

Caste and Social Hierarchy in "The God of Small Things"

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Abstract - The classifications among social classes are highly valued in India. Occupation and social conduct were used to define distinct social classes. No one can predict that these social evils will disappear from human civilization any time soon, even if we are well into the 21st century. Critically acclaimed book "The God of small things" (1997) by Arundhati Roy catapulted her to international recognition. "The God of Small Things" by Indian novelist and activist Arundhati Roy is the focus on the analysis of caste system in society. The piece draws attention extensively on Arundhati Roy's Flamingo-published book, The God of Small Things. This work not only portrays the class struggles that exist in Indian culture, but also demonstrates the author's sophisticated understanding of the caste system. There are significant parallels between the events of "The God of small things" and Arundhati Roy's own life. The work destabilized the caste system by focusing on a woman's infatuation for a marginalized character. In every circumstance, the oppressed individual is the one who suffers and is overlooked by everyone around them. The social status of the characters is examined in light of the notion of social class and its supporting characteristics. Using the social class consequences framework, we examine how the characters' socioeconomic status affects their lives. There are several depictions of the main protagonists' socioeconomic status.

Keywords - Caste, Arundhati Roy, Class, Society, Novel, Marginalization

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INTRODUCTION

Caste comes from the Portuguese word *casta*, which meaning "pure." "Its European etymology should make us immediately suspicious of definitions of 'caste' that rely exclusively on ideas of purity and defilement." The caste system is an old institution in Indian civilization that divides people into distinct groups according to their birth order and employment. Social mobility is constrained by the caste system because of its inherent, genetic basis. Members of the lower caste are ostracized and excluded from society due to their caste, which they have no control over. The Rigveda, a collection of Vedic Sanskrit hymns, is one of the holiest Hindu scriptures and is often regarded as the first work of Vedic sacred literature, make reference to this horrific social order. According to the Rigveda, the cosmos and its numerous castes were created when gods sacrificed Purusa, the cosmic Man, by slicing him up into many pieces. What do you call his lips, arms, legs, and toes? The Brahmin came from his tongue, the Warrior from his arms, the People from his thighs, and the Servants from his feet.

The God of Small Things, by Arundhati Roy, is a bildungsroman and a sociological book published in 1997. She earned the Pulitzer Prize for this, her first book, in 1997. The novel goes into complex issues, such as casteism and the challenges encountered by Indian women who have experienced divorce. It also

shows the long-lasting effects trauma has on children, particularly those from dysfunctional families like Rahel and Estha. Rahel's journey through the second half of the twentieth century in Ayemenem, South India, is chronicled here. Anglo-Indian cousin Sophie Mol passes away, and the story follows twins Rahel and Estha as they cope with her death, their mother Ammu's love life after her divorce, and an Untouchable named Velutha. '*The God of Small Things*' is a book that makes connections between seemingly insignificant details and the grand scheme of things. A spider's web impression on a pond's surface, or the impact of politics and history on your everyday activities, or everything in between..." Through the characters of Ammu and Velutha, the story also depicts the societal conventions and the harrowing situation of its transgressors. The God of Small Things, about a Christian Syrian called Ammu and an untouchable named Velutha, has been controversial since its debut. Both have fallen prey to harmful and restricting societal norms. Ammu's alcoholic husband assaulted her, and now, even when she left him, her own family doesn't treat her with any dignity. "Ammu left her husband and returned, unwelcomed, to her parents in Ayemenem," Roy says in the story. A return to the life she had abandoned a few short years before. Except that she now had two infants. And now I have no hope." The work stands out from the crowd because of the unique perspective it

provides on Christian communities in Syria. Despite not being Hindu, they have embraced many of the religion's practices. According to Tickell, the community's high status may be attributed to its traditional endogamy and strict adherence to many of the social limitations of upper-caste Hindus. The Syrian Christian church publicly shamed and excommunicated anyone who had committed serious sins. When Mammachi finds out about Ammu's romance with Velutha, she is terrified by "this power of spiritual sanction and its wider implications."

