

CHAPTER – VI

Summation

The literary world of the Indian English fiction has spread red carpet for women writers. They are articulating anxieties and concerns focusing on woman's issues and creating a body of 'literature of their own'. Women writers have been echoing the feeling of marginality and expressing their revolt against the purely masculine world. The contemporary literature highlights the plight of women, their increasing problem, their physical, financial and emotional exploitation and their mental anguish in the male dominated society in every sphere of life.

Over the decades a number of novels have appeared in Indian English fiction dealing with women's problems. The treatment of women is often powerful in these novels. They end up glorifying Indian women's virtues like patience, devotion and acceptance of sufferings as the design of fate.

The Indian woman has for years been presented as a silent sufferer. While she has played different roles – as a wife, mother, sister and daughter, she has never been able to claim her own individuality. According to Sushila Singh,

The words which we associate with the concept of an ideal woman are self-denial, sacrifice, patience, devotion and silent suffering. A woman was and is expected to subordinate every wish and every desire to someone else (112).

Several writers have made conscious and sustained attempts to analyse the predicament of women from various angles. The problems of women engage the attention of all major Indian writers in English and also form the bulk and core of the creative output of Indian women novelists, in particular.

The novels of Shashi Deshpande, Manju Kapur and Arundhati Roy have a totally different perspective. They portray the modern, educated and career oriented, middle – class married woman who is sensitive to the changing times and situations. These novelists are probably incomparable for their portrayal of women's turmoils, convulsions and frustrations and they are known for their lucid and simple narration also. Their novels provide searching insights and a great deal of human understanding. Most of their protagonists are women awakened. They are rebels opposing the social stigmas and blind customs and conventions of the society which makes males superior to women.

Deshpande as a novelist occupies a niche of her own in the later part of the twentieth century. Revealing a remarkable insight into the nature of a woman's mind, Shantha Krishnaswamy, says that "she depicts woman in myriad roles – wife, mother, daughter and an individual in her own right" (149). She always concerns herself with a woman's search for identity. She endeavors to establish woman as an individual who breaks loose from the traditional constraints and redefines her identity in tune with the changed social ambience of the modern times.

A woman is put under several restraints right from the day she was born. Our society is full of paradoxes and contradictions. Here, a female is considered as a peripheral member of the family. Her novels *The Dark Holds No Terrors* and *Roots and Shadows* deal with the woman's quest for self-exploration, the female psyche and an understanding of the mysteries of life and the protagonist's place in it. Deshpande brings out powerfully the psychological problems faced by her career women and discusses it artistically without crossing the barriers of art.

According to Chanchala Naik,

Deshpande has dealt with the problem of every woman in this hypocritical society. Preference of male child is very common in our Indian families. Eventhough the daughter is very talented, the parents give importance to the other sex and shower more affection on their sons, however they may be. It is assumed that girls are married off and the boys stay with their parents (246).

In the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* the protagonist Sarita's mind shuttles between the past and present and thus covers the whole span of her life. The stream of consciousness technique projects the psychic reverberations of Saru, of what she is rather than what she does. Memories are often linked to the ambivalent association of ideas. Each incident, a mini-story, a fiction in itself, imparts an unexplored vision to the narrative.

M.K Naik observes that,

It is a common belief that when a girl is born, she is considered as a debt and a liability. But, when a boy is born, he is an asset, who will earn and take care of his parents later on (256).

Thus, any expenditure for a boy is not cared much, but when it comes to a girl, there is always a second thought in the mind of the parents that they have to pay a huge sum of money as dowry for the girls. Saru experiences all the above tortures in her parental home.

According Sharad Srivastava,

In a patriarchal society, it is neither accepted by the man himself, nor by the society, if a woman is holding a better position than man (112).

In a marriage, if the wife earns more than the husband, the husband may feel inferior to his wife. In a male-chauvinistic Indian society, men mostly want to have an upper hand. Saru marries Manohar against the wishes of her parents. But, later when she became more successful than her husband, it created a rift between the two. It was really a wonder that a man who showed love and devotion to his wife, suddenly started to think her as a rival and an opponent.

The Dark Holds No Terrors tells the story of a marriage on the rocks. Saru is a “two –in-one woman” who in the daytime is a successful doctor and at night “a terrified trapped animal” in the hands of her husband, Manohar, who is an English teacher in a third-rate college. The novel opens with Saru returning after fifteen years to her father’s house, a place she had once sworn never to return unable to bear the sexual sadism of her husband.

The rest of the novel is remembrance of this past and a brief confession to the father, from present to past and vice-versa. The stay in her father’s house gives Sarita a chance to review her relationship with the husband, her dead mother, dead brother Dhruva and her children, Renu and Abhi. Though she remains unchanged till the end she had a better understanding of herself and others. This gives her the courage to confront reality. The dark no longer holds any terror to her.

According to R.S Pathak, “the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* holds a good mirror to many a woman, working or otherwise, but offers no readymade solutions for their problems” (311). It is up to the reader to draw his or her own remedial strategy. For instance, the feeling of homelessness drives Saru occasionally a fervent longing to be released from existence itself. She wonders:

to be alone? Never a stretching hand? Never a comforting touch?
Is it all a fraud then, the eternal cry of.... My husband, my wife,
my children, my parents? Are all human relationships doomed to

be a failure?...would it always be a failure, any attempt to reach out to another human being? Had she been chasing a chimera all her life, hoping for happy someone? Perhaps the only truth is that man is born to be cold and lonely. (DHNT 59)

But Saru will not let herself be bogged down by this for long. The novel surely has positive suggestions to offer. Saru places her trust in self-confidence and possibility of human interdependence. Saru's need for a confidant and her finding some relief in unburdening her heart to her father reiterates the idea of interdependence. Saru often finds herself oscillating between the so-called inner space and outer space as she had rather an indecisive nature. Deshpande ends the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* a little bit abruptly.

There have been cases of violence against women in various forms such as domestic violence, female infanticide, dowry deaths etc., In *The Dark Holds No Terrors* Saru's husband, Manu is a strange character. He is a husband during the day and turns into a rapist at night.

According to Prasanna Sree,

The dejections and disappointments of unrequired selfhood, the illusions and pinings of love and the yearnings for companionship make up the stream of Saru's consciousness (321).

Recalling her memory, she creates a world of harmony, a world of fantasy, understanding, authentic selfhood and a composite self. The epigraph of the novel reveals the core of Deshpande's psychological thought. In her

parents' home, Saru underwent the arduous journey into herself and learnt to free herself of guilt, shame, humiliation and she was also initiated into the mystery of human existence.

You are your own refuge;

There is no other refuge.

This refuge is hard to achieve.

The Dhammapada. (DHNT 7).

The epigraph of the novel gained its total significance when Saru realized that the parental home cannot be a refuge. She understood that neither her father nor her husband Manu could be her refuge. She had to kill the ghosts that haunted her. She had to find her own way to salvation. The parental home initiated Saru into an understanding of the meaning of human life.

