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**COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUSNESS TO PURSUE GENDER
EQUALITY IN THE MINISTRY OF UTMOST HAPPINESS**

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Abstract

The Ministry of Utmost Happiness tells the story of the marginalized people who are abused but share a collective understanding of different social norms. Gender inequality is a multi-layered dispute which states that there is discrimination among genders and it prevents the path of getting basic rights of the human being. On the other hand, gender equality eliminates violence, harmful practices and discrimination against all women and girls. Focusing on the theory of collective consciousness, this paper explores the question of gender equality in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Non-structural qualitative analysis is applied in this paper to distinguish past trends and forecast future models. Arundhati Roy precisely points out that the shared beliefs, ideas, attitudes can operate strongly as a powerful force to bring down the gender inequality in her *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. The author establishes that the collected voices can only stand together to make a difference in the world of injustice in this novel. This paper investigates how the combined innate craving for strength, justice and power builds up a gathering in a graveyard and how it works in the pursuit of gender justice.

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1. Introduction

“*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* is actually more unsettling because it is about broken people who bring shards of their broken hearts and ultimately make a mended heart” (Saha, 2018, p. 2).

Renowned writer Arundhati Roy has marked her way in the world of literature by her magnum opus *The God of Small Things* which has won the Booker Prize in 1997. Political awareness and social injustice are rooted in this book which already has foregrounded the shadow of *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Roy has immediately become the darling of readers with her signature non-linear, lyrical writing and she has taken twenty years to write her second fictional book, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. This novel does not flinch away from the truth and the blemishes of various social injustice including gender inequality inflicted in a society, rather it offers a resolution by turning away from the previous ruthless tone of *The God of Small Things*. Arundhati Roy has been fighting against gender injustice and it is portrayed in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* that offers a major concentration on this paper.

Hassenstab and Ramet (2015) note that both gender and equality are “argumentative” and “growing” terms and the combination of gender and equality is very challenging to theorize since there is a long-standing debate between these two (p. 17). Roy gradually approaches the dénouement with the picture of assembling of the shattered and marginalized people. This assembling arouses the anticipation of a new future which indicates the ending of a disheartening past and can be compared with “pinned joint” where the structural members rotate freely among each other, though they may not be pinned to each other (Blockley, 2014, p. 112). Tilottama, Anjum, Saddam, Jebeen as structural members construct a pinned joint in which they continue to rotate while signifying respect to each other, and this novel remembers the “struggles and their triumphs” (Sehgal, 2017). Their backgrounds are not the same, while Tilottama is educated, Anjum or Saddam are not. Against all the odds, they endure without being “pinned to each other” for a glorious future. This pinned joint structure can be called as “Collective Consciousness” in Durkheim’s language. French sociologist David Emile Durkheim first introduces the idea of collective consciousness in *The Division of Labor in Society*, as “the totality of the beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society” (Durkheim, 1984, pp. 38-39). Durkheim (1984) observes while being different from individual consciousness, collective consciousness “links successive generations to one another” (p. 39).

This paper seeks to ascertain Roy’s attempt to diminish gender inequality in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* by emphasizing the power of shared voices of oppressed people through collective consciousness theory.

As Durkheim suggests, Roy does not create any borderline between genders, she creates a “Doosri duniya”, a separate world, outside of the real world, within a graveyard. As Anjum says, “even we aren’t real” (Roy, 2017, p. 84), they resist and deny the functions of actual jurisdiction in their unreal realm. This paper examines how collective consciousness works in Roy’s doosri duniya, a platform for raising shared voices, and how it is utilized to bring down gender injustice. Roy stresses the urgency in this regard stating that common people are gaining consciousness and the distance between the right and wrong is becoming wide progressively. She states, “Whether we win or lose, we are not going to be on their side. So, we might as well do what we have to do as well as we can” (Anam et al., 2019, p. 4).

This paper is organized into seven main segments. Following the current introduction, existing literature has been discussed to establish the present research within its theoretical context. The next section

arranges the context of the study by presenting its problem statement, research questions, purpose, and methodology and finally these will lead the reader to the results and their discussion.

