Chapter – Six

Conclusion
The word ‘migration’ is usually taken in the sense of physical relocation of living beings. The other form of migration, that is, intellectual migration, is mostly ignored even amongst informed readers. However, the fact is that intellectual shift of writers is more important in the process of human civilization than the physical movement of writers. Even in the case of physical relocation, migration acquires cultural significance only because it is supposed to involve intellectual and philosophical issues. The motive of writers who opt for migrating to another country is either dubious, or they live a life of eternal conflict between expectation and reality. In other words, the utopian dream they nurture in their mind before their migration to the host country is shattered when harsh reality of racial discrimination and marginalization inflicts itself upon them.

Some diasporic writers migrate to another country for the betterment of life, some for protecting themselves from the communal, cultural and ideological conflicts in their motherland, and some for finding favourable and conducive environment for creative writing. All these factors are related to self-interest.

Diasporic writers tell their own experiences as well as the experiences of other immigrants — both traumatic and happy — through their writings. Salman Rushdie’s experience in the immigrant country is a happy one, as he has found a hospitable and favourable environment in the host country. Migration to him is a matter of liberation. In the case of Bharati Mukherjee, the experiences have been mixed ones — painful as well as blissful. Her experience in Canada was painful, as there she was a victim of racism, sexism, and other forms of social oppression, and she felt a sense of alienation. In America she has spent a life of unrestrained freedom. Anita Desai in her novels depicts the experiences of cultural displacement, racial discrimination, sexism and xenophobia in
England. Kamala Markandaya portrays experiences of her own and other immigrants in England who constantly live with a sense of dislocation, alienation and identity crisis. Meena Alexander searches for her identity in the United States where she constantly has to answer some embarrassing questions about her origin, colour of skin and profession. M.G. Vassanji and V.S. Naipaul expose the plight of the immigrants in East Africa who are entrapped between a sense of homelessness and a yearning for imaginary homeland.

Most of the diasporic writers’ experiences in the host countries are mixed with a sense of dislocation, disorientation, dispossession, alienation and a yearning for ancestral home. Most of the diasporic writers go through mental agony. Material security often fails to provide with intellectual and emotional peace.

Intellectual migration of authors has had wide and deep impact on readers, and it creates critical interest among them. Disgusted by and fed up with the earlier perceptions, beliefs, ideology, way of life, and by realizing the blunder and meaninglessness about their earlier conceptions, some writers gradually deviate to a new field of critical interest, and most of the time it happens at the psychic and emotional level. Almost all the writers have gone through this kind of alteration of themes in their writings, but some writers such as T.S. Eliot, G.M. Hopkins, George Orwell, Arthur Koestler, W.H. Auden, and Fyodor Dostoevsky leave this impression clearly.

Dostoevsky’s early life before his imprisonment was influenced by socialist movement, and his writings centred around the theme of miseries, sufferings, poverty, despair of the people living in big crowded cities in abject poverty. He assumed the role of a social reformer who exposed the ugly face of the exploiters. After spending several years of exile in Siberia, he changed his beliefs and vision of life. He turned to orthodox
Christianity, and his writings during the latter phase were marked with the themes of love, hope, happiness, redemption and resurrection. His shift was on the spiritual level. The harrowing experience of facing death penalty, the last moment pardon, the toughest possible conditions in Siberia and his thorough study of the Bible seem to be the factors in bringing about this shift in his perception. W.H. Auden’s intellectual movement is similar to that of Dostoevsky. His early life was dominated by post-Freudian psychology, Marxism and liberal-socialist-democratic outlook, and he wrote with revolutionary change of society as the central theme of his works. His change of mind began during his stay in Spain in 1937, and after his immigration to America in 1939, he converted himself to religious beliefs, and started writing poems and plays on religious themes. In this regard Charles Williams, Søren Kierkegaard and Reinhold Neibuhr influenced him greatly. His conversion was a kind of intellectual process rather than a spiritual experience. The present thesis is the product of an extensive study of Arundhati Roy’s life and works, both fiction and non-fiction.

Roy’s migration is essentially intellectual, but the type of her intellectual migration is quite different from that of Dostoevsky and Auden. Some obvious factors such as exile to Siberia in the case of Dostoevsky and an incident in a cinema hall in the case of Auden turned their life upside down. But in the case of Arundhati Roy, there is no such apparent factor responsible for her intellectual migration.

