



Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* as the Story of Childhood: Children's Perspective of Traumatic Experiences

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Abstract

*This paper analyzes the novel *The God of Small Things* written by Arundhati Roy, which is the childhood reflection of her own. The novel reflects the seduction and solicitation and its psychological impacts on the characters as they are affected by the society, especially by the elite people and the government officials. The novel is analyzed using the concepts of childhood studies – particularly Joseph L. Zornado's concept of "Black Pedagogy" as the tool for textual analysis. The self-cited statements of the characters provide additional strength to the tool. Roy by the help of various characters like Estha, Velutha, Ammu and Rahel depicts the suffering due to the caste and class differences among the society and the high profile people.*

Keywords: *Childhood studies, black pedagogy, seduction, solicitation, trauma*

Introduction

This paper analyzes Arundhati Roy's novel *The God of Small Things* in terms of the traumatic experiences of the characters like Rachel, Estha, Ammu and Velutha. The paper attempts to unfold the psychological impacts on them and their vulnerability. Various factors of the society like age, gender, caste and class cause psychological impacts in children. The novel is based on the real life events. The characters being traumatized in the novel can be the perfect example of the society of India. They are traumatized in various bases: the idea of gender, class and caste. John Clare points out that "a child is a national property" (12). In her remark, Roy points out: "I grew up in very similar circumstances to the children in this novel. My mother was divorced. I lived on the edge of the community in a very vulnerable fashion" (1). Roy's childhood was very miserable due to unhealthy relationship of her parents in Ayemenem, the village in which the novel was set. She has shown the real sufferings of the people and has given the live picture of how they got victimized. Seduction and solicitation is highly evident

throughout the novel and which is responsible for the root cause of psychological impacts in the protagonist in particular and children in general.

The term 'seduction' is commonly used in a more general way that means the act of tempting or influencing someone to do something, especially something bad or something they would not normally do. Though this sense of the word does not involve in sex, it is often thought of as a metaphor for the type of seduction that does. But the specific meaning for the word is the act of making someone wanting to engage in sexual activity with someone, especially in a subtle or manipulative way. Both senses of the word often imply a subtle manipulation in which one's motives are hidden. The meaning of another term 'solicitation' is the act of asking somebody for something, such as support, money or information; the act of trying to get something or persuading somebody to do something. These activities are highly evident in the novel *The God of Small Things*. The characters like Rahel, Estha, Ammu and Velutha are seduced and solicited. The young people, society and the culture are responsible facets for all these actions. In this regard, this paper creates a theoretical foundation of Joseph L. Zonardo's key idea – black pedagogy: "Idea that offers a way of seeing how violent child-rearing practices lead directly to fascist personality" (77) and then explores the traumatic scenes in the texts, dealing with psychological impacts of the traumatic experiences in the characters.

Psychological trauma is best applicable in the novel *The God of Small Things* as the characters Estha, Rahel, Ammu and Velutha faced the terrible moments in their lives. As the society is not equal in matter of class, gender and caste, it discriminates the people and the consequences become catastrophic as:

Pappachi would not allow Paravans into the house. Nobody would. They were not allowed to touch anything that Touchables touched. Caste Hindus and Caste Christians. Mammachi told Estha and Rahel that she could remember a time, in her girlhood, when Paravans were expected to crawl backwards with a broom, sweeping away their footprints so that Brahmins or Syrian Christians would not defile themselves by accidentally stepping into a Paravan's footprint. (Roy 76)

The above scenario presented by Roy clearly illustrates the picture of so called elite people who dominate the untouchable and they treat them as slaves. This situation leads to the vulnerability of children. Mary Jane Kehily mentions "childhood is the period of life where play and carefree pleasure should be indulged where the child is protected from the adult world of work and is cared for" (3). Despite being a very skilled towards his work, the stereotypical society prohibited him to enter anyone's house.