2. Problem Statement

The mixing of various factors, such as- age, religion and others can further complicate the cultural aspects, the conceptualizations, and measurements of gender equality (Hassenstab & Ramet, 2015). Ensuring gender equality signifies every step of human life in obtaining basic rights, responsibilities, and prospects in the every steps of life. Unfortunately, the growth of gender equality is still vulnerable. Women, children, and transgender people are still being dominated, harassed and captured by the powerful society. Establishment of gender equality around the world is essential to dig out everyone's potentiality and Arundhati Roy states the necessity of gender equality in her *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. By setting the characters, who represent different caste and classes and marginalized mass of society in the same crossroad, Roy implies the significance of raising shared voices.

Hence, the concern of collective consciousness arrives. Durkheim (2013) claims, "by aggregating together, by interpenetrating, by fusing together, individuals give birth to a being" (p. 86). As a result, to produce a fruitful solution in this context, it is required to replace the individual "I" with the collective "we". The present research, therefore, aims at investigating the condition of the distressed people facing gender inequality by applying Emile Durkheim's collective consciousness theory. Indeed, the main concern of this paper is to analyze Roy's picturesque consideration of gender inequality and its obliteration from society in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* by employing Durkheim's collective consciousness theory.

3. Research Questions

How do Arundhati Roy's marginalized characters unite together, after brutally treated by the oppressors, portraying collective consciousness in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* and how can it be useful to ultimately bring down gender inequality?

4. Purpose of the Study

This research aims at examining the outline of gender equality in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* by applying Emile Durkheim's collective consciousness theory. Unfolding the necessity of justice regarding gender issues, this study contributes significantly to form the real history, motives, and a framework of gender equality. Roy's empathetic involvement in uniting marginalized people to witness a fruitful solution, which will finally repair the existing problems of gender inequality is also addressed in this paper. Appreciating the impact of Durkheim's collective consciousness theory and applying it in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* to inspect Roy's views of uniting oppressed people are the main objectives of this research paper.

5. Research Methods

This is a non-structural qualitative research. The researchers have applied two kinds of data to prepare this paper- primary and secondary sources and they both have been explored and examined minutely for this research. Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* has been used as the primary text while existing works of literature have been used as secondary sources. Several theories and writings have been inspected to get the finest result. Purely textual analysis and exploration have been applied to study the inner meaning.

5.1. Primary source

By concentrating on *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* as the primary source, the researchers have examined various happenings related to gender equality, their necessities and ways of progressing simultaneously with the text. The researchers have concentrated on the popular understanding and the real incidents from the primary text are used as data to get the deeper meaning.

5.2. Secondary sources

Different kinds of texts have been as the secondary source, such as peer-reviewed articles, student papers, newspaper articles, online sources and many others. Online libraries, especially ResearchGate and JSTOR have been used greatly for searching the sources. To get hold of the accurate document, various keywords have been used, for example- collective consciousness, class, gender equality, injustice, society and many others.

6. Findings

“Andolan chalaayenge! With our struggle we'll persevere!” (Roy, 2017, p. 123).

Sex and gender are considered as counterparts in some previous understandings. Differentiating between sex and gender becomes necessary as, according to Kate Millett's *Sexual Politics* (1969), sex is originated from the biological root and gender is “culturally acquired” (as cited in Habib, 2005, p. 670). Furthermore, Simon de Beauvoir notes masculinity as the “absolute human type” (as cited in Habib, 2005, p. 683) and femininity as the “other” in her famous introduction to *The Second Sex*. She earnestly claims that one is not born as a woman rather becomes one due to the forced social norms and inborn traits. In Kate Millett's language, they grow to be “passive, ignorant, docile, emotional helpmeets for men” (Millett, 1971, p. 26). In addition, according to Gayle Rubin (1975), gender is adjustable as it is the “socially imposed division of the sexes” (p. 179) and the purpose of feminism should be to form a “genderless” society in which one person's sexual identity will be totally irrelevant (p. 204).