Roy was searching for a form to provide an outlet for her intellectual energies and beliefs. Till The God of Small Things, her mind was flitting from creative to non-creative writings and vice-versa. Actually she was experimenting with different forms of writing to find the most appropriate and effective one to suit her purpose.
Roy thinks that in this age of corporate globalization, neo-imperialism and neo-liberalization, when most of the people in the world fight a daily battle against hunger, thirst, and the violation of their dignity, a writer should use their skills, imagination and art “to re-create the rhythms of the endless crisis of normality, and in doing so, expose the policies and processes that make ordinary things—food, water, shelter, and dignity—such a distant dream for ordinary people” (An Ordinary Person’s Guide 106-107). She asserts that a writer should understand and expose the instruments and apparatus of the State. In this time of urgency, a writer should share the experiences of the masses and give voice to their feelings and thoughts.

Roy is a voice of the devoiced. She uses her skill, imagination, resources and time to expose and unmask the veiled bestial face of the imperialists, capitalists, and even of the state. Her sole aim is to make the powerless and the exploited aware of the injustices done to them by the powerful. To achieve this objective, she writes political essays which, she thinks, are easily accessible and credible to the masses, because people read political essays as facts based on relevant and actual data and statistics. This is the reason that pushes Roy towards the writing of political essays. Her only novel, The God of Small Things, is not less political than her political essays. In this novel, she exposes the fascist style of communist party in Kerala, the politics of untouchability, women suppression, and brutal treatment of the marginalized in postcolonial India. She got prestigious Booker Prize, worldwide fame and wealth for this novel; yet she decided not to write another novel, because she thinks a piece of fiction is less effective to carry out her mission of social awareness as creative writing cannot deal with the complex and intricate social, political reality with as much clarity as non-fiction writing. Readers often fail to
comprehend its true intent and purpose. Sometimes they take it as only a piece of literature meant for entertainment. Readers failed to understand the message Roy wanted to convey through *The God of Small Things*. The novel has been criticized for wrong and insignificant reasons such as the incestuous relation between the twins Estha and Rahel, and the love-making scene involving Ammu and Velutha. So she decided to give up creative writing and focus on social and political writing.

Roy had also written essays before she wrote *The God of Small Things*. In 1987, she wrote a book entitled *Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan: Causes, Consequences and India’s Response*, and in 1994, wrote two essays, ‘The Great Indian Rape Trick I & II’, scathing reviews of Shekhar Kapur’s film ‘Bandit Queen’.

Before *The God of Small Things*, Roy’s concern for women is reflected in ‘The Great Indian Rape Trick I & II’. In these two essays, she intervenes in local as well as international feminist practice. She protests against Shekhar Kapur for his exploiting, misrepresenting and undermining the actual life experiences of Phoolan Devi by restaging her rape without her consent. She lashes out at the practice of commodification of woman’s body to serve the commercial interests of the director of the film. By claiming the film’s status as ‘Truth’, Mr. Kapur coloured it with imagination, and made it delicious by adding *masala*, rape and gang rape, to allure the audience. She is critical of showing Phoolan’s revenge for her rape as the main motive. Although the film is claimed to be based on Mala Sen’s book *India’s Bandit Queen: The True Story of Phoolan Devi*, a lot of discrepancies are there throughout the film. Roy accuses Kapur of his violation of truth, justice and liberty of woman by cutting, altering and adapting her life experiences
and re-inventing her life with his own imagination. She indicts Kapur for his commodification of woman’s body.

