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RESEARCH PAPER

Discourse-Historical Analysis and Politics of Nationalism in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

[1]Aeisha Altaf* [2] Muhammad Afzal Faheem and [3]Ifrah Khan

1. PhD Scholar, Department of English and Literary Studies, School of Liberal Arts, University of Management and Technology, Lahore & Lecturer, University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
2. Lecturer, Department of English and Literary Studies, School of Liberal Arts, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan
3. M.Phil., Department of English and Literary Studies, School of Liberal Arts, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan

*Corresponding Author	aeisha.altaf@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This paper investigates Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* through Ruth Wodak's Discourse-Historical Analysis (DHA) to elucidate the intricate interplay between the Politics of Nationalism and Exclusion, which collectively engender a pervasive fear of alienation. Drawing on the theoretical underpinnings of DHA, the paper uncovers the mechanisms by which fear is cultivated within nationalist discourse, beginning with an exploration of the interrelated phenomena of Discourse, Text, Fields of Action, and Context. Progressing to a second level of analysis, it identifies four macro discursive strategies, examining destructive strategies that seek to erode national identities. The third level emphasizes the strategy of Argumentation, which operates through mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, reinforced by the topos of fear that delineates the binary opposition of 'Us' versus 'Them. The paper aims to dismantle the fear propagated by nationalistic divisions while simultaneously fostering a platform for resistance discourse, advocating for a more inclusive narrative that challenges the prevailing paradigms of exclusion.

KEYWORDS Discourse-Historical Analysis, Discursive Macro Strategies, Fear, Nationalism, Topos

Introduction

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is fundamentally concerned with examining the intricate relationships between power, resistance, hegemony, and the marginalization of oppressed groups. Its primary objective is to study and amplify the voices of the marginalized, as language serves as a crucial arena in which power relations operate and are shaped. CDA thus engages with the social processes and structures that define both societal and individual behavior, creating new contexts for understanding discourse. As Ruth Wodak emphasizes, the key elements underpinning CDA are "the concept of power, the concept of history, and the concept of ideology" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 4). This discussion will elaborate on these three components in sequence.

First, Michel Foucault's concept of power asserts that power is an omnipresent force embedded in all social interactions. He contends that power is intrinsic to every form of social activity, even in its most benign manifestations. Foucault's focus is to identify the mechanisms of power and the specific elements that enable it to function within force relations. According to Foucault, power should be analyzed through four dimensions:

- The "multiplicity of force relations" that operate within specific spaces and contribute to the broader frameworks in which they function (Taylor, 2010, p. 17).
- The "process" by which these force relations come into existence, often involving struggle and negotiation (Taylor, 2010, p. 17).
- The "support" that sustains these force relations and reinforces their functionality (Taylor, 2010, p. 17).
- The "strategies" that allow these force relations to function effectively, which are often state-initiated and periodically reinforced by the state (Taylor, 2010, p. 17).

The second key component is the concept of history. Given that this analysis is framed through the lens of Discourse-Historical Analysis, understanding history is essential. History provides the contextual framework for discourse, operating in a reciprocal relationship where history shapes discourse, and discourse, in turn, shapes history. Thus, examining discursive elements through a historical lens allows for deeper and more contextually grounded interpretations. This reciprocal interaction emphasizes the necessity of situating discourse within its historical context to fully grasp its meanings and implications. In sum, Foucault's articulation of power and the integral role of history in shaping discourse are foundational to CDA. Together, these elements facilitate a comprehensive analysis of how language and power operate to sustain structures of dominance and marginalization.

In Ruth Wodak's conceptualization, ideology is understood as "social forms and processes within which, and by means of which, symbolic forms circulate in the social world" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 4). This interpretation emphasizes that ideology underpins the discursive differences and practices that perpetuate existing power structures in society. In the context of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), ideology represents the foundation of political thought that enables certain groups to establish and maintain hegemony over others. The study of CDA employs a variety of methodologies to explore the interconnections between power, history, and ideology, and the ways in which these elements collectively sustain social dominance. A key methodological approach in CDA is "the Principle of Triangulation," which refers to the integration of diverse approaches from disciplines such as history, society, politics, and psychology to offer a comprehensive analysis of discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 65).

