



Views of Arundhati Roy on Political, Genre, and Canonical Writers

Reena Rajput^{1*}, Dr. K M Tripathi²

1. Research Scholar, LNCT, Bhopal, M.P., India

rajputreena780@gmail.com,

2. Supervisor, LNCT, Bhopal, M.P., India

Abstract: This research paper examines the non-fictional works of Arundhati Roy through the lens of the notion of 'justice'. Justice is a crucial concept in every culture or political system. The past demonstrates that justice transcends language and cultural divides. Democracy encompasses the concept of justice thoroughly and inclusively, providing equal opportunity for all individuals in a community. The notion of democracy is included by the idea of justice. This project argues that the nonfictional works of Arundhati Roy may be analysed as discourse of justice, given their significant contribution to broader discussions on justice.

Keywords: Democracy, Political, canonical writers, freedom, Humanity

----- X -----

INTRODUCTION

Arundhati Roy has authored several political articles to provide opportunities for justice, rights, and freedom for people worldwide. In literature, the works aim to emphasise a portion of her battle for the disadvantaged class worldwide. Arundhati Roy illustrates the contradictory destinies of two social strata in India. She believes that the population of India is divided into two groups, one large and one little, travelling in separate directions in convoys of trucks. The little group of vehicles arrives at its shining goal at the summit. The second convoy dissolves into the darkness and vanishes. The people of India are fragmented, not physically but emotionally and intellectually. She opposes this kind of duality in society. Gandhi was a highly intelligent, shrewd, and creative politician of the modern era. His actions exemplified the qualities of great authors. Skilled authors enhance the scope of the human imagination. Gandhi broadened political creativity. The politicians and political parties in power do not promote democracy. Each political party has used religious and national sentiments for its electoral benefit. This has undermined the secular and national unity of India. She believes it is pointless to continue criticising politicians and expecting them to uphold a moral standard they are unable to meet. In her article "Democracy," she states, "If they have disappointed us, it is only because we have permitted them to do so." Civil society may have failed its leaders as much as leaders have failed civil society. The Algebra of Infinite Justice Page 102

Recently, author Arundhati Roy was suddenly put on trial for "contempt of court," which may lead to incarceration. A viral text message said that she was involved in a plan by Christian missionaries to harm Vemula and destabilise India. Dismissing this collection of paranoid gibberish was challenging. The stories in India's mainstream media, which were indifferent or even hostile, may have led one to believe that Roy needed to respond to allegations.

Roy's "offence" to the court was an essay published in May last year that highlighted the imprisonment of a seriously crippled professor named Saibaba, a lecturer in English at Delhi University. Saibaba had been taken by the police and detained for his "anti-national activities." Roy said that if Modi's allies, who were convicted of several murders, could be released on bond, then a wheelchair user with declining health should also be eligible for parole.

Seven months later, a judge in Nagpur, India, refused bail to Roy, criticising her as "nasty", "surly", "rude", and "boorish". The judge accused her article of being part of a malicious "gameplan" to secure bail for Saibaba, despite there being no bail petition for him at the time of publication and no criticism of any court decision or judge while advocating for proper legal procedures. He accused Roy of criticising India by utilising the various accolades she is claimed to have earned. Roy, who has been writing on her second book recently, appears in his scathing criticism as a fierce opponent of those advocating for the prohibition of illegal and terrorist activities in the nation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ulriksen, Marianne et.al. (2022) This piece is dedicated to the memory of Professor Tessa Hochfeld and appears in a special edition focusing on issues of social and gender justice. We argue in this article that Hochfeld placed herself within the social justice research tradition, but that she was unsatisfied with utopian normative ideas and instead saw the value of theory only in its capacity to offer solutions to and call attention to gaps in states' efforts to create just societies. Through her methodological approach and empirical studies, Hochfeld contributed to the development of various features of theory within social justice-oriented research aimed at positive change. Social justice theory has these qualities: it is useful, liberating, unfinished, sensitive to contradiction, and relational. As a conclusion, we synthesize these features and analyze their significance for the epistemology of social justice research, the structure of the state, and the nature of social policy solutions.

Ruano Chamorro et.al. (2021) Achieving social and ecological objectives depends on fair involvement in conservation decision making. However, there is still a lack of consensus on what makes for fair conservation decision-making. We establish 11 procedural justice criteria, many of which have been missed in conservation literature, by integrating important material from environmental justice, psychology of justice, and participatory conservation. To facilitate the identification of the justice component in conservation decision-making, we construct a framework that categorizes the criteria into three essential areas (Process characteristics, Agency of participants, Interpersonal treatment). Seven policy options for improving procedural justice are discussed (e.g., scalar and contextual fit, conflict resolution, facilitation). However, clarifying and accounting for multiple and situated notions of procedural justice, as well as resolving other significant problems, are necessary to advance fair decision-making using this paradigm. Among the strategies we propose for overcoming these obstacles is fostering knowledge coproduction and self-reflexivity.