Hence, the discussion about gender equality can be expressed through various cultural movements. There is an age-old argument between the terms, gender and equality, which prevents them to be combined. The patriarchal system always has controlled the viewpoint about gender and constructed viewpoints of inequality have supported and elevated this culture. These fundamental beliefs go beyond gender order, establishing cultural, racial, and religious layers. Even a countless number of children have delusions about the concepts of patriarchy and father, a notion whose origin hints at “taking responsibility” (Hawkesworth

& Vianello, 2016, p. 119). But inequality, giving imbalanced power to one group over another, is rooted in uneven dynamics. Amaya, Geertz, Medrano, and Schroder (2019) observe that women have often been given the priority in the pursuit of achieving gender equality by providing women empowerment, removing barriers for the inclusion of women, ensuring the health, economic and educational facilities for women. But inequality occurs when unequal power dynamics take place among genders. To make progress on “Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls” (para. 1), it should be agreed upon that men and boys are allies in this journey and they have similar rights and opportunities. In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Roy pens about her innate dream of constructing an Edenic genderless utopia. Unlike the women-based world of Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain’s *Sultana’s Dream*, Roy longs for a world where people will reside equally and peacefully irrespective of caste, creed and gender. But the other side of the coin is also portrayed by Roy. She illustrates the accurate world which is still far away from being genderless. Roy (2017) observes how society tangles Anjum into a social decorum forcefully and it muddles with her sanity. Anjum forcefully cuts Zainab’s hair so that Zainab does not experience the same bitter incidents. Roy (2017) notes that it is only unsafe for a woman or a little girl to roam outside at the time of the riot, while men are completely safe exercising power and authority. Roy wants to portray the helpless condition of the dominated women and girls by illustrating Zainab’s cropped short hair and dressing her in boy’s clothes against her wishes (p. 48). Roy breaks the stereotypical idea of heroism by placing Tilottama, a woman, as the teacher; Anjum, a transgender, as the decision-maker and prime resident of Jannat Guest House. There is no distinctive hero who dominates others.

Therefore, this paper now comes to the point coming together which is categorized as collective consciousness by David Emile Durkheim. Kotler and Wheal (2017) note that collective consciousness is introduced by the distinctiveness and the behaviour of a whole group rather than the individuality of its members. It produces a new kind of uniqueness, built in the scattered psychological states, feelings, and participation of all the group members and one person’s individuality are fused with the group’s inner experiences (p. 68). Durkheim claims that there are two kinds of social solidarity: mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. In mechanical solidarity, society is collectively outlined and stable and central viewpoints are shared by all members of the group. Durkheim highlights that collective consciousness binds one individual to society, meaning “a shared belief system” (Crossman, 2019). For Durkheim, the collective consciousness is “the highest form of psychic life, for it is a consciousness of consciousnesses” (Durkheim, 1995, p. 445). According to Durkheim (1995), “a synthesis of individual consciousness” must rise to create the collective consciousness. The product of this synthesis creates another world which is full of ideas, views and assessments and “they *mutually* attract one another, repel one another, *fuse together, subdivide, and proliferate* [emphasis added]” (p. 426).

Crossman (2019) ascertains, according to Durkheim, individuality raises as parts of society grow to be more multifaceted. Society becomes well-organized when it moves in synchronization. In the world of “Jannat Funeral Services”; which provides services to people of different genders; their feelings, ideas, and views are attached and proliferated. Anjum, Saddam, and Tilottama consciously attract each other by their understandings which can be justified as the “shared belief system” or collective consciousness for a better future. As Rubina is a prostitute in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, all bathhouses, graveyards and

Imams refuse to accept Rubina's dead body, Roy does not differentiate among any genders, that's why her ideal world accepts those "whom the graveyards and imams of the Duniya had rejected" (Roy, 2017, p. 80).

Consequently, Roy's understanding of gender equality is distinct from the way she handles the dénouement of *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Applying Durkheim's collective consciousness theory, Roy combines all the oppressed people at the end, irrespective of the gender, in the graveyard. Not only she amalgamates the hierarchy of men and women to prove gender equality but also she introduces Anjum, a transgender character who has "the 'grid' of gender running through her" (Saha, 2018; emphasis added). Roy blurs the boundary of the grid as the "grids define our society and any transgression is met with extreme violence. This threat of violence is extended to anybody who doesn't fit the grid" (Saha, 2018, para. 4). Without accepting the grid, Anjum breaks it and comes out and breaking of this grid by Roy is an attempt to establish gender equality. Gender discrimination is also noticed with the use of sexism in language. Roy uses slang words in different parts of *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* which are gender-biased and often against women. There are very few slang words or name-calling directly associated with men, the slang words are feminine as Roy (2017) observes, "Ai Hai! Saali Randi Hijra! Sister-fucking Whore Hijra" (p. 62). The majority of the people, from infancy, are using these kinds of constructed slang, without knowing about this subtle sense of inequality and it is degrading and humiliating towards women.