In the present research, the postmodern narrative of *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) is analyzed using Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA). Postmodernism, characterized by its skepticism towards absolute truths, decentralization of meaning, and pluralism, aligns with this paper's approach. Postmodern texts, such as Roy's novel, challenge linearity and singular truth claims, offering fragmented and multi-layered narratives. This reflects a broader postmodern world marked by ideological forces that aim to create and maintain the hegemony of certain groups through power dynamics, which are deeply intertwined with historical contexts. Here, Wodak's DHA reverses the traditional order of manipulation by uncovering the historical processes that shape discourses and maintain power imbalances.

Wodak's DHA is particularly suitable for examining the politics of nationalism and exclusion in Roy's text, as the approach provides a framework for analyzing how national identities are discursively constructed, maintained, and transformed. DHA operates through interdisciplinary, solution-oriented, and eclectic methods, incorporating fieldwork, ethnography, and "abductive" reasoning—an interplay between theory and empirical data (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 70). Central to DHA is "recontextualization," which links various discourses across genres, topics, and arguments, ensuring that

historical context is always integrated into the analysis (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 70). National identity, in this framework, is shaped by four discursive macro-strategies: constructive, preservative, transformative, and destructive (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 70). The specific context of the discourse determines which strategy is most appropriate for analysis.

In Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, the narrative's postmodern, non-linear structure spans Delhi and Kashmir, oscillating between the 1990s and the present. Through multiple personal and historical accounts, Roy's text reflects critical moments in Indian history, such as the anti-corruption movement led by Anna Hazare in 2011, America's 9/11, the political rise of Narendra Modi, the disappearance of vultures due to diclofenac poisoning, and the Bhopal Gas Tragedy of 1984. The novel's reference to the Association of the Mothers of Disappeared in Kashmir further situates it within the fraught political landscape of modern India. Roy exhausts postmodern techniques to craft a "shattered story" (Roy, 2017, p. 436), combining these diverse historical moments into a narrative that resists linearity and coherence. Through DHA, this research reveals how these historical references and fragmented narratives create a discourse of exclusion and fear, illustrating how nationalism and ideology shape individual and collective identities.

A central tenet of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is that texts seldom originate from a single author. According to Wodak and Meyer, "Texts serve as platforms where discursive differences are negotiated, influenced by power dynamics embedded in discourse and genre" (11). This perspective underlines the multi-layered nature of texts, which frequently display the imprint of competing discourses and ideologies vying for dominance. CDA foregrounds power as a crucial element of social life and seeks to develop a theory of language that incorporates this element. It not only scrutinizes power struggles and mechanisms of control but also examines the "intertextuality and recontextualization" of conflicting discourses (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 11). Power, in this view, is intricately linked to social inequalities, with language serving as a primary tool in the articulation and contestation of these power differentials. While power itself does not stem directly from language, language acts as a powerful medium through which power structures can be challenged and altered (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 10). CDA thus explores how linguistic forms are mobilized in the expression and manipulation of power.

The paper employs Ruth Wodak's Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) to analyze Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017), revealing how fear is inculcated within the domain of nationalism. The first step of the framework involves understanding key notions such as discourse, text, fields of action, and context. In the second stage, four types of discursive macro-strategies are identified, with particular focus on destructive strategies that aim to dilute national identities. At the third level, the strategy of argumentation is selected, which operates through mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, demonstrating how such strategies function as tools of social control.

The hypothesis posits that in the postmodern era, hegemonic forces, particularly right-wing populist governments, utilize the politics of exclusion, identity, and nationalism to foster a climate of fear among marginalized communities. These "sites of fear" are discursive in nature, requiring interpretation through Wodak's DHA framework. The paper aims to dissect the ways in which right-wing radical parties, within varying contexts, manipulate discourse to sustain their hegemonic power. What becomes evident through this framework is that postmodernist texts, like Roy's, celebrate difference over universality, emphasizing personal value systems and multicultural approaches to truth. Postmodern narratives are pluralistic and often nonlinear, weaving together personal

accounts, institutional perspectives (such as police or media narratives), and characters' struggles to assert their version of truth.

