

Ghettoization of Transgenders in Indian Society: A Study of Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

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Abstract

Arundhati Roy is one of the prominent Indian Writers in English and is also a social activist. She is best known for her novels *The God of Small Things* (1997), which won her the Booker Prize for fiction in 1997, and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, published in 2017 (after 20 years). For hundreds of years, sexuality has been a major form of identity for human beings. Concepts like Ardhnarishwara in the Indian tradition refer to the unitary nature of being instead of modern dual identities of male and female. Slightly deviated position in terms of sexuality is not tolerated by the modern society. Arundhati Roy, in her novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, represents the same attitude of the people in the Indian society. Anjum Roy, a trans-woman, bears this insult throughout her life. She raises many uncomfortable questions in the course of the novel. She prefers to call herself a 'hijra' instead of a trans-woman. She enters 'Khwabgah', a place for people like her. Later on, she makes 'kabristan' her permanent residence and lives her rest of life there. Throughout the novel, she keeps on understanding, living, and problematizing her own 'hijra' identity. Her feminine instincts in a masculine body cause disturbance and uneasiness in the so called normal society. Her experience as a trans-woman is an important source to understand this phenomenon in a different way. So, in this light, this dissertation is a sincere effort to understand the link between human sexuality and identity by contextualizing it in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

Keywords: Sexuality, Identity, Arundhati Roy, Society, Trans-woman.

Introduction

This dissertation investigates the idea of transgenders' ghettoization in Indian society through the novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* by Arundhati Roy. The word *hijra* is derived from the Persian word *hiz* which means ineffective and incompetent. The alternative words for *hijra* are *hijada*, *hijara*, and it is pronounced as "heejra" or "neenda". The word *hijra* refers to third gender in Indian and some South Asian Countries. Transgender is the third gender which does not include man and woman. It refers to the people who move away from the gender they were assigned at birth, the people who cross over (trans.) the boundaries constructed by their culture to define and contain the gender. These people are not accepted equally in the Indian Society and they have to face the identity crisis in their whole life.

Mostly, in the Indian society, transgenders live separately in their own

Private spaces away from men and women. If any family residing in India give birth to a transgender, they give their child to the Community of Transgenders, or the Community of Transgenders take the child away with them in their own distinct world. They have very limited access to education, health, and other facilities provided by the government.

Arundhati Roy raises one of the important issues of Modern India where transgenders are ill-treated and there is no space for them in the living styles of normal human beings. She talks about the

equality and rights of transgender people. Her novel reflects the condition and situation of transgenders and their treatment in the patriarchal society. Anjum, a transgender, is the protagonist of her novel who goes through harrowing experiences before moving away to Khwabgah, a specially designated place for the people like her.

In "Social Exclusion of Transgender in the Civil Society", Sreoshi Sinha discussed,

"The term 'Transgender' is an umbrella term that includes transsexual, transvestite, intersex people and just about anybody else who doesn't confirm to the traditional model of sex/gender" (178). Nabutia Dutt also talks about transgender people's plight in the following words, "The most pathetic condition of eunuchs in the world is in India. All over the world their condition has improved a lot but in India they are still discriminated and are neglected of their civil rights" (qtd. In Sinha, 178). K. Vijayakumar writes down about Transgender Identities, "The present understanding of the third gender in India consist of overlapping of identities. This includes people identifying as intersex, hijra, and or transgender" (qtd. in Goel, "Transgender Identities" 4). In "What Does it Mean to be a Hijra Mother?", Inna Goel discusses, "Gauri Sawant, a self-identifying hijra, who plays on reel one of her real life role – that of a mother to her daughter" (3). Ngozi Adichie said:

"A transwoman" is a person born male and a person who before transitioning was treated as male by the world which means that they experienced the privileges that the world ,accords men. This does not dismiss the pain of gender confusion or the difficult complexities of how they felt living in bodies not their own. (qtd. in Goel, "Transgender Identities" 5)

In her novel *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* Arundhati Roy tries to highlight the pain and suffering faced by the transgender people through the character of Anjum, the protagonist. Due to the negative comments of the people in patriarchal society who considered themselves superior to the transgenders (hijras), Anjum decided to live with her community people at Khwabgah (The House of Dreams). But, later on, she found it uncomfortable and shifted to a graveyard called Jannat Guest House or Paradise where there was no hierarchy or discrimination. She also welcomed other Hijras, who were ill-treated by the people, to live with her at the Jannat Guest House.