Nicolai, Susanne et.al. (2022) Justice is inextricably tied to a socio-ecological transition as the repercussions of climate change led to increased social inequity. In this research, we inquire into whether or if a concern for justice inspires pro-environmental intention (PEI) and behavior (PEB), and if so, to what degree emotions and moral disengagement govern this process. Two quota-sampling surveys (Study 1: N =

174, Study 2: N = 880) were undertaken for this purpose. A greater sense of unfairness as a perpetrator, a recipient, or an observer was linked in both investigations via multiple regression analyses to a higher PEI. But moral apathy was the greatest indicator of PEB and PEI. Feelings of guilt and genuine pride were proven to be emotional predictors of PEI. Furthermore, mediation studies revealed that guilt mediates the relationship between sensitivity and PEI for both the offender and the recipient. In light of these findings, it is likely that people from industrialized nations, who are mostly responsible for climate change, feel guilty and have a higher PEI whether seeing global climate injustice from the standpoint of a beneficiary or perpetrator. This technique shows promise for making the issue of global injustice more apparent to people whose actions contribute to climate change, in the hopes that they would alter their actions. Barriers to pro-environmental conduct, including moral disengagement and victim sensitivity, are examined.

Pandey, Nitya et.al. (2022) Sometimes it's simple to grasp the idea of justice, and other times it's not. Justice for one person does not have to be the same for everyone else in a civilized community. Justice has been the subject of several attempts at definition and even more ideas advanced by thinkers over the ages. What constitutes fairness in one community may not be the same for those live in another. This article investigates the many faces of justice and offers a critical analysis of Rawls' and Nozick's respective views of justice.

Dr. Hari Prasad Mishra (2020) The comparative method is central to the empirical study of comparative politics, a subfield of political science. In other words, the field of comparative politics examines how different nations handle their internal politics, institutional frameworks, and armed wars. It often employs cross-national and historical comparisons to highlight fundamental continuities and discontinuities. According to Arend Lijphart, the study of comparative politics is methodological rather than substantive, since it is concerned with "the how but does not identify the what of the analysis."

POLITICAL, GENRE, AND CANONICAL WRITERS

The reception of Arundhati Roy nonfictional corpus is discussed in this chapter in the context of discussions on canon and genre theory. Here, "reception" refers to cumulative, long-term, and that which shapes a literary history or canon rather than the one that occurs right away following the publication of each work. The preceding sections have primarily and clearly focused on the political notions of justice and democracy that are inherent in Roy nonfictional work. It has now been suggested that writers' openly and frank political and ethical aspirations could very well be included in the canon of literature. This has also been tried by bringing up these writers' works in discussions concerning genre theory and, to a lesser extent, canon. My claim is that politically explicit work may legitimately be categorized as literary simply because it is either written by a literary writer in the conventional style, which is generally regarded by readers as beautiful, well-wrought, and creative, or because the language used is intended for a general audience. This implies that a work, regardless of the subject matter covered, may be considered literary if it can be said to have eschewed academic jargon and was written with the broad reader in mind. W. celebrated the case studies of neurologist Oliver Sacks, notably *Awakenings*, to illustrate that substance is less of a limitation than form. H. Auden and Frank Kermode; in fact, the latter considers them to be superior to the standard of current "practitioners of belles letters" (Doidge).

As it is still unanswered "why Lamb, Macaulay, and Mill are literature but not, generally speaking,

Bentham, Marx, and Darwin," the question of precisely what constitutes literature has actually proven to be notoriously difficult to define (Eagleton, *Literary* 8). One may argue that language is what keeps it from neatly slipping into other writing genres and finally becoming literature. It follows that the adjective "literary" is more likely to be an attribute that language earns than something it conveys about a subject. However, a discipline's past both shapes and limits its subject matter and content.

Above all, literature typically focuses on topics that are clearly and immediately of human interest. Certain topics have emerged from extended research in a specific, typically limited field; their direct application to humans is not immediately apparent. On the other hand, literature might have the greatest and most diverse audience in the human race. The fact that not all poetry or fiction is regarded as literary contributes to the difficulty in defining literary boundaries. Juvenilia and pulp literature are two examples of this that easily spring to mind. It should be noted that no attempt has ever been made to compile a list of subjects or contents from different literary genres.

IN PURSUIT OF DETERMINING THE WRITER'S PLACE IN SOCIETY

In their non-fiction works, Arundhati Roy and Pankaj Mishra address several important issues, including how the concepts of justice apply to the general public, who are typically relegated to a statistical and abstract existence. However, while being unconventional in both genre and exposition, their writing offers complex responses to the question of what a writer's place in society is. This is a very ancient question that brings to mind ideas like a writer's devotion and the concept of art for art's sake.