One interpretation of *The God of Small Things* is as a wistful love story about Ammu's yearning for her lost lover, Velutha. Sigmund Freud, the father of psychoanalysis and a neuroscientist, theorized that dreams were the unconscious mind's way of expressing deep, repressed desires and ideas. Ammu's dream about Velutha provides insight into her subconscious thoughts. There's a sense of inaccessibility between them in the dream: "If he touched her, he couldn't talk to her, if he loved her, he couldn't leave, if he spoke, he couldn't listen, if he fought, he couldn't win..." Ammu has a nightmare in which Velutha vanishes without a trace, anticipating his death and the end of his presence in her life: "The one-armed man blew out his lamp and walked across the jagged beach, away into the shadows that only he could see." No traces of his journey were found on the beach. The caste system affects Velutha, too. Roy portrays Velutha as a symbol of the condition of the underdog and "as a means to show how the powerful forces of caste, colonialism, and communism play vital parts in inflicting injustice on the powerless." The story uses Pariah, a less common name for Dalits, to describe the outcasts. Dalit has come to mean "Untouchables" in modern use. The Sanskrit root of the term from which Dalit is derived means "oppressed." Jyotiba Phule, an Indian activist and social reformer, used the word "untouchables" to describe those who were excluded from society. The gulf between the privileged and the oppressed, the "touchables" and the "untouchables," is one that Arundhati Roy investigates. Even though they only make up around 16% of the population, Dalits bear the brunt of many of India's social and economic woes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Jhajharia, Sangeeta (2018) *The God of Small Things*, by the immediately famous Indian author Arundhati Roy (1997), explores numerous themes, including the sorrow and suffering of the individual in a society where cruelty is unrestrained and unstoppable since the restrictions fail so frequently that they may as well not exist. The book explores the ways in which society's most ingrained institutions—including families, marriages, the legal system, and the equipment used to enforce justice—can become breeding grounds for cruelty. Subjects of Arundhati Roy's book include the oppression of the untouchables, the sexism and violence against women, and the suffering of the helpless at the hands of brutalized machinery in a caste-based and

hierarchical society. The story implies that the harsh treatment of the untouchable is really an extension of societal brutality against women and the helpless in general. The Paravans who accepted Christianity are portrayed by Arundhati Roy as living in abject poverty. Though their lot improved with the advent of independence, as Christians they were not eligible for employment reservations or low-interest bank loans. The subject of repressed women is another one that Roy takes up and throws into sharp focus. In a patriarchal culture, Arundhati Roy highlights the challenges women face. Roy has presented women as passive victims of patriarchy, sexism, misogyny, and other forms of discrimination. It's intriguing because despite the absence of obviously bad characters, evil seems to be springing up everywhere in the world of Arundhati Roy's book.

Kazim, Ghazal & Hassan, Waseem (2020) In this essay, we examine Roy's work *The God of Small Things* through the lens of citizenship. Cogan's (1998) definition of citizenship serves as the theoretical basis for this investigation since it encompasses an individual's sense of self, as well as their rights and responsibilities within a given community. This research investigates the possibility of studying postcolonial literature from the standpoint of citizenship. We provide a citizenship viewpoint that may be found within the text of Arundhati Roy's book *The God of Small Things* via a textual analysis of the novel. We contend that themes of citizenship, including individuality, rights, and responsibilities, are pervasive throughout the work. My research suggests that Cogan's citizenship paradigm may be used as a lens through which to analyze themes of sex, colonialism, social caste, and economic status. The study provides suggestions for researchers, educators, and novel readers.

Sarker, Md & Rahman, Md. (2018) *The God of Small Things* became the first work of Suzanna Arundhati Roy, a postmodern sub-continental author, a bestseller. In this book, we learn about Ammu, Rahel and Estha's mother. Through Ammu's eyes, the book depicts the social and political milieu of Kerala from the late 1960s to the early 1990s. The book focuses on Hinduism since it is the dominant religion in India, where the story is set. Velutha, one of the novel's main characters, is from a Dalit caste group. Between the late 1960s and the early 1990s, Kerala saw several more significant historical events. The Naxalite Movement is a particularly important one. In Kerala, the world's first free and fair election for communism was held. Through her representation, Ammu has drawn attention to several crucial feminism concerns. In a nutshell, the purpose of this article is to demonstrate how Arundhati Roy has effectively shown the overlapping and conflicting impacts of politics and history on the lives of the underprivileged. In sum, it would provide a detailed illustration of the interplay between historical events and political highs and lows throughout a state's political upheavals.

Dizayi, Saman (2021) Arundhati Roy's "*The God of the Small Things*" is the subject of this paper's examination. The major goal of this thesis is to analyze the author's presentation of resistance and individuality in the book and to draw conclusions about those themes. This tale will show how pushing back against postcolonial society's norms and customs is intrinsically linked with coming into one's own. The story depicts a variety of resistance strategies used by its characters. Postcolonial identity is too nuanced to be reduced to a single description or explored through a single theoretical lens. The notion of resistance and the inquiry into one's own identity. The novel deals with this idea, and gender identity emerges as a central theme throughout its storyline with the legacy of colonialism. Women's resistance may seem like a defensive move because of a desire to hide who they are, but it's really just a reflection of their awareness of the patriarchal norms and values they've been raised with. After colonization in India, a new society of economically and politically powerful individuals formed, and this article describes the many forms of resistance and activity that emerged to challenge these new power structures. The study concludes, in part, that acts of resistance legitimize the quest for self-identity, which is an effort to restore one's reputation, regain one's place in the world, and give it a new name.