Through the analysis of the story, this dissertation explores the idea associated with Transgenders. The story begins with the chapter "Where Do Old Birds Go to Die?" in which Arundhati Roy introduces the main protagonist Anjum, who lives in the graveyard which is located behind the government hospital for several months. As she was a transgender, it was expected from her by the patriarchal Indian society to live at some separate place. She had to face a lot of insult from people due to her different voice and gestures. She kept on bearing this like a tree for much time. But later on decided to move to the graveyard. Roy has aptly described her condition:

When she first moved in, she endured months of casual cruelty like a tree would – without flinching. She didn't turn to see which small boy had thrown a stone at her, didn't crane her neck to read the insults scratched into her bark. When people called her names – clown without a circus, queen without a palace – she let the hurt blow through her branches like a breeze and used the music of her rustling leaves as balm to ease the pain. (7)

At every level, the patriarchal society does not allow transgender people to become an integral part of it. Anjum somehow keeps herself engaging in one or the other activity. The blind imam Ziauddin visits her regularly. She reads newspaper to him. Even he is prejudiced towards the transgender people. He has some curiosities related to these people. He asks from Anjum, "Is it true that even the Hindus among you are buried, not cremated" (9). Ziauddin, an imam, is not immune to such biased views and considers transgenders as aliens. He further inquires, "Tell me, you people, when you die, where do they bury you? Who bathes the bodies? Who says the prayers" (9)? These are the hidden questions that are brought in light by novelist Arundhati Roy.

Anjum was the fourth child of her parents. Her mother wanted a baby boy

and she was very happy when Aftab was born. In the next morning when she became aware of Aftab's sex, her heart sunk. She decided to keep her baby's gender secret and started visiting the dargah of Hazrat Sarmad Shaheed in hope of some miracle. Aftab kept on getting his education normally till his specific qualities started emerging. He had a very good voice and was good at music. Ustad Hameed Khan tried to focus upon him but other students started tormenting him by one or the other name. At last, he had to leave his studies.

An interesting thing was that he was also capable to vibrate female voice/sound. When the secret was shared with Aftab's father by his mother, he was shocked and started worrying about this. Her mother wanted to

keep this thing as secret but as Aftab was growing up she had to talk about it with her husband (Mulaqat Ali). As a father, he decided to take an action against this situation and immediately took his child to the sexologist. Even after being a poor person, he decided to get Aftab's surgery and change his gender. A father's love could also be seen in the novel. Ultimately, being aware of the surgery, Aftab was now getting older and was observing the people of society from his house. Aftab was fascinated by a young lady residing in the same society who used to pass by the front of Aftab's house, dressed up in salwar kameej, including the dark lipstick and high heels. Aftab looked at the young lady and wished to be like her.

Aftab was fully aware of his intersex parts and willfully wanted the surgery to be a woman. He started liking the parts of girl. Another view or the positive thing could also be visualized from Aftab's body as his body was trapped within the female body according to the sexologist. But the interesting thing was that he had the choice of selecting his gender according to his own will. Either he could get the male body parts by washing out the female body parts from the body through the surgery or vice versa.

