Chapter - I

INTRODUCTION
Art is the expression of the highest imaginative and emotional susceptibility of man. Literature is one amongst the fine arts which employs language as a medium of expression. It is an essentially associate degree expression of human feelings, emotions, sorrows and joys. Sensible literature is rarely outdated and identified no bounds of place and time. It is permanent and also universal. The novel is a modern genre of art and in literature. Novel or Fiction is considered the foremost powerful genre of literary expression and it is agreed that the novel is the best suited literary genre for the exploration of experiences and ideas within the context of our time. As Dawan says, “…novel occupies a great significance in the world literature.” (Dhawan, p.5)

Generally it is assumed that in literature the novel or prose fiction is considered the most powerful expression and also a most appropriate literary form for exploration of experiences and ideas. Indian literature which plays a significant and salutary role in recent times to the growth and grace of global literature is the most notable gift of Britishers to India. Indian English writers paid their attention towards fiction writing, since fiction has come to be seen as the main stay of Indian English literature. India is known for its diversified languages, cultures, traditions, races and practices, Indian fiction is an expression of its individuals. their cultures, their traditions, their morals and ways of life. Tulsi Ram rightly evaluates Ram Mohan Roy’s choice of English as a powerful liberating force : “ Ram Mohan Roy believed that English alone was the language of literature and education for a new India. It would bring with it a new sensibility, a new intellectual discipline and a fresh spirit of adventure.” (Tulsi Ram, pp.48-49)

The novel which is developed as a distinguished literary genre in Indian literature was first published in the Presidency of Bengal. Later a number of Indian novels were published in the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay in Bengali, Tamil, Marathi and English. Majority of novels which are published from eighteen sixties to the end of nineteenth century were from the Presidencies of Bengal, Madras and Bombay and these novels were about social and historical issues.
It is the Renaissance in Bengal which made the "milieu" and 'moment' conductive for Indian English novel. In the creation of this critical sensibility among the 19th century Indians Ram Mohan Roy played a significant role. He created an environment for cultural and intellectual upheaval in which English became the medium of the new sensibility.” (Dr. Gajendra Kumar., p.3).

In narrative most of the Indo Anglican novelists depict the situation on spatial and temporal axes. It generally utilizes the devices of realistic mode and lets the novelist to give his breath, heart, anguish and happiness. This narrative technique has become a device to the Indo Anglican novelist to create real people. May be the Indian novelist is not attracted to new techniques in plotting, narration or characterization. But it cannot be denied that the novels written in English by Indian writers are rich enough and variegated enough phenomenon. During the period of Nationalist agitation the subject matter of fiction was inescapably political. But after independence there is a clear shift in focus. Human relationships, social issues, power relations, gender equations and a lot more have become the major concerns of the novelists. Now the travails of the freedom struggle, the communal divide and the miseries of the downtrodden have given place to issues like meaninglessness of existence, alienation and psychological issues.

Indian women, who have been showing their calibre in each and every discipline of knowledge are the embodiment of love and affection, hope and patience. Many Indian women novelists have explored female subjectivity in order to establish an identity that is not imposed by a patriarchal society. Indian women novelists in English and in other vernaculars try their best to deal with, apart from many other things, the pathetic plight of forsaken women who disliked to suffer from birth to death. Women novelists have also shown their extraordinary calibre and changeless imprint in the realm of Indian fiction in English. They have shown their nerve in each field and in some respects, much better than the male. Prior to the rise of the novel, several Indian women composed poetry and short stories in Hindi, Punjabi, Bengali, Urdu, Tamil, South Dravidian and Kannada.
The history of Indian women novelists in English begins with Toru Dutt who died at the early age of 21. Toru Dutt, one of the precious gems studded in the sparkling jewel adorning the poetic muse, can be numbered among the “deathless” in spite of her meager literary output in Indo-Anglican literature. Both her novels Bianca (The Young Spanish Maiden) and Le Journal de Mademoiselle d’Arvers deal with the autobiographical projections of the novelist—the experience, sweet and sour, she gathered in her very short life. The agony and catharsis arising out of sisterly love and bereavement are very beautifully projected in these two novels. Though the characters are Spanish and French, yet the delineation is entirely Indian, full of love and affection, sincerity and purity, which characterize the core of an ideal Indian woman.

During the six decades of post-colonial history of Indian English fiction, a wide variety of novelists have emerged focusing attention on a multitude of social, economic, political, religious and spiritual issues faced by three coinciding periods of human experience. The women novelists have been at the core of all literary writings of this phase and with it turn of the century the Indian English women novelists have surpassed their male counterparts outnumbering them quantitative as well as by maintaining a high standard of literary writing, they received equal applause in India and abroad, experimenting boldly with not only technique but also by incorporating tabooed subject matters in the novels and short stories, as a result being that Indian women of all categories—rural or urban, rich or poor, aristocratic or bourgeois high caste or Dalit with an intensity and conceit never attempted earlier.

The second generation of Indian English women novelists have favourably responded to the changed psychological realities of Indian life specially after Independence. These writers like Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, Nargis Dalal, Shobha De, and Bharati Mukherjee, are well equipped both emotionally and intellectually to treat the situation appropriately. Kamala Markandaya, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande, Shobha De and Bharati Mukherjee have written about women in a varied cultural perspective. Interestingly, they have probed the psyche of their creations and thereby have analysed their relationship with society at large.
In some women writers there is the attitude of despondency, negation and rejection of life while in others there is an affirmation, an acceptance of life with a compromising attitude leading to a deep sense of fulfillment. Some women characters also adhere to the concept of feminism as propounded and propagated by the French theorists, but they have been dexterously placed in the post-modern scenario.

Cornelia Sorabji, a Parsi Christian, is the other great figure in the realm of novels, Who studied at Oxford and returned to India in 1894 to act as a pleader for women, opposed the work of both male and female nationalist reformers. Carnelia represented women under ‘Sandas’ (special permission to plead) and later an official appointed the court of Wards to deal with the cases of Purdahnashin (Secluded Women). She reveals in her novels the various moods and vestures going in under the ‘purdah’, the ecstasy, tragedy, comedy and many more things which are unnoticed even by a feminist philosopher.

The novelists have exploited their talent in sticking out convincingly the painful mind of the persecuted women. Their portrayal of women characters within the novels invariably bears legitimacy to their feminist approach, outlook and perspective. Their keen observation of the life of Indian women and their interest in the study of their inner mind are proven by their vivid and wide portrayal of their plight. The women novelists focus in their novels on the existential quandary and travails of the subdued women in an exceedingly male dominated society ruled by rigid traditions and restrictions. These writers being women dive deep into the inner mind of the pent-up women by virtue of their female sensibility and psychological insight and bring to light their problems, that are the outcome of Indian women’s psychological and emotional imbalances.

