

T.C.
YAŞAR ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI
YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ

TRAUMA-LANGUAGE RELATIONSHIP IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S
THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS

Funda NEDİCEYUVA

Danışman

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T.C.
YAŞAR ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZ SINAV TUTANAĞI

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ÖZET

Yüksek Lisans

ARUNDHATI ROY'UN KÜÇÜK ŞEYLERİN TANRISI ESERİNDE

TRAVMA-DİL İLİŞKİSİ

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Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Yüksek Lisans Programı

Bu yüksek lisans tezinde 1961 doğumlu Hint kadın yazar Arundhati Roy'un ilk ve tek romanı olan *Küçük Şeylerin Tanrısı* romanındaki karakterlerin geçirdikleri ruhsal sarsıntıları ve bu sarsıntıların okuyucuya aktarımı sırasında kullanılan dili incelemek amaçlanmaktadır. Roy'un romanı küçük olayların nasıl büyük trajedilere dönüşebileceği hakkındadır. Romanının temel amaçlarından birisi karakterlerin geçirdikleri ruhsal sarsıntıları okuyucusuna yansıtmaktır. Roman kendine özgü zaman tasviri ve dili aracılığıyla travma kurbanlarının yaşadıklarını okuyucuya okuyucu kendisi yaşıyormuş gibi hissettirmektedir.

Yazarın bu ruhsal sarsıntıları okuyucuya yansıtabilmek için kullandığı yöntem romanda zaman kavramının ve dilin düzensiz kullanımınıdır. Yazar eserinin konusunu işlerken Malayalam lehçesi, kuralsız büyük-küçük harf kullanımı, tekrarlar, geçmişe dönüşler ve önszemeler, metinlerarasılık, ve çocuk dili gibi yöntemler kullanmaktadır. Romandaki dil ve zaman algısının anılan yöntemlerle bozulması sayesinde okuyucunun roman karakterlerinin yaşadıkları travmaları tecrübe etmesi sağlanmaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Travma, Dil, Zaman, Çağdaş Hint Edebiyatı, metinlerarasılık

ABSTRACT

Master Thesis

TRAUMA-LANGUAGE RELATIONSHIP IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S

THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS

Funda NEDİCEYUVA

Yaşar University

Institute of Social Sciences

Master of English Language and Literature

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* is about how seemingly small events can result in major tragedies which radically change peoples' lives. The novel aims to recreate the traumatic experiences of the characters for the reader. The main elements used in order to recreate trauma in the novel are the depiction of time and language. While telling her story, the author uses specific literary and stylistic devices such as the use of Malayalam dialect, ungrammatical capitalization, repetitions, flashbacks, intertextual elements, and children's language. The irregular use of language and non-sequential time in the novel allows readers to experience the characters' traumas.

What is aimed in this thesis is to analyze Roy's use of time and language while the depicting various traumas that the novel's characters go through. It is proposed that Roy mimics the post-trauma experiences of trauma victims through the novel's language. In order to achieve this, the novel does not use the literary styles of conventional literary texts. Roy toys with the order of the events, discards a reliable narrator, and uses word-plays extensively. Thus, she mimics the disorientation of the traumatized characters through the novel's language.

Keywords: Trauma, language, time, contemporary Indian Literature, intertextuality

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INTRODUCTION

Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* is about how seemingly small events can result in major tragedies which radically change peoples' lives. The narrator of the novel starts from the present when the twins Estha and Rahel reunite after 23 years, to different fragments of the past in order to tell how they got separated from each other. Several unfortunate events, misunderstandings, and treachery culminate into the tragedies that befall various characters in the novel. The narrators of the novel, Estha and Rahel, unveil the events gradually until their traumatic reunion when they are both adults.

The novel aims to recreate the traumatic experiences of the characters for the reader. The main elements used in order to recreate trauma in the novel are the depiction of time and language. While telling her story, the author uses specific literary and stylistic devices such as the use of Malayalam dialect, ungrammatical capitalization, repetitions, flashbacks, intertextual elements, and children's language. The irregular use of language and non-sequential time in the novel allows readers to experience the characters' traumas.

What is aimed in this thesis is to analyze Roy's use of time and language while depicting various traumas that the novel's characters go through. It is proposed that Roy mimics the post-trauma experiences of trauma victims through the novel's language. In order to achieve this, the novel does not use the literary styles of conventional literary texts. Roy toys with the order of the events, discards a reliable narrator, and uses word-plays extensively. Thus, she mimics the disorientation of the traumatized characters through the novel's language.

In the first chapter of my thesis I have started with a general introduction to the novel. In this part, I have tried to clarify why *The God of Small Things* is

appropriate for the exploration of trauma. I have also focused on specific characters from the novel and attempted to explain their parts in the portrayal of trauma.

In the second chapter, I have explored the works of several trauma researchers and tried to incorporate their studies and views into my analysis of the *The God of Small Things*. The first scholar I have studied is Cathy Caruth. Her work entitled *Unclaimed Experience* has been my primary source in understanding the concept of trauma as a psychological condition. Her definition of trauma and trauma studies has established my starting point in finding the connections between Roy's characters and real life trauma victims.

Another trauma critic I have studied is American sociologist Kai Erikson. His "Notes on Trauma and Community" has presented insights into my inquiry about how psychological trauma is different than bodily trauma and the difficulties that trauma victims experience in their later lives. He also explores how individual traumas can turn into collective traumas and effect later generations. His account of collective trauma has provided the base for my discussion of India's historical traumas in its post-colonial history.

Judith Herman's *Trauma and Recovery* is another important work I have discussed in this thesis. Her classification of post trauma psychological stages presents a picture of how trauma victims deal with the consequences of post-traumatic stress. She has coined the terms "hyper-arousal", "intrusion", and "constriction", and each of these stages can be observed in various characters of the novel. These stages refer respectively to how trauma victims, are agitated by, become anxious about, and finally surrender to the effects of trauma.

In the last chapter of my thesis, I have conducted a close reading of Arundhati Roy's novel, and I have tried to choose the most useful parts of the novel while documenting Roy's use of language in her portrayal of trauma. I have focused

on various techniques of hers such as her arbitrary use of Malayalam language instead of English, flashbacks and foreshadowing, intertextuality, repetitions, silences, and children's language. I have attempted to show the connection between these literary tools and trauma.

As stated earlier, Roy's mimicry of actual psychological traumas depends on the above mentioned literary techniques. By doing so, she both tries to create a second-hand experience of personal trauma for the reader and to elaborate on India's collective traumas arising from colonialism and the caste-system. Thus, language acts in the novel as a tool to simulate traumatic experiences.

1. THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS

1.1. THE AUTHOR

Suzanna Arundhati Roy was born on 24 November 1961 in the northeastern Indian city Shillong, and grew up in the state of Kerala, in southern India. Her mother is from a Syrian Christian family and her father was a Hindu from Bengal. After her parents divorced, she went with her mother Mary Roy, a politically and socially committed teacher and founder of a private school, and her brother to her parents' house in Ayemenem, where they lived as perpetual outsiders, similar to the main the characters of *The God of Small Things*. 16 years later Arundhati Roy left Ayemenem and went to a boarding school in Tamil Nadu. Finally, she moved to New Delhi - where she still lives - to study at the Delhi School of Architecture. Roy's political and social engagement manifested very early, and she wrote her thesis on housing projects for the poor. The architectural studies had also impact on Roy's later career. In an interview, she compares her career as a writer to working on an architectural project:

I'm trained as an architect; writing is like architecture. In buildings, there are design motifs that occur again and again, did repeat - patterns, curves. These motifs help us feel comfortable in a physical space. And the same works in writing. (...) The way words, punctuation and paragraphs fall on the page is important as well - the graphic design of the language. (Jana)

Roy harbored a desire to be a writer very early, as she claims in an interview that: "From the time I was a very young child, I knew in my heart that I wanted to be a writer" (ibid). It took, however, 36 years until the publication of her first novel. In 1984, she met her second husband, and took on small roles in his films and began even to write screenplays for movies and television series. In 1990's she started working on the manuscript of *The God of Small Things*. As a result of the success of

the novel and publicity, she dedicated herself to numerous political causes and wrote essays on social injustices and environmental destruction in India. At the same time, Roy is a well-known critic of globalization, US politics, and consumerism. She sharply criticizes the Indian Government and condemned India's nuclear tests, as well as the expulsion of the poor from their homes due to dam projects. Due to her blatant criticism of the policies of India, Roy had several court prosecutions, yet her political activism continues (Chamberlain).

1.2. THE NOVEL

Arundhati Roy's 1997 Booker Prize winner novel, *The God of Small Things* is set in Ayemenem, Kerala and explores the effects of a variety of issues in India such as the caste system, British colonialism, and male dominance. *The God of Small Things* is set between the 1960's and 1990's and tells the events happening around the Ipe family. The plot of the novel revolves around the love affair between Ammu, a Syrian-Christian widow and Velutha, a low-caste carpenter. Throughout the novel, the narrative skips from the present time to the past in order to tell the family tragedy, which results in Sophie Mol's death, Ammu's humiliation, and Estha's departure from his family.

The novel recounts the childhood lives of Ammu's twins Estha and Rahel and ends with the reunion of the twins around twenty years later. Ammu's love affair with Velutha, an untouchable, leads to several catastrophic events. After Ammu's parents find out about their relationship, Estha and Rahel decide to run away with their cousin, Sophie Mol, who dies by drowning during the escape. The two children seek refuge in an abandoned building where they witness Velutha being apprehended and lynched by the police, and are tricked into witnessing against Velutha as their kidnapper. Following these events, Ammu is driven away from her parents' home, and her children are kept away from her. Later on, she dies poor, having never seen her children again. The twins' grandparents do not want to take

care of both children at the same time and thus, Estha is sent away to his father. Although Roy does not focus on the events during their teenage years, we learn that they both lead unhappy and traumatized lives because of their roles in Sophie's and Velutha's deaths.

The novel is mainly concerned with how politics, gender, and social institutions (referred to in the novel as the 'Big Things') disrupt and destroy individuals' plans and lives ('Small Things'). It is the destructive and oppressive-oppressed relationship between these two 'things' which Roy explores in her novel. She constructs her narrative over the compromises that the individuals make in the face of the confines of society: "That Big God howled like a hot wind, and demanded obedience. Then Small God (cozy and contained, private and limited) came away cauterized, laughing numbly at his own temerity" (19). Here, it can be said that the Big God symbolizes the political issues such as the caste system that determines social relations and the Small God represents low-caste people like Velutha, and personal issues like love and family bonds. Additionally, the adjectives used while describing the Small God are the ones that can be used to describe Velutha's personality, and the above phrase (19) itself is like a summary of what takes place in the novel: the rules of society demand Velutha to stay away from Ammu but he disobeys them and ends up dead.

Aside from being stylistically difficult to decipher, the novel itself also resists an easy classification of genre. It is possible to assume that the novel falls into several different categories. For instance, the child narrators of the novel create a fairy-tale aspect in the text. This also creates an unreliability in the judgments of the narrators. At the same time, the catastrophic events in the novel bring in characteristics of tragedy. On the other hand, the novel also points out to the effects of British colonialism on India as seen in the conflict between the English and Malayalam languages, and the struggles of various characters in the novel to

overcome being stuck between English and Indian cultures. Therefore, *The God of Small Things* can also be read as a political allegory of the effects of British colonialism in India. Thus, it is possible to say that the novel eludes conventional forms of the novel and conforms to multiple genres.

As *The God of Small Things* was published in 1997, fifty years after India's attainment of independence, and awarded the same year with the Booker Prize, a true media hype about Arundhati Roy and her success story developed around her debut book. The first edition of the novel appeared in Indiadnk, a small Indian publishing house. The novel was an enormous commercial success and it stayed over a year in the bestseller lists, and in its first year more than 100,000 copies were sold (Mullaney 69). Although translated into over 40 languages, it took 14 years for a translation into Malayalam, the language spoken in the novel's setting, to appear. "No other translation is as important to me as this," said Roy on the occasion of this publication in February 2011 (qtd. In Basheer).

Arundhati Roy's debut novel garnered worldwide acclaim from readers and critics alike. The comments ranged from "breathtakingly beautiful", "magical" and "close to perfection" to "tediously overwritten" and "needlessly embellished style" (Tickell 13). Especially the frequently employed leaps in time, flash-forwards and flashbacks, changes in perspective disrupt the narrative flow and make the reading difficult. In Roy's homeland *The God of Small Things* sparked the most violent reactions. Although the novel was in its fifth edition only after three months of its publication in India, some critics nevertheless called for taking the book from the market. They described it as "obscene" and focused primarily on the representation of the sexual relationship between Ammu and Velutha (ibid). 17 years after its publication, there is no film adaptation of the novel. Arundhati Roy said in this context, in an interview with *The Hindu* in July 2011:

Every reader has a vision of the novel in his or her head and I do not want it to be fashioned into one film. A lot of Hollywood producers approached me, but I do not want to sell the adaptation rights for any amount of money. I do not want the novel to be colonized by one imagination. (qtd. In Santosh)

The narrative structure of the novel is not linear. Passages from the years 1969 and 1993 alternate and numerous flashbacks and foreshadowing gradually merge until the tragic events occur, of which, at the beginning of the novel, the reader only gets a vague idea. Almost all characters are introduced in the first two chapters, even though some of them appear only later and their relevance are revealed at the end. Parallel to the countless "little" things in the novel, and the playful and imaginative language from the childlike point of view of Estha and Rahel, the novel also provides insight into the political and social tensions in India in the late 1960s. To illustrate, even 20 years after India's independence, many members of the Ipe family in the novel still feel connected to the former British Empire, and are in favor of everything "English". This has a profound impact on the language and behavior of characters, and contributes significantly to the complexity of the novel.