After sometime, Aftab comes to know of Khwabgah or the House of Dreams. Nimmu argues on the creation of Hijras and states that God has discriminated against them. Normal people (male and female) have conflicts with each other but transgenders fight within themselves – “The war is *inside* us. Indo-Pak is *inside* us. It will never settle down. It can't” (23). Aftab steals some of his parents' money and moves to Khwabgah. Meanwhile, Aftab becomes Anjum, to become Delhi's most famous hijra. His parents tried to stop him when he was leaving home. Finally at the Khwabgah, Anjum was able to live the way she always dreamt of.

Now she was able to fulfill her dream. Kulsoom Bi also encouraged Anjum to go through surgery ensuring that it is not against Islam. Finally, Anjum decided to have surgery from a doctor. After adopting the female body parts and removing her penis, Anjum felt better and Dr. Mukhtar also gave him pills that undepend her voice. Anjum was very happily living at Khwabgah but suddenly decided to leave that place after thirty years. Anjum loves Zainab a lot and feels the sense of motherhood. Zainab's loved animals. At bed time, Anjum also tells stories to Zainab. In this way, Anjum tried to give a meaning to her life.

Later on, as Zainab started growing older, Anjum sent her to Ustad Hameed, her old music teacher, for singing classes. She missed her schooling due to Malaria. Anjum had to visit the shrine of Hazrat Gharib Zakir. In an incident, Milan's son Mansoor found Anjum at men's refugee camp, dressed up in the clothes of men. He brought Anjum back to Khwabgah. When Anjum arrived back to Khwabgah, she hugged Zainab and resumed her female appearance with make-up. Anjum was very unhappy and felt bad when she came to know that Zainab has started saying 'Mummy' to Saeeda. Anjum teaches Zainab a 'Gayatri Mantra' that she learnt at Gujarat.

One day Anjum even gives Zainab a haircut and dresses her in boy's clothes. She says that it is safer to be in boy's clothes. But Ustad Kulsoom Bi does not like what Anjum has done with Zainab and calls an emergency meeting. She proudly speaks of the history of Khwabgah, in which most of the *hijras* played an important role in the Mughal battle at the historical Red fort. In this way, Kulsoom Bi continues to speak proudly about the legacy of *hijras* in India. *Hijras* have always enjoyed the special status in myths and history (51-53). Therefore, she reminds other girls that the Khwabgah is the place where 'Holy Souls', trapped in the wrong bodies, are liberated. She also reminds that people spread rumour about *hijras* that they pick up the young boys and castrate them.

Moreover, Anjum protests that Zainab is her child and decides to leave the Khwabgah with Zainab. At first, Anjum is influenced by people, but as time passes, she begins to truly consider leaving her home past thirty years. Anjum is disturbed by her experience at the refugee camp and wants to leave Khwabgah. Unfortunately, no one realizes her trauma. Saeeda take her to doctor. She doesn't mention her experience at the refugee camp, rather makes up the story that Anjum is crazy due to the environment at Khwabgah. Anjum was spared at the refugee camp because it was considered bad luck to kill a *hijra*.

In the following paragraph, many of Anjum's Guests are other Hijras who have fallen out or have been expelled from tightly "administered grid of Hijra Gharanas" (68). On the day of Eid, Anjum hires a popular butcher to perform the sacrifice. Anjum dresses as a Man to take the role of "Man of the House" (71). Anjum and Saddam had become good friends. Anjum wants to die but Saddam desires to kill the official that condemned his father to death. At midnight, in another corner of the city, a baby with "blue black" skin appears. He belongs to some lower caste. His state of affair tells that society as well as government ignore the plight of the poorest of the poor. Anjum says, "Her new masters wanted to hide her knobby, varicose veins under imported fishnet stocking, cram her withered tits into saucy padded bras and jam her aching feet into

pointed high-heeled shoes” (111). Meanwhile, though the poor of the City are being dislocated (not located else). Even the Supreme Court judge has declared that who can not afford to live in cities shouldn't live in Delhi and ordered the mass removal of the city's slums and surplus of people. But the poor of the City fight back, as they armed with sticks and rocks, to defend unauthorised settlements where they live. There is conflict between the poor and the Government which will cause the City to break under the tension in what is supposed to be the summer of its renewal. Still the poor people have been evicted (means they have to leave their cities).