Kamala Markandaya is one of the most outstanding Indian women novelists writing in English. She started writing novels when India was just at the threshold of newly won freedom. Poverty, hunger and starvation were everywhere due to communal disturbances. In the opinion of Markandaya: “The role of observer which every traveller assumes is a good training for any writer-It makes-a good starting point, and I believe, it was my starting point.” (J. Kalinnikova, p.149)
She is gifted with extraordinary vision of life and uses fiction as a vehicle for communication of her vision life. She depicts in her novels, race conflicts, temperamental disparities cultural conflicts and sexual perversion as factors working in the form of barriers of communication.

There is no exaggeration in presenting the sufferings of the people. "She, however, is not a theorist to dwell upon cast and class problems only. Her concerns being predominantly socio-economic, her novels offer us a savage tale of brutality, ignorance mental and physical bludgeoning that the ordinary Indian man and woman, is subject to " (Krishnaswamy.S, p.162)

Ruth Prawer Jhabvala is a Polish - Jewish escaped from Germany to England at the age of twelve, and nourished a deep rooted literary ambition which burgeoned when she gained an entry into Indian life as the wife of a Parsi architect C.S.H. Jhabvala. The novels of R. P. Jhabvala ring the note of two things urban middle class Indian life tinged with domestic problems of an average joint Hindu family and an ironic studies of the confrontation between occidental and oriental attitudes. Shyam M. Asnani views that, "R. P. Jhabvala writes about the furious social scuffling in the present day India. All her novels are full of local colour and clamour, dealing with the young who are inert, romantic and non-too-wise, and the old who are cool, calculating and rigid. She describes the head-on collision between the traditional and the modern, the east and the west, and the confusion that follows in the wake of these collisions." (Shyam M. Asnani, p.80.)

Anita Desai, who adds a new dimension to the achievement of the Indian women novelists in English. Her psychological novels, presents the image of a suffering woman preoccupied with her inner world, her sulking frustration and the storm within the existential predicament of a woman in a male dominated society. Through such characters, she makes a plea for a better way of life for women. Her later novels, written since she moved to the USA, reveal all the characteristics of diasporic fiction, that is, a concern with the fate of immigrants, and a growing distance from the reality of India, which is viewed from the outside.
Shashi Deshpande created a place for herself in the galaxy of Indian women novelists in English and emerged on the Indian fictional scene in 1970s. Deshpande began writing late and moved to fiction after an apprenticeship in journalism and short story writing. She excels in projecting a realistic picture of the middle educated woman who, although financially independent, is still facing the problems of adjustment between the old and the new, between tradition and modernity, between idealism and pragmatism.

Shobha De is a modern novelist who is famous for portraying the sexual mania of the commercial world. In narration of incident she is very frank and straightforward. Like Anita Desai, she has the gift of exploring the subdued depths of women psychology.

Nayantara Sahgal, the niece of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and the daughter of Vijyalaxmi Pandit, is a novelist of politics. She is also known as a successful political columnist for different newspapers. Her writing is generally characterised by simplicity and boldness. Her writing is also famous for keeping in touch with the latest political ups and downs with a tinge of western liberalism. Her novels truthfully mirror the contemporary Indian political theme. Her attitude in the novels is tantamount to that of Nehru that is, co-mingled with the western outlook. Unlike the other political writers, she never professes any specific political ideology or favouring any political creed or political movement. Her novels only portray the contemporary incidents and political realities saturated with artistic colour and objectivity.

All her major characters of the novel are centripetally drawn towards the vortex of politics. But besides politics, her fiction also focuses attention on Indian woman's search for sexual freedom and self realization. Lakshmi Sinha puts this in a nutshell, "Sahgal's literary world..... in a broad sense can be termed "personalized fiction. "History, politics, autobiography and personalities intermingle in the novels of Sahgal." (Lakshmi Sinha, p. 42.)
Arundhati Roy appeared like a large luminous star in the firmament of literature by her magnum opus *The God of Small Things*, a unique novel in both matter and manner. By her extraordinary linguistic inventiveness, she succeeded in receiving the prestigious Booker Prize for literature in 1997.

The biography of Arundhati Roy is an engrossing story. Suzanna Arundhati Roy was born on 24th November 1961 in Shillong, Meghalaya, in the north-eastern Indian state to a Syrian-Christian mother, the activist and teacher Mary Roy and a Bengali Hindu father a Tea plant manager Rajib. Roy’s parents divorced when she and her brother Lalit Kumar Christopher Roy were still very young and Mary Roy returned to the small town of Ayemenem (or Aymanam) with the children to her family home, in the southern Indian state of Kerala.

As her mother Mary Roy is a liberal activist broke the tradition by marrying a Bengali and then divorcing him. She also made history by fighting the provisions of the Christian Succession Act and in this connection, she even went to the Supreme Court. The favourable ruling allowed Christian women an equal share with their male siblings, in their father’s property. Roy’s association with her mother became increasingly complex and desperate to escape the stifling conventionality of Ayemenem. Roy was the product of a broken home. She had to face several cares and anxieties, fret and fever during her childhood.

She attended the Lawrence boarding school at Lovedale in Tamil Nadu and at the age of eighteen, she left for New Delhi for higher education. She joined the Delhi School of Planning and Architecture. She lead an utter of penury life at Delhi and when she was in her second year of Architecture course her family members requested her not to return to Kerala due to some understandable reasons. It caused a great shock into her young, gentle mind. She met Gerard Da Cunha who was a fellow student in Architecture School and they were married. After marriage Roy and Gerard took a room at Feroz Shah Kotla, which was tin-shaded. She had to make a living by flogging empty beer bottles.
In an interview, she gave a flash back to her past life: "I used to live in Candolim on the beach. My boy friend was Goan, he's a very well known architect now. We both went to Goa, and we hired a little house on the beach. We used to bake cake and sell them. I did that for six to seven months, and then I got sick to the gills of tourists and these kinds of hippies who pretended they were all stoned flower children and were actually completely 'Kanjoos' and money minded. After that I remember, a friend of mine had given me a gold ring some years ago and I went and sold it to a fruit juice wallah and got enough money to come back. So I left Gerard and came back to Delhi. It was just about enough money to rent a barsati in West Nizamuddin, I never earned enough for the whole month-from the last week of the month I'd borrowed 100/- rupees from a friend and as soon as I got my pay I paid him back" (First City, p.24)

The other period of her life that is very important is when she was still in the Delhi School of Architecture. As she was not given a room in the hostel, she requested the mess manager of the canteen and rented a shack with her husband in the refugee colony next to their school of Architecture.