Srinivas, Sarakanam (2021) This study delves at the challenges faced by a lady who, after falling in love with a Dalit adolescent, herself becomes a member of that minority group. Ammu, the main lady in Arundhati Roy's first book, *The God of Small Things*, seems to have symbolized the fourth world, having been subjected to unfairness in both her family and her community. The caste-ridden class structure in India denies Ammu, who was born into a Syrian Christian small bourgeois family, the same access to healthcare, education, property ownership, social security, and respectable social identity that the Dalits have. Ammu is mistaken for a Dalit several times. The purpose of this article is to demonstrate, via an examination of Ammu, how the book reflects a pitiful social reality. The Dialectical and Historical Materialist approach is used to accomplish the aforementioned goal. Using this strategy, we are able to investigate the nexus between literature and the social relations of today, also known as production relations. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels advocated for this approach.

Birgan, Shiva & Moosavinia, Sayyed (2019) Europeans colonized regions of the world from the 15th through the 20th centuries. The novel was a freshly minted literary form that had a primarily political aim in the nineteenth century. Writers were crucial in establishing the supremacy of colonialism. The true essence of imperialism and literature are subservient to the overarching themes of knowledge and power. These motifs represent accepted forms of outstanding literature, culture, and tradition. The term "colonization" refers to an era. This is the stuff of history. Migration and adjustment were inevitable

outcomes of colonialism. Because of this upheaval, a new persona has emerged. Unknowingly, colonists' practices and values are assimilated into native communities. Cultural diversity thrives in India. This nation is home to a wide range of cultural traditions. The British colonialism and rule over India also resulted in a shift in the country's norms and practices. Arundhati Roy is a feminist and Indian author. The complex blending of the Christian minority's beliefs with the local Hindu social order provides the novel's foundation. People in such a society often wed partners from different backgrounds, whether they be religious or ideological. The purpose of this research is to use postcolonial theory to analyze the aforementioned text. This book covers a wide range of subjects, including Indian history, diaspora, hybridity, the status of women in Indian society, globalization, and resistance.

ABOUT ARUNDHATI ROY

Suzanna Arundhati Roy's (born 24 November 1961) The God of Small Things (1997) was awarded the Booker Prize for Fiction and became the most popular Indian novel not authored by an author based in another country. She is also an advocate for social justice and the environment on the political front. Rajib Roy was the Hindu manager of a tea estate in Calcutta, while his wife, Mary Roy, was a Malayali Jacobite Syrian Christian activist from Kerala. Indian author Arundhati Roy was born in the city of Shillong, Meghalaya. When she was two, her parents divorced, and she and her mother and brother returned to Kerala. Roy and his family spent some time at Ooty, Tamil Nadu, with Roy's paternal grandpa. Back in Kerala, her mother had opened a school when she was only five years old. Roy attended Corpus Christi School in Kottayam for his elementary and middle schooling, and the Lawrence School in Lovedale, Nilgiris, Tamil Nadu, for his secondary education. She met architect Gerard da Cunha when they were both students at Delhi's School of Planning and Architecture. They tied the knot in 1978, first settling in Delhi before moving to Goa. They divorced four years later.

CREATIVE NONFICTION AND FICTION

Roy's first novel, *The God of Small Things*, was published in 1997 and received widespread praise. The work, which was somewhat autobiographical, deviated from the typical bestseller formula. Using a lyrical language and hopping about in time, Roy's novel became the most popular book ever written by an Indian author and the winner of the prestigious Man Booker Prize in Fiction in 1998. Political nonfiction dominated Roy's latter output, most of it addressing the challenges facing her own country as a result of global capitalism. Other works of hers include *Power Politics (2001)*, *Public Power in the Age of Empire (2004)*, and *Capitalism: A Ghost Story (2014)*. She has also written *Field Notes on Democracy: Listening to Grasshoppers (2009)*, *The*

Algebra of Infinite Justice (2002), *War Talk* (2003), and *Public Power in the Age of Empire* (2004). It took Roy 20 years to write his first book, 2017's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. A large ensemble, including a transgender woman and a Kashmiri resistance fighter, evaluate contemporary India through the lens of their own experiences and the issues they face today.