Anjum, Saddam Hussain, Nimmo, Ishrat, and other *hijras* visit Indore where they join the protest to help the poor. As Nimmo has driven them all to the protest, in which Saddam thinks there may be some big scam but Anjum insists that they will learn something. Hammed has no interest in what is being discussed and young Ishrat spends the entire time taking selfies. Some film-maker was making a documentary. Anjum also registers her protest but she is shut down by someone with derogatory remarks about her sexuality. Every time, Anjum is cornered for her so called perverted sexuality by someone or the other. At last they are arrested by the police and released in the next morning.

Dr. Azad Bhartiya was the last person to see the Baby before she disappeared. He had been on hunger strike for twelve years and was very thin, "almost two dimensional" (125). While he is in protest, he wears a grimy sign around his neck on which he has written full name, home address, and current address - The Jantar Mantar, where he sits every day in protest. As it also lists his qualifications in which there are two Master degrees, Bachelor's History, and a pending PhD. Finally, there is long list of many things against which Azad Bhartiya is protesting – “US Capitalism, Indian and American State terrorism/ All Kinds of Nuclear Weapons and Crime, plus against Bad Education System/ Corruption/ Violence/ Environmental Degradation and All Other Evils” (126). Dr. Azad Bhartiya confesses that he is not technically a Doctor, as his PhD is pending, but he chooses to refer to himself with his title as anyway.

Now Dr. Azad Bhartiya is the person who saw the Baby last time before disappearance. Because the police rely on him for information about the Jantar Mantar, they Question him about the disappearance of the baby by slapping him around a little but not seriously, just from habit. Even the police have no suspect for kidnapping the baby but they set up with public announcement about her disappearance and register a kidnapping case but without much hope of the investigation going anywhere. They have already registered One thousand One hundred and forty six similar cases in the City that year for disappearing the Baby.

Moreover Saddam Hussain and Ishrat are on a horse back through the City, but Anjum sent them to follow an auto-rickshaw. On this journey, the two pass through the parts of Delhi they never seen. Then once pass over the flyover, they enter a part of the "city but less sure of itself". Even there are hospitals so full of sickness that their patients are spill onto the streets where they play "Indian roulette" (136). Finally, the rickshaw leads to Ishrat and Saddam to residential neighbourhood, and a young woman gets out the rickshaw, enters an apartment and turns on the light. She recognizes them, makes eye contact with Saddam who waves back.

In the chapter “Some Questions for Later”, questions arise for the baby who grows older. Will she remember the truth about her infancy? Her Childhood? Would she get Whiff of “Ripe Mahua” (139). And remember the forest where she was born? Would She remember the texture of the dry leaves on the Forest floor Or the hot-metal touch of the barrel of her mother's gun that had been held to her forehead with the safety catch off? Or is she destined never to know nor remember anything about her past?

In the following situation, another day arises in Delhi in which the city is shaken by simultaneous explosion that have gone off in bus stop, a café, and a shopping mall where five are dead and several injured. Biplab Dasgupta says these words:

The City is still stunned by the simultaneous explosion that tore through a bus stop, café and the basement parking lot of a small shopping plaza two days ago, leaving five dead and very many more severely injured. It will take our television news anchors a little longer than ordinary folks to recover from the shock. As for myself, blasts evoke a range of emotions in me, but sadly, shock is no longer one of them (143).

As television new caster are also in shock, but the first person narrator shows himself as blasts evoke range of emotions in him, but sadly shock is no longer one of them. The narrator finds himself in an old apartment in a nice neighbourhood whenever he has been sent home from the Foreign Service because his drinking habit has worsened, and he is supposed to check into rehab to deal with his health before returning to Kabul where he is stationed. Although now situation is dangerous in his office due to attacked twice when narrator longs to return. He is dedicated to Kabul's battle of wits.

