Chapter - II

CHARACTERIZATION

IN

THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS
Characterization is one of the important ingredients of the novel and it is considered the mighty pillar of the majestic edifice of a novel. The novelist gives his or her own personal, idiosyncratic version of the world he or she sees in and around the world through characterization. Walter Allen rightly thinks that "part of the novelist’s art is to mediate between his characters and readers. He does so with every world he puts to paper, for every world towards his characters and the total situation he is rendering." (Walter Allen, p.XIX) The characterization of Roy is even more fascinating. Through her realistic characterization, she is able to depict the social theme of the high and the low, the rough and the sublime. Through the 'stream of consciousness' technique, the author, delves deep into the recesses of the mind of her characters and digs out those unnoticed shades of mind which generally escape the eyes of even great psychologist or social scientists. The author has very subtly fused together both characterization and plot construction so as to present a homogenous result. One knows that every novelist wants to create in his or her novel the personal, idiosyncratic vision or opinion, which she or he gathers from day to day life. She or he wants to enact these personal visions through some characters or through incidents. In this novel, Arundhati Roy has shown most of her personal views of her past life through the vision of the twins. Her mother, Mary Roy, seems to represent Ammu who was divorced after marriage.

The God of Small Things has a number of characters. They are well moulded by the frame of characterization that they have become alive among the readers. Almost all the characters are realistically portrayed and so they closely resemble the reader’s sentiments. They sometimes arouse the readers’ sense of pity and catharsis. One can demarcate a line among these various characters on the basis of the two powerful symbols – ‘Laltain and Mombatti’, employed by the author. Under the caption ‘Laltain’ one may put the characters like Mammachi, Pappachi, Baby Kochamma, Chacko, Inspector Matthew, Comrade Pillai, who dominate over the ‘Mombatties’ or the downtrodden of the book. Similarly under the caption, ‘Mombatti’, there are characters like Rahel, Estha, Ammu, Margaret Kochamma, and Velutha who are seen unnecessarily tortured by the ‘Laltain’. Chetan Upadhyay remarks that, “in The God is Small Things, as the readers pursue the pleasant journey into the innermost recesses of not only a woman’s (i.e. the
novelists herself) heart but will also get a fresh outlook as how the world of women folk breathes, muses and acts and also takes up the female character as the protagonist.” (Chetan Upadyay, p.124).

The narrative of the given novel unfolds itself through the impressions garnered by the seven year old child Rahel, one of the twins of Ammu, the central character. O'Conner observes that, “We expect a fiction writer to know his craft, and to help us discover something about the world we didn’t know before or know in the same way, something we believe to be true and that has relevance to our own attitudes and conduct.” (O.Conner, p.9).

The tragic life of Ammu resembles that of Mary Roy and Ammu has been portrayed as the prime protagonist of the novel. Ammu, the mouthpiece of the novelist is not a kind of lady who is obedient, submissive and of serving nature according to patriarchal demands of the society. She is a tragic failure figure in the novel. She is the daughter of Mammachi and she is the mother of Rahel and Estha. Ammu became an emblem of a victim of the male dominated patriarchal structure. Dr.S. Prasanna Sree remarks “Ammu's life as presented by the writer Arundhati Roy is a slice of lives of those women who live in a society and so helplessly suffer and get marginal place or no place at all in the history and culture of which they are the essential part of human beings.” (Sree Prasanna, p.151). Her tragic tale began when she was very young. As a little girl, Ammu had to endure some unbearable nightmarish experiences. She saw her father’s cruelty, who used to beat her mother Mammachi with a brass vase. Roy says, “not content with having beaten his wife and daughter, he tore down curtains, kicked furniture and smashed a table lamp.” (Roy, p.181). Once in a rage Pappachi tore the gumboots of Ammu, which are very precious to her, when her father had stopped her education while considering the education of women as an ‘unnecessary expense’. Her fiery temperament and fighting spirit was restless in passively waiting simply for the suitable groom. Her sudden stoppage in education, hostile atmosphere at home and lack of feasible alternatives through marriage made her spasmodic. “All day she dreamed of escaping from Ayemenem and the clutches of her ill-tempered father and bitter, long suffering mother. She hatched several wretched little plans. Eventually one worked”. (Roy, p.113)
Ammu began to feel like a prisoner in the big Ayemenem House. She had to help her mother in the housework. So, she became the victim of frustration due to the sudden disturbance of education, uncongenial atmosphere and an antipathic attitude of the family members. She wanted to fly freely in the sky of liberty.

Her wings fluttered: “All day she dreamed of escaping from Ayemenem and the clutches of her ill tempered father and bitter, long suffering mother. She hatched several wretched little plans. Eventually one worked. Pappachi agreed to let her spend the summer with distant aunt who lived in Calcutta.” (Roy, pp.38-39).

When she got a chance to pay a visit to her aunt’s in Calcutta to spend her summer “She thought that anything, anyone at all would be better than returning to Ayemenem” (Roy, p.114). There in wedding reception she met Baba her husband, who is an assistant manager in a tea estate in Assam. When Baba proposed for marriage “Ammu didn’t pretend to be in love with him. She just weighed the odds and accepted........She wrote to her parents informing them of her decision. They didn’t reply.” (Roy, p.39). But in a hurry to marry him, she jumped from a frying pan to fire. After the marriage within a quick span of time she came to know the Baba is drunkard.

Her frustration and disgust for her husband reached the summit when he offered his wife herself to his boss, Mr. Hollick as a sort of bargain when he was suspended for alcoholism. She straightaway refused to the part of that deal. Her husband “grew uncomfortable and then infuriated by her silence suddenly he lunged at her grabbed her hair, punched her” (Roy, p.151) Ammu also hit back as hard as she could. But she had to come back to her maternal native place when her husband started beating their children too. Amanath Prasad observes that, “It is to be noted that through the character of Ammu, Arundhati Roy, a great champion of the cause of the women, here raises a number of question marks on our age long myths and traditions, history and legends. She shows that right from the beginning of creation, women have been the subject to many insults and abuses. As a matter of fact, a woman is allegedly charged with so many drawbacks mostly imaginary.” (Amanath Prasad, p.151)
Ammu returned to Ayemenem with her twin children Estha and Rahel. In Ayemenem House, she found her parents cold and indifferent to her and her children and she was burdened with the responsibility of two children who were unwanted in her maternal home. Her eyes welled up when she saw the miserable condition of the twins. She imagined her twins "like a pair of bewildered frogs engrossed in each other's company lolloping arm in arm down a high way full of hurtling traffic" (Roy, p.43).

For the people of her society, it would be juicy topic to discuss. Their lip sympathy "Ammu quickly learned to recognize and despite the ugly face of sympathy" (Roy, p.18).

So at an age of twenty-four, an age of enjoyment and merriment, Ammu had experienced that 'Life had been lived'. Ammu's life came to a standstill, "She spoke to no one. She spent hours on the riverbank with her little plastic transistor shaped like a tangerine. She smoked cigarettes and had midnight swim." (Roy, p.44). In other words, at her home and in her family, she was deserted and left alone. It can be obviously seen in the point of view of Baby Kochamma. She says "A married daughter had no position in her parent's home. As for a divorced daughter, she had no position anywhere at all. And as for a divorced daughter from a love marriage, well, words could not describe Baby Kochamma's outrage. As for a divorced daughter from a intercommunity love marriage-Baby Kochamma chose to remain silent on the subject." (Roy, pp.45-46).