Though she obtained a Bachelor Degree in Architecture with meritorious marks she never practiced. In other words, from the age of about 17 to 25, she had absolutely no anchor. She had been even asked to leave home by her family. After getting the degree of Architecture, Arundhati worked as a Research Assistant at the National Institute of Urban Affairs. She devoted herself to it and she won a scholarship to Florence to study the Restoration of Monuments and Historical Urban Centers. She returned from Italy grimly determined to restore neither Monuments nor Historical Urban Centers. She remembered: "The stewardess on the flight got talking to me. And when she found out that I had no money, no place to go to when I landed, she offered that I could come and share the crew's hotel room. "(Sunday Magazine, p.41.)
There was a turning point in her life after she met Pradeep Krishen, a film director, who saw her when she was riding a bicycle down the wrong side of the road. He offered her a tribal bimbo role in the movie Massey Saab, which was screened in Venice Film Festival. It is Pradeep Krishen who identified a writer in Roy and encouraged her to write screen plays and later Roy married Pradeep Kishen.

Her first professional writing assignment was about the life of Rhinoceros when she had a chance to escort a group of rhinos by road from Delhi to Dudhwa (Uttar Pradesh) and she wrote a commentary for a documentary film titled How the Rhinoceros Returned for Ashish Chandola. Arundhati Roy is also a great screenplay writer. She writes the screenplay for The Bunyan Tree, a television serial. The serial consists of 26 episodes and very beautifully deals with a story set in Uttar Pradesh in the years between 1921 and 1952.

It shows the last tumultuous decades of the British Raj. But this famous T.V. Serial was abandoned halfway through the shoot as the production company ran into financial trouble. The breaking of the serial in the middle was a very traumatic and painful thing for Roy.

She recalls these days, "I didn't know what was going to happen whether I was going to finish it to my satisfaction or whether I would just go on and on. There were bad moments—when you are running out of money; you don't know what's going to happen in terms of your career writing is not something that you naturally associate with earning a living." (First City, p.22.)

Bhaskar Chose, who was then Director General of Doordarshan instilled hope in Roy. He was very eager to commission something different from the national channel. He met Roy who told him that she wanted to write but that she didn't think anyone would finance her kind of screenplays. But to her great amazement, Bhaskar Ghose replied in positive and commissioned her to write a screenplay. Roy wrote a script based on her experiences of university in Delhi. She wrote in a sharp, satirical and critical manner. Moreover, it incorporated the fractured English of the student's community.
The title was *In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones*. Ghose appreciated the screenplay and even commissioned a film by Krishen, and Roshan Seth agreed to star in it. Though the budget of this screenplay was minuscule, it gave Krishen and Roy a chance to put their vision on the screen. But unfortunately 'Annie' got a warm critical response. Moreover, Ghose was transferred and the new regime at Doordarshan was horrified by the movie Electric Moon, then followed and though the movie has its fans, it was generally deemed an honourable artistic failure. Roy observes: “The movie I had in my head was different from the one we shot. I wanted it to have a more anarchic quality, but I did not know enough about cinema to make that come through on screen.”(Sunday, p.42)


A revolutionary book The End of Imaginations shows Roy’s strong revolt against nuclearization in India and abroad and also her this books is Roy’s mild satire on the arrogance and dominance of politics and above all the drawbacks of nuclear arms and ammunitions, which are gaining ground all over the globe. It opens with the apocalyptic vision of the nuclear explosion tested at the Pokhran site on 11th May 1998. It is a satire on the then government which celebrated the success of the nuclear test. Roy observes that “If there is a nuclear war, our foes till n’t be China or, America or even each other. Our foe will be the earth herself. They very elements-the sky, the air, the land, the wind and water will all turn against us. Their wrath will be terrible. Our cities and forests, our fields and villages will turn for days. Rivers will turn to poison. The air will become fire. The wind will spread the flames. When everything there is to burn has burned and the fires die, smoke will rise and shut out the sun. The earth will be enveloped in darkness.

There will be no day only interminable night. Temperatures will drop too far below freezing and nuclear winter will set in. Water will turn into toxic ice. Radioactive fall out will seep through the earth and contaminate groundwater. Most living things, animal and vegetable, fish and fowl, will die. Only rats and cockroaches will breed and multiply and compete with foraging, relict humans for what little food there is” (Arundhati Roy, The End of Imagination, pp.12-13)
The book shows that she is not in favor of war and killing. She might be the faithful follower of Gandhi who believed in truth and nonviolence and further, this book demonstrates her boldness as a free and frank writer. She strongly believes a writer should expose the corruption and aberrations of the society in which she lives and must be the voice of a nation.

Roy's revolutionary article which is later released in the form of a book entitled *The Greater Common Good* deals with authors rational and progressive attitude to the dam projects of the government. After her sympathetic talks with the sufferers of the Narmada Valley project, she made a harsh and rugged satire on the faulty decision and adverse attitude of the political parties and she strongly believes that big dams in India are obsolete, uncool, and undemocratic.

She rightly points out that "33 million. That's what it works out to. Thirty-three million people. Displaced by big dams alone in the last fifty years What about those that have been displaced by the thousands of other Development Projects?" (Arundhati Roy, *The Greater Common*, p.14)

The Algebra of Infinite Justice in this essay Arundhati Roy cross-examines the U.S.'s war on terrorism within the historical context of U.S. foreign interventions. Tracing American foreign policy back to the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Roy concludes Osama Bin Laden is a monster created by the U.S. military-intelligence complex to give the Soviet Union its own Vietnam-like quagmire.

Arundhati Roy's "War is Peace" written shortly after the beginning of the US war in Afghanistan, raises pertinent and unsettling questions about the war and the US imperial system more generally. The text is largely centered around calling into question the official narratives of the USA's past and present.

Roy refers to the fact that in the US "the arms industry, the oil industry, the major media networks, and, indeed, US foreign policy, are all controlled by the same business combines" and therefore the media avoids the truth in favor of propaganda, peddling "inanities about the 'Clash of Civilizations' and the 'Good versus Evil' discourse" (Roy). The text calls the audience to question what they
have been told by the government and media. Roy first upsets the cherished notion that the United States is "a peaceful nation" by matter-of-factly listing the countries America has made war with since World War II.

She then moves through the historical background and current reality of the conflict in Afghanistan, informing the reader in order to counter their assumptions. While Roy intersperses many of her conclusions throughout the essay, she also calls upon the reader to find answers within themselves: "Where will it all lead? ... Have we forfeited our right to dream?" (Roy).