As the neighbourhood where his apartment is situated was, new middle class families have emerged. Then the narrator observes that in spite of the construction and the smell of waste, compared to Kabul or anywhere else in Afghanistan or Pakistan where this foggy little back lane and is like a small corner of Paradise. When the narrator discover that the apartment he rented out on the second floor of building is empty, he goes downstairs. His first floor tenant wife invites him to have some tea. Even he observes with some dismay the cheap interior decoration to which she has subjected his property: watermelon pink painting on the walls cheap wood furniture. As the two sit down to have tea, the woman's maid – who the narrator imagines to be an indigenous woman from a poor region of the country, crawls beneath their feet to clean the floor. As they drink tea, the woman explains to the narrator what has happened with her up stair neighbour who seems to have left quite suddenly, even she shares vague story that involves Baby and police. In the following paragraph, narrator remembers his tenant - although tenant is "something of a euphemism" (149). He had romantic feelings for the tenant. The narrator first meets his tenant in 1984, when Indira Gandhi is assassinated by her Sikh bodyguard to encourage mob lynching of Sikhs all across the country. At the moment of such political unrest, the narrator and his tenant are involved in the production of a play called Norman and decide to perform it on the day of the movement. This play is directed by David Quatemaine, an Englishman, who has moved to Delhi from Leeds and the narrator also admires him. As in the play, Naga, one of the narrator's classmates, plays Norman, while the narrator plays the role of Norman's lover, Garson Hobart. Both he and as well Naga studied history at Delhi University and grew up together. Tilo is the lighting staff member of the play as she has been the student of architecture. From her English, the narrator guesses that she is from Kerala. He learns that her father is not in the picture, and her mother, originally from a high caste Syrian-Christian family in Kerala, got pregnant as a teenager. But both Naga and the narrator try to charm Tilo, but she has eyes only for a third member of their play Musa Yeswi. Both Tilo and Musa have studied architecture together and have been very close to each other. It was difficult whether they were siblings or lovers. Whereas Musa is a quiet.

Kashmiri young man, very dissimilar to Naga, who adores attention and seems able to change not only his personality, but his very appearance, to please those in whose company he finds himself. Musa, on the other hand, seems to want to draw attention away from himself, but has a quiet sort of strength. Once they graduate from architecture school, Tilo and Musa are drift apart. Musa returns to Kashmir and Tilo begins to work in an architecture firm. But Tilo and the narrator see each other, and one day, after visiting the shrine of a famous poet, the narrator goes to her house for the first time. But that night, the narrator, who at the time still lives in his parent's house, marvels at how different his own life is from Tilo's. He is a comfortable member of the upper-middle class surrounded by an attentive family, she is all alone, poor, seemingly without the foundations that are imperative in the narrator's own life. Whereas Musa has become involved in the Kashmiri resistance, Tilo, after her romance with him, marries Naga after Musa's death. But Naga knew that his Brahmin parents "would never accept her – the girl without a past, without a caste – into the family" (161). Even the narrator has chosen a much more acceptable path for himself. He married a Brahmin woman with whom he has two daughters. One of her daughters hopes to become a human rights lawyer. The narrator thinks it merely "teenage rebellion" (161) against her father, but later he comes to recognize that human rights law can be respectable and "even lucrative". Along with this Naga has advocated for a great number of leftist causes, most of which have nothing to do with each other. Then the narrator remembers how Naga, as a youth always had a fiery talent for rhetoric. Even he recalls how in elementary school, Naga made a powerful speech about the futility of religion. In the current political climate, as the saffron tide of Hindu Nationalism rises in our country like the Swastik once did in another, Naga would have been expelled or worse, for making such a speech. As the narrator himself is a twice-born Brahmin, that is why is accepted among his colleagues.

