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Fictionalization of Indian History in Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

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Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Chandra Nath Yogi has completed his thesis entitled "Fictionalization of Indian History in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*" by Arundhati Roy under my supervision. He carried out his research from November 2019 to January 2021. I hereby recommend his thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

.....  
Khem Raj Khanal

Supervisor

Date: .....

Letter of Approval

This thesis entitled "Fictionalization of Indian History in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*" submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Mr. Chandra Nath Yogi has been approved by the undersigned member of the research committee.

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## Fictionalization of Indian History in Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

### Abstract

This study examines fictionalization of Indian history in Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* from the perspective of new historicism. In this paper, the researcher argues that the writer in the fiction critiques the Indian politics during the 1980s and also indirectly criticizes the political leaders from 1980-2017. The researcher also attempts to show the dissatisfactions, frustrations towards the unstable Indian government because of power hegemony, hunger of politicians and also exploitation of downtrodden people. They were badly treated by some political leaders in the name of caste, gender, religion which is ridiculous. The writer is in favor of Muslim because Hiindutwa is all over country and also she is in favor of marginalized, downtrodden people as she is willing to provide voice to the voiceless people. Moreover, her writing is convincing though she has exaggerated some issues but she seems to have felt as them as her own problems. The paper concludes that the official history of India has excluded the marginalized ones, who also should be given rights, liberty and freedom.

Key Words: New Historicism, Indian Politics, Historical Context, Marginalization, Dissatisfaction, Gender Discrimination

The research paper makes an effort to explore Roy's aggression and shows the dissatisfactions against the Indian politics. The case of Gujarat riot in 2002 and treatment of Muslims by Hindus. It is not the case of particular place but the entire nation was suffering from the same problem as religious biasness. In the novel, the writer clearly presents the historical issues of the last two to four decades. She mainly focuses on the 1980s. Moreover, the novel recounts the main character Aftab later changed to Anjum, a hermaphrodite who acts as a social activist and also was blamed

as a curse for society. Hermaphrodite refers to those having sexual organs of male and female or other sexual characteristics, either abnormally or in case of some organisms as the natural condition. Anjum faces a lot of trouble on living in the personal and political realm of experiences. As it is very well known that Roy is a critic of contemporary society and brings out the gist of the then corrupted society. Not only this but also she provides the pseudo name to the political leaders, Gujarat ka Lalla to Narendra Modi and Mr. Aggrawal to Arbindra Kejriwal. Roy presents the novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* very ironically because in the novel she never talks about happiness. The complete novel is surrounded by the grief and sorrow of civilians. In the novel, the writer presents the fictional character named Anjum, a representative of the sufferer in Gujarat riots in 2002, their life is like a toy for political leaders. Similarly, Major Amrik Singh as a fictional character of historical figure Indira Gandhi who faces a lot of trouble in his activities by social activists.

New historicism is a method of literary criticism that emphasizes the historicity of the text by relating it to the configuration of power, society, or ideology in a given time. It is an approach to view literary and non-literary text simultaneously with reference to the historical context and situation at the time of its production. It associates both history and literature together in order to show their interconnectedness. To analyze the issues of the novel the researcher borrows theoretical insights from new historicism envisioned by Stephen Greenblatt's *Renaissance of Self Fashioning* and Michel Foucault's *The History of Sexuality* have been taken as theoretical parameters.

New Historicism looks at literature in a wider historical context, examining both how the writer's time affected the work and how the work reflects the writer's time in turn recognizing that current cultural context color that critics conclusions.

This is the 1970s developed literary theory which attempts to figure out the nexus between text and cultural system.

The plot revolves around the uncertainty of the Indian political situation which is hovering in Gujarat and Kashmir. People especially Muslims do not have their civil rights and are taken as outsiders in their own country. The novel depicts the political scenario as well as wrong cultural belief where leaders misguided the marginal, downtrodden, and the revolutionary spark for the 21st century to get justice for their freedom and liberty. The author is an acute observer of the very fabric of Indian society. The novel captures the harsh reality of the life of downtrodden people such as Anjum, Revathy, and other. The history of Indian politics is presented in a novel in fictional way. Historical fiction is a literary, genre where the story takes place in the past and through fiction the past is interpreted.

New historicism is a literary criticism that makes the blend between reality and fiction. Through fiction, the bitter reality is revealed. The situation of Sanjai Gandhi in 1988 is very similar to the protagonist Anjum who is objectified and taken in a negative sense because of transgender (Hijra). Sanjai Gandhi and Anjum have a problematic situation when they were chased by police. It was the end of the tyranny ruling of Indira Gandhi the bureaucrats were active to use their powers. In New Delhi police caught Sanjai Gandhi protesting against the then government. At that time they tried to chase him and he ran towards flyover. Sanjai Gandhi was so much terrified that he urinates in his clothes. The condition gets a match with Anjum when she was in the Delhi movement. She was caught by police and was trapped on the flyover. The terrific situation of both Sanjai Gandhi and Anjum was the same. They So-eed in their clothes while they were chased by police.

