

## Guilt and Transgression-Inner Suffering of Transgenders in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

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### Abstract

The present study centers on the life of transgender which is full of distress experiences throughout her life in Arundhati Roy's novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. The novel explores many narratives that focus on the exploitation and pain experienced by transgender individuals, particularly with reference to Guilt and Transgression-Inner Suffering. In South Asian civilization, transgender individuals are classified as a distinct third gender. Specifically, in Indian society, transgender individuals are deprived of their rights and subjected to exploitation and the perpetuation of many stereotypical portrayals led the characters to guilt and transgression-inner suffering. Therefore, they are subjected to ridicule and mockery, with people using various derogatory terms to simplify and categorize them. An identical representation has been given and undertaken in the present study to examine the mistreatment and anguish experiences of transgender individuals in Arundhati Roy's novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Close textual analysis has been employed as a methodology to examine the primary text in order to investigate the exploitation and anguish experienced by transgender individuals leading to guilt and transgress-inner suffering. The researcher has determined that the suffering and exploitation of transgender individuals are the result of societal causes, as well as the strong presence of inner distress. The research indicates that transgender individuals are marginalized in Indian society, lacking both status and recognition. They are excluded from the traditional gender binary of male and female.

**Key Words:** Suffering, inner-suffering, guilt, Transgender, Arundhati Roy, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

### Introduction

Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) has been discussed with its engagement with the larger political history of India for last two decades and its representation of the Kashmir conflict. Adopting a slightly different tack, the research focuses on the novel's concern with presence and absence in history. Ustad Kulsoom Bi, a hijra (eunuch), gets excited by the brief mention of court eunuchs in a show about late Mughal history at New Delhi's historic Red Fort: "The moment passed in a heartbeat. But it did not matter. What mattered was that it *existed*. To be present in history, as nothing more than a chuckle, was a universe away

from being absent from it. . . . A chuckle . . . could become a foothold in the sheer wall of the future” (Amit R. Baishya: 2017).

Contrast this with the opening coda that describes the disappearance of sparrows and vultures from urban Indian spaces. The causes for the disappearance of the sparrows remain unspecified, but their absence leaves an aural void that the noisy “homecoming” of crows and bats cannot fill. The vultures die of “diclofenac poisoning” after feeding on the carcasses of cattle pumped with the chemical. Diclofenac turns cattle into better dairy machines but works like nerve-gas on . . . vultures.” The narrator says: “Not many noticed the passing of the friendly old birds. There was so much to look forward to.” In the epic march of discourses of development, the vultures lose their foothold in the wall of the future (Amit R. Baishya: 2017).

Contiguously, in the first quarter of the novel, the narrator focuses on people massed at the edges of the Jantar Mantar—a Mughal-era observatory in Delhi also doubling as a space for political protest. A majority are fixated by “the newest show in town”: the media spectacle of the anticorruption protests spearheaded by the social activist Anna Hazare in 2011. The narrator, however, shifts the gaze from the media spectacle to the largely invisible protests of populations clamoring for footholds in public discourse like the victims of the 1984 Bhopal gas disaster and the Association of the Mothers of the Disappeared from Kashmir. Outraged by the “audacity” of the Kashmiri women, no TV camera pointed at them, “not even by mistake” (Amit R. Baishya: 2017).

While the spectacle of the anticorruption protests gives its participants a sense of participating in epic History—“India’s second freedom struggle”—the novel’s spatial focus on margins and backdrops impels us to look *backward* at populations and nonhuman entities struggling for footholds in the future. No wonder then that the novel’s dedication is to “The Unconsoled.

