



EXPLORING THE REASONS FOR SOCIOECONOMIC DISPARITY IN ROY'S NOVELS: THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS (1997) AND THE MINISTRY OF UTMOST HAPPINESS (2017)

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ABSTRACT- This study aims to explore Arundhati Roy's novels *The God of Small Things* (1997) and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) through Althusser's concept of Ideological State Apparatus (ISA). The rationale for this study is grounded in the researcher's interest to conduct a comprehensive analysis of reasons for the socio-economic disparity in the selected novels. The researcher observes that ISA conserve and widen the inconsistency which favor domination of upper class and suppression of already oppressed class in the selected works. The significant ISAs like education, religion, communication or media, politics, and family ISAs are present in the novels. The study, finally, concludes that there is a strong presence of ISA in Roy's works and it directs the major incidents and characters in the novels.

Keywords: ISA, socioeconomic, disparity, domination, oppressed class

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The present study explores Arundhati Roy's novels: *The God of Small Things* (1997) and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) to understand reasons for possible socioeconomic disparity on the basis of genealogy in the selected works. This study is directed by Althusser's concept of Ideological State Apparatus (ISA). He is of the view that ideology sustains or reproduces ruling order persuasively (Felluga, 2002). People are the subject of ISA (Althusser, 2014, p.259). They are made to believe, think and act in a way to support and sustain the hegemony of the upper class (ibid). This research aims to investigate whether the same concept applies to Roy's novels.

DeMichele (2016) confirms that the class system in India is on the basis of birth. No other nation or culture shows the same kind of social stratification which has a close affinity with the belief system (DeMichele, 2016). Also, the class system in India is based on birth which is more unfair and rigged (ibid). It is the aforementioned issue that draws the researcher's attention and led to choose the selected novels for the present research. The author of these works, Roy believes that people must be aware of the society they are living in through fiction because it is *only fiction that tends to fully address the world (ibid)*. And since external events have forced her hand (Lewis, 2018), the present study aims to explore her novels.

1. The objective of the Study

The proposed study intends to explore the reason for possible socio-economic inequalities among different social classes from Althusser's concept of ISA in *The God of Small Things* (1997) and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017).

2. Research Question

What reason for socio-economic inequalities among different social classes have been explored from Althusser's concept of ISA in *The God of Small Things* (1997) and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017)?

3. Introduction to the author

Arundhati Roy was born in 1959 in India (The Library of Congress, 2016). Her first was published in 1997 and won the Man Booker prize in 1997 (Penguin Books Limited, 2021). Also, it won the attention of many critics, pundits, and media persons (The Library of Congress, 2016). It was translated into more than forty languages. The second novel, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* was longlisted for Man Booker Prize 2017 (Penguin Books Limited, 2021).

Roy is one of the daring and innovative concepts and language writer of contemporary times The Library of Congress, 2016). She is called “a writer of victims of modernity” because of her efforts to dedicate her celebrity status to support the popular causes she believes in. She has excoriated well-supported decisions of the Indian Government like the launch of the nuclear test in 1998, construction of the Narmada dam in Madhya Pradesh and Gujrat (ibid).

4. Introduction to the Novels

4.1 *The God of Small Things* (1997)

The novel affirms the never-ceasing class system from Ayemenem, India despite being outlawed from the country (Course Hero, 2017). The presence of the Communist party to bring change and rebellion for the aggrieved lower class is worrisome for Ipes who represents the upper class in the novel. The novel is set in two different time-period. The major events are covered in incoherent chronological order. The caste system is enacted in both time periods (ibid).

Ammu and *Valutha*, both representing two different classes, transgress the class system by their close relationship (Course Hero, 2017). *Ammu* and *Valutha* having breached the social laws face their shattered lives and family and death. The society of Ayemenem becomes hostile to *Valutha* so much so that he was killed without having a proper investigation of this crime (ibid).

Later, after 23 years when twins *Estha* and *Rahel*, children of *Ammu* reunite, the outlawed social laws are still in plain view (Course Hero, 2017). Ironically, Roy’s point of emphasis is that no amount of tragedy can eradicate the class system and monopoly of power of exploiters like Comrade Pillai from Ayemenem (ibid).