The central theme of her writings, that is, the conflict between power and powerlessness is reflected in the screenplay *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones* in which she shows the disparity of advantage between town folks and villagers, and between the rich and the poor living in cities. She expresses her own intention through the characters, Annie and Radha, who confront the regressive social order, and express their concern for the powerless. On the contrary, the principal of the institute, Y.D. Billimoria and other professors do not dare to defy bourgeois social norms and represent the system, materialism and dogma. They are the agents of the powerful. In this film script, Roy appears to be a social reformer and political activist. She criticizes the government’s negligence in providing the rural people with essential and basic infrastructure and facilities in health, education, communication and employment that urban people receive. Through the plan designed by Annie, she actually wants the government to focus on the development of rural people. Radha is the mouthpiece of Arundhati herself who thinks that an architect should have a commitment to society for its well-being by reducing the gulf of advantage between the rich and the poor living in urban areas. She hates to be a part of money-making industry of architecture. She is against the system which divides the people in cities into ‘citizens’ who enjoy all the facilities of modern life and ‘non-citizens’ who are deprived of these. Till this point of her literary career, Roy could not find the space she was searching for. Her mind was still hunting for intellectual stability. So she started to write *The God of Small Things*. 
The novel is essentially a social document, as it depicts the social, political, economic and cultural milieu of 1960s in Kerala. India got freedom from the British, but it still carries a heavy burden of colonized psyche. Indians show a slavish attitude towards their ex-masters. The middle and the upper class people are much more submissive to the colonial culture than the lower class people. In Frantz Fanon’s words, “the native intellectual has thrown himself greedily upon Western culture” (The Wretched 176). Roy brings three types of characters in The God of Small Things to show the cultural slavery of Indians in postcolonial India. The first type includes Pappachi, Baby Kochamma and Chacko who blindly follow Western culture as superior to their own. Pappachi’s life-long endeavour to assimilate himself with Englishmen reminds us of Frantz Fanon’s theory of postcolonial psychic experience. He himself takes Western education, and sends his son Chacko to Oxford for a degree. He cannot believe that an Englishman “could covet another man’s wife” (The God 42). He thinks the British are “enlightened saviours”. The elaborate arrangement made by the Ipe family to receive Chacko’s white ex-wife Margaret and his daughter in Ayemenem shows total submission to the colonial culture. In this regard Chacko goes to such an extent that he measures whole human civilization within the parameter of British civilization. He feels a sense of pride for having a white wife. In Oxford, he is completely submissive to his British wife, and ignores his mother and family, and the whole beautiful landscape of Ayemenem. Chacko uses Kathakali ballet dance, an indigenous myth, to serve his own commercial purpose by recreating the half-naked foreign tourists. To Roy, it is a kind of cultural commodification. Baby Kochamma’s vain attempts to speak English in correct British accent with Margaret, her special training of spoken English to the twins Rahel and
Estha, her turning to American NBA league games, one day cricket, Grand Slam tennis tournaments, *The Bold and The Beautiful* and *Santa Barbara* shows indicate that she is fully controlled by cultural hegemony.

The second type of characters includes Rahel and Estha who are often reluctant to imbibe Western culture. Ammu is against the colonial culture imposed on Pappachi, Chacko and Baby Kochamma. She is sardonic to them. Roy shows, as Edward Said says in his *Orientalism*, that the West was wrong to treat the East as inferior both culturally and intellectually.

Roy is essentially a communist who fights against all kinds of exploitation, suppression, injustice and inequality. She is accused of being an anti-communist, because she unmasksthe communist leaders in Kerala who used communism to serve their personal agenda. The first communist chief minister of Kerala, E. M. S. Namboodiripad’s promise to neutralize the police in public affairs, to enforce land reforms and to subvert the judiciary appeared to be a hoax within a year. Roy cannot put up with the hypocritical attitude of the communist leaders who at the same time governed people and fomented a revolution. She shows that this government failed to keep any promise given to the people of Kerala. Very soon the riots, strikes and police brutality turned Kerala into a complete anarchy. Roy thinks that the Naxalite uprising was the result of the failure to keep promise to the people by the communist government. The communist leaders exercised anti-communist activities. Peasants were forced to work in the fields eleven and half hours a day with very little wages without any recession, and there was discrepancy between the wages of male and female workers. This government made a fun of classless society which is one of the main mottos of communism, and it could not rise above the
issues of caste system. During the tenure of this government the condition of the untouchables was much worse. Local leader K.N.M. Pillai appears to be a pseudo-communist who never sacrifices his own interest for the well-being of society. The untouchable Velutha, although he has all the qualities to be a true communist, is suppressed, tortured and beaten to death by the local communist leader Comrade Pillai, factory owner Chacko and the police. The government was the agent of the capitalists who created a class that can be suppressed and exploited economically and socially.