All right, so I'm alone. But so's everyone else. Human beings ...

They're going to fail you. But because there's just us, because there's no one else, we have to go on trying. If we can't believe in ourselves, we're sunk. (DHNT 200)

Saru had gained the assertion of will and confidence in herself. She learnt to trust herself. The novel ends with Saru attending a sick child, telling her father to ask Manu to wait till she comes back. This reveals that Saru is restoring herself the pride of her doctor's profession.

Indu in *Roots and Shadows* represents a woman torn between age old traditions and individual views. In her quest to be independent complete, she realizes that there is beauty and security in life. She is aware of the sanctity of the familial bonds; she restrains herself from the precipitous action of fleeing from the domestic scene. Though she views these bonds as unreasonable in the beginning, gradually, she learns to be bound by them as a typical traditional Indian woman, for she knows that transgressing them will certainly rupture the family ties.

She realizes that it would be unwise to seek freedom without determining her obligations and responsibilities and without losing her individuality. Indu's decision, not to submit herself to anyone's dictates, not to get influenced by her husband in career matter shows that she is making independent decisions. Her search for freedom results in her emergence as a bold and dynamic woman.

Indu tries to resolve her own internal crisis. Her reunion with Naren and old uncle, with whom she had close relationship from her childhood, allows her to tear off the mask of complacency and self delusion. Her resolve to live her life on her own terms and with uncompromising honesty strengthens her disposition especially after Naren's death. She returns to Jayant and her own home, gives up her job with the magazine and embarks upon the painful yet soul-fulfilling vocation of a creative writer.

The concerns of women are primarily in the context of family and community. Deshpande has looked into women's changing perspectives and their search for bonding within family as a mode of strength. Her women are caught in the process of redefining and rediscovering their own roles, position and relationship within their given social world.

In the opinion of R.S Pathak,

Deshpande's objective is to show that one should take refuge in the self. It means that self is not metaphysical but psychological. Women should assert themselves so that they can overcome or thrash the suppressing forces. Towards the end, Indu reaches the depth of self actualization (200).

Indu realizes that freedom lies in having the courage to do what one believes is the right thing to do and the determination and the tenacity to adhere to it, which alone can bring harmony in life. Undoubtedly, tolerance, love, kindness and faithfulness are widely acknowledged traits of female nature. For Deshpande, self-assertion should be viewed equally important. The author drives home her point with great subtlety and delicacy.

Thus, *Roots and Shadows* functions simultaneously as the story of an individual pulled against restrictive social institutions. It successfully dramatizes the conflict between individual freedom and social obligation, between modernity and tradition. Indu, the idealist and rebel who quits home in protest against Akka, comes back as Indu-Akka. Thus the novel powerfully

brings home the division between the ideal and the actual, between dream and reality.

In an interview, Gangadharan asked Deshpande if she is giving a message of freedom within the circle and the latter's reply is:

No. I am not giving any message to anyone. It is how they take it. Of course, some of these are very introspective things... But certainly, some of my thoughts are always there. They are there for the reader to pick and choose. As far as the question goes, all that I can say is this is what I, as an individual, believe in (253).

Thus, the women in Deshpande's novels move from a state of passive acceptance to active assertion. Without succumbing to societal pressures and without breaking away from accepted, traditional, social institutions, the protagonists succeed in being an individual awakened.

According to Yashoda Bhat,

The predicament of women in the novels of Shashi Deshpande represents the larger predicament of women in contemporary Indian society where the new concept of western education, economic independence and globalization have completely shaken the roots of old Indian culture and social values (201).

Deshpande has very subtly conveyed the message of mutual understanding and co-operation between wife and husband. The Indian women

must seek their freedom within the periphery of marriage through mutual understanding without disrupting the Indian socio-cultural values.

Her novels end with a positive note the hope of new dawn. They depict the permanent mark carved on the psyche of woman by traditions, norms and conventions of the male-dominated society which prohibit them from exhibiting their true self. The mode and style of their development inculcates in them submissiveness, silence and passiveness which hold a strong hold on their psyche. Deshpande conveys the message that the modern Indian women should learn to conquer their fear and assert themselves. R.S Prasad says that “The theme of quest self-identity, when handled by women writers, delves deep into the inner turmoil and conflicts that rage in the psyche of women in a society steeped in patriarchal values” (278).

Deshpande's novels appeal to the readers for their rootedness in everyday India. She writes in her clear, lucid prose about a society and a culture to which she belongs. Family relationships have always fascinated the novelist and she is aware where everything begins. In the India context, ancestral homes and family relationship have always had their importance. The ancestral home is the stage where the different family members come together, be it is a festive occasion or death of a family member.

Indhira Bhatt opines that

The underlying theme in Deshpande's novels is familial relationships, especially the ones that exist between father and

daughter, husband and wife and also between mother and daughter (172).

In all these relationships the women occupy the central stage and significantly the narration shifts through her feminist consciousness. Her novels reflect the lives of suffocated women in search of a refuge from suffering. Searching for a solution to their private problems, the female protagonists in her novels shift from their personal pains to the sufferings of the other women around.

In Deshpande's novels three types of suffering women characters recur with subtle changes. To the first type belongs the heroine's mother or the figure-the traditional woman who believes that her place is with her husband and family. Whatever be her troubles, she does not leave her husband; she strives for a working relationship with him at any cost.

She represents the traditional religious ethos and confirms the Manu code that the women should be under the control of the father in the maidenhood, the husband in her youth and the sons during her old age. Despite being the victims of patriarchy, some of these women hold power or control over other women in the family because of their status as mother or mother-in-law. Indu's mother in *Roots and Shadows* and Saru's mother in *Dark Holds No Terrors* belong to this type.

The second type of suffering women is the converse of the traditional type. Here, the women is bolder, more self-reliant and rebellious. She cannot conform to the Sita's version of womanhood and is consciously inclined

towards what would be designated as radical feminist ideology. Such kind of women characters are very rare in Deshpande's novels. They are mostly the heroine's friends and classmates. Saru's friend Nului in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* holds as a feminist ideology to life for the sake of which she chooses to lead an independent life as a spinster.

The third type of women characterize the women in between. Most of Deshpande's women characters belong to this category. This woman is neither traditional nor radical in her ideas and practice. She might walk out of her home in protest against her suffering, but gradually realizes that walking out does not solve her problems.

Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors* broods over her agonies even after she escapes her marital home. Indu in *Roots and Shadows* leaves her husband to seek refuge in her ancestral home, but she is unable to accept her fate as any ordinary woman might do. These heroines suffer more because they are aware of the escape routes of two other types of women-the traditional and the radical-but hesitate to choose those options. Their initial position is one of remaining at the crossroads. It is towards the end of the novels, that Deshpande's female protagonist realizes herself and learns to line up to the challenges.