As Seldon observes, one of the most pervasive elements of postmodern texts is the theme of the "absent center": "Human shock in the face of the unimaginable results in a loss of fixed points of reference. Neither the world nor the self any longer possess unity, coherence, meaning. They are radically decentered" (199). This absence of a stable, centralized meaning necessitates interpretation through an appropriate theoretical lens. Therefore, CDA, and more specifically Wodak's DHA, becomes crucial for understanding the discursive strategies at play in texts like *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, where fear and identity politics intersect with broader sociopolitical dynamics.

Literature Review

Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (2017) presents a complex tapestry of narratives, woven against the backdrop of significant historical events. Scholarly discussions surrounding the novel have traversed various domains, including the "Female Naxalite movement," "Gendered Spaces Captured in Cultural Representations," and "The precarious lives of India's Others." Meghan Gorman-DaRif, in her paper "Post-Magic: The Female Naxalite at 50 in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*," examines the lives of Roy's characters as devoid of existential magic. Despite the author's evident sympathy for her female protagonists, the characters are portrayed as having lost hope, living lives bereft of transformative possibilities. Gorman-DaRif critiques the novel for failing to fully develop the characters' agency, particularly in relation to their contexts of resistance.

In another scholarly contribution, Swapna Gopinath's "Gendered Spaces Captured in Cultural Representations: Conceptualising the Indian Experience in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*" delves into gender identities within modern India. Gopinath highlights how Roy's linguistic strategies allocate specific spaces to characters according to their gender identity, contextualized through the concepts of "Third Space" and "Heterotopia" as theorized by Soja and Foucault. Gopinath explores Foucault's notion of "Heterotopias," spaces that embody several overlapping realities. The cemetery, for instance, is one such space, where multiple states coexist—death and life, memory and oblivion—but one cannot access this space without fulfilling certain preconditions, such as death or imprisonment (Gopinath). However, Gopinath's analysis does not engage with the historical dimensions or the contexts required to enter these heterotopic spaces, leaving a gap in the understanding of their political and discursive relevance.

A third significant paper, "The Precarious Lives of India's Others: The Creativity of Precarity in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*" by Ana Cristina Mendes and Lisa Lau, discusses the agency exercised by Roy's most precarious characters. The paper closely aligns with this research in recognizing the precarious lives of the marginalized; however, Mendes and Lau focus predominantly on the choices available to India's precariat class without fully addressing the novel's creative narrative mode as a form of resistance. The paper, while insightful in its exploration of precarity, does not engage with the broader discursive structures that Roy employs to critique power and nationalism.

Theoretical Framework

The Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA) is distinctive in its methodological implications, primarily because it operates on the "Principle of Triangulation," as

articulated by (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 65). This principle posits that discourse must be examined within its social, political, and historical contexts, along with the various fields in which "discursive events are embedded" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 65). DHA focuses on "diachronic actions," emphasizing how discursive practices evolve over time (Wodak and Meyer 65). A hallmark of this approach is its recognition of both written and verbal discourse as forms of discursive practice. DHA presupposes a direct relationship among discourse, texts, fields of action, and context, suggesting that these elements are inherently interlinked.

The proportional relationship between these elements is grounded in the assertion that social practices and societal structures contextualize discourse, conferring legitimacy upon it. Consequently, institutions and social situations exert a reciprocal influence on discourse; the development of discourse is shaped by these social contexts, while, in turn, the discourse can also affect these social situations. Wodak provides a comprehensive definition of discourse, drawing on Lemke (1995), who describes discourse as "a complex bundle of simultaneous and sequential interrelated linguistic acts, which manifest themselves within and across the social fields of action as thematically interrelated texts, that belong to specific genres" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 66). Wodak emphasizes the complexity of discourse, arguing that it lacks a single point of origin, which leads her to introduce the concepts of "intertextuality" and "interdiscursivity" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 66). Intertextuality refers to the phenomenon wherein texts are interconnected, facilitating new interpretations of existing texts based on new contexts. In contrast, interdiscursivity addresses social issues by recontextualizing elements from various discourses to create new meanings for discursive events.

