

A Study into the Strained Love Relationships: The Issues of Caste and Gender in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

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Received: 19 Sep 2024; Received in revised form: 20 Oct 2024; Accepted: 26 Oct 2024
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Abstract

The aim of this study is to unfold the factors influencing the strained love relationships with the effects of such relationships as reflected in *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy. Every relationship depends on love, affection, respect, compromise, sacrifice, mutual understanding, needs and communication. Love is an intense feeling of deep affection by one for another. So, the idea of love or love relationship is not limited within conjugal relationship. The term "strained" indicates an atmosphere or situation or relationship which is not relaxed or comfortable. In this novel, the relationships between siblings, between parents and children, between the lovers, and the society and the individuals are somehow strained. Somehow the misconceptions of society, age old prejudices, discriminatory attitudes towards the children, deprivation of equal human rights, miscellaneous political practice, and social taboo are responsible for the distortion of relationships. Papachi, Mammachi, Chacko, Ammu, Estha, Rahel, Baby Kocchamma and Velutha suffer from strained relationships, especially love relationship. The long term effect of disordered relationship can be observed in the characters of Estha and Rahel. The Ipe family is broken for the chaotic connection among the family members. The study has used the theories of psychoanalysis, feminism, Marxism etcetera.

Keywords— Consequence, discrimination, familial bonding, love, relationship, social taboo

I. INTRODUCTION

Arundhati Roy is a renowned figure in contemporary south Asian literature in English. In her masterpiece, *The God of Small Things*, she criticizes the notions of gender, caste and human relationships among the citizens of Indian state, Kerala. The novel is set in a village namely Ayemenem. The inhabitants of the state are highly conservative towards each other because of their rigid love laws. They do not consider human values as the basis of developing any relationship. They are strict in their centuries old rules of dealing with the human beings distinct from one another. Such an effect of this social customs can be found vividly in the lives of the twin siblings in the novel namely Estha and Rahel. Their mental and physical growth is disrupted by the love laws of the society. The primary concern of this study is to analyze the love relationships which are strained in some ways among the characters with the causes and effects of these relationships.

In this novel, Roy deals with the traditional and historical aspects of Indian State of Kerela. She focuses on the societal injustices, miss-conceptions and oppressions like caste system or class distinction, gender discrimination, political humiliation, degradation of human relationship and so on. Arundhati Roy does not only present these societal diseases but also holds her pen against these. Ammu, Velutha, Estha, Rahel, Mamachi are the victims of the discriminating social system of caste, selection of gender and laws of love. Throughout the novel the novelist portrays how the society is infected with these centuries old inhuman customs. Estha and Rahel badly suffer from their childhood to their adulthood for these maltreatments of the society. Finding no support from the family or a trustworthy and safe society they reach a drastic level of relationship. All sorts of relationships suffered in this book. The characters undergo unaccomplished, ineffective, and hopeless relationships with their nearest one. There are theories to support the

ideas. This study develops through the well-known theories of Marxism, Feminism, and Psychoanalysis.

The principal objective of this discussion is to search out the most tempting factors behind the strained love relationships in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. There are some variables that affect the relationships in this novel. The relationship between Mammachi and Pappachi is not normal because of Pappachi's careless nature and his rudeness to Mammachi. The relationship between Ammu and Chacko loses its affectionate attachment because of the discriminatory treatments between the female child and the male child by their parents. Besides, Ammu's disillusionment with her husband and irresponsible attitude of Baba are responsible to destroy their conjugal relationship. Ammu and Velutha's relationship cannot grow into maturity in the face of the social border based on caste. Again, Baby Kocchamma's attraction for the Irish priest fails for the religious boundary. Even the children-parents relationship between Vellya Paapen and Velutha seem vulnerable in the face of man-made sense of inferiority complex. Finally, all the issues influence the twins in such way that they feel incomplete and a kind of identity crisis without each other, which lead the most lovable relationship between Eastha and Rahel into the incestuous one.