Her top favorite was the Flyover Story- Anjum's account of how she and her friends walked home late night From Defence Colony in south Delhi all the way back to Turkman Gate. There were five or six of them, dressed up, looking stunning after a night of revelry at a wealthy Seth's house in D- Block. After the party they decided to walk for a while and take in some fresh air. In those days there was such thing as fresh air in the city, Anjum told Zainab. When they were halfway across the Defence Colony flyover- the city's is only flyover at the time- it began to rain. And what can anyone possibly do when it rains on a flyover? They have to walking,' Zainab would say, in a reasonable, adult tone.....'So we soo-ed in our ghagra!' Zainab would shout, because she was at the age when anything to do with shitting, pissing and farting was the high point, or perhaps the whole point, of all stories. (33)

Indeed as fear lies in every person. Likewise, things happen to Sanjai Gandhi gets quietly matched with Anjum. The pathetic situation and satire to the then government is shown by the novel and what has happened in the past is revealed by means of writing. The case of Flyover and pissing in pants, ghagra farting due to fear of police. Five or six of them were chasing her, it was raining and what anyone can do if it rains. They don't have fix place to hide and were very badly treated by police members so that they had dad time during the movement.

Joining the words new and historicism the term new historicism was coined by the American critics Stephen Greenblatt's book *Renaissance Self fashioning* (1982) is usually regarded as its beginning (Greenblatt 172). It took the shape in the late 1970s and early 1980s as opposed to new criticism, old historicism, and critical deconstruction. New historicism is a theory which studies literary as well as non-



literary texts tests in equal parameter concerning the contextual factors in which they are produced and interpreted. Defining New Historicism, Blatt says;

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

According to Foucault's, *The History of Sexuality*. Discourse, power, and knowledge: "Of the three main Foucauldian's concepts introduced in this book- discourse, power and the subject- the last is probably the most complex. As an orientation to Foucault's overall rethinking of his fields- the history of ideas, or 'the history of systems of thought', as he preferred to call it- we will concentrate in this chapter only on the first two: discourse and power. But we must add to this a more direct consideration of the history of ideas itself and its central concept, knowledge" (1). He explains that the discourse of the past is only written of the higher one, not the lower one. The discourse shows the power others are objectified.

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

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

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

New Historicism, a form of literary theory that aims to understand intellectual history through literature, and literature through its cultural context, follows the 1950s field of history of ideas and refers to itself as a form of "Cultural Poetics". It first developed in the 1980s, primarily through the work of the critic and the University of California, Berkeley English professor Stephen Greenblatt, and gained spread in the 1990s. Greenblatt coined the term new historicism when he "collected a bunch of essays and then, out of a kind of desperation to get the introduction done, he wrote the essay represented something called a 'new historicism'. New historicism examines how the textual representation includes traces and fragments of historical truth in an unspoken manner. It also examines the fragment of historical truth and cultural ethos enter the textual world in the microform. The truth which enters the text in the manner is subjectivized and textually manipulated. New historicism becomes influential with the works of prominent new historicist, Stephen Greenblatt, who first of all took it to analyze particularly the works of the renaissance period. Regarding this, Greenblatt makes the following remarks:

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

A Literary text is embedded in its context. It is in a constant interaction and interchange with other component inside the other network of institution. It believes in cultural power relation and practices. Once spoken or written word enter a form of circulation, it then turns away from their point of origin. (68)

Indeed new historicism is a literary piece, by which the whole means of history and cultural beliefs are expressed. It helps us to understand the author's biography, social background, ideas of circulating at the time, and the cultural milieu. New historicism interprets using members of society or culture to apply their experiences. It evokes the whole situation of the past by the way of a fictional text.

Different critics have analyzed Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* from multiple perspectives which shows the main significance of the novel. The chaotic situation of India is delivered through fiction. Michiko Kakutani, in review "Arundhati Roy's Long-Awaited Novel Is an Ambitious Look at Turmoil in India", says the pathetic condition of India was at that time, the Kashmiri separatist movement, social, political, religious and cultural issues. She says:

She collected scraps of stories and inexplicable memorabilia that appeared to have no purpose. There seemed to be no pattern or theme to her interest, "No doubt Roy, who has spent much of the last two decades immersed in politics (she became a vocal supporter of the Kashmir separatist movement, and a

critic of Hindu nationalism) means for the many fragments and digression to open out her story into a panoramic mosaic of modern India, and the countless, social, political, religious and cultural issues rolling just below the surface of everyday life. There are to national tragedies in the unending "supermarket of sorrow," like the Bhopal toxic gas disaster of 1984 and the Gujarat riots of 2002 and multiplication of alarming anecdotes involving murder, rape, torture and mutilation as well as more mundane episodes of loss and grief. (4)

The novel consists of historical evidence of India's growth in terms of poverty, the wealth of billionaires, a crime against women, religious intolerances, and degradation of humanity. Likewise, it reflects the changing scenario of the world where elites keep on growing at the cost of the majority act of vanishing under the shadow of the struggle for survival. As far the colonization is still in practice though the British Raj has been ended. Insiders are trying to colonize and want to practice rules over them. Many of the political leaders trying to impose the rules over peoples.