The narrator is stationed in Kashmir where Naga is working as a journalist. Kashmir has always been in limelight for conflicts of the Indian government with the local people and terrorists. Naga is a left-leaning journalist who covers the cases of human rights violation all over Kashmir. Where the narrator himself observes the violence in Kashmir but he blames the various factions of Islam in the religion for annihilating one another. Even he observes that it is to the Indian Government's advantage that "there are eight or nine versions of the 'True' Islam battling it out in Kashmir" (170). And Kashmiri businessmen help out by investing in the peace process which the narrator is quick to observe, is an entirely different business opportunity from peace itself. The major character Amrik has big news for Biplab that he has captured the big terrorist commander Gulerz. But Biplab is not impressed as military is encouraged to capture and torture *jihadis* or terrorists. But more interesting to Biplab, the major reveals that he has also captured a lady who is not Kashmiri. It is Tilo who is in interrogation center and has a message for Biplab. While Tilo is recovering from her time in the

interrogation center, the situation in Kashmir continues to worsen. Now the body count rises and Biplab advises her not to go back to the city from Governor's house that day. The whole city cries the slogan 'Azadi'. They cry while Biplab understands the word in their dialect loosely means freedom where he finds irony in the fact that no Kashmiri defines the word exactly the same way or associates it with the same ideological and geographic contours. So next day, once things are settled, Biplab drives to the hotel where Naga and Tilo are staying but discovers that they have already left. A few weeks later, he receives an invitation for wedding, but this is the last time Biplab sees Tilo until four years before the present moment, she sees her name in the paper under an advertisement for a tenant in a second floor apartment where she says that she needs space to work as a freelance illustrator, and soon moves in.

So, in this situation, Anjum introduces herself and Saddam Hussain and informs Biplab that they have come to collect Tilo's things for her. They gather baby toys and clothes from cupboards, and Anjum asks Biplab if he wants to give any message to Tilo. Now Biplab continues through Tilo's document. He finds an incomplete dictionary written by Tilo. It is called 'Kashmir English Alphabet' and lists twenty six letters of the Roman alphabet. All are associated with the words commonly used in Kashmir. For example, "A is for Azadi, America, Ammunition, F is for funeral, H is for HRV (Human rights violations), Half-widows and Half orphans, I is for interrogation, N is for NGO and NTR (Nothing to Report), Q is for Quran/ Questioning, and Z is for *zulm*" (208-10). In the same apartment some time before, Tilo was staying satisfied, observing the sleeping baby who was kidnapped. As in front of her are balloons and a day-old cake, surrounded by ants, on which "Happy Birthday Miss Jebeen" is written in icing. But Tilo is happy for she knows that baby is the beginning of something. Tilo writes:

I would like to write in of those sophisticated stories in which even though

nothing much happens there's lot to write about. That can't be done in Kashmir. It's

not sophisticated, what happens here. There's too much blood for good literature (214). When Tilo comes out of her marriage with Naga he is distraught and asks her the reason. But in Tilo's eyes, Naga is simply an old aristocrat who has inherited the snobby air of the Brahmin parents. But Naga wonders if the recent death of Tilo's mother has affected her decision to leave him. As Naga admits to himself that he married Tilo principally because he couldn't reach her, and wonders why she married him perhaps, he fears because at the time she needed a cover. Other character Ashfaq Mir orders tea and biscuits. While waiting for these to be served Naga leads a poster

We follow our own rules

on the wall on which it is written:

Ferocious we are

Lethal in any form

Tamer of tides

We play with storms

U guessed it right

We are

Men in Uniform (221).