Roy’s depiction of the deplorable plight of the untouchables in India in this novel shows that they still live a life of colonized people in postcolonial India deprived of all the human rights, dignity and identity. They are constantly exploited and suppressed socially, economically, culturally and politically. Sometimes they do not exist for the mainstream life. A very dismal picture of the power structure is clearly visible in the caste-ridden Kerala where the untouchables are treated as social outcasts. The Communist Party in Kerala used the problem of untouchability as a tool for electoral gains. It is really painful that the government “never overtly questioned the traditional values of a caste–ridden, extremely traditional community. The Marxists worked from within the communist divides, never challenging them, never appearing not to” (66-67). To suppress the masses the powerful formed social codes which are always in favour of the powerful. They made ‘Love Laws’ which must be obeyed by the untouchables, and violation of which might bring a heavy penalty. Vellya Pappen and his two sons Velutha and Kuttapen belong to an untouchable caste, and they are the victims of politicians, administration and members of upper caste family. Vellya Pappen suffers at the hands of upper caste family, although he is loyal and submissive to his masters. His son Velutha
suffers, because he defies and breaks the social codes imposed on him. Velutha is beaten to death, because he breaks the Love Laws by touching the female body of a touchable woman. Velutha is the victim of narrow politics, and the communist government cannot save an untouchable member of the party, because they never intend to do so.

Roy delves into the arena of depth psychology, particularly in the case of the twins Estha and Rahel. She depicts the humiliating and deeply disappointing experiences of the twins. Their childhood trauma leads them to live the life of isolation in the case of Estha and of recklessness in the case of Rahel. The twins are deprived of fatherly love and care from the age of two, and at the age of five, they are treated as outcasts and unwanted creatures because of their parentage at their maternal uncle’s house. They are doomed, fatherless urchins to Baby Kochamma and millstones around their uncle Chacko’s neck. In Sophie Mol’s funeral, they are to stand separately, as though they have no connection with the family. A series of traumatic experiences — his sexual molestation by Orangered Lemondrink Man at ‘Abhilash Talkies’, his cousin Sophie Mol’s drowning to death, his eye-witnessing of beating to death of Velutha and his mother Ammu’s verbal abuses — accelerate Estha’s predilection for muteness, and he goes totally insane. Both Rahel and Estha think that they are responsible for the torturous death of Velutha, and a sense of guilt haunts them for the years to come. Rahel’s unusual behaviour at school and college is the consequence of her devastating and painful past. Roy shows the adults as perpetrators and the children as victims. In this novel, all of the three children go through a tragic life — Sophie Mol’s dying as a child, Estha becoming insane and a recluse, and Rahel attempting to dip into the bohemian life, but miserably failing.
Roy relentlessly fights for the cause of women. Her feminist concerns are reflected in her scathing reviews of Shekhar Kapur’s ‘Bandit Queen’, in the film script *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones*, in her non-fiction writings and in her novel *The God of Small Things*. In this novel she attacks the male chauvinist society which takes women as legal, economic and sexual property. A woman is a puppet in the hands of her father before marriage, of husband after marriage and at her old age in the hands of her son. Mammachi receives this kind of brutality and suppression from three generations of patriarchal dominance. Mammachi, Baby Kochamma, Ammu and Rahel are the relentless sufferers at the hands of the males. Pappachi and Chacko appear to be the eternal suppressors and controllers of women. Baby Kochamma, being a woman, takes the side of patriarchy because of jealousy and her unrequited love. Later Mammachi joins hands with patriarchy to accentuate male dominance. Mammachi’s submissive, compliant and meek nature towards her father, husband and son makes her become torturer and suppressor of women later. Ammu rebels against male chauvinists, but fails to defy the age old norms. Her challenge to the traditions and love laws made by the males to dominate women brings a heavy price to pay, and ultimately she has to surrender to fate. Rahel is an embodiment of Roy through whom Roy voices her own protest against male chauvinist society. Rahel is portrayed as a rebel who challenges all sorts of social norms formed to suppress women. Through the eyes of Rahel, Roy dreams of a utopia where there will be no disparity between male and female in rights and dignity.

The problems India is reeling under, such as the burden of colonized psyche of postcolonial elites, disparity between masters and slaves, owners and workers, suppression, oppression and exploitation of the marginalized and misuse of state
machinery to subdue the weak, are not critically discussed as the main concerns which Roy wants to highlight. Here Roy realizes the futility of her efforts. This is a reason that has kept her away from writing another piece of fiction, although she got worldwide fame and wealth for this novel. After the booker, she was offered many lucrative deals from big publishers for writing another novel, but she turned them down. She chooses small, independent publishers, like South End Press, that run non-profitable business. Fame and wealth never attract her, and here lies the difference between Roy and most of the diasporic writers who line up for big publishers. She says:

When people describe me as famous and rich and successful, it makes me feel queasy. Each of those words falls on my soul like an insult. They seem tinny and boring and shiny and uninteresting to me. It makes me feel unsuccessful because I never set out to be those things. And they make me uneasy. To be famous, rich and successful in this world is not an admirable thing. I’m suspicious of it all.