It is generally accepted of women in India to fit in these three broad roles successfully.

- 1) Dutiful daughter
- 2) Submissive wife
- 3) A caring mother

Most of Deshpande's novels hold more or less analogue narrative structures for the protagonist.

Deshpande's first three novels – *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, *That Long Silence* and *Roots and Shadows* – have analogue narrative structures. For the protagonist Saru in *The Dark Holds No Terrors*, Jaya in *That Long Silence* and Indu in *Roots and Shadows*, a journey into the past, a return to their childhood homes is the necessary spark that sets them off on the path of redefinition and self-discovery. They realize that through a re-appraisal they can achieve a pattern for the future. A sudden domestic crisis makes Jaya and Mohan seek refuge in the shabby family flat in *That Long Silence*. Temporarily liberated from the unending monotony of house-work is referred to by Simone de Beauvoir as the "Torture of Sisyphus". (10)

In the same manner Saru, the protagonist, in the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* also finds her marital condition unbearable and feels: "the desperation of a trapped animal" (DHNT 58)

Deshpande's novels are therefore conscious narrative structures of the protagonists who realize themselves and learn to live up to the challenges as she is a woman awakened.

Significantly her women characters, According to Amirta Bhalla "learn in due course as to how to arrive at a compromise and find a sense of balance in life" (143). Her novels centre on family relationships, mainly the relationships

between father-daughter, mother-daughter and husband-wife, with late dilemmas and conflicts. Her novels portray middle class Indian families.

She has portrayed with tremendous power the struggle of her protagonist Saru, in the novel *The Dark Holds No Terrors* who survives in a turbulent world which offers no easy outs to women. Saru's rebellion is not rebellion like Jaya's in the novel *That Long Silence*. The titles of both these novels are appropriately symbolic. *That Long Silence* implies the necessity to break the silence to revolt and to establish self – identity while *The Dark Holds No Terrors* is a shift towards self-realization after getting rid of the feeling of guilt and terror.

Manju Kapur's *Difficult Daughters* is infact a feminist discourse not because she is a woman writing about women but because, as Jasbir Jain rightly says that

He has understood a woman both as a woman and as a person pressurized by all kinds of visible and invisible contexts (92).

Kapur has taken profound insight into woman's inner turmoil to find a place, an identity and individuality of her own in society. For centuries, women are always back staged by patriarchal world.

The issue of the novel *Difficult Daughters* is according to Jain : “How to step out of the framework defined by men and patriarchal values and how to identify and create a tradition of their own” (50). Virmati's mother, a construct of patriarchy exercises her special prerogative to train her daughter into cultural

mores so that she takes up her assigned role of daughter, wife and mother without interrogation and learn the lore of self-sacrifice, and devotion. Susie Orbach's reflects: "to prepare her daughter for a life of inequality, the mother tries to hold back a child's desire to be a powerful, self-sacrifice, nurturance human being" (DD27).

Virmati's body becomes a site of terrifying alienation because she is not able to meet the demands of the society represented by the mother, as well as demands of her psyche. Resistance to patriarchy starts with Virmati's insistence on education and refusal for marriage. She believes: "One of the benefits of education is that it teaches us to think for ourselves" (DD102).

A Married Woman her another novel focuses on the emergence of the lesbian as a cultural and political subject. Lesbians are often seen as anomalies who do not fit into the heterosexual family paradigm. Darshana Trivedi elaborates:

To be a lesbian is to be perceived as someone who has stepped out of line, who has moved out of sexual/economic dependence on a male, who is woman identified (18).

Kapur traces the actual process by which woman is 'womanized' by locating and foregrounding the overt and covert means of women's bondage and conscription by ideologies, stereotypes and limited choices. Society allows a woman to enjoy her body and sexuality only in heterosexual intimacy bound by ties of marriage.

Kapur presents the reality of married life in a traditional society where a woman has to efface her personality and surrender one's very existence. Astha realizes:

A willing body at night, a willing pair of hands and feet in the day and an obedient mouth are the essential prerequisites of a married woman (AMW 231).

Fed up with disintegration of the body, she wants to reinvent herself as a human being and get back her female body with its desire, aspirations, emotions, feelings and dreams and sets on her quest for a more meaningful life in her lesbian relationship with Peeplika, a widow.

For some time, the female protagonist rejects the rules of a ritual bound society and challenges the patriarchal heterosexual norms and creates her own lesbian world in the midst of the larger mainstream heterosexual world; thereby effecting a crucial reversal in the subject position. In the moments of her heightened ecstasy she is not mother, wife and daughter or property of patriarchal system but individual self who is the sole owner of her body. Through its explicit portrayal of lesbian sexuality the novelist reveals the under belly of traditional society and the possibilities available for agency and the expression of female desire. Overall it offers simplistically sexual expression as the vehicle of female liberation.

In the opinion of Yasho Bhat

Tradition is deep-rooted in India and in the traditional system Indian society is organized around gender division giving more space to male for dominance (112).

Right from the marriage, the bride's incorporation into the family begins. She is guided and trained into the lifestyle of her husband's family. But despite all her efforts to devote herself sincerely to the wellbeing of the family, she is considered an outsider.

A close study of Kapur's novels makes us observe that through the story of her female protagonists in her novels, she also projects the view that when an Indian woman, in spite of her education, status and intelligence, tries to marry according to her own choice is likely to spoil her prospects in both the worlds- the one that she revolts against and the other she embraces. But she portrays her woman as to be outspoken, bold, determined, action oriented and awakened.

A detailed study of Kapur's novels reveals that women in her novels are of ultra modern era who want their individual worth to be realized. The novel *Difficult Daughters* recounts the story of a young woman called Virmati - her desire to study, her rejection of her arranged marriage, her entanglement with a married neighbour the professor, whose second wife she becomes, and her subsequent challenging and difficult life choices and their ambivalent outcomes

which mark the stages of development from identity crisis to identity achievement.

Binod Mishra is of the view that

A Married Woman explores the life of Astha from her young adulthood through her early middle years. In the process she marries, discovers the joys of intimacy with her husband, grows distant from him, struggles to become a painter, becomes a social activist, falls in love with a woman, and finds herself her freedom in the intimacy of another woman (242).

Although the conflict for autonomy and separate identity for women still remains an unfinished combat, her women protagonists continue their struggle. When she expresses some aspirations as men do she is labelled as a feminist. Though rebellion demands determination and will to stand by the cause of rebellion at any cost, the heroines in the novels of Kapur have often come up by paying price for their rebellion. This is the irony of Kapur's women.

There comes a traditional phase in their life and they tend to become different from traditional women and want to break out in new paths. However, the change is more theoretical in nature. When it comes to reality they lack courage and resume to patriarchal hegemony. What happens to Virmati and Astha is no doubt the more representative destiny of Indian women even if educated. Commenting on this issue. Anita Desai rightly observes,

the conterminous constraints of widespread illiteracy and material dependence make Indian woman themselves connive at patriarchal morals a secret convenience (89).