In *Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Roy has pointed the transgender /women character who is in conflict with the narrow-minded society and depicts the struggle about she moved from place to place in search of freedom. Being a female she has never built up her own identity in this parochial society. In her novel, the character is badly dominated by the patriarchal society. Most of the characters of Roy in her writing are found to be the victim of the then society. Yet females are compelled to pass through the dilemma of stereotyped identity imposed upon them by society, and even they are objectified through the whole novel and are taken as the means of interest of men.

Similarly, in the book *The Dramatic Decade The Indira Gandhi Years*, Pranab Mukharjee has presented history as a politician and as a decision-maker during a decade that set in motion political and economic changes. As one of the keenest observers of the participants in this dramatic decade, Pranab Mukharjee's insights are invaluable. Drawing from personal diary extracts conversations with key players of the 1970s and vital secondary literature, Mukharjee presents an exceptional portrait of a complex nation. Like all good Indian politicians, he refuses to divulge the secrets. It is straight and drab. Mukharjee even grabs the history of the separation of India and Pakistan in 1947. The partition of India split British India into the countries of India and Pakistan (east and west Pakistan) in 1947. The partition was part of the end of British rule over the Indian subcontinent, called the British Raj. The book also analyses in-depth about insurgency imposed upon civilians in 1975-1977. The time was very critical people were a drag for the sterilization campaign to control population growth. They were treated as if commodities. Politicians don't show any feelings, pity upon them which resulted in the revolution. The burden of past shamed by its present status of stagnation and slavery was coming to terms with the harsh realities of the present and intimidating challenges of the future. That was the transition phase in India. Mukharjee insisted in his book about the cruel behavior of Indira Gandhi on civilians. He focuses on political philosophy in his writing.

Similarly, in Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* Revathy is represented as suppressed as people were being scapegoated at the time of Emergency (1975 to 1977). Especially commoners whose civil rights were snatched and even they had to beg door to door for food. Likewise in Roy's novel the character Revathy a young girl and low-caste from a rural area of India, always excels in school but lacks the resources to pay for her education. She was good at her education. "I wanted to be a

lawyer" (420). Due to poverty and low- caste she joined Government College where she was radicalized by Maoist communists and dedicates her entire life to the communist cause. "After passing Intermediate I sat for Medical entrance and got selected but had no money for fees. So, I joined Government College in Warangal. Their movement was very strong. Inside forest outside also" (420). She got recruited in Maoist troops where she devoted her whole life to development by making revolution. There happened a heinous crime with Revathy, she was caught by some of the police and was tortured and brutally raped. Though she escaped she realizes she is pregnant which devastates her. She is ill throughout her democracy. "I was looking like a mad person. All the cigarette burns were bubbles on my face, breast, nipples, and stomach. My whole bed was blood" (423). Roy points out the pathetic situation of Revathy about how she was treated by society. There caused gender discrimination and she was also from the low caste. Roy too shows the relation with Indira Gandhi (the emergency period) how commoners were badly treated by political leaders, bureaucrats, and elite members.

Roy portrays in her novel that her 'new women' represents to Anjum is trying to search for her identity and wants to create for herself a new place in society. She firmly asserts that these women are there have the guts to raise their voices against it, hence creating awareness for the rest. Current women are trying to seek self-willed and discover the true self-identity crisis of women where she struggles to gain as a human being in its all sense through its own will power. They even try to challenge these forces of societies who binds her in the chain and reject her as a comparison to the human being. In previous women think that their identity is linked with their men but in today's context, they are trying to maintain their identity and avoid relational identities. In today's context, they understand the duplicity of this identity imposed on

her by society. So, they are trying to challenge the mainstream and formulate the new convention. To build up their own identity in society. They tried to provide the message that society is not only based upon patriarchy but also on matriarchy. Even women can do what men do in this time because no one is superior and inferior on the basis of gender.

