Preface

India has a subaltern identity and the nation is placed among the third world countries of the world. Atrocities against the subalterns are increasing day by day in the name of caste, creed and gender. In “Can the Subaltern Speak?”, Spivak reiterates her standpoint that “the subaltern cannot speak.” Spivak’s statement became highly controversial in the post-colonial scenario. One of the reasons for this controversy was the comparison of the words ‘speak’ along with ‘talk’. Spivak’s theory of subalternity is relevant in the ‘art’ and ‘activism’ of Arundhati Roy. The subaltern characters in Roy’s works try their level best to speak but the authorities turn a deaf ear to their plea. Arundhati Roy’s Booker Prize winning novel The God of Small Things is an artistic adventure. Roy has given prominence to two major themes in the novel – ecology and subalternity. Roy moved from the role of an artist to an activist with the publication of The End of Imagination and The Greater Common Good. Roy continues to deal with the major themes in her novel – ecology and subalternity - in the world of day-to-day life. Art here paves way for activism in Arundhati Roy. There is a definite connection with the themes of ecology and subalternity in the novel and Roy’s association with the Narmada Bachavo Andolan.

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