It is almost impossible to see Roy clearly through the haze of adulation, condescension, outrage, and celebrity that has enveloped her since the publication of *The God of Small Things*, a gothic about an illicit intercaste romance in South India. She was feted as a symbol of an ascending India, paraded along with bomb makers and beauty queens. Much was made of the author’s looks—she was named one of *People* magazine’s most beautiful people—and lack of literary background; there was titillated interest in her days living in a slum and working as an aerobics instructor. Praise for her novel was extravagant—she was compared to Faulkner and García Márquez—but it was also frequently patronizing. “There is something childish about Roy. She has a heightened capacity for wonder”—this from one of the judges who awarded her the Booker Prize. (Meanwhile, a writer who had judged the Booker the previous year publicly called the book “execrable,” and the award a disgrace.)

Roy appeared to want no part of any of this. She chopped off her hair after the Booker win, telling *The New York Times* she didn’t want to be known “as some pretty woman who wrote a book,” and donated her prize money to the Narmada Bachao Andolan, a group protesting the construction of a series of dams that threatened to displace millions of villagers. She turned her attention from fiction to people’s movements all over India—Kashmiris resisting the Indian military’s occupation, tribal communities fighting to protect their ancestral lands. She decried India’s nuclear testing (a source of much national pride at the time) and became an outspoken critic of America’s war in Afghanistan. She was praised for her commitment and derided for her naïveté, and faced charges of obscenity and sedition (later dropped). She was invited to model khakis for Gap (she declined) and to march through the forests of central India with Maoist

insurgents (she accepted). And now, after 20 years, she has finally returned to fiction with a new novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*.

Is *novel* the right word, though? I hesitate. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, hulking, sprawling story that it is, has two main strands. One follows Anjum, a *hijra*, or transwoman, struggling to make a life for herself in Delhi. The other follows Tilo, a thorny and irresistible architect turned activist (who seems to be modeled on Roy herself), and the three men who fall in love with her. But as was true of *The God of Small Things*, there is more than a touch of fairy tale in the book's moral simplicity—or clarity, if you're feeling charitable. Roy will say of a character, "He was a very clean man. And a good one too," and he is swiftly, unequivocally pinned to the page.

The world she conjures is often brutal, but never confusing or even very complex. Manichaeic dualities prevail: innocence (embodied by puppies, kittens, little girls) versus evil (torture, torturers, soldiers, shopping malls). If this tendency felt less troubling in her first book—think of handsome, heroic Velutha, the untouchable, and his foil, the almost comically evil Baby Kochamma—it was perhaps because the narration was trained so closely on children. Given that the central characters were a pair of young twins, Rahel and Estha, it felt natural that the world would be read this way.

Yet to simply find fault with the lack of psychological shading would be, I think, a genre mistake. Roy's indifference to precisely that problem suggests that something interesting is afoot. Consider the book's dedication—"To, The Unconsoled." Note the cover photograph, a grave, and the setting: The story begins and ends in a graveyard. More than a novel, this book wants to be an offering. It isn't concerned with the conventional task (or power) of fiction to evoke the texture and drama of consciousness. Instead, it acts like a companion piece to Roy's political writings—collected in books such as *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2001) and *Walking With the Comrades* (2011). It tours India's fault lines, as Roy has, from the brutal suppression of tribal populations to the 2002 pogrom against Muslims in Gujarat.

Just about every resistance movement is embodied in a character, and the lives and struggles of these characters intersect. The queers, addicts, Muslims, orphans, and other casualties of the national project of making India great again find one another and form a raucous community of sorts. And this novel—this fable—is as much for them as about them; it commemorates their struggles and their triumphs, however tiny. You will encounter no victims in this book; the smallest characters are endowed with some spit. A kitten, about to be drowned by a group of soldiers, bares her fangs, unafraid to take on the Indian army. At night, a dung beetle lies on his back in the graveyard, pointing his feet to the sky, to help prop it up should it fall. Even he is given a name: Guih Kyom.

Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) is an eccentric piece of work that uncovers the entire setting in an unconventional way and settings for example; graveyard has been given a place where Transgender Anjum is living, though the place is considered to be a permanent resident of dead people, similarly, Anjum is placed in the same way synonym to dead people because she has no place at all and displaced people. Graveyard is place without any owner and it is a place where people can live without any rent. Therefore, Anjum is living graveyard rather than to opt house on rent or to burdened someone else. This aspect of the novel shows that Anjum is a selfless character but still she is exploited and suffered in the entire novel because she does not hold a binaristic position where both man and woman are allowed to be placed in the binaries.