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

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

There was suppression inside people. People have forgotten the value of humanity. They formed the religious traits by which led to the bloodshed environment. The community was so much conservative there was the slogan "Musalmano ka ek hi sthan! Qabristhan ya Pakistan! (Only one place for the Musalman! The graveyard or Pakistan!)" (62). For instance, the transition of old India to new India presented by changing the perception of foreign media that shows the picture of the society in different ways. They have changed the old exotics in favor of the younger generation. The major character moves from one location to another location melting into local histories. Anjum's personal history melts into national history. Anjum travels to Gujarat where she becomes a victim of communal riots that shook India. She represents herself as a sufferer of communal in Gujarat attacks. Roy presented the

cultural and spatial conflicts which constitute multiple facets of the new Indian Identity. The conflicts can be drawn from the geopolitical space of Gujarat. In 2002, the riot of Gujarat was led by the Chief Minister of Gujarat Narendra Modi. So, Roy called him Gujarat Ka Laalla he was the suit gate for political leadership in Gujarat. In this novel, Roy portrays the violent scenario of Gujarat when Anjum went there for hiding because she had left Delhi because it was the place where no right for women/transgender was given, and was treated badly by the society. She saw the massacre of ethnic cleansing especially Muslims were under restriction. Ahmadabad, capital of Gujarat where a lot of Muslims were made to sleep under the rail track. Modi was represented as god himself. "In faraway Gujarat, Gujarat Ka Lalla recognized the appearance of the old man- baby as a sign from the god. With a predator's unerring instinct, he accelerated his march to Delhi. By the fifth day of the old man's fast, Lalla was (metaphorically speaking) camped outside the city gates" (81).

However, people were suffering a terrific situation as from 1975 to 1977, Indira Gandhi has imposed an emergency how Sanjai Gandhi had recruited thugs and hooligans for the sake of position and power. Same like, in 2002 Chief Minister of Gujarat did the religious discrimination civilians were chopped as radish and carrot. Roy who brought turbulently and upheaval in the scattered people to reunites opened the eyes of people for liberation progressive-minded in humanistic culture. She brought an idea of civilization and progress worldwide, not to quarrel amongst the inside people.

Different scholars have analyzed the term from several perspectives. Among them little have touched the perspectives of new historicism. Hence the new issues I have raised is researchable by the way of New- Historicism. According to Stephen Greenblatt," New Historicism is a literary theory, it is based on the idea that literature



should be studied and interpreted within the context of both the history of the author and the history of the critic. It is based on the literary criticism of Stephen Greenblatt. It is influenced by the philosophy of Michel Foucault. New historicism acknowledges not only that " a work of literature is influenced by its author's times and circumstances, but the critic's response to that work is also influenced by his environment, belief and prejudice" (Greenblatt14).

In the novel, Roy figures out the character Major Amrik Singh as compared to Indira Gandhi because of their cruel character and thinks people are only to be ruled. So many rules were imposed upon people to follow. Same as in the novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* Amrik Singh shows the cruel behavior towards commoners in Kashmir. Singh has made a bloodshed environment where he shot people randomly and like a mad. New historicism is a blend of fact and fiction of the past. Roy characterized Amrik Singh as a tyranny ruler like Indira Gandhi.

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

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

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

A new historicist looks at literature in a wider historical context. He or she examines how the writer's times affected the work. A new historicist work reflects the writer's times. New historicism acknowledges not only that "a work of literature is influenced by its author's and circumstances, but that the critic's response to that work is also influenced by his environment, beliefs, and prejudices" (Greenblatt 14). A new historicist looks at literature in a wider historical context. He or she examined how the writer's times affected the work. A new historicist work reflects the writer's time social and cultural situation of those times.

The novel is like a history-realism or historical realism is a writing style or subgenre of realistic fiction centered on historical events and periods. It was dapped with so many subjects, Kashmir insurgency, Hindu, Muslim program in Gujarat in 2002, the emergency of 1975-1977, the humiliated and battered life of transgender and brutal experiences of Dalit. It is the story of transgender women Anjum who used to be Aftab and the love story of militant Musa and ultra-modern girl Tilo. The writer questioned repeatedly either we are in postcolonial or we are colonized by our people.

The experiences of reminiscences of her character reveal the truth. Anjum was forced to live in the graveyard because the so called society was not fit for her. She was scattered, stoned, humiliated, and exploited like a tree. The cultural ideology of the so-called society fails to explain her. She was beyond explanation beyond language, beyond gender identity Janhara Begum knew "all things, not just living thing 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" (8). A person cannot lie in a vacuum she or he needs a cultural identity. But she has no identity. Not only she bulls all Hijras go through this crisis. They have no schooling, no education, they are only forced to confine themselves in 'balcony' to see the school going normal children. She portrays Anjum experiences but these are the experiences of the whole transgender community. In our society women are double colonized trapped by both patriarchy and colonialism but transgender are trapped by the tripartite system of colonialism. They have no legal rights, no jobs, they have to live by begging or by miser amount of Government and NGO's allowances or by 'badtmeezi- bad behavior'. Through the portrayal of Anjum anxiety, the novelist sketches the anxiety of all transgender. Roy expresses Anjum's anxiety through her narration. "She is women trapped in men's body...she who never knew which box to tick which queue to stand in which public toilets to enter (Kings or Queens? Lord or Ladies? Sirs and Hers) ... she augmented by her ambiguities... (122)