ABOUT THE NOVEL "THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS"

The God of Small Things, written by Arundhati Roy, was published to the public in 1997. Ammu and her family are the focus of this Booker Prize winner, which is set in Kerala in the 1960s and spans both joyful and tragic moments for them, with particular attention paid to Ammu's "two-egg twins," Estha and Rahel. Their young lives would be profoundly affected by the drowning death of a relative from England who had come to visit. The work is delivered in a non-chronological order and is filled with colorful scenes and descriptions. The twins' companion Velutha, a boatman from India's "untouchable" caste, has his youth disrupted by adult tragedies, the effects of which the reader must piece together. In this work, Roy eloquently lays forth the norms and disciplines upon which social interactions, cultural laws, and ideologies rest. People are disciplined and ordered according to cultural laws, ideas, and social norms. One of the themes of this book is the variety of loves and contexts in which they might flourish. A variety of cultural, religious, and societal frameworks all act as barriers to love. *The God of Small Things*, by Arundhati Roy, is a polysemic book that may be read on many different levels. The work has been described as a political satire that takes aim at the Communist establishment. It's possible to read it as the history of a Christian family spanning four generations. A religious novel reading might be made of it as well: It has been called a protest book, and it does shatter several taboos. A sad love tale is another possible interpretation. Reading the text through the lens of adolescence yields fruitful results. It is as daring a book in terms of formal innovation as *The Midnight's Children* was in the Eighties.

The God of Small Things sheds attention on patriarchal civilizations' complex power systems and several layers of oppression. Arundhati Roy investigates the impact of social stratifications including caste, class, gender, and race on interpersonal dynamics and group dynamics. When it was published, this book caused quite a commotion, and it went on to win the coveted Booker Prize. In fact, the novel's idea resonated with reviewers all across the globe, even if its language irritated their sense of propriety. Like Mulk Raj Anand's *Untouchable*, Arundhati Roy's modern take on an ancient practice sparked controversy as a form of protest against the discrimination faced by the poor and by women. As a result, Roy has really accomplished a mark of eminence in assisting us in overcoming "man's inhumanity to man" via her use of vivacious unique

language, sensitive poetry style, profound sensations, alarming emotions, and a creative method.

The external drama of a conflict between the powerful and the vulnerable is enacted by the God of Little Things. The author has avoided making a woman's powerlessness the central focus. These roles of victim and oppressor are not exclusive to women but are shared by males as well. It is true that society feels empathetic toward women who have lost their positions of authority, but this does not translate into a preoccupation with their helplessness. All of the characters, male and female, are devastated by the novel's central psychological, economic, and societal issues. An autobiographical novel because of the author's life experiences influencing her work; a political novel because of its criticism of the hypocrisy of the communist party; and a feminist novel because of the sympathy and fear it evokes for the plight of women in a specific cultural milieu. The work lends itself quite well to being read and interpreted in several ways. Arundhati Roy writes *The God of Small Things* as a form of protest against the dehumanizing taboos of a society that she believes are responsible for the suppression of women's and low caste people's hopes, dreams, and claims to dignity and respect. She sheds new light on centuries of injustice and misery endured by Indian women and untouchables by using a linguistically innovative and imaginative approach to a societal malady that our social reformers had branded as the worst blemish on Indian culture.

Mulk Raj Anand, in his seminal work on human rights, *Untouchable*, untouchables were driven to the outside of society and denied fundamental human rights, and the author decried the apathy of caste Hindus to their plight. Arundhati Roy condemns and rejects this tradition in order to tell her own story, which features two children as witnesses and protagonists in the aftermath of a tragedy caused by the inflexibility of social mores fostered by the patriarchal ideology of a caste-based culture that promotes elitism and violence in order to maintain social order. The anguish of guilt-ridden and grief-crazed children traumatized by the 'Terror' promoted by the adult world is a powerful language of rejection of this authoritarian society that has no space for dissent and for self-assertive individuals. In *The God of Small Things*, the characters' fates are intertwined with one another and the currents of history. A great Christian family, the Ipes of Ayemenem, through their overlapping public and private interactions, shed light on the interplay between the defined, delimited roles of the individuals who make up society's political, patriarchal, economic, and religious power structures. Antagonisms inherent to the fundamental structure of the two forces are revealed as the novel's architectonic tension grows along the interface between these two. Both are necessary, yet one cannot function without the other.

Arundhati Roy uses narrative to challenge the status quo and effect change through the influence of literature. According to Kate Millet, "when a system of power is thoroughly in command, it has scarcely a need to speak itself aloud." However, once a system's functioning is revealed and questioned, it becomes not just susceptible to debate, but even change. It's fascinating to see how Roy subtly carries out the emasculation of males by women, as well as the emasculation of women, but not in the usual pejorative sense. Her female characters acquire the ability to think for themselves, take on the role of guardian, and still retain their femininity. The inflexible nature of India's caste system is one of Arundhati's primary sociopolitical concerns. Sometimes, this rigidity based on caste disrupts the lives of many innocent people. One way to interpret the "bigness" of "big things" and "big people" is in how they treat "small things" and "small people" with kindness and generosity. Sadly, in today's Indian culture, this is not the case, and the ensuing situation is terrible and stifling. The most vulnerable members of our society, such as the paravans. Caste-stratifications inevitably do a great deal of harm to the scheduled castes and the poor. It has been noted that common topics in Indian literature include "the caste system, social attitude, social and religious taboos, superstitions, notions of superiority and inferiority."