Anjum has been introduced in the novel in the first lines as Anjum “lived in a graveyard like a tree” (Roy, 2017: p. 1). The object tree is more important and it is used as a metaphor because it stands for Anjum as Anjum was “endured the months of casual cruelty like the tree would”. Here the word casual is more important because it stands for those experiences of Anjum which are faced throughout the novel by Anjum in form of exploitation and suffering. The suffering of Anjum is very clear from the very first lines of the novel where she is introduced to the audiences. The word cruelty is more casual as it is the part of Anjum of life where she grew up was the caused by fate and her exploitation and suffering was more dreadful. It shows that Anjum from the very birth to the present is passing through the same representation of exploitation and suffering.

The most important about the tree to use as a metaphor because the tree in the graveyard is no meaning and no place in reality because the shades of the tree has no fruits because the shadows of the tree falls on dead people which is aimless and meaninglessness. In the same way the life of transgender is meaningless and has no fruits for other, therefore, transgender in the existed world and tree and the graveyard can be placed in the same cube that has no fruits for others. Further, both tree and transgender in the said context have no social construction as Butler’s (1999) concept is more appropriate as he redresses that transgenders have no social construction and they cannot be placed in the binaries, therefore, they are exploited and suffered. Similarly, the novel depicts transgender Anjum in the same way as she has no social construction and does not acceptable to binaries and she is exploited and suffered throughout her life.

Apart from the said bondages on transgender the character of Anjum is self-constructed as he struggles in the novel, though, her struggle gets no fruits for her but she does not stop her struggle. Throughout her consistent resistant Anjum “didn’t turn to see which small boy had thrown a stone at her and didn’t crane her neck to read the insults scratched into her bark” (Roy, 2017: p. 1). This is the daily routine with Anjum as she faces in her life when interacting with the people. This kind of insults and physical torture from the people is the creation of casual cruelty for Anjum. Apart from the said casual cruelty the audience and the readers are introduced with other forms of physical torture and casual cruelty that have faced by Transgender Aftab throughout the novel, although it was difficult for her to cope up with the situation but she has to bear and tolerate it because she is optionless and leading the main character to guilt and Transgression-Inner Suffering which are the major concerns of the current research to be explored in the current study.

### **Literature Review: Fixing Transness, Transnormativity and Transgression**

The most important theme in every genre of literature is fixed with the normative standards, used to judged people of different genders, including feminine, masculine and transgender. Therefore, different aspects of transgenders are judged and explored by different critics and scholars in their writings. Trnasnormativity, Transgression and fixing transness are the three aspects about transgenders which are discussed in detail in this section.

Johnson (2016) has noted about transnormativity as he defines it that “the “ideological accountability structure to which transgender people’s presentation and experiences of gender are held accountable...(it) structures transgender experience, identification, and narratives into a hierarchy of legitimacy that is dependent upon a binary medical model and its accompanying standards” (p. 466). Trnasnormativity means both the construction of transgenders from biological perspective and social construction as it functions and operates transgenderism which in contrast and comparison to other aspects are more comprehensive and understandable to



readers and the people who talk about transgenders. This phenomena is less complicated and based on least complexity as we call it transgressive, particularly in different genres to give focus in medical and different surgery, related to transgenders that “creates a marginalizing effect for gender-non-conforming people who cannot or do not wish to medically transition” (Johnson, 2016, p. 466).

The process of transnormativity leads towards a catastrophic creation of transgender stories to be believed as true and more legitimate because of their stereotypical representation. Transgender is thus represented and made transgender because transgender is born and planted in the wrong body to call him transgender because of the reason. The narrative is set out generically by people and it is consistent from person to person and their representation in every society is given according to the social structure and understanding. The identical theme of transgenders has been put in front of them as well, pretending that the wrong body of the transgender has represented in the fictional works as well and represented. It is very interesting to observe the construction and representation of male to female to be represented as transgender while historically it is less seen that female to male transgenders are represented. According to Rigney (2003) as he talks about the female to male construction has “gone largely unrecognized except in...a heterosexual format” (p. 5).