Next, the concept of texts emerges as critical sites where discursive phenomena unfold. Texts serve as the loci where the rules governing discourse operate and become contextualized. The term "Fields of Action" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 66) refers to the platforms of discourse where genuine discursive maneuvers occur, influencing future practices and introducing new perspectives based on prior discursive actions. This space is characterized by reciprocal existence, wherein past discursive practices shape the present discourse.

The final element of DHA is context, which is analyzed through the "Principle of Triangulation" (Wodak and Meyer 66). According to Wodak, context encompasses four levels: the first is "descriptive," involving the immediate, language- or text-internal context; the second focuses on "the intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 66); the third involves middle-range theories that elucidate broader discursive phenomena; and the fourth, termed "grand theory," captures the full spectrum of historical contexts (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 66)

Wodak further elaborates on discursive strategies, which employ various objectives and devices to achieve their goals. The "referential or nomination strategy" (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 73) formulates in-groups and out-groups through membership categorization. Predication involves labeling social actors positively or negatively via stereotypical and evaluative traits (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 73). The argumentation strategy, which will be the focus of this analysis, justifies positive or negative attributions by employing topoi—content-related warrants or conclusion rules that connect arguments to claims (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 73). Various types of topoi, categorized by their aims and functions, are outlined by Wodak, including the topos of advantage, definition, and danger or threat (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 73).

The topos of threat is particularly relevant in the context of this paper, as it frequently operates in political contexts. Wodak explains that this topos posits that in dangerous situations, individuals should avoid actions that may lead to destruction, or, if destruction is already occurring, they should take measures to protect themselves (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 73). A subcategory of this topos, the "topos of threat of racism," emerges when an influx of immigrants is perceived as a threat to local populations, particularly regarding job opportunities. This dynamic can lead to a reversal of roles between oppressor and oppressed (Wodak & Meyer, 2001], p. 73).

Wodak's exploration of the politics of fear in her book *The Politics of Fear* (2015) provides a critical lens through which to examine nationalism and denial. She asserts that nations are "mental constructs" (Wodak, 2015, p. 94) where individuals perceive themselves as part of a cohesive society tied to a specific group or land. This discursive phenomenon fosters a sense of belonging that compels individuals to sacrifice for the cause of nationalism. Wodak argues that such a mental construct engenders the binary opposition of 'Us' versus 'Them,' where certain members are included in the 'Us' group while others are relegated to the 'Them' category. This division often manifests in the context of linguistic competence, which can act as a gatekeeping device between groups (Wodak, 2015, p. 95).

Through this framework, DHA offers a nuanced understanding of how language and discourse function within the parameters of nationalism and exclusion, highlighting the intricate ways in which social identities and power dynamics are constructed and contested.

Results and Discussion

Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* exemplifies a pluralistic narrative technique, employing a nonlinear structure that operates on multiple levels. The first narrative level consists of the authorial voice and the perspectives of chosen characters, primarily represented through Anjum, Tillo, Musa, the landlord, Dr. Bhartoya, and Ashfaq Mir. The second level incorporates newspaper clippings, which serve as a form of historical documentation, aligning with the ethnographic search advocated by Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA). These clippings provide critical data about Tillo's experiences. The third narrative level comprises police records, which operate independently within their specified Fields of Action, delineating the realm where discursive practices occur. Finally, the overarching context serves as the framework through which the discourse, text, and fields of action are interpreted via intertextual and interdiscursive practices.

Wodak's next stage of DHA—Discursive Strategies—can be applied here, particularly focusing on the Argumentation Theory, which encompasses the topos of fear. The central topos operating throughout the novel is fear, which catalyzes three significant incidents around which the narrative revolves. The first event is introduced with "Newton's army, deployed to deliver an Equal and Opposite reaction. Thirty thousand saffron parakeets with steel talons and bloodied beaks, all squawking together" (Roy, 2017, p. 62). The second pivotal event occurs at the Shiraz Cinema: "As the woman (Tilo) made her way to the Shiraz's main interrogation center…the sign on the door said Interrogation Centre…In Kashmir, interrogation was not a real category. There was questioning, which meant a few slaps and kicks, and interrogation which meant torture" (Roy, 2017, p. 380). The third significant incident is "The Untimely Death of Miss Jebeen the First," which transforms Musa into Commander Gulrez: "Musa was not arrested at the check-post. He was picked up from his home after the funeral. Over quietness at the funeral of your wife and daughter would not have passed unnoticed in those days" (Roy, 2017, p. 325).