Most of these topics including the most fundamental of human emotions—love—are explored in *The God of Small Things*. As Herman Melville puts it, love is "the endless flowing river in the cave of man," so no matter how many times it's repeated, there's always more to discover. In her recounting of the plights of tiny things and their minor gods trapped in a larger battle between self and society, Arundhati Roy draws similarities to the ageless epic myths that theme this fight between self and society and between the destitute individual and the powerful representatives of societal hegemony. "a hopelessly practical world" (Roy 34). From this perspective, it is notable that the Ayemenem home and its inhabitants are often shown in conjunction with water features like rivers and the sea, which represent the continuous flow of life. All of this gives the characters a greater significance than they would have had on a more limited canvas, making them metaphors for the timeless drama of fighting for freedom and dignity against repressive societal systems. By transforming the everyday into something extraordinary, by shaping the banal into the felt reality of universal experience, art fulfills its mission.

INDIA'S CASTE SYSTEM AND SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

The Castes are an endogamy-based, traditionally-employed, hereditary society that frowns upon and punishes commensalism. About three thousand castes exist in the nation, according to estimates. There are higher castes, such as the Brahmins and Rajput's, lower castes, such as the Ahir and Sunar, and even lower castes, such as the Dhobi and Nai. The four

varnas (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras) are associated with the castes to establish social standing in ceremonial hierarchy. In the Indian subcontinent, hundreds of endogamous hereditary groupings (called Jati's or castes) form social classes and impose social restrictions that are together known as the Indian caste system. The exogamous groupings inside a Jati are called gotras, and they represent the individual's family tree or clan. Endogamy inside a gotra is tolerated and other measures are employed to regulate endogamy (such as a prohibition on endogamy within a surname) in a small number of sub-castes like Shakadvi.

If there is one thing that defines an Indian, regardless of where they live, what language they speak, or what faith they practice, it is their caste. India's history of social stratification along caste and Jaat lines dates back more than two millennia. The Vedas, Hinduism's sacred scriptures, make reference to a caste system in which people are divided up according to their professions and areas of interest. These social distinctions, or castes, have persisted because they were passed down from generation to generation. There are also various castes among Muslims and, in certain parts of India, among Christians, proving that the caste system is not exclusive to Hinduism. However, the Hindu caste system is the most rigorous, pervasive, and ubiquitous, accounting for 80% of the population. Understanding the caste system requires a familiarity with its development in Indian society through time. Historically speaking, there were four great castes or classes in Indian society: the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas, and the Shudras. A person's work determined his or her caste. Brahmins were those who were well-versed in their field, had an aptitude for learning, and were either educators or scholars. Those who worked in the military, such as kings and other powerful warriors, were known as Kshatriyas. The merchants, retailers, and dealers of ancient India were Vaisyas. The last castes were those who helped maintain society via tasks like cleaning, gardening, and manual labor.

However, this structure has significantly broken down over time. In modern India, there are about 2,500 distinct castes and subcastes. Who you are and what you care about are irrelevant factors in determining your caste. The caste system also has a hierarchical structure. The Brahmins are the noble class, whereas the Shudras are the commoners. For almost a thousand years, members of the Shudra caste have been treated poorly because of their social status. Some members of the lowest castes are also known as "*Untouchables*," a derogatory epithet that marks them as social outcasts. The caste system is a major obstacle to India's progress as a nation today. The country's power and resources are now fragmented due to this structure. The presence of a rigid caste system also sows discord and fuels animosity among the general

populace. The situation has worsened because political leaders have politicized caste for electoral gain. It's no secret that many voters throughout the nation cast their ballots without giving any thought to how each candidate would contribute to the country's progress. Caste and politics have become more intertwined, which has wreaked havoc on the nation's development.

Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras are the four social classes established by Hinduism's origination of the caste system. The prestige of a certain caste was determined by the benefits it provided to the community as a whole. The teachers were all high-caste Hindus. They were the custodians of learning and knowledge, advocates for peace, and upholders of justice. They were at the pinnacle of society's hierarchy. The Kshatriyas' role in society was that of guardians. It was their responsibility to keep the peace and defend their nation with valor. In terms of social standing, they were second only to the nobility and heroism of the knights. The Vaishyas followed, and they engaged in trade, agriculture, and livestock breeding. Members of the Shudra caste, the lowest in Indian culture, performed menial labor and entertained the higher castes. In its purer form, the caste system gave no weight to one's birth order. A Shudra may become a Brahmin if they develop the wisdom and insight of a Brahmin. The value society placed on an individual was proportional to the time and effort he had invested in acquiring and sharing his knowledge and skills. We may see numerous examples of the unfortunate rise of new birth-based classes following independence, despite the fact that the Indian constitution had forbidden caste-based discrimination.

