists and directors as a source to reveal the plight of the Hijras. Anjum's own complaints is carrying spiritual expressions and bold words more than what she said from culture or politics. A wise friend assures her that Hijras were chosen people, beloved of the Almighty, says that: "It was an experiment. He decided to create something, a living creature that is incapable of happiness. So he made us." (Roy 18). But Anjum struggles for years for respect, for

love and, most of all, for motherhood. Then, she will be a mother of an adaptive little girl named her Zainab. As Arundhati states that: "Zainab was Anjum's only love." (Roy 21).

After her trauma in Gujarat riot, where she missed and does not killed because she is Hijra. As Roy denotes that: " Another voice rose, high and anxious, another bird: *Nahi yaar, mat maro, Hijron ka maarna apshagun hota hai*. Don't kill her, brother, killing Hijras brings bad luck. Bad luck!" (Roy 36). Anjum's horrible incident makes her secretive person and left Khawabgah by taken up residence in graveyard. Anjum was so desolate and lifeless that she was least annoyed of Jinns and ghosts in the graveyard. She sounds like a dead body. Her emotions crush down to the ground. But she bravely fights against all the evil forces, within and outside to survive and thrive. Her desolation protected her from outside. The Guest House held the symbol of *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*.

### 3.5. The Literary aesthetics

Since times literature reflects varied development of human civilization, love, war, revolution, and societal issues. Lately, literature has not failed to advocate the reason of social and political concern. Arundhati Roy, the strikingly renowned postcolonial writer of Indian English Literature, strengthens her concern in her fictional and non-fictional works. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, draws out the issues of the marginalizing Hijras community, the war between Kashmir, Hindus, and Muslims, and religious confliction in India. With Stylistic devices and grammatical deviations that are liberally manipulated by Arundhati to bear in certain effects in the reader's minds.

The novel is fragmented and impractical and is lack of cohesiveness and conciseness. It is not one novel, whereas it is a mixed of two novels; one conducting with the *hijra* community and the dispirited class, and the second with the issues of terrorism in Kashmir. Roy used a huge cast of characters that misleading the readers where to focus exactly. As explained here : "[...]her myriad minor characters and political discussions [...] cause the narrative threads to slip from her hands, leading to a bewildering lack of momentum and focus" (qtd in. Batra 431). Just as this were not enough, there is an annoying mixed registers of Urdu poetry, mundane reportage, personal noting as she is testing the reader's patience. As a critic comments, "shockingly uneven in it register. Soaring to flights of irony and poetry one moment, plunging into anodyne reportage the next. It appears to be composed by several minds and hands, unable to decide its tone and texture." (quid in. Batra 431).

Through Roy's narration highlights some stylistic deviations hired by her to render purposes. We discover repetition, parallelism, similes and metaphors. While parallelism refers to the use of repeated patterns in separate parts of a sentence for creating emphasis, as Roy says that: "He did not always succeed. Nor did he always fail." (Roy 162) she is defined him as a person who neither failed nor succeeded completely. Also, the use of parallel structure is being effectively used in the following line: "life went on...death went on ... and the war went on." (Roy 153), both quotes are addressing Musa's survival in his mission.

Repetition of grammatical or syntactical pattern in which creates further emphasis, one best example of this can see in the following words in the novel: "She knew very well that she knew very well that she knew very well." (Roy 36), and then:" Anjum waited to die. Saddam waited to kill. And miles away, in a troubled forest, a baby waited to be born "(Roy49).

By using of similes and metaphors in which creates a sense of literary aesthetic. That latter, used by Roy for call of compulsory attention towards the reader. In the graveyard, Anjum lives "like a tree" (Roy9), feels the grip of the ghosts of vultures "like an ache in an amputated limb" (9), rattles through the gilded chamber "like a fugitive absconding from herself." Then she uses a metaphors too Ahlam Bhaji is described as : "floating regally" like a "filthy queen" (Roy 59), which is paradoxical as well.