'Only one chance' by making the unpardonable mistake of choosing the wrong man her real tragedy begins when she develops an illicit love relation with Velutha. Velutha belongs to an untouchable caste. But he is a talented craftsman. Ammu loved Velutha from her childhood. Her love, affection or inclination towards an untouchable Velutha was not simply to fill in the gap of a male, vacated by her husband. In fact Velutha was the only person in her society who really loved her children. She loved Velutha more for his exceptional and fiery spirit of protest which she herself wanted to practice but failed to do so. And both of them crossed all the borders and full heartedly loved each other. But as usual it was disclosed to her parents and largely because of Baby Kochamma's sly plotting Velutha was arrested on a false charge of Sophi Mol's death and he was killed at the end as he was brutally beaten by the police.
Ammu rushed to the police station as soon as she got the news. She couldn’t tell the truth as she was a divorced woman a Veshya whose affidavit didn’t have any validity before the police inspector. Ultimately she was thrown from the maternal house by her brother Chacko who said outraged, “Get out of my house before I break every bone in your body.” (Roy, p.110). As She has no support, no sympathy from anywhere Ammu left the Ayemenem house and ultimately died alone in a hotel “ in the strange bed, in the strange room, in the strange town” (Roy, p.121).

Ammu had been humiliated by her father, beaten and betrayed by her husband, insulted by the police and rendered destitute by her brother. Each of them jointly echoed the male chauvinism and patriarchal structure which left her nowhere as daughter, wife, sister and citizen.

Rahel, the daughter of Ammu in the novel is identified with Arundhati Roy in real life. Subir Dhar remarks “The only character in the novel to have conclusively escaped from the residual stranglehold of colonialism seems to be the younger of the two twins, Rahel.” (Subir Dhar, p.72) The narration starts flowing with the arrival of Rahel in Ayemenem in rain, who faced patriarchal domination and psychological torture after Ammu in the novel and she develops isolation, suffocation and frigidity because of trauma she has experienced from her childhood.

Amaranath Prasad observes that, “The next Mombatti who bears the brunt of patriarchal domination and psychological torture is Rahel, one of the twins of Ammu. She develops a sense of isolation, suffocation and frigidity in a conservative framework. In other words, the brutality and persecution Ammu and Velutha underwent, is also operative against this girl. She, along with her brother Estha, is always treated by the family as outsiders. Neglected both in home and outside, she becomes the object of sufferance and pity, contempt and hatred. She feels like a fish out of water in the Ayemenem House. She also had spent stormy schooldays as she is also rebellious like her mother. Rahel also neglected by the family members, in Roy’s words “In matters related to the raising of Rahel, Chacko and Mammachi tried, but couldn’t. They provided the care (food, clothes,
fees), but withdrew the concern.” (Roy, p.13). Dr.Ruby Milhoutra rightly observes that, “The novelist presents some beautiful episodes in Rahel’s childhood, which clearly shows her rebellious and somewhat abnormal nature.” (Dr.Ruby Milhoutra, p.139).

She was found breaching a sense of societal propriety and decorum and thus blacklisted. She was expelled three times from school. Rahel was first blacklisted in Nazareth Convent when she was caught outside her Housemistress’s garden gate decorating a knob of fresh cow dung with small flowers, second she collides against other girls in the convent to see whether her breasts hurt or not, third she burns the hair bun of her Housemistress in order to protest against vanity and artificiality in society. Nevertheless she continued her wayward and defiant way of living. It is because she is totally neglected by her family, she daughter of divorcee—mother one can easily observe that she is a product of broken home.

She was just eleven years old when Ammu died. Rahel grew up into a young woman on her own. “Rahel grew up without a brief. Without anybody to arrange a marriage for her. Without anybody who would pay her a dowry and therefore without an obligatory husband looming on her horizon.” (Roy, p.4). Later on she passed eight years in a college of Architecture in Delhi without getting a degree certificate. Like her mother she met Larry Mc Caslin who was in Delhi collecting material for his doctoral thesis and fell in love with him. Roy observes “Rahel drifted into marriage like a passenger drifts, towards an unoccupied chair in an air port lounge. With a sitting down sense. She returned with him to Boston.” (Roy, p.18).

The marriage broke down and she returned, like her mother, as a divorcee to Ayemenem. But here a drastic change had occurred since she didn’t feel ashamed or guilty about the broken marriage. She took it casual. To a large extent Rahel is an emancipated, liberated and modern woman. She appeared to be more understanding and genuine in terms of her relationship with her mother. She had understood all the nuances and implications of her mother’s relation with her.
Baby Kochamma, whose actual name is Navomi Ipe, but is called Baby due to her young age at becoming a grand-aunt, and Kochamma being an honorific title for females, at an age of eighty plus wanted to capture her past which wasn’t having anything but young age. Roy reveals her struggle thus, She “lived her life backwards. As a young woman she had renounced the material world, and now as an old one, she seemed to embrace it.” (Roy, p.22) During her hey days she tried everything to seduce, to tempt her lover Father Mulligan. She joined nunnery when her all ensnaring efforts to enslave the father failed miserably. Again her family could see through her plans, so they withdrew her and she was left desperate forever. Then it was her father who, “realized that his daughter had by now developed a ‘reputation” and was unlikely to find a husband. He decided that since she couldn’t have a husband there was no harm in her having an education.” (Roy. p.26).

She was sent to the U.S. for studying Ornamental Gardening. Roy doesn’t miss the chance to pass thus a satirical remark on the patriarchal notion of making marriage the utmost priority of a woman and the last one perhaps her education. Her physical separation from father Mulligan actually aggravate her love and then her growing frustration and depression. Then Baby Kochamma got transformed into a sadist and perverted narcissist as her wrath and unnatural self repression couldn’t get a healthy outlet. Only a stupid and cruel person like her can afford to attend the funeral ceremony of Sophy Mol in an ‘expensive sari.’ She felt fiercely that “her memory of him was hers. Wholly hers. Savagely, fiercely hers. Not to be shared with Faith...” (Roy, p.20) Throughout her journey in life, every day she made her entry fresh. “I love you, I love you” (Roy, p.297) And even after father Mulligan’s death, “every night, night after night, year after year, in diary after diary she wrote, I love you I love you” (Roy, p.298).

Mammachi had different tale to tell which was full of miserable happenings and torturous life. Mammachi the wife of Pappachi and here the male chauvinism charged a heavy toll from Mammachi for being a female and she has been a silent sufferer. The frustration and unsatisfied marriage of Mammachi shows the reader a
different tale of woe. Pappachi is seventeen years older than Mammachi and he gives least preference to her. He immediately discontinued the violent lessons of his wife in Vienna, out of jealousy, when the music teacher complimented her talent in playing violin. A sadist every night he beat her with a brass flower vase. Mammachi regularly suffered this ignominy with increasing frequency till Chacko, on vacation. One day Pappachi broke the bow of Mammachi’s violin and threw it in the river. He found Pappachi beating Mammachi. Now he had grown to be a big man.

Chacko “Strode into the room, caught Pappachi’s vase hand and twisted it around his back” and said, “I never want this to happen again” (Roy, p.48). This episode created a great hatred, in the mind of Pappachi. He never touched Mammachi again. He never spoke to her either as long as he lived.

When he needed anything, he took the help of either Kochu Maria or Baby Kochamma. All physical, mental tortures and humiliations inflicted upon Mammachi by her husband stem from this supremacy. Mammachi accepted all these insults passively and submissively. Thus she accepted the female role model imposed on her by the society—docile, submissive, ungrudging, unprotesting. Because of her failure in her married life, and acceptance of male domination, Mammachi secretly felt jealous of her own daughter Ammu’s courage and happiness in love, her gratification, however brief.

Mammachi’s indifferent attitude to Margaret Kochamma shows her feminine jealousy for the woman whom her son had loved and married. She never met Margaret Kochamma. But she looked down upon her “Of course Mammachi would have despised Margaret Kochamma even if she had been heir to the throne of England... She hated Margaret Kochamma for being Chacko’s wife. She hated her for leaving him. But would have hated her even more had she stayed.” (Roy, p.168).