Review of Literature

Most critical analysts focused other than childhood studies and the black pedagogy. We can see some glimpses in the subsequent paragraphs. Ajay Sekher opines, "*The God of Small Things* subverts patriarchic norms that sustain caste and gender domination . . . that sustain the caste and the gender question still remain assertive, [and] unresolved" (3445). Here, the major focus is on patriarchic norms, values and its outcomes. The inequalities that are evident in the novel cannot be viewed from this lens. Reading from the Marxist perspective seems quite insignificant regarding this novel as John Lutz avers on the line of Marxism,

The brutality of this social order often finds expression in the hidden impulse dominate others and control life by forcing it to conform to a set of rigid standards. Those standards are derived from oppressive social and economic structures invariably linked to the fetishism of commodities. The characterization Kochamma, who sets in motion the traumatic events that

destroy the lives of the novel's central characters, provides a fundamental example of this fetishizing impulse. (59)

More often, the appearance of images, icons or objects evokes the multiple levels of trauma that is evoked due to the practice of black pedagogy not because of economic structures.

The social injustices cause the unprecedented psychological impact on the characters. Velutha is a character in the novel who suffers directly by the mistreatment of police but Rahel and Estha suffer indirectly, which is described in this way,

They woke Velutha with their boots. Esthappen and Rahel woke to the shout of sleep surprised by shattered kneecaps. Screams died in them and floated belly up, like dead fish. Cowering on the floor, rocking between dread and disbelief, they realized that the man being beaten was Velutha. Where had he come from? ... Why had the policemen brought him here? (308)

Velutha is so-called untouchable in the social setting. He is beaten by the six police men brutally. The terror in him is beyond imagination. The same happening during the sleep wakes up Rahel and Estha terrified. In the lifetime they had not seen such a brutal and merciless act in front of them. Even the living children are imagined with "engineered eugenics" (Prout 127). This incident is a very strong example for the children to be traumatized psychologically as the incident for them is unexpected, sudden and negative.

In the same way, when Ammu goes to the police station, she is mistreated by the police in front of her children Rahel and Estha:

He spoke the coarse Kottayam dialect of Malayalam. He stared at Ammu's breasts as he spoke. He said the police knew all they needed to know and that the Kottayam Police didn't take statements from veshyas or their illegitimate children. Ammu said she'd see about that. Inspector Thomas Mathew came around his desk and approached Ammu with his baton. (7-8)

Ammu marries somebody out of her parents' consensus so that the family treats her as if she is untouchable. She, along with her children Rahel and Estha, is not given equal position in the family functions as other members get. Regarding the childhood situation, Kehily argues, "Childhood is based on their innocence" (16). For instance, Ammu goes to the police station to complain about it with her children Estha and Rahel. The police mistreat her in front of her children. They speak in a very foul-mouthed way addressing her to be *Veshya* ('prostitute') and the children to be illegitimate ones. Here, Alan Prout points out, "Children and child-related phenomena are formed as assemblages of heterogeneous materials that intermingles with social and cultural forms" (141). Not only this, but also one of the police approached Ammu with his baton on her breasts poking them. This event is negative, uncontrolled and sudden. This adversely impacts on the children's psychological development.

Ammu and the children are helpless that they cannot control the happening and become the innocent victim. The event is negative, too. The mother and children do not like to anticipate such events in their life as it is connected to the privacy and prestige of a woman. This is a kind of social and cultural phenomena. In the novel, the child characters like Ammu, Estha, Velutha and Rahel are humiliated. They are tortured and tormented. The idea of black pedagogy is highly evident in the novel as J. Zornado states, "Black pedagogy conceived the child as wicked, willful... and is frequently humiliated" (77). This is a matter of self-respect, too. Ammu expects one thing but the police misbehaved with her. This leads unprecedented trauma when Cathy Caruth elaborates, "Trauma describes 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" (181). Thus, the

mentioned event in the novel is one of the reasons for the psychological trauma not only in the family, but also importantly to the children.

In another instance, Estha is molested by Orangedrink Lemondrink Man. The family went to watch *The Sound of Music* in a cinema hall in Cochin. Before the interval, Estha comes out of the hall where Orangedrink Lemondrink Man molested him:

'Now if you'll kindly hold this for me,' the Orangedrink Lemondrink Man said, handling Estha his penis through his soft white muslin dhoti, 'I'll get you your drink. Orange? Lemon?' ...Estha held it because he had to...His hand tighter over Estha's...Then...Estha's hand was wet and hot and sticky. (103-104)

The event was totally unexpected for nine years old boy. A young boy is asked to go out of the cinema hall by his mother simply because he sings there. In this particular act, we can say that the "concepts of childhood remains imbued with significance that encodes what children mean to adults" (Gittins 49). Estha takes the exit intending to sing the song outside freely, but he gets molested by Orangedrink Lemondrink Man behind his counter. He develops a sense of fear that affects his psychology seriously.

