Along with Ideational and Interpersonal meanings, a text also has a third simultaneous strand of meaning known as Textual meaning. At clause rank, this meaning is realized by structuring the clause as message. Beyond the clause, this is concerned with cohesion, coherence, texture and the overall organization of the text. The success or failure of a writer to a great extent depends on the way he organizes his message. A conscious writer is aware of the need to keep his readers informed “where they are and where they are going” (Butt 2003: 134). For this purpose, he makes use of the various linguistic resources, available in the language, to signpost his readers through the clauses, clause complexes and the whole text. The first signpost comes at the beginning of a text, paragraph or clause. It tells the readers “what the message is concerned with: the point of departure for what the speaker is going to say” (Halliday 1994: 38).

The chief concern of the present chapter is to unveil various chunks of information put by the author at the Thematic position in the text under study. Placement of information is an important concern for every author as a number of syntactic options are available in every language. He has the choice of placing the same information at a number of places. However, the initial position in a clause provides a peculiar and special prominence to the entity put at this place. It serves two functions. First, it links up the clause with the preceding text and secondly, it guides readers’ understanding of the subsequent parts of the text. Therefore, the choices at Thematic level are crucial for the success or the failure of a text. An author may fail to achieve the
desired meaning if he is not aware of the need to select the information to be placed in the initial position. With this consideration in mind, the investigation done here is an attempt to pin down the ways in which the information in the Thematic position is determined by the linguistic function of the text and vice versa. The analysis aims to explain the impetus that has influenced the author to decide what to place in the initial position.

As already stated, “Systemic Functional Grammar is a system of meanings associated with three metafunctions, each indicating how language is structured to be used. The users interact not only to exchange sounds, words or sentences, but to create meanings in order to understand the world around them and one another.” (Patricia Bertoli-Dutra and Cristiane M. Bissaco 2006: 1052). In this linguistic theory, one of the three metafunctions viz. Textual metafunction revolves around the concepts of Theme and Rheme. Theme, according to Halliday, is a “clause-initial element” (1994: 37). It appears first in the clause and then combines with the remainder of the clause i.e. Rheme and the two parts together constitute a message. For Systemic Linguists, language is functional in nature and must be studied in terms of choices an author makes to express himself in different ways. The author’s lexico-grammatical choices do not occur randomly but depend on the linguistic function they are supposed to serve.

In order to organize “The God of Small Things” as message, Arundhati Roy has employed the linguistic resources available to her. She exploits the linguistic device of Thematic prominence to articulate Textual meaning. It facilitates her to express her standpoint about the issues involved and also affects readers’ perception of them. To foreground certain aspects of discourse, she makes use of a particular linear order and also places certain selected elements at the initial position. Similarly, she utilizes a parallel Textual mechanism of Information structure to produce a variety of effects.

One of the issues that Arundhati Roy wants to focus on in the text is the problem of untouchability in Indian society. She does so by giving Thematic prominence to Participants like Velutha and his father Vellya Paapen who belong to Paravan
community, a so-called lower caste. The treatment given to them is different from the
treatment given to people belonging to so-called upper castes. Roy has presented two
generations of untouchables in the novel - one represented by Vellya Paapen and the
other by his son, Velutha. Through them, the author intends to bring home to the readers
the difference that has taken place over the passage of time in the treatment meted out to
them. The passage given in Appendix 16 presents a picture of Vellya Paapen’s time. It
is a society in which untouchables like Vellya Paapen are content with their lot. They
have accepted their position in society and do not mind the sub-human treatment given
to them. Rather they are grateful to the upper caste people for the little favours they do
to them. In the passage under analysis, Vellya Paapen expresses his gratitude towards
Mammachi for paying for his glass eye. A cursory reading of the passage makes it clear
that it is about Vellya Paapen. The Textual analysis brings to the fore the linguistic
structures employed by the writer to express the plight of untouchables in Vellya
Paapen’s time. In the very first clause of the passage, Roy has put Velutha’s father,
Vellya Paapen, at the Thematic position:

Velutha’s father, Vellya Paapen, however, was an Old World Paravan.

In this way, the writer has used him as the starting point of the message. It serves the
linguistic function of signposting the readers that the passage is about Velutha’s father.
The use of interpolation ‘Vellya Paapen’ adds extra details. The next clause-complex is:

He had seen the Crawling Backward Days

and his gratitude to Mammachi and her family for all

that they had done for him,

was as wide and deep as a river in spate.
In the first clause, the Thematic element is ‘he’ referring to Vellya Paapen, Velutha’s father and leads to Thematic continuity. The Textual Theme ‘and’ in the next clause relates it paratactically with the previous clause and construes a relationship of addition. Another clause ‘that they had done for him’ is an embedded clause and is a part of the Topical Theme ‘his graduate to Mammachi and her family for all that they had done for him’. Here ‘they’ refers to Mammachi and her family. The next clause-complex is:

- **When** **he** had his accident with the stone chip,
- **Mammachi** organized and paid for his stone eye.

The writer begins the clause-complex with a dependent clause and thus gives the ideas expressed in it a Thematic status. As this clause refers to the time of action, this idea becomes starting point for the whole clause-complex. Individually, this clause starts with a Textual Theme ‘when’ linking it hypotactically with the independent clause and showing the time of action. In the independent clause, the writer puts Mammachi at the Thematic position and introduces a shift in focus from an untouchable member of society to a touchable one. The Thematic element in the following clause-complex again brings Vellya Paapen into focus:

- **He** hadn’t worked off his debt yet,
- **and** **though** **he** knew
- **he** wasn’t expected to,
- **that** **he** wouldn’t be ever able to –
he felt

THEME

that his eye was not his own.

TEXTUAL THEME

TOPICAL THEME

This clause-complex contains six clauses in all. In five of the clauses, the Topical Theme is ‘he’ referring to Velutha’s father and in the sixth clause the Topical Theme is ‘his eye’ a part of Vellya Paapen’s body. Thus, it is clear that Arundhati Roy wants the passage to be about Vellya Paapen. The second clause contains two Textual Themes. ‘And’ links this clause with the previous clause paratactically and construes a relationship of addition. ‘Though’ links it with the clause that follows and construes a relationship of concession. In two of the clauses, the Textual Theme is ‘that’ used primarily for linking the clauses with each other and for establishing relationship of enhancement. The last clause-complex of the passage is:

His gratitude widened his smile

THEME

and bent his back.

TEXTUAL THEME

In both the clauses, the Topical Theme is ‘his gratitude’ and both the clauses are linked paratactically with the Textual Theme ‘and’ at the beginning of the second clause. The impact of this clause-complex comes to the fore when we look at it from the parallel Textual system of Information structure. The Given information in both the cases is the same i.e. ‘his gratitude’. It is the New information that puts the two clauses in contrast with each other. In the first clause, the New information is ‘widened his smile’ and in the second clause ‘bent his back’.

The Textual analysis of the passage brings several factors to the limelight. In seven of the clauses, Vellya Paapen, Velutha’s father, is the Topical Theme and hence is the point of departure for the message. In two of the clauses ‘his gratitude’ is the
Topical Theme, foregrounding this trait of Vellya Paapen’s personality. In one clause, ‘his eye’, a part of Vellya Paapen’s body is the Topical Theme. All this makes clear that the passage is mainly about Vellya Paapen, Velutha’s father. ‘Mammachi and her family’ is put in Thematic position in two of the clauses and ‘Mammachi’ in one clause. Mammachi and her family belong to the upper sections of society while Vellya Paapen belongs to the lower sections of society. In this way, the writer builds a sort of Thematic contrast. Apart from these, we find six of the clauses beginning with Textual Themes like ‘and’, ‘they’, ‘though’. As usual, these mainly serve the purpose of linking clauses with each other.

If the passage given in Appendix 16 deals with the sub-human treatment given to Vellya Paapen, Velutha’s father, the passage given in Appendix 14 focuses our attention on the problem of untouchability in India in general, especially in Kerala. The Paravans and other weaker sections of society suffer a good deal in the process of class-stratification. Arundhati Roy vividly portrays their acute suffering and deep frustration in this text. They are given sub-human treatment and are treated like dirt and filth, not fit to be touched. As Arundhati Roy wants to focus on their miserable condition, she puts them in the Thematic position in the very first clause-complex of the passage:

They were not allowed to touch anything

That Touchables touched.

The Thematic element ‘they’ in the very first clause refers to those members of society who are considered to be the lowest by the members of upper caste. By putting ‘them’ at the Thematic position, the writer has not only made ‘them’ the focus of attention but also the point of departure for the message, indicating that the rest is the passage is about them. The next clause starts with the Textual Theme ‘that’. It refers to ‘anything’ in the Rheme of the previous clause. The Topical Theme here is ‘Touchables’. This is exactly opposite to ‘they’ of the previous clause. In this way, the writer uses the device
of Thematic contrast to build up tension between two opposing forces of society. The next clause is:

Caste Hindus and Caste Christians.

Graphologically, it is presented as a separate clause. But at the syntactical level, we find several elements missing. A possible full-fledged clause can be like this:

\[(\text{That}) \quad \text{Caste Hindus and Caste Christians} \quad (\text{touched})\]

In this way, the Topical Theme ‘Caste Hindus and Caste Christians’ is an extension of the Topical Theme of the previous clause ‘Touchables’ and leads to Thematic continuity. It refers to those members of society who are considered ‘Touchables’. In order to further foreground their importance in the society, the writer has begun all the words in Topical Theme with capital letters. The next clause-complex in the passage is:

\[\text{Mammachi} \quad \text{told Estha and Rahel}\]

\[\text{That} \quad \text{she} \quad \text{could remember a time, in her girlhood,}\]

\[\text{When} \quad \text{Paravans} \quad \text{were expected to crawl backwards with a broom,}\]

\[\text{So that} \quad \text{Brahmins or Syrians Christians} \quad \text{would not defile themselves by accidentally stepping into a Paravan’s footprint.}\]
The writer starts this clause-complex by putting ‘Mammachi’ in the Thematic position. She is presented as telling something to Estha and Rahel. Thus, the rest of the clause-complex is from the point of view of Mammachi. This is writer’s way of shedding the responsibility for the truth of the Propositions to be presented in the next few clauses. In the next clause, the Textual Theme is ‘that’ which links it with the previous clause and the Topical Theme is ‘she’ referring to Mammachi of the previous clause. In the following clause, the writer brings a change at the Thematic level. The Textual Theme is ‘when’ and the Topical Theme is ‘Paravans. The Textual Theme not only links this clause with the previous clause but also refers to the time “when Paravan were expected to crawl backwards with a broom, sweeping away their footprints” (Roy 73-74). In this way past and present are juxtaposed and an effort is made to show that the sub-human treatment of untouchables has its roots in the past. In the last clause of this clause-complex, the Textual Theme is ‘so that’ and the Topical Theme is ‘Brahmin and Syrian Christians’. The Textual Theme ‘so that’ construes a relationship of cause and effect with the previous clause. The Topical Theme ‘Brahmins and Syrian Christians’ is again put into contrast with the Topical Theme of the previous clause ‘Paravans’. Thus, by putting two themes side by side, the writer has tried to point out the disparity in the treatment towards different members of society. The penultimate clause-complex in the passage is:

**In Mammachi’s time,**

Paravans like other Untouchables,

TOPICAL THEME

were not allowed to walk on public roads,

(Paravans were)

TOPICAL THEME

not allowed to cover their upper bodies,

(Paravans were)

TOPICAL THEME

not allowed to carry their umbrellas.

In the first clause, the Topical Theme is ‘in Mammachi’s time’. This is an example of a Marked Theme in the sense that the Grammatical Subject, the Logical Subject and the
Psychological Subject do not conflate with each other. The Grammatical Subject here is ‘Paravans’, the Logical Subject is missing and thus left to the imagination of the readers and the Psychological Subject, of course, is ‘in Mammachi’s time’. As the writer has brought, a Circumstantial element of Location (time) from the Ideational system to the Thematic position, it carries a special and different meaning. It takes the readers back in time to let them know the treatment given to Paravans at that specific time in history. The other clauses in the clause-complex are elliptical clauses. The Grammatical Subject and Finite elements are missing but can be derived from the previous clause. In both cases these are ‘Paravans were’. All these clauses are put in paratactic relation to each other and thus create a sort of grammatical cohesion. The last clause-complex of the passage is:

They had to put their hands over their mouths

when they spoke, to divert their polluted breath away from those

whom they addressed.

The writer uses ‘they’ i.e. ‘Paravans’ as Thematic element in the first clause of this clause-complex and thus sets up the local semiotic environment in which the clause is to be interpreted. The writer gives the ‘Paravans’ a special Textual status and indicates that the clause is going to be concerned with them. In the next clause the Textual Theme is the conjunction ‘when’. It sets up a semantic as well as grammatical relationship with the previous clause and shows the time of action. The Topical Theme again is ‘Paravans’ and the clause is going to be about them. In the last clause the Textual Theme is ‘whom’ and the Topical Theme is ‘they (Paravans)’. The Textual Theme links this clause with ‘those’ in the Rheme of the previous clause. The writer has left the Textual Theme indefinite here, though, of course, it has reference to ‘Caste Hindus and
Caste Christians’ referred earlier in the passage. The Topical Theme is continuation of the Theme of the previous clause.