However, cultural representation of male to female and female to male of transgender is very rigid as the cultural aspects prefer the representation of male to female than female to male. In this regard transgression as concept give birth to another concept from within transnormativity which likably the concept of transgression and the it is now affirmed that none of the identity either male or female, if, not identified with the both gender is considered to be transgressive. This transgressive gives birth to the discourse of transgression which is directly asided from the normative rules and belief. Simply, they transgression discourses remain outside from the social belief and boundaries. Capuzza (2016) has come up with the opinion that “transgender body is a challenge to assumptions about gender because it does not fit tidily into either/or categories established” set out by the society (p. 91). The system is quite threatening to the status of the transgenders, taking them to the oppressive modes of the social norms.

It is confirmed that literature and different genres of literature gives more exaggerated picture of the transgender in the discourse rather than the actual picture of the transgender, though, the transgenders represented in the movies and films become least transgressive is the reality as Abbott (2013) has noted that “trans films often [cast] an actor who fits the trans character’s birth sex rather than gender identity” (p. 36). It means the transgender character as actor if he is man, is supposed to cast his shot as female because transgender would be treated as female not the male. The readers and audiences are witnessed with the biological creation of the characters who are deliberately represented in such way

The crowd knows the biological identity of the actress, and this takes some of the power. The expectation of the readers and audiences are premised that the representation of transgender must be “either/or: pre-op or post-op, transvestite or transsexual...there are few representations in mainstream media of a transgender person who defies these categories” (Siebler, 2012, p. 75). In discourses we are not bound to understand the representation of transgender or we look for characters, existed in no in-between because our culture provides us a comprehensive understanding how neatly cross from the concept of making transgender from male to female respectively. However, it is one of the opinion that transgender and androgynous characters can

be moulded either to man or women through medical surgery but our society does not bother with such cases and the exploitation and suffering of the transgender becomes inevitable. The understanding of our society is likely linked with our cultural beliefs of two binaries; male and female while the third gender transgender does not hold any identity. Therefore, the phenomenon of transgression is unintelligible to become a subject matter of gender studies.

Apart from transgenders so many submissive and stereotypical aspects they are shown with no emotion, means these characters are emotionally unstable as Keegan (2013) has come up with the opinion about the same aspect of transgender that “fictional transgender figure has traditionally been marked as vulnerable to or productive of extreme emotional states, portrayed either as the emotive center of a narrative...as disturbed, erratic, or unstable...or psychotically violent” (3). The features highlighted by Keegan (2013) are submissive aspects of transgenders and directly can be linked with the exploitation and suffering of the transgenders. Their characters are psychologically and mentally unstable or weak who are supposed to be transgenders and the readers also give the prediction that these transgenders are actually the exploited and suffered human beings.

We are largely witnessed with the fact that transgenders are largely covered by different problems and they can surpass these problems as Kolasinska (2000) has pointed out that “the stigma that surrounds a transgressive representation is problematic for a number of reasons” (p. 175). First problem is about the inclusion of the transgenders characters in different genres of literature, particularly in films as they are rarely included in the script while the second problem is annexed with this problem when they are included then they are represented with stereotypical images, means they are shown exploited and suffered in the entire context of the films or other genre of literature. According to Baptista and Himmel (2016) who talks about the transgenders have noted that, the “dangers of representation...sustain norms that kill those who transgress them” (p. 640). It means the representation of transgenders in the entire works are fictional but what damage is given to transgender in real life is their exploitation and suffering and they are treated in the same way as they are represented in literature. In this way the ultimate goal of the discourse producers is to develop the transgender characters in depoliticized way as they are taken to personalized position.

