

# Re-Thinking Society and Culture in the Era of Globalization - A Study of Selected Writings of Mahasweta Devi and Arundhati Roy

**Mr. K Jayaramudu**

Assistant professor

Department of English

Sreyas Institute of Engineering and Technology

Nagole, Bandlaguda, Hyderabad

## Abstract

This paper presents the writers consciousness of the society in the Era of Globalization specially how the writers try to show India in their works such as Mother of 1084, Bayen, Aajir, Statue were written by Mahasweta Devi and The God of Small Things was written by Arundhati Roy these two writers generally trigger the society's pathethatic situation of the human condition such as in the form of *Naxalism, women subjugation, oppression, outcast and patriarchal society, caste, class and gender* in which especially how the women characters are shown not only women but also other souls in the novels through them we can easily understand the writers unconsciousness towards the culture of India. Here we can see how the women characters are killed or weakened in their works particularly apolitical mothers of children are made voiceless at the end of the novels (mother of 1084, Bayen, Statue and The God of small things) though they are Women writers and also radical in thinking they cannot escape from the Culture psychologically.

**Keywords:** Women subjugation, culture, patriarchal society, class struggle, mythology.

## Aim

The primary aim of this research paper is to understand the women characters through the Indian culture in the selected writings of Mahasweta Devi and Arundhati Roy. Through analyzing the following characters of the novels we can clearly understand the Indian mythology and culture that get inherited their artifacts.

1 Mother of 1084 (Hajircharusirma in bengali language )

2 Bayen

3 Statue

4 Aajir

5 The God of Small things

## Introduction to Mahasweta Devi and Arundhati Roy writings

*"Time was stronger than the grief"*

*"What it presented was not a world to be contemplated, but to be changed"*

*Mahasweta Devi*

Mahasweta Devi was born on 14 Jan 1926 in Bengal and died in 2016. Mahasweta Devi was basically to belong to West Bengal most of her writings are in Bengali but later they were translated into English by several writers. Language .She was a novelist, essayist and short story writer. When Mahasweta Devi was young there were many riots going on. So that which directly or indirectly made her write novels, essays and short stories in which she completely portrayed the complete picture of India. It is the place where she tried to explore the class struggle, women subjugation, bonded labour so and forth though she was born and brought up in upper middle class family but completely supportive to the suppressed and marginalized. She tried to give a strong voice to the voiceless. Particularly in the novel *Mother of 1084* there is a woman she beget with many children but most of the children were like father except Brati who is called to identify her son's dead body in the morgue where the father was insensitive a little towards his son's death whereas a woman shows too much love towards her son's death where we see the motherhood towards sons, through this we point out that women's sensitivity and at the end of the novel she dies. and in the another novel *Bayen* is a novel in which a mother is a witchcraft she is separated from her son Baghirathi from the very beginning she gives birth to the son, even her husband also cannot even treat as a mother as women as well as human being but at the end of the novel she dies. If we look at another novel that is the statue there is a woman her name is Dulali (Duli) is a widow from childhood when she was six years old she is treated as a witchcraft because there are women who live free from under they are not allowed to all the events which means women under patriarchal hegemony and another.

The novel *The God of Small Things* novel starts in the broken hearted family in Kerala Ayemenem where we can see the incidents that happen and how they lead the family especially how the children's minds can be shaped up through some specific incidents in the novel. There is a woman in the novel by name Ammu (major character in the novel) gets married to an abusive husband (Baba) and also alcoholic, so with his strange behavior Ammu gets suffered a lot and falls for an underprivileged man named Velutha (outcast) but Ammu's family cannot digest it and finally all the Ammu's family members plot to kill to kill Velutha throughout the novel woman suffered and she is separated from her children Estha and Rahel (Ammu's children) at the end of the novel the major character Ammu passes away and the novel ends when Estha and Rahel meet together sensually.

### **Research question:**

Why are the major women characters killed or weakened in the novels of Mahasweta Devi and Arundhati Roy though they were written in globalization?

(or)

Why do the major women characters not have any endeavors ahead in the particular novels of Mahasweta Devi and Arundhati Roy ?

### **Research problem**

In the era of globalization Mahasweta Devi and Arundhati Roy portrayed the entire India through their novels there are some cultural stereotypes were shown as they were so that we

can observe the cultural constraints however they wrote these novels in globalization they cannot escape from the Indian culture. If they wrote these novels in the globalization which meant in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century why did they represent the women characters as they saw the incidents in India, if we think that these two writers belong to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century then why didn't they alienate the characters rather than portraying as Indian women.

### **Literature Review**

A particular and exhaustive study made on the selected writings of Mahasweta Devi and Arundhati Roy where we straightly came to the point that all women characters are voiceless, oppressed, women subjugation, communism and bonded labor. Here not only women characters but also it is a special view on the society. There are various figures in the plays of Mahasweta Devi and Arundhati Roy's fictional world that were explained in the following Paragraph.

