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REPRESENTATION OF MARGINALS IN *THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS*

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Abstract:

When we peer into the past, we see that from the Vedic era, the Hindu society was and is divided into the graded inequality and hierarchical anarchy. We should become happy, all should emancipate from the anxiety and agony, all should see the prosperity and progress of others and none should suffer any pain. These are only utopian sayings. Because of the graded inequality, the one section of Hindu society was always remained unexploited and neglected, and even that was not considered as touchable creature.

KEYWORDS:

Psychological , Social support , multidimensional , physical pain.

INTRODUCTION

In Hindu's inhuman belief, the untouchability is deeply rooted. There is a superstition, "A touchable would defile, if he would touch an untouchable". This injustice was practiced by the Hindu society since long. Untouchables have not accepted as fellow human beings by the touchables, since past to the present time. No doubt, there is a concrete reference of the Hindu spirituality in the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Purans and the Smritees about, human equality, enlightenment, uplift, love and kindness to all the humanity and every living creature. But generally this spirituality remained untouchable by the Hindu society. In this respect one community was always oppressed. That was none but Dasa, Dasya, Shudra, Untouchables, later on Harijan and again dalit. According to M.K. Gandhi, this social evil was a disgrace on Hinduism.

British Empire, during their rule; they first time legally tried to remove the social evils by imposing various laws. They were 'The Widow Remarriage Act of 1876' and 'The Cast Disability Removal Act of 1850'. Actually, Gandhiji wanted to uplift untouchable by changing the mentality and hearts of Hindu people which did not come into existence. Various constitutional rights are provided to oppressed community after amendments are introduced to the marginalized or the untouchables but the century's old and traditional disgust not changed. Still the untouchability is existed in democratic India which is the universal truth.

The present paper focuses light on the harsh truth about untouchables in her novel titled, '*The God of Small things*', the prestigious 'Booker Prize' awarded novel, depicts the cross caste conflict. In the Hindu society caste and sub-caste are based on social divisions, since long. This kind of untouchability, we find in only Hindu religion, not in Islam or in Christianity. But in the novel of Arundhati Roy, we find intense cross caste conflict which is not taking place between touchable Hindus and untouchables, its between Syrian Christians and Untouchable! It shows that 'untouchables are not only suffering torturing and harassment from Hindus but also from other religious communities in the democratic India. These untouchables have become sandwich between the Hindu majority and other religious minority.

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The Novel, *The God of Small Things*, depicts a significant village, named 'Ayemenem'. The very important person in this novel is Ammu, a young woman whose father had worked as joint director in Imperial Etymology, Delhi. Had not paid more attention on her education and selecting a suitable life partner for her because he was orthodox. So, Ammu has to nothing to do except the house hold duties and waiting for the unknown bridegroom. Nobody from her family was caring and thinking about her marriage. So, she found her life partner herself, a Bengali as an assistant manager in a tea estate in Assam, for the first time in her life she broke the social barrier – an inter – community love marriage. Inter – community marriage is very crucial and not accepted in rural India today. It is considered as a disgrace on family and lineage. So immediately after her marriage, she was badly treated by her own family. Of course, she could not enjoy for long time a marriage life. She realized that marriage with a wrong person. But it was too late. She had to return to her village Ayemenem with her twins Estha – a boy and Rahel – a daughter. In her village, she was of no where, because the orthodox lady baby Kochamma, the grandmother of the twins. According to her, 'divorced daughter had no position anywhere at all. In rural areas of India, divorced women have to take shelter in the houses of their parents. So she remained salient as she knew this fact that divorced woman has not status.

Nobody was caring for her and her twins but Velutha, an untouchable Dalit and Ammu attracted towards the care taking and love-making nature of Velutha for her and her children. He taught the twins boating and fishing. The kids enjoyed their learning because they did not know' what was untouchability gradually the meetings and greeting between them increased. She liked her exercised body of Velutha. Naturally, love increased about him in her heart for that Dalit Velutha. And the untouchable felt the same passion about her. Both of them have forgotten the social rules , regulations and customs. According to Hindu culture, there are certain laws, "Whom to love", we can find many illustrations in of that in ancient literature of India. According to the ban the untouchables were/ are not allowed to love or marry upper caste woman, while the other Varna's allowed to defile / rape the untouchable women. In Matsya Puran, one of the old Puranas, the inter-cast relationship was banned. Though ban was preaching like in the past today it practiced strictly in rural India. There is deeply rooted hate for untouchables not only in the orthodox Hindu religious community but also other religious community. But Ammu and Velutha, both had overthrown the imposed law. An untouchable's affair with a touchable woman is not granted in rural India, in any community. Even untouchables would not dare to do such things because they know the consequences. Velutha's father knew the consequences, so he rushed to inform about his son's affair, with view to punish him but the lady of the house spat on his face. Baby Kochamma, in her youth, who was fascinated towards father Mullingan, a handsome Irish Monk, has cunningly rejected the affair due to particular smelling of paravans (dalits). Actually, she had opposed the affair because it was with an untouchable. In fact , untouchability is not depicted anywhere in the holy books, but to flatter and please the Hindu society, the Christian, too practiced / cherish the notion. This incident was enough for the old lady Baby, Kochamma to remove an untouchable forever. Disgust towards untouchables is rooted deeply in the mind of touchables. Velutha is not responsible for the death of Sophie but the violent flow of a river Meenachal. But because of hate and revenge, she had filed F.I.R. against an innocent untouchable. It is the truth in the rural area that whenever an untouchable is accused for any crime, the touchables became united to remove him forever that is revealed in the novel. When the police found him at that time he was in sleep. They treated him inhumanly. "They wake Velutha with their boots". It shows they did not touch Velutha directly but by their boots. These were the public servants of democratic India. He is not yet proved that he is a criminal but police had brutally treated the accused untouchable as a murderer. This sort of victimized untouchable how long they would live? "Half an hour past midnight death come for him". In this cross caste love affair, Ammu was not entrapped by Velutha. She had willingly submitted. Both of them paid highest price for that. Ammu's family was scattered and Velutha was killed. And the climax of Ammu's misery was the Christian Inspector Thomas Mathew's malicious behaviour. When she went to the Kottayam police station to inform the truth about Sophie's death and save Velutha, nobody has noticed her. But the police inspector Mathew, by tapping on her breasts with his baton, said, "The Kottayam police station did not take statements from Vaishayas or illegitimate children. What was her crime ? Love ? Actually she had thrown away the imposed social code of Hindus. Whom to love, but the Christian code. She had not done anything wrong but loved an untouchable and consequently she became an untouchable, Vaishya whose breasts can be touched. Breasts touched by baton shows that the Christian minority in India also tries to flatter and please the Hindu majority by hating the untouchables.