The setting of the novel is the small town of Ayemenem in the state of Kerala in southwest India. Roy tells the story of a Syrian-Orthodox middle class family in the midst of a transition between the former British Empire and the new, independent India. The family has a canned goods factory, founded by the grandmother Mamachi: "Paradise Pickles & Preserves". Pappachi, the grandfather was an entomologist during the British Empire and he is deeply connected with this part of his life. The novel is primarily about the 7-year-old twins Estha and Rahel and tells of the tragic events in 1969, as a result of which, the family eventually breaks down.

Estha and Rahel are identical twins, Estha being only eighteen minutes older than Rahel and they feel incomplete without each other as an inseparable whole. The narrator of the novel describes their relationship "as though they were a rare breed of Siamese twins, physically separate, but with joint identities" (2). They speak of themselves together as "Me", and separately, as "We" or "Us" (2), even if they speak individually and feel the constant presence of the other. Rahel recalls, for instance, of being woken up laughing in the middle of the night over Estha's dream (2). The unusually close relationship between the siblings is one of the central themes in the novel.

The twins live together with their mother Ammu, their grandmother Mamachi, their uncle Chacko, their great aunt Baby Kochamma and their domestic worker Kochu Maria. Ammu is divorced from her husband, and as a widow, dependent on the good will of the family. In their grandparents' house, where old traditions and social norms are upheld, Ammu and the children are barely tolerated.

In December 1969, Chacko's ex-wife Margaret Kochamma - an Englishwoman, whom he had met while studying in Oxford - comes to visit from London with their daughter Sophie Mol in order to recover from the tragic death of her second husband. The arrival of Sophie Mol is expected by the family with joyous excitement, except Estha and Rahel who are disenchanted and jealous because of the attention given to her. On the day before Sophie Mol's arrival, the family drives to a cinema in Cochin to see "The Sound of Music". Estha's life changes forever that evening as he becomes the victim of the "Orangedrink-Lemondrink-man" who sexually molests him.

On the day of Sophie Mol's arrival, Ammu begins a secret affair with Velutha which brings both in danger on the basis of their class and caste differences. Velutha is a Paravan, an "untouchable". The Lovers violate the so-called Love Laws -

"[t]he laws did lay down Who should be loved, and how. And how much" (33) - and break the prevailing taboos in the society. Thanks to his working skills Velutha has been employed by Mamachi from an early age; and he works as a carpenter in the family's pickle factory. As Velutha's father discovers to his horror that Ammu and Velutha have an affair, he sets off to see Mamachi and asks desperately for forgiveness. He thinks he is deeply indebted to her and offers to kill his son. Mamachi who is concerned about the honor of the family, locks Ammu in a room. Ammu, in her anger, protests before her children and holds the twins responsible for everything. After that the twins run away from home and head for the "History House", where once a colonial civil servant of the British Empire lived. On the way there, they have to cross a river where their boat capsizes and Sophie Mol drowns.

In the meantime, the disappearance of the children is noticed. In order to save the honor and reputation of the family, Baby Kochamma makes a false statement to the police. She accuses Velutha of abducting the children and raping Ammu. The next day they find the body of Sophie Mol and the police capture the unsuspecting Velutha in the "History House", where the frightened children have sought refuge without his knowledge. The cruel brutality of the police knows no boundaries; and they beat Velutha to near death before the eyes of the twins and arrest him. After the police understand that Baby Kochamma has lied, she threatens them. The crafty great aunt then forces Estha to identify Velutha as their kidnapper and to thus to confirm her statement. Velutha eventually dies on the same day in prison. The twins are separated; Estha is "returned" to his father, because he is held responsible for the death of Sophie Mol by Chacko, and Rahel remains in Ayemenem. Ammu is chased away from home. She cannot stand the loss of her children and the death of her lover, and dies soon afterward from pneumonia.

23 years later, Estha returns to Ayemenem. He no longer speaks and is considered a mute and a madman who lives in his own world. Baby Kochamma, who lives with Kochu Maria is the only resident of Ayemenem house. Having emigrated to the U.S., Rahel sets off to return to see Estha. Rahel and Estha share the guilt that they have not forgotten over the years, and in an act of incest, also break the Love Laws: "Only that what they shared that night was not happiness, but hideous grief" (328).

2. TRAUMA IN THE NOVEL

The word 'trauma' originates from the ancient Greek language and its primary meaning signifies a physical wound inflicted through a violent exterior force which impairs the integrity of the body. Despite the earlier use of the word 'trauma', which confines it to physical injuries on the human body, currently, 'trauma' has come to refer more to injuries human psyche. For instance, both 2005 edition of Longman and 2007 edition of Oxford English Dictionaries reserve two meanings of the word 'trauma' to mental, and one meaning to physical injuries. Owing to the vast concerns of this field of study, as well as medical sciences, trauma is explored in a wide range of social sciences. Therefore, the word has currently gained a more abstract meaning and come to be affiliated with sociology, literature, cinema, cultural studies and similar disciplines.

In her *Unclaimed Experience*, Cathy Caruth defines trauma as "an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena (11)". However, it is still not feasible nor easy to give a clear-cut description of the term trauma literature, since the study of trauma narratives is quite new and critics widely differ in their views on the topic. To illustrate, "Trauma and Literary Studies: Some "Enabling Questions" Elisa Marder writes that: "Over the last fifteen years or so, the emergence of groundbreaking new work on trauma in literature and critical theory has made a profound impact both within and beyond the field of literature. Scholars generally agree that the explosion of trauma work now being done in literary studies is largely due to the pathbreaking work by Cathy Caruth and Shoshana Felman" (1). Study of trauma seeks to answer such questions as: What is a traumatic experience? How does it manifest itself on the individual? How -if possible- can trauma be healed? How do traumatized people reconstruct and express their experiences?

Compared to sorrow and pain, trauma lasts longer. In his “Notes on Trauma and Communitality”, Kai Erikson claims that the effects of trauma are more important than the actual events that result in the trauma:

It is how people react to them rather than what they are that gives events whatever traumatic quality they can be said to have. The most violent wrenchings in the world, that is to say, have no clinical standing unless they harm the workings of a mind or body, so it is the damage done that defines and gives shape to the initial event, the damage done that gives it its name. (184-5)

Therefore, even after the immediate and visible effects of traumatic events have passed, trauma may persist on individuals throughout their lives. In the event of large-scale dealings like wars, migrations, slavery, or natural disasters, trauma might even pass to later generations who may not have witnessed these events first-hand, which is in return, called collective trauma. In this respect, in his “Social Theory and Trauma”, Ron Eyerman writes: “In economic crisis as in war, one’s personal loss is intimately tied to those suffered by others. The cumulative impact would only intensify the trauma, where a sense of belonging, a collective identity, is shattered along with individual identity (43)”.

Basically, trauma can be defined as a violent experience that an individual is powerless against and the initial reaction to this experience is fright (Rycroft 187). Traumatic events disrupt individuals’ ordinary activities and thus, In *Trauma and Recovery*, Judith Herman claims that “Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life (33)”. Kai Erikson similarly comments on the psychological condition of the traumatized individual as follows:

Trauma is generally taken to mean a blow to the tissues of the body—or more frequently now, to the tissues of the mind—that

results in injury or some other disturbance. Something alien breaks in on you, smashing through whatever barriers your mind has set up as a line of defense. It invades you, takes you over, becomes a dominating feature of your interior landscape. . . . The classic symptoms of trauma range from feelings of restlessness and agitation at one end of the emotional scale to feelings of numbness and bleakness at the other. Traumatized people often scan the surrounding world anxiously for signs of danger, breaking into explosive rages and reacting with a start to ordinary sights and sounds, but at the same time, all that nervous activity takes place against a numbed gray background of depression, feelings of helplessness, and a general closing off of the spirit, as the mind tries to insulate itself from further harm. Above all, trauma involves a continual reliving of some wounding experience in **daydreams** and nightmares, **flashbacks** and hallucinations and in a **compulsive seeking out of similar circumstances**. (183-4) (emphasis mine)

With respect to *The God of Small Things*, Erikson's above comments are especially significant. As they will be discussed in detail in later chapters, daydreams, flashbacks, and a wish return to familiar environments are recurring themes which constitute the recreation of trauma in *The God of Small Things*.

Having witnessed two world wars, racial and religious conflicts unprecedented in their violent nature, and major acts of terrorism, literature of the twentieth century abounds in works of trauma narrative. In this respect, in her *Literary Trauma*, Deborah M. Horvitz remarks that: "Over the past one hundred and twenty-five years, three unique forms of trauma have emerged into public consciousness: hysteria in the late Victorian Era, combat neurosis following World War I, and violence against women and children in our era (12)". Horvitz also claims that hysteria -trauma-, was first conceptualized as supernatural, as a kind of

demonic possession until the end of Victorian Literature. Around this period, however, Sigmund Freud demystified trauma and identified hysteria and trauma as medical conditions.

Horvitz's above identification of three different types of traumas -hysteria, war neurosis, and women/child abuse can further be elaborated through the early war narratives related to the two great world wars and the Vietnam War. In these narratives, traumatic narratives of the soldiers in action are generally dubbed as "shell-shock narratives". The term 'shell shock narrative' refers mainly to the experiences of soldiers who have witnessed horrifying events and have consequently entered a state of detachment and confusion (Reid 9). As well as shell-shock narratives, the calculated killing of undesired minorities by National Socialist Germany and Imperial Japan have also lead to traumatic experiences both on the survivors and the following generations.

In her 1992 book *Trauma and Recovery*, Judith Herman coins the term "Post Traumatic Stress Disorder", and offers a simple method of categorization of outward signs of trauma. Herman classifies symptoms of trauma into three groups: hyper-arousal, intrusion, and constriction. She explains "Hyper-arousal" as the constant anticipation of danger, "intrusion" as the fixed imprint of the traumatic; event, and "constriction" as surrender to the symptoms of trauma (35).

As well as others, Herman quotes American poet Robert Graves' experiences after he returned from WWI as an example for hyper-arousal: "I was still mentally and nervously organized for War. Shells used to come bursting on my bed at midnight, even though Nancy shared it with me; strangers in the daytime would assume the faces of friends who had been killed"(35). Such an example can be seen in *The God of Small Things* when Estha fears that the Orangedrink Lemondrink Man, who abuses him at the Abhilash Talkies, will find him at Paradise Pickles and will molest him over again. Because he is afraid of another sexual assault, he develops a

two ideas which he names as “Anything can happen to Anyone” and “It's best to be prepared” (186).

Later in the novel, Estha's “Anything can happen” scheme forces him and Rahel to carry some food to the History House by river, in case they have to run away from the Orangedrink Lemondrink Man. Estha's experience of hyper-arousal can also be seen when the twins meet Velutha's brother Kuttapen. Kuttapen amuses the twins by telling them funny stories about the river. Later on, the narrator remarks that: “Temporarily, for a few happy moments, the Orangedrink Lemondrink Man shut his yellow smile and went away. Fear sank and settled at the bottom of the deep water. Sleeping a dog's sleep. Ready to rise and murk things at a moment's notice” (202). Through this quotation, one can see that although he temporarily forgets his troubles, on the subconscious level, Estha is still alarmed and he fears that this short moment of joy will be defeated by fear again.

Herman's second type of traumatic symptoms is ‘Intrusion’ and it can be said that ‘Hyper-arousal’ and ‘intrusion’ are related with each other. Herman identifies that intrusion “reflects the indelible imprint of the traumatic moment” (35), and elaborates that, “(l)ong after the danger is in past, traumatized people relive the event as though it were continually recurring in the present. They cannot resume the normal course of their lives, for the trauma repeatedly interrupts” (37). Intrusion is probably the most evident type of side effects related to trauma in *The God of Small Things*. One example for intrusion in the novel is when Rahel watches a strange woman on a train in New York Grand Central Station, whom Rahel is captivated with and she forgets the “other, more terrible thing that haunted her” (Roy 70). Specifically, the things “that haunt her” are the memories of Velutha's death and its results. These traumatic memories can be classified as ‘intrusive’ because are permanent and they prevent her to form healthy personal relationships

with other people. For instance, her marriage fails and she is removed from several schools because she is incompatible with her classmates and the school setting.

Herman's final category is called 'constriction'. She equates this stage with the feeling of submission. At this stage, the subject of the traumatic events undergoes a state of surrender and acceptance of the stressful events. The conflict between confrontation of and resistance against traumatizing events entails constriction. It is a "trauma coping mechanism," which, as Reddemann stresses, is used when there is no way to fight or flight. John Wilson defines dissociation as "a process by which certain thoughts, attitudes or other mental activities lose their relation to other mental activities and the rest of the personality (qtd. in Arnold 118). He describes some victims as a stepping out of their bodies, making them look at itself from the outside. He claims that abused or maltreated children especially use dissociation as a way to leave behind the unbearable realities because irrational guilt may cause trauma victims to not hide their powerlessness. That is, it may be easier for their psychological balance to blame themselves instead of admitting their defenselessness. He points to the particular occurrence of this in children. He claims that when children are subjected to violence from someone close to them, it is often easier for them to take the blame than to lose the caregiver's love (79). Such an event can be seen in the novel in the scene where Estha and Rahel feel obliged to testify in favor of the policemen and claim that they did not see the police beating Velutha. In a previous scene the twins convince each other that the body handcuffed and dragged by the police is Urumban, the imaginary character they invent as Velutha's "long-lost twin brother from Kochi" (295). However, it is difficult for Estha to lie to herself she is initially "unwilling to seek refuge in fiction" (304). However, the twins are manipulated by Baby Kochamma into condemning Velutha in an effort to save their mother. Thus, it is clear that the twins submit to

“constriction” by choosing to normalize the events and patch their trauma by inventing Urumban.