The topos of fear, particularly the fear of discrimination, drives the characters to abandon their fields of action, which are essential to their identities. For instance, Anjum flees Khawangah after the Gujrat incident, Tilo navigates the diplomatic enclave post-Sheraz Cinema, and Musa lives as a fugitive freedom fighter following the tragic death of his wife and child. Wodak states that "groups can create and cross boundaries simultaneously and that people construct boundary ideologies distinguishing between 'Us' and 'Them' in their everyday discourse while drawing on the cultural resources to which they have access and the structural conditions in which they are placed" (Wodak, 2015, p. 95). This ideological framing is embodied in Musa's assertion: "We can't win with just our bodies. We have to recruit our souls too" (Roy 370), indicating his intent to delineate boundaries.

The enigma at the core of Roy's narrative remains the question of truth: "True? Is what True? What is truth about a she who lived in the graveyard like a tree?" (Roy, 2017, p. 1). This uncertainty resonates through Tilo's plight: "Tilo, on the other hand, was like a paper boat on a boisterous sea. She was absolutely alone. Even the poor in our country, brutalized as they were, had families. How would she survive? How long would it be before her boat went down?" (Roy, 2017, p. 160). Similarly, Musa/Commander Gulrez, when offered assistance, inquires, "Am I under arrest, or do I have the permission to leave?" (Roy, 2017, p. 340). These contemplations illustrate the characters' struggle to navigate their identities within the binaries of 'Us' and 'Them.'

Further exemplifying identity construction is the context of specific locations in the narrative, such as "Khawabgah—the House of Dreams" (Roy, 2017, p. 23), inhabited by "living creatures that are incapable of happiness" (Roy 23), and the "Jannat Guest House" (Roy, 2017, p. 23), which functions as a funeral parlor adjacent to the graveyard. Roy's portrayal of the American president's dogs as "his army" illustrates the intertwining of power and identity: "Now because the American Presidents come to India so often, they keep their dogs here, permanently stationed" (Roy, 2017, p. 129). The characterization of Tilo as someone who "is always alone" (Roy, 2017, p. 131) further emphasizes the themes of isolation and disconnection.

Thus, the relationships and identities of characters in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* are in constant flux, where one identity cannot be seamlessly translated across different dimensions of time, space, or boundaries. Anjum's estranged relationship with Khawabgah is severed "once she entered another world" (Roy, 2017, p. 57). The dynamic between Anjum and "Newton's army" (Roy 62) contrasts starkly with the implications of the Jannat Guest House, where the expansion of its influence signifies a proportional increase in its power: "if Jannat Guest House 'expanded, the sum would expand proportionately'" (Roy, 2017, p. 67). The relationships forged on the night of the Shiraz Cinema illustrate the precariousness of identity: "Mam would be personally handed over, but Sir and madam could leave only when Ashfaq Mir said they could" (Roy, 2017, p. 220).

Wodak posits that "identities are always recreated in specific contexts. They are co-constructed in interactive relationships. They are usually fragmented, dynamic and changeable, but not mutually exclusive as everyone has multiple identities" (Wodak, 2015, p. 95). This multiplicity and contextual unpredictability compel characters to relinquish one identity and adopt another, often informed by new circumstances.

In Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, the primary characters establish their strategic identities early on, with the exception of Garson Hobert, who struggles to define himself amidst the complexities of his contextual relationships. Hobert reflects on his predicament: "What will become of me? I am a little like Amrik Singh myself, old, bloated,

scared, and deprived of what Musa so eloquently called the infrastructure of impunity that I have operated within all my life. What if I self-destruct too?" (Roy, 2017, p. 432). Thus, Hobert remains caught between his political role of surveillance and his unfulfilled love for Tilo and her cause.