Like Baby Kochamma, Mammachi is also a big hypocrite. She did not want to see the illicit relation between her daughter and Velutha. But on the other hand she was fully aware of Chacko’s libertine relationships with the women in the
factory and so she said “He can not help having a man’s Needs” (Roy, p.168). So, ‘Men’s Needs’ gained implicit sanction in the Ayemenem House: “Neither Mammachi nor Baby Kochamma saw any contradiction between Chacko’s Marxist mind and feudal libido. They only worried about the Naxalite, who had been known to force men from Good Families to marry servant girls whom they had made pregnant” (Roy, p.168). Mammachi’s attitude to the untouchable paravans is full of hatred. She calls Vellya Pappen “Drunken dog! Drunken Paravan liar”. She was full of rage when she came to know that Velutha succeeded in having sexual relations with Ammu. When she came to know of the illicit sexual relations of her daughter, she begins to suffer from the sense of shame and contempt “She has defiled generations of breeding. For generations to come, for ever now, people would point at them at weddings and funerals. At baptisms and birthday parties. They’d nudge and whisper.” (Roy, p.258). Even the attitude of Mammachi to the workers of the pickle factory is not kind and friendly. Whenever anything goes wrong in the factory, the news is generally brought to Mammachi, and not to Chacko. It is only because “Mammachi fitted properly into the conventional scheme of things... Her responses, however-harsh, were straight forward and predictable.” (Roy, p.122).

Mammachi plays the role of villain in the novel. Mammachi’s hatred for Ammu is a typical psychological hatred that is a mother’s great love for a son, more powerful than a daughter and a father’s hidden sexual instincts for her daughter, the opposite sex. This is the thing that is mostly operating in Mammachi’s attitude to her daughter. Moreover, feminine jealousy can also be attributed to her nature. When one finish reading the novel, Mammachi does not evoke one’s sympathy.

Her cold and indifferent attitude to Ammu rises from her frustration in love. In short, Mammachi is an entirely loathsome character whose blindness and her persecution in the family seldom arouse the readers’ sense of sympathy for her.

Margaret Kochamma is a minor but remarkable character. She is the wife of Chacko and the mother of Sophie Mol, she also suffers and loses her dreams in this male dominated society. After the marriage with Chacko, her life becomes
more frightful and more insecure than before. She has to undergo unbearable grief and sorrow. A chain of misfortunes make her life sad and gloom, e.g., She gets a divorce, Joe, her second husband, dies, Sophie Mol, her dear daughter, also gets an unexpected death. This is why she is always seen expressing her contempt and her irrational rage at Rahel and Estha who have been spared of death by drowning. But very soon she realizes her mistake for her unwanted rage for the twins. She even writes an apologetic letter to Ammu. To put it candidly, Margaret Kochamma, the drowning of Sophie Mol is that devastating event in her life, which absolutely breaks her. Her piteous Margaret Kochamma was working as waitress in a cafe in London when at first, she met Chacko. Like Ammu, she left the house of her parents “for no greater reason than a youthful assertion of independence.” (Roy, p.240). She had an ardent desire to be a good and gentle lady with enough money. So, she had to face with the real world. The author points out “She clung nervously to old remembered rules, and had no one but herself to rebel against. So even up at Oxford, other than playing her gramophone a little louder than she was permitted at home, she continued to lead the same small, light that she imagined she had escaped.” (Roy, p.241).

One day, when Chacko came to the cafe, she, like Ammu, all of a sudden, drew towards him. Chacko looked like an ‘untidy beautified Porcupine’, he was tall and well built. What attracted her much was Chacko’s shining, happy cheeks and friendly smile.

She even shared the uncontrolled laughter with Chacko, a complete stranger: “She thought of Chacko’s laugh, and a smile stayed in her eyes for a long time.” (Roy, p.244) And what Chacko loved most about Margaret Kochamma was her self-sufficiency. He loved the fact that “Margaret Kochamma didn’t cling to him. That she was uncertain about her feelings for him. That he never knew till the last day whether or not she would marry him... He was grateful to her for not wanting to look after him...” (Roy, p.246).

Well, both Chacko and Margaret Kochamma were married without their family consent, without their family knowledge. But this untraditional rebellious marriage, as bad luck would have it, did not prosper in a fruitful way “Along with
the pressured of living together came penury. There was no longer any scholarship money, and there was the full rent of the flat to be paid" (Roy, p.247) Moreover, she also grew fed up with the untidy, clumsy and undisciplined living of Chacko. To crown the effect, Margaret Kochamma's parents refused to see her. Her father disliked Indians. He thought of them as sly, dishonest people. He could not believe that his daughter was to marry such a man. So, very soon, she divorced Chacko and got herself married with Joe, a biologist. The author observes: “Joe was everything that Chacko was not. Steady. Solvent. Thin. Margaret Kochamma found herself drawn towards a wedge of light” (Roy, p.248) Thus, Margaret Kochamma is a tragic character partly tortured by the powerful Fate (in Hardian sense) but mostly harassed and divested by her own fickle mind and inadaptable conduct. The critical juncture she faced in her life occurred only because she did not think before going to act anything. Had she judged the pros and cons of her future husband before marriage, her piteous condition would have disappeared. But she, like Ammu, was in a hurry to marry a stranger and therein lies her tragedy.

Sophie Mol is the daughter of Margaret Kochamma and Chacko the most innocent child character in the book, stingles the readers' heart to the highest percipline. Her immature sudden demise presents a great shock to the readers. She is the 'Mombatti of the story. The novel opens with the death scene of Sophie Mol.

She was only nine when she was swallowed by the powerful death. But her presence continued to be felt throughout the novel. She was “like a fruit in season”. The author rightly maintains, “Sophie Mol put the presents into her go go bag and went forth into the world. To drive a hard bargain. To negotiate a friendship. A friendship that, unfortunately, would be left dangling. Incomplete. Flailing in the air with no foothold. A friendship that never circled around into a story, which is why, far more quickly than ever should have happened, Sophie Mol became a Memory, while the loss of Sophie Mol grew robust and alive” (Roy, p.267) It is great misfortune for her that when she was an infant, her father was divorced by her mother. So, she was the product of an indifferent and cruel fate.
Sophie Mol has two fathers, one biological who has given her birth and the other ‘real’ who brought her up. Chacko is her biological father divorced at her infancy and Joe was her ‘real’ father killed in a car accident when she was a young child. She had “Pappachi’s nose waiting inside hers. An imperial Entomologist’s nose-within-a-nose. A moth-lover’s nose”. (Roy, p.143). She was taller than Estha. Her eyes were ‘blue greyblue’. Her pale skin was the colour of beach sand: “Her hated hair was beautiful, deep red brown” (Roy, p.143). But all these natural gifts are meant for only a short period of time. The author very poetically remarks: “But around her, the air was sad, somehow. And behind the smile in her eyes, the Grief was a fresh, shining blue. Because of a calamitous car crash. Because of a Joe-shaped hole in the Universe.” (Roy, p.143).

Sophie Mol has harboured in the core of her heart a sense of isolation. Perhaps this is why she seldom developed love for Chacko. When asked by the twins” Who d’you love most in the World?” She replied in a very simple way: “Joe my dad. She says that Joe is her real father who never hits her. It is a great irony in the life of Sophie Mol that she had come to India to recover from the great shock of his father’s death. But unfortunately, she became the victim of death. It was a mere coincidence that the day when Sophie Mol was drowned in the river, Ammu was caught red handed for her illicit relation with Velutha.

Sophie Mol’s stay at the Ayemenem House lasted for a very short period of time. Within another week, she became the object of memory. The boatman found her dead in the river: “It is a wrinkled mermaid. A mer-child. A mere mer-child. With red brown hair... she lies at the bottom of his boat with his silver haul of small fish” (Roy, pp.248-249). In short, Sophie Mol plays a very short but significant role in the development of the plot of The God of Small Things.