These events cause an adjustment problem in the children. Talking specifically about the children, the role of parents is in greater need. If the parents become supportive and motivating, the children can adjust themselves and do not become victim and if they do not get good parenting, they cannot adjust well.

The Concept of Black Pedagogy

The concept of black pedagogy was first introduced by Katharina Rutschky in 1977. The psychologist Alice Miller used the concept to describe the child-raising approaches that, she believed, damage a child's emotional development. She claims that this alleged emotional damage promotes the adult behavior harmful to individuals. She explains how poisonous pedagogy in the name of "child rearing" leads to dysfunctions and neurosis of all kinds.

Later on, Joseph L. Zornado in his book *Inventing the Child: Culture, Ideology and Story of Childhood*, uses it as the key term to analyze the literary text. He discusses the historical development of the western culture's stories of childhood in which the child is exposed by their parents or adult members of their family. It takes the references from *Hamlet*, fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm, and Walt Disney cartoons. Zornado analyzes the history and development of the concept of childhood, starting with the works of Calvin, Freud and Rousseau, culminating with the modern "consumer" childhood of Dr. Spock and television. He focuses on the media depictions of childhood and examines the ways in which parents use different forms of media to educate and entertain their children. He asserts that the stories we tell our children contain the ideologies of the dominant culture: materialism as the way to happiness in which the children imbibe.

In the novel, Rahel and Estha are exposed to the unjust practices imposed upon them and to their mother. The exposure to such unkind, sudden and negative social practices, impact them psychologically. They are psychologically disturbed because of these happenings as they cannot handle their life well working on the track considering their bright future. When Ammu is ill-treated in the police station, she cries badly so that the children cannot interact to their mother or to each other. They are paralyzed with the traumatic exposure and reaction of her mother on the incident is described in the book,

When they left the police station Ammu was crying, so Estha and Rahel didn't ask her what veshya meant. Or, for that matter, illegitimate. It was the first time they'd seen their mother cry. She wasn't sobbing. Her face was set like stone, but the tears welled up in her eyes and ran down her rigid cheeks. It made the twins sick with fear. (8)

The children are exposed to the traumatic circumstance so that they cannot adjust with the available condition. Psychologically, they are dejected, suppressed and humiliated.

Ammu could not guide her children with a proper parenting as she was a divorcee and was not given equal status in the society. She was even exiled from her own home, which made to spend her life in isolation. The children become the ultimate sufferer. To be specific, she was not allowed to attend the funeral procession of Sophie Mol. To elaborate further:

As for a divorced daughter-according to Baby Kochamma, she had no position anywhere at all. And as for a divorced daughter from a love marriage, well, words could not describe Baby Kochamma's outrage. As for a divorced daughter from an intercommunity love marriage-Baby Kochamma chose to remain quivering silent on the subject. (45-46)

No equality can be experienced between sons and daughters. Ammu did not get equal schooling as her brother got. She, however, was a revolutionary type of girl. She ran out of the house, married somebody out of her caste, got two children, but ultimately got divorced and now comes back to stay with her parents. In this respect, the traditional and closed family structure does not give her respectable position in the living. This adversely impacts in the psychology of the children.

Black Pedagogy and Child Characters

The future of children is associated more with the seniors of the family. Any cause of the victim to the senior is the equal and vice versa to each other. In the novel, Ammu is a victim because of the social structure she is in as it is described in this way, "Though Ammu, Estha and Rahel were allowed to attend the funeral, they were made to stand separately, not with the rest of the family. Nobody would look at them" (5). This is the circumstance that Ammu has in her life. She along with her children is discarded by her family. She is not given emotionally equal position in the family and the society. This is the reason she cannot provide good parenting to her children so that they become the victim to be exposed to the familial and societal ills. J. Zonardo argues, "The child, according to the black pedagogy, comes into the world in desperate need of reform, and reform comes at the hand of adult, often through violence" (79). Parents play a crucial role to motivate and empower not to let the children break down when the children are exposed to the traumatic circumstances, becoming the trauma victim.