4.2 *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017)

The main plot of the story has two main protagonists: *Anjum* and *S. Tilottama*. *Anjum*’s story is set in Delhi and she represents the transgender community (BookRags, 2021). While *S. Tilottama* AKA *Tilo*’s story is more related to Kashmir valley. The story starts and ends in a graveyard. Also, the book is dedicated to “To the Unconsoled” (ibid).

Anjum, being a transgender faces the unwelcoming attitude of people first in her family, school, streets, and then society. After facing unacceptable behavior from society she joins Khwabgah where she raises a girl named *Zainab*. Then, she leaves Khwabgah to live in a cemetery which she turns into Jannat Guest House for earning.

Alongside, the story of *Tilo* is given in the novel. She is an architect, a dark-skinned lady. She has a close relationship with an architect student from Kashmir. As the story proceeds, it is discovered that the two characters Garson Hobart; a bureaucrat, and *Naga* love her. *Naga* is a journalist and *Tilo*’s husband. In addition to the main stories, there are details of life in Kashmir and its landscape. Towards the end, *Tilo* and *Anjum* spend their life in the graveyard with *Zainab* having married *Sadam*, a resident and business partner of *Anjum* in Jannat Guest House.

5. Introduction to the Theoretical Framework

Tyson (1950) states that Marxist literary theory helps in analyzing any text to explore issues like class conflict, dominant economic system by virtue of mode of production, the role of ideology, and nature of the human relationship in a particular society depicted in literary work (p. 55-64). The aim of using this particular theoretical framework may be to understand society and the conditions of people on a broader spectrum to clearly pose solutions to complex social problems.

By acknowledging the scope of this theoretical framework, the study is directed to understand the role of ideology specifically through Althusser’s concept of Ideological State apparatuses in *The God of small things* (1997) and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017).

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Roy’s works have caught the significant attention of critics, researchers, and policymakers around the world as her works are represented in contemporary times (The Library of Congress, 2016). The selected Althusser’s model of State Apparatus is also used by researchers for interpretation of literary

works. In this section, existing literature related to Roy's novels and theoretical framework is discussed. Along with existing literature, this section also points out the gap in the existing literature for this research.

Dwivedi (2010) points out discrimination on the basis of birth and discrimination with women on the basis of gender (p.387) are portrayed by Roy. The researcher by closely examining the two issues, concludes that violation of women's rights is actually more likely to be minimized by collective efforts (Dwivedi, 2010, p. 393). However, there is a long long way to go with discrimination on the basis of birth as it is grossly ingrained in Indian society. If someone tries to challenge this evil, face the opposition of society like Roy's characters; *Valutha*, *Ammu*, and *Kelan* (Dwivedi, 2010, p. 90).

Varghese (2009) uses the concept of Subalternity by Gayatri Spivak to study *The God of Small Things* (1997). She asserts that subaltern people are those who are not heard by authorities (ibid). As in the case of *The God of Small Things* (1997), *Ammu* and *Valutha* are presented as subalterns. Power is used to make them stand as wrong and silent. Roy, being a responsible artist of society, has played her part to show the reality. Likewise, art should be used for the purpose of social betterment and activism (ibid).

Raj (2018) finds that *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) is replete with characters and incidences which show the discriminatory attitude faced by lower-class people. For instance, the transgender community is still struggling for its basic rights. Moreover, characters are sidelined due to their religious and cultural identities as the people of Kashmir in this novel. In the same way, Dalits of India is also victimized due to its caste (Raj, 2018).

Raj (2018) adds that Government does not care for the environment as the process of deforestation and the heavy inflow of industrial machinery will pollute it. In the end, Raj (2018) concludes that Roy has brought to attention this issue and she has added to the voice of those in protest for rights.