According to Sandercock (2015) who notes about such discourses which “imbricate trans characters with hegemonic norms and render ‘transgender’ difference [as] ultimately resolvable-something that can be unproblematically folded into heteronormative familial and social structures” (p. 439). This process is done because of the fact to show the neat transition of one gender to another in a smooth way. Therefore the “trans body is fashioned as one that ‘feels bad’, the answer is to fix it” (Sandercock, 2015, p. 441). Further Keegan (2013) has noted; “while transitional and non-conforming bodies may momentarily deconstruct the fiction of static gendered categories, transgender representation may also be manipulated to enforce these categories” (1). In this way the nature of transgender outside the boundaries of binary divisions of gender is corrected.

Further, Keegan (2013) has come up with the opinion that the popular representation of transgender is “nearly always end with a reinforcement of a binary system of gender, which operates as a form of narrative resolution” (6). Though, it is very systematic to wind up the discussion with binaries of genders but still it is consistent and the sopiness is reverberated by

Phillips (2006) who comes up with the opinion about the dominant filmic images about transgenders that the “dominant filmic images of transgender from 1950s to the end of the 1990s have in the end tended to reinforce stereotypical thinking on the subject” (p. 165). Although, transgenders may have different representation in different discourses but they are finally shown with bleak images and their representation is largely given stereotypical in the context of different genres.

It is confirmed that the representation of transgenders is pre-operationally fixed and cannot be altered, updated or changed but consistent with rigid entity. The theme of fixing is limited to transness is premised to both concept of transgression and transnormativity. To fix the transness is resulted formally by both concepts as noted above. The fixity and its meaning of transness referring to pipe line which is the central aspect of the analysis. If we take the example Sandercock (2015) who comes up with the explanation that “by ‘seeing’...central trans characters...shows allow for nuanced representations as the sight of ‘real’ performers playing these roles adds a material aspect to trans representations...the implied cisgender gaze of these visual texts also ‘fixes’ transness...rendering trans people as knowable and legible curiosities” (p. 441).

It is fixity to confirm that transgenders can be either made subject or object, is the process of scrutinized to evaluate it. The process is upto the level to educated the people about the issues and knowing transgenders from very close. Further, it is also of great importance to know about the body of transgender to be fixed either affixed with the body, triggered by mind or something else. According to Johnson (2016) that the “adherence to a medical model of transition emphasizes a *born in the wrong body* discourse and a *discovery narrative* of trans identity” (p. 468). Such models of wrong body to form it as discourse or make it the part of medical model the transgender people are always in dire need to set up their medical and surgical intervention to fixe their body. The “essentialist, symptom-based model of trans experience creates the trope of trans people being *born in the wrong body*...and deters any alternative narrative of gender identity as fluid, emergent, processual, or constituted by social norms and influence” (Johnson, 2016, p. 469).

To talk about the fixity of transness it is direly necessary to acknowledge that binary are more important to either transgender may be placed in femininity or masculinity. Therefore, the fixation of transgender body is of great importance because it gives transgender people a gendered binary. Therefore, the term fixation is used for very fruitful process to repair a broken thing to be repaired. Further, the process may be to fix an entity that needs no alteration and amendment or direly unchangeable. Therefore, as result tansgenders in terms of their representation must be regulated by the policy to trigger and perpetuate the gender binaries. According to Sloop (2000) as he noted that “a transgendered person becomes a foil in which the presuppositions of the gender and sexual norms of contemporary culture are reiterated and reaffirmed, in which ritual and taboo operate to assure this” (p. 169). It is explicit in this regard that transgenders have been represented in a way to eliminate different complication of gender. Butler (1999) pointed out that the compatibility of gender helps to “maintain gender within its binary frame” (p. 191). However, this process of transnormative depiction of transgenders is not upto the level to deconstruct the elusive “illusion of an abiding gendered self” but inserts transgender people back into a stable binary (Butler, 1999, p. 191).