Failure attracts my curiosity as a writer. Loss, grief, brokenness, failure, the ability to find happiness in the saddest things—these are the things that interest me. (*The Shape 75*)

After *The God of Small Things*, Roy again turned to write non-fiction which she thinks a more comprehensible and easily accessible form of literature to expose the dangerous policies, plans, instruments, strategies of neo-imperialism such as neo-liberalism and globalization designed by the postcolonial native rulers and the neo-imperial and capitalist countries such as the United States, Britain, Israel and others. Roy
talks about the exploitation of the powerless at the national and transnational level. It is hardly possible to incorporate in a novel all these facts which are thoroughly researched.

Presently India is teetering on the brink of civil war. The majority of the people in India are facing a number of problems because of the government’s wrong policies, and a civil unrest among its people is throttling the progress of the country. In *The End of Imagination*, she passionately and vehemently expresses her outrage against the testing of nuclear bombs at Pokhran in 1998 by the BJP-led Central Government. She asserts that it was a kind of fascist and totalitarian attitude of the government that tried to persuade the people that the testing of nuclear bombs was a singular achievement and a matter of national pride. She expresses her concerns for the jingoistic nationalism prevalent among the people. She tries to make the people aware by pointing out the devastating aftermath of the nuclear test. She also exposes the irrelevance and ineffectiveness of the theory of deterrence, political expedience, and “Exposing Western Hypocrisy” on the basis of which Indian government tried to achieve consensus of the people for nuclear test. She thinks that India’s intention to be a part of the club of Super Powers by testing nuclear bombs was not only fallacious but also ridiculous.

In ‘The Greater Common Good’ and ‘The Road to Harsud’, Roy expresses her deep concern for the construction of Big Dams. In these essays, she says that India takes ideology of development as an excuse for capitalist expansion by dispossessing, dislocating and repressing the weak of the nation, especially the *dalits* and *adivasis*. To them this development means horror and miseries. She assails the Government of India for its development policies of building dams, and the World Bank and Indian Supreme Court for their assistance and support without regarding the scientific studies on the
social, economic and ecological impact of dams. The postcolonial ruling natives reduce poor people, *dalits* and *adivasis* to mere postcolonial subalterns who are the victims of the decision made by their own government. These two essays are the result of Roy’s study of the data on social, environmental and economic impact of dams, and of her own experiences. The painful episode of this developmental project is that millions of people are displaced and dispossessed without any proper rehabilitation and compensation. Roy sees the ray of hope in the resistance movement being carried out all over India against the construction of dams under the leadership of Medha Patkar. This movement forced the government and the World Bank to set up commissions to review the human cost and environmental impact of big dams.

Indian poor, *dalits* and *adivasis* are the real victims of globalization, neoliberalization and free market economy. Roy’s depiction of the plight of the tribals in India in her essays ‘Mr. Chidambaram’s War’ and ‘Walking with the Comrades’ exposes the deplorable conditions of the colonized Indians in post-colonial India. She holds the Government responsible for most of the tribals’ joining, supporting and sympathizing with the Maoists, because the Maoists assist them in their struggle for existence, when they are deprived of the basic elements of life — safe drinking water, electricity, education, healthcare, legal redress, and even dignity and identity of a man. The Government and the corporations in the name of free-market and national-interest dislocate the tribals from the mineral rich lands by the brutal police and military force through killing, raping and driving them away. Roy lashes out at the then Home Minister P. Chidambaram for his launching the Operation Green Hunt in 2009 which, she thinks, was designed to wipe out the tribals from the mining areas just to create a favourable
climate for investment. Roy’s concern is the negligence and lack of good intention of the Government to solve the Maoist problem through discussion, negotiation, and understanding the root cause of their outrage. She thinks that military brutalization cannot be a solution for this sort of problem spanning over decades.