Theodore Adorno writes that the purported autonomy and freedom of the writer mutually undermine the other theoretical stance, partially in response to Jean Paul Sartre's view that a prose writer must be politically involved:

Every one of the two options contradicts the other. Since committed art must be distanced from reality to be considered art, this gap is eliminated. "Art for art's sake" is an attempt to make art standalone from reality, but it rejects this attempt by asserting an unbreakable bond with reality. The tension that has existed in art throughout history is resolved between these two poles. Since the world of art is a creation of reality, it is actually difficult to separate the attempts made by artists to create illusions of an alternate reality from the reality they live in. How well the two worlds relate to and correspond with one another is what gives art its durability and attractiveness. If the imagined realm of art could let go of the real world would be false. There is a force that keeps art on a thin leash. In contrast, art either reminds or reveals reality to itself or inspires it to change in order to realise a greater vision. However, Edmund Wilson's *The Shores of Light* provides a very convincing historical configuration and justification of what constitutes the aesthetic principle or autonomy of art for art's sake.

ARUNDHATI ROY ON THE SOCIAL FUNCTION OF WRITERS

The talk Roy gave on February 15, 2001, at Hampshire College in Amherst, USA, with the interesting title "The Ladies Have Feelings, So...". Should We Let the Professionals Handle It? Prior to this, Roy had written three more significant articles, *The God of Small Things*, about nuclear weapons, large dams, and a dubious type of corporate globalization in the context of power projects. This article addresses the

discussions surrounding a well-known literary writer's ventures into highly political and economic matters in its opening chapters and provides an explanation for her seeming shift from writing fiction to non-fiction and from literary to political topics. Even though she provides subjective justifications for her points, the essence and breadth of her arguments go beyond her preferences or clarifications.

Speaking to a group of people in the American college, Roy discussed the unique complexity of India, including its size, diversity, and issues like extreme poverty and illiteracy as well as corruption, which is the main cause of these difficulties. It is a nation that is both ultra-modern and mediaeval at the same time. Furthermore, in a nation where so many people lack the ability to read and write, it is a "dubious honour" to be a well-known writer. Since they obtain their information by observations (and perhaps laborious investigation), the writers are probably perceptive by nature. Of course, there are books, travel, and personal or known life histories; nevertheless, to shape these materials and produce anything that is, or almost is, art, all of them require frequent exposure to the outside world and a subsequent period of seclusion. In India, daily encounters with predators are commonplace, and the typical reactions are diverse. It is possible to turn a blind eye to such truths out of callousness or powerlessness.

It is through their narratives that writers attempt to make sense of the world around them, with all of its beauty and horror. The comforting belief that things are the way they are because it is predetermined is only available to those who are utterly naive or fatalistically fanatical. Most people, who are neither fatalists nor naive, frequently withdraw into a limited individualism and try to use whatever resources they have to meet the demands of an almost Darwinist social space. Writers who may choose to wrestle with this kind of difference in life, or not, can also choose to do so. However, Roy refers to this retreat as either a "fine art" or a "form of insular, inward-looking insanity" or "both." Roy's perspectives on writing in India, or anywhere else, stem from a very political outlook that can be linked to Roy as a person, a writer, or a citizen. In any case, it is challenging to ignore the background and concentrate on the writing's craft and creativity. Roy fully supports the right—or rather, feels that it is imperative—for writers to have complete control over what they produce. Roy serves as an example of how a writer could get sucked into writing when a war is raging by "the mating rituals of a purple sunbird, or the secret life of captive goldfish, or an old aunt's descent into madness." She seems to realise that aesthetics has no bearing on beauty because the subjects of these small asides from the wider conflict have life of their own.

Her personal situation, however, is the exact opposite; rather, she discovered a man-made, avoidable catastrophe among the "putative peace" and discovered a covert war. Roy believes that morality of seeing is linked to morality of speaking up or even of being silent since, once something as evil as a war is witnessed, both action and inaction are full of political intrigue. She is correct when she says that throughout human history, writers and artists have maybe never felt this joyful and liberated. Every attempt to restrict this freedom is vehemently opposed. Roy claims that writers and artists "have become radiant jewels in the crown of modern civilization" and deems this state "wonderful." Why art and artists arouse both individual and collective veneration maybe one's question. The fact that they address both the requirements of the individual and the group for self-awareness may be one explanation. They aim to address issues related to a society's spiritual demands, such as our identity and how we came to be, interpersonal relationships, and our prevailing or hidden interests. We give writers and artists free reign because these are significant issues. Roy seems to be saying that they are granted that freedom in the

process of transforming their resources to provide us with that desired and essential self-awareness.