## **Guilt and Transgression- Inner Suffering in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness***

The section is initiated with prominent quotes about the inner suffering of human beings, particularly I would refer it to transgenders. Jean Genet notes “then, as she had already died four or five times, the apartment had remained available for a drama more serious than her own death” while Murray Bookchin has come up with the similar opinion that “guilt and repentance, as distinguished from shame and the practical need to redress the effects of a social transgression, become character traits with the emergence of morality”. This is what the dilemma for transgenders in a society to place their position because they are socially exploited not from other sources but still other markers are more important to represent them with stereotypical images as presented in the theoretical section of the research.

If we talk about the freedom of humanity it is basic phenomenon and bestowed to everyone but still it is nonexistent because human beings live in very natural order without any prior exploitation and hierarchy of oppression. However, to remain happy without any remorse, particularly in a society is unknown and absent because when a person is to pass from innocence to adulthood, travelling with his experiences, is exposed to certain machinations and exploitation as we are witnessed with the first man Hazarat Adam (AS) had been descended from heaven. The same happens with the postmodern man in the contemporary period. However, when a man tries to turn out from exploitation and suffering and abolish slavery he is turned to send to master-slave phenomenon. One man becomes the master while another becomes the slave.

In postmodern world with the emergence of advance technology the trends have been shifted to materialistic, preferred, whereas the moral aspects are ignored. In this regard the human beings are getting exploited with the hands of their human fellows. This exploitation merged in the humanity from both within and without. These conflicts of human exploitation are the actual causes of all conflicts in both microcosm and macrocosm worlds. The inner suffering with external suffering in the selected novel is explicit, shows the exploitation and suffering of transgender from within and linked with the societal norms and forms.

Roy throws light on different aspects of human exploitation, ranging from the love of mother to hatred and exploitation to revolt. The story is not only limited to aspects of exploitation and suffering but depicts the trauma of the society form within in the form of different characters. She goes for the insights into the hearts and minds of the oppressed and oppressors and the readers feel the same pain of suffering the observed in the writing. The novel is even objecting a mother who gives birth to a baby and now she is tormenting, feels humiliation for giving birth to Aftab. It means that mother is not suffering, if suppose she is suffering from the dilemma then the question rises why she gave birth to a baby? She passes through an inner dilemma and exposes herself to the pain from the inner and giving the expression to readers that she is exploited and suffered. The writer beautifully creates the inner anguish of the character where the readers appropriate themselves with the characters on the pages of the novel.

The readers are witnessed with the suffering and paroxysms of Anjum at the beginning of the novel when she is forced to leave Khwabgah, entering to a realm of burden full of suffering and cruelty as the writer notes that “she lived in the graveyard like a tree” (Roy, 2017, p. 3). For Anjum suffering and exploitation is now her fate and faith, accepted like a cool breeze coming from the nature to entertain. The more important she never complains and turns against the people who call her “clown without a circus, queen without a palace” (Roy, 2017, p. 3). This is the creation of the writer, giving the inner conflict of the character, exploited but not tormented.



It means the exploitation and suffering in the postmodern world is not a hard phenomenon but accepted.

Anjum does not bother about anything, cursing and hurting while standing like a paralyzed tree “used the music of her rustling leaves as balm to ease the pain” (Roy, 2017, p. 3). Anjum’s experiences have intimated her that her existence and life is full of futility and meaningless, reaching to the conclusion that every individual’s life is full of meaninglessness. She herself is the victim of meaninglessness, particularly her name spells backward or forward that is meaningful for her. Her realization and recognition about her name Anjum to Anjuman is meaningless but she identified the names; “I’m a mehfil, I’m a gathering. Of everybody and nobody, of everything and nothing. Is there anyone else you would like to invite? Everyone’s invited” (Roy, 2017, p. 4). Her sufferings have uplifted her spirit and like Hazrat Sarmad Shaheed given her the ability to comprehend “Sach Khuda hai. Khuda hi Sach hai.’ Truth is God. God is Truth” (Roy, 2017, p. 5). She gets knowledge through her experience as a “Need was a warehouse that could accommodate a considerable amount of cruelty” (Roy, 2017, p. 6).