### **Communism in the novels of Mahasweta Devi :**

In the writings of these two revolutionary writers much exploration has been done particularly when Mahasweta Devi (*The plays of Mahasweta Devi , and Arundhati Roy's fictional world a collection of critical essays Dwivedi B.R Pub. Corp*) when she was young there were many conflicts going these incidents from this many evolving characters emerged as Brati, Aajir, Dyndyal. On the whole in all these novels young activist was brutally killed by crossing humanitarian grounds .on the other hand in another novel that is Aajir the itself has been given based on the character by name Aajir. In the work of Arundhati Roy where we can talk about one of the major characters Velutha who had a link with communists that is the reason who was brutally killed by the dominated. All these contemptuous elements were clearly done by the many thinkers in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Societal state of India in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century :**

Mahasweta Devi (*The plays of Mahasweta Devi*) was born and brought up in the well known family. during 1960s though it is a free independent India by the time India was emerging into new form but when it was evolving there were many disruptions occurred that were interpreted in the particular art crafts as the novel is a social discourse it gives varied voices on behalf of the suppressed. Generally everybody tried to talk about the class struggle that we can see in Mother of 1084 here one zero eight four is Brati's corpse number this young activist gives a render voice to the voiceless people. In 1960s like Brati's many young activists were killed because of Naxalism. Like this many incidents took place during the globalization.

### **Superstition in India:**

After having made a different attitude on the writings of these two Writers superstition is clearly appeared. In the novel Bayen (*The plays of Maha Sweta Devi*) where we can see. One of the major or protagonist Bayen is shown as a witch craft in in which Bayen is not treated as human being because she is a professional grave digger (fiction of Mahasweta Devi by B.Vijaya) which is was given by her ancestors that she would execute everything as it is

through this we can understand how superstition greatly exists in our society. But in the novel her son Bagirathi stands by her at the end of the novel. Here Bagirathi is one of the existing men characters.

### **Partriarchy in Mahasweta Devi and Arundhati Roy:**

In the late 20<sup>th</sup> century writers clearly added the patriarchy that we see in the mother of 1084 where Sujata's husband's deferent attitude towards Sujata when she asked her husband to hospital to see her son brati's dead He does not respond to her though she request him take the car out here The male dominance is shown in the novel.

Here is Sujata lives under patriarchal hegemony and on the other hand in Statue Duli the protagonist of the novel she becomes widow when she is six years old. She is deprived of all her young cheerful moment because women were strictly restricted not get another marriage.

In Arundhati Roy's novel *The God of Small Things Ammu (Arundhati Roy's fictional world Dwevedi B.R Pub .corp)* suffers a lot due to this patriarchal Power. Eventhough they wrote novels in the Globalized Era they did not talk about the women power and their role in society.

### **Bonded labour:**

In the plays of Mahasweta Devi (*The Plays of MahaswetaDevi*) there we can read the translated work where Aajir is the protagonist in the novel here then by birth is a bonded labor that was given by his ancestors for three rupees. In the novel in fact there is no bond between Aajir ancestors the owner but they try to impose their Superiority on the oppressed class. At the end of the novel Aajir comes to know that they don't have any bond between Aajir's family and the owner's family by didn't of the owner's wife help.

### **Life is from Innocence to Experience:**

The characters in the selected novels of Mahasweta and Arundhati Roy all the evolving characters come from innocence to experience (*Fiction of MahswetaDevi Class,Caste , and Gender by B. Vijaya*) there are some important characters that evolve from innocence to experience by facing problems which is portrayed in some of the novels. There are some major women specially the *Mother of 1084(the plays Mahasweta Devi)* in the plays they face difficulties by seeing their situations such as goons in the society how they killed many young activists. So by facing all they will come to know the exact world's morphology.

### **Cultural Constrains:**

Here we can see how cultural constrains affect the writer's minds and how they make the figures become weaken at the end of the writings.

### **Cultural regimes demean the women characters in the works of Mahasweta Dev and Arundhati Roy :**

During the era of globalization or in post independent India Mahasweta Devi and Arundhati Roy simply portrayed the women characters are weak. why, because one of the major “Cultural Elements” that affects the writers mind so that they did not simply escape from the stereotypes “because of this cultural rigidity the writers portrayed the women characters is weak “that is the reason why the major women characters do not have any endeavour ahead, that we can see in one of the writings of Mahasweta Devi specially in *statue* there is an existing women by name *Dulali or Duli* is a working class woman deprived of all her endeavors ahead in the novel, and this characters is completely portrayed in negative shade. She lives her entire life under the oppressed motive. This is also one of the major reasons that we can clear by slacking (loosen) this cultural constrain.

### **How the women are mortified in various cultural codes:**

Here we are to look at how the women are mortified with the help of Cultural codes and how they make them have fixed attitude towards creating the same cultural codes. Cultural code is the one through which most of the women were represented with negative symbols. All these negative symbols were drawn from Indian cultural ideology where they were given the partial supreme power knowingly and unknowingly this unconsciousness gets inherited into the writers consciousness so they produced the same in Arundhati Roy *The God of Small Things* in which how Ammu the women character in the novel is Mortified at the end. Though she is an existing characters in the novel she is Shown in particular code so that the simply fixed this code in the and makes it weaken.

### **Conclusion**

It is a sort of writers distress of mind that tells us how it affects to impose their psych to write such chagrin characters that have been founded in the selected writings of Mahasweta Devi and Arundhati Roy that we can see the distress in the novel *Bayen* it is where how the women suffers from the rooted things on the other hand in *The God of Small Things* even Ammu one of the major women also suffers from it. All these cultural constrains were completely picturised in globalizaion specially in late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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