Society would have to accept untouchables as their fellow human beings then and then the hatred towards untouchables can be removed. Only providing those special rights or political protection can become a step towards the change. When we think about Kerala, communists were in power , They have accepted human liberty, Equality and Fraternity. But in the case of untouchables, they change the policy. Velutha was a card holder member of party when the Christian family knew is love affair,

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consequently he felt his life was in danger, he immediately rushed to the party leader, Mr. Pillai, to interfere the issue. But Mr. Pillai had shrewdly rejected his request thus", Party was not constituted to support workers indiscipline in their private life". If he would interfere in the case, Velutha would not die thus. M. Pillai's refusal to help Velutha only because of the caste.

The God of Small Things, thus, is a story about love and brutality, the brutality against the Dalits. In democratic India, still one community is becoming the victim of the brutality of the majority and the flatterers of the majority. On one hand, the Human Rights and values are globally, seriously considered, on other hand, in rural India, this sort of atrocity against Dalits are going on. The Aymenem incident of killing Velutha is the microscopic vision of the orthodoxy's brutality against Dalits. In country like India, Dalits have provided a lot of legal protections to remove charges and attacks from copper-caste people. But they are only on the paper. We should have to change our mentality towards the untouchables or dalits. Changing mindset about untouchable can help to solve the problems of them.

The story is set in the caste society of India. The main part of the novel takes place in 1969, a time when the caste system in India was still very strongly imbedded. It is also the time of increased awareness around the world and a peak of communist ideology and influence. India is a very complex society with various cultural and religious habits and beliefs. Hindu, Buddhists, Christians and Muslims share the same space. Society is divided not only by the very strict caste system but also by class consciousness. In this time, members of the untouchables Paravan or Paryan were not permitted to touch members of higher castes or enter their houses. This extreme form of discrimination was deeply embedded over centuries in the Indian society starting from the time of Portuguese colonialism during which Christianity / Roman Catholicism became a major religion in Kerala. The untouchables were considered polluted beings. They had lowliest jobs and lived in subhuman conditions. In India, the caste system was considered a way to organize society.

Arundhati Roy's book shows how terribly cruel such a system can be as oppressors were immigrants from Persia / Ira. Along with the caste system there was an economic class struggle too. The Ipes are considered upper class. They are factory owners, the domination class. The characters like Mammachi and Body Kochamma would not deign to mix with those of a lower class. Even kochu Maria, who has been with them for years, will always be a servant of a lower class.

Roy's novel attacks the brutal, entrenched and systematic oppression at work in Kerala, exemplified by figures of power such as Inspector Thomas Mathew. Roy is also highly critical of the hypocrisy and ruthlessness of the conventional, traditional moral code of Mammachi and Pappachi. On the opposite side of the political fence, the Kerala Communist Party, at least the faction represented by Comrade Pillai, is revealed to be much more concerned with personal ambition than with any notions of social justice. The novel is really an exploration of the historical tensions and conflicts associated with the particulars of the children's caste, class, religions and gender inheritances. She is interested in excavating and reclaiming the hidden histories buried under the homogenizing myth of the nation in the post – independence year.

In this way, Arundhati Roy Projects class conflicts in terms of caste, making a contrast between touchable and untouchables. She has a great sympathy for the downtrodden as she has presented a living picture of their sufferings and the injustices done against them. The third chapter symbolically refers to class antagonism. Like the Laltain the upper classes are well-off and live a comfortable life. But the lower classes suffer in life due to lack of proper amenities. They suffer politically and economically.

There is always an oppressor and always an oppressed. This universal paradigm is generalized in terms of the Big Things and the Small Things which allies with symbolism of the Lantern and the Lamp. On the level of ideas, this would mean, more or less, the same thing as Kart Marx's analysis of the moneyed class and the poor people. The former have become rich by virtue of the labours put up by the poor. The poor have become poorer because they are not allowed to share the surplus the generated.

Thus her novel is most materialistic novel written in this country and will remain as the most popular novel in the future.

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