2.1. MAJOR CHARACTERS AND THEIR PORTRAYAL OF TRAUMA IN THE NOVEL

Rahel is seven years old and about 18 hours younger than her twin brother Estha. She is often rebellious, disobedient, but also unusually sensitive. She feels unwanted and unloved, is often sad, even if she do not really know why, "Rahel was not sure what she suffered from, but occasionally she practiced sad faces, and sighing in the mirror" (61). Again and again she pulls herself back to her own world, which is fueled by an exceptionally vivid imagination. The reader learns about the world of the novel mostly through Rahel and Estha's eyes. To focus on Rahel's part in narration, her special way of perceiving things and often dreamy, unusual, and curious view of the sometimes cruel reality, allow the reader into Rahel's world of thoughts to participate and draw our attention to the little things that escape the adult world. She is the one who wonders if Sophie Mol saw her own funeral or if there was a cartwheel in her coffin and imagines the trash cans at the airport as cement kangaroos with pouches for cigarette butts. She is particularly in need of love and fears nothing more than losing her mother's love. When she's scared, she feels like "a cold moth with unusually dense dorsal tufts" (112), a "cold moth with unusually dense scaly hind wings" (133). Through similar recurring vivid motifs conveyed through Rahel's imagination Roy's narrator depicts Sophie Mol's drowning in the river: "On Rahel's heart Pappachi's moth snapped open its somber wings. Out. In. And lifted its legs. Up. Down "(293).

Estha is a silent, introverted but a bright boy who seems too grown up for his age. He is fond of Elvis Presley and “The Sound of Music” and after a series of traumatic events he is separated from Rahel and "returned" to his Father. He looks at things with a serious and thoughtful look, thinks that "Anything can happen to Anyone. And (...) It's best to be prepared "(194). He wonders if it counts when

you're happy in a dream. He lives in constant fear because of Orange-Drink-Lemon-Drink-Man's sexual abuse. Looking for someone to blame for Sophie Mol's drowning, he is made the scapegoat. His aunt uses his sense of responsibility and obedience as a ruse to accuse Velutha of being a kidnapper. Estha grows up ever traumatized after: "The Inspector asked his question. Estha's mouth said Yes. Childhood tiptoed out. Silence slid in like a bolt "(320). 23 years later, when Estha returns to Ayemenem, he is like a walking ghost. He no longer speaks and he is not easily perceived by people: "Over time he had-acquired the ability to blend into the background of wherever he was - into bookshelves, gardens, curtains, doorways, streets - to appear inanimate, almost invisible to the untrained eye. (...) Estha occupied very little space in the world" (10). He looks forlorn, as if he had no place in this world, lives isolated from the outside world. The memory of his last encounter with Velutha, the betrayal of a friend, and guilt haunt him and Rahel.

Ammu has the disadvantage of being a woman in a male-dominated society, which provides women with no self-determination in the family and social institutions. Even as a child, through the cruel treatment of her parents, she had realized quite early on that the ideal family stories in her children's books had nothing to do with reality: "As a child, she had learned very quickly to disregard the Father Bear Mother Bear stories she given to read. In her version, Father Bear beat Mother Bear with brass vases. Mother Bear suffered those beatings with mute resignation "(180). This quotation can also be identified as an extension of Herman's "constriction" category, as such a metaphor created between children's tales and domestic violence helps her patch the trauma. While her brother, whom she always emasculated through her witty and sarcastic comments, has had the privilege of studying abroad in England, she has no opportunity as a woman for higher education, waits for marriage proposals. She leaves her house the first opportunity she gets in marriage, however, her husband is an alcoholic and abusive,

and she finally gets divorced. Disillusioned and humiliated as a widow and without rights, she returns with Estha and Rahel back to the place of her childhood. In Ayemenem she is received with disrespect and hostility: "Ammu left her husband and returned, unwelcomed, to her parents in Ayemenem. To everything she had fled from only a few years ago. Except she did now had two young children. And no more dreams "(42). Ammu loves her children, but their credulity and insatiable desire for love overwhelm her: "Their wide-eyed vulnerability, and their willingness to love people who did not really love them, and exasperated her and sometimes made her want to hurt them - just as an education, a protection "(43). Ammu longs for freedom against the false morals of the society against women, and finds resistance and refuge in her forbidden love for Velutha.

Velutha is the "God of Small Things" and the "God of the Loss." Friendship and passion bind him with the twins and their mother. Although he lives at the bottom edge of society as an "untouchable", he works at the Kochamma family factory, thanks to his skills, to the dismay of other workers. His life and his death are shaped by his low social status. However, his affair with Ammu and his membership in the Communist Party of Kerala he manifests a certain rebellion against the social system he is trapped in. He is different from other "untouchables", perhaps less concerned about the morals of society and more concerned about his own happiness. He is reserved, yet self-assured, which worries his father: "It was nothing that he [Velutha] had said. Or done. It was not *what* he said, but the way he said it. Not what he did, but the *way* he did it "(76). With respect to his contribution to the topic of trauma, Velutha represents class distinction and its silencing effects on untouchables in the Indian society. Velutha's position as an untouchable leads to his downfall as a lover of a woman of higher status. Despite the fact that he is in fact one of the most rebellious characters as evident in, his class forces him to go silent.

Chacko has studied at Oxford, and describes himself as a Marxist and his family as Anglophile. He is the twins' uncle and Sophie Mol's father. His "reading voice" and his pride in his education suggests his elitist tendencies. He keeps lecturing the children on history and attempts to explain the world as he sees it: "Our dreams have been doctored. We belong nowhere. We sail unanchored on troubled seas. We may never be allowed ashore. Our sorrows will never be sad enough. Our joys never happy enough. Our dreams never big enough. Our lives never important enough. To matter "(53). At his heart, Chacko is a Briton, he embodies the colonial legacy, but is also aware that he is always at a disadvantage due to his Indian origins. He behaves in a disrespectful and condescending manner towards women, due to his patriarchal upbringing and the rigid hierarchies that prevail in the Indian society. He thinks himself superior solely on the basis of sex. His male chauvinism also makes him think he can lay claim on the entire possession of the family: "What's yours is mine and what's mine is also is mine "(57). He takes a similar position as his father. He does not back away on his position against Margaret and Sophie Mol, although they are divorced. When she comes to visit Ayemenem, he tries to recapture Margaret and it seems he believes in a common future with her. In his view, Margaret is still his wife. In terms of traumatic experiences, Chacko embodies India's colonial inbetweenness. Thanks to his education, he is aware of India's colonial and socially unjust institutions, but is unable to act any different than a patriarch. That is to say, although he has received the intellectual tools to overcome bigotry through his education, he chooses not to exercise it.

Sophie Mol is a nine year old girl of an English mother and an Indian father. Her name reflects her inbetween roots: the English first name Sophie is combined with "Mol", which means "little girl" in Malayalam (60). Her arrival brings little enthusiasm to the twins. She is the pretty English cousin, and the "little angel"

(179), and all the attention and admiration she receives from the family attracts jealousy and inferiority on many member of the family. Even though Sophie Mol seeks the friendship of the family, apart from Chacko and Baby Kochamma, she receives little. The tragic death of Sophie Mol becomes a haunting memory and becomes the major traumatizing event for the twins: "The Loss of Sophie Mol stepped softly around the Ayemenem House like a quiet thing in socks. (...) The Loss of Sophie Mol grew robust and alive. It was always there. Like a fruit in season. Every season" (15).

Mamachi is the twins' half-blind grandmother, who adores her son Chacko and hates all women who come near him. Nevertheless, she endures his countless affairs with the factory workers to keep him happy. As Chacko saved her from the brutal beatings of her husband, she projects all her affection to son: "[H]e became the repository of all her womanly feelings. Her Man. Her only Love "(168). She feels great contempt for Margaret. She has little understanding and respect for her daughter Ammu. Mamachi's personality is marked by double standards in many respects. On the one hand, she worships Chacko, who, as a divorced man, has not lost his social status, on the other, she despises Ammu, since she has no legitimate place in the social system as a divorced woman any more. As long as Velutha is useful and she can take advantage of his services, he is tolerated as an "untouchable" in the house. Mamachi ignores caste hierarchies, but when it comes to the love affair between Velutha and Ammu, she does not hesitate to betray those two for the sake of family honor.

Baby Kochamma is a deceitful schemer who has nothing but contempt for the twins and Ammu. She displays a particularly hostile behavior and never misses an opportunity to express her contempt: "Baby Kochamma disliked the twins, for she considered them doomed, fatherless waifs. Worse still, they were Half-Hindu hybrids whom no self-respecting Syrian Christian would ever marry "(45). The

unrequited love of a priest has turned Baby Kochamma, a former nun, to an embittered woman who clings to Indian society's ancient, deep-rooted traditions and moral values to justify her own existence. Her dislike is aimed primarily against Ammu; firstly because she has returned as a divorced daughter to her parents' house. Secondly, she envies Ammu's strong will, because she herself was unable to change her own fate. Baby Kochamma's malice and cunning culminates in the libel against Velutha and Estha's subsequent manipulation, which aims to save her honor. It might be also be elaborated that despite being Syrian Christians, and not Hindus, some members of the Ipe family choose to participate in the class system, whenever they see it appropriate, and Baby Kochamma is one of the most notorious examples of such a hypocritical stance.

Pappachi, Estha's and Rahel's grandfather, who is no longer alive at the time of the events, was a cruel, embittered patriarch who felt deeply connected to the British Empire. While he was polite and elegant towards outsiders, seemed like a loving husband and father, and displayed the image of a "sophisticated, generous, moral man" (180) in public, he bullied and abused them at home. He begrudged his wife any accomplishment and joy, and after his death leaved his adult son in his place. He was an entomologist during the era of the British Empire, but the fact that he a species of moth he discovered had not been named after him tormented him until his death. Consumed by jealousy and resentment, he still tried to maintain his proud face to the outside. Chacko and Pappachi are in fact two different sides of a single coin. Pappachi does not consider himself an Indian, at least culturally. Similar to Chacko he has received British education, but unlike Chacko, Pappachi adores everything British. It can be claimed that although Chacko's actions and beliefs contradict each other, Pappachi is at least consistent in his behavior.

2.2. INDIA'S HISTORICAL TRAUMA

Not only personal, but also historical/cultural traumas of Indian people are highlighted in the novel. The history of India under imperial rule and the damages it caused are reflected in *The God of Small Things* through various traumas experienced by different members of Ipe family. In the novel, consequences of British imperialism are inseparably interwoven with the inconsistencies of caste and class systems, along with the town of Kerala, which is a place marked by differences in religions, politics, and language with the rest of India.

The Syrian-Christians, India's one of the smaller minorities is in the focus point of *The God of Small Things*. The twins' mother, Ammu is a Syrian-Christian woman and also belongs to a higher-caste family. As a widow, an affair with anyone, let alone a Hindu untouchable is out of the question for someone in her position. At the center of the stigmatization of their love affair is Ammu's and Velutha's positions within the Indian caste system. Indian caste system divides people into different categories, and Untouchables like Velutha are at the bottom.

Roy puts special emphasis on 'history' both as a word and a theme throughout the novel. For instance, the ominous presence of 'the History House' on the other side of the river is felt by the twins. It is also important that the main traumatic events all take place around the history house. In this way, Roy links cultural trauma with characters' own traumas:

While other children of their age learned other things, Estha and Rahel learned how history negotiates its terms and collects its dues from those who break its laws. They heard its sickening thud. They smelled its smell and never forgot it. History's smell. Like old roses on a breeze. (55)

Each member of the Ipe Family experience how history “collects its dues” in a hard and painful way; they lose Sophie Mol and life is never the same for any of them. Each member of the family suffered in a different way after the day that they call as the “Terror” (38) which refers to the loss of Sophie Mol and the revelation of the affair between Ammu and Velutha. The events happened on that specific day is such horrible that the family do not even want to name what happened, instead they come up with a word which defines a mixture of feelings like fear and violence.

It is also interesting that Roy attributes a certain sound and smell for history. “Sickening thud” refers to the sounds the twins heard while the police was beating Velutha and “Old roses on a breeze” is a term that is repeated at some points in the novel and the smell is similarly associated with Velutha’s brutal beating, one of the causes of trauma.

The effect of historical events is expressed through a foreigner’s point of view too; the above paragraph is the subconscious words of Rahel's ex-husband Larry McCaslin:

“... It was never important enough. Because Worse Things had happened. In the country that she came from, poised forever between the terror of war and the horror of peace, Worse Things kept happening.” (19)

Larry McCaslin is offended by the eyes of his wife while they are making love because he thinks that “her eyes belonged to someone else” (19) and tries to understand the reason why. Then he blames history, her country for this. For him India is country which is stuck between chaos and the hope for peace, that’s why it is “poised forever” and terrible things keep going on. Each word is carefully chosen to express that what happened and is happening in India and to give an example of the big picture.