As Smith (2014) notes, collective consciousness forms different individual ideas "into a communicable form" (p. 34). It furnishes the mind with the 'moulds' which allow us to see things as a whole rather than just as they appear to us from our individual perspective. To emphasize the necessity of collective consciousness, Durkheim (1984) claims, the degree of variation of the relationships among the conscious group members creates stronger ties that will "bind the individual to the group" (p. 64). It means, solidarity within the group ensures sustaining relationships, one with another or with the group collectively. Given the background, the game of dice scene from R. K. Narayan's *Mahabharata* (1978) can be paralleled where Draupadi, has been forcibly disrobed but saved by praying to Krishna. Miraculously, her cloth never ends, saving Draupadi from further disgrace. The present courtiers keep their silence while Draupadi curses, protests, yells but fails to save herself from the strong oppressors. Failing to receive assistance from living persons, Draupadi has to beg to magical being. In this context, Durkheim (1984) claims, the wounded common consciousness must resist the oppression and to achieve that, the confrontation must be communal (p. 58). Draupadi has been denied the support from the elderly courtiers and "collective resistance" and "Dues ex Machina" arrives to serve the duty of saving her, from which a general human being is deprived.

Roy (2017) describes how Tilottama's husband has normally been advised to strike her since she is disobedient, "What she needs . . . is two tight slaps" (p. 232). Thus, this heinous crime is considered as a simple incident which paves the path of gender inequality. Domestic violence is also a form of gender inequality which can hinder the progress of women. Kelly Gerard (2017) recognizes that to eliminate gender inequality, "collective responses" is required and it will be fruitless if individual women are given the entire burden. Rather empowerment projects of women can be possible by building movements for gender equality (para. 13).

On the same note, Bailey (2019) observes, mutualism is a kind of equally beneficial relationship between organisms of different species and it can be called as "a symbiotic relationship in which two different species interact with and in some cases, *totally rely on one another for survival* [emphasis added]"

(para. 1). Saddam, Gulrej, Anjum, Tilottama- they need shelter and Roy depicts their sorrows, claiming that no paradise can be built without a symbiotic relationship among the victims. The necessity of gender equality is vital and a group can always bring better results than the individuals (Smith, 2014, p. 22). Merging of the collective identities can only provide the victims- shelter, protection and nutrition. “Thus they are solidly joined together. This gives rise to a solidarity *sui generis* which, deriving from resemblances, binds the individual directly to society” (Durkheim, 1984, p. 61). The organisms fulfil their needs of shelter and nutrition, securing themselves in mutualistic relationships (Bailey, 2019, para. 1) and the oppressed people of *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* fuse to protect themselves in the same way. Therefore, collective consciousness theory supports to establish gender equality in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Social solidarity is exhibited when all members of the Jannat Guest House share mutual statements and accordingly the same consciousness grows stronger in their minds (Durkheim, 1984, p. 64).

Moreover, Kania (2016) notes the use of the term of “androgyny”, which pursues to release one individual from the confines of genders, after analyzing Carolyn Heilbrun’s writing whose pen name is Amanda Cross. Heilbrun strongly believes in gender equality and her view of androgyny is the “intellectual denial” of considering one gender greater above another and sometimes as a method of encouragement “for a superior way for both men and women to function in the society” (Kania, 2016, p. 94; emphasis added). Heilbrun believes that gender certainly does not matter in the true meaning of gender equality and she gives priority to androgyny to achieve gender equality. Even though Heilbrun does not propose any potential solution to establish androgyny to inaugurate a transformed world where men and women will reside equally, Durkheim’s collective consciousness theory can be successfully applied in this context. With the shared ideas and views, one society can seek androgyny to liberate its inhabitants from the confinement of gender. Even Adrienne Rich suggests the need to establish an androgynous place in her “Diving into the Wreck” poem, by proposing that our internal mind/centre, which holds the deepest and truest truth, “belong to all sexes” (Merrigan, 2018). Without objectifying a person with gender, it is a promising resolution to completely eradicate gender inequality. In this context, it can be observed that Roy wants to create an androgynous world where without objectifying any person with his/her gender, one can live happily and spontaneously. This place turns out as their home, “a Noah’s Ark of injured animals” (Roy, 2017, p. 399). Anjum faces no social barricade or insecurity in the graveyard, she is free, unlike her real experiences where she constantly is treated with disrespect, fear, humiliation. To her, it becomes home, the room of one’s own, as Virginia Woolf would have noted, and a space where Anjum will not be colonized and defeated by the despotic authority.