Iyer (2018) finds that *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) is written in a fragmented and loose structure. Being a creative and realistic writer, Roy says that India itself is a fragmented nation. The story of such a nation can never be told in a structured form (p.165). Hence, for a divided nation like India, Roy chooses to write in a fragmented way to the sense of reality (Iyer, 2018, p. 165). India's aim to become a secular democracy is a distant dream. On the basis of race and religion, characters face discriminatory attitudes in the novel. This must not be ignored by the writers of the time. Writers must write for the cause of people and society (Iyer, 2018, p. 166).

Malik, Shahriar, & Bughio (2017) finds that Althusser's concept of Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) and Repressive State Apparatus (RSA) are used in Pakistan during Zia's regime as depicted in the novel *The Geometry of God* (2008) written by Uzma Aslam Khan. The researchers found that the public and private domains including education, and media, family, and religion work as ISA to disseminate the ideology of Zia. Along with this, state executives like police and the army are used to enforce the ruling structure through repressive means. Researchers conclude that the purpose of State Apparatus was to secure political interest under the policy of Islamisation (Malik, Shahriar, & Bughio, 2017, p. 185).

A brief review of the literature cited above shows that a significant number of scholars have devoted their research to Roy's works using a specifically Marxist theoretical framework. However, the research gap exists on the application of the Althusserian concept of Ideological State Apparatus on Roys' novels particularly *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017). Thus, this paper is an attempt to analyze the reasons for socioeconomic inequalities among different social classes.

III. INTRODUCTION TO THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Marxists put economic system and material power at the core of discussion when trying to explain any given social phenomenon or human behavior in it (Tyson, 2006, p. 54). This paper argues that socioeconomic inconsistency is embedded in society through State Apparatus (i.e. Ideological State Apparatus in this study) to favor pro-governing class economic order and power. For instances, the inconsistency on the basis of birth is unconvincing and baseless as the victims; *Valutha*, *Dayachand* and *S. Murugesan* are found more hardworking, dedicated, and well-deserving to attain the similar position and power enjoyed by characters of the upper-class characters like *Chacko*, *Comrade Pillai* in the novels. The concept of State Apparatus is discussed in the next section.

3.1 State Apparatus

Althusser (2014), through his concept of State Apparatus, has made ideology plausible and traceable in any society. According to him, ideology is material and concrete (Althusser, 2014, p.76). Its material existence is found in the “*non-ideological realities*” or institutions of state and followed through institute-related practices. Further, these practices are hardwired in social norms, rituals, habits, customs, and real-world obedience (ibid). Out of these two apparatuses: ISA and RSA pointed out by Althusser, this study is confined to use ISA for detailed study of selected novels.

3.1.1 Ideological State Apparatus (ISA)

Althusser defines ISA as:

a certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions (Althusser, 2014, p. 243).

Althusser (2014) has pointed out apparatuses that primarily work as ISA are: *scholastic, familial, religious, political, associative, information and news, publishing, and cultural* apparatuses (p.75, 243). These apparatuses work independently for one cause: to support state authority (p.76). Thus, they collectively make a ‘system’. One can understand the functioning of each apparatus relative to the other (p.76).

Althusser (2014) has stated that ISA ensures the supremacy of the upper class through ideology (p. 242). It interpellates people to uphold the supremacy of the ruling class inexpediently unstated way (Althusser, 2014, p.247). For instance, people go to educational institutes, churches, and watch T.V out of their ‘free will’ (Althusser, 2014 p. 78).

ISA is found in the private and public domains of one’s life (Althusser, 2014). Subsequently, it is less likely to work under the direct commandment of the state rather their engagement with the state is more of indirect nature (Althusser, 2014, p.81). For example, church or other religious institutes, apparently, seem to work independently of the state (p.79). However, they are legally bound to work under the commandment of the state, covertly. The practices followed in these institutes support the state without pronouncing it. In this way, they are part of the state yet they seem to be independent (p.80). This makes ISA less visible, more autonomous, and productive (Ibid).

This study finds Althusser’s concept helpful to the reason for the age-old socioeconomic disparity among social classes as depicted in the selected novels. For instance, in *The God of Small Things* (1997) the age-old norms and conventions are taken up in modern society as they are supporting ruling class dominance. Similarly, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) shows different tendencies against the state are repressed to maintain and consolidate the existing economic order.