War Talk is collection of essays on the issues of democracy and dissent, racism and empire, and war and peace. In this she highlights the global rise of religious and racial violence. From the horrific pogroms against Muslims in Gujarat, India, to U.S. demands for a war on Iraq, Roy confronts the call to militarism. Desperately working against the backdrop of the nuclear recklessness between her homeland and Pakistan, she calls into question the equation of nation and ethnicity. And throughout her essays, Roy interrogates her own roles as "writer" and "activist." In fact she was jailed in March 2002, when India’s Supreme Court found Roy in contempt of the court after months of attempting to silence her criticism of the government.

In 1989 she won the National Award for Best Screenplay in 1989, for the screenplay of In Which Annie Gives It Those Ones. In 1997 Arundhati Roy was awarded the Booker Prize for her novel The God of Small Things. In 2002, she won the Lannan Foundation’s Cultural Freedom Award for her work “about civil societies that are adversely affected by the world’s most powerful governments and corporations,” in order “to celebrate her life and her ongoing work in the struggle for freedom, justice and cultural diversity”. In 2003, she was awarded ‘special recognition’ as a Woman of Peace at the Global Exchange Human Rights Awards in San Francisco.

Arundhati Roy started writing novel The God of Small Things, when she was working on documentary film entitled How Rhinoceros Returned. She remembers that “The real reason was also that I had just got a Computer and I liked the idea of writing on it. So I just started putting down what was going on in
my head. It was a very private thing. I wouldn’t show what I had written to anybody. It would just stay in the computer. It was all just coming out of me like smoke I suppose and I kept putting it down.” (First City, p.24). After she finished the novel she was not confident of its popularity. According to her view this novel was “a fragile and personal” book and she consulted but the Indian publishers intend to pay only Rs.5000/- only. She was not sure about finding a foreign publisher as she had no any friend in abroad. Around this time she met Punkaj Mishra who was then an editor with Harper Collins for his opinion. He read the manuscript of the novel, greatly impressed and he said to Roy that he wanted to publish the novel further he promised her to send this novel to the foreign publishers.

He sent the manuscript of the novel to three British publishers Harper Collins, John Sadler and David Godwin. David Godwin offered her British rights to publish her novel. Roy recalls the moments “I had got over the excitement of the book being so much in demand. I decided that this time I would not go with the highest bidder. I would go with the publisher I felt best about. I am very proud of the fact that I went with Random House because I respected them even though another large publishing house offered me $1,50,000 more that the Random House bid.” (First City, p.39). It is the fastest selling Booker Prize winner so far was Roddy Doyle’s Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha which won in 1993.

It sold 27000 copies within half an hour of bookshops opening day after the announcement. The God of Small Things shattered all past records. It registered tremendous sales the world over. The novel has been translated into 40 languages. The money she gained from the award, around 30,000 US. Dollars, was donated to one of the largest grassroots organizations in India, Narmada Bachao Andolan.

Roy’s The God of Small Things is an intensely autobiographical novel. Roy admits that “In some ways small things is story that has always been with me.” (Speath, p.58). Roy tries to overcome the traumatic memory of some past experience that has been haunting her recollecting and confessing it.
Dr. Ashwini Kumar Vishnu observes that “the novel is spun on the very fabric of social stratification we are having for several centuries. Despite constitutionalized watchwords: Equality, Liberty and Justice to all citizens for years: the Democratic India is still reigned over four class system. Worse than ever the latest shift in politics unashamedly enchases caste and community card to reap maximum benefits.” (Ashwini Kumar Vishnu, p.205) The protagonist of the novel Ammu’s tragic life is resembles that of Mary Roy but according to Mary her life is much worse in real life than the novel. As like Ammu in the novel Mary Roy came from a traditional Syrian Christian family and who confronted fall the trials and tribulations. Mary Roy in real life married a Hindu tea planter in Assam and in novel Ammu’s husband is also a tea plant manager. As in the novel Mary Roy’s marriage is not accepted by her family members. Rahel is identified with Arundhati Roy and Estha is his brother Lalith Kumar Christopher who is older than Roy by 18 months, in the novel 18 minutes. She identified George Isaac with Chacko and Reverend Rao Bahadur John Kurian with Reverend John Ipe.

Baby Kochamma their Grand Aunt in the novel is no more. Roy is an architect by profession in real life and indeed she was a student in the Delhi School of Architecture and here she met Gerard De Kunha is Larry Mc Caslin in the novel. As like Rahel in the novel she married Gerard and divorced him.

The village school in the novel which was built for untouchables children by Rev. John Ipe, actually the Rev. Rao Bahadur John Kurian School popularly known as Kampanal School. Roy describes pappachi the all humoured man is Mary Roy’s father indeed an imperial Entomologist at the Pusa Institute who became Joint Director in independent India and retired. He was charming and urbane with the visitors but a bully with his wife and children. Pappachi who is an ill humoured both in novel and in real life.

Paradise Pickles and Preserves owned by Mammachi in the novel is well known Palat Pickels and Preservers in real. Ayemenem is indeed Ayamanam and the Ayemenem house is Pulliyampallil. The house has folding doors and a side entrance as described in the novel. The river Meenachal which has a prominent role in the novel splits just before Kottayam town and then girdles, its one half
running through Ayemenem before merging with Vembanad. Roy speaks about a
history house in the novel where Velutha is mercilessly beaten and which hid within
its four walls many secrets including the story of Ammu and Velutha is Kari Saipu’s House or The History house in the novel. It was actually built in 18877 by
George Alfred Baker who belonged to a family of the earliest Protestant
Missionaries who came to South India. The novel truly reflects the social context
of early 1960s and 70s. Caste discrimination, untouchability, caste conversion.

The social predicament of women and politics of the time are authentically
portrayed. Arundhati Roy utilizes and modifies her experiences to serve as a
vehicles for the expression of highly personal statements filled with intense
emotion. The story primarily takes place in a town named Ayemenem or Aymanam now part of Kottayam in Kerala state of India.

The temporal setting shifts back and forth from 1969, when fraternal twins
Rahel and Estha are seven years old, to 1993, when the twins are reunited at age
31. Much of the story is written in a viewpoint sympathetic to the seven-year-old
children. Malayalam words are liberally used in conjunction with English. Prominent facets of Kerala life that the novel captures are Communism, the caste
system, and the Keralite Syrian Christian way of life.