Every mother is a difficult mother to her daughter and every daughter is a difficult daughter to her mother because ideas are different from one to one. The women characters in her novels are victimized at emotional and physical levels, but they transcend the image and refuse to ascribe to the given construct. The novelist seems to understand the inner urges of her protagonists and their strength of their inner selves.

Thus, in *Difficult Daughters*, the women's role in the family is revalorized. The protagonists have established themselves as autonomous beings, free from the restrictions imposed by society, culture, nature and also free from their own fears and guilt. According to Suman Bala,

a distinct theme in her novels runs against the preservation of traditional family structures and of related aspects such as cultural values, spirituality and gender roles (222).

The family bestows a network of relations which support and maintain individual identity. Arundhati Roy gives in her novel *The God of Small Things* the vivid description of untouchability, gender bias and caste system. She brings to light the social problems and ethos of the society. Roy repeatedly uses various small things to reinforce her reader's awareness of the confrontation existing in human nature. In the novel *The God of Small Things*, she invites us

to pay special attention to those who are marginalized and devoiced in the post colonial subcontinent. Moreover, she conveys an important message that colonialism may be dead, yet the concept of empire will never vanish both at the present time and in the upcoming future.

The novel begins with Rahel's return to Ayemenem. Upon seeing her familiar hometown with altered small things, Rahel sets out to stroll around the town collecting her memories. By speaking through the mouth of Rahel, Roy constructs her story and summons up her memories. According to Madhu Benoit,

In the novel *The God of Small Things* where unspeakable desires are articulated and repressed memories recalled, the plot appears fragmented because the narration follows the process of an unspecified narrator's recollection of traumatic past events, a remembering which can easily be distracted by the simultaneous emergence of divergent memories (311).

Thus, reading the novel turns out to be an adventurous journey of sorting through bits of debris left by some past catastrophes. With the clues found, recollected and remembered, long forgotten incidents are once again pieced together. *The God of Small Things* centres on Rahel's memory of the three weeks leading to the drowning of Sophie Mol, the death of Velutha, the exile of Ammu and the loss of childhood of Rahel and Estha; that is, before the day of terror which shattered forever the world they live in, the day which is so traumatic that it signifies to them "the end of living" (304).

Rahel and Estha, twins of a middle class divorced mother Ammu live in Ayemenem house, which belongs to their uncle, Chacko, Mammachi's beloved son. A series of unexpected incidents follow the arrival of Chacko's ex-wife, Margret Kochamma, and their daughter Sophie Mol. Without informing any adults, the three children make their own crossing of the overflowing river at night in a little boat and Sophie Mol is unfortunately drowned. Sophie Mol's death accompanied by the scandal of Ammu and Velutha's trans-caste love affair, results in Velutha's death, Ammu and twins separation, and the invisible wound in the heart of all the Ayemenem dwellers.

Twenty-three years later, Rahel comes back to Ayemenem to meet her twin brother Estha. Their shared memories begin to emerge from their sealed heart as all the small things in their home town beckon their hidden memories from their oppressed past and the long forgotten events are accordingly reconstructed.

According to Murari Prasad, "*The God of Small Things* exposes the rigid hierarchy of the caste system in Indian society, where the untouchables are placed at the bottom of the social ladder" (102). Indeed through Roy's depiction one can see that, the untouchables are voiceless. Even the protagonist, Velutha, seldom has voice of his own. His rare outburst of thought expresses his inner struggle between love and laws. "He tried to hate her. She is one of them. He couldn't. She had deep dimples when she smiled. Her eyes were always somewhere else" (204). Trapped in his hatred towards the injustice, the Big God has imposed on him and his love towards Ammu's

attraction, Velutha recognizes Ammu's aloofness towards the oppressive society through her eyes.

According to S.P Swain,

Women, who have always been placed at the bottom of the society, are forced into silence in the patriarchal system. Roy in her novel *The God of Small Things* truthfully describes the plight of the subjugable females and untouchables, the social injustice and the ever-lasting conflicts between love and laws, Roy intends to explore (211).

Estha and Velutha are also victims of patriarchal love laws and caste system. Yet Estha's oppression is even more strengthened because of several things that happen in his life-the sexual humiliation by an adult, the drowning of his cousin, and loss of Ammu and Velutha.

Throughout his life, Estha is searching for the truest 'self' that would fit him into a proper place. Yet, he does not find the answers to all life's problems. All he can do is to muse in his silent world and solitude. It is not until the coming back of Rahel that he reconstructs his original image. Though the identity of Estha in the end of story is somewhat ambivalent, the lack of father figure for Estha has been transformed into an Oedipus complex. Here, the target of Estha's repressed sexual desire is not anyone but his twin sister Rahel.

As for Velutha, he is both victim and a scapegoat of the social system and communist authority. Unlike Estha, Velutha's mother died of tuberculosis.

Therefore, he has to be independent to support the family, though he does not go through trauma like Estha, he lives in a society where its values are based on strict social hierarchy and political bigotry. After his affair with Ammu is disclosed, it seems that everyone is waiting for his death. In the end, he learns a hard earned lesson with the price of his own life. Due to his socially oppressed position, Velutha turns to Ammu for love and comfort. And supposedly his oppression is somewhat released by sexual intercourse with Ammu.

The God of Small Things presents wide description of traumas and love laws, in December 1969, all catastrophes of death, love, murder and betrayal happened to the Ipe family. At the very beginning of the novel, we learn about Sophie Mol's death and the vivid depiction of her funeral. Estha and Rahel feel guilty about Sophie Mol's death since, they let their cousin accompany them in the boat trip in monsoon season. Yet the death of Sophie Mol seems so trifling that "the government never paid for Sophie Mol's funeral because she wasn't killed on a Zebra Crossing" (GST 6).

Ironically, Sophie Mol embraces her world of children instead of cruelty of the adult world –"She lay in it her yellow crumpling bell-bottoms with her hair in a ribbon and her Made-in-England go-go bag that she loved" (GST 6). She lies in a child-sized coffin and keeps the stuffs she loved, with her.

Roy mentions the small things detaily in the novel. It is by inscribing on the 'Small Things' that Roy brings out big traumas and haunted memories of each character. Through the narration of Rahel, Roy leads us to face the real

confrontation of life. It is on Sophie Mol's funeral that Rahel feels "fiercely vigilant and brittle with exhaustion from her battle against real life" (GST 7).

Besides, Rahel's sensitive mind and careful observation accentuate the sad tone of the novel. First, she notices the changes of colour of church dome. Second, she notices a black bat. She thinks Sophie Mol must have noticed that, too. Here the church signifies a place for two occasions of life –wedding and funeral. The funeral at the beginning of the novel predicts some kind of misfortune. As for the bat, it signifies bad luck and misery in life. It is in "the funeral that Rahel and Estha learn that the world had other ways of breaking men" (GST 8). And the atmosphere on the funeral is that of 'sick sweet' –"like old roses on a breeze" (GST 8).