This study proceeds to the next sector to show data interpreted under the light of the arguments presented above from the chosen theoretical framework. For convenience, *The Ministry of Utmost of Happiness* (2017) will be analyzed followed by the discussion on the *God Of Small Things* (1997) in chronological order.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is non-empirical research. It is research carried out to apply an existing theory, any previous academic knowledge (Dan, 2018). Non-empirical research is an analytical study on the basis of established facts (Fidelis, 2017, p. 26). In order to understand an existing issue, researchers may take the help of existing theory or they may come up with their own conceptual theory or idea by closely examining the issue (Fidelis, 2017). The research, subsequently, turns out to be a fresh contribution of researchers in the existing knowledge (ibid). In other words, non-empirical research helps in building theory (Dan, 2018).

V. DATA COLLECTION

5.1 Close Reading

This study uses close reading techniques to get a deeper comprehension of the selected text in the light of philosophical theory (Wiggins, 2015). The understanding of the text is achieved by making sense of its clear meaning for logical understanding. It takes into consideration the salient features of any selected philosophical theory in mind to reach a conclusion by providing textual lines as evidence (ibid).

The selected text is read multiple times to thoroughly understand a text in the light of philosophical argument as cited by Tim Shanahan (Wiggins, 2015). In other words, the user of this technique understands the fact that a text cannot be completely understood in one reading. Therefore, the close reading technique is a systematic way to understand a text by following a number of steps which are discussed below:

Firstly, researchers start with selecting a written text (Kain, 1998). They may select the whole text, some passages from the text (a significant one), or some details, facts, and other elements in a text such as structure, literary devices, or simply its meaning. After getting significant facts and examples which support or reject a theory, researchers build an understanding of the text (ibid).

Secondly, researchers annotate anything remarkable within the text and which can be brought into the discussion as an essential point for making readers understand researchers' viewpoint (Kain, 1998). It is the first attempt of researchers to support their argument by referring to the text and its interpretation.

Thirdly, readers take a holistic view of all annotations to figure out the pattern of the text's author (Kain, 1998). Researchers may notice the repetition of similar ideas, dissimilar ideas, or contradictory ideas within a text. This is more about taking care of the overall impression of the text on the structural level such as diction, and pattern (Close Reading Strategies Across the Grades, 2016).

Fourthly, all the compiled ideas are integrated, keeping the theoretical framework in mind, to synthesize the final understanding. In this step, the researcher may also reflect on the previous knowledge before going through the text and lead to a concrete conclusion.

This research has followed all the above-discussed steps to understand and create a conclusion of Roy's novel through the application of Althusser's concept of ISA.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

What reason for socio-economic inequalities among different social classes have been explored from Althusser's concept of ISA in *The God of Small Things* (1997) and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017)?

This study finds that the main reason for the socioeconomic disparity among different social classes is the presence of Althusser's (2014) mentioned education, religion, politics, communication or media, and family ISA in Roy's novels; *The God of Small Things* (1997) and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017). The pointed out apparatuses are given in detail below:

6.1 The Education ISA

Althusser (2014) proclaims that education is agreeably the most obvious and neutral ISA for interpellation (Lee, 2015). The use of education as ISA in present times is similar to that of the use of churches and religious institutes in medieval times. It is due to the reasons that teachers catch the undivided attention of pupils which makes interpellation easier at an early age (ibid).

Having realized the potential of education ISA, characters in Roy's novels are trying to leave their impact on the educational institutes. In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017), for instance, *saffron parakeets* exerted their influence by taking hold of university, disturbing concerts, and burning books (Roy, 2017, p.401). Not only this, a formal committee was formed to:

Formalize the process of turning history into mythology and mythology into history. They, also, had glorified Hindu stories and culture. Muslim ruler's poetry, architecture and literature were reduced to sound of clash of sword in war cry (Roy, 2017, p. 401).