Another focus of this study is to analyze the effects of the strained love relationships in this novel. Ammu suffers from the bondless relationship between her parents. She was tortured physically with her mother by her father. Chacko wants to grab the share or partnership of Ammu from their family possessions with the sense of gender consciousness. The breakdown of the conjugal relationship between Ammu and Baba wounds the callow minds of Estha and Rahel. Baby Kocchamma's unrequited love turns her into passionless, rude and lonely. Her rudeness affects the twins. And the lives of Ammu, Estha and Rahel have faced a tremendous change as the consequence of the relationship between Ammu and Velutha.

Roy obliquely indicates the possible solution to the problems regarding the distortion of relationships. The presentation of the issues of discriminations in this novel seeks for the appeals of humanity and the necessity of implementation of equal human rights as the most suited solution of such disorder of situation. If everyone tried to ensure the basic human rights equally for all, no discrimination would take place. Everyone should have the right to enjoy the identity of their own. As man is a rational being, every human being with their different genders, religions, castes or other categories should be treated rationally.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There have been a number of works on different aspects of Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. Some acknowledged ideas of the authors are explored below in the form of paraphrase.

Jersey Zheng in his article entitled "A Reading on *The God of Small Things and Wide Sargasso Sea* through the Hybridity Theory" discusses from Homi K. Bhaba's point of view that in

"*The God of Small Things*, the story's setting is in Ayemenem which is a small village in the southwestern Indian state of Kerala, as well as, a meeting-point between European and Indian cultures. Thus it displays the hybridity characteristic in the language, culture and regions". (p. 2)

Besides, Deepa K. and Dr. P. Nagarai comment in their article entitled "Stylistics Aspects of Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*" that the novel is not written in a chronological order. The structure of the work is full of facts and reality faced by the characters. Arundhati Roy is a gifted Indian novelist in the art of writing. Roy is an author of varied taste.

In "Ramification of Infidelity in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Thing*", Nirmala Kumari V. and Dr. K.K. Sunalini describe,

"In the novel, the writer breaks the regular sequence of events and allows them to the sad fate of Ammu shared by her two eggs twins Rahel and Estha. The theme of doomed love between Ammu, the Syrian Christian, Velutha, the untouchable paravan is presented in post-modern form. It is frequently praised for its sensitivity to social injustice and its feminist politics, saying who is to be loved by whom, how much and how little less. Here, we can see how a woman's self-desires to cross the existing rules of the society." (p. 1)

Moreover, Kitipong Metharattanakorn narrates in "Discuss Roy's Presentation of History and Realities in *The God of Small Things*",

"Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* is one of many representations of history revealing the inconsistency of history and presenting a new method to perceive it. The novel can be anything the individuals want to see or like it to be.

Small things might be the habitual situation of everyday life that people never notice. Likely, the death of Velutha is forgotten when time flies. No one notices it. "God" may be the social contexts like rules and orders of society that control and dominate people's lives. In short, death of Velutha is a micro thing that expands the macro scale of Indian social structure. Like Velutha, all individuals are small things that are controlled by big thing like God, fate, history, society, or whatever they want to define it." (p. 3)

Furthermore, in the essay entitled "Better to Have Love & Love Laws: A Psychic Rapprochement of Subjectivity & Symbolic Dispossession in *The God of Small Things*", the essayist speaks about the violent consequence of the gap between self and other.

III. DEFINITIONS OF THE KEY TERMS

3.1 Identity crisis

Identity crisis is the notion of loss that goes profound in colonial and postcolonial writings. The loss of a past, a culture, a customs is the catastrophe which marks the lives of the colonized people. It is equally the loss that hints the loss of individuality for the postcolonial people. When it is true that the fight for identity is widespread struggle, the postcolonial identity is undoubtedly a struggle with extenuating circumstances. The study of colonial and postcolonial writings innately encompasses with the reading of identity. Identity develops an overpowering emotive vigor in the person's lifespan that begins to drive every single action. Identity crisis is the quandary of emerging a rational individuality afterwards the colonial rule.

3.2 Alienation

Alienation suggests the condition or experience of being separated from a group to which one should belong. Alienation is typically a problematic separation from something. Social isolation can be defined as a form of individual torment deeply interwoven in the social organization.

3.3 Hybridity

Hybridity means the blending of cultures occurring at the intersection of colonizers and colonized. It is the most extensively engaged and disputed terms in post-colonial theory. It generally means to the formation of new transcultural forms.