### **3.6. Conclusion**

The Ministry of Utmost Happiness, examines the ways of a narrative combination format handle to a complex and rich plot of contemporary India. Where gender questions, caste discriminations, injured landscapes and religious conflicts to vivid a tale of decay and hope. By resorting to Hindu epics, on the one hand, and to the intellectual activism typical of her non-fiction works on the other, Roy issues both a warning and calling to take into account the ambivalence of present-day postcolonial India.

As we read the novel, we detect that these characters are mostly split between two worlds- male- female, love-hate, and life-death. They sometimes try to shun desire completely. As language and desire are harmonious, their endeavours to remake themselves through naming and re-naming become as a heroic but failed exercise. The characters either sustain the ache of social stratification or try to set their identity in the complex social, and gender classification, from different common and dividing socio- religious discourses.

The novel juxtaposed rich analysis and could be decoded from several critical approaches. It is full of allegory, allusion and irony. The use of phrases with constant similes leads the reader into the core of the problem to differentiate the fact from the

fiction. The historic and political information provided with digressions spread a number of the vivid realities that everyone would need to learn within few hours of analyzing.

# **General Conclusion**



## General Conclusion

In Indian society, women lived under men's influence where they are ranked in second position, whereas achievements and ambitions are held by men. But recently, Indian woman has several attempts to take off the dress of humiliation and persecution of the patriarchal society. Her contributions appear in number of domains such as: politics, education and literature. In literature, she carries the tone of torment, steadfastness, struggle, passion, and power. She proves her existence and identity through literature.

Arundhati Roy's second novel records a number of conflicts in marginalized people's lives. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* tackles mainly the issue of Hijras which has been for a long time considered as taboo. Roy tells her own story through Tilottama. Tilottama shares some of her experiences.

The main theme in the novel is intersex. It is portrayed through the character Anjum. Roy unveils many traits of this burden category. While intersex people have a biological defect since birth, they are exposed to discrimination from their surroundings. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* addresses also other issues including: feminism, gender, and sexuality in which all of them flow and determine the concept of intersex.

Gender is divided into two genders; man and woman. It is socially constructed idea of what is masculine and feminine. It differs from sex which has biological determination (on anatomy and genetics). Masculinity and femininity used to describe and compare person's mannerisms and features based on social expectations and are basic component of gender. They are cultural attributes. One's sexuality is complex

subject that intertwines with gender. It is composed of our sexual activities with/and attraction towards other individuals.

Intersex individuals suffer from social discrimination, humiliation and harmful medication surgeries that influence negatively their psyche. Intersex is sensitive matter that affects several dimensions of social, religious, political, and more specific psychological aspect in people's life. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* copes with all these aspects and portrays them in characters' spirit and desire. Yet, readers both in India and abroad welcome the discussion on issue of Hijras in India.

With her unique style and erotic words, Roy created a sympathetic discourse on hijras community and intersex woman in particular. She studied this category from her feminist point of view. Roy portrayed woman from other marginalized angle in Indian subcontinent to raise the voice of traumatized intersex woman. On the other hand, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, is rich pot of recent historical modern India.

Arundhati Roy highlighted an important point which that intersex person could be included in deviant sexual orientation. Whereas intersex individuals could be: transgender, homosexual, asexual, bisexual, and gay or lesbian. She spotlighted intersex issue under the gender studies. Where intersex people's gender is socially constructed.

The author exploits cultural and social dimensions to describe both suffering and strength of intersex woman, with patriarchal set up ingrained there. Between hope and decay Roy addressed many issues such as: gender crisis, caste discrimination, injured landscapes, and religious conflicts. Her non-fiction novel presents postcolonial India to illustrate Hindu epics with introducing characteristics of intellectual activity in her work.

The novel addressed a constructed world between dual sides. Between love and hate, life and death, and man and woman. The characters trying to fit the normal and sometimes they try to completely avoid their desires. With a heroic act to change their names in order to find a their identity in unmerciful society; but at the end the act was in vain. This latter was undertaken based on gender categories that support the pain of social stratification and consist of various social religious discourses.

The mocking style of Roy enhances a several literary aesthetics such as: allegory, allusion, and irony. Thus, come out of rich analysis which deciphers many critical approaches. She is wisely used the similes to guide the reader into the heart of the matter and to differentiate between fiction and non-fiction. Also, the historical and the political information add a realistic touch to the novel.