Other than this, the purpose of educational ISA is to *fills the posts of small and middle technicians, white-collar workers, small and middle civil servants, petty-bourgeois of all kinds* (Althusser, 2014, p.251). In other words, the education system engages potential youth and recruits them to serve the upper class. This employed youth always remains engaged and subservient to the upper class. Subsequently, their struggle *to survive is certainly a factor in keeping them down* (Tyson, 2006, p.56). They hardly have time *to become politically active, or even politically aware, when one is struggling just to stay alive and feed one's children?* (Tyson, 2006, p.56). Thus, the ISAs become successful in the reproduction of repressive ideology. The same kind of ISA is found in Roy's *The God of Small Things* (1997) where *Valutha* is sent to school to become a skilled carpenter rather than an engineer.

By noticing his extraordinary qualities at early ages, he (Valutha) was sent to school (especial for Untouchables) by Vellya Paapen on the persuasion of Mammachi (Roy, 1997, p. 74).

Apart from his carpentry skills, Valutha had a way with machines. Mammachi (with impenetrable Touchable logic) often said that if only he hadn't been a Paravan, he might have become an engineer (Roy, 1997, p.75).

In *The God of Small Things* (1997), Valutha possesses skills and talent more than any aristocrat around him in the novel. However, his efforts are always undervalued in the capitalist society due to his belonging to the deprived class.

To keep the others happy, and since she knew that nobody else would hire him as a carpenter, Mammachi paid Valutha less than she would a Touchable carpenter but more than she would a Paravan. Mammachi didn't encourage him to enter the house (except when she needed something mended or installed) (Roy, 1997, p. 77).

It can be safely said that Valutha's underprivileged caste is an impediment to secure any respectable place in society. Although he is employed as a carpenter, it is not a real recognition of his skills and talent. He remains subservient to the upper class as a carpenter. It also engages him to extent that it kept him down as mentioned by (Tyson, 2006, p.56).

Along with this, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) Musa asserts that he got a job when the state machinery was out of order and there was a complete breakdown of state institutes as colleges and schools were shut down and there was widespread kidnapping, mass murder (Roy, 2017, p. 358). In this situation, all the people of Kashmir valley wanted to clear matriculation because it will make them eligible to get loans and funds. In this pursuit, those people also cleared the exams who copied instructions over answer copies written on question paper which asked them to turn over the page (ibid).

In other words, educational achievements like degrees and certificates are used to grant small funds and loans to needy people. The requirement of educational testimonials to grant small favors worsen the quality of education. Additionally, it makes people stay sincere with the government (ibid).

6.2 The Religion ISA

The upper class uses religion ISA to subjugate people of the lower class. Religion introduces the caste system which divides society into different classes. People of the upper class are given higher status in society while others follow them. One of the victims of religion ISA in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) is Dayachand AKA Sadam Hussain and his family. Dayanand's father was lynched in public on a false accusation of cow slaughtering (Roy, 2017, p. 89). The false accusation was raised by policeman *Sehrawat*. Killing a cow, which is considered holy in the Hindu religion, prompted mobs to kill Dayanand's father without proper investigation (Roy, 2017, p. 87-88). Thus, religious ISA served its purpose and Hindu protestors fiercely lynched Dayachand's father. On the other side, *Nimmo Gorakhpuri*, in the same novel, puts this matter in these words: *it that It's all about property, not cows. You have to be very careful* (Roy, 2017, p. 402).

Another victim of religious ISA, in the same novel, is *S. Murugesan*. He, being a soldier in the army, dies on his duty while fighting for his country (Roy, 2017, p. 316). Nevertheless, neither his services are celebrated, nor his dead body procession and family are honored with respect due to the unwillingness of upper-class Hindus of his native village (Roy, 2017, p. 317-318).

In his village the Vanniyars (who were not 'untouchable') would not allow the body of S. Murugesan (who was) to be carried past their houses to the cremation ground. So the funeral procession took a circuitous route that skirted the village to the separate Untouchables' cremation ground right next to the village dump (Roy, 2017, p. 317)

Other than this, his statue was built at the entrance of the village to celebrate his bravery. It was also a matter of concern for the upper-class people of the village. Subsequently, it was turned to dust because of his lower caste (Roy, 2017, p. 318).