Her doleful demise at a very early stage emotionally enamours the reader and makes their heart sad and morose. Her character seems to fulfill the demand of a great novelist in his handling of character, that is, “the novelist keeps close to common experience or boldly experiments with the fantastic and the abnormal, his men and women shall move through his pages like living beings and remain in our memory after his book is laid aside and its details perhaps forgotten.” (Hudson, p.145)
Arundhati Roy, has titled the novel relevant to the victimized man and not the woman, who is also a victim but her life is different from that of her male counterpart. Roy presents different male characters who are as varied as life itself. They range from the chauvinistic grandfather to the Marxist leader, Pillai, to Velutha, set in Kerala which was just establishing its Communist identity.

Pappachi is a cruel, embittered man in private but in public he pretended to be the kindest of men much to the envy of the friends of the family. This man brought ruin to the entire family by his cruel ways. He is a perfect study of an embittered man who takes out his frustrations on helpless women, his wife and young daughter Ammu. In true chauvinistic style he believed that college education was not for girls but spent money on sending his son Chacko abroad for his education. When his wife mammachi took violin lessons her tutor told Pappachi that she was concert material, immediately he stopped her violin classes. She was seventeen years younger than Pappachi and when he retired he found that his wife was still young and energetic, he could not tolerate the fact that she was popular as the owner of Paradise Pickles and Preserves. The more she became popular the more frequent were his beatings of her with a vase.

He was a psychologically twisted man whose frustrations are borne in equal measure by Ammu and Mammachi. Ammu develops a love for confrontations because of this exposure to violence early on in life. In one of his violent moods he cut up her favourite gumboots which she treasured. When Chacko stops him from beating Mammachi he shows his anger in different ways. Cunningly he would sew buttons on when they had visitors to create the image that he is the neglected husband of a workingwoman. He stops beating and also talking to his wife. Another innovative means of revenge he thought up is buying a car and not allowing anyone else to use it or sit in it.

When Ammu returns from a broken marriage, instead of lending a sympathetic hand of support he refused to believe that any Englishman would make an indecent proposal to her through her husband. According to Chacko, Pappachi is an Anglophile - a person who was well disposed towards the British. His face reflected all the expressions and impressions of manic violence and even his portrait captures that expression.

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The room in which the portrait is kept acquires a chilly atmosphere. He is neither a loving husband nor an understanding father but to all outsiders he was the pinnacle of kindness to his family. His father was a man blessed by a great priest and had the reputation of being a very pious man. He was an extremely charitable man and was magnanimous towards the less privileged by building schools and vocational centres. Unfortunately both his children Pappachi and Baby Kochamma turned out to be the nemesis of the family. They are both selfish and self-centred individuals. Pappachi has the advantage of being born into a cultured family, educated highly, worked with the British, is well-travelled and has the exposure to be a reasoning and good individual. Yet he is in the words of his grand daughter Rahel “a monstrous, suspicious bully, with a streak of vicious cunning.”(Roy, p.180).

Father Mulligan is a friend of Baby Kochamma's father. He is a priest who had taken vows but that did not prevent him from falling in love with Baby Kochamma. Though he does not make any obvious efforts to encourage her he does not stop her either. She takes conversion from a Syrian Christian to a Roman Catholic, goes to a convent to get trained as a novice, nun. But to no avail, as she could not adhere to the strict regimen.

He studies Hinduism and converts to it later on. Her love for him remains steadfast and she continues to maintain diaries in which she wrote everyday that she loved him. He is the cause of her bitterness with life and she gave vent to it by manipulating everyone around her, under the delusion that she had made the right choices in life and was pure and saintly.

Velutha is born a Paravan, a caste which has borne centuries of victimisation and injustice. Velutha joined the communist party hoping for some change in this situation, he receives no help from any quarter, his religion, his caste, human beings, social system, loved ones everyone forsook him. He is a victim all over again. He is initially betrayed by his father and next innocently by the children, he loves as his own. This is the cross that the children and Ammu bear for the rest of their lives. Velutha is the most sensitive among all the men in the novel. He is sensitive to Ammu's needs and the children's needs. He is in all
ways a surrogate father for them. He tries his best to help them at all times. He grew up gifting small things he made to Ammu and a bond developed between them.

He knows that Ammu and the children need nothing but a little sympathy and kindness and provides it in full measure. Baby Kochamma develops a prejudice against Velutha and she utilises it well in manipulating the children and Mammachi to cause his tragedy. Mammachi notices his ability to use tools and ensures that he is trained professionally. He manages all the equipment in the factory and the house. In Mammachi's house he enjoys “touchable” privileges, much to the envy of his fellow untouchables. Without the advantage of caste, formal education, exposure, social standing or position he is a better human being than all the men in the novel.

He is so sensitive to what the twins needed that when they went to his house dressed as women he treats them as ladies, “Instinctively colluding in their fiction, taking care not to decimate it with adult carelessness or affection” (Roy, p.190). Whenever he sees them he feels his heart clench, reminding him of Ammu. Ammu also knew he is “The God of Small Things”, “who keeps appearing in her dreams. Margaret Kochamma never knew him or the fact that he exists as, “The God of Small Things” (Roy, p.265) never left any marks in the sands of time or life. He is the God, albeit of small things, and the narrator repeatedly refers to him as a God.” Among all the gloomy men he is the only bright spot.

When his father betrays him, out of the gratitude he feels for the help rendered by Mammachi, Velutha, never utters any words of abuse against Mammachi's abusive language, he is a born gentleman. Ammu and Velutha pay with their lives for their affair one dead and the other living but dead. The children live under the cloud of the terror of Velutha's death. The price that they all paid is two adult lives and two children's lives. All of them paid for the manipulations of others. God, History, Marx, Man, Woman and child, abandoned Velutha, in the end.
Esthapappychachen Kuttappan Peter Mon is the elder of twins and fondly called as Estha in the novel. He is identified with Arundhati Roys brother Lalith Kumar in real life. K.Smitha observes that, “Lalith Kumar is older than Arundhati Roy by 18 months; in the novel 18 minutes. Roy modifies and combine the real life incidents to suit her narrative.” (K.Smitha.p.92). Estha develops from a boy to a man in the novel. His development is traced from a normal, happy individual to a totally introverted and withdrawn individual. A series of extremely unfortunate incidents happen in quick succession and close proximity in his life tuning him from a happy child to a man, who has become absolutely silent which prompts Baby Kochamma to say that he lost his mind. His story is unravelled in a seesaw manner now in the present next in the past. The twins undergo displacement from their father's house where Ammu could no longer live with a brutal man. It was brutality of a more subtle kind that they experienced in the Ayemenem house. The twin's felt that they are not loved and are also not worthy of being loved. Except for Velutha no one offers them love let alone kindness. With the visit of Sophie Mol and Animus affair made public life takes a turn for the worse. In Estha's case it is multiple tragedies as when they went for a movie the Orange drink Lemon drink man manipulated Estha into masturbating him. The fact that Estha tells him where he lived makes him live under the dread of that visit. They decide to run away because Ammu also in a careless manner calls them millstones, because, she is traumatised when she was locked up, as her affair became public.

The other unfortunate tragedy occurs while they escape, Sophie Mol drowns in the river by accident. Estha bore the brunt of Margaret Kochamma's anger as she just instinctively blames him for her daughters' death and repeatedly slaps him. Later she apologises but by then Estha is sent back to his father separated from both his mother and his twin sister because Chacko succumbed to Baby Kochamma's manipulations. When the policemen arrest Velutha, Baby Kochamma uses a subtle kind of blackmail saying that, to save Ammu, Estha has to say that Velutha kidnapped them. She does this to save herself from the repercussions of the false FIR she has filed. This guilt haunts Estha.
Arundhati Roy has depicted a variety of men and powerful images of these men keeps repeating in the novel like Pappachi’s moth, the lunatic Muralidharan’s cupboards. All the three, Ammu, Estha and Rahel needed was a little love and kindness and the one man who understood them and gave it to them, Velutha, was not allowed to live.