CONFLICTS BETWEEN CLASSES IN "THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS" BY ARUNDHATI ROY

The book "*The God of small things*" by Arundhati Roy has frank discussions of atomic and molecular scales. The political satire, casteism, and patriarchy in this book are examined and questioned. Arundhati Roy examines the ways in which societal structures and behavior contribute to caste, gender, and class distinctions. These are having an impact on the ability to form meaningful relationships with others and to respect the privacy of others. Roy demonstrates the prejudice of the caste system by describing the plight of the untouchable and the degrading treatment they received. The author's formative years as a writer are illuminated in this work. It's no secret that "*The God of Small Things*" is a memoir in novel form. Ammu, the mother figure in Arundhati Roy's work, is a south Indian lady who reflects the author's own mother. The novel's central topic is the struggle between social classes. As a result of the caste war, the people in that group face discrimination and oppression on many fronts, including the political, social, and religious. The Indian social system is heavily dependent on the caste system. It analyzes the many ways in which individuals from higher castes demean those at the bottom. The writer has used this platform to address the very delicate topic of untouchables and other

underprivileged groups. This prejudice based on social status is a very shameful flaw in Indian culture. Arundhati Roy's keen eye for detail allows her to see the moment when members of society finally come face to face with the societal ill that is untouchability. The Paravans were a caste of untouchables. In this social order, she demonstrates, women, like the untouchables, are objects of contempt and subjugation.

In patriarchal societies, the God of Little Things is concerned with the problems that women face in their roles as daughters and wives. Untouchability was seen as a kind of effluence or pollution by those in higher castes, who constantly sought new means to eradicate it. They are not welcome in their home and must avoid any upper-caste possessions. Demoralization is a problem that Roy highlights. The central theme of "*The God of Small Things*" is the struggle between social classes. There is a long history of the caste system in this country. Arundhati Roy has strong connections to the socioeconomic issues of India. Every issue that the average person has ever had is summed up by her. She has made an effort to draw attention to the most pressing social issues of our day. "*The God of Small Things*" is a microcosm of civilization, just as life itself is a microcosm of the universe. The culture in which a writer resides has a significant effect on their work. There are several groups that individuals belong to in every civilization. Class conflicts are seen as existing in some parts of society. People who are marginalized economically, socially, culturally, and/or politically are at the center of class tensions. The despondent and the destitute are seen as class enemies.

THE LOWER CLASS IN "GOD OF SMALL THINGS"

Velutha, Ammu, Estha, and Rahel are all characters in *God of Small Things* who are considered to be of a lower social class. Velutha, who is from a lower socioeconomic level, is shown vividly in this tale. Velutha is dark, yet he has incredible brains. His social standing steadily improves over time. He is now struggling to make ends meet. Velutha, the protagonist, is from a lower socioeconomic class. His disadvantaged socioeconomic status may be attributed in large part to his upbringing. Since he was so dark-skinned, people referred to him as Velutha, which means "White" in Malayalam. Vellya Paapen, his father, was a Paravan. An up-to-the-minute tapper (Roy 1997, p. The passage serves as a snapshot of Velutha's past. Vellyan Paapen, a Paravan, is Velutha's father. Since this is the case, Velutha must also become a Paravan. In India, the lowest caste is called Paravan. It's also known by the name "Untouchable." Most Paravans can only find employment in low-paying service jobs, hence Paravan communities tend to be impoverished. Since Vellyan Paapen has to take a job as a maid in the Pappachi household, he has no right to expect a comfortable life for his kid. It causes poverty for the Velutha people. Velutha's economic situation is

indicative of his social status, which places him in the bottom social strata.

Ammu is a wealthy, upper-class Christian Syrian. However, her position shifts once she and her spouse split. He brings it down from its former status as something of the upper crust. When Ammu, Pappachi's daughter, moves back live with him in Ayemenem after their divorce, Pappachi gladly accepts her. Ammu has to be persuaded to leave the house just once before she finally does. Pappachi becomes enraged, and Ammu leaves, since his "secret" love for Velutha has been exposed. Ammu has to provide for herself, so she goes to work to make a living. Ammu used to work at her family's pickle plant, but after being kicked out by Pappachi, she began looking for employment elsewhere.

The importance of one's occupation in bringing one's socioeconomic class to public attention is often overlooked. People from privileged backgrounds often hold high-status positions that pay well. Because it gives them the confidence to purchase whatever they want and live whatever they want, regardless of the consequences. After then, the steps to achieving an air of superiority might be deliberated and pursued. However, behind that surface, the working class has access to nothing but low-wage service occupations that effectively chain up their economy. Due to their restricted access to resources, their social standing will remain lower than that of the rest of society at all times.