In the end, "the loss of Sophie Mol grew robust and alive. It ushered Rahel through childhood into womanhood(GST 17). Yet the trauma not only lingers on the twins' mind but keeps haunting the heart of Sophie Mol's mother- "she had come to Aymenmem to heal the wounded soul, and had lost all of it instead. She was shattered like glass" (GST 249). Sarcastically "it is curious how sometimes the memory of death lives on for so much longer than the memory of the life that it purloined" (GST 17).

Estha "had always been a quiet child, so no one could pinpoint with any degree of accuracy exactly when he had stopped talking" (GST 12). In fact, he seems to occupy little space in the world. The world around him does not carry too much meaning. Actually, Estha's trauma can be traced back to his

experience of sexual harassment by Orange drink Lemon drink man at Abhilasha Talkies.

Originally, Estha goes with his family to watch the classic film *The Sound of Music*. Yet the man who sells drinks forces Estha to rub his penis in exchange of drinks. Though not knowing the intention of this man, Estha is terrified into silent fear and shame by this assault. Later on, the loss of Ammu and Velutha traumatizes his fragile heart even worse. These painful memories may be the hidden causes of Estha's stagnation in growth and his inability to live normal life.

The tragedy of Ammu and Velutha is the worse trauma for both Rahel and Estha. It is the unwritten law of the society that Velutha as an untouchable should not love woman higher than his caste. After his love affair with Ammu is discovered by local police authority, he is tortured violently. Yet, the policemen assert that "they were not arresting a man, They were exercising a fear" (GST 293). The brutality of the policeman is described as follows:

The posse of touchable policemen acted with economy, not frenzy, efficiency, not anarchy, responsibility and not hysteria. They didn't tear out his hair or burn him alive. They didn't hack off his genitals and stuff them in his mouth. They didn't rape him or behead him. After all they were not battling an epidemic. They were merely inoculating a community against an outbreak (GST 293).

It is not entirely Velutha's fault that "he lived in a society where a man's death could be more profitable than his life ever been" (GST 267). Eventually, he is betrayed by Comrade Pillai and history itself.

The last betrayal that sent Velutha across the river, swimming against the current, in dark and rain, well in time for his blind date with history. So what has been left in Velutha's life? Almost nothing since he left no ripples in the water. No foot prints on the shore (GST 274).

After the death of Velutha, Ammu dies alone at the age of thirty-one "not old, not young, but a viable, dieable age" (GST 154). And the church refuses to bury her because she is a shame to everyone in Kerala. Since Ammu ends her former marriage in divorce, she seems to worry about her future life. That is "it wasn't what lay at the end of her road that frightened Ammu as much as nature of the road itself" (GST 208). In her dream, there are 'shadows' that only one armed man can see. Ammu and the man have the desire to touch each other, but they do not do. Strangely, the man leaves no footprints in sand, no ripples in water. And Ammu flies through her dream on heavy, shuddering wings.

After reading the novel, the readers are unavoidably drawn by Velutha's tragic death and Ammu twins' misfortune. According to Muraru Prasad,

The tragedies of the protagonists in the novel trigger the reader's sympathy towards the powerless and their reflection of the injustice imposed on the weak in such an oppressed society. Naturally, *The*

God of Small Things is accordingly regarded as a story revealing the outburst of physical brutality in Ayemenem (213).

Moreover, such outbursts of violence are more often than not regarded, by the perpetrators as merely routine, though paranoid, efforts of battling an epidemic, in this case the untouchable. This subversive novel also highlights the profound humanity of lower caste characters. Even though the caste system serves as the basic frame work that keeps the society intact and ensues its function, the fact that the lower-caste characters suffer so brutal a fate because of their race, caste and gender in the power structure still reveals the hidden problems in Indian society.

Laws, written in the dominant language are supposedly endowed with unchallenged authority in the patriarchal society. Laws are held in such a supreme position because they are written with the intention to maintain justice and social orders. Members of the society should obey the laws in order to ensure progress towards prosperity for the citizens. Besides the written laws, invisible laws, such as common sense, inherited beliefs, religions, customs, and traditions, also dominate individual's daily interactions.

These unwritten laws affect individuals even more profoundly than the written laws. The invisible law's power derives from the everlasting 'norms' in the society. They are supported by the public who believe in their own righteousness and who seldom questioned or challenged the authority of laws, explicit or implicit. Though the collective power in the whole society, social order, are hence maintained and society runs smoothly, the power that gives

society peace, structure, and stability can also be turned into the source of conflicts. The written laws, officially put into fixed words, show the same weakness as the unwritten laws.

Different individuals at divergent places in various periods of time will explicate the same written laws according to their specific condition, thus endowing the written laws with immeasurable flexibility. Similarly, unwritten laws lack exact forms in the beginning and often depend on the shared beliefs of a group of people, so they can be appropriated even more easily than the written laws. Any challenge to either the written or unwritten laws may symbolize the defiance against the public, hence bringing about violent punishment.

Due to these laws' trait of flexibility, conflicts caused by different interpretation of the laws are effortlessly provoked. Whichever law it may be, the law is unavoidably accompanied by violence. Laws may be designed to cease violence, but ironically they often lead to more violence. Laws always stand by the side of the rich and powerful although they are laid down by the authority for the benefit of all the people. With such a premise, between those who suffer under the laws and the ones who design them there always exists a bottomless gap that cannot be bridged.

Those who suffer in the hands of law are often regarded as the violators who are prone to threaten the general peace of the public. Their voices are silenced by the authority because the sufferers' images are overlapped with those of the threats they pose to the stability of the society. Even though the

laws might be proved wrong or excessive, the possibility for the weak to ignore or violate the laws seems rather slim or impractical.

According to Paul Kingsnorth, “the power structure endorsed by the laws is metaphorically reflected in the novel’s narration of the tense relationship between the Big God and the Small God” (307). The Big God symbolizes the authority that interprets the laws for its own benefit. Supported by the majority of law-abiders, it possesses the absolute power to oppress any challengers who attempt to act against it. Thus, when pursuing his freedom and desires, the Small God, without any privilege, faces repeated oppression and is neglected if his behaviour contradicts with the acceptable standards of the society. In the confrontation between Big God and Small God, laws join hands only with Big God to silence any turmoil in the society. Law serves as the accomplice of the Big God and protects only those who have money and power to manipulate them.

Unjustified and excessive violence inflicted on Velutha by the police after he was falsely accused by Baby Kochamma of raping Ammu is an example. Velutha, the Small God, is repeatedly depicted as

Someone who leaves no foot prints in sand, no ripples in water, no image in mirrors an almost non-existing being. Despite his talent and loyalty, as an ‘Untouchable’ by birth, he exists in the ‘Touchable’ police an inchoate, unacknowledged fear, a fear that is so strong that it prompts them to “destroy what could neither subdue nor deify (GST 292).