3.4 Subalternism

Subalternism is a sub-set of postcolonial studies. "Subaltern" means dispossessed individual. In other words, subalterns are the indigenous or lower-caste people. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in her "Can Subaltern Speak?" defines "subaltern" as those who fit to the third world countries. It is impossible for them to speak out as they are separated by sexual category, class, social group, region, religious conviction and other narratives. These dissections do not permit them to arise in union. Now it refers to the person belonging to the minor by means of various categories.

3.5 Love Relationship

Love denotes to the feeling of solid fascination and passionate connection. It is a risk which can cause a great pain or it can heal into a kind of habit which may not be remained love. It is a kind of unselfish, loyal and benevolent concern for the welfare of others. It indicates the compassionate and affectionate actions towards others. In its various forms, love performs as a key organizer of personal and social relationships. The forms and the ranges of love differ from person to person. For instance, the love of parents towards their children is different from the love form between the spouses. Both are the two forms of love. A sense of love can assure the deepness in every relationship. Love can make any bonding stronger both in the case of social and familial or of public and personal relationships. The forms of love are varied for the types of relationships. Both Greek and Modern philosophers identify several forms of love based on the nature of relationship such as familial love, platonic love, romantic love, love for the divine, unrecompensed love, infatuated love etcetera. The concept of love is related to the context of relationship.

IV. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study is partially related with the theories of, Marxism, feminism, psychoanalysis, colonialism, postcolonialism.

4.1 Psychoanalytic theory

The concept of psychoanalysis is interlinked with literature. It investigates the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements of human mind.

Sigmund Freud established psychoanalytic principles. Psychoanalysis aims at resolving the psychological problems known as disorder or dysfunction. It focuses on patterns of behavior. Psychoanalysis can help anyone in better understand of human behavior.

Freud's introduces the unconscious part of human mind beyond its conscious part. He unfolds its decisive role in human life. Unconsciousness indicates the idea of

repression. In other word, it is such conflict which remain unresolved. It can be an un-admitted wish, or nocuous past experiences. Freud works on the concept of dream. Dream is processed by real incidents.

If we look through the lens of psychoanalysis, we easily find individual with a psychological history which commences through the experiences of his childhood in the family and his adult behavior is the outcome of that childhood familial experience.

4.2 Marxism

The German philosopher, Karl Marx and the German sociologist, Friedrich Engels were the joint founders of this thought. Its intention is to bring an undivided society. According to this theory, economy is the motive behind all activities such as education, government, religion, science, philosophy, technology, media, the arts, and so on. Economy is the base of every superstructure. It describes most of the mortal deeds in relations of the circulation and underlying forces of financial power.

From Marxist perspectives, “socioeconomic factors divide people between those who control the world’s natural, economic and human resources and the proletariat, the majority of the world’s people who live in substandard conditions performing the manual labor”. Unluckily, those the proletariats are habitually the last to identify this circumstance. They typically allow dissimilarities in religious conviction, race, culture, or sexual category to discrete them into combatant blocs that undertake minute or not any communal alteration. Few Marxists trust that proletariats will one day instinctively improve the awareness required to rise up in ferocious rebellion against their tyrants and build an equal sphere.

For Marxism, an ideology exposes through the exercise and idea of class conflict. For example, capitalism, communalism, nationalism, religious belief, ethical systems, humanism, green politics and forecasting are all ideologies. Marxism is a non-suppressive viewpoint. Its mechanism is to mark us persistently conscious of the means by which we are products of factual/chronological surroundings and of the exploitive dogmas that assist to make us sightless to this fact in order to keep us submissive.

From a Marxist perspective, classicism, for instance, is a belief that connects one’s worth as a social being by means of the societal status to which one fits. As of classist point of view, persons at the top of the societal scale are certainly grander to the folks underneath them: those at the topmost are extra clever, additionally accountable, more reliable, extra virtuous, and so on. Persons at the lowermost of the collective scale, it follows, are indeed indolent, and unreliable. Therefore, it is accurate and ordinary that persons from the utmost societal class should grasp all the

sites of supremacy and management for the reason that they are certainly appropriate to such roles and are the only ones who can be trusted to execute them appropriately.