The image of man as it emerges in Roy’s novel is a multiple one showing the many faces of man ranging from the sensitive vulnerable Velutha, *The God of Small Things* to the vindictive Chacko, the tyrannical old grandfather Pappachi to the young boy Estha.

K. N. M. Pillai, is a typical politically ambitious man. He is an important leader in the local communist party. He plays a major role in the tragedy of Velutha yet he justifies it and dismisses it as “Inevitable consequence of Necessary Politics.” “He walked through life like a chameleon.” (Roy, p.14).

He changes colours and shades to suit his purpose and always came out of tricky situations cleverly manipulating incidents to his advantage and benefit. He tries to get mileage out of every situation to increase his political clout. He earns good sums of money by printing labels for Paradise Pickles but also tries to raise a revolution in the factory. He carefully refers to them as Management and never Chacko by name. He categorizes Chacko in different ways to suit his needs and satisfy his conscience as Chacko the client, Chacko the management, and Chacko the comrade. Pillai saw Velutha the day before he was arrested but does not offer him any help.

He says that it is a private affair and not a party affair. He knows the volatile nature of the situation and waits for an opportune time to use it to his advantage. He is only interested in his ambitions being fulfilled but does not truly believe in Marxist ideology of equality for all. He is the living example of how ideology is manipulated in actual practice. He profits from Velutha’s death claiming that the management falsely implicated Velutha.
The Policeman Inspector Thomas Mathew, is the other cornerstone of society, a caretaker of the laws governing society. He hates Ammu because she breaks the social laws, religious laws, love laws and caste laws. However she breaks no legal laws.

According to the society she is guilty on many accounts, she is a Syrian Christian married to a Hindu, she divorced him, returned to her paternal home, had the audacity to fall in love and have sexual liaisons with an untouchable. She brings disorder into the world, according to him. Ammu does not succumb to his manipulations. He acts hastily on Baby Kochamma's FIR and from then on his sole concern is to protect himself from a backlash. To save his skin he blackmails Baby Kochamma into making Estha say that Velutha abducted them. Chacko, who is identified with Rhodes scholar George Isaac in real life, the only son of Pappachi, Mammachi and the brother of Ammu, is a hypocrite, eccentric, jealous and lecherous character. Though he wants to lead a luxurious life, he is seen as a man of misery and desperation.

Chacko and Ammu were the children living in a violent household, where the father beat up his wife and daughter. Chacko himself has a failed marriage. Though he is a Rhodes Scholar he does not have the necessary refinement or scholarly nature. He is a divorcee like his sister but leads a more privileged life than her.

He is the apple of Mammachi's eyes especially after preventing Pappachi from beating her up. Yet he behaves in an uncouth manner towards her, embarrassing her in front of guests exactly like his father.

He has the same streak of cruelty in him. Being divorced, and separated from his daughter, he is kind and loving towards his sister Ammu and her twins Rahel and Estha, in his own way, but he calls them "millstones" around his neck. He is preoccupied with his own grief. Though Ammu works as hard as him in the Pickles factory it is always his factory. When Ammu exclaimed that it is because of the male chauvinistic society, Chacko says, "What's yours is mine and what is mine is also mine." (Roy, p.58) Ammu thinks that there was nothing extraordinary
about Chacko but Mammachi held the opinion that he is extraordinarily intelligent. He does not manage the factory well and runs into debts. He proclaims himself a Marxist and had numerous debates with his father about it. On the pretext of party work he has a number of women visiting him and has numerous affairs with them.

Both Mammachi and Baby Kochamma are aware of this and label it as 'man's needs'. They accept it to such an extent that Mammachi has a different entrance built for their convenience. When Ammu has one affair the world came crashing down around her. Family shuts her out; society shuts her out because woman's needs do not exist. Chacko is extremely proud of his wife and daughter. The entire family dances to his tune to please them when his wife Margaret Kochamma and Sophie Mol came for a visit. It is as though they are all playing parts in a play-being on their best behavior.

Unfortunately the visit becomes a tragedy for each one in a different way. The loss of Sophie Mol is devastating for Margaret Kochamma and Chacko, apart from the twins. Ammu's affair with Velutha is brought to light and she, is locked up by Chacko. Each of them is so absorbed in his or her own misery that they do not spare time for the misery of others. Chacko behaves like a monster towards Ammu. He lets himself be manipulated by Baby Kochamma who wants to ensure that Ammu and Estha would leave. Once Ammu and Estha have left "Chacko provided the care (food, clothes, fees) but withdrew the concern" (Roy, p.15) to Rahel. He settles down in Canada. The entire house after Sophie Mol's death becomes a graveyard. Chacko lost his perspective completely after his daughters' death.

**Psychoanalytical Analysis of Characters:** The study of the characterization in psychological perspective of Roy's *The God of Small Things* shows some psychological elements play an important role in the behavior and inner workings of some major characters like Ammu, Estha, Rahel and Velutha. Amarnath Prasad views that "The whole novel seems to revolve around two types of psychology" (Amaranath Prasad, p.114). Two types of psychology – needs psychology which made to break the love laws and encouraged for transgression of social rules and trauma psychology makes Rahel a girl of taciturnity, who wants
lead a peaceful life far from the din and bustle of crowded city and it has engraved a permanent impression in the innocent mind of Rahel, which develops an incestuous relation with Estha at the end of the novel. Generally human organisms have some basic instincts and these instincts are to be satisfied at any cost and to satisfy his/her organism he/she may violate ethical rules which are defined by the society.

If these needs are not satisfied it may lead to some psychological disturbances or psychological problems like sexual disturbances, psychosomatic disease, hyper tensions and many other. Amaranath Prasad remarks that “In his discussion of traumatic experiences, Freud himself accepts the role of terrifying experiences which involve danger to life. So ever body in society wants personal security at first.” (Amaranath Prasad, p.115). These organisms at first want to protect life and develops sense of social security in the mind of a child as soon as he develops self and self concept.

One can easily understand that Roy’s The God of Small Things is woven on the above mentioned demands and at the conclusion of the novel one can find almost all the characters of the novel are suffering from these demands of organism. Ammu, the protagonist of the novel violated the social norms with a hope she and children would get security, but which brought to her a miserable death. The wish for new experience makes the twins engaged in an incestuous relation and it is this experience which makes Ammu and Velutha indulge in sexual life.

Pappachi develops an unamiable, sapless and obdurate behavior it is because of the denial of the credit of his scientific discovery of new month, one can see it in the beginning of the novel. This denial may be his professional failure which haunted him until his death and it is so devastating that he always beat his wife and children severely. The ‘moth’ in this novel symbolizes the evil as it is not only haunted him but also his children and grand children.

He made a devastating impression on the mind of Ammu “One one such night, Ammu, aged nine, hiding with her mother in the hedge, watched Pappachi’s natty, silhouette in the lit windows as he flitted from room to room. Not content with having beat his wife and daughter (Chacko was away at school), he tore
down curtain, kicked furniture and smashed a table lamp. An hour after the light went out, disdaining Mammachi’s frightened pleading, little Ammu crept back into the house through a ventilator to rescue her new gumboots that she loved more than any things else. While Ammu watched, the imperial entomologist shred her new gumboots with her mother’s pinking shears.” (Roy, p.181). Ammu who married Babu (a Bengali) with hope to escape from the Ayemenem house, experienced the traumatic shock when she is known that Babu is a drunkard.

She encountered the second psychological trauma when Babu insisted her to satisfy his boss Mr. Hollick’s sexual desire to protect his job in the tea estate. In these two contexts Ammu’s life is like a fish out of water as she has no moral support from anybody.