Thus, analyzed from the Textual angle, the passage brings to the fore the several ways in which the writer has structured her message. That the passage is about Paravans becomes clear when we find that in seven out of the thirteen clauses ‘they’ (Paravans) are put in the Thematic position. There are only three clauses in which ‘Touchables’ or ‘Brahmins and Syrian Christians’ are given Thematic prominence. And when this is done this is to emphasize the different type of treatment given to these two sections of society. There are two clauses in which Mammachi is put at the Thematic position. This is mainly done to present the picture of caste ridden Indian society from the angle of some one other than the author. For the writer, this serves two purposes. First, such an account appears to be an objective one. Secondly, it gives the writer a privileged position of telling the details without responsibility. In one of the clauses, a Circumstantial element ‘in Mammachi’s time’ is used as Theme. This is mainly to put the time factor in prominence. The author wants to acquaint the readers with the position of untouchables in the past. The main purpose is to put it in contrast with the present to indicate that not much has changed for them in spite of several constitutional and political changes. In six of the clauses Textual Themes precede the Topical Themes. The main purpose is to establish grammatical and semantic relationships between various clauses in clause-complexes.

Similar to the passages discussed in the preceding section, the passage given in Appendix 17 also deals with the issue of untouchability. But here the author represents the whole issue from another angle. Her focus is on the fact that the untouchables are as capable as the so-called touchable members of society. The only difference is that they do not get the equal opportunities to show their worth and to rise in life. Arundhati Roy has chosen Velutha, an untouchable but competent character of the novel to highlight this positive aspect of untouchables. He is described as a person who has the qualities of becoming an engineer. He knows how to mend radios, clocks and water pumps. He knows how to maintain “new canning machine and automatic pineapple slicer” (Roy
A Textual analysis of the passage brings out how the author has linguistically structured this message. She has achieved the linguistic function of giving prominence to certain elements by bringing them to the initial position. Likewise, she has shifted certain elements towards the end of the clauses as New information to the readers. The author begins the passage with a clause containing a Marked Theme:

_Apart from his carpentry skills_, Velutha has a way with machines.

The author has brought a Circumstantial element ‘Apart from his carpentry skills’ to the Thematic position to indicate possession of certain skills on the part of Velutha. She, thus, uses this Circumstantial element as a point of departure and sets the tone of the passage. The Theme of the clause also brings to the fore the author’s assumption that the readers know that Velutha is a skilled carpenter. Taking this as Given information, the author goes on to tell the readers about the other traits possessed by Velutha. The next clauses-complex shows a change in focus:

Mammachi often said

_Mammachi_ Theme

_that if only he hadn’t been a Paravan_

_Textual Theme _ Textual Theme _ Topical Theme_

_he might have become an engineer._

_Theme_

The writer brings ‘Mammachi’ to the Thematic position. As this is in a reporting clause, it shows Mammachi’s angle towards the ideas presented in the reported clause. This is the writer’s way to authenticate what she has stated in the previous clause. As Mammachi belongs to touchable sections of society, her praise of Velutha, an untouchable, is quite significant. The praise of Velutha by an untouchable might not have the same type of impact as praise by Mammachi. The next clause starts with a Textual Theme ‘that’. It signals that the coming clause forms a part of a large structural
unit, the clause-complex, and how it relates to the other clauses in the clause-complex. The Topical Theme is ‘he’ referring to Velutha of the previous clause. In the next clause, the Thematic element is again ‘he’. Looked from another parallel system of text organization, ‘he’ is the Given information and ‘an engineer’ is the New information. The next two clauses have similar Thematic and Information structures:

- **He** mended radios, clocks, water pumps.
  
  THEME / GIVEN

- **He** looked after the plumbing and all the electric gadgets
  
  THEME / GIVEN in the house.

Here the Thematic element is Velutha who is also put as Given information. The New information contains elements like radios, clocks, water pumps, plumbing electric gadgets etc. The New element informs the readers about the various skills possessed by Velutha. The next clause-complex moves the spotlight towards Mammachi:

- **When** Mammachi decided to enclose the back verandah,
  
  TEXTUAL TOPICAL THEME

- **it** was Velutha
  
  THEME

- **who** designed and built the sliding-folding door
  
  THEME

- **that** later became all the rage in Ayemenem.
  
  THEME

The clause-complex starts with a dependent clause. In a way, the whole clause can be considered a Thematic one. The writer has decided to give prominence to a particular point in history, when something important has taken place. As a separate clause, it starts with a Textual Theme ‘when’ indicating the time of action and the Topical
Theme, Mammachi, follows it. The next clause is an example of Thematic Predication. The writer has brought a shift in the status of Given and New information. She appears to give prominence to a constituent that would otherwise remain unimphasized. By moving the constituent ‘Velutha’ away from the beginning of the clause, the writer signals it as New information instead of Given information. She introduces an empty structural element ‘it’ as the point of departure for the message. The purpose is to single out Predicated element ‘Velutha’ as something noteworthy and also to put him in contrast with other characters in the novel. In the adjoining clause, the Thematic element is ‘who’ referring to Velutha. The following clause shows a shift in focus from ‘Velutha’ to ‘sliding-folding door’ that Velutha has built. By doing so, the writer shifts the Thematic focus from the doer to the deed. She achieves this by bringing ‘that’ to the Thematic position, which is used as substitute for the Complement ‘the sliding-folding door’ found in the Rheme of the preceding clause.

The following clause-complex again brings Velutha in the focus:

\[
\text{Velutha} \quad \text{knew more about the machines in the factory} \\
\text{THEME}
\]

\[
\text{than} \quad \text{anyone else.} \\
\text{TEXTUAL THEME} \quad \text{TOPICAL THEME}
\]

In the first clause, Velutha is in the Thematic position and the rest of the clause is about him. The second one starts with a Textual Theme ‘than’. It relates the clause with the previous one and also construes a relationship of comparison and contrast. The Topical Theme ‘anyone else’ is used in contrast to Velutha, the Theme of the previous clause. Thus, the writer has used the device of Thematic contrast to highlight the various qualities of Velutha in comparison to others. The next clause-complex is:

\[
\text{When} \quad \text{Chacko} \quad \text{resigned his job in Madras} \\
\text{TEXTUAL THEME} \quad \text{TOPICAL THEME}
\]
and (Chacko) returned to Ayemenem
TEXTUAL THEME TOPICAL THEME

with a Bharat bottle-sealing machine

it was Velutha
THEME

who reassembled it
THEME

and (who) set it up
TEXTUAL THEME TOPICAL THEME

This clause-complex begins with a dependent clause ‘when Chacko resigned his job in Madras’ and the whole clause can be considered Thematic. The writer uses it as a point of departure for the whole clause-complex. It indicates that the writer wants to focus on a specific time in history when something important took place. This clause is paratactically linked to the following clause ‘and (Chacko) returned to Ayemenem with a Bharat bottle-selling machine’ and construes a relation of addition. Structurally this is realized by the conjunction ‘and’. The rest of the clauses in the clause-complex are examples of Predicated Themes. These are used by the writer to put Velutha in the prominent position. Instead of putting Velutha as Given information, the writer puts him as New information. For this purpose, he introduces an empty theme ‘it’ and presents it as Given information. The clauses ‘who (Velutha) reassembled it’ and ‘and (Velutha) set it up’ have Velutha in the Thematic position. He is used as point of departure for the messages presented in the respective clauses. The next few clauses in the passage are:

It was Velutha
GIVEN NEW

who maintained the new canning machine
and the automatic pineapple slicer.
Velutha who oiled the water pump and the small diesel generator.

Velutha who built the aluminium steel-lined, easy-to-clean cutting surfaces, and the ground level furnaces for boiling fruit.

All these clauses contain similar Thematic structures and thus create a sort of Thematic cohesion. These are examples of Predicated Themes allowing the writer to pick out a single element and give it emphatic Thematic status. The element that gets the emphatic status here is Velutha. Instead of presenting him as Given information, which would have been a more congruent version, the writer presents him as New information. In the adjoining embedded clauses, Velutha is presented as Topical Theme linguistically realized by the structural element ‘who’.

Thus, the Textual analysis of the passage shows that the passage is mainly concerned with Velutha. In 12 of the clauses, Velutha is presented as Topical Theme and thus is made the starting point of the message. There are only two clauses in which Mammachi is presented as Topical Theme and that too to objectify the writer’s standpoint. Again there are only two clauses in which Chacko is put at the Thematic position. But as these are dependent clauses, the Topical element ‘Chacko’ does not enjoy the same Thematic prominence as the Thematic elements in the independent clauses. In the independent clauses concerned Velutha is presented as Topical Theme and thus gets the prominence. An important feature of the passage that comes to the fore is the writer’s use of Predicated Themes. There are at least six instances where Velutha is presented as Predicated Theme. The purpose of the writer is to put him in emphatic Thematic position. This indicates the importance the writer wants to give to Velutha, who is otherwise an untouchable in the Indian socio-cultural milieu. There are some clauses which begin with Textual Themes like ‘that if only’, ‘who’, ‘that’, ‘than’, ‘when’ etc. These elements perform the linguistic function of connecting clauses in clause-complexes.
It is not that the government has not made any efforts to ameliorate the plight of the untouchables. “When the British came to Malabar, a number of Paravans, Pelayas and Pulayas (among them Velutha’s grandfather, Kelan) converted to Christianity and joined the Anglican Church to escape the scourge of Untouchability” (Roy 74). But even this conversion of faith has failed to transform their predicament. Rather, this conversion has gone against their interests and has come in the way of their getting benefits from the government. Arundhati Roy writes, “After independence they found they were not entitled to any Government benefits like job reservations or bank loans at low interest rates, because officially, on paper, they were Christians, and therefore casteless. It was a little like having to sweep away your footprints without a broom. Or worse not being allowed to have footprints at all” (Roy 74). A Thematic analysis of the passage given in Appendix 15 from Systemic Functional perspective brings to the fore the linguistic structures chosen by the author to organize this message. The very first clause-complex of the passage refers to the time when the untouchables have embraced Christianity to change their destiny:

**When**

the British
came to Malabar,

TEXTUAL THEME  TOPICAL THEME

**a number of Paravans, Pelayas and Pulayas (among them Velutha’s grandfather, Kelan)**

TOPICAL THEME

converted to Christianity

and

(topical)

TEXTUAL THEME  TOPICAL THEME

joined the Anglican Church to escape the scourge of Untouchability.

The author has structured the beginning of the passage with a Textual Theme followed by a Topical Theme. The Textual Theme ‘when’ refers to the time of conversion. It implies that the novelist wants to focus readers’ attention on this specific time in
history. The Topical Theme ‘the British’ refers to their importance in this particular context. Rather it is their arrival in India, more so in Malabar, that is instrumental in the conversion of faith of the untouchables. The next two clauses have ‘a number of Paravans, Pelayas and Pulayas (among them Velutha’s grandfather, Kelan)’ as Topical Themes along with a Textual Theme ‘and’ linking the two clauses in paratactic relationship. Here, the focus shifts from ‘the British’ to the ‘Paravans, Pelayas and Pulayas’. These are the various nomenclatures of so called untouchables sections of society. By this Thematic shift, the author focuses her attention on the main issue of the passage. In the next few clauses, the focus is on them:

**As added incentive**, they were given a little food and money.

*TOPICAL THEME (MARKED)*

**They** were known as the Rice-Christians.

*TOPICAL THEME*

The use of Marked Topical Theme is quite significant here. The writer has brought to the initial position a Circumstantial element ‘as added incentive’ to emphasize what the untouchables got when they changed their faith. In the next clause, ‘they’ referring to untouchables becomes the Theme and the added incentive ‘the Rice-Christian’ is put in the Rheme part. From the point of view of Information structure, ‘they’ is Given information and ‘the Rice-Christians’ is New information. But from the next clause onwards there is a change in tone and this gets reflected in the Thematic choices:

**It** didn’t take them long to realize

*THEME*

**that** **they** had jumped form the frying pan into the fire.

*TEXTUAL THEME   TOPICAL THEME*

**They** were made to have separate churches, with separate services, and separate priests.
**As a special favour** they were even given their own separate Pariah Bishop.

THEME (MARKED)

The first clause in the examples is an instance of a Thematized Comment. The writer’s use of Thematized Comment realizes Interpersonal meaning and expresses her opinion concerning the Proposition that follows. In itself the Thematic element ‘it’ does not convey any meaning. But its significance can be well realized from the context. It refers to the predicament of the untouchables after their conversion into Christianity. The next clause starts with a Textual Theme ‘that’ linking it with the previous clause. The Topical Theme ‘they’ once again refers to Paravans, Pelayas and Pulayas, the untouchables members of society indicating that the writers wants to foreground their predicament in the clause concerned. In the subsequent example, the writer makes use of a Marked Theme ‘as a special favour’. By bringing the Circumstantial element of Role to the Thematic position, the writer tries to put emphasis on the fact that the untouchables have got their own Pariah Bishop. This indicates that they are not completely accepted in the Christian religion. There, they are also considered a separate class. On the other hand, this transition from one religion to another has a negative effect on their existence as human beings. This is highlighted in the subsequent clauses of the passage where their lot after independence is described:

**After independence** they found they were not entitled

THEME (MARKED)

to any Government benefits like job reservations or bank loans at low interest rates,

**Because officially, on paper,**

TEXTUAL INTERPERSONAL TOPICAL (MARKED)

THEME THEME THEME

they were Christians, and therefore casteless.
It was a little like having to sweep away your footprints without a broom

THEME

Or worse (it was)

TEXTUAL THEME INTERPERSONAL TOPICAL THEME (Elliptical)

not being allowed to leave footprints at all.

