

Eco Political Study in Arundhati Roy's *Walking with the Comrades*

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Abstract:

The term eco - politics is an emerging term, it deals with environment and politics. These two are the oldest form of discipline which club their hands to form a new inter disciplinary area of study. The work shows the agony of laymen and their sufferings in power politics. Materialism peaks its domination and it results in deforestation. The concept of green politics emerges in the red eye of comrades. The power structure tries to control them with repressive state apparatus. In this process, ideological extremism sprouts and it fights against the armed super powers to save the nature. The term 'development' is used as a key weapon by the capitalists to enrich their wealth and it automatically results in the displacement of rural and tribes from their native place. The social set up of the country helps the capital and the natural resources become the possession of them. This paper is an attempt to question the concept of development, which makes common people as the victim of capitalism in the name of green politics.

Key Words: Eco politics, Materialism, Repressive state apparatus, ideological extremism, Green politics.

Environment is the base structure of human life. The life of human beings revolve around atmosphere. The relationship between humans and environment is inseparable. It is difficult to understand them in isolation. Politics is the oldest social construction which has its own impact on human beings from their evolution. It is hard to survive in a society without analyzing the political background. Environment and politics are two influential

words in human mankind and these words act as a driving force of the planet. Eco politics is an emerging trend which clubs environment and politics. Politics plays both the role of protagonist and antagonist in the midst of environment. Politics forces constant change in environment and it indirectly affects the life of human being. In this work, *Walking with the Comrades*, Arundathi Roy shows her rebellious attitude and she also exposes malicious intension of green politics. This paper looks at green politics of reserved forest in the red eye of suppressed laymen.

Roy wants to know the harsh reality of reserved forest and also the life of people who do not have faith in the system of government and democracy. Her social activism drives her to take brave decisions in her life. The ideology of Roy is one of the main reasons behind her journey towards exploring the unexplored parts of the country. She is ready to risk her life to find the different dimensions of life. The restrictions are high to the core. The party with leftist ideology is the core element of the forest. There is red hot war between the government and Maoists. The government of the nation depicts them in a negative way but on the other hand they are ideological extremists who work for their basic needs against huge power politics. The party has belief on the writer and they allow her to meet the fellow comrades inside the forest. Roy says,

The terse, typewritten note slipped under my door in a sealed envelope confirmed my appointment with 'India's single biggest internal security challenge'. I had been waiting for months to hear from them. I had to be at the Ma Danteshwari mandir in Dantewada, Chhattisgarh, at any of four given times on given two days. (WC 1)

These words justify the intension of the government over the community of its own citizen. The absolute power creates an aversion in the minds of people with leftist ideology. The history of Maoists records their anger over the power system. The government puts forward the mantra called 'development' and it is opposed by the community of laymen.

The scenario of Dantewada is completely different from other parts of the country. The army of the country holds its firm grip on the forest. The basic needs and the rights of the people are crushed by the armed hands of

army. The connection between the mass and army is questioned by the ideology. In the book, *Beginning Theory An Introduction and Critical Theory* Peter Barry says,

Althusser makes a useful distinction between what we might call state power and state control. State power is maintained by what Althusser terms repressive structures, which are institutions like the law courts, prisons, the police force and the army which operate in last analysis by the external force. (Barry 167)

These words depict the power of forces like army on the common people. The forest becomes the epicenter of a war. The government has new plan called 'Operation Green Hunt'. It has a green touch with idea of capitalism. Though the idea stands for the development of the country, the leftist people have their own grievance in this plan. They give importance to nature and culture. The concept of capitalism shows its own harsh reality with the name of displacement. The writer speaks about the four line highway crashing. This is the reality of the modern nation with development. It also has its own negative effort. The native rural people become victim of this so called development plan. The culture and nature of rural people are diluted by Repressive State Apparatus. The power structure uses armed forces to crush the ideology of laymen. Barry says,

In recent past, Social construction gangs seemed to be everywhere, digging up and replacing the academic sidewalks and for the most part their work is still in place, constituting the main academic thoroughfare in the humanities. So the difficulty of either verifying or falsifying the view that everything is socially or linguistically constructed has not diminished. (Barry 252)

The conflict between people and armed force continue even in so called new India. The writer wants to know about the impact of development in the forest area and also the reaction of people. The election is considered as a huge scam by Maoists. The selected power system is the primary reason for their problems. They lack their respect and rights. It leads them to take arms in their hands to fight for themselves.

The concept of development includes the construction of dams, irrigation project, mines. In this process, the government shows its own interest on the displacement of large population. It speaks about welfare of tribes. The development and the welfare of the tribes are taken as the main weapon by the government for the displacement of the mass. It leads to urbanization and also deforestation. This conflict must be observed in the eye of both left and right wings. Though it is hard to develop a country without industrialization, destroying the natural resources in the name of development is also a crime as Roy says,

Each time it needed to displace a large population for dams, irrigation projects, mines – it talked of bringing tribals into mainstream or giving them the fruits of modern development. Of the ten millions of internally displaced people, refugees of Indian progress, the great majority are tribal people. (WC 8)

These words portray the negative side of displacement. A nation makes its own people as refugee for the capital development. The writer questions this attitude of the ruling party and also she does not want the government to interfere in the simple life style of tribes. Every culture must be given importance. The concept of enlightenment and development should not disturb their basic system of culture. This is the main reason for war. The party takes its own stand against the government and most of the people enroll themselves as the part and parcel of party. It shows the mindset of people. People give importance to their home land and culture. Chetan Bhagat in his work *What Young India Wants* shows his anger towards the society and educated class of people. He questions the concepts of democracy, he says:

Do we value democracy or Do we believe in power in the hands of a select few to whom the laws don't apply? Do we value honesty or do we value the job done anyhow? Do we believe in frugality or do we want to show off our wealth? Do we value our local communities or do we value being part of India? (Bagat 4)

These words of Bhagat clearly depict the scenario of modern India. It confuses itself between the capital (absolute power) and the labour (working class). Roy says about the Corporate Social Responsibility that plays

hide and seek with the welfare of people. The industries are the reason for all the health issues that people undergo and it takes responsibility to cure it. They make money from the natural resources.

The concept of materialism tarnishes humanism. Capitalism drives the human sector against nature. It is difficult to live against nature. Nature is irreplaceable by mankind. In this work *Walking with the Comrades*, Roy shows the importance of nature and also the mindset of people with leftist ideology towards nature. The power structure brands them as Maoists. It shows the absolute power which surrenders to capitalism. This is the time to understand the politics behind nature. Though the power structure terms people as extremist and threat to the country, they are eco – terrorists who want to save the nature from the materialistic hands of capitals. Suppression of the power must be reduced and people should have free hand in enhancing nature and their own culture. The rural people who want to save the nature are the victims of the power politics and they are forced to move from their native place. The real freedom is denied to these people and awareness must be created among the nation about this exploitation.

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