Likewise, the outlawed caste system existing in Hinduism is reinforced by the Religion ISA against the downtrodden specifically Valutha and his family in *The God of Small Things* (1997). Valutha and his family are exploited on an economic, social, and moral basis in the name of outlawed practices. On the social level:

Paravans were expected to crawl backwards with a broom, sweeping away their footprints so that Brahmins or Syrian Christians would not defile themselves by accidentally stepping into a Paravan's footprints. In Mammachi's time, Paravans, like other Untouchables, were not allowed to walk on public roads, not allowed to cover their upper bodies, not allowed to carry umbrellas. They had to put their hands over their mouths when they spoke, to invert their polluted breath away from those whom they address (Roy, 1997, pp. 73-74).

On an economic basis, *Valutha* and his family are not offered a sufficient amount of income for the assigned workload. Hence,

Mammachi paid Valutha less than she would a Touchable carpenter but more than she would a Paravan. Mammachi didn't encourage him to enter the house (except when she needed something mended or installed) (Roy, 1997, p. 77).

Thus, it can be clearly observed that discrimination and exploitation are reinforced by the religion ISA in *The God of Small Things* (1997) and continues till day as confirmed by the contemporary work *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017). In other words, efforts of Roy's important characters like *Valutha*, *Dayachand* and his father, and *S.Murugesan* to challenge the socioeconomic disparity on the basis of birth are averted by the religion ISA.

6.3 The Communication or media ISA

The communication ISA includes media (television, radio) and press (Althusser, 2014). It works by treating every citizen as a "subject" of "daily doses of nationalism, chauvinism, liberalism, and moralism" (Althusser, 2014, p. 250). For example, in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017), chapter *Nativity*, media works to stir patriotic emotions in the general public by portraying chants of 'Hindustan Zindabad' and a positive image of the mother India (p. 96-97). But it altogether ignores the homeless population of the same country (ibid). On the contrary, the communication ISA has less role to play in *The God of Small Things* (1997) as compared to Roy's second novel. It appears when *Valutha* goes for help from *Lucky Press*. However, its doors are closed to him (Roy, 1997, p. 286).

6.4 The Family ISA

Althusser (2014) calls family a "unit of consumption" (p. 77). He, further, states that in a society based on the serfdom mode of reproduction, family plays a pivotal role (ibid). In *The God of Small Things* (1997), the family of *Valutha* has kept in place the mode of production based on serfdom for their class. For instances, on discovering *Valutha's* behavior not aligned with his class' (servitude), his father, *Vellya Paapen*:

feared for his younger son.... Perhaps it was a lack of hesitation. An unwarranted assurance. In the way he walked. The way he held his head. The quiet way he offered suggestion without being asked. Or the quiet way in which he disregarded suggestions without appearing to rebel. While these were qualities that were perfectly acceptable, perhaps even desirable in Touchables, Vellya Paapen thought that in a Paravan they could (And would, and indeed, should) be construed as insolence (Roy, 1997, p. 76).

Thus, it can be said that *Valutha's* deviation (in behavior) from his class caused resentment for his father. He fears for his son's not alignment with the mode of production they belong to. So, he tries to impose servitude in *Valutha* through his own ways in the novel.

6.5 The Politics ISA

The political ISA includes political parties and parliament (Althusser 2014, p.76). In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) the important political representatives make use of current events in their favor (p. 41-42). They use biased narratives against the minority to satisfy the privileged class and win the vote bank. It aggravates socioeconomic disparity and inequality in society. For instances, the belligerent speech by *Poet Prime Minister* on the incident of 9/11 instigates mobs to creates chaos in the country (Roy, 2017, p. 41-42). It meant to target minorities living in the country but once the unrest started it become uncontrolled. It becomes the cause of despair for already deprived people irrespective of religion as indicated by the text below:

The mobs were armed with swords and tridents and wore saffron headbands. They (The mob) had cadastral lists of Muslim homes, business and shop. They had stockpiles of gas cylinder (which seemed to explain the gas

shortage of the previous few weeks). When people who had been injured were taken to hospitals, mobs attacked the hospitals (Roy, 2017, p. 45).