The last part of the passage starts with a Marked Theme ‘after independence’. A Circumstantial element of Location referring to time is brought to the initial position to highlight the predicament of untouchables in temporal context. This Marked Theme ‘after independence’ builds a Thematic contrast with the Thematic clause ‘when the British came to Malabar’ at the beginning of the passage. In this way, by the use of these Thematic devices, the writer tries to bring home to the readers the plight of the untouchables at different times in history. The next clause is a unique one in the sense that it contains a Textual Theme, an Interpersonal Theme and a Marked Topical Theme. The Textual Theme ‘because’ links the clause with the previous clause and also builds a relationship of cause and effect. The Interpersonal Theme ‘officially’ is a comment by the writer on the ideas expressed in the clause. The Topical Theme ‘on paper’ is a Marked one and refers to Circumstantial element of Location. It refers to the position of untouchables in official records. In this way, the use of three Themes in a single clause succeeds in highlighting the inconsistency between what the untouchables in reality are and what their position in the government records is.

In the last two clauses of the passage ‘it’ is used as a Thematic element and is a placeholder for the Subject of ‘to be’. In one of the clauses, it is explicitly stated while in the other it is ellipted. In both these clauses this Thematic element is used in the sense of Thematic Comment and expresses the writer’s opinion concerning the Propositions concerned. In the second clause, the Topical Theme is preceded by a Textual Theme ‘or’ and an Interpersonal Theme ‘worse’. The Textual Theme links the two clauses and establishes a paratactic relation of variation. On the other hand, the Interpersonal Theme is a comment by the writer on the ideas expressed in the clause. In this way, the writer
herself enters into text and comments on the position of untouchables in pre-independence and post-independence period.

In this way, by the use of various Thematic structures, the writer has succeeded in creating a world, which is quite unsuitable for the untouchables. There are 13 clauses in the passage in total and out of these, 09 clauses contain Unmarked Topical Themes and 04 clauses contain Marked Topical Themes. Out of the 09 Unmarked clauses, 05 clauses have Paravans, Pulayas and Pulayas as Topical Themes indicating the passage is mainly concerned with their plight. In three of the clauses the Topical Theme is ‘it’ used in the sense of Thematized Comment expressing writer’s views on the situation described in the passage. There is only one clause in which the Thematic element is ‘the British’, which is used to indicate a specific time in history. Moreover, this element is in a dependent clause and does not carry much significance. Besides the Topical Themes, there are five Textual Themes in the passage viz. ‘when’, ‘and’, ‘that’, ‘because’ and ‘or’. These serve the purpose of connecting clauses with each other and form sometimes paratactic and sometimes hypotactic relation. Of these, the Textual Theme ‘when’ also creates temporal context for the passage and ‘because’ creates a relation of cause and effect. The two Interpersonal Themes used in the passage ‘officially’ and ‘worse’ articulate the writer’s personal observations on the subject represented in the text. The four Marked Themes in the passage ‘as an added incentive’, ‘as a special favour’, ‘after independence’ and ‘on paper, also produce an impression that this world is negatively titled against the untouchables. ‘As an added incentive’ and ‘as a special favour’ refer to the so-called benefits they got when they adopted Christianity. But a close reading of the clauses concerned reveals that these Thematic elements are writer’s sarcastic comments on the situation. ‘After independence’ is a Circumstance of Location used as Marked Theme to locate the text in a specific time in history and also used as Thematic contrast with the first clause of the passage ‘when the British came to Malabar’. ‘On paper’ again is Circumstance of Location and refers to untouchables’ official position. Thus, by the use of specific Thematic structures, the writer has succeeded in conveying the meaning that she wants to convey.
Another meaning that Arundhati Roy wants to structure in the text is the position of women in India sub-continent. The Indian society, at large, is patriarchal and male dominated where men enjoy a prominent position and women a secondary one. The attitude of the male members of society towards the female members is denigrating, exploitative, and repressive. The female characters depicted in the text under study enter into an unending struggle for existence in the male dominated social setup. A clause-by-clause analysis of some of the passages from the text form the point of view of Textual structures makes it clear that one of the meanings that Arundhati Roy wants to bring home to the readers is exploitation on the basis of gender. The passage given in Appendix 04 deals with Ammu’s life in her parental house in Ayemenem. In this house, she is given a discriminatory treatment by her father simply because of the fact that she is a girl child. Her father is of the opinion that a college education is an unnecessary expense for a girl. A Textual analysis of the passage unveils the Thematic structures Arundhati Roy has employed to present this facet of reality. In the very first clause of the passage, she puts ‘Ammu’, the female protagonist, in the Thematic position to indicate that it is her predicament that is her chief concern:

Ammu finished her schooling the same year

That her father retired from his job in Delhi

And (her father) moved to Ayemenem.

By doing so the author has used ‘Ammu’ as the starting point of the message. As the very first clause is also a topic clause of the passage, it puts the whole focus on Ammu, the way she has to leave Delhi, to come to Ayemenem and ultimately persuade her father to let her go to Calcutta to a distant aunt. The rest of the two clauses in the clause-complex have multiple Themes. In both cases Textual Themes precede Topical Themes. In the clause ‘that her father retired from his job in Delhi’ ‘that’ is the Textual Theme.
and links this clause hypotactically with the preceding clause and establishes a relationship of enhancement. The Topical Theme ‘her father’ shows a shift in focus from Ammu to Pappachi, her father. In the other clause, the Textual Theme ‘and’ paratactically links the two clauses and serves the purpose of extension of the ideas already expressed. The Topical Theme ‘her father’ is in ellipted form and refers to Ammu’s father. The next clause-complex starts with the same Topical Theme:

Pappachi insisted

that a college education was an unnecessary expense for a girl,

so Ammu had no choice

but to leave Delhi

and move with them.

In this clause-complex, the focus continues to be on Ammu’s father as he is put in the Thematic position in the very first clause. But in the next clause, the writer brings in a shift in focus. The focus this time is neither on Ammu nor on her father Pappachi or on any other human being but on a concept ‘a college education’. By foregrounding the concept of college education, Arundhati Roy draws attention to the discriminating attitude of Pappachi about the education of girls, here in this case the education of Ammu. In the next three clauses, the Topical Theme is ‘Ammu’ and it is preceded by different Textual Themes viz. ‘so’, ‘but’, and ‘and’. The Textual Theme ‘so’ establishes a clause and effect relationship with the preceding clause and shows the result of Pappachi’s thinking on Ammu’s life. The other two Textual Themes are used as
extension of such an effect. The Textual Theme ‘but’ shows that Ammu goes to Delhi against her own desires and ‘and’ is an additive to this move. The next clause-complex in the passage starts with the Thematic element ‘there’:

**There** was a very little for a young girl to do in Ayemenem

THEME

Other than to wait for marriage proposals

**While** **she** helped her mother in the housework.

TEXTUAL THEME TOPICAL THEME

But in the second clause, the spotlight shifts to Ammu, the female protagonist. At structural level this is achieved by putting her at the position of Topical Theme. The Textual Theme ‘while’ refers to Ammu’s predicament at a definite time i.e. when she has to wait for marriage proposals. In the next clause-complex, Arundhati Roy once again brings Pappachi, Ammu’s father, into focus:

**Since** **her father** did not have enough money

TEXTUAL THEME TOPICAL THEME

to raise a suitable dowry,

**no proposals** came Ammu’s way.

THEME

The Textual Theme ‘since’ at the beginning of the next clause establishes a relationship of enhancement with the following clause and refers to the reasons behind delay in Ammu’s marriage. The Topical Theme ‘her father’ puts Ammu’s father in prominence but this is done to put focus on the fact that he is responsible for Ammu’s troubles. In the next finite clause the focus shifts from ‘her father’ to ‘no proposals’, an idea. Once again, this structural shift serves the purpose of highlighting the lack of matrimonial proposals in Ammu’s life.
In the next clause the Thematic element is a temporal one ‘two years’. It indicates the time Ammu had to wait for marriage proposals. Then the focus shifts to Ammu’s age in the next clause. By putting ‘her eighteenth birthday’ in the Thematic position, the writer has tried to show the importance of age in matrimonial matters in the Indian context. The higher the age is, the less the matrimonial prospectus for a girl. The next clause shows the consequence of all these developments on Ammu. Ammu is again brought to the Thematic position, as it is she who has to bear all this.

**Two years** went by.

**Her eighteenth birthday** came and went.

Unnoticed, or at least unremarked upon by her parents.

**Ammu** grew desperate.

The following clause-complex starts with a Marked Theme. The Circumstantial element of time ‘all day’ is brought to the initial position thus bringing it into focus. In the next clause, Ammu is once again put at the Thematic position. The Rheme element of this clause is ‘hatched several wretched little plans’. This Rheme becomes Thematic ‘one’ in the next clause preceded by an Interpersonal Theme ‘eventually’. By using the Interpersonal element at the Thematic position, the writer herself enters into the discourse and comments on Ammu’s situation and refers to what happens to her at the end of a series of events.

**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.

**THEME**

Eventually, one worked.

**INTERPERSONAL THEME TOPICAL THEME**

In the last clause-complex of the passage ‘Pappachi’ is the Thematic element in the first clause. He agrees to send Ammu to a distant aunt. In the subsequent clause ‘a distant aunt’ in the form of ‘who’ gets the Thematic slot.

**Pappachi** agreed to let her spend the summer with a distant aunt

**THEME**

**who** lived in Calcutta.

**THEME**

Thus, that the passage is mainly about ‘Ammu’, the female protagonist of the novel. It becomes clear from the fact that majority of the clauses (08) have either Ammu or some pronoun referring to her at the Thematic position. The next important character in the passage is Pappachi, Ammu’s father. He is put in the Thematic position in at least 05 of the clauses. But here again the main emphasis is on the result of his actions on Ammu’s life. There are at least five clauses in which the Thematic element is neither Ammu nor Pappachi nor any other human being but some idea or concept e.g. ‘a college education’, ‘no proposals’, ‘two years’, ‘her eighteenth birthday’ and ‘one (several wretched little plans). All these elements directly or indirectly are related to Ammu or her predicament. For example, the idea of ‘a college education’ is, no doubt, put from the angle of Pappachi, but its direct victim is Ammu. This is also true of other concepts put in the Thematic position.

Looked at from another Textual angle, there are at least 08 clauses in which some Textual element is put at the initial position. These are mainly part of clause-complexes and used to link clauses with each other. In almost an equal number of
clauses, the Thematic element is the same as Subject in the Interpersonal metafunction. There is only one clause in which Circumstantial element is at the Thematic position:

**All day** she dreamed of escaping from Ayemenem and
**TOPICAL THEME (MARKED)**

the clutches of her ill-tempered father and bitter, long suffering mother.

By foregrounding the Circumstantial element of time, the writer has tried to bring into focus the importance of time in the life of Ammu. There is another clause in which an Interpersonal element is put at the initial position:

**Eventually, one** worked.
**INTERPERSONAL THEME  TOPICAL THEME**

By putting the Mood Adjunct ‘eventually’ at the Thematic place, which means ‘at the end of a period of time or a series of events’, the author has again stressed the importance of time in Ammu’s life. It shows how difficult it has been for Ammu to pass her time in her parental house at Ayemenem. There are at least two more clauses, which refer to age/time as something crucial in matrimonial matters, especially in the marriage of a girl:

**Two years** went by.
**THEME**

**Her eighteenth birthday** came and went.
**THEME**

The period of ‘two years’ is described as quite crucial in the life of a girl. Similarly, ‘her eighteenth birthday’ refers to the fact that in a South Indian rural socio-cultural milieu, a girl should have got married before she reaches her eighteenth birthday.

Thus, the passage starts with Ammu in the Thematic position and thus serving a point of departure for the author. The passage ends with her father’s permission to
allow her to spend the summer with a distant aunt in Calcutta. This ultimately leads to a series of events, which ultimately jeopardize Ammu’s life.

The passage given in Appendix 05 deals with Ammu’s meeting with her future husband. In the first part of the passage, the writer describes Ammu’s would be husband by listing various traits of her personality. But in the second part of the passage, she shifts the spotlight towards his proposal of marriage to Ammu. Roy also focuses on the circumstances under which Ammu decides to accept his proposal. The writer chooses a Marked Theme as a point of departure to foreground the place where Ammu meets her future husband:

There at someone else’s marriage reception, TOPICAL THEME (MARKED)

Ammu met her future husband.

A Circumstance of Location – Place is put at the initial position to indicate the place of Ammu’s meeting with her future husband. But in the very next clause ‘he’ (Ammu’s would be husband) is put in the Thematic position. From the perspective of Information structure, he is presented as Given information and the other elements as New information:

He was on vacation from his job in Assam
THEME \ GIVEN

Where he worked as an assistant manager of a tea estate.
THEME (MARKED)

In most of the clauses in the passage (10), Ammu’s future husband is put in the Thematic position either overtly or covertly. This is because after the first clause the author takes him as Given information and in clause after clause she provides one or the other facet of his personality as New information e.g.
He was a small man. NEW

But (he was) well-built. NEW

(He was) pleasant looking. NEW

In this way, the writer has used linguistic mechanism of Information structure to realize the linguistic function of describing the various traits of Ammu’s would-be husband. In contrast, there are at least five clauses in which Ammu is put in the Thematic position. Look at the following clauses:

Ammu didn’t pretend to be in love with him. THEME

She just weighed the odds and accepted. THEME

She thought that anything, anyone at all, would be better than returning to Ayemenem. THEME

In all these clauses, Ammu is chosen as a point of departure of the message. But the Rheme element in all these clauses is quite significant as it contains New information for the readers. The New element supplies the readers with information regarding Ammu’s decision to marry ‘her future husband’.