Another character from the novel, Baby Kochamma also reveals the importance of caste system and history upon expressing her idea about the twins: “Baby Kochamma disliked the twins, for she considered them doomed, fatherless waifs. Worse still, they were Half-Hindu Hybrids whom no self-respecting Syrian Christian would ever marry” (45). Baby Kochamma despises the twins to such a great extent that she describes them as “fatherless waifs” ignoring the fact that their father is alive. This shows what getting divorced means in their culture along with how intercommunity marriage is perceived.

Roy’s description of some scenes from the daily life of the paravans can be seen as an allusion to history as well:

History was wrong-footed, caught off guard. Sloughed off like an old snakeskin. Its marks, its scars, its wounds from old wars and the walking backwards days fell away. In its absence it left an aura, a palpable shimmering that was as plain to feel as the heat on a hot day, or the tug of a fish on a tout line. So obvious that no one noticed.” (176)

Here, history is described like a snake that got rid of its old skin but its presence is still felt because it still exists, only with a fresh new skin. The fact that untouchables used to walk backwards and had had to swipe their footmarks on the street so that the touchables wouldn’t be stained by their dirt is expressed through the concept of history. “The walking back days fell away” but this is just a change of skin because the caste system still continues.

In *The God of Small Things*, the use of trauma might have several purposes. Firstly, the portrayal of trauma in the novel exposes the unrecognized or overlooked results of the caste system by creating a link between what is personal and what is

political. For instance, Rahel's memories while travelling by bus in New York is an example of the way Paravans were treated in the old days:

“As a young boy, Velutha would come with Vellya Paapen to the back entrance... Pappachi would not allow Paravans into the house. Nobody would. They were not allowed to touch anything Touchables touch, Mamachi could remember a time... when Paravans were expected to crawl backwards with a broom, sweeping away their footprints so that Syrian Christians would not defile themselves by accidentally stepping into a Paravans footprint. In Mamachi's time, Paravans, like other Untouchables, were not allowed to walk on public roads, not allowed to cover their upper bodies, not allowed to carry umbrellas. They had to put their hands over their mouths when they spoke, to divert their polluted breath away from whom they addressed. (73-4)

Through Rahel's memories of the untouchables' traumatizing treatments, she covertly familiarizes her non-Indian audience with the Indian caste system. That is to say, the personal traumas of the novel's characters can in fact, be read as metaphors of the traumas created by the caste system. Instead of directly dealing with political issues like India's post-colonial history or its caste-system, Roy uses trauma as a tool to appeal to the foreign reader who is unfamiliar with these issues.

The main tragedy at the center of the novel is Estha and Rahel's experience with the death of their mother and the separation from each other, as well as their participation in Sophie Mol's and Velutha's deaths. As mentioned before, Roy's novel employs an irregular depiction of language and time. Roy describes language as “the skin of my thought” (Roy, qtd. in Mair). In fact, wordplays, puns, verse, nursery rhymes, and quotations from various writers and movies abound in *The God of Small Things*. Throughout the novel, language arouses in the reader both positive

and negative feelings towards the characters, and creates a setting which enables the readers to bond and familiarize themselves with the characters. Although the story seems to be focused on Estha and Rahel, through language, the reader is provided with enough information to understand each character's story and be able to judge their actions accordingly. Apart from language, Roy's special treatment of 'time' can also be seen both through the form and content of the novel. Roy's irregular handling of time, for instance, is apparent as the readers read odd and even numbered chapters in the novel, since the events shift between the present and the past in these chapters.

To illustrate the novel's irregular handling of time, one can look at how Roy constructs the sequence of events in the narrative. The novel begins in 1993 where the reader is provided with a foreshadowing of the series of unfortunate events and ends in 1962 when the reader witnesses the love affair of Ammu and Velutha. Traditional novels usually reach their resolution in the concluding chapters. In *The God of Small Things*, however, the last chapter of the novel is not the part that a mystery is resolved, but depicts the love scene between Ammu and Velutha. The reader witnesses a moment that is already mentioned but left undepicted in the previous chapters of the novel.

The following excerpt from the novel is one of the most significant summaries of the novel's focus on the traumatic experience by the characters:

In a purely practical sense it would probably be correct to say that it all began when Sophie Mol came to Ayemenem. Perhaps, it's true to say that things can change in a day. That a few dozen hours can affect the outcome of a whole lifetime. And when they do, those dozen hours like the salvaged remains of a burned house – the charred clock, the singed photograph, the scorched furniture – must be resurrected from the ruins and examined. Preserved. Accounted

for. Little events, ordinary things, smashed and reconstituted.
Imbued with new meaning. Suddenly they become the bleached
bones of a story. (32)

The narrator clearly states in this quotation that the entirety of the Ipe family's lives have been affected within the same day, both in personal and familial level. The arrival of Sophie Mol and her death have a huge impact on the whole family. It is also interesting that Sophie Mol is not fully fleshed out by Arundhati Roy, and is one of the minor characters in the novel. Therefore there is a parallel here with the small events triggering the climax of *The God of Small Things*. That is to say, seemingly unimportant people create large and catastrophic effects on entire lives of others. Thus, although the reader never gets to know Sophie Mol deeply, she is a key character in the novel. The choice of personal belongings in the above quotation: "the charred clock", "the singed photograph", and "the scorched furniture", is not entirely random, but points out to the loss of time, memories (or history), and material belongings of the family respectively. Roy's novel hints that the personal traumas it depicts are in fact shaped by social and economic constructions such as the caste system, and the British colonial rule. Therefore, it seems that the novel's treatment of the family and romantic relations exists to provide a small-scale version of these economic and political structures. At the same time, by restricting the plot to the personal experiences, Arundhati Roy demonstrates the significance of these structures on the individual.

The God of Small Things can also be analyzed in terms of its postmodernist features. Canadian literary critic Linda Hutcheon claims that one defining aspect of the postmodern novel is its frequent use of historiographic metafiction. According to Hutcheon, historiographic metafiction is "fictionalized history with a parodic twist" (Hutcheon 53). Such works reveal the conflict between official and unofficial interpretations of historical events. They posit the awkwardness of grand narratives

through showing that events can be interpreted from multiple positions. Regarding Roy's novel, one can look for the official and thus, untrue versions of major traumatic events in *The God of Small Things*. In fact, by allowing the unofficial versions to come to surface in various chapters, the novel allows the voice of those oppressed by the rigid caste and patriarchal systems to be heard. Velutha's death and Ammu's relationship with him are two major examples of this kind of effort to unearth the lies of the official history of these things. Thus, by recounting how Sophie Mol really died, Roy reveals how the police and the state have wrongfully accused and in the end, killed Velutha. Or, through the love scene between Ammu and Velutha, Roy discloses the ridiculousness of the patriarchal expectations of abstinence from widowed women.

"Love Laws" is a recurrent and perhaps, oxymoronic phrase in *The God Small Things*. In this sense, Roy puts forward the idea that the source of the difficulties encountered by different members of the Ipe family is breaking the "Love Laws". While 'love' represents the personal space, 'law' symbolizes the communal, or the political. Therefore one can understand that Roy merges what is personal with the political, and that she proposes that politics affects personal lives. In this sense, Roy's narrator claims:

Still, to say that it all began when Sophie Mol came to Ayemenem is only one way of looking at it. Equally, it could be argued that it actually began thousands of years ago. Long before the Marxists came. Before the British took Malabar, before the Dutch Ascendancy [. . .] It could be argued that it began long before Christianity arrived in a boat and seeped into Kerala like tea from a teabag. **That it really began in the days when the Love Laws were made. The laws that lay down who should be loved, and how. And how much.** (emphasis mine) (32-3)

In the above quotation, the absurdity of the Indian caste system's effort to prohibit love between certain groups of people is displayed. Besides, it is evident that Roy sees personal and political spaces unified. Thus, what is personal and what is political are mutually compatible and/or incompatible. That is to say, While Sophie Mol's arrival triggers the tragedies that befell Ammu and her twins, the 'love laws' of the caste system are already in existence in India to persecute her and Velutha long before anything else. Similarly, Roy emphasizes here that "it all began" but at this point in the novel, the reader does not know what "it" refers to. One can only guess that the events in question are so traumatic that Roy chooses to say 'it' instead of clearly describing them.

3. NARRATION, LANGUAGE, AND TRAUMA IN THE NOVEL

In this thesis, it is proposed that Roy's use of time and narrative style in *The God of Small Things* serve to highlight both the characters' personal and India's social traumas. Cathy Caruth defines trauma in her *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* as: "a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind" (3). One may encounter such horrible events that the subsequent trauma can permanently haunt a person and affect the way they reflect on their lives. Moreover, not only individuals but entire communities are subject to trauma as well. Wars, natural disasters, and other catastrophic events may affect millions of people, leaving non-erasable imprints on several generations. In this sense, Arundhati Roy's 1997 novel *The God of Small Things* present an allegory of the greater traumatic experiences of the post-colonial India through a series of tragedies within a single family. Trauma at different levels and with different causes can be seen in many members of the Ipe family. Similarly, these effects manifest differently in each family member.

On the representation of traumatic experiences through language, Kathie J. Albright writes in her "Analyzing Trauma Narratives" that: "In all such instances of trauma, the narrative nature of daily life is breached. Trauma produces a rupture in the life storyline of its victims and, as a result, survivors find it difficult, if not impossible, to untangle the now snarled or clipped threads of stories so as to create a new overarching story that makes sense to them" (400). Similarly, *The God of Small Things* aims to recreate the traumatic experiences of the characters for the reader. In order to achieve this, the novel does not use the literary styles of conventional literary texts. Roy toys with the order of the events, discards a reliable narrator, and uses word-plays extensively. Thus, she mimics the disorientation of the traumatized characters through the novel's language.

The main factors contributing to the effectiveness of the recreation of trauma in the novel are Roy's depiction of time and the novel's language. While unfolding her story, Arundhati Roy uses specific literary and stylistic devices such as the arbitrary use of Malayalam dialect, irregular capitalization, repetitions, flashbacks and children's language. The narrators of the novel, Estha and Rahel, unveil the events gradually until their traumatic reunion when they are both adults. The irregular usage of language and time in the novel allows different readings possible through its depiction of themes like memory, and trauma.

3.1. FLASHBACK, FORESHADOWING, AND INTERTEXTUALITY

Arundhati Roy's first and only novel, *The God of Small Things*, published in 1997 is one of the most impressive texts of how the consequences of a single tragic event influence the lives of an entire family. Through frequent use of flashbacks, and foreshadowing, *The God of Small Things* switches from the past to the present. The novel has various sub-plots, but, it is mainly focused on two main stories. The first of these plots is the relationship between Ammu and Velutha, and the other is the actions of Estha and Rahel. Through the end of the novel, Roy describes in detail the tragic outcome of the forbidden inter-caste relationship between Ammu and Velutha, however, she leaves the future of her children ambiguous. As the novel concludes, Ammu's twins reunite after years of forced separation by their relatives and have sex, and it is left up to the reader how their lives turned out in their later years, and if they could or could not overcome their traumas. It can be argued whether the novel foresees a dark or a bright future for the children, considering how their lives turned out after their reluctant participation in Velutha's demise, and the incestuous nature of their reunion. Indeed, it is up to the reader to interpret, whether this reunion represents the twins' reconciliation with each other or it is a visible manifestation of trauma and social dysfunction.

The novel is fragmented into individual narrative fragments. After a brief introduction, the funeral of Sophie Mol, who is unIntroduced at the moment, is described. After the funeral, a pair of twins is brought by their mother Ammu to a police station. There, she wants to make a statement and see Velutha. The relationship between Ammu and Velutha which was not mentioned so far remains unclear even after the description of that visit to the police station. Only at the end of the novel, the key scene of the relationship is revealed, that is, how Ammu (a Syrian Christian widow) and Velutha (a member of the low caste of untouchables) found themselves as lovers. Only then the title of the novel becomes clear. Although it was previously clear that Velutha himself is the God of Small Things, it is clarified only in this last scene of the book that this title means a certain aspect in his relationship with Ammu. According to "The Big Things", that is, their caste allegiances, it is strictly forbidden for a relatively high caste member Ammu, to enter a relationship with an untouchable. This knowledge of the danger "ever lurked inside her. They knew that there was nowhere for them to go. They had nothing. No future. So they stuck to the small things"(338) – of whose god is Velutha. Who Velutha exactly is, what the twins have to do with Velutha and Ammu, or how the death of Sophie Mol is linked to the whole event, is clarified only in small steps and with no connection between the chapters.

One of the twins, Estha, at some point and for some unknown reason - is said at the beginning of the novel - to have ceased to speak, i.e. he "grew accustomed to the restless octopus that lived inside him and squirted its inky tranquilizer on his past. Gradually the reason for his silence was hidden away, entombed somewhere deep in the soothing folds of the fact of it "(12). Interestingly, the narrator states that Estha has been behaving like a "Lungfish" since he stopped talking (10). It is ingenious on the writer's part because the behavior of the lungfish exactly reflects the withdrawal of a traumatized person from the world. The lungfish is a kind of extinct African fish. At the beginning of the

dry seasons, it burrows itself into the seabed and secretes mucus, and then envelops itself in a thin cocoon. As the water dries away, its cocoon hardens, but the fish can continue to breathe on his exposed lungs. In such a protective container, which reliably isolates him from the outside world, it can survive up to two years without food or water. He makes up for the reductions in energy through breaking down the muscles in its tail. In this way he can lose up to 50% of its body weight. Thus, the fish does not starve, but only grows smaller ("dormancy"). The narrator similarly states that Estha reacts to the event by occupying "very little space in the world", and that "some (people) never noticed (him) at all" (10).

