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## **The Ugly Reality of Life with Special Reference to Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things***

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### **Abstract**

The present research paper with “The Ugly Reality of Life” in Arundhati Roy’s novel *The God of Small Things* is a very large problem in the novel in post-colonial literature. Taking this idea the paper tries to explore the ugly reality of life of three generations of women in the novel. Here the struggle for existence of women is presented skillfully by Arundhati Roy. Roy’s novel *The God of Small Things* is stunning tale of women who have been placed at margin of society. She has shown keen awareness of problems of women through her writing. She rightly explains forth how women become victims of violence exploitation, alienation and exile. She was divorced from an alcoholic husband, mother of twins has disastrous love affair with untouchable. Caste segregation Betrayal love, political issues, historical realities, social discrimination, forbidden love are major ugly theme in the novel in the end of the novel she was found dead alone in a grimy room in lodge at age of thirty one.

**Keyword:** Women Existence, Male Dominated Society, Ugly Reality

### **Introduction**

Arundhati Roy is one of the foremost novelists of this tradition showing exceptional awareness of the social crises and sensitivity to the problems. Her contribution to Indian English literature is momentous. Roy was born on November 24, 1961 in Bengal. Her full name is Suzanna Arundhati Roy. When Roy began writing *The God of Small Things* “I didn’t know what I did started really I didn’t know I was writing a book for a while. *The God of Small Things* was launched in Delhi on April 4, 1997 and was awarded the booker prize in

London on 14 October 1997. After this novel Arundhati Roy has not written any novel, but she has shown tremendous interest in the contemporary world and national issues. Beside the novel she has written a number of articles on international politics containing her radical ideas.

Arundhati Roy novel deals not with one reality, but several realities. The opening page of the novel bears a line from John Berger: "Never again will a single story be told as though it's the only one". The novel deals with small things, the consciousness of these things, the minute under currents of situation that surround the characters.

The novel focuses on several things primarily it takes up a society that survives amid rural setting, with the Syrian Christian family. She highlights the rigid caste system that sanctions strict behavior and relation codes. Both men and women in the Ayemenem house are governed by this mentality. In Velutha we have a symbol of the victim of this cruel social system. The novel problematic the role of the political radicalists who have vowed to bring about a Marxist revolution to banish all exploitative systems and establish a society based on equality and respect for man as man. The novel also focuses the hapless daughter of the ayemenem house Ammu with her twin children Estha and Rahel. She is betrayed by her husband, humiliated in her parent's home to which she returns after divorcing, leads a lonely life, falls in love with another luckless being Velutha, faces cruel treatment at the hands of police is insulted by her brother and in the end dies in a little-known hotel's dirty room. Roy's feminist anger foregrounds society's well-oiled exploitative machinery that brings about this end to Ammu. That means all the realities are ugly reality of life in Arundhati's novel *The God of Small things*. The story primarily takes place in a town named Ayemenem in Kerala state of India. The time shifts back and forth from 1969 to 1993 when the twins are reunited at age 31, March of the story is written in a viewpoint sympathetic to the 7 year-old children. The novel deals with prominent facets of Kerala life which include communism, the caste system, and the Syrian Christian way of life.

Ammu is the female character in the novel. She is center figure of the novel. Her father was bitter because the credit for his discovery of a new species of moth went to someone else. Ammu was desperate to escape the house. She finally convinced her parents to let her spend a summer with Aunt in Calcutta. There, she fell in love with married a man who was managing a tea estate. She gave birth to two children twins Estha and Rahel. She later found out that her husband was a heavy alcoholic. He beat her and tried to pimp her out to his boss in order to retain his job. She left him. Ammu came to live with her mother and brother in Ayemenem. Also living at the house was baby Kchamma, who is sister of her father. On the way to the airport the family encounters a group of communist protesters. Rahel claims to have seen Velutha, a man from the factory in the crowd. Velutha is an untouchable (the lowest caste), a paravan. His family had been working for Chacko's family for many generations. Velutha was extremely gifted with his hands, and was an accomplished carpenter

and mechanic. Unlike other untouchable, he had a self assured air, unable to conform to this father's idea of the proper behavior for an untouchable Velutha disappears. Because of his easy going nature, Velutha was great friends with Rahel and Estha. Ammu become attracted towards Velutha. When their intimate relationship is discovered, Ammu is tricked and locked in her room and Velutha is banished. When the twins ask their mother why she has been locked up, Ammu in her rage blames them as the reason why she cannot be free. Rahel and Estha deeply wounded, and decide to run away.