THE SOCIAL DISCRIMINATION IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S "THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS"

In India, society was stratified according to economic status. The social stratification forced everyone to congregate there. Each class has its own club, and they all join it. The class divide only had a negative impact on the lower classes to a certain extent. The working poor had to struggle to make ends meet. What they needed most was met with cruelty. It's damaging to portray them as invulnerable. The government never granted them any special treatment in the past. They had to go hungry, miss school, etc. Social discrimination includes caste prejudice. Indian author and social activist Arundhati Roy. She has published many books, most of them focus on political or social issues. Here, we're using an excerpt from her book *The God of Small Things* (1997). In 1997, it won the Booker Prize for Best Novel. The story focuses heavily on the effects of social prejudice. An untouchable in this book is in trouble with the upper class because of the lady he's seeing. Humanity's societal problems have just one root: the past. All the norms in our past were established by society, and everyone just obeyed them.

Disrespectful and unequal treatment of members of a certain social group is what we mean when we talk about discrimination. Among the many forms of prejudice in society, "untouchable" stands out. India's

society is stratified into four groups known as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras. Those of the Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vaishya castes have privileged status in Indian society. The Shudras, however, are allowed to continue existing. They have had a hard time making it through the day. They are the outcasts of society since they make a living cleaning toilet, sewage systems, etc. India is where history was created. Roy's *The God of Small Things* shows the tragic social deaths of two untouchables, Velutha and Ammu. In the upper class's homes, the untouchables were not welcome. The public road was off-limits to them. They had to go shirtless in public. When members of the upper class were conversing, the untouchables would cover their mouths with their hands to keep their dirty breath out of earshot. Umbrellas were strictly forbidden. The temple grounds were off-limits to them.

Untouchables in villages sometimes had their own street and entrance. They couldn't use the same well that everyone else used to quench their thirst. They drank water from their own private well. The untouchables would instantly wash whatever they touched with water. Mammachi instructed Estha and Rahel, who are identical twins, in all of these rituals. Pappachi employed Velutha at his pickle plant. Vellaya Papan, Velutha's father, introduced him to the Ipe family. Mechanically and artistically, Velutha was a genius. Even at his early age, he had shown extraordinary skill. Those of the Ipe household approved. Mammachi tagged along with Velutha to class. After completing his education, he returned to his job at the pickle plant. The masculine chauvinism is present in *The God of Small Things* as well. Ammu's father, Pappachi, often beat both her and her sister, Mammachi, when they were little. Pappachi believed women did not need a college education, therefore once Ammu finished high school, she was not permitted to continue her education. Ammu, nevertheless, remained at his house. Ammu had the unexpected opportunity to visit her aunt in Kolkata, where she met and married the manager of a tea farm. The lady was never acknowledged again by her parents after her marriage. Ammu's parents were cruel to her when the couple divorced and she became estranged from her spouse. Ammu experienced male chauvinism not just from Chacko but also from her own brother. At every turn, he had Ammu completely under control. She was given far less consideration after her divorce. Because they were born to an intercaste relationship, her family has also been unkind to her fraternal twin sons. Velutha became quite fond to Ammu and her offspring. They hit it off and formed a strong bond. The connection between Ammu and Velutha is now forbidden. The bond between them is strong and profound. The members of their family discovered their affair. Ammu could not leave the room. Due to her relationship with Velutha, Ammu was forced to be apart from her kids.

Only in a few areas of contemporary India has the caste system been completely eradicated. Rules for the untouchables persisted in rural parts of India. At the far end of this specific settlement was Separate Street, where the untouchables resided apart from the rest of society. They were forbidden from entering the homes of the upper class and from touching any of the movable or movable objects inside those homes, much like the old rules in India. The temple was off-limits to them. The untouchable may labor in a wealthy person's house, but they would never be invited to a social gathering. In a similar vein, the untouchable may invite the touchable to a family event, but the elite would never dream of showing there. History will remain the same no matter how much time passes. Untouchables in contemporary India are afforded various protections and benefits by the government. They were being given preferential treatment when it came to job offers and academic scholarships. Because of this, the caste system was altered. Velutha was injured severely as a result of the cruel treatment he received. Ammu turned himself in to the police and told them everything. She said that Velutha's family was out for retribution against him after being wrongfully accused of having an affair with Ipe's sister. That Velutha was a communist eventually made its way to the inspector's attention. The truth at finally came out. However, Velutha's injuries proved fatal, and he passed while in police custody. Ammu decides to split apart the twins after all that has happened. Ammu's relatives were not kind to her. She's been on her own for a while, and nobody's around to help her out. Ammu passed away at age 31. The point was not to be young or old, but to live to that age. Ammu and Velutha were easy victims for society because of these inequalities in status.