Roy assails back Hindu mythology where the transgender are regarded as 'forgotten ones'. Ramayana when Ram, Sita, and Laxman were going to the forest for fourteen years, the citizen decided to go with them and reached the outskirts of Ayodhya, where all you men and women to go home and wait for me until- I where the forest began. Then Ram addressing the people said- "I want all you men and

women to go home and wait for me until I return" (51). The transgender was also thereby Ram only addressed the men and women to back but he forgot to mention the transgender. They waited fourteen years at the edge of the forest. So they are taken as 'forgotten ones' not only in past but in present also. However, transgender and even low- class are colonized by the insiders. They don't possess any cultural identities.

Literary works may or may not tell readers about various factual aspects of the reader about various factual aspects of the world from which they emerge. They will tell readers about the prevailing ways of thinking at the time. They raise the question of interest to anthropologists and sociologists. New Historicism is more socio-cultural historical than it is " a delving into factoids concerned with ideological products or cultural construct which are formations of any era" (Greenblatt 34). New historicism insists that ideology manifests itself in literary productions and discourse. They test themselves in the interpretive construction which the member of a society or culture apply to their experiences.

The New historicist recognizes that this is not a simple answer that can be teased out by studying the text. This work must be judged in context. Cultural history can be revealed by studying the work. Studying history shows more about the text. Studying history the text yields greater facts about history. The new historicist also acknowledges that his examination of literature is damaged by its own culture and environment. New historicism stresses the impermanence of literary criticism lies in the belief of our times in the same way that literature reflects and is reflected by its historical context. Roy reveals as:

All the time of Green hunt, Party gave a call for recruitment to PLGA- People's Liberation Guerrilla Army. At the time I and two went into Baster forest for arms training. I worked there for more than six years. Inside

sometimes I am called Comrade Masse. It means Black Girl. I like this name different names also other names. Although I am in PLGA, since I am an educated woman, Party also keeps me for outside work. Sometime I have to go to Warangal, Bhadrachalam or Khamman. (421-422)

However, being a social activist she witness the political ups and down in Indian politics how people got affected by political leaders in 1990. The pathetic condition of downtrodden people and were tortured by some politicians because of that they joined PLGA to get rid of that pain. The class-based society and low earning also made some people join the militants there they find freedom in the sense that they can do what they like to do. She explained how she was inspired to write fiction and making the connection between history and fiction. She tries to fictionalize the real and political happening by providing the fictional characters in the novel. She tries to show the gross injustice India spreading rapidly after the Gujarat riot in 2002, Kashmir insurgency in 1990.

Moreover, history for new historicism is not the collection of the facts and actual events only but it is the story of both facts as well as fiction written from the perspectives of power holders. The novel is written through the perspectives of novelist Roy who witness Indian politics during that time. Being a reader we do not know about the facts of Indian political history and also what the author has intended meaning while writing the text. However, Roy presented the last two-four decades scenario, political and national scene got dominated by power politician. The novel also encapsulates the shot of Indira Gandhi by her body gourd who was Muslim. This shows the frustration against the ruling parties and the quest for identity too. The fall of aristocratic tyranny leads to the freedom of India. With her passing away the country has become so well.

Greenblatt recognizes how language both keeps readers at the distance from the past. He also draws the reader to it in a quest for understanding. Greenblatt points to in his raising of questions about the assumption of the text but doesn't develop. He says that he is "committed to project of making strange what has become familiar" (8). The only thing is in an imaginative response. Formally readers are to be fine and figure out the fine meaning of what the author wanted to convey according to the history and contemporary situation in the text. The fact can only be revealed by readers. New historicism aims to the historicism of the text Greenblatt further says:

New historicism is a term applied to a trend in American academic literary text and at the same time (in contrast with older historicism) the 'textual' nature of history. As a part of a wider reaction against purely formal or linguistic critical approaches. New historicist, led by Stephen Greenblatt, draws new connection between literary and non-literary texts, breaking down the familiar distinction between a text and its 'historical background' as conceived in established historical forms of criticism. (171)

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

The novel captures the political, social, cultural issues where different have different issues. The transition phase such as the emergency of India, Kashmir insurgency, Gujarat riot, Godhra train burn, which takes several life of people. Somehow their relatives are still in trauma by losing them. This shows the satire to the country that it's only looking for the high class and superior people and inferior are going down the drainage. The novel recounts the character Anjum, a transgender is

taken in a negative sense. A biological defect is taken outsider in any work. "Was it possible to live outside language? Naturally, this question did not address itself to her in words, or as a single lucid sentence. It addressed itself to her as a soundless, embryonic howl" (8). This question, whether it's possible to live outside the control of language, outside of the circumscribed categories, the binaries that don't for many of us, recurs throughout the book, growing louder and louder as the book explores the conflict in Kashmir.