Then there are clauses in which the Thematic elements are other than Ammu and her future husband. These elements are ‘his family’, ‘who (wealthy zamindars)’, ‘that (old fashioned spectacles)’, ‘which (not been to college)’, ‘five days after they (Ammu and her future husband)’, ‘that anything, anyone at all’ and ‘they (Ammu’s parents)’. Of these, the following clauses are quite significant:
He proposed to Ammu five days after they first met.

TOPICAL THEME (MARKED)

She thought that anything, anyone at all would be better than returning to Ayemenem.

In one of the clauses, the Circumstantial element of Time is brought to the Thematic position. The author has made it a Marked Theme to give prominence to the fact that they have not taken enough time to take the crucial decision of their marriage. In another clause, ‘anything, anyone at all’ is put in the Thematic position. It contains indefinite and inanimate elements. It shows the casual attitude of Ammu towards her marriage. Taken together, both these Thematic elements create a picture of a matrimonial alliance, which is not materialized on the basis of thorough consideration. The chances of success in such a alliance are quite remote.

The last clause of the passage is:

They didn’t reply.

Here, ‘they’ refers to Ammu’s parents. The clause shows the attitude of Ammu’s parents towards her marriage. The Rheme part indicates their lack of concern. It implies that they are not in favour of this matrimonial alliance.

As expected, Ammu’s marriage turns out to be an unsuccessful one. Her husband turns out to be an alcoholic and good for nothing fellow. In order to save his job, he wants Ammu to satisfy the carnal desires of his boss. Ammu refuses to accept this uncompromising situation and decides to leave him. But even in her parents’ house she is not welcomed. The passage given in Appendix 06 refers to Ammu’s predicament.
after she has left her husband. In Indian socio-cultural milieu, a woman has no place in her parent’s house after marriage. The passage contains 10 clauses in total. Of these 09 contain Unmarked Topical Theme and one contains Marked Topical Theme. The only Marked Theme is:

Except that now she had two young children.

The Circumstantial ‘now’ is brought to the initial position to draw attention to the change that has come in Ammu’s life over the passage of time.

In the clauses where Unmarked Topical Themes are used, Ammu and Pappachi occupy the Thematic slots in majority of the clauses. It implies that the writer wants them to be the focus of attention. Actually, the passage deals with Ammu’s return to her parental house and Pappachi’s subsequent response. The other Topical Themes are ‘his bouts of violence’, ‘war with Pakistan’ and ‘an Englishman, any Englishman’. The Topical Theme in the last clause is quite significant because it calls attention to Pappachi’s response to Ammu’s tale of misfortune:

Pappachi would not believe her story – not because he thought well of her husband but simply because he didn’t believe that an Englishman, any Englishman, would covet another man’s wife.

It indicates that Pappachi has more faith in an Englishman than in his own daughter. The Englishman referred here is boss of Ammu’s husband who has instructed Ammu’s husband to send Ammu to him to satisfy his sexual impulses if he wants to retain his job.

Besides the Topical Themes, the passage contains 01 Interpersonal Theme and 08 Textual Themes. The only Interpersonal Theme is ‘simply because’ and it refers to Pappachi’s views regarding Englishmen. The Textual Themes used in the passage are ‘when’, ‘and’, ‘that’, ‘except that’, ‘not because’ and ‘but’. As usual, these are used to build connections between the adjoining clauses and also to establish some sort of
logico-semantic relationship between each other. For instance in the following clause complex ‘when’ refers to the time of action and ‘and’ connects the two clauses and establishes a relationship of extension:

**When** his bouts of violence began to include the children, **and** war with Pakistan began, Ammu left her husband **and** returned, unwelcomed, to her parents in Ayemenem.

Similarly, conjunction ‘that’ serves the logico-semantic purpose of enhancement:

To everything, **that** she had fled from only a few years ago.

In the same way, the Textual Theme ‘except that’ in the following clause establishes logico-semantic relationship of concession and refers to the change that has come in Ammu’s life:

**Except that** now she had two young children. And no more dreams.

The last clause-complex of the passage has three Textual Themes ‘not because’, ‘but’ and ‘that’:

Pappachi would not believe her story – **not because** he thought well of her husband **but** simply because he didn’t believe **that** an Englishman, any Englishman, would covet another man’s wife.

The Thematic element ‘not because’ establishes a relationship of cause and effect in a negative way. The Textual Theme ‘but’ extends the ideas expressed in the opposite direction.

In this way, the linguistic structures used in the passage serves the linguistic function intended by the author. Here her purpose appears to be to highlight the response of Pappachi, a male, on Ammu’s return to her parental house after leaving her husband for good. Conforming to the Indian socio-cultural environment, he is not happy
Likewise, the passage given in Appendix 11 deals with the patriarchal system of society where women are taken for granted. The passage presents the position of Ammu in her parental house in comparison to his brother Chacko. As expected, in many of the clauses, the author chooses either Ammu or Chacko as point of departure. The very first clause-complex of the passage is:

\[
\text{Though} \quad \text{Ammu} \quad \text{did as much work in the factory as} \\
\text{TEXTUAL THEME} \quad \text{TOPICAL THEME} \quad \text{Chacko},
\]

\[
\text{whenever} \quad \text{he} \quad \text{was dealing with food inspectors or} \\
\text{TEXTUAL THEME} \quad \text{TOPICAL THEME} \quad \text{sanitary engineers},
\]

\[
\text{he} \quad \text{always referred to it as my factory,} \\
\text{THEME} \quad \text{my pineapples, my pickles.}
\]

The author begins the clause-complex with a Textual Theme ‘though’ construing a relation of concession with the independent clause. The Topical Theme is Ammu, indicating that the author has chosen her as the point of departure. In the very next clause, the Textual Theme is ‘whenever’ which refers to time and Topical Theme is ‘he’. Now the focus shifts from Ammu to Chacko referred to as ‘he’. In the next clause, the only Topical Theme ‘he’ refers to Chacko. Thus, this clause complex contains two Textual Themes and three Topical Themes. Of the three Topical Themes, two refer to Chacko and one to Ammu. This gives a dominating position to Chacko. Not only this, in the independent clause the Topical Theme is Chacko, while in the dependent clauses, in one the Topical Theme is Chacko and in the other it is Ammu. The next clause-complex shows the attitude of the author towards the ideas presented in this clause-complex:
Legally, this was the case

INTERPERSONAL THEME  TOPICAL THEME

because Ammu, as a daughter, had no claim to the property

TEXTUAL THEME  TOPICAL THEME

The writer puts a Comment Adjunct at the Thematic position and thus sets the tone for the clause-complex. By using ‘legally’ as an Interpersonal Theme, the writer distances herself from the ideas expressed in the clause-complex. In this way, she lessens her degree of commitment to the ideas expressed in the Proposition. The Topical Theme ‘this’ refers to all the ideas expressed in the previous clause-complex i.e. Chacko’s claim that it is ‘my factory, my pineapples, my pickles’. The succeeding clause begins with a Textual Theme ‘because’ and construes a relationship of cause and effect. It serves the linguistic function of foregrounding the legal status and its effect on Ammu. The Topical Theme ‘Ammu’ signifies that the clause is about her. The next clause-complex is:

Chacko told Rahel and Estha

THEME

That Ammu had no Locusts Stand I.

TEXTUAL THEME  TOPICAL THEME

In the first clause, Chacko is in the Thematic position and thus is chosen by the writer as point of departure. The second clause, however starts with a Textual Theme ‘that’ which links this clause to the previous clause and construes a relationship of enhancement. Here the Topical Theme is Ammu indicating that the rest of the clause is about her. The next clause has a Marked Theme. Here the Complement is put at the initial position:

‘Thanks to our male chauvinist society’, Ammu said.

TOPICAL THEME (MARKED)
By putting the Complement at the Thematic position, the writer has tried to bring it into focus. Thus, ‘thanks to our male chauvinist society’ is foregrounded. By doing so the writer brings into focus the male-female dichotomy that exists in the patriarchal society. These words are uttered by Ammu, but by the use of Marked Theme the writer moves the focus from Ammu to what she says. The last clause-complex is:

**Chacko** said ‘what’s yours is mine and what’s mine is also mine’.

Here, Chacko is at the Thematic position and thus, the clause is about him. The Rheme expresses his views regarding his property rights. In this way, the writer puts into contrast the views of Chacko and Ammu, a male and a female.

Thus, the Textual analysis of the passage brings out that the passage is about Ammu and Chacko. In four of the clauses, Ammu is the Topical Theme and in an equal number of clauses, Chacko is the Topical Theme. In one of the clauses, the Textual Theme is ‘this’ which refers to the Rheme of the previous clauses. There is only one Interpersonal Theme in the form of Comment Adjunct ‘legally’ that the writer uses to defer her responsibility for the statement. There is only one clause in which the Theme is a Marked one i.e. a Complement is used at the initial position. Obviously, the purpose is to foreground the ideas expressed as Theme. There are at least four clauses containing Textual Themes. The main purpose is to link the clauses with each other and to maintain the continuity.

In this way, Arundhati Roy’s “The God of Small Things” deals with the position of women in Indian society. Ammu, the central character in the novel, is presented as a victim of patriarchal system. But this patriarchal system gets reflected not only through the thinking and actions of male characters only but also through the mental makeup and external behavior of female characters like Mammachi as well. The ideas expressed in the passage given in Appendix 07 shows how a woman like Mammachi views a situation in the life of another woman i.e. Ammu. Ammu has left her husband and has come back to stay in her parental house in Ayemenem. A Textual analysis of the
passage brings to the fore the way the writer has structured her message. The first clause complex is:

**She (Mammachi)** subscribed wholeheartedly to the commonly held view

**that** a married daughter had no position in her parents’ house.

The writer chooses to start the passage with Mammachi as a Topical Theme. So structurally she is the starting point of the massage and the clause is going to be about her. Another clause in the clause-complex begins with a Textual Theme ‘that’, a structural element linking two clauses in the clause-complex and serving the purpose of enhancement. The Topical Theme here is ‘a married daughter’. So this is the element, which is the focal point of the clause concerned. The next clause is:

**As for a divorced daughter – according to Baby Kochamma,**

she had no position anywhere at all.

Here, the writer chooses Marked Themes as point of departure for the message. She brings to the initial position two Circumstantial elements of Angle ‘as for a divorced daughter’ and ‘according to Baby Kochamma’. So the whole clause is presented from the angle of Baby Kochamma. This serves for the writer at least two purposes. One is female members of society are as harsh towards divorced women as men and perhaps even more. The other is these are the views of Baby Kochamma and not of Arundhati Roy, the writer. Another Thematic element ‘as for a divorced daughter’ indicates that the clause is going to deal with only those women who are divorced and not others. In this way, ‘divorced women’ are classified as a different class and are unlike other women. In the next clause, we find continuity of the same Theme with a little difference:
And as for a divorced daughter from a love marriage,
TEXTUAL THEME TOPICAL THEME (MARKED)

well, words could not describe Baby Kochamma’s rage.

This clause starts with a Textual Theme ‘and’ which links this clause paratactically with
the previous clause and construes a relationship of extension. The Topical Theme here
again is Marked one. A Circumstantial element of Angle ‘as for a divorced daughter
form a love marriage’ is used as point of departure for the message. Structurally, this
indicates a continuity of the Theme of the previous clause ‘as for a divorced daughter’.
But the addition of the group ‘from a love marriage’ gives it its special flavor and twist.
This is the writer’s way of foregrounding a special situation in the life of a woman. And
in the following clause, the same structural strategy is further extended:

As for a divorced daughter from a intercommunity love marriage –
TOPICAL THEME (MARKED)

Baby Kochamma chose to remain quiveringly silent on the subject.

Here again, a Circumstantial element of Angle is brought to the Thematic position.
Hence, the Topical Theme is a Marked one. The writer repeats the Theme of the
previous clause with a difference. Instead of using ‘as for a divorced daughter from a
love marriage’ he uses ‘as for a divorced daughter from a intercommunity love
marriage’. The addition of a single lexical expression ‘intercommunity’ is writer’s way
of emphasizing this specific social aspect. It emphasizes that in India, intercommunity
marriages are not generally accepted.

Thus, analysis of the passage from Textual angle brings out the different ways
the writer organizes the message to highlight a specific meaning. Linearly, she shifts
certain elements to the initial position to emphasize them. She starts with Mammachi as
Thematic element, indicating that the passage is going to be presented from her angle.
In the very next clause, she moves on to put ‘a married daughter’ at Thematic position.
The rest of the passage deals with the position of a married daughter in her parents’
house. In the rest of the clauses, the writer chooses to make use of Marked Themes. Circumstantial elements of Angle with little differences are used in all clauses at the initial position making their position a Marked one. This repetition of the Circumstantial elements at the initial position emerges to be a special feature of the passage. This, on the one hand, highlights the fact that the passage is presented from a special angle and, on the other hand, it provides a sort of grammatical parallelism and contributes to the cohesiveness of the passage.