ISSUES OF CLASS AND SOCIETY IN THE NOVEL

Wersley claims that Arundhati Roy's story accurately depicts the problems of different socioeconomic classes in contemporary India. However, Karl Marx's ideas are well-suited to the story. Marx's theory has been used to create class distinctions in this fiction. Everything shown in the work is a reflection of Roy's ideas on Indian culture. Issues like money, employment, and education have been shown brilliantly, and linked to an upper-class society in which the lower class has no access to these spheres. Those from the higher class have been played by Papachi, Mamachi, Baby Kochama, and Chacko, while those from the lower class have been portrayed by Ammu, Velutha, Rahel, and Estha. Physical health, mental health, family life, education, religion, and the criminal justice system are all shown in graphic detail, as are their effects on society as a whole. Thus, this research shares the opinion that Roy's work is depicting the social difficulties of the period and asserts that society has been split along Marxist and communist lines. He continues by saying that people in every culture have their own unique set of beliefs and personality traits. In the individual's social life, these discrepancies manifest as economic disparities and economic difficulties. He goes on to argue that in today's culture,

where individuals are evaluated according to their socioeconomic level, the economic issue cannot be ignored. Economic inequalities and the resulting concentration of wealth are inevitable outcomes of a society organized according to Marxist principles. Accordingly, the more productive society will always triumph over the less productive one. Karl Marx identifies three basic types of civilization based on their mode of production. The capitalists or bourgeoisie are his term for landowners, the working class is his term for the proletariat, and the labor class is what keeps the other two groups afloat. But the point of the research is to show how pervasive class consciousness is in Roy's book *The God of Small Things*.

Primitive communism, ancient society, feudal society, and capitalist society are the four fundamental stages of social development, according to Karl Marx. Only the first period, which Marx refers to as primitive communism, was devoid of any social stratification based on class, in his view. Marx argues that this segment of society, whose members have access to more food than they can possibly use, is also the most active. He is the only major character who explicitly distinguishes between socioeconomic strata. According to Marx, a society can have no other roots save its material prosperity and economic stability. Since his economic underpinnings are solid, he also thinks that it is the ownership of the money that gives the person authority. The ruling class is the socioeconomic group that owns and operates the majority of the country's factories and farms.

On the other hand, Marx argues that society evolves as a result of the ongoing struggle and conflict between different social classes. However, because of the friction between the classes, one tends to emerge as the dominant group. The purpose of this research is to shed light on the similarities between the class tensions depicted by Roy in her book and the archaic caste system seen in contemporary Indian culture. According to Karl Marx, society is divided into the capitalist class (also known as the bourgeoisie) and the working class (also known as the "proletariat"). The capitalist class is the socioeconomic group that owns and operates the economic means of production. However, they are firmly established due to their ownership of land, management of industries, and other infrastructure. The working class is defined as the socioeconomic group that relies only on its members' ability to sell their labor. Nonetheless, the study's primary objective is to delve into the mechanisms by which the proletariat consistently exploits the working class. It is further said that the world's wide variety of lifestyles may be attributed to one of three primary factors. And these are things like prosperity, authority, and status. Separation has occurred between groups of people based on their preferred modes of living, each of which offers a unique perspective on the 'self' and the cosmos. He continues by saying that wealth, which includes both property and income, is the most important indicator

of social status. A wide variety of assets, including real estate, livestock, tools, automobiles, enterprises, stocks, bonds, and bank accounts, may be considered property. A person's income consists of their salary, rent, interest, royalties, and company profits. The focus of the research, however, is on the ways in which Arundhati Roy's book *The God of Small Things* presents similar arguments. Based on the outcomes associated with each social class, Henslin classifies people into one of six groups. Physical health, mental health, family life, education, religion, and the criminal justice system are the six areas into which the effects of socioeconomic class in *The God of Small Things* have been classified. Thus, taking into account these assumptions and the portrayals in Roy's work, the research aims to demonstrate the picture of Indian society.

CONCLUSION

The God of Small Things changed the course of literature in its own unique manner. Both the author and India received accolades for the Booker award. Reviews were overwhelmingly positive. The novel's setting is the age-old conflict between castes and classes. Discrimination based on a person's gender is also a major factor. Arundhati Roy has done a fantastic job of bringing together a diverse cast of individuals to tell a narrative about prejudice, acceptance, and equality. Students in India have already mentally divided themselves into several social classes. This is a serious problem. Consequently, this research depicts social class as the system's closest opponent, a source of ongoing issues in India. The social decline of Ammu, Pappachi's respect for Mammachi, and the struggles of other characters with similar issues are all instructive. Roy depicts the ladies in her works as being torn between the constraints of the past and the liberties of the present. Without a question, Arundhati Roy pushed women's problems, which had been on the fringe in previous years, to the center. Following this reading, it is evident that Arundhati Roy's "*The God of Small Things*" is a book that vividly shows the conflict between social classes. The story not only shows how the classes are at odds with one another, but also claims that the higher classes always use the lower classes for their own gain. It is hoped, via the actions of the characters, to convey a message that the higher classes are abusing the lower classes.

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