The necessity to build up a community without gender hierarchy can also be observed in the writing of Helene Cixous. According to Cixous, all women should reclaim their rights by subverting the confines of languages in her “The Laugh of Medusa”. Derridean deconstruction and psychological theory greatly influenced Cixous. Hence, she deconstructs all the shackles which keep women caged by demolishing gender difference in the language. In a similar vein, A. J. Greimas compresses Vladimir Propp’s “thirty-one ‘functions’ of tales into three pairs of binary oppositions” (Putri & Sarwoto, 2016, p. 84). The problem with this notion is whenever gender is perceived with these three pairs, generally, men are considered to play the typically strong role while women are expected to be the subordinate one. While men turn into being subject, sender or helper, women naturally become the object, receiver or opponent. Cixous rejects

this type of gender inequality and writes to launch a new signifying order which will not be restricted to different binaries of man and woman, strength and weakness and light and darkness. The phallogocentric, socially acceptable rhetoric is constructed through male-dominated conventions which Cixous describes as “Light Continent”, counter to the world of women as the “Dark Continent”. Men simply do not want to engage with the “Dark Continent” and thus it is the final refusal of acknowledging women’s participation in writing or engaging with popular culture. Just like Roy creates a “space” where Anjum, Saddam, Miss Udaya Jebeen, Tilottama can unite together to crush the gender inequality, popular culture can also create “a space where people can come together to begin addressing the reality of the power this language holds above society” (Shim, 2018, para. 4). Cixous discards the Lacanian theory by encouraging women to write beyond the order of the binary opposition of the Symbolic Order to create an equal world. As Roy liberates her utopia in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* from the boundaries of binary opposition by placing people including transgender and children in the graveyard, Cixous also believes the oppressed constructions of the androcentric world can be demolished by stepping forward. When society can acknowledge its inhabitants and their rights properly without objectifying their genders, only then people can enjoy justice and equality abundantly.

To achieve such gender equality, the amalgamation of people from various races, classes, and genders are obligatory. As Roy feels the necessity of solidarity, she declares boldly by denying the traditional power play of hierarchy, “I function within huge river and stream and a rising, rushing current of solidarity” (Aitkenhead, 2017, para. 23). Likewise, Bapsi Sidhwa’s *Cracking India* is an effective example of female solidarity that breaks class and religious borders. Women in this novel, take the responsibility to rescue other oppressed and raped women. Sidhwa reveals how only the awareness of women’s shared violation of human rights and physiques by men can hold all of them together, initiating compassion towards each other (Dey, 2018, p. 39). While political unrest is visible both in *Cracking India* and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, the solidarity gives anticipation of liberation from gender inequality in the time of turbulence.

The power of unity and collective thoughts also reflect on Russian scholar Mikhail Bakhtin’s carnival theory. Bakhtin observes that, in most cases, folktales do not end with the life cycle’s natural order-death, rather it is adorned with a festival. Everything is becoming and nothing is stable in the world of the carnival. Power is denied through laughter and Bakhtin is interested in the outlook which laughter creates. The peasants’ world is the “second world” which fights against the official authority and it is conscious about “the value of high and low, death and life, rich and poor” (Nesaria, 2015, p. 646). Bakhtin notices that “the carnival images of inconsistency” were so irrepressible that it can at least put competition with the authoritative powers (Nesaria, 2015, p. 646). Similarly, Roy makes her characters to deny the authoritative power with the help of laughter and jubilee. Roy represents how the characters remain delightful and enjoy themselves without the limitations of gender. Tilottama, Anjum, Nimmo Gorakhpuri, Saddam, Jebeen the second- curl with each other at the birthday party of Ustad Hameed’s grandson and they also enjoy a pre-wedding party by taking a ride in a Mercedes. Zainab, Anjum’s adopted daughter, and Saddam’s wedding was also a gathering of different people of different genders- from hijras (transgender people) to sweepers, mortuary workers, municipal truck drivers, security guards and also students of fashion design. These people gather with contentment to oppose gender inequality and thus the graveyard becomes an emblem of

consistency. To say India remains politically sound at that moment is an irony but the characters shield their 'second world' against all unrest competing with the conventional society full of injustice reflecting the collective consciousness theory.