As indicated above, misuse of gas cylinders causes gas shortage which is a problem faced by all the citizens and not only Muslims. Moreover, anti-terrorism laws introduced after 9/11 (Roy, 2017, pp. 41) were against minorities. Consequently, *in no time at all the prisons were full of young Muslim men* (Roy, 2017, p. 42).

In the same vein, political parties of *Comrade Pillai* and *Chacko* in *The God of Small Things* (1997) are also trying to secure their personal interest and exploiting workers of their respective parties are it communist political party (Roy, 1997, p. 66). They callout strongly progressive and socialistic agendas, but have nothing to offer except exploitation on the pattern of capitalism. For instances, the strong socialist party after coming into power, it *neutralizes the police, subverts the judiciary, and Restrain the Head of the Reactionary Anti-People Congress Government at the Centre* (Roy, 1997, p. 67) causes strikes, hunger, and famine (ibid).

VII. CONCLUSION

The proposed study intended to investigate the causes of socioeconomic disparity based on birth in the novels written by an Indian writer by bringing to light the intensity of the issue in that part of the world. The result of this study shows that discrimination on the basis of birth is deliberately fabricated by man (aristocrats) in society to sustain and maintain the power of the aristocracy. This fabrication society is achieved by interpellation of masses which is a complex phenomenon itself. The interpellation through varied apparatuses are explained with the help of Althusser's (2014) concept of ISA by highlighting the major events and text of selected novels: *The God of Small Things* (1997) and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017).

The selected novels were studied through close reading techniques. It helps in building a deeper understanding of the selected text step by step. After analyses, the study finds that there are some major apparatuses that deepen the socio-economic disparity by interpellation. The major ISAs found in the novels are education, religion, media or communication, family, and politics. These apparatuses are working to favor governing class the way Althusser (2014) has mentioned.

It is noted that the significance of education in shaping young minds is fully realized by the state in the selected novels. Hence, In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017), books, and libraries are influenced to turn history into mythology or stories which favor the upper class (p. 401). Similarly, the prospects of growth and independence are curbed by deviating minds of a poor lot in securing short time achievements like loans and other subsidies by the state in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) (Roy, 2017, p. 358). Even, some vulnerable are not offered these perks and they are sidelined when it comes to education (Roy, 1997, p. 74). Thus, this segment of the society manages to get technical and vocational education which only enables them to serve the upper class as in the case of *Valutha*. Instead of having skills and ability, it is impossible for him to become an engineer in such a society (Roy, 1997, p.75).

Similarly, the religion ISA is successfully creating a gap in society by placing truly deserving people like *Valutha*, *S.Murugesan*, and *Dayachand*, and his father at the weakest strata. They find society hostile and conformist to them and neglecting their contribution for its betterment. Adding to this, communication and media are found subservient to the state in the selected novels. For instance, In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017), media instead of being the voice of people remains engaged in portraying a one-sided picture for the glorification of achievements of the ruling class (p. 96-97).

Furthermore, *Valutha's* father *Vellya Paapen* is found an example of family ISA in *The God of Small Things* (1997). He keeps troubling *Valutha* for outgrowing the boundaries of his caste set by his caste system (Roy, 1997, p. 76). Lastly, in the politics ISA, political cohort work either to support the existing influential class or exploit the workers. In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2014), political leaders are occupied to exploit events like 9/11 in their political favor (p. 41-42). On the other hand, political leaders like *Chacko* and *Comrade Pillai* are exploiting workers in the name of freedom, unity, and equality (Roy, 1997, p.66-67).

In the end, this research study concludes that the reasons for the socioeconomic disparity are the presence of ISAs like education, religion, communication or media, family, and politics in Roy's novels: *The God of*

Small Things (1997) and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness (2017)*. The characters find it challenging to curb socio-economic disparity which is entrenched in the society through ISAs. Hence, it continues to exist for long period.

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