The baby born in Jahanara Begum brought happiness that night but unfortunately the night turned to nightmare when the boy was declared as a eunuch by Ahlam Baji. The catastrophe for a mother was started with the birth of a transgender, led her to a dilemma to kill the baby or kill herself. The mother entirely falls in horrible condition and timely she was watching the baby it might be possible that they are mistaken in recognition; “her bowels convulsed and a thin stream of shit ran down her legs” (Roy, 2017, p. 8).

In first step with the birth of the baby the mother pretends to kill either the baby or herself but it was a cruel act, though, she was exploited and suffered from within but she has to hide her suffering and exploitation beneath her artificial look for the baby. Therefore, she tries to hid the cruel truth from the entire world about the baby “Like the God of the Christians did, after he had made Heaven and Earth” (Roy 2017, p. 8).

Her own exploitation and suffering views the suffering and exploitation of the baby and considers; “suddenly they seemed to be the most important 97 people in the world” (Roy, 2017, p. 8). She sets her journey to Hazrat Sarmad Shaheed for the purpose to beg for her baby because they are the innocent creation of God. In contrast to Aftab’s mother his father Mulaqat Ali was a man of confidence and proud but he himself is thrown to the world of dismay and sorrow. The birth of the baby dishonored the family’s honour like the fall of “dynasty of Changez Khan” (Ibid: 25) This dilemma is entirely the creation of inner exploitation and suffering of different characters, not only Aftab is the victim, though, we can say that the exploitation and suffering of family is caused by Aftab.

The exploitation and suffering of Aftab is confirmed from the music mantra which he was learning from Ustad Hameed Khan; “he’s a She. He’s not a He or a She. He’s a He and a She. She-He, He-She Hee! Hee! Hee!” (Ibid 12) forced him not to take the lessons and premised to his house. The stance in the novel gives him recognition of another world “Bombay Silk” while the current one is now misfit for him. The Bombay Silk consists of other seven similar figures like Aftab who are Gudiya, Mary, Nimmo, Baby, Heera, Razia and Bulbul, living with Ustad Guru in Kulsoom Bio Haveli. Ustad Guru was the aged amongst other and the house belonged to Guru. Aftab come to about the residence, called Khwabgah that can be translated into English as the House of dreams. Aftab wanted that he must be the part of Khwabgah and when he becomes the part of the old decrepit home he realized that the place is not least than heave for Aftab. Aftab came to know that she entered to paradise because the life is an

experiment for him as it is the longing “a living creature that is incapable of happiness” (Roy, 2017, p. 23).

The purpose of Aftab to live in Khwabgah is to get happiness and relaxation in life because the external world is full of exploitation and suffering for him. Factually, the happiness in Khwabgah is mockery and ostentatiousness happiness not the permanent one. The place turns to be a home of inner misery and inner suffering, though, the disturbance in the lives of transgenders is caused by external world but it was the battle from within that was difficult for them to settle down. “What was real world for others Hijras called Duniya, the world and in that world they were not happy rather they were Happiness Hunters. Their stories were made public through media and this sale of grief and pang was made to suit readers’ appetites and expectations” (Ibid: 26). The same was pointed out by Butler (1999) and other selected theorists who nominated media is one of the dominant tool for representing transgenders on screen and the people believe in what has represented and constructed.

Transgender considers herself a Holy soul and quotes different religions, nominate them Holy Soul because religion Hinduism gives a respectable and loving position to transgenders. The story of Lord Ram and his wife Sita is very significant because they were sent to Jungle to live for fourteen years. They were loved by their masses, though, all women and men came at one platform but they were sent back by them and amongst them transgenders were waited for fourteen years outside the jungle, despite they were not mentioned and given a name in the struggle. Therefore, every religious mythology has forgotten as Indian mythology considered them “the forgotten ones” (Ibid: 51). Butler (1999) supports the arguments in his theory that Transgenders are not place in the binary oppositions of male and female, therefore, they are not included in the context of struggle as well as in other domains. The same has done Roy with transgenders in the novel who are forgotten and exploited.