Something must have traumatized Estha terribly that he has thus withdrawn himself from the world. But what that exactly is, is talked about only in hints at the beginning of the novel. These hints usually contain subjects that are not expected to be heard from children. For example, narrator states that Estha "was steeped in the smell of old roses, blooded on memories of a broken man" (12). It is also unclear who the unnamed, "guru of gore" is and whether Rahel's memories of an accident casualty foreshadows the fate of Velutha: "I've seen a man in an accident with his eyeball twinging on the end of a nerve, like a yo-yo "(16). Lastly, it is clear that the "inky tranquilizer," of the octopus cannot obscure everything from his past and that a particular "Yes," always remains present:

But worst of all, he carried inside him the memory of a young man with an old man's mouth. The memory of a swollen face and a smashed, upside-down smile. Of a spreading pool of clear liquid with a bare bulb reflected in it. Of a bloodshot eye that had opened, wandered and then fixed its gaze on him. Estha. And what had Estha done? He had looked into that beloved face and said:

Yes.

Yes, it was him.

The word Estha's octopus couldn't get at: Yes. (32)

There are two storylines in the novel which get entangled into each other again and again. In the first storyline, Margaret comes from England to visit her ex-husband Chacko in India and brings their daughter Sophie Mol. During their stay, the twins get jealous of Sophie Mol, and mistakenly believe that Ammu does not love them anymore. Sophie Mol similarly feels uncomfortable in the family and persuades the twins to take her on their journey to across the river. During their escape they capsize the boat and Sophie Mol drowns. The second storyline is closely interwoven with the first one. Ammu, falls in love with the untouchable Velutha, who is a member of the lowest caste. He is falsely and deliberately accused by Ammu's mother for the disappearance of the children, and of raping Ammu. The grandmother Baby Kochamma transfers all her anger on Velutha, namely the responsibility for all the humiliations she has ever experienced. That is, the family was once caught in a communist demonstration and had to wait in their car until the train of demonstrators had passed:

Baby Kochamma's fear lay rolled up on the car floor like a damp, clammy cheroot. This was just the beginning of it. The fear that over the years would grow to consume her. That would make her lock her doors and windows. That would give her two hairlines and both her mouths. Hers too, was an ancient, age-old fear. The fear of being dispossessed. (70)

Velutha is probably one of the demonstrators. Therefore, the old woman "focuses all her fury at her public humiliation on Velutha" (78). Gradually for her, Velutha begins to embody the demonstration, and the man who had forced her to swing the

Marxist party flag. Velutha will eventually even turn into a symbol of everything bad for Baby Kochamma, a symbol of "all men who had laughed her" (78). In the end, it can be argued that she even believes her made-up story that she tells to the police. A police officer apprehends Velutha in his house and beats him terribly. Velutha later dies from his injuries in the prison. Only after the beating, do the police notice the twins have witnessed the violence. Thus, towards the end of the novel, the motif of the smell of blood and roses (12) alluded to in an earlier chapter which refers to Velutha's blood on the grass of History House, is resolved. The closely interwoven storylines mentioned above (i.e. Sophie Mol's drowning caused by a misunderstanding, Velutha's death as a result of Baby Kochamma's spite, and the twins' witnessing these events) are presented by Roy in a very puzzling way, which is completely unclear in during the first reading. Only after returning back to previous chapters can the reader make sense of the "octopus", "yes", and "blood on the grass" motifs. These storylines demonstrate Roy's technique of using fragmented narratives in order to mimic real life trauma victims who find it difficult to recount their stories in an orderly fashion.

After Velutha's death, the children are manipulated by Baby Kochamma into testifying against Velutha. The use of the personal pronoun "we" in the following question by Baby Kochamma is at first difficult to grasp: "D'you want to save Ammu or shall we send her to jail?" (318). The question is in fact unclear because of the plural, and its suggestion that the children should actually take over the responsibility of the two deaths. The "we", Baby Kochamma says seems to be a pure, clear plural at first glance. However, the plural seems strangely out of place, as it is not for a group of equally strong individuals. Moreover, considering the situation and especially the actual power relations between the twins and the grandmother, the distance between the old woman and the twins is clear: it has

already been decided for them. The twins follow her decision: "Not together (but almost) two frightened voices whispered: Save Ammu" (319)

The traumatic thing about the situation is that the children were apparently able to make a decision autonomously, as the narrator phrases Baby Kochamma's question by saying it was "as though she was offering them a choice of two treats". It is not important that a better choice for the twins actually does not exist, because the children can only pick the wrong choice in this situation. It is possible to say that the twins' situation is similar to a position where one is forced into harming other people through moral paradoxes. Regardless of how the candidate opts (e.g. "If you do not want to kill him, we will torture your family. Will you now work with us?"), by the very fact that the respondent chooses, he has already become part of the torture machine. The decision of the twins is similarly paradoxical and traumatizing, as both "knew that they had been given a choice. And how quick they had been in the choosing!" (319).

Estha experiences the following as if in a trance. The cell in the basement of the police station is dark at first, and then lit. The policeman pushes the almost dead Velutha with his foot, who looks up to Estha and tries to smile. The sentences are generally structured with a simple subject-verb-object structure without being interrupted:

The Inspector asked his question. Estha's mouth said Yes.

Childhood tipto-ed out.

Silence slid in like a holt.

Someone switched off the light and Velutha disappeared. (320).

The simplicity of the sentences conflicts with the complexity of what really happened. Shortly after, Velutha dies. For Velutha it is death, but for Ammu and the twins it is the "the end of living" (321) because from that point onwards nothing would be the same with their life before Velutha's death. To express the gloomy atmosphere at the police station and underline the fact that Estha was forced to say 'yes', the basic sentence structure is used. The events and its results are presented as if they are inevitable and that they could not have been prevented. In this respect, three literary structures are particularly striking in *The God of Small Things*: foreshadowings, flashbacks, and the intertextual references within the text.

The foreshadowings and flashbacks in the novel are central in understanding the previous events that led to the traumatization of the twins. Through flashbacks, every detail of a particular unknown in the novel gets additional importance, and they are crucial on the way to understand the circumstances around the deaths of Sophie Mol and Velutha. For instance, early in the novel, one of the twins describe the History House which has been of interest to them when they were little as "looming" dimly "in the Heart of Darkness":

They didn't know then that soon they would go in. That they would cross the river and be where they weren't supposed to be, with a man they weren't supposed to love. That they would watch with dinner-plate eyes as history revealed itself to them in the back verandah. [...]

It would lurk forever in ordinary things (...) They would grow up grappling with ways of living with what happened. (55)

The fate appears as a malicious, unforeseeable, unchangeable and unavoidable power. In the novel, the narrator creates a metaphor between fate and a missile and says that none had the slightest idea that the missile "would annihilate

the family's "Good Name" forever, and once fired, it "would come from a completely unexpected quarter" (168).

After Sophie Mol's funeral the use of foreshadowing in the novel continues as well. When Ammu is thrown from the house of their parents by her brother Chacko, she departs from her twins, but not without asking them, "that (they) will always love each other." The twins are at that moment "twin millstones"; but what "they had done, would return to empty them. But that would be Later "(225). Such and other similar interjections shape the text, such as: "Sorrow, however, was still two weeks away on that blue-stich afternoon" (266).

For the twins, years after Velutha's murder, the house where he was beaten always remains as "Velutha's house", and the place where "an inflatable goose had been burst with a policeman's cigarette" (49). The motif of the inflatable goose is totally incomprehensible at this point for the reader. The history of the house is not resolved until later, and only when reread in retrospect: The children had taken their toy goose across the river with them during their escape, and one of the cops later burst it with a cigarette (351).

Images like these are numerous in the novel: the motif of the inflatable goose destroyed with a cigarette, the painted ceiling of the church which is mentioned in Sophie Mol's funeral – the blue sky with silver jet planes - or details like that millipede under the boot of a police officer all of which appear frequently in the text (269). These motifs are not immediately explained, but brought out to light and explained only much later in unexpectedly different contexts. With this shifting technique Roy creates an atmosphere of hopelessness and created by uncertainty. Although the action in the novel apparently runs like clockwork, it is impossible to tell when these events happen. Each event could play an important role in the story, and every event is charged with a meaning, but it is not possible to track them down in a sequence.

3.2. INTERTEXTUALITY

The foreshadowings and flashbacks in *The God of Small Things* are accompanied by a third literary structure, the intertextual references which additionally underline the impression that the events described in the story are inevitable. The references to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* published in 1899 haunts the entire storyline. In Conrad's novel a hopeless, self-contained world is explored. The protagonist of Conrad's novel is similarly foreign to his surroundings and yet he heads inevitably to a single point. His search is directed to Mr. Kurtz, who is quite a violent man and yet revered almost as a god among both the workers of the ivory company he works at and the native people. The narrator wants to reach the "heart" of Africa to find Kurtz, and actually manages to find him in his deathbed. His last words are the end lines of the story: "The horror! The horror!" (138). Similarly, in *The God of Small Things*, twins name the History House as the heart of darkness and cross the river to explore the house and witness Velutha being beaten to death. It will not be unsuitable to call Velutha's tragedy as "the horror".

Nature in the Conrad's novel is threatening. It looks like an "unknown planet" (69). The forest is "unmoved, like a mask-heavy, like the closed door of a prison." Nature is personified through this metaphor, as a living being with its own will, "hidden with the expression of knowledge, patient expectation, and unapproachable silence" (110). Roy's novel, on the other hand opens with the following description of nature:

May in Ayemenem is a hot, brooding month. The days are long and humid. The river shrinks and black crows gorge on bright mangoes in still, dustgreen trees. Red bananas ripen. Jackfruits burst. Dissolute bluebottles hum vacuously in the fruity air. Then they stun

themselves against clear windowpanes and die, fatly baffled in the sun. (1)

The parallels regarding nature between *Heart of Darkness* and *The God of Small Things* surface here since the imagery of the 'black crows', 'bursting jackfruits', and the "dying bluebottle flies" similarly constructs an uncanny introduction in Roy's novel (1). In both novels, nature represents danger, stillness, inactivity, and stagnation.

Aside from a few individual motifs such as the narrator's or Marlowe's constant fear, or the river, or the senseless murders of Kurtz, there are not so many direct intertextual similarities between the Conrad's and Roy's novels. Rather, both texts are similar, especially on a deeper level, and in their ambiguity. This can be seen in Conrad in his non-specific use of the title "Heart of Darkness". The title of Conrad's novel alludes both to Kurtz and Africa. The first meaning that this title refers to is Kurtz's persuasiveness, as he is likened to "the deceitful flow from the heart of an impenetrable darkness" (105), and the other reference is to nature in general: "The brown current ran swiftly out of the heart of darkness (136). Similarly, in Roy's novel, the title is a play on the Big God-Small God dichotomy, and it both refers to Velutha as a character, and the unavoidable social structures which keep him and Ammu apart.

3.3. ENGLISH VS MALAYALAM

Many postcolonial writers and critics of colonialism have drawn attention to the relationship between language and colonialism. Colonizing powers have employed the tactic of converting the conquered population to their religion and teaching their own language in the conquered peoples' schools. In this respect, French linguist Louis-Jean Calvet identifies in his *Language Wars* that linguistic colonization occurs in two phases, namely the vertical, and the horizontal steps.

During the vertical step, the language of the colonizers is adopted by the elite of the colonized, and then spreads through them among the other social classes. The second step, -the horizontal- involves the nationwide spread of the colonizers' language, through the education system and language policies (72).

Imperial powers are usually aware that their continued existence on the conquered places and their exploitation cannot be sustained only through brute force. Cultural transformation of the conquered peoples is therefore necessary in order to assure the safety of their colonial interests. Therefore, struggle against the effects of colonialism in the recently freed nations have also necessitated a struggle against these cultural institutions as well.

Bettina Migge's following words from her article "Language and Colonialism" clarifies the difficulty of postcolonial experience.

(F)orce alone was not sufficient to drive European imperialist expansion. The imperialist and colonial enterprise was much aided or ultimately even enabled by the existence of a social system and social ideology in Europe which firmly inscribed, legitimised and naturalised European cultural, social, scientific superiority (3).

Similarly, Martinique-born French critic Franz Fanon writes in his *Black Skin, White Masks* that: "A man who has a language consequently possesses the world expressed and implied by that language (9)".

Compared to the former colonies, the subjugation of India was more problematic for the British rulers. While its former colonies presented little or no resistance against the English Imperialism, the cultural and linguistic complexities of India proved difficult to be understood and dismantled for the British. Regarding such a comparison between India and other English colonies, Bernard S. John makes a summary in his *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge* that:

The indigenous populations encountered in North America were quickly subjugated, relocated, or decimated, and even though there continued to be, from the colonial perspective, a “native” problem, it was a military and political one, requiring little in the way of legal and administrative innovation. In the Caribbean colonies, the indigenous population had all but been destroyed before British sovereignty was established, and the basic form of production through the plantations worked with enslaved labor was largely responsible for the maintenance of law and order. For the whites, the system of governance was much like that of the North American colonies. Only in Ireland, and to a lesser extent in Wales and Scotland, did the British face a colonial problem that required innovation. The solution in Ireland was the establishment of a Protestant landholding elite, with the virtual creation of plantations that depressed Catholic peasantry provided with labor and rents. (57)

India’s position is certainly different from the above mentioned colonies. India’s firmly established state traditions, military capabilities, religious and caste institutions, and rich literary tradition made it a more difficult endeavor for the colonizers to subdue India. Therefore, India’s colonizers had to understand India before dismantling it. This led to establishment of British schools in India where British customs and language could be taught, and Imperial presence could be normalized. This in turn, made way for the question of hybridity and inbetweenness, as embodied in the novel by Chacko, Pappachi, and Sophie Mol.