At this juncture neither does she continue her nuptial relation with Babu nor go back to her parent’s house in Ayemenem. Amaranath Prasad rightly points out that “This extreme humiliation creates a sense of hatred in the heart of Ammu for her husband” and “Ammu returns to Ayemenem with a pulled out cheeks and there too she finds her parents cool and indifferent to her and her children “ (Amaranath Prasad, p.116).

Throughout her life Ammu until her death faced many such psychological experiences. After the diverse Ammu with her twin children return to Ayemenem house for shelter but she is not received cordially by her parents. Ammu’s parents ill-treated her and her children. When she finds the ill treatment of her parents her eye are filled with tears, which expresses her inability and place in the family and society as diverse women’s in India. She imagines her two children “ like a pair of small bewildered frogs engrossed in each others company, lolling arm in arm down a highway full of hurtling traffic.” (Roy, p.43). Chacko even though he studied at Oxford, he too developed a hatred relation with his own sister Ammu. Ammu feels that she is getting aged and realizes her youth and beauty will bid adieu to her soon. As she decided to satisfy her long suppressed sexual desire, so she goes out side in the nights, meets Velutha and develops an illicit relation with him breaking all ‘Love Laws’ and social norms. At this juncture one can observe that she is a great victim of psychological trauma.
According to Freud, the dream is fulfillment of our repressed desire. Ammu in this novel dreams quite often and she believes they come true. When Sophi Mol arrives on the afternoon she dreams “dolphins and the deep blue” and some time she dreams a one eyed man. These dreams indicate the psychological trauma of Ammu. The one eyed man in her dreams is none other than Velutha, who is handicapped by society, administration and Marxism.

Rahel and Estha, the twins of Ammu also encountered traumatic experience in the novel. They see the quarrels of their mother and father and when are in Ayemenem house with their mother, they lead their life like orphans. They become the victims of morbid stiffness and malice of Baby Kochamma, who tortures them by reminding their isolation and their sinfulness. Estha faced a traumatic experience when he was molested by Orangedring Lemondrink man in the Abilash Talkies.

Estha and Rahel encountered another psychological stress when Velutha was arrested by the police after his illicit relation with Ammu was discovered, all the family, state and administration collectively blackmailed. Roy described the scene very beautifully “The Inspector asked his question, Estha’s mouth said yes. Childhood tiptoed out. Silence slid like a bolt.” (Roy, pp.319-20). Ill treatment is common to Estha and Rahel in Ayemenem house, but they were totally neglected and even denigrated after the arriving of Sophi Mol.

Generally in such cases children develop a sense of isolation it becomes a hurdle to the child’s moral and spiritual, physical and social development. Perhaps this is why all through the novel the researcher sees that the twins harbour a feeling of anxieties which always haunts them, Thus Estha is seen making composition in his note books about the danger that may be fall a man crossing the road. Rahel imagines what would happen if the rope of the Church snapped.

When their mother scolds them they become very apprehensive. Estha develops a sense of taciturnity in Calcutta. Rahel also shows rebellious attitude through three notable reactions, which symbolize her silent protest against three dogmatic attitudes of the established society. R.S. Sharma rightly observes:
"First of all, she subverts the value system of society by elevating what is considered low and detestable. She decorates a knob of dung with flowers. Her colliding against the other girls in the convent to see whether breasts hurt is an expression of rebellion against the suppression of sexuality in conventional Christian education. Thirdly the burning of the false hair bun artificiality in human relation." (Sharma, p.72). Baby Kochamma, She played a vital role in the discovery of the illicit affair relation of Ammu with Velutha and who blackmailed the twins and compels them to speak against Velutha in the police station, when police arrested Velutha in association of the death of Sophi Mol though he is innocent. But Baby Kochamma is also a sufferer of psychological trauma and the result is She develops an extremely puritanical and intolerant attitude. Baby Kochamma for outward world is known for her decorum and decency, etiquette and manner in other words she seems to be an embodiment of strictness, rigidity and hypocrisy, but inwardly she is rotten, full of poison: "Baby Kochamma had lived her life backwards" (Roy, p.22).

Roy observes that "like a lion tamer she tamed twisting vines and nurtured bristling, cacti. She limited bonsai plants and pampered rare orchids. She waged war on the weather. She tried to grow edelweiss and Chinese guava. Every night she creamed her feet with real cream and pushed back the cuticles on her toe-nails" (Roy, p.27).

It helps to find out the reason to her fanatic behavior through Psychology. It provides an answer that it is because of frustration which they call it frustration psychology. Psychology shows that if a man's ardent desire in his early life is crushed or suppressed, it bursts like a lava of volcano in his later life. In other words, disappointment, frustration or repressed sentiments begin to take their toll in the sufferer's life. The sufferer's mind is fractured with so many psychological maladies that he begins to develop a sadistic attitude so that his long suppressed desires may be compensated.

Baby Kochamma falls in love with Father Mulligan and she becomes a Roman Catholic with a strong hope that this act would provide a legitimate occasion to be with Father Mulligan. Roy observes that "That was all she wanted.
All she ever dared to hope for, just to be near him, close enough to smell his beard. To see the coarse weave of his cassock. To love him just by looking at him.” (Roy, p.24). But all her desires fall flat on the ground. Very soon she realises her futility of love with Father Mulligan. She grows restless in the convent. This results in her stubborn nature. She begins to write puzzling letters to her parents: “My dearest papa, I am well and happy in the service of our lady. But Koh-i-noor appears to be unhappy and home sick. My dearest papa, today Koh-i-noor vomited after lunch and is running a temperature: My dearest papa, convent food does not seem to suit Koh-i-noor, though I like it well enough. My dearest papa, Koh-i-noor is upset because her family seems to neither understand nor care about her well-being’(Roy, p.25). Here Koh-i-noor is no other than Baby Kochamma. The letter very well expresses a sense of frustration which is gaining ground in the mind of Baby Kochamma. The seed of this frustration in love begins to grow and the final fruit is her absolute neglect of the twins and their mother Ammu. It is this frustration which doesn’t want to see a happy pair of Velutha and Ammu.

A thorough study of this novel clearly shows some psychological things gaining ground in almost all the chief characters of the novel. The incestuous relation between the twins is also an example of the suppressed sexuality and genetic predisposition. One more way of looking at this relationship is to suppose that in depicting Estha and Rahel, the author is actually representing the two selves within herself: “A hot twin and a cold one. He and She. We or Us.” (Roy, p.122)

In other words, the feelings of loneliness, emptiness and imperfection have collectively created a situation in which the twins have nothing to do but develop an incestuous relation. But Roy never favours it. She observe; that “what the twin shared that night was not happiness but hideous grief.” (Roy, p.328). To sum up, through these psychological ingredients Roy seems to present a trenchant critique of the present day Indian society in which people are suffering from trauma leading to so many physical absurdities.

**Feminine Gender Identity:** Indian English fiction has become well entrenched within the larger gamut of Indian English literature, Feminist fiction has occupied the centre stage as the most powerful and characteristic from of
literary expression. Today feminism has emerged as a thought system, a point of view to recognize the world's realities, a positivistic holistic approach to life, a step towards sanity in human relationship, and perhaps the only mode for preservation of very human existence on Earth. Das remarks that, "The writer belonging to the middle class and educated in a religious tradition were more concerned with the issues of dowry, female education, changing perceptive of the family structure and the age old relations among the member of the family than with more daring questions of sexuality." (Das, p.21).

Roy's The novel The God of Small Things is about a woman and her pathetic plight in society besides it deals with love and hate, love and sex, marriage and divorce, conflict and struggle. It adumbrates the real conflict between men and women. Abu Abraham remarks, "Respectable Syrian Christians must feel that the book, however, maligns the community and particularly its womanhood. The explicit reference to sex is bad enough but a Syrian Christian must feel that the book, however, maligns the community and particularly its womanhood. The explicit reference to sex is bad enough but a Syrian Christian woman would make love to an untouchable youth is clearly obscene" (Abraham, p. 3).