That is the reason why when Baby Kochamma brought the news of Velutha's raping of Ammu to the police station, the inspector Thomas Mathew, immediately believed her lies and instantly sent a posse of police to track Velutha down. When Baby Kochamma seeks assistance from the police inspector, he consults with Comrade Pillai, a leading member of the Communist party, to make sure Velutha's position in the party. Comrade Pillai's assurance of Velutha's irrelevance in the party extinguishes all hopes for this dispensable Small God.

Inspector Thomas Mathew and Comrade Pillai act as the agents of the Big God and sentence Velutha's death. Once an agreement is reached and death sentence pronounced,

they looked out at the world and never wondered how it worked, because they know they worked it. They were mechanics who serviced different parts of the same machine (GST 248).

Inspector Thomas Mathew, the enforcer of the laws, instructs his men to execute the laws upon Velutha, who has no opportunity whatsoever to fight against the dominant power and the Small God is finally silenced and wiped out from any record that might prove his existence.

Such a horrendous execution is shown undisguised before the twins and Roy according to Murari Prasad,

ironically explain the scene as a clinical demonstration in controlled conditions of human nature's pursuit of. It was human

history, masquerading as God's purpose, revealing herself to an under-age audience (292-93).

To those policemen who ruthlessly bully Velutha, they justify their uncontrollable violence as "merely inoculating a community against an outbreak"(GST 293). With a standpoint of maintaining social order and exorcising their fear of possible threat to the community, the policemen, in the name of their love for their own people, appeal to the laws that provide them with excuses to eliminate the subversive power in the society.

Through Velutha's tragic ending, the laws that wear him down are explicitly presented as monstrous and oppressive. His inherited caste position and dispensable role in the communist party deny him any access to power in the laws of the world. However, while presenting the net of laws that captures the powerless Roy.

According to Brinda Bose,

intends to reveal another kind of unwritten law, Love. Love is an amorphous part of human affection and an indispensable element in the relationships among individuals. Love's unpredictability makes itself appear unassociated with the more straight forward laws that are written down (166).

However, contrary to common beliefs, laws, susceptible to divergent interpretations and appropriation, are not necessarily that specific. While romance writers like their readers to believe that love has subversive power that can conquer all obstacles that stand in the way of the lovers, love actually

obeys its own laws and itself a cause of disaster, for once the laws were made to dictate "Who should be loved, and how, and how much"(GST 35). Tragedies are round the corner.

Love is a natural feeling whose root and intensity can hardly be traced and measured, love obeys its own laws and such laws are easily manipulated and appropriated by those in power in order to discipline and control those who are not in control of their own destinies. On the one hand, Roy desires to assert that even though how to love can be taught, love itself and its possibility are infinite. On the other hand, Roy also emphasizes the possibility to manipulate love. Because there are so many different ways for one to be in love, ranging from limited expectation of positive and negative emotions, to total bodily contacts, conventions are made up to help undermine what are and what are not proper expression of love. In the interaction between individuals, love is sometimes performable.

Khurshid Alam is of the view that

In *The God of Small Things*, the instability of the love laws is most evidently discerned in the relationship between Ammu and the twins. As a single mother, Ammu doubles her love for twins so as to fill up the twins' desperate need of love due to absence of a father in their life (261).

When Ammu returns to Ayemenem after her divorce, she nevertheless realizes that she occupies a crucial position in the twins' heart and this

realization provides her with additional strength to protect them. Similarly, as fatherless children, the twins are deprived of patriarchal governance and social positions. When compared with Sophie Mol, who is loved from the beginning, the twins are anxious of reassuring themselves about the love they receive from their mother, because Ammu has always been the only source of love for them.

Their categorical dependence on Ammu for love forms a tight bondage between the mother and the children. However, Ammu's monopoly of the twins' love also turns her into the source of pain for the twins. Such love not only generates the power for the twins to live on but also reveals its potential to destroy a desirable relationship between the family members. Whether Ammu is aware of the twins' fragile hearts, she disciplines them with the threat of loving them 'less'. To the innocent eyes of the twins, they believe that their mother's love has a fixed amount of quantity and can always be reportioned and adjusted according to whether they can live upon Ammu's expectations. Because the twins lack the sense of security, losing Ammu's love becomes the twins' deepest fear, which keeps haunting their muddled recognition of love.

The twin's fear of losing Ammu's love can be explicated respectively through their experience before the day they meet Sophie Mol. The innocent questions that Rahel asks to her uncle, Chacko, reflects her anxiety of losing the little love she has in her possession upon Sophie Mol's arrival.

Chacko? Is it necessary that people have to love their own children most in the world. Chacko, for example..... just for

example, is it possible that Ammu can love Sophie Mol more than me and Estha? Or for you to love me more than Sophie Mol for example? (GST 112).

The anxiety Rahel suffers while in apprehensive anticipation of Sophie Mol's arrival, unfortunately, prompts Rahel to make insensitive comments and indulge in offensive behaviours. As if possessed by jealousy, she can not even tolerate her mother for making a courteous but positive comment on the Orange drink Lemon drink man at the theatre where they go to see a movie, the day before they go to the airport to greet Sophie Mol. So, upon hearing Ammu says, rather casually,

Sweet cap, the Orange-drink Lemon-drink fellow, "Rahel said rather petulantly, "Why don't you marry him then?" Her rash and pungent response irritates Ammu so much that she asked Rahel "do you realize what you have just done?" she again said to Rahel "when you hurt people, they begin to love you less. That's what careless words do. They mark people love you a less little (GST 107)

By repeating the threat of loving her children less, Ammu becomes the very accomplice of the love laws in disciplining the twins into subjecting themselves to Ammu's logic of love.

Estha, feels frightened after he is sexually harassed by the Orange-drink Lemon-drink man.

He knew that if Ammu found out about what he had done with Orange-drink Lemon-drink Man, She'd love him less as well. Very much less. He felt the shaming churning heaving turning sickness in his stomach (GST 108).

The experience of touching the “untouchable” brings Estha the feeling of impurity, but, more importantly, it may be the very cause for him to lose Ammu's love. In other words, Ammu's love is nevertheless so concrete that it becomes the very force to form the fragile subjectivities of the twins. Love, in the mutable relationship between Ammu and the twins, serves as the laws that govern the twins' behaviour and the threats that may endanger their world.

Roy describes the twins' mental sufferings resulted from their love towards Ammu through her unique metaphor of the moth, which almost always appears in the text whenever Rahel feels paranoid, as well as the metaphor of the egg-white, which seems to be another bodily image to project Estha's anxiety. The originally invisible and unspeakable feeling is embodied in the two specific objects that can effectively reveal how love and laws influence the twins.