Similar to many other postcolonial writers, Arundhati Roy’s work enriches its narrative and amplifies its themes through its depiction of the effects of colonial rule. Roy claims in her article entitled “Shall We Leave It to the Experts?: Enron's Power Project in India Demonstrates Who Benefits from Globalization” that:

Fifty years after independence, India is still struggling with the legacy of colonialism, still flinching from the "cultural insult." As citizens we're still caught up in the business of "disproving" the white world's definition of us. Intellectually and emotionally, we have just begun to grapple with communal and caste politics that threaten to tear our society apart. You may have guessed by now that I'm talking about the modern version of globalization.

In the context of *The God of Small Things*, these words can also be interpreted as the attention Roy places on colonial history as a subject matter. The language of Roy's novel cleverly presents the dilemmas of both India and its imperial rulers through the mocking and playful way Roy employs. For instance, the novel opens with Ammu's return to her parents' house in Ayemenem. The way Ammu's hometown is presented sets the theme of 'homecoming' against an unwelcoming backdrop:

May in Ayemenem is a hot, brooding month. The days are long and humid. The river shrinks and black crows gorge on bright mangoes in still, dustgreen trees. Red bananas ripen. Jackfruits burst. Dissolute bluebottles hum vacuously in the fruity air. Then they stun themselves against clear windowpanes and die, fatly baffled in the sun. (1)

Roy's use of ambiguous adjectives achieves in the above quotation to create an unwelcoming atmosphere and to foreshadow Ammu's troubles. The reader both wonders and anticipates what is being 'brooded' for her. The imagery of the 'black crows', 'bursting jackfruits', and the dying bluebottle flies constructs an eerie introduction to the novel. The ambiguity and uncanniness also lies in the fact that

Roy constructs Ayemenem in the above paragraph both as a natural beauty and a place of lethargy.

As previously mentioned, Chacko represents India's inbetweenness as a post-colonial nation. The dichotomy between English and Malayalam leads to several complications in post-colonial India and generates a gap between younger and older generations. During the scene where the twins' uncle Chacko calls Pappachi an 'Anglophile', the twins resort to a dictionary in order to understand the meaning of the word. After learning that it meant 'Person well disposed to the English', this time, they have to look up the word 'disposed', and find the correct description of the word in the context that Chacko used it. Only after they have been aided by Chacko, can they vaguely understand the meaning of the word (52).

According to Chacko, they cannot go in the house of their ancestors since they have been 'locked out' and all they can see "through the windows, are shadows". Their "minds have been invaded by a war", which makes them "adore (their) conquerors and despise (themselves)" (53). The "war" mentioned here is both literal and metaphorical, and refers to India's independence from the colonial rule. Chacko does not use words like 'our land or our country' instead; he says "our minds" which refers to colonization of India by the British and since the nation underwent a cultural change the way that Indian people think has altered and in time they started to perceive the British superior than the Indians. In *The God of Small Things*, the cultural hybridity caused by the English educational system on Indian culture is clear in the Anglophile attitudes of some members of the Ipe family. At the same scene described above, Chacko claims that:

(T)hough he hated to admit it, they were all Anglophiles. They were a family of Anglophiles. Pointed in the wrong direction, trapped outside their own history and unable to retrace their steps—because their footprints had been swept away. He explained to them that

history was like an old house at night. With all the lamps lit. And ancestors whispering inside.

“To understand history,” Chacko said, “we have to go inside and listen to what they’re saying. And look at the books and the pictures on the wall. And smell the smells.” (52)

The first half of this quotations and the reference to sweeping one’s footprints refers to the untouchables’ obligation to sweep their own footprint, lest they defile the higher classes who walk the same road. Therefore if there is a caste system among the British and the Indians, the British are the masters and Indians are the untouchables. In the second half, although it is clear that Chacko is renouncing the Imperial education system and proposing a return to folk tales, and national history, it is quite interesting that a double meaning exists in the second paragraph. When taken individually, it is also possible to claim that the second paragraph posits that “to understand history” Indian people are obliged to “listen to what they -the English- are saying”. One can justify such an interpretation by looking at the twins’ reaction. The twins misunderstand Chacko and think that he is talking about the house on the other side of the river -The History House-, whose owner was an Englishman who supposedly adopted the Indian culture by wearing traditional Indian clothes and speaking in the local language. Roy claims that he is in fact “Ayemenem’s own Kurtz”, and that Ayemenem is “his private Heart of Darkness” (52). Therefore it is clear that for the younger generation what they think as history is closer to the ‘The History House’ than what Chacko wants them to.

The History House featured in the novel can be identified as a metaphor for postcolonial India. Therefore, the history of India and England can be said to be cross paths in this house. Although the house itself is a tangible, real house, its real meaning is in fact allegorical. It can be argued that there is a similarity between the

novel's interpretation of the relationship between India and England; and the things that the History House stands for. The novel describes this master-slave position through its positioning the "Big God", and the "Small God": "That Big God howled like a hot wind, and demanded obeisance. Then Small God (cozy and contained, private and limited) came away cauterized, laughing numbly at his own temerity. Inured by the confirmation of his own inconsequence, he became resilient and truly indifferent" (20). It can be argued in the light of the above quotation that the History House exists in order to lend a voice to the traumatic colonial experience. Thus, the decades of colonial fancies, clash of civilizations, and social changes have traumatized both cultures because they do not find a place in official histories.

It can be argued that this constant interaction between the colonized and the colonizer in the novel stands for the connection between the past and the present. In *The God of Small Things*, past is something all major characters either yearn for or despise, For instance, while Pappachi longs for the English rule, Chacko hates it. Similarly, at the end of the novel, Ammu and Velutha are punished for their scandalous past, and the twins cannot adapt to the present, having being separated from each other.

In *The God of Small Things*, Arundhati Roy constructs her setting as a multicultural and multilingual society where English and Malayalam languages are used together by the community. Therefore, the language of the novel frequently shifts between these two. However, Roy presents India, and Kerala specifically, as a place where the English language is privileged over the local languages. One can see this in the apparent inclination of some of the characters to use the English language and confidence in the English people. Thus, English turns into the language of the Indian elite and the local languages are pushed in the periphery. Favoring the English over the Indian is especially apparent in Ammu's parents. When Ammu tells her father that her husband has been abusing her and trying to

force her into having sex with his English boss, her father is not only unconcerned but also skeptical: "Pappachi would not believe her story- not because he thought well of her husband, but simply because he didn't believe that an Englishmen any Englishman, would covet another man's wife" (42). Pappachi's point of view shows that English is not only a language; it is a way of being. Anyone who is a native speaker or can speak the language has to have a good personality.

In Baby Kochamma's case, the Malayalam language signifies Velutha's inferior position, and her hatred for him. As the Ipe's are passing through a communist demonstration while driving to a movie theater to see *The Sound of Music*, they are insulted by some of the demonstrators. Some of the demonstrators attack their car and force her to shout "Long live Revolution!" -"Inquilab Zindabad!"- in Malayalam. During these incidents, Rahel sees Velutha in the march and tells this to Baby Kochamma. Thereafter, Baby Kochamma starts hating him, although he was not among the attackers. As she had been considering herself very highly, this encounter humiliates her deeply and directs her anger towards Velutha:

In the days that followed, Baby Kochamma focused all her fury at her public humiliation on Velutha. She sharpened it like a pencil. In her mind he grew to represent the march. And the man who had forced her to wave the Marxist Party flag. And the man who christened her Modalali Mariakutty ('landlord' in Malayalam). And all the men who had laughed at her. She began to hate him. (82)

Roy's use of the Malayalam against English dichotomy throughout the novel thus serves to introduce the personalities and ideologies of some of the characters. In *The God of Small Things*, the English language is frequently employed by elder members of the Ipe family, who have grown up during the colonial rule, such as Baby Kochamma, Pappachi, and Mamachi. As a result, it seems that they are

unknowingly sacrificing their national and local identity while glorifying the English language. As its use is associated with the superiority of the educated upper classes, their preference of English over Malayalam conveys their vanity.

Thus, it is possible to claim that the use of Malayalam language helps Roy to create a social background for Kerala in the novel. Thus, the reader can understand the cultural concepts like treatment of women and colonial attitudes in postcolonial India more easily.

3.4. SILENCE

The use of silence is another also another convention by Roy in making a connection between trauma and language. Roy uses silence to express trauma through language. Silence exists in the novel both through structure and through the characters. For instance, through the end of the novel there are three chapters without a title, which, structurally, can be considered as novel's handling the theme of silence. In addition to that, all actual events in the novel are introduced in the first chapter. That is to say, the beginning of the novel is where the reader gets a glimpse of what is going to happen throughout the book. In other words, the first chapter is the core of the book and the rest is the echo or reflection of the memories mentioned at the beginning.

Judith Herman identifies opposite tendencies in trauma victims: "The conflict between the desire to deny horrible events and the desire to utter them aloud is the central dialectic of trauma" (ibid 9). Thus, traumatized people do not tell. They have enormous difficulties to engage in the narrative process. Narration seems extremely difficult to them. People who have survived dread, terror, abuse, misuse, and threat to life without being able to process the events try to trivialize the events to those around them. There is however a paradox in such a situation: most of the traumatized people want nothing more than to share their horror. No matter how

much, they want their audience to do everything possible to help them; they just do not want them to ask them what actually happened. They give them the feeling that they do not allow contact with the trauma. They say that they cannot imagine talking about it.

According to Herman's observations, Traumatized people feel that the traumatic events they have lived do not fit easily into the existing core beliefs about themselves and the world. Due to the overpowering nature of the events and the unwillingness of people to change their own beliefs about themselves and the world, these events are not understood at first. The exchange about these events with other people is then an important strategy to understand the significance of the event, and about their own beliefs, and to be able to adjust the self-image and world view of the events. Therefore, and the inability to understand and communicate the event, and silence remains a central feature of the trauma (14-5).

In light of Judith Herman's views on the trauma victims' simultaneous desire to speak out and keep quiet, one can see that silence is the manifestation of the personal significance of state and family violence. Generally, victims are faced with the fact that even people closest to them are not interested in listening to their stories. The ambivalent attitude of the victim, on the one hand is to suppress the painful memories and on the other hand to exchange them. However they are confronted by the doubt and avoidance of those around them, and thus contributing to the maintenance of their speechlessness. This situation only benefits, both in state and in domestic violence, the perpetrators who remain protected from social ostracism and punishment.

One character who experiences extensive trauma in *The God of Small Things* is Estha. The effects of trauma on Estha are apparent in his muteness. Two major events depicted in the novel lead to his gradual turning in upon himself: his

encounter with Orangedrink Lemondrink Man, and watching Velutha being beaten to death, which is due to his false testimony on the way Sophie Mol died.

"But worst of all he carried inside him the memory of a young man with an old man's mouth. The memory of a swollen face and a smashed, upside-down smile. Of spreading pool of a clear liquid with a bulb reflected in it. Of bloodshot eye that had opened, wandered and then fixed its gaze on him. Estha. And what had Estha done? He had looked into that beloved face and said: Yes."(32)

Estha's gradual muteness exemplifies his feelings after the unfortunate events and his related trauma. Although he had no other option but to say "yes" in order to save his mother Ammu, it is not surprising that he chooses to go silent, since a single word he uttered resulted in devastating events:

Once the quietness arrived, it stayed and spread in Estha. It reached out of his head and **enfolded** him in its swampy arms [...]. It sent its **stealthy**, suckered **tentacles** inching **along** the insides of his **skull**, hovering the **knolls** and **dells** of his memory, **dislodging old** sentences, whisking them off the tip of his tongue. It stripped his thoughts of the words that described them and **left** them pared and naked. Unspeakable. Numb [...] He grew accustomed to the uneasy octopus that **lived** inside him and squirted its inky **tranquilizer** on his past. **Gradually** the reason for his **silence** was hidden away, entombed somewhere deep in the soothing **folds** of the fact of it.

(Roy 13)

The "L" sound is repeated throughout this paragraph, and the words I have highlighted in this quotation can be seen as an example to alliteration. Traditionally, alliteration serves as a memory aid for bards to remember lengthy literary works.

Therefore, the fact that this part of the novel serves to highlight Estha's silence in his effort to forget the traumatizing effects, constitutes a direct contrast between silence (and forgetting) and memory (and remembering). Even though Estha tries to overcome his memories and forget his traumas through silence, the narrator's use of alliteration here hints that he cannot. It is also clear here that Roy wishes to tell us that words can bind people together or set them apart. By saying "yes" to the police, Estha confirms the false accusations against Velutha. Velutha's subsequent death leads to Estha's experiencing the power of words and as the time passes silence helps Estha to tame his memory; to get used to living with the past but when Rahel returns everything changes because she is the key of Estha's memory. Her arrival revives the forgotten things, the sad memories:

It had been quiet in Estha's head until Rahel came. But with her she had brought the sound of passing trains, and the light and shade that falls on you if you have a window seat. The world, locked out for years, suddenly flooded in, and now Estha couldn't hear himself for the noise. Trains. Traffic. Music. The Stock Market. A dam had burst and savage waters swept everything up in a swirling. Comets, violins, parades, loneliness, clouds, beards, bigots, lists, flags, earthquakes, despair were all swept up in a scrambled swirling. (15)

Every sentence in the above quotation refers to an event, and it can be likened to a summary of Estha and Rahel's childhood memories. Estha tries to lock away all those memories but with Rahel returning, everything he had suppressed until that time becomes uncovered. In "the world locked out for years, suddenly flooded in" the use of the verb 'flood' can be seen as a reference to Sophie Mol's drowning, violin is Mamachi's violin, and the flag refers back to the day the family saw Velutha with a flag. Estha suppresses the events that make him remember the tragic events, keeps them away by not talking and Rahel, unintentionally reveals everything that

he had kept hidden because with her arrival, Estha knows that he needs to break his silence and start talking again. That is why “with her she had brought the sound of passing trains”.