CONCLUSION

The goal is to demonstrate how Mishra distinguishes between various forms of justice by examining specific narratives as well as literary and historical sources that shed light on these Asian nations' darker sides. In some of Roy and Mishra's works, the concept of democracy—which is inextricably linked to moral self-rule and justice—has also been discussed and is significant. The second chapter of this thesis, "Literature, Democratic Practices, and Delivery of Justice," has addressed this facet of justice as it manifests in democracies. The works by Roy that are discussed here highlight views that are casteist and religious because they run counter to democracy's core values of equality and justice. Her writings on the media and the developmental paradigm in relation to indigenous peoples, or Adivasis, and how these issues explain the shortcomings of Indian democracy, have been thoroughly examined.

An analysis of Mishra's *Butter Chicken in Ludhiana* reveals how it is a representation of small-town India, which has not yet adapted its mindset to conform to democratic norms. Nepal, Tibet, China, and some of its neighbours likewise exhibit deeply ingrained hierarchies and power politics in place of a feeling of equality and human solidarity. Mishra's numerous works about these areas have been analysed from the standpoint of democracy and how urgently it is needed. Capitalism as an ideology sees an economy built on the principles of fair competition and level playing fields, which unlock human potential and contribute to both individual achievement and an increase in the total amount of wealth in society. Even while capitalism's foundations are far more reasonable, its effects are terrible, especially when it comes to the environment. In her works on capitalism, Roy argues that because capitalism is not what it seems to be, its workings are diametrically opposed because there is no genuine competition and a skewed playing field. This is the secret to comprehending the issue of excessive wealth concentrated in a small number of hands. In Roy's critique of capitalism, the murky and evil elements of the systems and procedures that have produced unethical inequality are exposed. Roy's nonfiction works, which are centred on India, ask questions, express dissatisfaction with the promises and shortcomings of the emerging democracy, and occasionally provide solutions. As per her comprehension, the concept of caste, both in theory and in practice, poses a moral and intellectual obstacle to the contemporary notion of democracy.

References

1. Ulriksen, Marianne & Plagerson, Sophie. (2022). Bringing Theory to Life in Social Justice Research. *southern african journal of social work and social development*. 34. 1-17. 10.25159/2415-5829/8648.
2. Ruano Chamorro, Cristina & Gurney, Georgina & Cinner, Joshua. (2021). Advancing procedural justice in conservation. *Conservation Letters*. 15. 10.1111/conl.12861.
3. Nicolai, Susanne & Franikowski, Philipp & Stoll-Kleemann, Susanne. (2022). Predicting Pro-environmental Intention and Behavior Based on Justice Sensitivity, Moral Disengagement, and Moral Emotions – Results of Two Quota-Sampling Surveys. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 13. 914366. 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.914366.

4. Pandey, Nitya & Jaiswal, Dr. (2022). A Comparative Study Of Theory Of Justice: In Reference To. 10.13140/RG.2.2.25117.18407.
5. Dr. Hari Prasad Mishra 2020 The Study of Comparative Politics Its Evolution and Features Author ISSN NO: 2394-2886 Volume 10, Issue 11, 2020
6. Abrams, M. H. "Essay." A Glossary of Literary Terms. 7th ed. Singapore: Thomson Heinle, 1999. 82-83. Print.
7. Adams, Hazard. Critical Theory since Plato. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College, 1992. PDF file.
8. Adorno, Theodor. "Commitment." Literature in the Modern World: Critical Essays and Documents. Ed. Dennis Walder. 2nd rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008. 103-13. Print.
9. Ali, Tariq. "Andropov Was Right." Rev. of Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan, by Rodric Braithwaite, and A Long Goodbye: The Soviet Withdrawal from Afghanistan, by Artemy Kalinovsky. London Review of Books 16 June 2011: 13-14. Web. 20 May 2013.
10. Allen, Francis A. "Beccaria, Cesare." Encyclopaedia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite. 2010 ed. DVD.
11. Levenson, Laurie L. "White-Collar Crime." Encyclopaedia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite. 2010 ed. DVD.
12. Mansfield, Harvey C. Tocqueville: A Very Short Introduction. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010. PDF file.
13. McLean, Ian, and Alistair McMillan, eds. Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics. 2nd ed. New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2003. Print.
14. McMillan, Alistair. "The Election Commission." The Oxford Companion to Politics in India. Ed. Niraja Gopal Jayal and Pratap Bhanu Mehta. New Delhi: Oxford, 2010. 98-116. Print.
15. Mee, Jon. "After Midnight: The Novel in the 1980s and 1990s." A Concise History of Indian Literature in English. Ed. Arvind Krishna Mehrotra. Ranikhet: Penmanent Black, 2008. 358-77. Print.