According to Karl Marx, Religion is “the opiate of the masses”. It is a system that aids to keep the faithful deprived pleased with their lives, or in any case accepting of it. The enquiry of God’s presence is not the vital concern for Marxist; rather, whatever human beings do in God’s name–structured religion – is the concentration. For instance, while various Christian religious clusters work to feed, clothe, household and even train the underprivileged, the pious tenets that are distributed along with the foodstuff and clothing encompass the belief that the deprived, if they retain on non-violent, will discover their prize in paradise.

4.3 Feminism

Feminism is a set of belief that defend women’s personal, economic, social and political rights. Recognizing patriarchy, violence against women, equal rights both of men and women are the primary concern of feminism. Traditional gender roles justify successfully the inequalities between man and woman. Women are generally excluded from the access of leading and the position of decision-maker. Even today, women earn lower wages than men in the similar job.

This novel indicates the parallel structure of domination between colonial history and the history of oppression in the state of Kerala. The afflictions of the women can be noticed only due to their biological identity as a female. Political humiliation is highly noticed in the male-treatment of the members of the Communist party with Velutha. The main events and the relationships are affected by the psychic instability of the characters.

V. THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF THE STRAINED LOVE RELATIONSHIPS IN *THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS*

The story of *The God of Small Things* rounds around the village namely Ayemenem in the State of Kerala in India. Ipe family lives in there. Papachi and Mamachi are the head of Ipe family. They are not happy in their conjugal life. Papachi beats Mamachi. Ammu and Chacko are their two children. Chacko goes to Oxford for higher study where he involves himself with Margaret. He does not keep regular contact with his family except when he feels the need of money. He marries Margaret. Their marriage does not work successfully. They have one child namely Sophie Mol. On the other hand, Ammu does not get the chance to go outside of Ayemenem for the purpose of higher study. There is no peace in between her parents. Ammu wants to get rid of her family. So, Ammu has married Baba hurriedly when she has

been introduced with Baba. Soon she has been disillusioned with her husband. Baba is an alcoholic. Once he has forced Ammu into sleeping with his boss. Where there is no self-respect, there is no love. That's why Ammu has left her husband and settled back in Ayemenem with her twins: Estha and Rahel. After divorce Ammu comes back to her Ayemenem house "unwelcomed" by her family. The society does not take back their married girls. Even the family members take the married girls who are rejected from their husbands as burden. Here, she develops an affair with an Untouchable handyman, Velutha. Velutha has a close relationship with Ipe family, particularly with Estha and Rahel. For this, Ammu has been banished from her own house. Baby Kochamma is the aunt of Ammu and Chacko; and the grandaunt of the twins. Baby Kochamma lives in their Ayemenem house as she is a spinster. Baby Kochamma possesses a vengeful and tactful personality. After inculcating Velutha of raping Ammu Baby Kochamma forces Estha to confirm it. After he is accused of raping and kidnapping the children, the police strikes Velutha almost to death. Both Ammu and Chacko's marriage didn't work successfully. In 1993, Rahel came to Ayemenem again from America to meet Estha. At the end of the novel, Roy indicates an incestuous physical intimacy between the siblings.

5.1 The Nature of Love Relationships in *The God of Small Things*

All the characters of the novel break the rules of love and the rules of the society. They all are infected with the laws regarding who should be loved and how should be loved and how much. Ammu and Velutha die because of their love relationship. Ammu has been banished for involving herself in an extra marital relationship with Velutha who belongs to the untouchable caste.

The twins also involve themselves in an unnatural physical interaction at the end of this novel. In some conventional way, one can look at it as incest but the way the novel describes, it seems really a sharing of an immense grief and an unimaginable sense of loss and isolation. They try to heal the wounds that both of them had in some terrible ways. Sometimes it does shock the people.

Again, Navomi Ipe is the sister of Papachi. She is called as Baby Kochamma. In her young age, she felt an attraction for a young Irish priest namely Father Mulligan. In order to be intimate with him, Baby Kochamma had converted had joined a monkery. Eventually she cognized that her determination did not bring her close to Mulligan whom she loved. Because of Kochamma's unreturned love for Father Mulligan, she stayed spinster becoming severely resentful over time.