Just like Anjum has declared, "I'm a mehfil, I'm a gathering", Anjum's creator Arundhati Roy approves, she is "never settling, never compromising and never afraid- is *the voice of many in one* [emphasis added]" (Noor, 2019, para. 1). This "never compromising" tone drives away the deep-rooted customs and confidently institutes the idea of a mehfil, a gathering- which is needed to eradicate all kinds of injustice. According to Durkheim (1995), "collective thought" is possible if individuals unite together with their awareness (p. 447) and due to the collective consciousness, the assembly of people irrespective of class, race and gender can be possible. The shared set of ideas gives a fresh approach to address gender equality in classic grace as Arundhati Roy (2017) records, "and as you fall you will hold on to other falling people" (p. 84). In *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, Roy patches everything which is already shattered, broken. Indeed, the pieces of broken hearts are fixed together in the graveyard (Anam et al., 2019). By receiving Saddam, who has been forced to flee to save his life and watched his father's death, as a resident of Jannat Guest house, gender equality prevails. He is also a "fallen man", "chamar" or untouchable like Anjum, Tilottama. Roy creates gender equality by placing male, female and transgender into their paradise who believe in the same moral viewpoints. She urges, "When will you stop waiting? When will you say 'That's enough!' and reach for your weapons, whatever they may be?" (Subramanian, 2019, para. 10). Roy wants the actual result and she does not shy away by only giving a vague outline, rather she contributes the character Udaya, which means "sunrise", who will bring light in a tormented city. Udaya is the glimmer of darkness, the hope of these people who symbolizes an equal futuristic world which can be achieved only through the collective consciousness of the maltreated people and Roy (2017) soothes in a calm yet strong voice, "things would turn out all right in the end. . . . Because Miss Jebeen, Miss Udaya Jebeen, was come" (p. 438).

7. Conclusion

"It is the collective consciousness which is the true microcosm" (Durkheim, 2013, p. 181).

For a better understanding of diverse socio-political complications of India, Roy crashes diverse characters from different upbringings in her *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. These characters have been oppressed by patriarchal society at different times of their lives because of their genders. Roy feels that gender inequality separates people in such ways that prevent every form of solidarity and to successfully enjoy all rights as a human being, it is mandatory to achieve gender egalitarianism. Consciously, Roy wants collective consciousness to eradicate gender equality eternally and she creates the characters by blending integrity, rebelliousness, and unity. But individual consciousness is required to achieve collective consciousness as Durkheim (2013) notices, "no collective entity can be produced if there are no individual consciousnesses. . . . these consciousnesses must be associated and combined, but combined in a certain way" (p. 86). In an interview, Roy explains, people outside the grid tend to attract those who are also absent from the grid. As a result, the characters of *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* attract themselves towards each other and "it happened pretty organically" (Saha, 2018, para. 5). This paper has attempted to highlight how gender equality should be treated sensitively since it causes a deep impact on society. Loewenstein

(2017) engraves, “Roy wants readers to be uncomfortable with characters that sparkle with humanity, wit and anger.” Roy dedicates *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* to “The Unconsoled”, who are fighting for their identities as human beings. She portrays the solidarity with vivid imageries, how crows gather to rescue a victim crow, “the sky swarmed with thousands of agitated, low-flying fellow crows” (Roy, 2017, p. 404). Such kind of solidarity should be reflected upon the human mind to fight against injustice and Roy (2017) salutes the rebel, brave people by greeting them with “Lal Salaam Aleikum” (p. 426). Raising voices by coming together with the shared views of the ignored and oppressed people, it is not a very futuristic dream to enjoy a world free from gender inequality. The novel doesn’t end with chaos, despair like the previous melancholic tone of *The God of Small Things*, rather it ends with hopefulness and anticipation of a new future. Miss Udaya Jebeen gives them the potential courage of a new beginning, of becoming. In essence, *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* flawlessly provides the key to the problem of gender inequality by the unification of Durkheim’s collective consciousness theory where shared consciousness will eradicate the oppression of the ruling society.

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