The Indian society has double standards to evaluate its male and female members. The sexual relationship of Ammu with Velutha is looked down upon and she asked to leave the Ayemenem house. Chacko, her brother, on the other hand enters into similar relationship with women working in the factory but both Baby Kochamma and Mammachi close their eyes to it. Mammachi, his mother, even goes to the extent of saying, “He can’t help having a Man’s Needs” (Roy 168). In this way, “the enigmatic, secretly thrilling notion of 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” (Roy 168). In order to bring this aspect of Indian society to the fore, Arundhati Roy has used the linguistic structures accordingly. A Thematic analysis of the passage given in Appendix 19 reveals that there are 28 clauses in the passage and all the clauses contain Unmarked Topical Themes. There are only three clauses where the Topical Themes are preceded by Interpersonal Themes:

**Surprisingly**, Baby Kochamma accepted this explanation and the enigmatic, secretly thrilling notion of Men’s Needs gained implicit sanction in the Ayemenem House.

**Of course** they did not even remotely suspect that the missile, when it was fired the one that would annihilate the family’s Good Name forever, would come from a completely unexpected quarter.

The arrangement suited Mammachi, because **in her mind**, a few clarified things.
In the first example, the Interpersonal Theme ‘surprisingly’ is a comment by the author on Baby Kochamma’s behaviour. The fact that she has accepted Chacko’s illicit relations with the women working in the factory speaks of her double standards. Because when Ammu’s affair with Velutha is discovered, it is Baby Kochamma who raises a hue and cry and it is she who lodges a complaint against Velutha in the police station. Arundhati Roy’s use of Interpersonal ‘surprisingly’ shows that she does not approve of Baby Kochamma’s this behaviour. In the next example, the Interpersonal Theme ‘of course’ is again the writer’s comment on the ideas expressed in the following clause. ‘The missile’ in the clause refers to Ammu’s relationship with Velutha that gives an unexpected shock to everybody in the Ayemenem house. But in the last example, the Interpersonal Theme ‘in her mind’ refers to the ideas of Mammachi, Chacko’s mother. She thinks that by giving money to the women, the sexual favours done by them to Chacko get justified. Here her attitude, like Baby Kochamma’s attitude, is contrary to her attitude towards Ammu’s sexual encounters with Velutha.

Besides the Interpersonal Themes, there are 09 Textual Themes in the passage that precede Interpersonal and Topical Themes. These are ‘but’, ‘when’, ‘and’, ‘who’, ‘whom’, ‘that’, ‘which’, ‘because’ etc. Of these ‘but’ not only links the two adjoining clauses but also constructs a relationship of counter expectancy:

She was aware of his libertine relationship with the women in the factory, but had ceased to be hurt by them.

The reference is to Chacko’s relationship with women working in the factory. Mammachi’s response to this situation is opposite to expectations. Instead of getting shocked, she accepts it as normal. The Textual Theme ‘when’ puts the whole situation in temporal context and serves the purpose of enhancement:

When Baby Kochamma brought up the subject, Mammachi became tense and tight lipped.
Similarly, the Textual Theme ‘because’ creates a relationship of cause and reason:

The arrangement suited Mammachi, because in her mind, a fee clarified things.

Here it refers to the reason behind Mammachi arrangement of giving money to women working in the factory in lieu of sexual favours done by them to Chacko.

The Topical Themes used in the passage are quite scattered ones. But in a large number of clauses it is Mammachi or Baby Kochamma or both are made the point of departure. It means that, in the passage, the writer wants them to be the focus of attention. Indeed, the passage mainly expresses their views on the issue of Chacko’s relationship with the factory women. In one clause, Chacko and in two clauses the women working in the factory are also assigned Thematic prominence. In contrast, there are three clauses in which ‘missile’ is given Thematic status. This missile refers to Ammu’s relationship with Velutha. But putting this relationship in the Thematic spot, the author builds a contrast between the two relationships and opposite reactions of Baby Kochamma and Mammachi. In this way, Thematic prominence is used to highlight their discriminatory response to two similar situations. The other Thematic elements used are ‘Men’s Needs’, ‘the objects of his needs’, ‘the arrangement’, ‘Chacko’s room’ etc. Taken together, all these Themes refer to Chacko’s sexual encounters with the women working in the factory.

It is not only Ammu who is the victim of patriarchal system, but also other women characters in the novel. One such character is Mammachi, Ammu’s mother. She becomes victim of her husband’s cruel treatment who usually beats her with brass vase. He is presented as a jealous husband who cannot tolerate his wife’s rise in life and getting attention. The passage given in Appendix 08 deals with Pappachi’s patriarchal state of mind and its effect on Mammachi. An analysis of the passage from Textual angle brings out how the various linguistic structures are used by Arundhati Roy to achieve this linguistic function. The first clause-complex is:
Though Mammachi had conical corneas
TEXTUAL THEME TOPICAL THEME

and was already practically blind,
TEXTUAL THEME

Pappachi would not help her with the pickle making.
THEME

Because he
textual theme topical theme

did not consider pickle-making a suitable job for a high-ranking ex-Government official.

Roy begins the passage with a dependent clause of concession and also puts the whole clause at the Thematic spot. Individually, the clause starts with a Textual Theme ‘though’ which links it hypotactically with the independent clause. ‘Mammachi’ is the Topical Theme and hence chosen as a starting point for the message. The next clause starts with the Textual Theme ‘and’ which links it with the previous clause paratactically and construes a relation of addition. This clause is also an example of ellipsis at the level of Topical Theme, which is Mammachi and can be derived from the previous clause. In the independent clause ‘Pappachi’ is the Topical Theme and a point of departure for the message. The clause is linked hypotactically with the following clause and construes a relationship of cause and effect. Structurally, this is realized by the Textual Theme ‘because’ at the beginning of the following clause. The Topical Theme ‘he (Pappachi)’ is a continuation of the previous clause. The next clause-complex is:

He has always been a jealous man,
so he greatly resented the attention

TEXTUAL THEME TOPICAL THEME

his wife was suddenly getting.

THEME

At the Thematic level, this clause-complex is a progression of the previous one. It starts with Pappachi as Topical Theme. The succeeding clause begins with a Textual Theme ‘so’ which shows the results of the ideas expressed in the preceding clause. The Topical Theme is again ‘Pappachi’. In the last clause of this clause-complex, there is a shift at the Thematic level. Mammachi (his wife) is brought to the Thematic place and hence chosen as the point of departure for the message. The next clause-complex is:

He slouched around the compound

THEME in his immaculately tailored suits,

weaving sudden circles around mounds of red chillies

and freshly powdered yellow turmeric,

watching Mammachi supervise the buying, the weighing,

the salting and dying, of limes and tender mangoes.

In all these clauses, Pappachi is put at the Thematic position and hence chosen as point of departure indicating that the rest of the clauses are about him. The next clause contains a Marked Theme. A Circumstancial element of Location – Time is brought to the initial position to foreground it:

Every night he beat her with a brass flower vase.

THEME (MARKED)

The use of Marked Theme is structurally as well as functionally significant. By this structural shift, the writer focuses on the frequency of the event, in this case beating of Mammachi by Pappachi. In the next clause, we find a Thematic shift. Instead of a human being ‘the beatings’ is brought to the Thematic position.
The beatings weren’t new.

The focus continues to be on the beatings. It illustrates the way the male members of society treat their female counterparts. The next clause-complex is linguistically quite significant:

What was new

__________________________

was only the frequency

with which they took place.

This clause-complex presents a shift in the status of Given and New information through a process of Thematic Predication. Through the use of this structural device, the writer gives emphasis to a constituent that would otherwise remain unemphasized. He does so by moving the constituent ‘new’ from the beginning to the end position and thus affects the intonation choice. He presents ‘new’ as New information instead of Given information. For the adjoining clause the full clause ‘what was new’ serves the purpose of Theme. In the clause ‘with which they took place’ a Circumstance of Extent is presented as a Marked Theme. It emphasizes the frequency with which Pappachi used to beat Mammachi. The last clause-complex of the passage is:

One night Pappachi broke the bow of Mammachi’s violin

And threw it in the river.

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In the first clause, a Circumstance of Location – Time is chosen by the writer as a point of departure. This is realized by bringing the Circumstantial element ‘one night’ to the initial position. The purpose is to bring into limelight a specific time in the life of Mammachi and Pappachi. But this time is also an extension of the time already described. It further underlines the cruelty shown by Pappachi towards his wife. The following clause begins with a Textual Theme ‘and’ and is linked paratactically with the previous clause. It construes a relation of addition. The Topical Theme ‘Pappachi’ is ellipted but can be derived from the preceding clause.

Thus, there are in total 17 clauses in the passage. In 08 of the clauses, Pappachi is presented as starting point of the message, indicating that the passage is mainly about him. This provides a Thematic unity and continuity to the passage. In three of the clauses, Mammachi is presented as Topical Theme. In one clause, ‘the beatings’ is used as Theme, which is derived from the Rheme of the preceding clause. There are at least three clauses in which the writer makes use of Marked Theme. In all these cases, Circumstantial elements are brought to the initial position. In two of the cases, the Marked Thematic elements are Circumstances of Location indicating time of action and in one of the cases, the Circumstance of Extent is foregrounded to emphasize the frequency of beatings. There are five clauses starting with Textual Themes like ‘though’, ‘and’, ‘because’, ‘so’ etc. All these are conjunctions, which are used to link clauses together within clause-complexes. Since they are obliged to come first in the clause, they do not take up the full Thematic potential of the clauses concerned. They indicate that the following clause is part of a larger structural unit i.e. the clause-complex. So, in order to understand the full Thematic potential, we need to look at Topical Themes in the clauses concerned. In the passage, there is only one example of Predicated Theme. Here the element that in normal circumstances would have been presented as Given information is presented as New information and hence gets highlighted.

There are other instances in the novel where Mammachi, Ammu’s mother, becomes victim of gender discrimination and suffers at the hands of her husband.
Pappachi. Pappachi, in the novel, is portrayed as a person who cannot tolerate his wife’s rise in life. There are several incidents in the novel referring to his gender-discriminatory behaviour. The passage given in Appendix 10 deals with an episode from his life presenting his patriarchal mental make up. A Textual analysis of the passage at clause rank makes it clear how the writer has built up her meaning by structuring the clause as message. The first clause-complex in the passage is:

**It was during those few months**

PREDICATED THEME

(that)           they spent in Vienna

TEXTUAL THEME (ELLIPTED)  TOPICAL THEME

RHEME

that Mammachi took her first lessons on the violin.

TEXTUAL THEME  TOPICAL THEME

In this clause-complex, the full clause ‘it was during those few months’ is put at the Thematic position. It is an example of Predicated Theme where a Circumstance indicating Time is brought to the Thematic slot. The purpose is to single out the Predicated constituent i.e. Circumstance of Location: Time as particularly noteworthy and put it in contrast with other elements in the text. In the clause ‘they spent in Vienna’, the Topical Theme ‘they’ refers to Pappachi and Mammachi. The subsequent clause starts with a Textual Theme ‘that’ that links it paratactically with the previous clause and the Topical Theme is Mammachi maintaining Thematic progression. The next clause-complex is:

**The lessons were abruptly discontinued**

THEME
when Mammachi’s teacher, Launsky – Tieffenthal.

made the mistake of telling Pappachi

that his wife were exceptionally talented

and, in his opinion, potentially concert class.

The first clause of this clause-complex begins with a Topical Theme ‘the lessons’. This Theme is continuation of the Rheme of the previous clause ‘her first lessons’. Thus, this is the element with which the rest of the clause-complex is concerned. The next clause, a dependent clause, starts with a Textual Theme ‘when’. It links the following clause hypotactically with the previous clause and also tells the reader about the time of action. The Topical Theme ‘Mammachi’s teacher, Launsky – Tieffenthal’ is used for the first time. Here the writer has not only put ‘Mammachi’s teacher’ at the Thematic position but has also introduced an interpolation ‘Launsky – Tieffenthal’. The purpose is to add extra details. But what strikes the readers is that though referred to for the first time, ‘Mammachi’s teacher’ is not presented as New information. It seems that he is put at the Given position because the writer needs the New position to put something more important. ‘The mistake of telling Pappachi’ appears to the writer a more suitable element to put in the New slot. In the next clause, the author uses the Textual Theme ‘that’ to structurally link the clause with the preceding one. ‘His wife’ referring to Mammachi is used as Topical Theme and hence the point of departure for the message.

So, the Textual analysis of the passage reveals that the writer has started the passage with a Predicated Theme. Structurally, the Circumstantial element of Location indicating Time is brought to the Thematic position. Obviously, the purpose is to make the reader take it as something noteworthy. That ‘it was during those few months’ is chosen as point of departure for the message, it puts time element in noteworthy position. Thematic choices are quite scattered in the passage. In two of the clauses, we
find ‘Mammachi’ as Theme while ‘Mammachi’s teacher’, ‘they (Pappachi and Mammachi)’ and ‘the lessons’ are in Thematic position in one clause each.