This couple is neglected and discarded by the orthodox society, found solace in union. The secret love meeting goes on for thirteen days until it is reposted by Velutha's father to Mammachi (Her mother) when this disastrous affair is revealed, Velutha is grabbed by police and killed on false case of rape. When Ammu went to police station to set the record straight against Velutha, at that time the police officer insulted her with remark that the "Kottayam police does not take statement from Veshyas (prostitutes) and their illegitimate children." This brutal behavior of police shows that he used his power to marginalize Ammu.

Arundhati Roy delights in seeing comic element in ordinary things as has been noted earlier; such portrayals are lent a deliberately ironic twist in order to rip open the hollowness. Let us see the following passage –

Comrade Namboodiripad's house functioned as the hotel's dinning room, where semi-suntanned tourists in bathing suits sipped tender coconut water, and old communists, who now worked as fawing bearers in colorful ethnic clothes, stopped slightly behind their trays of drinks.

At the end of novel, Ammu is exiled from home by her family members. She is separated from her children and not allowed to visit Ayemenem. She desperately tries to seek good job in anonymous places. Tried, exhausted, sick and finally defeated she is found dead in a grimy room in Bharat Lodge in Aleepy. After death her humiliation does not end, the church refused to bury Ammu. Finally cremated in electric crematorium were only beggars, and police custody dead are cremated. Throughout the course of Ammu's life we observe that she was facing severely ugly realities of life like family, marriage, religion and police.

As we have earlier seen *The God of Small Things* is about several things. One of the chief issues it brings into focus is the family and social mechanism evolved over centuries in traditional Indian society to suppress women and her independence as a human being. Right at the center is the woeful tale of Ammu, mother of Rahel and Estha who suffers silently, yet simmers inside in her a deep discontent.

The story is set in the caste society of India, at a time when members of the untouchable paravan or paryan caste were not permitted to touch member of higher castes or enter their houses. The untouchable were considered polluted beings. In india, the caste system was considered a way to organize society. Roy's book shows how terribly cruel such a system can be. Along with the caste system, readers see an economic class struggle. The

lives are considered upper class. Second Betrayal is a constant element in this story. Love ideals and confidence are all forsaken. Consciously and unconsciously, innocently and maliciously, and these deceptions affect all of the character deeply.

One interpretation of Roy's theme of forbidden love is that love is such a powerful and uncontrollable force that it cannot be contained by any conventional social code. Another is that conventional society somehow seeks to destroy real love, which is why love in the novel is consistently connected to loss, death and sadness. Also because all romantic love in the novel relates closely to politics and history, it is possible that Roy is stressing the connection of personal desire to larger themes of history and social circumstances. Love would therefore be an emotion that can be explained only in terms of two people's cultural background and political identities.

Indian history and politics shape the plot and meaning of *The God of Small Things* in a variety of ways some of Roy's commentary is on the surface with jokes and snippets of wisdom about political realities in India. However, the novel also examines the historical roots of these realities and develops profound insights into the way in which human desperation and desire emerge from the confines of a firmly entrenched caste society. *The God of Small Things* is not written in a sequential narrative style in which events unfold chronologically Roy also employs a disjointed, non-sequential narrative style that echoes the process of memory especially the resurfacing of previously suppressed painful memory.

### **Conclusion**

The painful novel explains about women position in society. A divorced woman has no place or respect in the traditional Indian family we found that related inferiority complex is evident in the interactions between untouchable and touchable in Ayemenem. Beside that caste segregation and other major issues are ugly reality of life in this novel. Throughout the book, there are various moments that intersect. In one moment everything is seen through a child's eyes with child's feeling and rationals. Later the same fact, objects and people are seen in a completely different life.

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