Moreover, in a chatty mood, the commandant tells his audience how in his college days, after losing several family members in the struggle for Azadi or freedom, he had become a separatist Kashmiri. He has come to see the light. But he also thinks aloud wondering what will happen after Azadi. Whereas Naga realizes that Ashfaq Mil is offering a sort of Kashmiri deal, essentially exchanging an interview with Aijaz for Naga's journalistic silence over whatever happened to Tilo the night before. Before leaving the room, Ashfaq turns to Aijaz and introduces Naga as a journalist where he writes against us openly, the commandant explains but still

we respect and admire him and this is the meaning of democracy. Some day you will understand how beautiful it is! Even Ashfaq Mir soon renters the room, asking Naga to reconfirm facts from Aijaz before publication of the article. He is a terrorist after all the commandant says, that my terrorist brother. Still, when Tilo tells Naga that she is leaving him, he is shocked and after taking advice from a colleague, decides to beat her if unconvincingly Tilo is out of his life, Naga begins with a "string of gloomy affairs" with women closer to him in social status. But his mother's favourite, a member of minor royalty has nicknamed the Princess, and has milk white skin and glossy hair. Even Naga has never met Tilo's mother, Maryam Ipe, although he has heard of her. A Syrian Christian from South India, Maryam founded a very successful and innovative high school, focused on empowering young women to follow their dreams. Tilo had never been close with her mother. Naga was surprised when Tilo began to visit Maryam every day in the office when the old woman had fallen ill. After reading Naga's notes Tilo realizes that he still loves her and not able to be with anymore. As Tilo knows that no one in the neighbourhood knows the truth about her baby or suspect her from kidnapping. Dr. Azad Bhartiya suggests that she and the baby should visit the Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services, and gives Tilo Saddam Husain's contact number. Saddam left the same card when he followed her home from the first night she had the baby. Finally, Tilo comes across a notebook filled with her own writing. Even she remembers how, in these days just after she left Naga, she didn't even see Musa every time where she went. Rather, during her travel, she collects documentation of conflict, although with no particular specification. The amazing thing is that Tilo has titled her book "The Reader's Digest Book of English Grammar and Comprehension for Very Young Children" (284). In this book, there are series of mock test questions based on the horror of daily life in Kashmir. While reading the book to the Indian army and local militant groups, Tilo remembers her time with Musa outside of Kashmir. In the last box Tilo has to contain documents about major character Amrik Singh, which she and Musa had to compile together. After reading through the documents, Tilo loves to leave them because they are legal documents after all. She thinks and contains no incriminating evidence. Even she places Musa's recoveries; including his gun, knife, phones, passports, and other identifications documents in her freezer.

When the posse arrives to Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services, Anjum is still waiting. But Anjum has already set up a room for Tilo, although she was unsure of which kind of decoration a "real woman" from the "Duniya" (305) would want. Meanwhile, the baby is passed around from arm to arm, even she "embarks" on her brand new life in a place similar to and yet a world is apart from where over eighteen years ago, her younger ancestor as Miss Jebeen the First had ended hers.

Miss Jebeen has always insisted on being called 'Miss'. This culture boomed alongside with prevalence of weapons, grenades, spies, etc. Even she is buried in the Martyr's graveyard which has a sign at the entrance that reads "We Gave Our Todays for Your Tomorrows" (310). But she is buried right next to her mother, Begum Arifa Yeswi, who dies by the same bullet as her younger daughter, when it passes through Miss Jebeen's through Miss Jebeen's temple into her mother's heart. Later in the novel, for Kashmiris, the maintenance of the Martyr's graveyard is an act of resistance as these are the people who fought to free Kashmir. But some believe that here an 'empty duffed bag' not a corpse is buried. But it was founded by a 'real' martyr graveyard in Srinagar in filling up at alarming pace. Now is the day when Miss Jebeen and Arifa die, and they are sitting on the balcony outside their home watching the funeral procession of a local Professor who was active in the movement for Azadi but disagreed with the main radical new resistance groups. Miss Jebeen said:

On the occasion Miss Jebeen was by the biggest draw. The cameras closed in on her, whirring and clicking like a worried bear. From that harvest of photographs, one emerged a local classic. For years it was reproduced in papers and magazines and on the covers of human rights reports that no one ever read, with captions like Blood in the Snow, Vale of Tears and Will the Sorrow Never End? (310).