Rahel, the daughter of a divorced mother, does not get a proper parental care. She got an unjust treatment by the members of her maternal family. She was compelled to be exposed by various traumatic instances. During her study in a university, she was hated, rejected and avoided by her friends and even the professors. Finally, she happens to meet a man named Larry McCaslin in America, whom she marries. The root of the problem begins from the psychological trauma from her childhood. Its impact is great and varied. She takes this marriage as trauma avoidance, but she ultimately fails to keep the relations smooth,

Rahel grew up without anybody to arrange a marriage for her. Without anybody who would pay her a dowry... They left her alone. She was never invited to their nice homes or noisy parties. Even her professors were a little wary of her- her indifference to their passionate critiques... She met Larry McCaslin... and ... Rahel drifted into marriage like a passenger drifted towards an unoccupied chair in an airport lounge... But when they made love,... they behaved as though they belonged to someone else... After they were divorced, Rahel worked for a few months as a waitress in an Indian restaurant in New York. (17-20)

As a daughter of social outcasts, Rahel does not get any circumstance in her life that gives her the existence of an ordinary girl in her family and society. As J. Zornado points out, this situation is considered as the “detachment child; having the multiple issues like delinquency, reduced intelligence, increased aggression, depression, trauma and affectionless psychopathy” (171). The father and mother get divorced when she reaches two. She and her mother along with her brother Estha get humiliated in the family.

There is nobody to look after her, guide her and suggest her the ways of her proper life. She gets expelled from schools often; however, she completes her schooling and joins a university. In the family, parents play a very crucial role for the children to be adjusted in their circumstance. But in the case of Estha, he cannot get that. Trying to be a responsible mother, Ammu tries to find an adoptable and adjustable circumstance sending Estha to his father as Estha is exposed to such a circumstance where he is shocked to see his mother cry heavy heartedly. Had he been with his father, Estha would not have been to be exposed, most probably, to such social brutality. Two weeks after the police station case, Ammu sends her son to his father: “Two weeks later, Estha was returned. Ammu was made to send him back to their father, who had by then resigned his lonely tea state job in Assam and moved to Calcutta... now, twenty-three years later, their father had re-returned Estha” (9). A good parenting is required for the child's wellbeing. A child has full right to be with his father and mother. But Estha is traumatized because he cannot get love and care of his father in his childhood. Rahel is sent to his father when he is seven. But his father sends him back to his maternal home. This correlates with “ordinary expressions of violence as a symptoms of an adult culture” (Zornado XIV). Not only trauma causes a gap in the relationships between and among the family members, but also a gap in the relationship act to cause trauma in the children.

Estha cannot adjust to the circumstance after his father sent him to his maternal house. His mother is already dead. His sister Rahel has gone abroad. He becomes completely alone. He does not see anybody there. So he moves here and there trying to avoid the trauma causing circumstances but loses to communicate with others. He is pushed in a deep silent zone. This quote from the novel concretizes the argument:

Estha had always been a quiet child, so no one could pinpoint with any degree of accuracy exactly when (the year, if not the month or day) he had stopped talking. Stopped talking altogether, that is. ... A barely noticeable quietening. As though he had simply run out of conversation and had nothing left to say. Yet Estha's silence was never awkward. Never intrusive. Never noisy. It wasn't an accusing, protesting silence... the psychological equivalent of what lungfish do to get themselves through the dry season, except that in Estha's case the dry season looked as though it would last forever... Estha occupied very little space in the world. (10-11)

Due to the exposure to various traumatic incidents in his lifetime in the family and society, Estha acts as if he is a completely psychologically retarded person. He stops speaking with others. He forgets the total idea of conversation, and his mother too is dead and sister is not there to ease him. This gives him an additional shock. This is a very strong impact of being exposed in the traumatic events.

There is involvement of an innocent young boy in the labor market. Estha integrates himself to the labor market. He is traumatized by familial breakdowns and social and cultural ills that he is exposed to. He does not show much interest in the studies. Although he is an average student, he shows no interest at all for co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. The novel describes this situation in this way,

Estha was Returned, their father sent him to a boys' school in Calcutta. He was not an exceptional student, but neither was he backward, nor particularly bad at

anything. *An average student*, or *Satisfactory work* were the usual comments that his teachers wrote in his Annual Progress Reports. *Does not participate in Group Activities* was another recurring complaint. (11)

As a result of the effect of psychological trauma, Estha remains only an average student or a satisfactory student in his studies, but talking about his involvement in the group activities, he completely rejects the idea. He cannot integrate in the team work with other members in the group. This makes him to divert in his mind to integrate into the labor market as a form of trauma avoidance.