This plot summary places the events in chronological order, though the
novel shifts around in time. The God of Small Things is about the three generations
of a Syrian Christian family that is irreparably shattered for being over-familiar
with a Paravan family, an Untouchable family, set in Kerala, a province in
southwestern India with its deeply rooted system of caste hierarchies and its mix of
Syrian Christianity, Communism and Hinduism. Kerala’s social system is
controlled by the machinery of ancient and medieval patriarchies. The people are
like components of a machine and serve different functions in its operation.

A close study shows that the whole story of the book is concisely revealed
in the first chapter only. She rightly observes: “I would start some where and I’d
colour in a bit and then I would deeply stretch back and then stretch forward. It
was like designing an intricate balanced structure.” (R.S. Sharma and Shashi Bala
Talwar, p.34.)
The novel is composed of twenty-one chapters pieced together with the ruptured and broken fragments of memories and imaginings narrated by Rahel, a thirty-one year old having returned to her hometown. It makes use of flashbacks interweaving time past and time present. The first chapter is chronologically the most recent, while the final chapter marks the onset of a revolution against the old system.

Roy's novel can undoubtedly be called the book of the decade. The Booker citation describes the novel as one written with extraordinary linguistic inventiveness. "With extraordinary linguistic inventiveness Roy funnels the history of South India through the eyes of seven year old twins."(The Week, p.47).

The novelist reveals a child's vision of the adult world in this novel; she herself being an "unprotected child in some ways" as she had reported in an interview. "I had an unprotected childhood ... Two things happen. You grow up quickly. And when you become an adult there is a part of you that remains a child. So the communication between you and your childhood remains open."(The Week, p.47).

The authenticity of the child's vision is faithfully recreated the child's world by the novelist. As a matter of fact the novel can be said to be about several things. One can call it a protest novel which is radical, subversive and taboo-breaking. One can call it the story of a family.

The public administration also comes under attack in the novel being one of the main targets. Those interested in politics can also claim that it is a satire on politics communist establishment, to be specific. Perhaps the most striking aspect of the novel is the treatment of the dalits in the novel. This paper is an attempt to have a close scrutiny on the multidimensional view of reality depicted in the novel.

Arundhati Roy in an interview rightly holds that: "Fiction for me has been a way of trying to make sense of the world as I know it. It is located very close to me—the book. It is located in the village I grew up in. If I had to put it very simply it is about trying to make the connections between the smallest of things and the biggest ones and to see how they fit together."(General Knowledge Today, p.4)
*The God of Small Things* deals with the universal theme of social consciousness in terms of exposure of the tyranny and injustice to the untouchable, the insult and tribulations to the deserted and the defenceless in the police custody, and the class discrimination prevalent in the society. The novel deals with the pathetic plight of a woman, Ammu, divorced by her husband and neglected by family. It shows a contrast between *The God of Small Things* i.e. Ammu, Velutha, Rahel and Estha and the God of big thing i.e. Pappachi, Baby Kochamma, Chacko, Thomas Mathew and Comrade Pillai.

The central character of the novel is Ammu, the daughter of Pappachi and Mammachi and Ammu is the sister of Chacko. When Ammu was a child, she saw the cruelty of her father, who used to beat her and her mother. He behaved like a decent man but demonstrated his male ego when he tyrannized his wife and daughter.

On one occasion when Ammu was at a wedding reception in Calcutta, she happened to meet her future husband, who was an Assistant Manager of a tea estate in Assam. Ammu was in a hurry to marry him. She also wrote to her parents informing them of her decision of marriage, but they did not reply. After marriage, Ammu found that her husband proved to be an alcoholic. She left the place with her twins Rahel and Estha and returned to village Ayemenem, her parental home. In Ayemenem, she found that her parents' brother were indifferent to her and her children. She became most unhappy to see the miserable condition of the twins. Meanwhile Chacko was sent to Oxford for higher education but Ammu was deprived of higher education even in India. During his stay in England, he married Margaret.

Sophie Mol was born there at Oxford. Later on Margaret divorced her husband, Chacko, who returned to Ayemenem and became incharge of the parental house. He told his sister Ammu: “What is yours is mine and what is mine is also mine.” (p. 57).
Thus Ammu’s life came to a standstill. She spoke to none. Ammu came into contact with Velutha, an untouchable of the village Ayemenem. She loved him deeply. She had an illicit relation with him. One day Velutha’s father saw their illicit love-making and he broke the news to Baby Kochamma. As a result Ammu was locked up in a room. Velutha was sent to police custody and he was mercilessly beaten by the police. The Ayemenem leader Comrede Pillai did not help Velutha in the police station although Velutha was a member of the party. Rahel and Estha, the twins, have to pass through many ups and downs in the big Ayemenem house. Rahel develops a sense of isolation, suffocation and frigidity in the conservative family.

Rahel is a child of a broken home and a daughter of a divorcee mother absolutely neglected by the Ayemenem house. She is devoid of love and affection that a child is supposed to get during her childhood. She is ‘therefore’ seen haunted by all those unhaunted desires. Rahel was hardly eleven years old when her loving mother Ammu died.

As a child she had seen almost all those things of the grown up people which a child is not supposed to see e.g. the sufferings of her mother, the insult and abuse that were inflicted on her, her betrayal of Velutha in the police station. After the death of Ammu, Rahel had lost the last moorings and so she began to drift from school to school. She spent her holidays at home but she was ignored by her grand-mother and her maternal uncle Checko.

Baby Kochamma has her own story in the novel. She fell in love with a handsome young Irish Monk, Father Mulligan, who was in Kerala for a year on deputation from his seminary in Madras. Very soon she realized her futility of love with Father Mulligan. She grew restless in the convent. She wrote a puzzling letter to her parents. “My dearest Papa, I’m well and happy in the service of our lady .......Convent Food does not seem to suit though I like it well enough” (Roy, p. 21). The letter expresses a sense of frustration.
The novelist flings a harsh irony on the man's domination over women. She seems to say that a woman is not a mere toy or an object of pleasure a means of gratifying the men's baser passion but the novel and richest part of a man's life.

She also lashes out at the hypocritical moral code of society which makes a great difference between men and women. As a matter of fact both men and women are the two wheels of the same chariot of life. It is observed that there is a great fault in the man's nature that he fails to understand and appreciate the nobler and purer side of a woman's love. Love for man is a passing phase while for woman it is the essence of her being. The novelist also wants to convey how Velutha's grand-father Kelan along with a number of other untouchables embraced Christianity to escape the scourge of untouchability. One can find a very harsh satire on the police administration. Thomas Mathew the police Inspector is an officer guided by politics and big guns of the society. Similarly One also finds a satire on politics.

Comrade Pillai is an opportunist. He does not like to help Velutha in the police custody although Velutha was a member of his party. Thus the reader finds that right from the beginning of the novel i.e. the first chapter which is so beautifully drawn and decorated linguistically that the successive events are rightly structured up to the end of the novel.