Meanwhile, Miss Jebeen's photographs taken at her funeral become widely popular in the world of documentation of suffering. Later, when Musa is arrested, he is in grief at Arifa's and Miss Jebeen's death. Even his father, Shaukat Yeswi, is one to announce with surprise that major character Amrik Singh wishes to talk Musa. Next, when Naga is in public hospital, Tilo is treated with other patients. Doctors believe that abortion is immoral but Tilo is ready to abort, to bear more pain. She falls asleep on a grave, wakes up and feels better, prepares herself to go home and face the rest of her life.

Later, the novel reaches back at Jannat Guest House and Funeral Services where Tilo works as a teacher for the poor children holding classes in the graveyard. She teaches Arithmetic, Drawing, Computer graphics, a bit of basic science, English, and Eccentricity. She doesn't go back to her old place since she moved into the Jannat Guest House Community with Miss Jebeen. And second, even though she has received Biplab's message through Anjum and Saddam Hussain, she feels like a family at the Jannat Guest House. When Ustad Hameed begins to give lessons of singing to the promising students, she also takes part in the classes. At

the Jannat Guest House, Anjum arranges for a swimming pool like Duniya. She says, "So all in all, with a People's Pool, a People's Zoo and a People's School, things were going well in the old graveyard. The same, however, could not be said of the Duniya" (400). She says that though there is no water, but the poor know how to appreciate the pool all the same time. At the same time, bad news comes from Gujarat Ka Lalla, the Hindu fundamentalist is India's new Prime Minister. Anjum feels terrified at this news and sees the worst consequences of it. Another situation arises when Miss Jebeen, the baby was born when she was raped by captors and seriously considered killing Miss Jebeen. Secondly, she decides to give the baby up at Jantar Mantar and sees many good people there. But she ends with two letters by sharing the plan to kill herself because she suffers and struggles more. While finishing letter Anjum decides that they should have a funeral recovery as well and wants to know the correct ritual for the funeral of a Communist.

Further, Biplab endorses that the Indian Government's violence in Kashmir is unjustifiable and wrong. No one knows about his opinion as it is pro-Kashmiri. It can create political storm and disturb the so-called peace again. Musa is released from the jail by Biplab and both of them meet in an apartment. They talk about politics and are convinced that there is no enmity between them. Biplab also informs Musa that he can take the documents from freezer any time. Now the situation changes after chatting for a while. Biplab asks Musa that he is dying to know about the documents related to Major Amrik Singh. Lastly, Musa is at Jannat Guest House for his third and final night. Tilo reads him a poem written by her which connotes the shattered story of Indian politics. At the end of the story, Anjum comes back at graveyard with Miss Udaya Jebeen. She is hopeful of a better life in the future. Roy summed up this hope in the following words:

By the time they got back, the lights well all out and everybody was asleep. Everybody that is, except for Guih Kyom the dung beetle. He was wide awake and on duty, lying on his back with his legs in the air to save the world in case the heavens fell. But even he knew that things would turn out all right in the end. They would, because they had to (438).

In this way, Anjum, the transgender's story comes to an end in a graveyard as a mother of an adopted child.

Conclusion

Naturally, Aftab had the under-developed sexual organs of both male and female. His hormonal changes were also unpredictable. He started liking female sex and also transformed in that way. His outer appearance was masculine. As a transgender, she had to remain in hide from the normal society. She had no place there. That is why she moved to Khwabgah to fulfill her dreams. In the same way, most of the transgender people in Indian society have no space or place to reside. They are forced to live in a separate place together. After Khwabgah, Anjum (Aftab) has to move to a graveyard. A graveyard was the only place normal people would not object. It depicts the deplorable condition of transgender people. Anjum also adopts a child to fulfill her dream of becoming a mother. All the common pleasures of life are denied to transgender people. Arundhati Roy has tried to depict all the pros and cons of a transgender person's life to sensitize its readers. She has successfully convey her message that the transgender people are also normal people with normal desires and weaknesses of a human being.

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