The moth, to begin with, refers to an indigenous moth that Pappachi discovered before retirement. As an entomologist, Pappachi incidentally discovered a new-found species of moth in India, but was told otherwise. However, years late, this moth was named after some other person as a separate

species and such disappointment and anger lingered in Pappachi's heart until his death:

In the years to come, even though he had been ill-humoured long before he discovered the moth, Papachi's moth was held responsible for his black moods and sudden bouts of temper. Its pernicious ghost-gray, furry and with unusually dense dorsal tufts – haunted every house that he ever lived in it tormented him and his children and his children's children (GST 48).

Estha, a silent boy who always depicted as “[occupying] very little space in the world” (GST 12), is unable to express his feelings as directly as Rahale through words. Thus, when he is sexually harassed by the Orange-drink Lemon-drink man outside the Abhilasha Talkes, he is too frightened to tell Ammu what happened to him. Harassed by the belief that once the incident is uncovered, Ammu will love him less. Estha could only attempt to repress his fear. This fear keeps haunting him because he has touched what he should not have touched. This sense of guilt, accompanied by his fear resulted from the possibility of losing Ammu's love and from the Orange-drink Lemon-drink Man's threat, increases his anxiety for the future.

Thus, after the incident, Estha comes up with conclusion that” (i) Anything can happen to anyone,... (ii) It's best to be prepared” (GST 186). This chain of thought later becomes the source of all the tragedies in the Ayemenem House and leads all the members to the road of disaster.

The twins' fear becomes another form of laws that predominate over the love. When Ammu, in a rage, accuses the twins of being the reason for her unexpected, incredible imprisonment in her room and demands them to go away, the twins, in a fit of despair, decide to cross the river, seeking shelters in the old history House because they had already 'prepared' for the worst. The incidental outbreak of Ammu's rage and the twins' desperation results in Sophie Mol's death which contains the most powerful destructive force to break bondage among the Ayemenem dwellers.

Ironically, it is Ammu's careless words that trigger the tragedy and hurt the twins' fragile hearts. The love that should tie Ammu and the twins together is transformed into the knife that cuts off their relationship. Without a chance to mourn for their suffering, Ammu and the twins are torn apart. The wounds caused by love have no time to be healed, and the twins are forced into adulthood once their mother's love and protection are removed. Such unpredictable aftermath of love leaves its traces on the twins' subjectivities, depriving them of the language that could help them understand what and why it has happened, leaving, "them behind, spinning in the dark, with no moorings, in a place with no foundation" (GST 182). Rahel's indifference and Estha's silence yield ample and concrete evidence of love's unpredictability and its destructive power.

According to Mohit Kumar Ray "the confrontation between love and laws causes deaths within the Ipe family and traumatizes those who survive the tragedy" (300). The trauma that occupies the minds of victims tremendously

affects their lives, but, for the twins at least, they can only manage the “Hole in the universe” left behind by the traumatic events with incoherence, silence, and self imposed exile. Even though the shock of the tragedy can be deliberately forgotten and buried deep down inside each individual, fractured and disjointed memories are always beckoned and aroused unexpectedly by the small things in daily lives.

Within a few days, the twins witness their mother’s sorrow, the river’s claim of their cousin, Sophie Mol, Velutha’s violent death, and Chacko’s rage that tears everything apart. The drastic change of their originally orderly lives leaves irretrievable wounds on the twins.

The trauma then takes its roots in the ‘enforced optimism’ in Rahel’s eyes and “a hallow where Estha’s word had been” (GST 20). Although the twins are separated soon after the tragedy, their shared memory of Velutha’s tragic death scene and Ammu’s desperation follow them wherever they go. After Ammu’s death, Rahel began her drifting but despite the fact that she hates Ammu for changing from a clever and confident mother into one who “refuses to acknowledge the passage of time” (GST 152), Ammu’s face keeps emerging in Rahel’ memory.

Years later, on a crisp fall morning in upstate New York, on a Sunday train from Grand Central to Croton Harmon, it suddenly came back to Rahel. The expression on Ammu’s face that hard marble look in Ammu’s face ... Across the aisle from Rahel a

women with chapped cheeks and mustache coughed up phlegm and wrapped it in twists of newspaper...Her co-passenger's madness comforted Rahel. It drew her closer into New York's deranged womb. Away from the other, more terrible things that haunted her (GST 69-70).

The co-passenger's coughing up phlegm reminds Rahel of Ammu's last visit to the Ayemenem House when Ammu's health deteriorates rapidly. Seeing her beloved mother beaten down by hardship of lives increases Rahel's anger and hatred towards her mother because Rahel herself can not manage to deal with her own inexplicable sorrow and wounds. The terrible things that haunts Rahel is "sour metal smell, like steel bus rails, and the smell of the bus conductor's hands form holding them. A young man with an old man's mouth"(GST 70). Such a specific scene on the bus provokes Rahel's repressed memory through sensual stimuli; challenging the fiction she sought refuge in as a child. The trauma also takes its shape in Rahel's dream.

After Sophie Mol's funeral, Chacko furiously storms into Ammu's bedroom, demanding Ammu's leaving and threatening physical violence. Such a savage scene repeats itself in Rahel's dream.

After that for years Rahel would dream this dream: a fat man, faceless, kneeling beside a woman's corpse. Hacking its hair off. Breaking every bone in its body GST (241).

Chacko's threat becomes the atrocious dream that keeps haunting Rahel, forcing her to face irrepressible memory.

As for Estha, his reaction towards his traumatic past is his gradually diminishing voice. His silence is not "an accusing, protesting silence" but a self punishment for what he once said, "Yes, it was him" (GST 32), when asked to identify Velutha in the police station. Estha on his trip to Calcutta carries his belongings as well as "terrible pictures in his head ... inside him the memories of a young man with an old man's mouth. The memory of a swollen face and a smashed; upside-down smile"(GST 32).

As the train leaves the station, he also "[leaves] voice behind" (GST 309). Witnessing the scene in which the Touchable police men ruthlessly beat Velutha compels Estha to step into the adult world even though he is still too young to understand the brutality of human nature. Simultaneously, unable to recover from the lie that Baby Kochamma forces him to tell, Estha could only blame himself for what he did. Years after the incident, Estha would keep repeating in his mind the scene in which he sentences Velutha's death and betray his beloved friend, but Estha still could not work out such a trauma.

The trauma originating from the collision between love and laws causes the twins to lose the ability and the will to form desirable relationship with others. Rahel's marriage with Larry Mc Caslin fails because the husband can not realize the message emanating from his wife's empty eyes. Unable to love

anyone with her indifferent state of mind, Rahel grants a divorce and goes on drifting.

Similarly, Estha turns to his silence and walks incessantly around the town, seemingly unaware of his surroundings. “One was mad the other was divorced. Probably barren” (GST 124). This is what Comrade Pillai regards the twins as. Indeed, since the twins’ forced separation twenty three years ago, they have been living incomplete lives. Not until their return to Ayemenem can the twins face their shared trauma together for the first time. It initiates the process of re-constructing the buried history and provides them with chance to unearth their belated memories. Rahel’s return changes Estha’s perception of the world and his repressed memories come alive.