Such type of study is not only helpful to the students but it also enhances their knowledge to extend the research into other studies from their proper perspectives. The research has given us fresh insight into how literature can change society's view about intersex. Thus through literature presents several social, political, cultural problems that are carefully studied by narrating stories to reflect reality.

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## Glossary

**Asexual** / ,er'sekʃuəl /: not having sexual qualities; not interested in sex.

**Bisexual** / ,baɪ'sekʃuəl /: sexually attracted to both men and women.

**Brahmin** /'brämən/: a socially or culturally superior person, especially a member of the upper classes from New England.

**Dalit** /'dälit/: low-caste.

**Duniya**/du:ɲə /: world.

**Femininity** / ,femə'nɪnəti /: the fact of being a woman; the qualities that are considered to be typical of women.

**Gay** / geɪ /: (of people, especially men) sexually attracted to people of the same sex.

**Gender** / 'dʒendə(r) /: the fact of being male or female, especially when considered with reference to social and cultural differences, not differences in biology.

**Heterosexuality** /hetərə ,sekʃu'æləti/: a person who is sexually attracted to people of the opposite sex.

**Hijra** /hidʒra:/: Transgender men who usually beg in return for blessings.

**Homosexuality** / ,hoomə ,sekʃə'wæləti/: a person, usually a man, who is sexually attracted to people the same sex.

**Intersex** / 'ɪntəseks /: the physical condition of being partly male and partly female.

**Jannat Guest House** /dʒnæ t/ /'gɛst/ /'haʊs/: paradise.

**Khwabgah**/kə'wə bga/ : House of dreams.

**Lesbian** / 'lezbɪən /: a woman who is sexually attracted to other women.

**Maoist** / 'maʊɪst / :is a Maoist communist party in India which aims to overthrow the government of India through people's war.

**Masculinity** / ,mæskju'lnəti /: the quality of being masculine.

**Mehfil** /məhfil/: gathering/party.

**Naxalite** / 'næksələɪt /: (in India) a member of a group which believes in political revolution in order to change the system of how land is owned. It took its name from Naxalbari in West Bengal, where it started.

**Patriarchal** / ,petri'ɑ:kəl /: ruled or controlled by men; giving power and importance only to men.

**Queer theory** / kwɪə(r) 'θɪəri /:an offensive way of describing a homosexual , especially a man, which is, however, also used by some homosexuals about themselves.

**Sex** / seks /: the state of being male or female.

**Sexuality** / ,sekʃu'æləti /: the feelings and activities connected with a person's sexual desires.

## الملخص

يناقش البحث الحالي المنظور الآخر لدراسات النوع الاجتماعي و الذي يتمثل في ثنائية الجنس. ومع ذلك، فإن الأشخاص ذوي الجنس المزدوج بيولوجياتهم لا تتوافق مع نفس خصائص الذكور والإناث، حيث يعانون من التمييز الاجتماعي والعلاجات الضارة. قدمت أرونداتي روي هؤلاء الأشخاص من خلال عدة أبعاد مثل: اجتماعيا، دينيا، وسياسيا. مع شخصية أنجوم روي تناولت من خلال كلماتها صراع الأفراد ذوي الجنس المزدوج. درست كل التفاصيل حول حياتهم، وأحلامهم، ومعاناتهم في المجتمع الهندي. تم تقديم هذا الأخير ضمن مجتمع الهجرة الذي يتم عزله من قبل المجتمع. المنهجية المستخدمة في البحث هي النهج النوعي. حيث يتم إجراء التحليل والوصف على الرواية والمشكلة البارزة. دراسة هذه القضية التي نتوصل إليها مع التحقيق في أن ثنائية الجنس هو موضوع حساس ويجب دراسته. درست روي هذه الفئة من خلال عدة مجالات وطرحت معاناتهم بشكل جيد.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** أرونداتي روي، دراسات النوع الاجتماعي، أزمة الهوية، أدب المرأة الهندية، الجنس المزدوج، المجتمع الأبوي.