Anjum in the novel wants to escape from the harsh realities of life to find happiness in Khawbgah but she came to know that her sadness and miser expanded with the death of Zakir Mian and triviality of Zainab. After three decades of relationship at the age of forty six she forces herself to leave the Khawbgah. She pretends to commit suicide but it was the exaggerated act and theatricality it was a drama. Zainab was Anjum’s rare hope, only solace and hopeless love but her histrionics and psycho-blabs took Zainab away from her. The “principled livings and iron discipline” “hallmark of the Khawbgah” “snatched her only love Zainab. Zainab announced Mummy’s never happy” (Roy, 2017, p. 57). Anjum now leaves the Kwawbagah without saying a single word “only ten minute tempo ride from the Khawbgah enter into another world of graveyard.” (Ibid: 57).

Anjum entered to the graveyard with the pain of Zainab’s loss, is the enteral misery and exploitation of Anum rather than the external factor. The wound that given by Zainab can never be healed and its obstinacy cannot be diminished. Further, her heart and mind cannot be mended with the loss of Zainab. The graveyard was actually a place where to hide her inner miseries and exploitation. However, the fact cannot be denied and underestimated that transgenders are exploited and suffered by societal factors, shown earlier but the inner self of the character Anjum is weak rather than the external because she tolerated how people named her with different names. Simply she could stand with the external suffering and exploitation but could not stand with the internal factors and markers of exploitation and suffering. As a result she is forced to live in the graveyard.

Though, her exploitation and suffering could not manageable but the entry of Imam Ziauddin gave her another hope to hide her miseries. She has been accompanied by Imam

Ziauddin now and as the time passes “the fort of Desolation scaled down into a dwelling of manageable proportions. It became home; a place of predictable, reassuring sorrow-awful, but reliable” (Ibid: 66). Imam Ziauddin is also victimized in the novel from within, caused by the disrespect and humiliation from his daughter-in-law and beloved son, therefore, Anjum’s company becomes the permanent source for Imam Ziauddin as Roy says that Imam Ziauddin “soon became a permanent guest” (Ibid: 68).

In the context of novel, rapidly the graveyard became a paradise for different people who are exploited and suffered from both within and without. They started to live together and it was called the place of fallen people “a ‘Chamar and not Dalit Daya’ Chand who was carrying the burden of woe and misery of his kin’s death on his heart and soul. He told a lie to Sangeeta Madam Haramzaadi Bitch” (Ibid: 85) about the facts and gave his introduction as Saddam Hussain which is not the real name but an adopted one. The truth was hidden because the suffering and exploitation from the external world. As a Dalit the job was assigned to them to take away the skeleton of dead cows which were used for leathers and they were also externally exploited and suffered became the part Anjum’s world.

### Conclusion

The novel entirely covers up the internal exploitation and suffering of different characters but the most important is Anjum, preliminarily exploited and suffered by the society but internally she seems exploited and suffered from within. Therefore, Roy covers both aspects of exploitation and suffering of Anjum’s character. We can derive the conclusion that the physical appearance plays an important role in judgment of one’s character everywhere, including south Asia. Therefore, any form of disability or disbalance in personality may portray an individual as an evil and resentful creature. furthermore, this ugliness of their physical appearance effect the lives of people by marginalizing them and creating and depriving them of their rightful opportunities to grow, learn and progress in their lives. Although the study was limited to one character and one novel, the character portrayal in Roy’s narrative is the representation of an ugly reality of the world we live in, where good looks are preferred over moral characteristics and nobility of character. To conclude the current research it has explored that the novel is full of exploitation and suffering of transgender Anjum, caused by different societal and inner suffering. Further, the contribution of the research may recommend further researches on Roy’s novel and transgenders in other works from different perspectives.

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