Sex and gender identities are the quests for equality and dignity for their progress and development. Indian woman's identity is one that is typically connected to cultural norms of a patriarchal familial structure which are defined by social group. Her identity is defined within the parameters of her social relationship to men. The Indian woman is a symbol for purity, chastity and sanctity of the ancient spirit that is Asian nation. This essential spirit of Asian nation lies in its God, religion, spirituality, culture, tradition and family.

According to Simone de Beauvoir, "One is not born, but rather becomes a woman. No biological, psychological or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society. It is civilization as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine" (Simone De, p.301)

In the society inequality is built, established and legitimized on woman's body, sex and gender and they are the foundations to create inequality. A woman's identity, which is formed in different context, setting and situations such as her
relation with family, community, organization and society in her everyday life. Bhattacharjee views that “The displacement of her history is crucial for the construction of a nation: in reclaiming her voice, her story, she risks displacing the nation” (Bhattacharjee, p.247).

In the contemporary Indian society, most of the urban, especially working women are struggling to create a distinct ‘self’ or an identity within their family and beyond it. In Indian context, Christian, Parsi and tribal women enjoy more freedom as compared to their Muslim and Hindu counterparts because of their socio-cultural settings. Even then the complex cultural impacts such as rigid social system, caste etc. on Indian Christian women cannot be denied.

In The God of Small Things, Roy portrayed a remarkable indictment of Patriarchy and the injustice and oppression faced by woman in the society. It has been noted that woman is victimized everywhere as daughter in her parent's house, as wife in her husband's house, as an employee in workplace. One of the major issues in this novel is the struggle engaged in by the women for the establishment of their identity.

Chandra observes that, “Identity is concerned with the self - esteem and self-image of an individual, a gender, a community, a class, race or a sex or a nation real or imaginary dealing with the existence and role: who are we? What position do we have in society vis-a-vis at international arena?.” (Chandra, p.150).

Ammu is a valiant fighter for these causes, though the options open to her in the male dominated order are not viable at all. As Ammu has been a victim of patriarchal society, where her father Pappachi used to beat her mother with brass vase and once the mother and daughter were thrown out of the house. She was deprived of higher education because her father Pappachi thought that higher education can spoil a female child. He considers that it is also an unnecessary expense for a girl. On the other hand. Ammu’s brother has been sent for higher education.

It’s a clear case of gender bias and a discrimination in the family between a male and a female child. Since she has not been cared properly. She grabs the first
opportunity for escaping from the oppressive atmosphere of her parents’ house in Ayemenem and prefers to marry anybody during her short visit to Calcutta: “she thought anyone at all would be better, than returning to Ayemenem” (Roy, p.39). It is another thing that as a consequence of this step she actually finds herself out of the frying pan into the fire. Baba to whom she is married is a drunkard who. While living in Assam, Ammu declares her identity and freedom through her manners and behavior at social gatherings.

When her husband makes most degrading proposal, to satisfy the lust of Mr. Hollick, who is her husband’s boss on a tea estate in Assam, she meets violence with violence. When she no longer tolerates the cruelty of her husband, she rebels, objects to this proposal and finally hits her husband with a heavy book and leaves the place. Ammu quits him even though this step involves jumping into the abyss of total economic and cultural insecurity.

The novel is set in three cultures-Kerala, Bengali and Western and these cultures are interwoven and intermingled into the very texture of the novel. However, the most part of the novel and its action takes place at Ayemenem in Kerala. Narayan states that “The novel, however, has been primarily set in Indian cultural background, Kerala with its Syrian Orthodox Church, the cruelty of women who discriminate against their own daughters in favour of sons and the empathy between twin children who find the grown up responsible” (Narayan, p.48).

When she comes back to her village with her twins to live in her parents house, they have not been given proper care there. Again her brother has been given preference in her parental house. He becomes the owner of the parental property. Ammu’s life makes up a story of misery, desperate search for livelihood and despondency tinged with fruitless day-dreaming.

Sharma remarks, “Her death in ignominy, and disgraceful cremation bring the story of her life to an end-more sinned against than sinning” (Sharma, p.78). Despite all the troubles, she cherishes the love and care for her twins. This love between mother and child situation is an exclusive female experience which needs a serious probe into a female psyche and biology.
Alok Roy mentions that her novel deals with, "is not merely the brutality that one class of people perpetuates on another - its more personal, more individual than that the wars that families wage within themselves men against women, adults against children, the ways in which we kill each other off in bits." (Alok Roy, p.3).

Ammu and her two children, Rahel and Estha attended the funeral ceremony of Sophie Mol along with all the family members. Since she married a Bengali Hindu without consent of her parents, she was not allowed to go closer to other family members. After the funeral of Sophi Mol she went to police station to record her statement but the Inspector Thomas Mathew did not record her statement further he treated her badly.

"He stared at Ammu's breasts as she spoke. He said the Police knew all they needed to know and that the Kottiayam Police didn't take statements from Veshyas or their illegitimate children. Ammu said she'd see about that. Inspector Thomas Mathew came around his desk baton. 'If I were you', he said, 'I'd go home quietly'. Than he tapped her breast with baton gently. Tap, tap, as though he was choosing mangoes from a basket ." (Roy, p.8).

Roy portrayed Ammu's identity as if she has no identity at all as a woman. She was ill - treated, scolded and rejoiced by the male coloniser's gaze specially to the sexual organ of the woman. Inspector Mathew's behavior with Ammu shows that the low degree treatment of women in public life especially in Police department. Ammu is a socially and economically insecure woman suffers in the hands of rigid upper class for her passionate love and social transgression.

The life of Ammu, a high caste woman, is a painful saga of depression and persecution. The brutal discrimination Velutha underwent is also operative against Ammu. She challenges the defiled social order and what it represents first by marrying a man of her choice and then breaking that marriage and getting entangled in forbidden love. Velutha epitomizes the negation of all that she detests in Chacko and Pappachi.
Ammu seeks to unsettle the formidable structures of an irrelevant socio-cultural order by interrogating the traditional grammar of love. Through their iconoclastic ways Ammu and Velutha construct on aesthetics of destruction. They tend to demolish all orthodoxies and ideologies which have outlived their relevance. Ranga Rao observes that, “Roy’s book is the only one I can think of among Indian novels in English which can be comprehensively described a protest novel. It is all about atrocities against women and untouchable.” (Ranga Rao, p.13).

Arundhati Roy probes into female psyche and shows that women could not enjoy much freedom and autonomy in Ayemenem society as male dominance is quite obvious in Ayemenem house. The familial relationship is devoid of love. Ammu, Pappachi’s daughter is reminded of her childhood days in Delhi, where her Entomologist father used to act like a bully. “He donated money to orphanage and leprosy clinics. He worked hard on his public profile as a sophisticated, generous, moral man but alone with his wife and children he turned into a monstrous suspicious bully, with a streak of vicious cunning. They were beaten, humiliated and then made to suffer the envy of friends and relations.” (Roy, p.180). Mammachi life in Ayemenem house is crushed between human cruelties of her husband and her house hold responsibilities. In the novel female characters failed to cope with the situation. There is a gender bias in Mammachi’s treatment of his daughter Ammu and her son Chako who becomes the inheritor of all her property. Chako married an English woman, Margaret, who later on divorced him and married Joe. They had a daughter Sophie Mol who died by drowning. The divorce signifies the changing traditional familial structure of Indian society in contact with the western culture.