And, the relationship between Ammu and Chacko is not appreciable. Ammu seems to be the competitor of Chacko. Chacko wants to win over the rights of Ammu as a family member. As he is the only son of his family and Ammu is the female child, Chacko thinks himself as the owner of all of properties of their family. He does seize the ownership of Paradise Pickles Factory and treats Ammu as a worker similar to others. Ammu becomes a part of the proletariat similar to the other factory workers in the eyes of his brother. Chacko does not become sympathetic to his sister. The narrator captures Chacko's annoyance, " 'Are they *my* responsible?' He said that Ammu and Estha and Rahel were millstones around his neck." (85) He does not think twice before banishing his sister from Ayemenem. Thus the bonding between these two siblings does not run normally.

Conjugal relationships are not comfortable. Love, respect, pleasure, mutual understanding, compromise, responsibility, care, sympathy etcetera are the common aspects in both social and familial relationship which are absent in the relationships between Ammu and Baba, Mammachi and Pappachi, and Chacko and Margaret.

5.2 The Factors behind Such Disordered Relationships with Their Effects

5.2.1 Discriminatory attitudes towards children

Ammu is always deprived of his necessary care and concern for her by her parents. Chacko gets whatever he wants. Both Ammu and Chacko are the siblings. Their parents treat them with different eyes. Ammu in all stages of her life is neglected by her family. As a child, she suffers from the unhappy relationship between her parents. In her childhood, her father used to beat Ammu due to his rage on her mother. Even, Mamachi shows discriminatory attitudes towards Ammu. She gives less priority to Ammu. Mammachi loves Chacko more because once he prevents Pappachi from beating her. Even being born in higher class family, Ammu tolerates the humiliation like an Untouchable. She with her twins endures such biased attitude, "Though Ammu, Estha and Rahel were allowed to attend the funeral, they were made to stand separately, not with rest of the family. Nobody would look at them."(5) That is why she feels losing the familial bonding.

She is punished for having an illicit relationship with Velutha. On the contrary, Chacko enjoys the advantages of the poor female workers of the factory. The sexual contemplations of Chacko and that of Ammu have not been justified in the same way by the family members. Chacko tries to take advantage of the poor female workers of Paradise Pickles Factory. He habitually feels pleasure to see them in their home. Regardless of reproving extramarital interaction of Ammu, it confirms a part in their house for Chacko. Mammachi has provided the access for Chacko's

mistresses in a separate part of the house so that Mammachi can overlook them while they come into the house. And, to veil this treacherous entertainment Mammachi's only explanation for compliant this behavior from Chacko is that she can simply approve the necessities of males who have a desire. The narrator describes,

“Mammachi nor Baby Kochamma saw any contradiction between Chacko's Marxist mind and feudal libido. They only worried about the Naxalites, who had been known to force men from Good Families to marry servant girls whom they had made pregnant.” (168)

Ammu is scolded by her own family members, where Chacko is forgiven by the family members for doing the same thing. The members of Ipe family do not consider Ammu's condition. Family members do not bother about Chacko's relationship with Margaret, even when he gets divorced from Margaret. No one of the family pays heed to this matter. But Ammu as a divorcee becomes an unwanted member of Ayemenem house.

The treatment to Sophie Mol and the treatment to the twins are different by the people of Ipe family. Even the twins are scolded by the servant of their house. One night Estha and Rahel were jumping on the bed and playing *Julius Caesar* in the room where Kochu Maria was sleeping on the floor. The humiliation and the maltreatment by Kochu Maria to the children can be seen with the voice of the narrator, “‘Tell your mother to take you to your father's house’, ... ‘There you can break as many beds as you like. These aren't your beds. This isn't *your* house.’” (83)

5.2.2 Deprivation of Human Rights

The God of Small Things is knitted around the contexture of human classification that has been going on for several centuries. Because of social classifications and hierarchy among the society, all the inhabitants of Ayemenem do not have the chance to enjoy all basic human rights. Some suffer for their lower social class based on monetary value, some for lower social caste, some for social customs and some for religious bindings. Every species has the right to live and live with respect. The novel embraces the poor exploited and socially disallowed folks of the Kerala society. They are eccentrics, outcastes, factory workforces and low-caste people. The female, the children, and the untouchable are the prisoners of the institutions of the society with meager degree of freedom.