It is not only Estha who is mute in the novel. Velutha is similarly portrayed as silent. Since he belongs to the untouchable class, Velutha is not allowed to socialize with the Ipe family. Although Velutha doesn't have a timid, silent personality, he is silenced by the people around him; even his own father wants to mute him:

"Vellya Paapen feared for his younger son. He couldn't say what it was that frightened him. It was nothing that he had said. Or done. It was not what he said, but the way he said it. (...)The quiet way he offered suggestions without being asked. Or the quiet way in which he disregarded suggestions without appearing to rebel." (76)

As a result, it is worth noting that Roy communicates Velutha's speech to the reader by using words associated with movement, gestures or facial expressions. The narrator points out to a similarity between male Kathakali dancers and Velutha. Kathakali dancers are outcasts in the Indian culture as well, but at the same time, their dancing are both praised and revered. (“kathakali”). In the novel, they are referred to as the “most beautiful of men because their body is their soul” (107). A characteristic of this dance is the intense use of hand gestures and facial make-up. Thus, the silence of these men is in contrast with the intensity of the hidden messages conveyed through these indirect means. Thus, Velutha's disempowerment and forced silence is overcome through such a metaphor.

It is also worth noting that Velutha's silence extends to his death as well, and he does not have the chance to speak out and defend himself about the accusations against him because those accusations were made by a person from a higher class

than Velutha's. Consequently, the police brutally beat him to death and he cannot utter a word or ask the reason why. And after all that tragic event, although no one told her the opposite, Margaret Kochamma never blames Velutha of killing Sophie Mol, instead; she blames Estha and even once slaps him hysterically for this. In the paragraph below the narrator of *The God of Small Things* describes Margaret Kochamma's thoughts about Velutha:

“Strangely, the person that Margaret Kochamma never thought about was Velutha. Of him she had no memory at all. Not even what he looked like. [...]

The God of Loss.

The God of Small Things.

He left no footprints in sand, no ripples in water, no image in mirrors.”(265)

Velutha is represented like a ghost who has no relation to world, no body to prove his presence, no clue to prove his very existence in the world. This shows that what happened to Velutha is a reason for trauma because people who underwent traumatic experiences have a tendency to ignore or cover the actual reason that reminds them of the traumatic experience. Furthermore, the above paragraph reveals the hidden meaning behind the title of the novel. The reader becomes sure that the title refers to Velutha himself.

Similar to Velutha, Ammu is also partly silenced as a result of her social status. At the beginning of the story, after returning her home with her twins, she is accepted by her family, but also she is aware of a subtle hostility, and that she is not welcomed: “She was twenty seven that year, and in the pit of her stomach she carried the cold knowledge that, for her, life had been lived. She had one chance.

She made a mistake. She married the wrong man” (38). Roy implies that by marrying the wrong man Ammu has destroyed her dreams of being an independent woman who lives away from her family.

Apart from the characters, the book itself is ‘silenced’ structurally. Roy does this by not giving titles to four chapters all of which are about the traumatic events. All of these chapters reveal the truth about the events that are somehow unspoken or ignored. In the first chapter without a title, the Ipe family gets the news of Sophie Mol’s death but on the same day Velutha’s father visits Mamachi to confess about Velutha and Ammu’s affair. After that, we learn the chain of events that led to Velutha’s death.

In the second ‘silenced’ chapter, we read about how Sophie Mol got prepared for her tragic boat trip with her cousins, she takes the presents that they had brought from England for Estha and Rahel and puts them in her bag. Until that time the reader is not informed about the reason behind this trip, which was simple: “To drive hard bargain. To negotiate a friendship.” (267)

In order to understand the third chapter without a title, we need to check the last paragraph of the previous chapter where Velutha visits Comrade Pillai to ask for help:

Velutha’s last visit to Comrade Pillai-after his confrontation with Mamachi and Baby Kochamma- and what had passed between them, remained a secret. The last betrayal that sent Velutha across the river, swimming against the current, in the dark and rain, well in time for his blind date with history. (282)

The ‘secret’ is revealed throughout the following chapter. It tells us what happened between Mamachi and Baby Kochamma and how Comrade Pillai refused to help him.

As for the fourth and the last 'silenced' chapter, it is slightly different from the previous ones, since it talks about twenty three years later when Estha and Rahel reunite in the Ayemenem House. The twins share a secret that no one else but them would ever know; the fact that they had sex. But the interesting thing is how Roy combines the twins' secret with that of their mother, Ammu's. The chapter begins with Estha and Rahel's mental and physical reunion, and ends with Ammu's inner thoughts about Velutha. Thus, Roy completes the circle through which the love laws are resisted and overcome by the twins' repetition of Ammu's sexual transgression.

3.5. REPETITION

Despite its negative connotations both in literary and academic writing, repetition acts as a soothing, problem-solving, rehabilitating element in *The God of Small Things*. Roy's characters use repetition of words and phrases in order to make sense of an otherwise illogical world caused by their traumatic experiences.

In one of her interviews, Roy states that: "Repetition [was] used because it made me feel safe. Repeated words and phrases have a rocking feeling, like a lullaby. They help take away the shock of the plot." (qtd in Stade 421). On the use and effects of repetition in the *God of Small Things*, Roy herself thus claims that through repetition, the characters are able to create a sphere of protection for themselves against some of the tragic events in the novel.

In the very first chapter, the writer gives the reader hints of what is going to happen throughout the novel and connects everything with Sophie Mol's death. On the other hand, she highlights the importance and effects of the social events of the time before she reaches a final decision and claims that: "it really began in the days when the Love Laws were made. The laws that lay down who should be loved, and how. And how much." (33). The concept "love laws" mentioned here is repeated

many times in the novel. Each time the concept is emphasized, the reader is reminded about what had happened and we face the fact that we cannot change what already had happened.

The second time the author talks about “Love Laws” is when Ammu and Velutha sees each other after a long time:

Ammu saw that he saw. She looked away. He did too. History’s fiends returned to claim them. To rewrap them in its old, scarred pelt and drag them back to where they really lived. Where the Love Laws lay down who should be loved. And how. And how much. (177)

As can be seen here, love laws and history are working hand in hand to foreshadow the tragic events that Velutha and Ammu will go through. History is described as a monster who punishes everyone who breaks its rules. The word ‘rewrap’ is a sign that it is not the first time history punishes the ones who don’t obey it, and the word “pelt” and “being wrapped in pelt” remind the reader of the ancient, unmodern, and backward nature of these laws. Once more historical trauma is blended with personal one.

The third time we read about “Love Laws” is a bit different than the first two because this time it is the twins who break them. This shows that the rules of the society are for everyone, for every generation. That’s why love laws and history are depicted hand in hand in most parts of the novel.

But what was there to say? Only that there were tears. Only that Quietness and Emptiness fitted together like stacked spoons. Only that there was a snuffling in the hollows at the base of a lovely throat. Only that a hard honey-colored shoulder has a semi-circle teethmarks on it. Only that they held each other close, long after it

was over. Only that what they shared that night was not happiness, but a hideous grief. Only that once again they broke the Love Laws. That lay down who should be loved. And how. And how much.” (328)

The above lines shows us the feeling of the twins after their incestuous relation. Quietness, and Emptiness refer to Estha and Rahel respectively, and the repetition of the similar events, through the same naming ('love laws') enhances the effect of their happening. The phrases “who should be loved”, “And how”, “And how much” at the end of the two above quotations are examples of repetition which echoes of the traumatic events that the characters went through.

A metaphorical version of repetition in the novel is the re-union of Rahel and Estha, which is mimicking the union of their mother and Velutha. In this respect, the twins’ incestuous relationship is similar to the scandalous affair between the adults. The repetitions in this scene exist not only as a plot element, but also as a language structure as well. As well as portraying a repetition of Ammu and Velutha’s affair, many sentences in this particular scene are repeated as well. The stacked spoons imageries in: “[t]he emptiness in one twin was only a version of the quietness in the other ... the two things fitted together. Like stacked spoons” (21), and “Quietness and Emptiness fitted together like stacked spoons” (311) are repeated in different parts of the novel referring to the sexual relationships between Ammu and Velutha, and between the twins.

Apart from that, the narrator imitates Rahel’s and Ammu’s physical characteristics. For instance Ammu is continuously said to be at an “a viable die-able age” (5, 154) when she died. Rahel is also similarly called in different instances of the novel as well (88, 310). Lastly, she is also said to have “grown into the skin of her mother” (88, 283). However, the reappearance of similar phrases does not only serve to create the feeling of confinement and inevitability of fate, but at other

instances help the twins rehabilitate themselves. By repeating what Ammu and Velutha did they break the Love Laws and defy the “Big Gods”.

As mentioned before, an example of repetition in the novel is the use of the phrase 'viable-die-able age'. As well as setting an example to word-play in the novel, the phrase 'viable-die-able age' can also be regarded as an example of repetition. As discussed above, repetition serves as a cure for the traumatic events. By remembering such events through comical names as 'viable-die-able' or 'love laws' helps characters normalize these events, shrouding them under humorous expressions.

To exemplify, one can turn to the first chapter where we learn how old Ammu was when she died. The short and sorrowful life of Ammu is another traumatic event in the novel this is perhaps the reason why it is repeated and brought back a few times in the novel:

“Gentle half-moons have gathered under their eyes and they are as old as Ammu when she died. Thirty-one.

Not old.

Not young.

But viable-die-able age.” (3)

The second time the twins are in the bedroom, Rahel is watching Estha undressing:

“they were never been shy of each other’s bodies, but had never been old enough (together) to know what shyness was.

Now they were. Old enough.

Old.

A viable die-able age.” (92)

This time the age is not expressed in numbers but the reader can understand that it is 31, the age that their mother Ammu died. A different example is the scene where Rahel remembers memories about her mother: “She died alone. With a noisy ceiling fan for company and no Estha to lie at the back of her and talk to her. She was thirty-one. Not old, not young, but a viable, die-able age.” (161)

And finally, for a fourth time is when the twins break the love laws:

“they lay like that for a long time. Awake in the dark. Quietness and Emptiness.

Not old. Not young.

But a viable die-able age.” (327)

Here the age is not expressed explicitly in numbers but the reader can easily recall that it is 31 due to the similarity of the experience, but this time it is the twins who broke love laws, and not Ammu and Velutha.

Another important example of repetition in the novel refers to the sudden nature of the events that Ipe family went through. It is about the concept of time, and the fact that how we perceive it can change in the blink of an eye. The phrase “Things can change in a day” is repeated four times in the novel, each time in different contexts, but referring to the same idea; the fact that no one can change things that had already happened, as in Sophie Mol’s death:

In a purely practical sense it would probably be correct to say that it all began when Sophie Mol came to Ayemenem. Perhaps it’s true

that things can change in a day. That a few dozen hours can affect the outcome of whole lifetimes. And that when they do, those few dozen hours, like the salvaged remains of a burned house—the charred clock, the singed photograph, the scorched furniture— must be resurrected from the ruins and examined. Preserved. Accounted for. (32)

The above paragraph starts with a Mol (small child) coming to Ayemenem, and the phrase “a few dozen hours”, both of which trivialize the events. However, the rest of the paragraph takes a different turn. These trivial things can upset “whole lifetimes”. “A few hours” can turn things into “ruins”. They can destroy memories in the “photographs”, and riches like “a house” and furniture”.

Roy also explores the concept of time through Rahel. The phrase “ten to two” is repeated at various parts in the novel. For instance: “Rahel’s toy wristwatch had the time painted on it. Ten to two. One of her ambitions was to own a watch on which she could change the time whenever she wanted to (which according to her was what Time was meant for in the first place).” (37) By this scene the reader is introduced to that specific time and it is repeated seven times in the novel. It is interesting that a child thinks about the concept of time and wants to control time, which can be seen as foreshadowing the things to come. Whenever a watch or clock is visible on advertisements or media the specific hours, 13:50 or 10:10 are usually chosen by advertiser or the director. The reason for this is that the arms of the clock resemble the shape of a smile at this position and subliminally invoke happiness on the customer or the viewer (Newman). One can see here that Rahel’s fixation with “ten to two”, forms a contrast with the phrase “things can change in a day. Each time the phrase is repeated, Rahel is either in a bad situation or remembers a bad memory. For instance, she is imposed by Baby Kochamma a fine for speaking in Malayalam, or Baby Kochamma is unbearably furious with everyone because of her

humiliation during the communist demonstration, or after they are interrogated by the police and they betray Velutha.

3.6. CHILD-SPEAK

From the beginning of the novel the reader can realize the language specific to the twins. Roy uses different linguistic devices such as focalization, fragmentation and manipulation of words to attract the readers' attention on the twins and focus on the things happening around them. Besides, the twins have their own sense of understanding the words spoken to them and the reflection of these words helps the reader to be able to see the world through their eyes.