In ‘Azadi’, ‘Democracy’s Failing Light’, ‘How Deep Shall We Dig’ and some other essays, she talks about the problems prevailing in the states of the north-east and Kashmir, and Indian Government’s responsibility for it. They are imagined communities who are marginalized in every sphere of life. It shows the failure of the postcolonial project of creating a unified India. She vehemently expresses her outrage against the implementation of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. In the name of killing the militants, the army personnel with the power of this act kill thousands of innocent ordinary people and label them as terrorists, gangsters, or insurgents. The ratio of army personnel and the people of Kashmir indicates that the Indian Government deploys force to control the Kashmiri people. The condition in Kashmir and the north-eastern states indicates the complete failure of Indian democracy. She asserts that the Kashmiri people’s demand of the end of Indian rule, deployment of a UN Peacekeeping Force and an investigation of war crimes committed over the last two decades by the Indian army is not unjustified, but these are their rights. She is very true when she says that Kashmir is not a problem, but a successful solution in serving the political interests of the politicians. Very recently, she kicked up a storm by a daring remark that Kashmir was never an integral part of India, and for this, she was accused of sedition.

India is inflicted with the dual assault of communal neo-fascism and neoliberal capitalism, and the poor and religious minorities are the worst sufferers of these assaults.
While the Congress government brought neoliberal capitalism to India, the BJP practised communal fascism as an electoral strategy to come to the power. With this agenda the BJP came to power in 1998, and it committed genocide in 2002 in Gujarat by killing 2000 and displacing 1,50,000 Muslims. Muslims have been systematically marginalized socially, culturally, economically, and even politically. The neo-fascism’s brutal and bestial face was exposed, when the pogrom was justified by the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee as “part of the retaliation by outraged Hindus against Muslim ‘terrorists’” (The Algebra 265). Roy lashes out at the Indian democracy as flawed and laced with religious fascism. She also reminds the people of the Congress government’s horrific past with three thousands Sikhs butchered in Delhi in 1984, just after the assassination of Indira Gandhi. She criticizes the enactment of Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) by the BJP government which was designed to suppress and wipe out the dalits, adivasis and religious minorities, especially Muslims.

Neoliberal capitalism strangulates the poor in India. It is a part of American neo-imperialism which has the policy of privatization of national resources such as lands, mountains, minerals, water, electricity, education, healthcare at its core. Neo-liberal capitalism is nurtured by International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and Inter-American Development bank. In a nutshell, the joint force of American-imperialism and the native government consigns the life of the people of Third World countries into darkness and uncertainty. Roy’s remark is very realistic when she says that the neoliberal markets make a business strategy that the First World needs to sell and the Third World needs to buy. The devastating effect of neoliberal capitalism and free market forces thousands of farmers to commit suicide every year in India.
Roy exposes the hidden ugly face of American-imperialism, neo-colonialism and its strategy of globalization to overcome its unprecedented and ever-deepening economic crisis and to retain its military supremacy. Her dealing with international issues mainly focuses on how American-imperialism with intrigue, assassinations, aggressions, blockades, sanctions and invasion colonizes weak nations. She reveals that America through the CIA, and with the help of other capitalist countries has committed massacre and genocide in almost all the developing and underdeveloped countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America. She brings the painful histories of US invasion of South Vietnam, North Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Afghanistan, and more recently, Iraq.

America with the co-operation of World Trade Organization, World Bank and International Monetary Fund carries out its strategy of globalization, privatization and liberalization to suck the last drop of blood from the impoverished and poor people of underdeveloped countries. She unveils to the world how America with the largest state debt and economic hollowness and millions of jobless citizens is desperate to revamp its sagging economy by selling and clearing the stock of arms and ammunitions (as the arm industry is the main source of American income) and by the contract of reconstruction works after the wars, and by capturing the rich oil reserves (in the Middle-East). Exercising global hegemony is another central objective of American imperialism. Roy points out the real motive of waging war on Afghanistan and Iraq. She says that Afghanistan war was waged with an eye to open up and control a corridor to the oil reserves of Central Asia, and war on Iraq had the intention to establish domination over the vast oil reserves of Iraq. Roy thinks that 9/11 was a self-made excuse of America to launch its ‘War on Terror’ to fulfill its objectives in Afghanistan and Iraq. Roy brings
data to prove that 9/11 was the sudden outburst of accumulated rage of many decades against American atrocities all over the world. She describes the painful history of how the state of Israel was formed unlawfully and how it, with the help and support of America, indulges in inhuman treatment and torture of the Palestinian people, and violates human rights regularly.