In book, *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir* by Prem Nath Bazaz also presents a connected history of the freedom movement of the people in Kashmir from the dawn of civilization to our times. The book also analyses a long history of the Kashmiri movement in quest of right and justice. The nexus of the history and the present of Kashmiri is mentioned. Till today people are being the scapegoat of some elites and bureaucrats. Similarly, Roy has also picked up the same issue of the Kashmiri riots where not only terrorists are massacred but commoners are also brutally tortured and massacred.

History can also be revealed through literary text which shows the socio-cultural, historical, and linguistic, in a wider form. The historical background is led by the literary and non-literary text. The title depicts not only sarcasm of contemporary politics but it provides a message of past society and some of the party such as Rastriya Swam Sewak Sangh (RSS) is still in trend of making discrimination, inequality and so on. It shows the intimacy with the time of emergency (1975-1977). It also portrays how people are colonized by their country people.

In 1976, at the height Emergency declared by Indira Gandhi that lasted twenty-one months. her spoiled younger son, Sanjai Gandhi was the head of Youth Congress (the youth wing of the ruling party) and was more or less

running the country, treating it as though it was his plaything. Civil Rights had been suspended, newspapers were censored and in the name of population control, thousands of men (mostly Muslim) were herded into the camps and forcefully sterilized. A new law- the Maintenance of Internal Security Act- allowed the government to arrest anybody for a while. The prison was full a small coterie of Sanjai Gandhi's acolytes had been unleashed on the general population to carry out, his fiat. (34)

This shows the grief and sorrow of people. A straight commentary is given by the author intruding into the next, memory classified by authorial intervention becomes a mode of historicizing fiction. The period of Emergency is outlined. Roy a member of social activists, has got the enormous opportunity to observe the Indian socio-political scenario. Roy presented the corrupted political leaders and the inability of the people to know what the good for them. She also presented the colonial relationship between violent and non-violent colonizers. The harsh reality is people are being colonized by insiders, they have feelings of superiority and inferiority. In Perry Anderson book, *The Indian Ideology* has observed that "the Indian Ideology, a nationalist discourse in a time when there is no longer a national liberation struggle against an external power, and oppression where it exists has become internal, obscure against an external power, or avoids such issues". (3) The real characteristics of India are the violence that structures the country's history, politics, and gender issues. She points out a clear picture of the problems behind the Hindus and Muslims that prevails in India during non-violence as the main source for many contemporary Indian writers like Arundhati Roy. Roy points out the picture of non-violence because she walks in the path of non-violence. Roy repeated her stance by questioning the 'Mahatma' status of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi whom she called a complex man and political genius but a racist



at the core. She cited the student unrest in Ghana that ended with the removal of the statue of Gandhi from a university campus and his association with the elite class in Durban. However, people revolt against his racist behavior. In Inder Malhotra who wrote the biography of Indira Gandhi reveals as:

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

Indeed Roy points out the living house of Anjum, The Jantar Mantar at Old Delhi but when the riots began and several people were killed and abandoned she frequently shifted to Gujarat which was also not a suitable place for living because that place was also full of aristocratic ruling and Muslim and Hindu began the religious riot, where she had to lose her friend and got several tortures. Though the place was good but it was worse for living because it has taken the lives of several peoples.

Same like, in book *India after Gandhi* by Ramchandra Guha explains India independence in 1947 from the British. Indira Gandhi daughter of Jawahar Lal Nehru holds the ministry post for twelve years. She was a tyranny ruling prime minister who imposed the emergency and abducted the rights of commoners. Guha insisted the time 1975 -1977 as the emergency phase in India by Indira Gandhi where a lot of evil practices take place. Even today people don't want to remember the worst period which abandons them from their houses. Many more people were caught for the sterilization campaign which was led by Sanjai Gandhi. Especially Muslims were

dragged into vans and were kept into prison. Especially Muslims were humiliated and were given a lot of troubles and as a result, Indira Gandhi was shot by her bodyguards (religious minorities) in 1984. By which India continues to be increasing global power. Guha clearly shows the revolution of the downtrodden people. He shows the better chance of prosperous society among middle common and minorities, numbers of middle-class people began to climb the tower of development. Inder Malhotra in his book *Indira Gandhi A Personal and Political Biography* states about Indira Gandhi as "I have been acutely aware that a personal and political biography of Indira is also a history of India at least for the two decades during which she dominated the Indian scene, whether she was in power or out of it" (4). Inder Malhotra clearly shows the aristocratic behavior of Indira Gandhi whether she remains in power or not but she destroys the ethics of commoners.