Pappachi, Mammachi’s husband, tortures his wife not only physically but also psychologically. A minor incident given in Appendix 09 speaks about the shameful ways he adopts to humiliate his wife. The fact is that he is jealous of his wife’s achievements as a successful entrepreneur. In order to create the impression before the visitors that Mammachi, his wife, neglects him, he sits in the Verandah and sews buttons that are not actually missing. It is his method of corroding the impression of Mammachi, his wife. A Textual analysis of the passage reveals the linguistic structures used by the author to organize this message. The passage consists of only six clauses. Of these only one clause has Marked Topical Theme and the other five clauses have Unmarked Topical Themes. The Marked Topical Theme is ‘in the evenings’ in the very first clause and it is used to put the whole episode in temporal context. In the other clauses, 03 contain ‘Pappachi’ as Thematic element, one ‘Mammachi’ and one ‘that (buttons)’. In other words in 60% of the Unmarked clauses Pappachi is used as point of departure while Mammachi is chosen so in only 20% of the clauses. Looked at from the point of view of power dynamics, Pappachi, a male, turns out to be powerful in the situation in comparison to Mammachi, a female. There are only two Textual Themes in the passage ‘and’ and ‘that’. Both these are used to connect clauses with each other. The first one creates the relationship of addition while the second one of enhancement. The only Interpersonal Theme is ‘to some small degree’ in the last clause of the passage. It is writer’s comment on the situation suggesting that such attempts of the male members of society to some extent minimize the image of the working ladies. In this way, the writer’s choice of Thematic structures is in accordance with the meaning she wants to convey.

In addition to discrimination on the basis of caste and gender, the text also deals unfairness at the level of administration. The police in the Indian administrative system has unlimited power that the policemen use and abuse at their sweet will. The passage given in Appendix 01 describes Ammu’s visit to the police station to save the life of her
lover, Velutha, with whom she has spent a few nights at the bank of the river Meenachal. In the police station, Inspector Thomas Matthew working against the ideals of police force humiliates Ammu and calls her by derogatory names like ‘veshya’. A Thematic analysis of the passage reveals that it is Ammu’s predicament that is Arundhati Roy’s focus of attention in this passage. There are 36 clauses in the passage in total and of these 35 clauses contain Unmarked Topical Themes and 01 contain Marked Topical Theme. The only Marked Theme is ‘after the funeral’ referring to the time of action i.e. when Ammu visits the police station to meet Inspector Thomas Mathew. Of the Unmarked Topical Themes Inspector Thomas Mathew is put at Thematic position in 17 of the clauses while Ammu is put at the Thematic position in only 08 of the clauses. In this way, through the use of Thematic contrast, Arundhati Roy constructs power imbalance in Kottayam police station. Ammu and her twins Estha and Rahel in the form of ‘they’ are given position of Thematic prominence in three of the clauses while the police in general gets this place in four of the clauses. The use of ‘policemen’ in the last clause at Thematic position is quite significant because here the writer generalizes the arrogant and lecherous behaviour of Inspector Thomas Mathew. There are two clauses where Interpersonal Themes precede the Topical Themes. In one clause, the Thematic element is ‘anticipating the sharp, smoky stink of old urine that permeated the walls and furniture’. It refers to the feelings of Ammu, Estha and Rahel when they enter the police station. In another clause, the Finite element ‘do’ precedes the Topical Theme ‘you’ because it is the form of an interrogative clause. Besides the Topical and Interpersonal Themes, there are 13 Textual Themes used by the author in the passage. These are ‘when’, ‘and’, ‘that’, ‘but’, ‘as’, ‘if’, ‘then’, ‘as though’, ‘whom’ etc. Most of these Thematic elements serve the purpose of joining adjoining clauses. But they also establish a kind of logico-semantic relationship between them. The use of ‘if’ in the Thematic position in the following clause generates a hypothetical situation where Inspector Thomas Mathew tries to overpower Ammu and in a roundabout way directs her to act the way he wants:

‘If I were you,’’ he said, ‘I’d go home quietly’.
Similarly the use of Thematic ‘then’ in the following clause creates the impact of sequence:

**Then** he tapped her breasts with his baton. Gently. Tap, tap.

In the same way, the use of conjunction ‘as though’ as Textual Theme in the following clause produces the impact of enhancement and comparison:

**As though** he was choosing mangoes from a basket.

This way, through the use of Thematic devices in the passage, Arundhati Roy succeeds in conveying the police brutality that exists in the administrative system and common people like Ammu and Velutha are victims of such a system.

Another instance of police brutality can be seen in the passage given in Appendix 22. Here the victim of police brutality is Velutha, the male protagonist of the novel. After the death of Sophie Mol, Chacko’s biological daughter, a police party goes to arrest Velutha on a complaint filed against him. The policemen beat him mercilessly without any evidence of his involvement in Sophie Mol’s death. They break his nose, his skull, his cheekbones, his lips, his ribs, his intestine, his spine, his kneecaps and other parts of his body. This ruthless beating leads to his death in the police station that can be termed as murder by the police. In this passage, Arundhati Roy wants to bring home to the readers the impact of such cruel beating on Velutha. For this purpose she has chosen those Thematic structures that produce this type of semantic effect. A Textual analysis of the passage reveals the linguistic structures that she has used for this purpose. The passage in total contains 27 clauses and all the 27 clauses have Unmarked Topical Themes. There are only 06 Textual Themes and no Interpersonal Theme. In most of the clauses, especially in the first part of the passage, the Topical Themes refer to some part of Velutha’s body viz. ‘his skull’, ‘his nose and both his cheekbones’, ‘the blow to his mouth’, ‘three of which’ (broken six teeth), ‘four of his ribs’, ‘his lower intestine’, ‘his spine’, ‘the concussion’ and ‘both his knee caps’. By bringing these body parts to the Thematic position, Arundhati Roy wants to show the effect of atrocious
treatment by policemen on Velutha. By doing so she succeeds in conveying the meaning that policemen usually act without any reason and maltreat the common public. These Thematic choices, in a way, can be seen as the author’s comment on the working of police force in Kerala. In the next part of the passage, the policemen are given Thematic spot:

Still they brought out the handcuffs…. That was when they noticed his painted nails. One of them held them up and (____) waived his fingers coquettishly at others. They laughed.

In all these clauses, the policemen are chosen as point of departure by the author indicating that the author wants to highlight their actions. The Rheme elements of these clauses demonstrate that all their actions are harmful ones and are against the police ethics. Some of the clauses in the passage are imperative in construction and hence the Predicate element is put at the Thematic position:

One of them flicked at his penis with his stick.

‘Come on,

Show us your special secret.

Show us how big it gets

When you blow it up.’

In the above clauses, ‘come’ and ‘show’ are used as Thematic elements. These are used in the sense of command to Velutha to perform certain actions. As in his present wounded condition, he is not in a position to oblige them; these are actually used as humiliating tools by the policemen. In the last clauses of the passage, the humiliating tone turns into physical action:
Then **he** lifted his boot (with millipedes curled into its sole)

and (________) brought it down with a soft thud.

**They** locked his arms across his back.

The Thematic element in the first two clauses is ‘he’ referring to one of the policemen. In the first clause, it is used explicitly and in the second one it is ellipted. In both these clauses, this policeman is used as part of departure of the message and his actions become the focus of attention. To crush a male sexual organ with a boot is the extreme form of physical and mental torture that can lead to the victim’s death. By putting this policeman at the Thematic position, Arundhati Roy has shown that policemen can stoop to any extent to torture the common populace. Besides the Topical Themes, there are a few Textual Themes in the passage as well. These are ‘when’, ‘and’, ‘still’ etc. These perform their usual function of connecting the clauses. Furthermore ‘when’ serves the purpose of putting the ideas expressed in temporal context, ‘and’ extends the ideas already expressed and ‘still’ is used in the sense of ‘in spite of this’ bringing in an element of enhancement. In this way, the use of specific Textual structures in the text serves the specific linguistic function of highlighting the negative attributes of police force.

The impact of police brutality is not only felt when one is undergoing a harrowing experience, but also when one is not in the presence of the police force. The horrifying experiences enter into the unconscious of the victim and he/she suffers torments throughout his/her life. Ammu, the central character of the novel, also experiences this type of traumatic suffering. The encounter she has with Inspector Thomas Mathew in the Kottayam police station and the death of Velutha, her lover, on account of police torture leaves an ineffaceable impact on her psyche. After Sophie Mol’s death and when her clandestine affair with Velutha becomes public, she is forced to leave her parental house. She moves from one place to another in search of a job. One such search lands her in Bharat Lodge in Alleppey where she breathes her last. The passage given in Appendix 18 describes her end “in a grimy room in the Bharat Lodge
in Alleppey” (Roy 161). The writer has structured the passage in such a way that the harrowing experiences undergone by Ammu become the focus of attention. A Thematic analysis of the passage from Textual angle brings to the fore those linguistic structures that the writer has used to organize her material and create an impact of police brutality. As the passage is mainly concerned with the traumatic experiences undergone by Ammu, she is put in the Thematic position in the very first clause:

Ammu died in a grimy room in the Bharat Lodge in Alleppey,

The theme

Where she had gone for a job interview

Textual theme Topical theme

as someone’s secretary.

This clause-complex contains two clauses, which are linked hypotactically with the Textual Theme ‘where’ at the beginning of the second clause. The Textual Theme also indicates the place of action. The Topical Theme in both the clauses is Ammu. The next clause is:

She died alone.

The theme

With a noisy ceiling fan for company and no Estha to lie at back of her and talk to her.

Here again Thematic continuity is maintained. Ammu is chosen as a point of departure. After this clause there is a lexical group, which is presented graphologically as a separate unit. Technically, this unit is not a clause. But this can be construed as a Circumstantial element of Accompaniment attached to the preceding clause. But the question is why the writer has chosen to put it as a separate unit. Probably, the writer wants to give this unit some kind of Thematic coloring. In the next clause, the same pattern is repeated:
She was thirty-one.

Not old, not young, but a viable, die-able age.

Ammu is again put at the Thematic position. After this clause again there is a lexical group put as a separate unit, which can be construed as extension of the Rheme of this clause. Again, the writer’s purpose seems to be to give prominence to this specific element. The next clause-complex is:

She had woken up at night to escape

from a familiar, recurrent dream

in which policemen approached her with snicking scissors,

wanting to hack off her hair.

Here, in the independent clause, the point of departure is again Ammu. But in the dependent clause, a change is introduced at the Thematic level. The Topical Theme ‘policemen’ is chosen as the starting point of the message. The Textual Theme ‘in which’ links this clause hypotactically with the previous clause. It refers back to ‘a familiar recurrent dream’. The subsequent clause-complex is:

They did that in Kottayam to prostitutes

whom they’d caught in the bazaar – branded them

so that everybody would know them
what they were. Veshyas.

TEXTUAL THEME TOPICAL THEME

This clause-complex contains five clauses. Of these the independent clause is ‘they did that in Kottayam to prostitutes’. This contains ‘they’ referring to policemen as Topical Theme and starting point of the message. The same Topical Theme is repeated in three dependent clauses. There is only one clause in which the Topical Theme is ‘everybody’ referring to the general public. ‘Whom’, ‘so that’ and ‘what’ are used as Textual Themes at the beginning of the subordinate clauses. All these conjunctions link clauses with each other. Besides, the linking purpose, ‘whom’ also refers back to ‘prostitutes’, ‘so that’ construes a relation of cause and effect and ‘what’ refers forward to ‘Veshyas’. The writer also puts ‘veshyas’ as a separate unit in italics and thus gives it unusual prominence. The next clause is:

So that the new policemen on the beat

TEXTUAL THEME TOPICAL THEME

would have no trouble identifying whom to harass.

Grammatically, this is a dependent clause and should be part of the previous clause-complex. But the writer has chosen to put it as a separate unit, obviously for the purpose of giving it prominence and attracting readers’ attention. Semantically, it construes a relation of cause and effect which is realized at the grammatical level by the conjunctive group ‘so that’, a Textual Theme in the clause. At the Topical level, there is a change from the ‘policemen’ of the previous clauses to ‘the new policemen on the beat’. This indicates that there seems to be no end to the harassment to a particular section of women whom the society brands as ‘prostitutes’. The choice and change of Topical Themes reveal that this legacy of harassment is handed over from one generation of policemen to the other generation of policemen. The next clause-complex is:

Ammu always noticed them in the market, the women with

THEME vacant eyes and forcibly shaved heads in the land
In this clause-complex, Ammu is at the Thematic spot in the main clause. The subordinate clause starts with a Textual Theme ‘where’ that links it hypotactically with the previous clause and shows the place of action. At the Topical level there is a change. A new Theme ‘long, oiled hair’ is introduced. This aspect has significance in the socio-cultural milieu of Kerala where long, oily hairs are symbolic of morally upright women. Thus, by making it Thematic, the writer has put spotlight on this aspect. The next clause-simplex contains a Marked Theme:

That night in the lodge, Ammu sat up in the strange bed in the strange room in the strange Town

Here two Circumstantial elements of Location are brought to the initial position. One is of Place and the other is of Time. By putting these two in the Thematic position, the writer highlights the place and the time of Ammu’s death. The next clause-complex is:

She didn’t know
She recognized nothing around her.