In *The God of Small Things*, Roy portrays how human separate the mortal and become inhuman towards them in excuse of caste system, in Indian society, particularly in the state of Kerela. Despite constitutional watchwords, the democratic India is still ruled by four-class system which is

Brahmins, the revered priest caste; the Kshatriya associated with warfare; the Vaisya engaged in commerce and Sudra assigned for menial tasks and the ‘outcaste’ or the ‘untouchable’ exist at the lower section of the Sudra group. Roy draws the pictures of those ‘untouchable’ of the society who are known as ‘Paravan’ in this novel.

Besides, the constitution of India abolished the ‘untouchability’ and its practice in any form but ironically the system still continues in some parts of India due to the deep-rooted prejudice of some people well placed in society and their fear of losing their supremacy. The values and customs of different religions have been merged with one another. In such way, the lower caste untouchable followers of Hindu religion have also been treated with the same standard by the Syrian Christian even after becoming the convert to Christianity. In the words of the narrator,

“When the British came to Malabar, a number of Paravans, Pelayas and Pulayas's (among them Velutha's grandfather, Kelen) converted to Christianity and joined the Anglican Church to escape the scourage of Untouchability.” (74)

Though the poor untouchables become Christians to get rid of the social hatred, they are marginalized and subordinated. There are three characters namely Kuttapen and Velutha; and their father Vellya Pappen, belong to the category of untouchable. They represent the ‘dalits’ in this novel. Throughout the novel we find that the services of these Paravans are entertained in every short of necessity by the Ipe family or by the society, though the Paravans are not allowed to enter into the house of the touchable. “Mammachi didn't encourage him to enter the house (except when she needed something mended or installed).” (77) The Paravans were not permitted to tread on the common streets, likely to the crawl towards the back with a sweeper, sweeping away their footmarks so that the higher castes would not pollute themselves by treading into Paravan's footprints. The Paravans were not permitted to unmask their mouths when they talked, to distract their vile inhalation away from persons whom they spoken. Even in the novel, the people of that society don't think of a common school for all children from all castes. “Mamachi persuaded Velutha Pappen to send him to the ‘Untouchables’ School that her father-in-law, Punnyan Kunju, had founded.” (74)

Moreover, the author draws an inhuman outcome of the injustice in the name of caste through Velutha's character. In all walks of life, he suffers stock scorn and segregation of the upper caste people. The society regards him as inferior. His skills go unevaluated. He is an unparalleled as

a carpenter, as a mechanic and also as an engineer. Velutha used to make little wooden toys for Ammu and as untouchable, he had placed them in her outstretched hand without any touch. He is more conscious about his duty to the working class than his caste, though the workers of Paradise Pickles belong to the 'touchable' sniff at Velutha. According to them Paravans cannot be carpenters. This Paravan boy disregarded social rules in favor of love. For this he had to pay very dearly. Though everyone knew that Sophie Mol's death was an accident, he was falsely implicated. Even Velutha was referred to as 'Dr. Velutha' by Kochamma when her garden cherub's silver was fixed by him, didn't think twice before making such cruel plan against him. He was a committed worker of the Communist Party but when he was arrested, the Marxist Party never stood beside him. The police feel little remorse for brutally beating him to death, because he was an 'untouchable'. Papacchi beats Mammachi in his bad mood. Mammachi cannot enjoy the equal human rights. She has no power to offer her own opinion, though she is financially independent. She has no freedom of choice. Papacchi does not pay respect to Mamachi as his better-half. If he considered his wife as a human being similar to himself and treated her with respect, they might be happy in their conjugal life. Wives or girls do not get the opportunity of equal human rights to the husbands or boys. Similarly, she had no right to protect her dignity. It seems that the dignities of the wives are the possession of the husbands achieved through the formal institutions like marriage. If the people of the society did not make border between the inhabitants, no class-based victimization would happen.