The glorification of childhood is not a new factor in literature. The novelist's vision of childhood is more akin to R. L. Stevenson's Childs Garden of Verses than to William Blake's Songs of Innocence the Stevensonian vision of childhood is based on reminiscences and memories which are recaptured through fanciful condescensions of an adult mind. The former is a recollection and the latter is imagination so much so that it is universal. The basic question that arises in the mind of many readers is if the child's vision is mature enough to comprehend the nuances of life. The answer should be positive since children alone are endowed with an open mind that is totally from biased pre-conceived notions. Their immense sense of curiosity endows them with the ability to view life in its totality. They are capable of a direct apprehension of unmonitored thoughts which helps them to see life with a kind of subjective-objective vision.
The objectivity springs from their first-hand apprehension of life while the subjectivity springs from their whole-hearted participation in the joys and sorrows of life. Rahel was nearly eleven years old when her loving mother died. As a child, she had seen almost all those things of the grown-up people which a child is not supposed to see e.g. the sufferings of her mother, the insults and abuses that were inflicted on her, the tortures she had been subjected to, her betrayal of Velutha in the police custody, the cold and indifferent attitude of the family members, etc.

Perhaps this is why all through her life these nightmarish experiences which she gathered in her childhood haunt her like a ghost. She also remembers how she along with Estha was made instrumental by Baby Kochamma in doing wrong to Velutha and to their mother. It is that memory which Rahel is unable to root out from her mind.

Rahel is a child of broken home and a daughter of a divorced mother. She is devoid of love and affection that a child is supposed to get during her childhood. Though her mother has a great love for her but she is so helpless due to the cold and indifferent attitude of the family that she pays a little attention to Rahel. It is the psychology of a child that he always wants to get tender love and care from the grown-up people. But Rahel is devoid of all those childhood affections, she is seen haunted by all those unfulfilled desires.

The novelist presents some beautiful episodes in Rahel’s childhood which clearly shows her rebellious and somewhat abnormal nature. At first, she was blacklisted in Nazareth Convent at the age of eleven when she was caught outside her house mistress’s garden gate decorating a knob of fresh cow dung with small flowers; The next morning she was made to look up the word ‘depravity’ in the Oxford Dictionary; Six months later she was expelled from the school after repeated complaints from senior girls. In each of the school where she got her self admitted the teachers noted two important things that she is extremely polite and secondly she has no friends.
Estha is one of the twins of Ammu. Like Rahel' he is also badly tormented and tortured by some past nighmarish experiences. "He grew accustomed to the uneasy octopus that lived inside him and squirted its inky tranquillizer on his past" (Roy, p. 12). He is treated as a lonely waif forsaken by all. He feels himself like a fish out of water in the big Ayemenem House where Baby Kochamma is against him and his sister Rahel. Estha has not any personal stand in the house. He is like a caged bird who flutters for a free flight in the sky of freedom innocence and simplicity. But the society is so cruel to him that it has chained his wings.

When Estha, along with Rahel, goes to Ayemenem House, they become the prey of morbid stiffness. Baby Kochamma reminds the children of their insecure position in the house. The reason of strictness and hypocritical attitude goes to her own repressed sentiment, her failure in love with Father Mulligan. One can also see that during the funeral of Sophie Mol, Rahel and Estha, along with their mother, are made to stand separately.

Even the maid servant of the house does not hesitate to say "These are not your beds. This is not your house" (Roy, p. 83). Estha is also possessed with a dilemma that for him, using a surname is a problem. Ammu was uncertain as to whether she should resume her parental title or continue with her husband's surname.

The children are subject to psychological trauma throughout the formative years of their lives. Baby Kochamma takes vicarious pleasure in scolding them every now and then. The novelist has chosen two major symbols to embellish the theme of childhood in the novel. The Meenachal river symbolises the flowing time. It is near the river that the children learn the harsher and deeper realities of life. The silent river also sends them to moods of contemplation. They study silence near the river and also 'to think thoughts and not to voice'. Another important symbol in the novel is the 'boat'. Like Rabindranath Tagore's Geetanjali, here also the 'boat' symbolises the frail vessel of life. The chapter ten of the novel is entitled 'River in the Boat' wherein both the symbols are fused to give the meaning of the vessel of life that is set afloat in eternal time.
On the whole, the novelist has attempted to recreate in the novel the multidimensional magic of the child’s world. The novelist is successful in recreating the child’s world to the readers authentically.

Another important factor of the novel is portrayal of class antagonism and class exploitation; exposure of the tyranny and injustice to the deserted and defenceless; a forbidden relationship between the touchable and untouchable in the class-ridden society. The novelist is of the opinion that the society can achieve its goal successfully only when there is no gap between the poor and the rich between the dalit and the possessed.

Perhaps ‘smallness’ is the watchword for the novelist here. The title of the novel is a pointer to this fact. Who is this ‘God of small Things’? The novel clarifies he is “The Go of Less? The God of Small Things? The God of Goose Bumps and Sudden Smiles? Of Sourmetal Smells-like steel bus-rails and the smell of the bus conductor’s hands from holding them? (Roy, p. 217).” This ‘God is undeniably related to Ammu’s dreamworld. Many a time the hint is thrown in the text that Ammu the frustrated mother of the twins Rahel Estha is a great dreamer.

In one place the readers find “there are big dreams and little ones” (Roy, p.89). The ‘little dreams’ constitute an integral part of ‘Small Things’. Hence Ammu’s dreams of ‘The one-armed man’-who is he? Is he Velutha the paravan? Are directly lined with The God of Small Things. Ammu is such a great dreamer that her children the twins are afraid of disturbing her in her dreams. Speaking of her mother Rahel remarks: “She says you should never wake dreaming people suddenly ‘she says they could easily have a Heart Attack” (Roy, p.217). The most striking aspect of the novel is the treatment of the dalits in the novel. Velutha the titanic figure stands out as the representative of the untouchables in the novel. They were a class of people who were not allowed to walk on the public roads not allowed to cover their upper bodies and not allowed to carry umbrellas.

To add to the humiliation they had to put their hands over their mouths when they spoke to divert the polluted breath away for those whom they addressed. Velutha just at the beginning of the novel is shown “bare bodied and shining sitting on a plank swinging from the scaffolding in the high dome of the church painting silver jets in a blue church sky.” (Roy, p.6).
The intention of the novelist to show ‘bare bodied’ gives us enough hints to indicate that the character she has introduced is certainly an untouchable. The next reference to his name is made by Ammu. After the funeral of Sophie Mot’ her brother’s daughter’ Ammu took her twins to Kottayam police station’ where she is asking for Velutha. Later’ on board the bus when the conductor asked for ticket she simply muttered “lie’s dead”. Then she whispered: “I’ve killed him” (Roy, p.8). Enough suspense is built here as to what has happened to Velutha.