In all these clauses, Ammu is put at the Thematic location and is used as point of departure for the message. The clause ‘where she was’ is down-ranked as a nominal group and functions as Complement. It shows the place of happening. The last clause ‘she recognized nothing around her’ is technically a separate clause and in normal circumstances should have been separated by orthographic symbol ‘full stop’. But the
fact that the writer has chosen to make it a part of the clause-complex attracts readers’ attention. It seems that the writer has used this stylistic variation as an eye-catching device. The next clause-simplex begins with an Interpersonal Theme:

\[ \text{Only her fear was familiar.} \]

INTERPERSONAL THEME  TOPICAL THEME

The Comment Adjunct ‘only’ at the beginning of the clause as an Interpersonal Theme reflects the writer’s attitude towards the ideas presented in the clause. The Topical Theme ‘her fear’ is introduced for the first time. The focus shifts from Ammu to her state of mind at the time of her death. The next clause is:

\[ \text{The faraway man inside her began to shout.} \]

THEME

The Topical Theme ‘the faraway man inside her’ refers to Velutha, Ammu’s lover, who has died in police custody, unable to bear the police torture. The writer’s choice of Velutha as Topical Theme shows that Ammu remembers her lover even at the time of her death. The next clause-simplex contains a Marked Theme:

\[ \text{This time steely fist never loosened its grip.} \]

THEME (MARKED)

Here, the Circumstantial element of Location indicating Time is used as point of departure for the message. This is done to focus on the last moment in the life of Ammu. The last clause-simplex of the passage is:

\[ \text{Shadows gathered like bats in the steep hollows near her collarbone.} \]

THEME

This clause shows the end of Ammu. The word ‘shadows’ symbolically indicating that Ammu has left this mortal world, is brought to the initial position. This shows the end of everything, at least for Ammu.
Thus, the passage graphically presents the scene of Ammu’s death in a hotel named Bharat Lodge in Alleppey. The Textual analysis of the passage brings out how the writer’s choice of various Themes has created this graphic effect. From the beginning till the last Ammu is the focus of attention. In about 10 clauses, she is put at the Thematic position i.e. she is used as point of departure for the message. Another important group that occupies the Thematic position is ‘policemen’. In 04 of the clauses, they are the starting point of the message. This refers to the last dream that Ammu has. By making them Thematic, the writer has highlighted the fact that to what extent the police brutality can affect people like Ammu. It may even snatch from them their right to die peacefully. The other elements in the Thematic position are ‘everybody’ referring to general public, ‘they’ referring to prostitutes, ‘long oiled hair’ symbolic of morally upright person, ‘the night in the lodge’ emphasizing the time and the place of Ammu’s death, ‘the faraway man inside her’ referring to Ammu’s lover Velutha whom Ammu could not forget even at the time of her death, ‘this time’ indicating Ammu’s last moments and ‘shadows’ referring to the fact of Ammu’s death. All these Thematic elements collectively create a vivid effect of the time when Ammu leaves this world. Looked at from another angle, there are at least two clauses, in which the writer has chosen to use Marked Theme. In both these cases Circumstantial elements of Location are brought to the initial position. By doing so the writer has succeeded in foregrounding the time and place of Ammu’s death. There is only one clause in which an Interpersonal Theme is used at the initial position. The Comment Adjunct ‘only’ is chosen to reflect the writer’s attitude towards the clause ‘only her fear was familiar’. Besides this, there are eight clauses in which Textual Themes are used at the initial position. As usual, these are used to link clauses with each other, sometimes paratactically and at other times hypotactically.

Another important issue dealt with in the novel is Communist hypocrisy. The Communists who profess to follow the ideals of Karl Marx, in reality, are no different from other politicians. They also lead a life of double standard. As a result, the position of Communist Party in Kerala has deteriorated. The passage given in Appendix 02 deals with this deteriorated position of Communist Party in Kerala. It has lost its sheen
and is not what it used to be. The passage contains only three clause-complexes. The first clause-complex is:

**Sometimes** Estha walked past Lucky Press – old Comrade

THEME (MARKED) K. N. M. Pillai’s printing press.

**once** (it was) the Ayemenem office of the Communist Party,

THEME (MARKED)

**where** midnight study meetings were held,

TEXTUAL THEME TOPICAL THEME

**and** pamphlets with rousing lyrics of Marxist Party songs

TEXTUAL THEME TOPICAL THEME

were printed and distributed.

The very first clause of the passage contains a Marked Theme. The Circumstance of Location – Time is brought to the initial position. Thus, time is chosen as a point of departure for the clause. In the next clause again a Circumstance of Location – Time is used in the Thematic position and hence chosen as a starting point for the message. This is also a Marked Theme. The following clause starts with a Textual Theme ‘which’ that connects it hypotactically with the previous clause and shows the place of action. ‘Midnight study meetings’ is chosen as Topical Theme and the point of departure. This Topical Theme is carried forward in the next clause as ‘pamphlets with rousing lyrics of Marxist Party songs’ which is linked paratactically with the preceding clause by the Textual Theme ‘and’. The next clause-complex is:

**The flag** that fluttered on the roof had grown limp and old.

THEME

This clause-complex starts with the Topical Theme ‘the flag’. This is again continuation of the Topical Theme of the previous clauses ‘midnight study meetings’ and ‘pamphlets with rousing lyrics of Marxist Party songs’. This clause-complex also contains an
embedded clause ‘that fluttered on the roof’ which is embedded with the Topical Theme ‘the flag’. The last clause is:

**The red** had bled away.

**THEME**

This clause contains a Topical Theme ‘the red’ which is again a continuation of the Theme of the previous clause ‘the flag’.

That the passage deals with the Communist Party becomes clear from the Textual analysis of the passage. The Topical Themes in five out of the seven clauses in the passage in one way or the other are linked with Communist Party. Thus, this is used as a point of departure for the message. The rest of the two clauses contain reference to the Communist Party in their Rheme parts. In the Rheme of the first clause we have ‘old Comrade K. N. M. Pillai’s printing press’ and in the second clause we have ‘the Ayemenem office of the Communist Party’. Looked at from another Textual structure, in both these clause, these elements are presented as New information for the reader. The rest of the passage presents this information as Given information and brings in other elements as New information for the reader. There are two clauses in the passage containing Marked Themes. In both clauses, we have Circumstantial elements of Time at Thematic position. This is mainly to emphasize the change that has come in the Communist Party with the passage of time. There are two clauses in which we find Textual Themes at the initial position. In both cases, these form link between the clauses that follow and the clauses that have preceded them. In one clause the relation formed is hypotactic and in the other paratactic.

But even then the Communist party is successful in Kerala than anywhere else in India except perhaps in Bengal. The writer tries to find out the reason behind this. There are several opposing theories. One refers to the large population of Christians in Kerala and the other refers to the high level of literacy in the state. But the author concludes that the reason lies elsewhere. She says that it offers a cocktail revolution that can be described as a mixture of Eastern Marxism and orthodox Hinduism, spiked with
a shot of democracy. The Communists have never questioned the traditional values of caste-ridden traditional society and have worked form within the communal divides. In this way the picture she paints of the Communist party is far from an idealistic one. Now the question is what linguistic structures she has employed to paint the Communists in this way. A Textual analysis of the passage given in Appendix 13 from the point of Systemic Functional Linguistics reveals interesting points about the way linguistic resources have been used. The passage contains only seven clauses. The Topical Theme in six of the clauses is an Unmarked one and only in one clause it is a Marked one. The only Marked Theme is ‘as a reformist movement’ where a Circumstantial element of Role is brought to the initial position to draw attention to the role of communists in Kerala. Of the Unmarked Topical Themes, the passage starts with a Topical Theme ‘the real secret’. Being the Theme of the first clause of the passage, it also becomes a Theme for the whole passage. It signifies that the writer intends to talk about the real secret of the success of the Communists in Kerala in the passage. All other Unmarked Themes in one way or the other refer to Communists. The fact is that in majority of the clauses, the writer has chosen the Marxists as point of departure indicates that they are her main concern in the passage. There is no Interpersonal Theme in the passage. There is only one Textual Theme ‘that’ in the passage and it connects the two adjoining clauses and establishes a relationship of enhancement.

Communist leaders in general are represented in the novel through Comrade Pillai. He is a local leader and has a desire to get party ticket for the Kerala state assembly. In his constituency, he wants to be seen as a man of influence. For this purpose, he tries to cash on each and every opportunity. The passage given in Appendix 20 deals with one such opportunity where he tries to use Chacko’s visit to impress the local supplicants and party workers. The occasion is the visit of Pothachen and Mathukutty, two villagers, who want to use Comrade Pillai’s connections to secure nursing jobs for their daughters at Kottayam hospital. As the passage deals with Comrade Pillai and his aspirations as a politician, the Textual structures are chosen accordingly. In the very first clause a Marked Topical Theme is used:
As an aspiring politician, it was essential for Comrade Pillai to be seen in his chosen constituency as a man of influence.

Here a Circumstantial element is brought to the initial position to put in focus Comrade Pillai’s role as a politician. The focus continues to be on Comrade Pillai even in the next clause where ‘he’ is used as a point of departure for the message:

He wanted to use Chacko’s visit to impress local supplicants and Party Workers.

But a Thematic shift is seen in the next clause-complex where the focus of attention shifts to Pothachen and Mathukutty. These are two villagers from Comrade Pillai’s constituency who need his help in securing nursing jobs for their daughters:

Pothachen and Mathukutty, the men he had sent for, were villagers who had asked him to use his connections at Kottayam hospital to secure nursing jobs for their daughters.

In this clause-complex there are three clauses one independent and two dependent ones and in all these clauses Theme elements refer to Pothachen and Mathukutty. The next clause-complex contains two clauses having Comrade Pillai and Pothachen and Mathukutty as points of departure. Besides the Topical Themes the clause-complex also contains a Textual Theme ‘that’ connecting the two clauses and establishing a relationship of enhancement:

Comrade Pillai was keen that they be seen waiting outside his house for their appointment with him.

In the text clause-complex, there is a Thematic shift and focus shifts from Comrade Pillai and Pothachen and Mathukutty to the general public:

The more people that were seen waiting to meet him, the busier he would appear, the better impression he would make.
The clause-complex also contains two Marked Themes ‘the busier’ and ‘the better impression’. Here the Participants functioning as Complements in the Ideational metafunction are brought to the initial position to give them extra weight. By doing so, Arundhati Roy wants to focus on these aspects of Comrade Pillai’s personality. The last clause-complex is:

*And if the waiting people saw that the factory Modalali himself had come to see him, on his turf, he knew it would give him all sorts of useful signals.*

This clause-complex contains four clauses. The Themes used here complete the overall impression of Comrade Pillai created throughout the passage. The first clause starts with a Textual Theme ‘and’ creating an impression of extension of ideas expressed in the previous clause-complex. It is followed by ‘if’ again a Textual Theme creating an ambiance of condition. The Topical Theme ‘the waiting people’ refers to Pothachen and Mathukutty and the other people. In the next clause, the Topical Theme shifts to Chacko put as ‘the factory Modalali himself’. Chacko is introduced in the passage for the first time but his impact is the greatest because he belongs to an influential section of society. His visit is of significance for Comrade Pillai because it will raise his stature in the eyes of people like Pothachen and Mathukutty.

In this way, the Thematic choices used by the author constructs Comrade Pillai as a cunning politician who uses each and every opportunity to his advantage. The analysis reveals that the passage contains 05 Marked Themes and 09 Unmarked Themes. The Marked Themes are ‘as an aspiring politician’, ‘the men’, ‘the more people’, ‘the busier’ and ‘the better impression’. All these Themes except ‘the men’ refer to some trait of Comrade Pillai’s personality and construct his image in the eyes of the readers that of shrewd politician. Of the Unmarked Topical Themes, three Themes refer to ‘Comrade Pillai’, three to ‘Pothachen and Mathukutty’, and one each to ‘the waiting people’, ‘Chacko’ and ‘it’. Here the Thematic elements are distributed among different characters. But again two major Thematic Participants are Comrade Pillai and Pothachen and Mathukutty. This is so because the passage mainly concentrates on Comrade Pillai’s intention to influence Pothachen and Mathukutty.
Besides Comrade Pillai, Communism is also represented in the novel through Chacko. But his commitment to the ideals of Marxism is only at the superficial level. The passage given in Appendix 12 brings to the fore various aspects of Chacko’s phony personality. There is pretentiousness in his character. There is dichotomy between what he is and what he poses to be. He claims to be a Marxist but his Marxism is hollow one. He does not adhere to the principles of Marxism but rather uses it as an excuse for his flirtious activities with women working in his factory. A Textual analysis of the passage reveals how the writer has used the linguistic resources at her command to convey this message. She begins the passage by putting Chacko in the Thematic position. This indicates that the passage is about him:

Chacko was a self-proclaimed Marxist.

Looked at from the parallel Textual system of Information structure ‘Chacko’ is presented as Given information and ‘a self-proclaimed Marxist’ as New information. It is this New information in which the writer thinks the reader must be interested. In the next clause-complex, the writer maintains the Thematic continuity:

He would call pretty women

**THEME**

who worked in the factory

**STRUCTURAL / TOPICAL THEME**

to his room

**and**

**TEXTUAL THEME**

**on the pretext of lecturing them on labour rights and trade union law,**

**THEME (MARKED)**

(He would) flirt with them outrageously.
She presents again Chacko as the point of departure. The next clause begins with ‘who’ which is a structural element as well as Topical Theme. As a structural element it links the clause with the preceding clause and as a Topical Theme it refers to ‘pretty women’ of the Rheme of the previous clause. The following clause in the clause-complex begins with a Textual Theme ‘and’ linking this clause paratactically with the previous clause. It also contains a Marked Theme. The Circumstantial element of Role ‘on the pretext of lecturing them on labour rights and trade union law’ is brought to the Thematic position. This is done to give prominence to this aspect of Chacko’s personality. In the next clause-complex, Chacko is again the Thematic choice:

**He**

would call them Comrade,

THEME

and

insist that they call him Comrade back

TEXTUAL THEME

(who made them giggle).