It had been quiet in Estha’s head until Rahel came. But with her she had brought the sound of passing trains, and the light and shade that falls on you if you have window seat. The world, locked out for years, suddenly flooded in (GST 16).

Rahel’s appearance brings back Estha’s memory of the day when they are separated. The farewell scene in which Estha wailed and Rahel screamed was recalled through Estha’s remembrance of the train that took him away. Similarly, Estha’s existence also brings Rahel the familiar sensation she feels towards him. “She could feel the rhythm of Estha’s rocking, and the wetness of rain on his skin. She could bear the raucous, scrambled world inside his head” (GST 22)

Their first encounter after long years of separation brings their shared memories back through all kinds of subtle sensations. Their perception of the world is suddenly switched on and they begin to remember the small things in the past. In the obsessively clean room where Estha lives,

Terrible ghosts of impossible-to-forget toys clustered on the blades of the ceiling fan. A Catapult. A Qantas Koala with loosened button eyes. And inflatable goose. Two ballpoint pens with silent streetscapes and red London buses that floated up and down in them (GST 87).

These small things beckon their memories and they begin to see the decaying Ayemenem, smell the history and touch each other's body in search of the image of their long deceased mother. To regain their oneness, their final healing process is through intimate physical contacts because they would revive their lives from where they stopped. It is the battle between love and laws that destroys the lives of the twins, and once again through the confrontation within love and laws should lives go on once again. After breaking the Love Laws, for the first time the twins are able to share the 'hideous grief' that they should have shared long ago.

R.S Sharma says: "In *The God of Small Things*, Roy not only attempts to find out the hidden meanings of love and laws but also combines the two contradictory words. The oxymoronic phrase, love laws, tends to dramatize the tension" (211). The weak characters suffer in the novel. The meaning of love

and laws overlap with each other, but the most confusing part lies in the combination of the two words. Love, through individuals' non-stop pursuing, becomes the laws for all the love bound people to follow. It regulates individual's behaviour and moulds them according to the fantasy created in their love-relationship.

To secure the authority of the law-makers and to protect the loved ones from any possible harms laws are reinforced to maintain the stability of the society. Thus, love and laws, as interdependent ideas, give the term "Love Laws" an even more complicated notion. By creating the phrase "Love Laws", Roy designs a complex word/world in which relationship clash against and merges with each other. It is this increase and decrease of tension caused by the struggle between love and laws that Roy manages to analyze.

As Roy claims: "that is really began in the days when love laws are made. The laws lay down who should be loved, and how. And how much"(GST 33). To speak the hidden tension of Love Laws, Roy searches for the clues among the small things in the daily life. By the detailed description of the small things in life, Roy successfully arouses the shared sensual experience among human beings and leads them to sense the multiple meaning of Love Laws.

The another facet of love, besides the previously mentioned parental as well as lover's love, the selfless love towards all human beings is also what Roy desires to explore. It is natural for human beings to love those who form

intimate relationship with them, but to love those who take no part in their lives becomes even more difficult.

Roy may not expect a world where all human beings live in peace and love one another, but witnessing the brutality that human beings are capable of, she feels the need to point out how human beings' selfish love can harm those who do not love.

If they hurt Velutha more than they intended to, it was only because any kinship, any connection between themselves and him, any implication that if nothing else, at least biologically he was a fellow creature – had been severed long ago. They were not arresting a man, they were exorcising fear” (GST 293).

For the Touchable policemen, Velutha is far from a fellow human being. Their indifference towards him results from the brutal caste system that has severed the connection between the Touchables and the Untouchables. Roy intends to expose how human beings divide one from another, and how cruelly they can kill another person without their conscience being troubled. This is the most serious problems in the caste-bound India. The love among human beings is destroyed under the caste system, and this is exactly what Roy intends to express and articulate. The caste system both divides and destroys the lives of individuals.

Besides the obvious plot in the novel that reveals the injustice in the society, Roy also manifests other subtle means to reinforce such an idea. In the society where everyone is addicted to classification, the unclassifiable objects are definitely not allowed. Respectively, Ammu a Touchable but divorcee, is not allowed in the patriarchal family because she does not belong to her father, neither her husband. Velutha, with amazing ability of making crafts, is also unclassifiable because of his low birth. The twins are also not classifiable as they are like orphans. So they are also not granted a place for them to dwell.

According to Alessandra,

In so intriguingly laying bare the many layers of Love laws, Arundati Roy manages to concretely elaborate on and give bodily images to register the otherwise inexpressible emotions individuals feel when shattered by the forces of the Love Laws (191).

In the aftermath of people's confrontation with the Love Laws, Roy suggests, they can find access to their traumatic past only by piecing together disjointed clues and puzzles to form an interwoven tapestry. Her attempt to locate amorphous human affection in the real life is the magic that makes her novel resonate to the readers.

With the everlasting conflicts residing of Love Laws through the individual bodies and even through the natural environment, Roy incessantly presents to the readers how she makes sense of the world and how she discovers the origin of human conflicts. Roy transmits a very essential message

through the novel. Only by celebrating the power of individuals' love in transcending laws, only by paying homage to the force of their bodies in performing their subjectivity can the ever-lasting conflicts within human nature, as well the conflict between human nature and Nature, be ceased and a new prospect of a better tomorrow will emerge.

According to R.S Sharma,

The novel is a powerful indictment of those ugly social forces which crush innocent lives. "It is a continuous saga ... of the ever-suffering humanity which has been, for long, victimized by forces who have enjoyed position, power and language"(210).

Arundhati tells a tale worth telling, in a telling novel, in an inimitable manner. Though the novel depicts the lives of some inhabitants of Ayemenem, it has a universal appeal as it reveals the bare bones of humanity.

According to Binod Mishra,

the novel *The God of Small Things* is a very rich text dealing with several social issues. Ammu the protagonist of the novel seems to be a woman alive and not a fictitious character. She tolerates all the humiliations silently. But she always has her way of life (176).

Ammu's behaviour as an embodiment of resistance is subversive because she repeatedly parts with strongly established notions. She dared to

leave her husband, she rejects Anglophilia, she has a love affair with an untouchable and she never accepts her second status as daughter.

All of these attitudes, plus her irony and sharp answers turn Ammu into the most innovative character in the novel, since it is she who tries to find other ways of thinking and living outside of fossilized myths that only perpetuate unfair caste, race and sex distinctions. In the novel these hegemonic practices are presented as the enemies of human sensitivity, creating a social order that instead of being balanced, fair or welcoming is emotionally destructive and impossible to handle.

Thus the select novels of the three women novelists convey the fact that women in modern days are not like the women of yester years. They are not born to do the role of 'Pativirtas'. They are equal to men with all the aspirations and desires. They cannot be treated like puppets or playthings by men. They are women awakened.