In the second chapter of the novel the readers know a little more about Velutha. The marxist Labour Union had organised a march as part of a secretariat march to be organized’ by their colleagues in Trivandrum to be followed by a presentation of the charter of people’s Demand to ‘Comrade EMS’. The main demand was to have an hour’s lunch break for the paddy workers. There was another demand to increase the women labourers’ wages from Rs. 2’25 to Rs. 3 and men labourers’ wages from Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 4.50 a day. A third demand was that the ‘untouchables’ should not be addressed by their caste names. This is the first time in the novel where a reference is made to the untouchables. They did not want “to be addressed as Achoo parayan’ or Kelan Paravan’ or Kuttan Pulayn’ but just as Achool’ or Kelan’ or Kuttan.” (Roy, p.69).

As the march was on the move on the outskirts of Cochin. Rahel suddenly got a glimpse of Velutha’ Vellya Paapen’s son. lie was her most beloved friend. She became totally restless when he marched with a red flag “in a white shirt and mundu with angry veins in his neck.” Velutha wearing a shirt was an unusual sight for Rahel. When she called him he freezed for a moment and listended with his flag. She continued to call him “Velutha’ Velutha (please come here) but he disappeared deftly. This made Ammu slap Rahel in anger asking her to behave herself. She continued to snub her saying’ “You are a stupid silly girl.” (Roy, p.72). Rahel was totally puzzled to see her mother reacting so strongly for a trivial thing. Rahel noticed that Ammu had perspiration on her forehead and her eyes had become hard like marbles. Velutha emerges as the daring trade unionist as an untouchable fighting for the rights of the oppressed and the deserted and defenceless people.
Velutha, the untouchable boy used to go to the Ayemenem House (Ammu's ancestral home) with his father to deliver coconuts plucked from the trees in the compound. These paravans were not allowed to enter the house. They were not allowed to touch anything that the "touchables" touched. Mammachi Rahel's grandmother even remembered time in her girlhood "when Paravans were expected to crawl backwards with a broom sweeping away the footprints so that Brahmins or Syrian Christians would not defile themselves by accidentally stepping into a paravan's footprint." (Roy, pp. 73-74)

It was Mammachi who first noticed Velutha's remarkable ability as a carpenter. Although Velutha was hardly eleven years old he was like a little magician. He could make intricate toys. He could do wonderfully things like making tiny windmills and minute jewel boxes out of dried palm reeds. He could also carve perfect boats out of tapioca stems. He used to bring these curiosities to Ammu three years elder to him.

Being an untouchable he would hold them out on his palm so that she wouldn't have to touch them to take them. However, he called her Ammukutty which certainly was more than a privilege for an untouchable boy. Johabb Klein, a carpenter from Bavaria had come to Kottayam when Velutha was hardly fourteen. Klein spent three years with the Christian Mission Society conducting a workshop for the local carpenters. This helped Velutha to be an accomplished carpenter. He had a way with machines and Mammachi had even remarked that "If he hadn't been a Paravan he might have been an engineer." (Roy, p. 75).

Apart from mending radios, clocks and water pumps, he looked after the plumbing and all the electrical gadgets in the house. He could design and build sliding folding doors much more than that. He was a real master craftsman. 'Jack of the trade and master of the trade.'

It was Velutha's grandfather Kelan who, along with a number of other untouchables, embraced Christianity to escape the scourge of untouchability. But later on they found they had made a mistake. Although they were given separate churches and separate priests, and in a special favour they were even given their own separate Bishop yet after 1947 they found that they were not entitled to any
benefits like job reservation and bank loan etc. at low interest because they were Christians and casteless. The novelist observes: 'It was little like having sweep away your foot-prints without a broom. Or worse' not being allowed to leave foot-prints at all.' (p. 74) It was Sophie Mol's death which came as the last nail in Velutha's coffin. He was falsely implicated though everyone knew it was an accidental death.

The news of the death of the police 'encounter' with a Paravan charged with kidnapping and murder of the subsequent Communist party seize of the factory led by Ayemenem's own "Crusader of Justice and spokesman of the oppressed" K. N. M. Pillai-all had been in the papers. Pillai did not have any prick of conscience when he claimed that the Management had implicated the Paravan in a false police case because he was an active member of the Communist Party. Ile said they wanted to eliminate him for indulging in 'Lawful Union Activities'!

The novelist has heralded a revolutionary attitude against the maltreatment of the untouchables. Velutha stands out as a very tall figure in the novel. It was his desire to "relive" as a touchable that triggered the tragedy. But he could never be a coward when he knew that his life was in danger. When he knew that his end was imminent he continued to remain a Gandhian an apostle of none-violence.

His loyalty to the party was unquestionable and as a trade unionist he was committed to protect the rights of his fellow workers at any cost. On the whole one can very well say that Velutha is certainly a creation unparalleled like a Shakespearean tragic hero.

Marxism which upholds the cause of the deserted and defenceless is now seen doing just the otherwise for what it is meant for. Baby Kochamma rushed to the police station to explain the circumstances that had led to the sudden dismissal of Velutha the factory worker.

"A few days ago he had tried to' to force himself on her niece' she said. A divorcee with two children." (Roy.p.259). It was to contain the scandal and salvage the family reputation that misrepresented the relationship between Ammu and Velutha. She never knew at that point of time that Ammu would go to the police
station and try to set the record straight. Police Inspector Thomas Mathew was deeply concerned when the real story that “what the Paravan had taken from the touchable kingdom had not seen snatched but given” (Roy, p.260). It seems Velutha had asserted that they could no longer kick them around like dogs.

Baby Kochamma was more than careful to see that whatever provocations from their side were hidden from the police inspector. For the same reason she never told him how Mammachi lost her control’ how she had gone upto Velutha and spat right into his face. The things she had said to him and the names she had called him also did not figure in.

The first thing that the intelligent police inspector did was to send a jeep to fetch the local communist leader Comrade K. N. M. Pillai. They did not see eye to eye and never trusted each other. Pillai deliberately concealed the fact that Velutha was a member of the party. He also did not reveal that Velutha had been to his house previous night. Velutha was declared to have no patronage or protection of the party. There was a further discussion which was brief’ and to the point. The F.I.R. was shown to Pillai and though he knew it was not true’ he did not refute the allegation of attempted rape in Baby Kochamma’s F.I.R.