5.2.3 Psychological alienation

Several painful separation can be found in this novel. The term psychology looks through the human mind and behavior. It interprets all facets of human experience. Man is a physical and psychological combination. Psychology is an indissoluble object one's personality. We can see the physical attack but the mental wounds are invisible to us. Each humiliation affects us psychologically. Thus anyone suffers from psychological problems. The external variant like society, caste, community, creed, and culture always control person's psychological arena. A set of biased social belief have taken away the sense of home for Ammu, Rahel and Estha. Their house becomes a prison for them.

Detachment of one causes attraction to another. Similarly, Ammu is detached of her family members, there grows an appeal in her mind for Velutha. The psychology of the children is the most affected figure in this novel. Estha and Rahel grow facing the worst criticism from the society owing to their mother. They become demoralized with the

scorn pouring on them. Roy presents the traumatic experiences of past of the characters through flashback. None can understand the children properly. Children's psychology largely depends on the psychological state of the parents, especially the mother. For instance, the novel points out how the twins feel after sexual humiliation of Ammu in front of the twins by the police officer at the police station, "Her face was set like stone, but the tears welled up in her eyes and ran down her rigid cheeks. It made the twins sick with fear." (8)

The novel shows how small issues like behaviour can affect our life. Their continuous separation from the family members particularly from their parents disrupts the natural growth of Estha and Rahel. They suffer from lack of parental love, disturbed infancy. Ammu was made to send Estha back to their father. His transfer from one place to another makes an identity crisis for Estha. In the words of the story teller, "And now, twenty-three years later, their father had re-Returned Estha. He had sent him back to Ayemenem with a suitcase and a letter." (9) Moreover, such frequent separation from a near one can make Estha lonely. That is why he becomes quite. He was in trauma from his very childhood which made him dumb. As if he withdraws himself from this world. "Slowly, over the years, Estha withdrew from the world. He grew accustomed to the uneasy octopus that lived inside him and squirmed its inky tranquillizer on his past." (12)

This isolation commonly demonstrates in immoral bonds and actions. Isolation from their identities leads to a desperate quest for their individuality. Estha and Rahel are stooped to one another because they can express their pain and oppression. They consider themselves as a single entity. They have found themselves alienated. They have no one except each other. It seems that they carry the same soul in two bodies. Both social and familial negligence make them to perceive in such way. As the narrator unfolds,

"In those early amorphous years when memory had only just begun, when life was full of Beginnings and no Ends, and Everything was For Ever, Esthappen and Rahel thought of themselves together as Me, and separately, individually, as We or Us. As though they were a rare breed of Siamese twins, physically separate, but with joint identities." (2)

5.2.4 Social taboo

The patriarchal hegemony, discriminatory glance and suppression can be found in the name of values. Extra-marital relationship for a woman is thought as a social taboo in the patriarchal society. According to them, a married

woman should not come back forever from her husband's house. They should try to adjust with their husbands. In this novel, despite being born in a higher class family, Ammu is humiliated by the family members and the society for her extra-marital relationship like the untouchable or the proletariat. After the death her dead body is rejected by the Church for her groundbreaking action towards the social taboo. "The Church refused to bury Ammu. On several counts. So, Chacko hired a van to transport the body to the electric crematorium". (162)

Velutha disrespects the biased society by transgressing its various boundaries. By making an extra marital relationship with Ammu, the offspring of a touchable family, he violates their traditional social rules. This so-called untouchable does not behave like an untouchable which he is supposed to do. "They were made to have separate churches, with separate services, and separate Pariah Bishop." (74) Even, his own father worries about his stepping out of bounds. At one stage, the relationship between Velutha and his father becomes unusual when his father offers Mammachi to kill Velutha. "He offered to kill his son with his own bare hands." (78) As everyone knows that subaltern, cannot move higher toward the social hierarchy. They don't make their voice hark.

Again, the inhabitants follow the laws of love about who should be loved and how should be loved or how much. Everyone should keep his or her class, caste, religion, in mind when one wants to love someone. But both the little Estha and Rahel are very close to Velutha. They have a kind of friendship among them. Finally, the conscious intimacy between the siblings is the threat to the social set up. When there is no barrier of caste, religion, class and the twins feel them the single being, there is no problem to love. So, according to the rules of the society, they can love each other. The so-called love laws of the society should not have any problem with sexual or physical intercourse between the siblings.