Roy insists in the novel about the terrible, pathetic situation of Musa Yewsi whose wife Arifa, daughter Miss Jebben first got shot in the insurgency period of 1990 in Kashmir. As new historicism blends history and fiction and the reality is the outcome of the text. Roy reveals:

The soldiers came out of the bunker, took the position, and fired their light machine guns straight into the unarmed crowd that was wedged into the narrow street they shot to kill. Even after people turned to flee, the bullets pursued them, lodging themselves in receding backs and heads and legs. Some frightened soldiers turned their weapons on those watching from windows and balconies and emptied their magazines into peoples and railings, walls and windowpanes. Into Miss Jebben and her mother Arifa. (324)

Roy insists the heart touching figure in her novel where soldiers have cross fired at anyone's house in a narrow street. Firing a bullet takes the life of so many innocents.

Soldiers even turned their weapons towards windows and balconies and emptied their magazines into people's bodies.

Musa Yewsi, a student of architecture badly needs help from S. Tillottama, militant in Kashmir, and both of them were a friend. She was also hated by her Syrian Christian mother, they need the freedom, Azadi, not Azadi but also dignity. "More than Azadi, now it's a fight for dignity. And the only way we can hold on our dignity is to fight back" (170). This shows insiders make people terrorists, make them outsiders. All the actions led by the government to make them militant.

New historicism focuses primarily on the views of discourse. Discourse is the social language created by particular cultural conditions. Foucault concerns discourse in terms of knowledge. Discourse cannot adequately explain the culture of social power, rather discourse is formed for getting different sorts of power and is imposed in society. Michel Foucault adds more about discourse "to maintain dominance of power must circulate in numerous discourses namely religion" (301). Foucault has been always interested in the mechanism of society, human "thought and ideas, concepts, experiences, discourse formed in any society or culture. He also focuses that divergent interests get intersected with each other in different issues like power, knowledge, and truth" (120). His ideas are not only on mere power but it is the manifestation and different technique that produces truth to lead an individual to subjection. Concepts of Michel Foucault writes:

Resistance is more effective when it is directed at technique at power rather than at power in general. It is a technique that allowed for the exercise of power and production of knowledge; resistance consists in their modern configurations requires convincing of the social body as the multiplicity of force relation. (86)

Foucault conveys that the power is intelligible and susceptible to analysis down to its smallest details. Several things can be mobilized by political advantages. But importantly oppressive forces of domination do not hold "the monopoly in the capacity to invent tactics. Foucault questions the historical condition for the emergence of truth" (77). For this, he illustrated the historicity of different disciplines and concepts related to power relations politics. Foucault proposed a theory of power, discourse, and truth which means only those have discourse who have power and it says the truth about themselves. As in Perry Anderson's book *The Indian Ideology*, "the elite believe what they want to believe, as always everybody believed, what they wanted to believe" (61). This shows powerful hold the ecstasy of power and only their history should be reviled not others.

The writer clearly paints the picture of the whole cruel towards people by some of the bureaucrats and by politicians as Roy mentioned in her writing:

The killing went on for weeks and was not confined to cities alone. The mobs were armed with swords and tridents and wore saffron headbands. They had cadastral lists of Muslim homes, business and shops. They had stockpiles of gas cylinders (which seemed to explain the gas shortage of the previous few weeks). When people who had been injured were taken to hospital, mobs attacked the hospitals. The police would not register murder cases. They said, quite reasonably, that they needed to see the corpses. The catch was that the police were often part of mobs, and once the mobs had finished their business, the corpses no longer resembled corpses. (45)

In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Roy has raised concerns regarding humanity suffering, social stratification, and classism. In the novel, she voices the rights of "have-nots", the exploitation of lower classes by the capitalist system. She engages a

political discourse in her novel and highlights the atrocities of the Indian Army in Indian held Jammu and Kashmir. Hindutva, the ideology of Hindu hegemony especially in terms of religious radicalism, which is also called "Hinduness", has risen to an alarming degree in the previous few decades' especially extreme right-wing government in India which is also highlighted through the novel. The hegemony of politics, religion, and caste is there in the novel. The loss of humanity in some politicians and are always ready to torture people by engaging with bureaucrats.

In the novel, Musa Yewsi, needs help from S. Tillotama to free from grief. S. Tillotama made an affair with Musa to take her revenge because she was a sufferer of tribal. "He held her hand and kissed her silver ring" (371). As Michel Foucault disclose the power, discourse, and truth. Roy portrays the Kashmir issues of 1990, where one has a thirst for blood.

