

Name of the Scholar : **Shabeena Kuttay**
Name of the Supervisor : **Professor Ameena K. Ansari**

Department of English
Faculty of Humanities & Languages
Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi-110025

Title: **Interrogating the Postcolonial Intellectual, Activist and Writer:
A Critical Reading of Arundhati Roy's Non-Fictional Works**

Abstract:

In the thirty five essays, one allegorical piece and one mock-drama that comprise Arundhati Roy's four anthologies – *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2001), *An Ordinary Person's Guide to the Empire* (2005), *Listening to Grasshoppers: Field Notes on Democracy* (2009), and *The Broken Republic* (2011) – that have been taken up as the primary source of this research, the main objective is to examine and evaluate Roy's role as a postcolonial intellectual, activist and writer. The research tries to bring out the various dimensions of Roy's writings in the intellectual discourse particularly from the perspective of the post-colonial, neo-colonial and imperialistic discourse of the twenty-first century. In a world where neo-colonialisms compete globally to demolish the rights of the silent oppressed segments of society, Roy's non-fiction is analysed for its radical critique of the contemporary world order, new hegemony and contemporary nation-state. Her dissenting voice aims at foregrounding the absences that are deliberately activated by the perpetrators of power against common masses who are subjected to divergent discriminations, oppressions and, thereby, relegated to a marginalized, sub-altern status. The thesis begins with a brief foreword to the research topic and then opens out into five chapters followed by a conclusion.

The thesis critically evaluates Roy's intellectualism as practiced by her in her literary works also as an activist for the various causes that she stands up for. Through the evaluation of her non-fictional works, the research sums up Roy's contribution to the intellectual tradition and her transition from a creative writer to activist. The research tries to critically evaluate Roy's intellectual career from a writer to an activist where she traverses different personas – that of an intellectual, an activist and a writer. In between her literary commitment and socio-political commentaries Roy transitioned into an activist who not only expressed her convictions through literature (fiction as well as non-fiction) but actively participated in social movements. She not only discussed controversial issues in her essays and journalistic tracts but also came out in open support of various movements for justice. This new activist persona strengthens her role as an intellectual because her social and political commitments do not stop at her literary contribution. They go beyond written words and realize into active involvement in various civil and social movements. She participates in marches and rallies, and joins open forums and discussions to represent the causes she advocates and believes in. The focus has been on ascertaining Roy's role as an intellectual in the twenty-first century by assessing how she fits in the definitional parameters of an intellectual in parlance of the contemporary epoch.