She shows how America and its allies, after 9/11, equate global terrorism with Islamic movement, and to crush this movement how much aggression and brutality is unleashed against Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries in the Middle-East. During the colonial period of Russian communism in Afghanistan, America, through the CIA and the ISI, armed, financed and trained a number of dictators, despots and terrorists to wipe out Russian forces in order to exercise hegemony in Afghanistan, and when Russia withdrew from Afghanistan, it turned against the Taliban, and invaded Afghanistan to capture the rich oil reserves of Central Asia.

In ‘An Ordinary Person’s Guide to Empire’, ‘Instant-Mix Imperial Democracy (buy one, get one free)’, ‘Peace and the New Corporate Liberation Theology’, she shows how American neo-liberalization and neo-colonialization bulldozed an ancient civilization (Iraq) into dust. She says that Iraq is the “logical culmination of the process of corporate globalization, in which neocolonialism and neoliberalism have fused” (An Ordinary Person’s Guide 334). The logic of Operation Iraqi Freedom that was designed with an excuse of Iraq’s possession of weapons of mass destruction was baseless. Before the invasion, the UN’s chief weapons inspectors had given a clean chit to Saddam Hussein on that count. America retained its fascist colour by disrespecting the protest of
millions of people all over the world against the invasion of Iraq and imposed total economic and political hegemony over a hapless people.

Roy’s biography may suggest that she has a fickle mind and has kept flitting between different fields, from architecture to political writing, to cinema to fiction and back to political writing, but a close reading of her writings clearly indicates that the themes of all her writings reflect her political bent of mind. To her an architectural thesis, a film script, a novel, a political essay are various ways of expressing an evolving political vision. In the forward of In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones, she says that right from the time of her studying architecture or even earlier, the political way of looking at the world began. From that time she began to try and understand the endless conflict between power and powerlessness, which has remained the central theme of much of her writings, fiction and non-fiction alike. In ‘Come September’ she says: “Fiction and non-fiction are only different techniques of storytelling. For reasons I do not fully understand, fiction dances out of me. Non-fiction is wrenched out by the aching, broken world I wake up to every morning” (13). So Roy is one of the most consistent writers who has not changed her beliefs, ideas and faith. She has only changed the forms of writing, or, in other words, she tells the story in different ways. Roy’s migration is intellectual, noble and honest. In other words, her migration is not motivated by any selfish, personal considerations, but by the desire to serve the cause of the marginalized and the exploited in the most effective way possible.

Finally, we must answer the question: Why did Roy choose to settle down to political writing after extensive experimenting with the various forms? In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones sank with so much of a trace. It is anybody’s case that the
commercial interests and issues associated with film making do not provide much scope for serious writers to venture into this genre. *The God of Small Things* was an instant success, made Roy a celebrity almost overnight, won her acclaim in the form of Booker, but did not satisfy Roy herself because personal fame and fortune is not what she has been looking for. Fictionalization of politics imposed its own restrictions and severely limited the scope of unambiguous expression of ideas and perceptions. The novel was acclaimed and criticized for wrong reasons, and many of Roy’s socio-political concerns were lost in the labyrinth of story-telling. It is in the very nature of creative writing to make crystal clear reality ambiguous and paradoxical. It may be the strength of creativity from one perspective, but when unambiguous expression of ideas and thoughts and perceptions is the chief motive of a writer, this strength becomes a weakness.

Roy had no option but to settle for political writing because of her choice of themes also. From exposing the nefarious designs of controlling the hearts and minds of the people, and the will of governments across the globe that informs the functioning of US imperialism, to hammering at the conspiracy of dispossessing the naturally lawful owners of lands and resources in the tribal areas through the bogie of Naxalism, from shattering the self-righteous patriotic myths about Kashmir to unrelenting war against monopolization of wealth in the private sector under the garb of neo-liberalism and globalization, the themes that Roy has selected for her writings demand clarity of thought and expression in equal measure. She is bold enough to face the consequences of telling the truth, and courageous enough not to seek shelter behind the façade of ambiguity offered by creative writing. Hence Roy has come home in political writing; her migration has led her to her intellectual roots.