5.2.5 Blemishing Political Situation

The defected political groups like Communist political party can be noticed as the responsible issue for the social disorder in this novel in some way. K. N. M. Pillai does not take the responsibility of the other members of the party. He is one of the leaders of Communist Party of Ayemenem. He speaks for the betterment and the rights of all the deprived, poor, lower caste inhabitants of that area. On the contrary, his activities or actions are not supportive always to the deprived and not against the suppression, oppression or the deprivation. K. Comrade K. N. M. Pillai engages himself more for his own benefits than that of the other members of their Party. In expression of the narrator of *The God of Small Things*,

"Comrade Pillai told Inspector Thomas Mathew that he was acquainted with Velutha, but omitted to mention that Velutha was a member of the Communist Party, or that Velutha had knocked on his door late the previous night, which made Comrade Pillai the last person to have seen Velutha before he disappeared." (262)

Again, Inspector Thomas Mathew does not try to investigate the case of Velutha who is a committed member of Communist Party and a true victim of the class based society of the bourgeois. He does not act like a true Congress man. Even, he proves the biased nature of Communism in Ayemenem. The narrator of the novel highlights the irresponsible nature of the police,

"It was crucial for him to know whether the Paravan had any political support or whether he was operating alone. Though he himself was a Congress man, he did not intend to risk any run-ins with the Marxist Government." (262)

VI. CONCLUSION

Arundhati Roy is known world-wide for her successful writings like *The God of Small Things*. It is not about a single issue. The Novel is not only about the small things rather it is about the connection from the small things to the biggest things. It reflects how the strained relationships affect the individuals to the society and how the discriminatory issues of caste and gender stir up both social and familial relationships. She does not only depict the social set up of miss-judgment regarding relationships, gender and caste-system but also resist frequently against these. As a Paravan, the representation of Velutha with divine qualities, the relationship or intimacy between Ammu and Velutha; finally the drastic intimacy between the siblings are nothing but the slap on the face of the inhuman social customs. In *The God of Small Things*, Arundhati Roy shows how love and human relationships are meaningless and helpless in the face of the cruel, unsocial and inhuman norms of the society. The presentation of mistreatments regarding the caste and gender throughout the novel is pathetic and raises questions about humanity. Through the story of discriminations regarding caste and gender Roy shows the psychological damage and destructions of human relationships. The caste system is the system of man-made stratification into the society. It presents the repression of the people who are lower in caste-system. Roy's presentations of caste system, the treatment towards the

Paravans, their responses and the ultimate circumstance raise a sense of affliction and accuse humanity.

Both the love and liberty are suppressed because of the society biased of caste and gender issues. Caste-consciousness is so pervasive in Indian society that the so-called 'pure' and the 'high' try all sorts of tactics to show off their superiority as the people with the Ipe family successfully ruin the life of Velutha in this novel. Ammu and Velutha, the male and the female protagonists of the novel are the nastiest sufferers of gender role and caste discriminations. The customary faith of women and the caste construction of culture are organized by the great priests of a bourgeoisie class who wish to preserve the social order in its discipline. They have to make love in accordance to the laws set by the society. The emotions, feelings and expressions are restricted by their customs. The most terrible thing is that a man cannot touch other human being only because of the caste attributed on him. Again, all of such social routine regarding caste, class, familial and social relationship, and love laws are different for women. The life of a woman is considered a public affair. The rules and customs are imposed forcefully on the female. In order to do justice to the age old social regulations, the society confidently performs injustice to the female inhabitants of that society. The characters of Ammu, Mammachi, Baby Kocchamma, the female workers of Paradise Pickles Factory are the victims of such discrimination. How much the women synthesize the age old discriminations that they even cannot understand the mal-treatment and diminish of basic rights as a human being all the time.

The God of Small Things is a fabulous novel of Arundhati Roy. The complications of South Asian identities and affiliation are at the temperament of this novel. Characters such as Ammu, Veluth, Rahel and Estha are a kind of rootless in their social settings. They seek both for love and identity. That is why they habitually select to go out of the orthodox of social life. No character finds fulfillment of any sort. The assurance of equal human rights for all, humanity and love may alleviate such social and psychological iniquities.

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