The police who are the servants of the state went to Velutha’s house and woke him up with their boots. There is a heartrending description of what they did to Velutha. There was the thud of wood on flesh. “Boot on bone. One teeth. The muffled grunt when a stomach is kicked. The muted crunch of skull on cement. He gurgle of blood on a man’s breath when his lung is tom by the jagged end of a broken rib” (Roy,p.308). The semi-conscious Velutha was not moving. “His skull was fractured in three places. His nose and both his cheekbones were smashed leaving his face pilpy’ undefined. The blow to his mouth had split open his upper lip and broken his six teeth. Four of his ribs were splintered’ one had pierced his lift lung’ which was what made him bleed from his mouth. Since he could not walk’ they dragged him.

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The police knew that it was death in custody of a technically innocent man. To save their face they had to concoct their own story. As the children came handy they were abducted by the paravan. "They were asked to say 'yes' to the questions put by the uncle with the big 'meeshas.' (p. 318). Meanwhile Velutha's body was dumped in the 'temmady kuzhi'-the pauper's pit-where the police routinely dump their dead. That marked the end of the life of Velutha an untouchable a trade unionist a rebel a carpenter and a lover of humanity. One of the striking features of the novel is a whirlpool of images and symbols' similies and metaphors. The opening passage of the novel is so rich in symbolism that it has harboured in its bosom the whole process of events in a nutshell. The richness of nature presents an irony in the novel. In nature there is fullness but in society there is saplessness. The sentence 'black crows gorge on bright mangoes in still dust green trees' is very suggestive.

It suggests the love relation between Velutha the untouchable and Ammu the lady of the upper caste family divorced by her husband. The term black crow suggests Velutha who was black in appearance. 'Bright mangoes' suggests Ammu who though the member of two children is still a blooming young lady discarded by both her parents and husband but the trees on which the crows gorge on bright mangoes is dust green. The term 'dust' is a symbol of evil or insignificant thing. Perhaps here it seems to suggest the patriarchal domination and the cruel and callous society in which the sweet love of Ammu and Velutha did not get momentum and consequently did not create any fruitful result.

The last line of the opening passage 'then they stun themselves against clear windowpanes and die' contains pathos. It arouses our sense of pity and catharsis. In spite of their best efforts to assert their identity in a male dominated patriarchal society full of social injustice and racial indiscrimination they are bound to face death and destruction.

The novelist has nicely put in this novel two important metaphors 'Laltain and Mombatti which are highly suggestive both give us light and burn another light. The former is well-fed and wellprotected while the latter is without any protection support. The later can be blow out by the surge of wind. In this way'
through this beautiful suggestive connotation the novelist has successfully aroused our sense of pity and sympathy for the dalits' the deserted and the defenceless. In the novel the readers find that “There are big dreams and little ones.

Big man the ‘Laltain sahib’. small man the ‘Mombatti’ an old Bihari coolie who met Estha’s school excursion party at the railway station used to say of dreams. Big man the Laantern’ Small man the ‘talow-stick. Huge man’ the strobe lights’ he omitted to say. And small man the subway station.” (Roy, p.80) As a matter of fact imagery presents a very vital role in the texture of a good work of art. This is exactly what the reader finds in the novel. A deep and profound study of the images shows that the images have vividness' force and economy. The novelist' like a great artist' creates surprising images out of most familiar material. The images always move back and forth and they have the unique smell of the character’ situation and the environment where the plot resolves. Besides' the novelist is gifted with an integrating power-the power of organising the different complex and obscure material into a dramatic whole.

Arundhati Roy’ as a writer of the Nineties’ is a representative of the current Indian writing in English. She seems to be a harsh critic of the traditional way of Indian life especially the one that Indian women have been leading. She is modernistic in her approach to life as well as to art.

Today one can observe that Shakespeare’s dramas and sonnets appeal to universal readers. It is because they contain poetic beauty and poetic truth. The same thing happens in the case of Arundhati Roy who has lived up to the ideals of great art in her first novel’ The God of Small Things. Inspite of the fact that the novelist has shown the brutal truth of society’ she has not forgotten the norms of great art in terms of images and symbols’ ironies and overtones and other aesthetic aspects of life.

As a matter of fact one is never inclined to disregard the small: on the contrary’ the reader perceives the vastness and glory of God in the smallest particle of the universe. The small things need not be as small as they seem to be even if they are really small they need not be of small or trivial influence in our life.
The novelist has a unique gift of being able to see even the smallest apparently meaningless details and create a complex significant and aesthetically satisfying mosaic of life. She has structured her novel *The God Small Things* around sort of small things. The focalizes on a whole world of small things’ tiny creatures’ small children’ small happenings and small lives. She knows in well as to how the narrative found its form. “Little events’ ordinary things. smashed and rccpmstotitted. Imbued with new meanings. Suddenly then become the bleached bones of the story.” (Roy, pp.32-33).

The world of *The God of Small Things* is a world in which ancient and modern’ nature and culture’ small and big appear against each other. Any mention of small things is explicitly accompanied by a mention of big things. ‘The novelist places the two God together: “The big God howled like a hot wind’ and demanded obeisance. The small God (cosy and contained’ private and limited) came away cauterized’ laughing numbly at his own temerity”’ (Roy, p.19).

The question of smallness is relative. While Rahel and Estha are small before Ammu’ she herself is small before Baby Kochamma who in her turn is small before Father Mulligan. Chacko is big for Ammu but small for Margaret Kochamma.

The use of the term big and small may have philosophical implications’ but if the reader wants to grasp the real significance of the novel’ one will have to understand them in terms of the author’s critique of society. It is manifest in the pettiness of the passions and prejudices of the so-called big’ and enormity and integrity of the experience of the so-called small’ which underlines every contrast or conflict between the small and the big in the novel.

In this way on the basis of the aforesaid discussion’ one finds that the small in the novel is not really small. On the contrary’ the big in the novel looms large but is petty at the core. *The God of Small Things* does die in the novel but resurrects himself as a big powerful God’ the novelist herself takes tip cudgets in behalf of the children subjected to abuse. The small and the big exchange their roles’ the small grow big and the big shrink to small. In fact’ the dichotomy
between small and the big man made and so the fists of the novelist are not raised to heaven but are aimed nearer home' at man and society. *The God of Small Things* is much more the story of the "two-egg twins" Rahel and Estha than the story Ammu and Velutha.

They are the living embodiment of what Ammu and Velutha suffered in life as well as in death and primarily it is through the consciousness that the whole story is visualised. As a matter of fact the novel is not just a novel; it is a fundamental mode of social enquiry as well.