The children have the habit of reading backwards. They use this talent as an escape of the real world around them because they want to ignore the actions happening and also in this way they can show their intelligence to each other and other people. The scene below shows the mental connection between the twins and how they perceive language.

“First they read it forwards. Miss Mitten, who belonged to a sect of Born-Again Christians, said that she was a Little Disappointed in them when they read it aloud to her, backwards. ‘ehT serutnevda fo eisuS lerriqS.’ [...] They showed Miss Mitten how it was possible to read both Malayalam and Madam I’m Adam backwards as well as forwards. [...] It turned out that she didn’t even know what Malayalam was.[....] Estha who had by then taken an active dislike to Miss Mitten, told her that as far as he was concerned it was a Highly Stupid Impression.”(60)

The twins are exposed to English literature regardless of their age, they are familiar with many outstanding works such as; The Tempest, Julius Caesar, A Tale of

two Cities, Jungle Book and more. Since they are used to read classical books, the twins have no interest in simple children's books. As a result of this when Miss Mitten, a friend of Baby Kochamma's gives them The adventures of Sussie Squirrel, Estha and Rahel feel disappointed because the book is too easy for their level of knowledge and intelligence, so they call the book as "baby book" (59).

Consequently, to show their intelligence twins read the book backwards. The twins also have a habit of labelling things and people. This way the reader can understand how they perceive the world and remember the actions. For example Sophie Mol is "Thimble-Drinker, Coffin Cartwheeler" (129)

They also create poems in their heads and rhyme with the sound "dum dum". By that sound the reader can understand that they see the world through their eyes. But the important thing is every time one of them uses "dum dum" it is about a traumatic event or an unimportant event for them. For instance when they go to see the theatre we are able to feel as Rahel:

"Rahel was like an excited mosquito on a leash. Flying. Weightless.
Up two steps. Down two. Up one. She climbed five flights of red
stairs for Baby Kochammas one.

I'm popeye the sailor man dum dum

I live in a cara-van dum dum

I open the door

And fall on the floor

I'm popeye the sailor man dum dum (98)"

Rahel is excited because in the end the family got to see the play but later when her mother warns her about her behaviour she thinks; "Rahel had:

Excitement Always Leads to Tears. Dum dum. (98)". The sound helps the reader to perceive the world from Rahel's eyes and feel the same excitement and disappointment at the same time. In the part after they witness Velutha's beating they have two ideas in their minds: "Blood barely shows on a Black Man. (Dum dum) it smells though, Sicksweet. Like old roses on a breeze. (Dum dum)" (310).

Adding the dum dum sound serves as a wall between the real world and their imaginary world. By this way they can escape from the truth and be happy in their childish world. All of these show that no matter what the twins undergo, they are just children and should not be blamed for what happened around them, especially for the drowning of Sophie Mol.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have tried to explore the depiction of trauma in Arundhati Roy's 1997 novel *The God of Small Things*. While studying trauma in the novel I have particularly focused on Roy's use of language and time. During my study of the novel, I have noticed several different aspects of language and time which are related to the depiction of trauma. These were Roy's use of Malayalam language alongside English, silences (both on character base and novel format base), flashbacks and foreshadowing, intertextuality, repetition, and children's language. As well as these language specific aspects, the novel's plot in a disorderly fashion and the sequence of events is inverted at many points. My main argument here is that Roy uses the above-mentioned in order to disorient the reader and help them experience the effects of trauma. In other words, the use of language makes the reader feel confused, unsafe and stuck in the past, like a trauma victim.

The first chapter of my thesis presents brief information about Arundhati Roy and *The God of Small Things*, which is to date, her only novel. Roy's personal life seeped into some of characters and her narrative, like Ammu, she comes from a Syrian-Christian background, and has had to live with her mother in her grandparents' house after her mother's divorce. Her later career as an architect had an impact on her writing style as she claims that writing is similar to architecture, and that repetition of design motifs in buildings and in literature soothes the viewer and the reader alike (Jana).

In the second chapter of my thesis, I have presented a general overview of the novel and its characters. A survey of the characters was crucial, since many of them display characteristics of traumatized people. Basically, trauma can be defined as a violent experience that an individual is powerless against and the initial

reaction to this experience is fright (Rycroft 187). Traumatic events disrupt individuals' ordinary activities and thus, In *Trauma and Recovery*, Judith Herman claims that "Traumatic events are extraordinary, not because they occur rarely, but rather because they overwhelm the ordinary human adaptations to life (33)". In this respect, several characters in the novel conform to these evaluations. Specifically, Estha, Rahel, Ammu, Velutha, Chacko, Pappachi, and Sophie Mol reflect different degrees and types of traumas in the novel.

In this respect, Estha's muteness and Rahel's social incompatibility are consequences of trauma. After his encounter with Orange-Drink Lemon-Drink Man, Estha begins to think that "Anything can happen to Anyone. And (...) It's best to be prepared "(194). By attributing this mental scheme to Estha, Roy mimics the panic mood that trauma victims tend to display even long after the traumatizing events. Quite similarly, after Velutha's and Sophie Mol's deaths and her separation with her mother, Rahel is sent off to several boarding schools where she is unsuccessful each time, and later on her marriage similarly fails as a result of her inability to form friendships and intimate relationships with others.

In Roy's novel, Ammu and Velutha also stand for different aspects of trauma. Ammu's experiences represent the collective pressure on women. Both her mother and she have been victims of domestic and societal abuse and violence. Roy writes: "As a child, [Ammu] had learned very quickly to disregard the Father Bear Mother Bear stories she given to read. In her version, Father Bear beat Mother Bear with brass vases. Mother Bear suffered those beatings with mute resignation "(180). She unsuccessfully tries to resist the hypocritical standards of society against women, and find refuge in the forbidden relationship with Velutha. Ammu lives in the constant difficulty of living in a patriarchal society, which offers women with no self-determination in the family and social institutions. In terms of the representation of trauma in the novel, Velutha represents silence. First of all, he lives at the bottom

edge of society as an "untouchable", which leads to his voice being ignored. However, his participation in the Marxist revolutionary movement makes him one of the few rebellious characters in the novel and he shows that he actively tries to challenge his tragic and traumatized life. Secondly, his personality and attitude also indicates that in spite of his silenced position, he has little care for what other think about him, as evident in his father's anxiety over his son's assertiveness: "It was nothing that he [Velutha] had said. Or done. It was not *what* he said, but the way he said it. Not what he did, but the *way* he did it "(76).

Lastly, Chacko, Sophie Mol, and Pappachi show various degrees of traumatic inbetweenness related to their identities in the novel. This situation stems mainly from India's colonial past. Firstly, Chacko has a good education thanks to his stay in England. Despite the fact that he considers himself a Marxist, his pride in his education and his lectures to the children suggests his elitist tendencies. He also behaves in a rude and patronizing way against women, owing to his patriarchal background and the inflexible hierarchies in the Indian society. Therefore, it can be said that in spite of his self-proclaimed Marxism, he enjoys his privileges in the Indian society. By her very name, Sophie Mol also embodies inbetweenness. Her English first name is complemented by the Indian diminutive "Mol" by the Ipe family, which suggests her multiple allegiances. She is welcomed with little enthusiasm by most of the family members, as she is considered the "pretty cousin" and "the little angel" from England (179). Lastly, Pappachi is a direct foil to Chacko, as he is a Hindu with a sincere sympathy for India's colonial period. Since he had various privileges under colonial rule, he adores everything British. Overall, these three characters represent different sides of inbetweenness, and frame Roy's image of India's colonial/post-colonial trauma.

In my third and last chapter I have discussed various language devices in the novel and their contribution to the portrayal of trauma. Each language device

serves its own purpose. For instance, flashbacks and foreshadowing are used to keep the reader away from the comfort zone and to remind them of what happened in the past, and to make them uncomfortable about things that might happen. The foreshadowings and flashbacks in the novel are essential in understanding the earlier events that led to the traumatization of the twins. Through flashbacks, every detail of a particular unknown in the novel gets additional importance, and they are vital for understanding the conditions around the deaths of Sophie Mol and Velutha. As the whole novel makes sense only after finishing it, the reader is left helpless in understanding the events for a majority of the time they spend reading it. This is probably one of the most effective methods which Roy uses in order to mimic the inability of traumatized people to make sense of the terrible events surrounding them.

Furthermore, the novel establishes a connection to trauma through intertextuality. By alluding to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Roy makes a transition between India's colonial past and its current problems. In Conrad's novel, one of the main characters is a man named Kurtz who goes to Africa for ivory-trading business but later goes mad and dies in Africa. Similarly, in *The God of Small Things* we learn about Kari Saibu, an Englishman who owns the house across the river (later referred as History House). This man described as "The Englishman who had gone native. Who spoke Malayalam and wore mundus. Ayemenem's own Kurtz. Ayemenem his private Heart of Darkness." Bonding the characters in *Heart of Darkness* and *The God of Small Things* underlines the impact of colonialism regardless of location. Similarly, the titles of both novels similarly support the ambiguity that Roy intends to achieve. While 'heart of darkness' refers both to Kurtz (105), and Africa (136) in Conrad's novel, in Roy's novel, the title is a play on the Big God-Small God dichotomy, and it both refers to Velutha as a character, and the unavoidable social structures which keep him and Ammu apart.

The use of Malayalam language alongside English is also one of Roy's methods to convey trauma to her audience. One may notice that many postcolonial writers and critics of colonialism have drawn attention to the relationship between language and colonialism. Imperial powers are usually aware that their continued existence in the conquered places and their exploitation cannot be sustained only through brute force. Cultural transformation of the conquered peoples is therefore necessary in order to assure the safety of their colonial interests. According to the twins' uncle Chacko, Indian people cannot go in the house of their ancestors since they have been 'locked out' and all they can see "through the windows, are shadows". Their "minds have been invaded by a war", which makes them "adore (their) conquerors and despise (themselves)" (53). The "war" here refers to India's independence from the colonial rule. Chacko chooses to say "our minds" instead of "our country", which points out India's colonization. Since the nation underwent a cultural change, the way that Indian people think has changed. Eventually, they have started to see the British superior to themselves. This situation can be seen in Baby Kochamma's humiliation in being forced to shout "Inquilab Zindabad!", the Malayalam for "Long Live the Revolution!", or the preferred use of English over Malayalam language by family elders.

The use of silence is another also another convention by Roy in making a connection between trauma and language. Judith Herman identifies opposite tendencies in trauma victims: "The conflict between the desire to deny horrible events and the desire to utter them aloud is the central dialectic of trauma" (ibid 9). Thus, traumatized both desire to speak out and to stay silent. Silence exists in the novel both through its structure and its characters. In this respect, the four untitled chapters of the novel are interesting. In these chapters, the readers can finally make sense of the flashbacks and foreshadowing in the previous chapters, and solve the mystery of how Velutha died, and why Ammu was sent away. As these chapters

cover the most violent and traumatizing events in the novel, it is fitting that they do not have title, and thus, are silent. Apart from this structural level of silence in the novel, Estha's muteness and Velutha's unvoiced status are examples of actual silences in the novel. Estha's memories with the Orange-drink Lemon-drink Man and Velutha's position as a 'nobody' constitute 'silence' on a personal level.

Repetition also plays a very important role to convey the trauma effect. The repetition of some phrases creates a soothing and rehabilitating element in *The God of Small Things*, and Roy's characters use repetition of words and phrases in order to make sense of an otherwise illogical world caused by their traumatic experiences. Phrases like 'Love-Laws', 'stacked spoons', 'viable die-able age', 'the skin of her mother', 'things can change in a day', and 'ten to two' are repeated many times throughout the novel. Apart from that, the love seen between the twins is a repetition of Ammu and Velutha's forbidden love. According to Roy "Repeated words and phrases have a rocking feeling, like a lullaby. They help take away the shock of the plot." (ibid 421). Thus, through repetition, the characters are able to create a sphere of protection for themselves against the traumatizing events in the novel.

Child-speak is the final language device employed by Roy to mimic trauma. One can easily notice the unique way the twins use language. Roy uses different linguistic devices such as focalization, fragmentation and manipulation of words to attract the readers' attention on the twins and focus on the things happening around them. The twins also have their own sense of understanding the words spoken to them and these words help the reader see the world through their eyes. For instance, the children have the habit of reading backwards. They use this talent as an escape of the real world around them and to erase traumatizing memories. The twins also have a habit of labelling things and people. This way the reader can understand how they perceive the world and remember the actions. For example

Sophie Mol is “Thimble-Drinker, Coffin Cartwheeler” (129). They also make up poems that rhyme with the sound “dum dum”. Yet, every time one of them uses “dum dum” it signals a traumatic event. The dum dum sound acts as a barrier between the world of the adults and their imaginary world in their heads. Thus, they can escape from the reality and be happy.

The God of Small Things touches upon diverse themes. Arundhati Roy creates a masterfully written story in her novel about how small events have the power to trigger big tragedies, and how innocent people are affected by them. While the twins, Ammu, Velutha, and Sophie Mol are the innocent victims, at the end, the evil ones are able to get away with everything. Thus, at the core of the novel lies the trauma of these innocent characters. In this thesis, I have tried to show that Roy’s creative use of language in *The God of Small Things* is not only an artistic choice, but also a clever method to mimic for her audience the way these victims experience trauma. It is my hope that this thesis will provide helpful insight into the connection between “small things” like language and the “big things” like personal and collective traumas.

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