The genocide of ethnic cleansing they referred to was the mass exodus of Kashmir Pandits from Kashmir valley when the freedom struggle had turned militant in the 1990s and some Muslim militants had turned on the tiny Hindu population. Several hundred Hindus had been massacred in macabre ways and how the government announced that it could not ensure their safety. (116)

Indeed Muslims of Kashmir got frustrated with the government because soldiers fired at anyone's house and claims terrorism to any civilians especially Muslims which resulted in the loss of several lives and houses. The genocide of Kashmiri Pandits began in 1990. They do not have their fixed destination for their housing and survival too. Likewise, in the novel *The Case of Freedom* by Arundhati Roy describes what Kashmiri wants true democracy and questions the disregard of the hardship faced by the Kashmiri and evasiveness of Indian Intellectuals on this issue. Kashmir the valley was once considered a paradise changed into a disputed region. For Kashmiri

Freedom means Kashmir. Roy elucidates what Freedom means to Kashmir while questioning India's liberal democracy. She criticizes journalists, politicians for raising their voice against the human abuses against Kashmir people by Indian security forces. By Roy Kashmir was never an integral part of India, Roy opens as:

The immense human suffering of Kashmir occupies such an imperceptible place in our moral imagination? After all the Kashmir demanding release from the degradations of military rule couldn't be louder or clearer. India has contained the insurgency of 1989, which it provoked with rigged election and massacres of protestors. The hundreds of thousands of demonstrators who periodically fill the streets of Kashmir's cities today are overwhelmingly young, many in their teens, and armed with nothing more lethal than stones.

(2)

Different political leaders and bureaucrats were too cruel that they made the house vacant "moreover 700000 Indian soldiers, the valleys four million Muslims are exposed to extrajudicial, exception, rape, and torture, with such barbaric variations lives electric wires inserted into penises" (1). Due to the over torturing of civilians, the result has become so dangerous that nowadays people hold arm and ammunition and are being trained. Every teen holds the stone in their hands to fight with the government.

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

hierarchical narratives of the marginalized group such as women, poor, working-class people, and so on. The historical narratives of some groups are becoming more and more numerous such as those of women and people of color.

Saddam, Revathy recognizes the problem of the caste system, the novel explores the caste problem through time. Though the novel is written in 2017, it holds the essence of the caste which is reflected using time, the problem of the caste is still an issue in India – Roy deeply involved in seek of freedom, justice against the political agendas.

Michel Foucault takes man and women simply as the effects of prevailing social practices, codes, and disciplines. Nothing can guide people in the collective activity they are driven by views regarding how the thought of Foucault weakness the power of revolution.

It is precisely the idea of society as a system, a set of institutions that must give way to something. The power system is to abolish both real and scientific categories. Man is a free human subject is a subject of a certain sort, naturally good, warmly sociable, kind, and loving. Men and women are social creations, the products of codes and disciplines. (61)

Simply, man and woman are the product of the society. They give a new sort to the new connections which are subversive Foucault has not explained about the new vision and ideas arise against that system.

Arundhati Roy is a feminist writer, she clearly paints a sorrow and painful picture of female in the novel, a rape victim Revathy a low-caste girl. The rape of Revathy symbolizes the violence against women. Mainly different characters Revathy, S.Tilottama, Saddam Hussain, Musa have joined the Naxalite, which is the worse condition of the country which led the terrorism inside the country. Revathy

believes to bring justice, to the poor, and eradicate political, social, economic inequality. Roy presents in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* the sarcasm of the then society. Revathy a victim of rape presents the whole chaotic condition of women to whole over the country. She wanted to be free as other girls and society to be liberal. Revathy figures out the situation in her fort but she makes assure of freedom. She joined the Maos to get the freedom she reveals as the party is everything for her. "My party is my mother and father, Many times it does many wrong things. Kills wrong people. Women join because they are revolutionaries but because they cannot bear their sufferings at home" (425). She describes the cruel, pathetic situation of the people in Kashmir, how the other become the sufferer of the revolution. The revolution led by soldiers turned into the massacre of several peoples.

In conclusion, this study has examined fictionalization of Indian history in Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* from the perspective of new historicism. This study claims that this novel critiques the Indian politics during the 1980s and indirectly criticizes the political leaders from 1980-2017 in order to give voice to the downtrodden people. They were badly treated by some political leaders in the name of caste, gender, religion which is ridiculous. The writer is in favor of Muslim because Hiindutwa is all over country and also she is in favor of marginalized, downtrodden people as she is willing to provide voice to the voiceless people. Moreover, her writing is convincing though she has exaggerated some issues but she seems to have felt as them as her own problems. In this manner, this study sheds light on the official history of India, which has excluded the marginalized communities.



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