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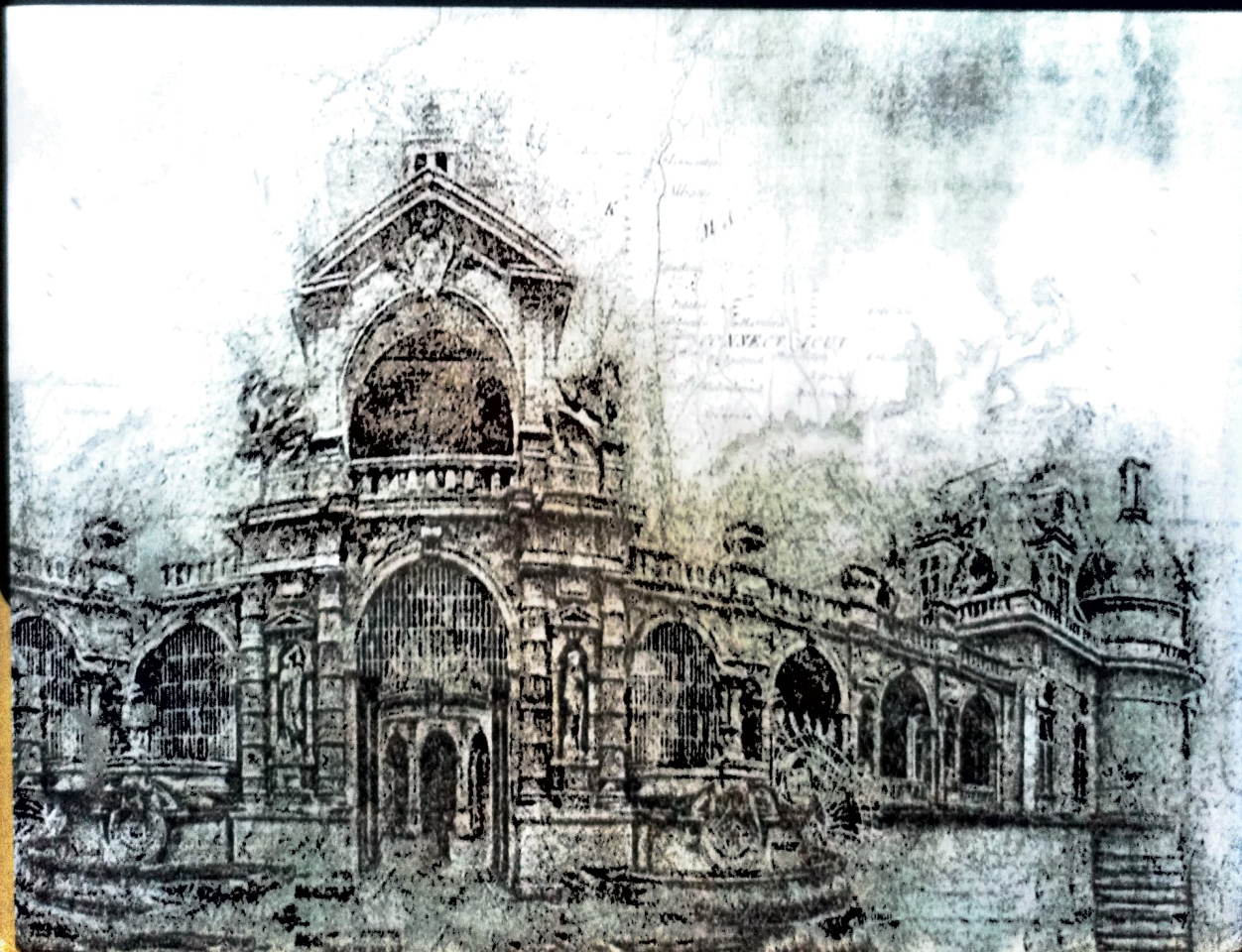


THE EMPIRE AND AFTER

Trends, Issues and Perspectives

Edited by

BHASKAR CH SARKAR



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Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*:
Voice of Subaltern Women

Swagatalakshmi Basu

Name of the Author

The term "Subalternity" has attained much popularity in Postcolonial social studies. The concept of 'Subalternity' has disturbed the doctrinal boundaries of contemporary discourse. As a theoretical venture, subaltern revises and extends the Marxian proletarian discourse as well as strengthen its positions based on poststructuralist concept of 'difference'. The term Subalternity refers to a condition of subordination brought about by colonisation or other forms of economic, social, racial, linguistic, gender and cultural dominance. The 'Subaltern' owes its origin to Antonio Gramsci's writings and it indicates a subordinate position in terms of caste, class, gender and culture. Gramsci criticizes the classical Marxist thinking that culture and ideology are extensions and reflections of the economic reality. In Gramsci's perception, capitalism sustains its exploitation of the subaltern through the hegemony of culture. He also emphasizes the fact that the nature and structure of the subaltern consciousness very form one social context to another, owing to the difference in their experience of capitalist exploitation and the subaltern response to it. The term 'subaltern' is used in the ground of history, geography, sociology and literary criticism as post-colonial study. Indian scholar Gayatri Chakrobarty Spivak borrows this term from Gramsci to refer to the unrepresented group of people in society. Indian unconventional writer Arundhati Roy raises her voice for subaltern women through her masterpiece *The God of small Things* (1997).

Suzanna Arundhati Roy, one of the ambassadors of the Indian renaissance and socio-political activist and famous postcolonial writer of Indo-Anglia Literature, who is best known for her debut *The God of small Things* (1997). Arundhati Roy was born 24th November 1961, shillong, Meghalaya, India. Roy's father Rajib Roy was a Bengali and mother Mary Roy, a Syrian Christian who worked on women's rights in Kerala. She spent her childhood in Aymanam in Kerala. Roy's literary career was interrupted by controversy. Roy's literary output largely consisted of politically oriented nonfiction, addressing the problems faced by her homeland in the age of global capitalism. Her publications were: *power Politics* (2001), *Public power in the Age*