STRUCTURAL / TOPICAL THEME

The second clause of this clause-complex is linked paratactically with the previous clause by the use of Textual Theme ‘and’. The Topical Theme is an elliptical one and can be derived from the preceding clause. The next clause begins with ‘which’ which is a structural element and Topical Theme combined into one. The writer has achieved greater pace and continuity by packaging two elements into one. As Topical Theme, it refers to full clause ‘Chacko would insist that they call him Comrade back’. The next clause begins with an Interpersonal Theme:

**Much to their embarrassment and Mammachi’s dismay,**

INTERPERSONAL THEME

**he**

forced them to sit at table with him and drink tea.

THEME
This is one of the few clauses in the text that begin with Interpersonal Themes. This
Interpersonal Theme expresses the writer’s attitude towards the entire clause. As
Chacko is the Thematic element about which the clause is concerned, this Interpersonal
Comment turns out to be a comment on his behaviour. It shows her negative
appreciation of Chacko’s personality. In the next clause-complex, the writer moves on
to describe an incident to authenticate her comments on Chacko’s traits:

**Once** he even took a group of them to attend Trade Union classes

THEME (MARKED)

**that** were held in Alleppey.

STRUCTURAL / TOPICAL THEME

This she does by bringing a Marked Theme at the beginning of the clause. A
Circumstantial element of Location indicating time is brought to the initial position and
hence chosen as a point of departure. In the other clause in the clause-complex ‘that’ is
used at the initial position and combines in itself the features of structural element and
Topical Theme. It refers to ‘Trade Union classes’ in the Rheme of the preceding clause.
In the next clause-complex Thematic continuity is broken:

**They** went by bus

THEME

**and** returned by boat.

TEXTUAL THEME

Here the Topical Theme ‘they’ includes Chacko as well as the women working in his
factory. In the second clause, which is linked paratactically with the previous clause by
the use of Textual Theme ‘and’, the same Theme is presented in the form of ellipsis.
The writer has used a device of contrast to highlight her observations. The contrast is
not at the level of Theme but at the level of Rheme. In other words, it is the New
information, which is put in contrast to each other. Given information is ‘they’ in both
the clauses. But New information in the first clause is ‘went by bus’ and in the second
clause is ‘returned by boat’. The writer, in this way, gives a sort of aesthetic shock to the readers. In the next clause, the Thematic continuity is maintained:

**They** came back happy, with glass bangles and flowers in their hair.

Here again the New information is quite significant. It gives a kind of shock to the reader. In an earlier clause in the passage the New information is ‘he even took them to attend Trade Union classes’. The New information in the clause under analysis is shocking to the reader because it presents information that is quite opposite to the expectations raised in the previous clause referred above. The last clause-complex is:

**Ammu** said

**It** was all hogwash.

Just a case of a spoiled princeling playing Comrade! Comrade!
An Oxford avatar of the old zamindar mentality -
a landlord forcing his attention on women

**who** depended on him for their livelihood.

This clause-complex presents a change at Thematic level. Ammu, Chacko’s sister, is chosen as the point of departure. Hence the whole clause-complex is presented from her point of view. In a way, the Rheme of the clause is a comment on all that has been described in rest of the passage. In the eyes of Ammu, Chacko’s Marxism is simply gibberish and this authenticates the writer’s view of Chacko established in the other clauses. The rest of the lexical groups though put graphologically as separate units, technically cannot be described as clauses. In a way, they are extensions of the Rheme of the preceding clause and presented as comment on Chacko’s behaviour.
Thus, a Textual analysis of the passage unveils that the writer has chosen Chacko as the starting point of the message in majority of the clauses. This is done to indicate that the passage is about him. Next to him ‘pretty women’ occupy the Thematic position. There is only one clause in which Ammu is chosen as starting point of message. She is put at Thematic position to comment on the flirtious nature of Chacko. She regards him as “an Oxford avatar of the old zamindar mentality – a landlord forcing his attentions on women who depended on him for their livelihood” (Roy 65). Two of the clauses contain Marked Theme where Circumstantial elements are put at Thematic position. One is Circumstance of Role ‘on the pretext of lecturing them on labour rights and trade union law’ and the other is a Circumstance of Location indicating time ‘once’. Both are foregrounded for the purpose of emphasis. There is only one clause beginning with an Interpersonal Theme ‘much to the their embarrassment and Mammachi’s dismay’. It is used by the writer as a comment on the subsequent clause. In three of the clauses, Textual Themes are put at the initial position. As usual, these link either hypotactically or paratactically the following clauses with the preceding clauses. A unique feature of the passage turns out to be that in four of the clauses structural elements and Topical Themes are packed into one. This is done to achieve economy and pace.

The focus in the passage given in Appendix 03 once again moves towards Comrade Pillai. He is a member of the Communist Party and is presented as a local leader. In the text, Roy chooses him as a representative of the Communist Party at the macro level. But at the same time he is also symbolic of the degradation that has come in politics in general and Communist Party in particular. The first clause-complex of the passage is:

\[
\text{Though} \quad \text{his part in the whole thing} \\
\text{TEXTUAL THEME} \quad \text{TOPICAL THEME} \\
\text{had by no means a small one,}
\]
Comrade Pillai didn’t hold himself in any way personally responsible for what had happened.

The writer starts the passage with a dependant clause of Concession ‘Though his part in the whole thing had by no means a small one’ and the whole clause can be considered Thematic for the rest of the clauses in the clause-complex. The writer wants to highlight the role played by Comrade Pillai in destroying the lives of Ammu, her twin children Rahel and Estha and Velutha, her untouchable lover. Individually, the clause starts with a Textual Theme ‘though’ that construes a hypotactic relation of Concession with the clauses that follow. The Topical Theme ‘his part in the whole thing’ is used as starting point for the message. In the next clause, which is also an independent clause, Comrade Pillai is put at the Thematic position, indicating that the clause-complex is mainly concerned with him. In an other clause ‘what had happened’, ‘what’ is put in Thematic position. This refers to happenings in the lives of Ammu, Rahel, Estha, Chacko and Velutha. Looked at from another angle, this clause is a part of the previous clause and used as noun substitute. The next clause is:

He dismissed the whole business as the Inevitable Consequence of Necessary Politics.

The old omelette and eggs thing.

Here again, the writer puts Comrade Pillai in the Thematic position, thus maintaining the Thematic continuity. Another group ‘the old omelette and eggs thing’ though graphologically put as a separate unit, is grammatically a part of the previous clause and an extension of the Rheme element. The next clause:

But then, Comrade K. N. M. Pillai was essentially a political man.

a professional omeletteer.
starts with a Textual Theme ‘but then’. It links this clause with the previous clause-
complex and also construes a relation of opposition. A group ‘a professional omeletter’
though presented as a separate unit, is actually an extension of the Rheme of the
previous clause. The next clause again puts Comrade Pillai in the Thematic position:

**He** walked through the world like a chameleon.

THEME

In order to analyze the next few clauses we need to paraphrase them:

**Never revealing himself,**

can be paraphrased as:

**He** never revealed himself.

THEME

**Never appearing not to**

can be paraphrased as:

**He** never appeared not to reveal himself.

THEME

And

**Emerging through chaos unscathed.**

can be paraphrased as:

**He** emerged through chaos unscathed.

THEME

In all these clauses the Thematic element is ‘he’ i.e. Comrade K. N. M. Pillai.
The passage contains in all nine clauses. Of these seven have Comrade Pillai as Topical Theme. This indicates that the writer chooses him as starting point of message in most of the clauses. The passage is, without doubt, about Comrade Pillai. There are only two clauses in which the Textual Themes precede the Topical Themes. The passage starts with a Textual Theme ‘though’ and construes a relationship of concession. In another clause, the Textual Theme is ‘but then’ and it establishes a relationship of opposition.

As already stated, the Communists in the novel are largely represented through the character of Comrade Pillai. He is painted as a double-faced personality as most of the politicians usually are. As a leader of the people, he is expected to look after the interests of the common people, more so of the downtrodden people like Velutha who belongs to an untouchable family. But the passage given in Appendix 21 reveals that he uses his glib tongue to instigate Chacko to dismiss Velutha from his establishment ‘Paradise Pickles and Preserves’. Not only this the passage also brings to the fore his anti-untouchable mentality. He simply pretends to be the well-wisher of the untouchables, in reality, he is not. In order to bring this aspect of Comrade Pillai to the limelight, the author has made use of the Textual recourses at her command. The passage contains 13 clauses in total and of these 03 contain Marked Topical Themes and the remaining 10 contain Unmarked Topical Themes. The clauses with Marked Topical Themes are:

But see, Comrade any benefits you give him, …After all whatever job he does, carpenter or electrician or whateveritis, for them he is just a Paravan.

In the first example, the Goal element from the Ideational metafunction is brought to the initial position to make it a center of readers’ attention. By doing so Comrade Pillai wants to bring to Chacko’s attention the benefits given to Velutha, an untouchable, in his establishment ‘Paradise Pickles and Preserves’. In the other example, ‘whatever job’ is again a Goal element form the Ideation metafunction that is brought to the front to get it focused. Here Comrade Pillai’s purpose is to first focus on the activities of Velutha and then negate them. This he does by first bringing these to the initial position and then
negate them by using an indefinite ‘whatever’ before the nominal ‘job’. In the last example, a Circumstance of Angle is brought to the initial position. This is Comrade Pillai’s is cunning move of shedding the responsibility for what he has said or asked Chacko to do regarding Velutha. He puts the whole blame on other workers working in Chacko’s factory. The Unmarked Themes used in the passage are ‘others’, ‘it’, ‘they’, ‘I’, ‘this’, ‘change’, ‘acceptance’, ‘you’ etc. As this passage is in the form of address by Comrade Pillai to Chacko, the elements put at the Thematic position express Comrade Pillai’s attitude towards the whole issue. Actually, Comrade Pillai is jealous of Velutha’s capabilities and sees him as a possible rival in his political field. So in order to downsize him, he wants Chacko to dismiss him form job. He cleverly expresses his own views as those of the other workers in the factory. For this purpose in the three of the clauses, he uses them as Topical Theme. Then, there are two clauses in which the fact of Velutha’s being a Paravan is used as Topical Theme. There is only one clause in the passage where he himself puts at the Topical position:

This I myself told them is wrong.

But here again he artfully distances himself form the views expressed and says that these are the views of the workers and not his own. In the following examples, he uses Thematic contrast to impress upon Comrade Pillai to act against Velutha:

But frankly speaking, Comrade, Change is one thing.

Acceptance is another.

Here the two Topical Themes ‘Change’ and ‘Acceptance’ are put in contrast with each other to highlight that a Paravan working as a carpenter or electrician is not acceptable to the touchable workers of the factory. In the last two clauses of the passage, he puts Comrade Chacko in the Thematic position and openly asks him to dismiss Velutha from service:

You should be cautious.

Better for him you send him off …
This is one of the passages in the novel where a number of Interpersonal Themes have been used. These express Comrade Pillai’s attitude towards the ideas expressed. In the very first clause-complex two Interpersonal Themes have been used:

But see, Comrade, any benefits you give him, naturally others are resenting it.

The Interpersonal vocative ‘Comrade’ is an address to Comrade Chacko indicating that he is the focus of attention for Comrade Pillai. The other Interpersonal Theme ‘naturally’ refers to the resentment of factory workers on account of Velutha’s working in the factory. Comrade Pillai presents this resentment as something natural. Another Interpersonal element in the following clause-complex expresses the similar sentiments:

After all, whatever job he does, carpenter or electrician or whatever it is, for them he is just a Paravan.

The Interpersonal Theme ‘after all’ is used to negate Velutha’s competence of being an electrician and a carpenter. There is another clause-complex with Interpersonal Thematic elements:

But frankly speaking, Comrade, change is one thing. Acceptance is another.

There are two Interpersonal Themes ‘frankly speaking’ and ‘Comrade’. The vocative Comrade is an address to Chacko. By using this vocative, Comrade Pillai wants to build a relationship of commonality and comradeship with Chacko. The Interpersonal Theme ‘frankly speaking’ expresses his views regarding Velutha’s working in Chacko’s factory.

There are two instances of Textual Themes in the passage:

But see, Comrade any benefits you give him, naturally others are resenting it.

But frankly speaking, Comrade, change is one thing. Acceptance is another.

In both these clause-complexes the Textual Theme ‘but’ establishes an atmosphere of counter expectancy.
To cap it all, this chapter concentrates on the linguistic structures used by Arundhati Roy to communicate Textual meanings. For this purpose, she has made her choices from the numerous options available to her at the level of Thematic and Information structures. As this research mainly centres on the issues of caste, gender, administration and Communism, the passage related to these are examined at the micro level. The investigation reveals that both Thematic and Information structures are used to give prominence to certain elements and to push some others into the background. The Thematic position in different clauses indicates the point of view of the writer and the New slot shows what is important for the readers. In other words, in the text, we find a movement from one type of prominence to another type of prominence. The Thematic oriented prominence puts into focus what the writer is about and the Information oriented prominence shows what the writer presents as news to the readers. By bringing the shifts between the two orientations – from writer oriented prominence to reader oriented prominence and vice versa – the writer has created a world, which is divided on various lines. The need is to bridge these divisions and construct a world that is homogeneous in character.

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