The next character in the novel who craves for identity is Ammu daughter Rahel, who is a mischievous girl in her school. She expelled from school for frenetic behavior in the school. First for her behavior “Rahel was first blacklisted in Nazareth Convent at the age of eleven, when she was caught outside her Housemistress’ garden gate decorating a knob of fresh cowdung…” (Roy, p.16),
second for smoking and third for setting up fire to her house mistress’ false hair bun. She is very slow learner in studies and she took eight years to complete five years degree course in a mediocre college of architecture in Delhi. Unlike Ammu, Rahel is bold enough to face problems.

She fall in love with co student named Larry Mc Caslin and their love culminated into marriage. “Rahel grew up without a brief, without anybody to arrange a marriage for her. Without anybody who would pay her a dowry and therefore without an obligatory husband looming on her horizon” (Roy, 17). As like Ammu, Rahel also frustrated with her husband and divorced him but she is unable to understand the reason, may be her urge for home in her which she doesn’t get with Larry. “she wondered why it was that when she thought of home, it was always in the colours of the dark, oiled wood of boats and the empty cores of the tongues of flame that flickered in brass lamps” (Roy, p.73).

The hollowness is because of her material pleasure. According to Chandra “she experiences meaninglessness in her marriage and takes divorce. She is a symbol of true Indian Immigrant woman whose body is western while her spirit is Indian. Within her home she cherishes Indian tradition and beyond her home she is like other westerners” (Chandra, p.157).

After she is informed that her brother Estha is coming to Ayemenem, she immediately resigned her job and returned to India. Kulkami observes that, “Probably with lost hopes and unsatisfied desires, Rahel represents the contemporary women representing the western land – culturally barren, morally empty, socially inimical.” (Kulkami, p.22). She develops incest relation with her brother Estha, which is may be in western culture but it is forbidden in Indian society and it is sign of cultural erosion.

“Craving for identity is seen in the breaking of social laws of the love and bowing to the instinctual laws in the case of both mother and daughter “ (Chandra, p.157). Ammu, divorced her husband Baba, transgressed the social norms and love laws by sharing her body with Velutha who is three years younger to her and Rahel who divorced her husband in America and shared her body with her own
brother eighteen minutes junior. Barche remarks that, "The element of identity is seen in breaking the social norms and following the 'Swadharma'. The element of identity is seen in the breaking the social norms in the case of both the mother and the daughter" (Barche, pp.34-35).

Ammu had ethereal joy with Velutha but Rahel with Estha experienced "Only that what they shared that night was not happiness, but hideous grief." (Roy, p.328). In fact, the change is Rahel's behavior and life style occurred through passage of time.

Nirmala C. Prakash comments that, "Rahel belonging to the third generation of the Ayemenem house finds her marriage with an American Research Scholar in Indian Architecture boring, the prosaic. She finds no logic in continuing such an alliance compared to Mammachi and Ammu. She has greater confidence and clear perception of life. It is owing to such clarity that Rahel breaks off the marriage which brought her close to Larry Mc Caslin with a magnetic charm with identical case and speed. Rahel, a highly educated and modern girl refuses to accept the fate of her mother and grandmother. She walks out of the relationship the moment it fails to suit her. For Rahel it is neither a burdensome yoke nor an escape rather a brief step over for the fulfillment of the self" (Prakash, p. 39).

One of the feminists' approach is their emphasis on the biology of female body from woman's point of view and not as an object of male desire. One can observe it easily Ammu and Rahel, they long for their sexual gratification and continue the pursuit for sexual sublimation, considering their sexual organs as the objects of male gaze and desire. It is there that they fail to achieve the true feminist objective of self identity in their sexual desire. Both of them initiate for sexual act with their partner.

R. S. Sharma considers, "Both Animu and Rahel have avoided the proper cause of feminist struggle for self-respect and freedom. They ultimately conduct themselves to state of degraded sexual pleasure and loneliness. One of them destroys her self in her illusory pursuit of redemption, although it must be gravited that her intentions remained lofty and worthy of praise. The other woman is also not in a better position. Her incestuous satisfaction promises no real break though in the direction of feminine objectives" (Sharma, p.101).
The close examination of these two characters asserts and re asserts their identity. Ammu meets her tragic end by challenging the rigid caste based patriarchal social norms of India. Rahel is an ultra modern girl, who manages to come out from the orbit of such conventional attitudes and survives both in Delhi and New York in spite of all the troubles and oppression imposed by male dominated society.

When it comes to the matter of Baby Kochamma’s identity there are clear parallelism between Ammu and Baby Kochamma. Ammu’s relationship with Velutha transform them into the world of true love and sexual pleasure and their union is synthesis of femininity and masculinity. Where as Baby Kochamma’s failed love relation with Father Mulligan made her introvert and who could not translate her thought into action. Baby Kochamma hangs between her thoughts and actions and her traditionality and traditionality. Though Mammachi and Baby Kochamma are the victims of patriarchal oppression, they do not hesitate to victimize Ammu and her twin children by the virtue of their family status and structure.

According to Chandra, “The serious irony arises in juxtaposing these two women-Ammu and Baby Kochamma. One is deprived of higher education, the other goes to Rochester for a Diploma in Ornamental Gardening. Yet, Baby Kochamma could not use her education for herself. She fails to come out of the traditional patriarchal society, while Ammu asserts her right, marries outside her community without seeking consent from her family. Where Kochamma fails, Ammu attempts to cross the orbit of conventional society. Finally, her daughter Rahel leaves home, goes abroad for her studies, lives there, marries and takes divorce from her husband and succeeds in doing what she likes and thus asserts her identity even beyond her family, challenging the patriarchal societal set up.”(Chandra, p.160).

In the novel Roy depicts the lack of mutual love, adjustment or understanding between man and woman. In the novel the relation between Pappachi and Mammachi is ridden with jealousy, violence and hatred.
In every context Pappachi who failed to appreciate Mammachi’s success in business but she has succeeded in her business not to attract Pappachi but she has no identity. The male dominance is obvious in the family, that is why women’s voices are not heard and they could not enjoy freedom. Finally this is the reason why Baby Kochamma had to live the life of a spinster even though she secretly doted on Father Mulligan. “Her clandestine love for the priest continues even after she achieves the status of a grandmother. Perhaps it is her spinsterhood or unfulfilled yearning for love that accounts for her treacherous nature” (Prakash, p. 35).

The thorough examination of the female characters in this novel shows Mammachi who is having less power is a transitional women. Ammu is rebellious and having more power than her mother, leaves her drunkard husband can be categorized as transitional woman. When it comes to Baby Kochamma and Rahel claiming equal power can be categorized as egalitarian new women. Baby Kochamma is Western in her body and soul besides Rahel has the spirit of India like an immigrant woman living in western countries.

In the contemporary Indian society, most of the urban, especially working women are struggling to create a distinct ‘self’ or an identity within their family and beyond it. They are in transitional state. They feel that their husband should share their household responsibilities. In reality, in India, though their husbands want to marry educated working women, they do not like to share the household responsibilities. Most of the readers therefore, are in transitional stage because one does not treat ones’ wives as their equal partners. Further, the world is moving towards democratization. In cosmopolital societies in India particularly women are preferring love marriage like Ammu, Rahel and claiming their identities like American and European women entering into new field like media, film and armed forces and standing by their boyfriends.

In short, the novel as well as contemporary Indian society is a synthesis between Eastern and Western culture. The identity of very Indian educated women lies, in fact, in the western dress and behaviour while still they possess the essential Indian nationalist spirit within their heart. In short, Roy creates a microcosm that
encompasses, gender bias, wife battering, infidelity, molestation, emotional insecurity, pride or death within one family in the South of Kerala. Through the microcosm, Roy explores the often chaotic social and political history of India.

She has portrayed the endless tale of Indian women who are struggling to liberate themselves from the clutches of patriarchal society of India. In fact, through multiplicity of feminine gender identity she projects the true picture of Indian Christian women of Kerala. They are trying to assert their identity as per their education, environment and hierarchies.