Wodak notes the risks associated with extreme forms of nationalism, stating, "I trace the trajectory of how the traditional and value-laden concepts of mother tongue and fatherland have been foregrounded in recent national citizenship policies" (Wodak, 2015, p. 95). Hobert's existential crisis encapsulates the plight of those who feel lost amid shifting allegiances.

Wodak asserts, "the borders between us and them are not set in stone; boundaries can be shifted, allegiances change and are changed, depending on political and other interests" (Wodak, 2015, p. 98). This fluidity is evident in the relationship between Amrik Singh and Musa, which, despite its apparent clarity, shifts during Amrik's enforced visit to Shiraz Cinema, where he offers Musa "a bottle of Red Stag Whisky. Everybody, the audience as well as the protagonists of the play that was unfolding understood the script" (Roy, 2017, p. 341). Roy emphasizes that "sometimes, in these kinds of collaborations, the partners don't know that they are partners" (Wodak, 2015, p. 285).

Wodak observes that the need for a national consciousness is foundational for the establishment of modern states, stemming from "modern industrial society" (Wodak, 2015, p. 98). Roy echoes this sentiment when she states, "The only thing that keeps Kashmir from self-destructing like Pakistan and Afghanistan is good old bourgeois capitalism. For all their religiosity, Kashmiris are great businessmen" (Wodak, 2015, p. 170). This capitalist impulse reinforces the status quo, preserving a precarious balance within Kashmiri society.

Thus, instances of resistance against fear pervade *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, exemplified by the assertion that "when the fighting began and the Organization tightened its grip, for ordinary people the consolidation of their dead became, in itself, an act of defiance" (Roy, year, p. 311). On the night of the Shiraz Cinema incident, Tilo "did not want to be the audience for Ashfaq Mir's show. It was an instinctive gesture of solidarity with a prisoner against a jailer, regardless of the reasons that had made the prisoner a prisoner and the jailer a jailer" (Roy, 2017, p. 223). Moreover, Ashfaq Mir's refusal to display pain signifies his resilience: "refusing to show pain was a pact the boy had made with himself. It was an absolute act of defiance that he had conjured up in the teeth of absolute abject defeat. And that made it majestic" (Roy, 2017, p. 195).

These multifaceted narratives illustrate the intricate interplay of identity, fear, and resistance in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, underscoring the complexities of existence within the broader context of societal upheaval.

Conclusion

In Arundhati Roy's narrative universe, the postmodern characters navigate a labyrinth of contexts, each layered with pluralistic tendencies that compel them to confront an uncharted topos of fear. These multifaceted contexts, marked by their novelty and inherent inconsistencies, present characters with new fields of action—each field comes imbued with a distinct set of discursive identities. Stripped of a central grounding, these postmodern figures find themselves in a precarious position, urging them to resist the nationalist discourses that fragment society along ideological lines.

The resistance articulated by these marginalized voices serves as a potential catalyst for the formation of inclusive discourses that embrace a sense of belonging rather than perpetuating the topos of exclusion. As Roy illustrates, the assertion, "But you will still have eyes to see what you have done to us. You are not destroying us. You are constructing us. It's yourselves that you are destroying. Khuda Hafiz" (Roy, 2017, p. 434), encapsulates the paradox of destruction and creation inherent in oppressive power dynamics. This statement highlights the resilience of those subjected to violence and marginalization; they emerge not as mere victims but as active agents who redefine their narratives against the backdrop of national and ideological oppression.

In essence, the characters in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* engage in a complex interplay of identity and resistance, asserting their presence within a socio-political landscape that seeks to erase them. By challenging the dominant discourses and cultivating a collective identity rooted in shared experiences of struggle and resilience, these characters foster a transformative potential that transcends the binaries of 'Us' versus 'Them.' Their journey is emblematic of the broader human quest for recognition, belonging, and the reclamation of agency in the face of systemic oppression.

Roy's work illuminates the necessity of embracing multiplicity and fluidity in identity formation, advocating for discourses that promote inclusivity and solidarity rather than division. Through her nuanced portrayal of postmodern characters, Roy invites readers to reflect on the transformative power of resistance and the potential for emergent narratives that celebrate collective humanity in an increasingly fragmented world.

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