The children who are traumatized psychologically, they do not think for their wellbeing. They do not or say it literally and cannot involve themselves in some good works, so they can cash them in the future. Rather, they involve in the present day to day activities. Here, the involvement of children into the labor market is taken as a form of their trauma avoidance as an impact of trauma.

Characters' Traumatic Experiences

Estha does not show his interest to go for further studies. Rather, he involves in some petty things. He feels uncomfortable to be the burden to his father and step-mother; this too further traumatizes him,

Estha finished school... but refused to go to college. Instead, he began to do the housework. As though in his own way he was trying to earn his keep. He did the sweeping, swabbing and all the laundry. He learned to cook and shop for vegetables. Vendors in the bazaar... He never bargained... when the vegetables had been weighed and paid for, they would transfer them to his red plastic shopping basket. Estha carried them home in the crowded tram. (11)

The innocent children are supposed to get love and care from the parents to move ahead. But contrarily these children are exposed to such brutality. So he decides to discontinue his further study. Rather, he joins the labor market and other household works which, in long run, would not be supporting him to promote for his sound life and for his wellbeing.

Rahel has the exceptional circumstance to lead herself further for her wellbeing. She does not show her concern for her studies. Although she goes to school and then later to college, she does not study seriously. She takes the matter simply as time pass as is described in the book:

Rahel drifted. From school to school... Rahel was first blacklisted in Nazareth Convent at the age of eleven... Six months later she was expelled after repeated complaints from senior girls. That was the first of three expulsions. The second for smoking. The third for setting fire to her Housemistress's false hair bun... When she finished school, she won admission into a mediocre college of architecture in Delhi. It wasn't the outcome of any serious interest in architecture... She just happened to take the entrance exam, and happened to get through. (15-17)

Here, Rahel cannot, or more literally, does not show her serious concern on her studies. She works to avoid her trauma doing different activities. She does not continue her studies; rather she goes to integrate herself to the labor market as:

She spent eight years in college without finishing the five-year undergraduate course and taking her degree. The fees were low and it wasn't hard to scratch out a living, staying in the hostel, eating in the subsidized student mess, rarely going to class, working instead as a draftsman in gloomy architectural firms that exploited cheap student labor to render their presentation drawings and to blame when things went wrong... After... divorced, Rahel worked for a few months as

a waitress in an Indian restaurant in New York. And then for several years as a night clerk in a bullet-proof cabin at a gas station outside Washington. (17-20) Not being able to concentrate on her studies, Rahel focuses on her day to day living. During her schooling, she got expelled from various schools and although she completes her schooling and joins college, she rarely goes to take her class. Instead, she joins herself to the labor market as some firms were there to exploit the students by hiring cheap. She only thinks her daily earnings and lives a carefree life intending to avoid traumatic instances. She happens to marry an American but due to inability to maintain her emotional and psychological state, she was unable to uphold the relation which finally turns out to divorce. After getting divorced, she goes to the labor market without considering for the future wellbeing.

Estha, an innocent nine years old boy, experiences what a child never expects. The experience is uncontrolled and it gives a negative perception in his mind. He gets molested by the man at the counter of refreshment in the cinema hall. He develops a sense of fear of the possible visit of that bad man in his home town and he would repeat molesting him or do as bad things as he did, with other family members, too.

The Orangedrink Lemondrink Man could walk in any minute as he says, "Catch a Cochin-Kottayam bus and be there. And Ammu would offer him a cup of tea. Or Pineapple Squash perhaps. With ice. Yellow in a glass" (194). Estha has not been able to share the happening with other family members, not even his mother and sister. He suffers himself and now he has a continuous sense of fear that he would come anytime and his mother or somebody in the house offers him a hospitable greeting.

Estha is really shocked to be the part of the man's deed. Being in the jolly mood, Estha sings beautifully in the cinema hall. Peter Hunt mentions, "Individual childhoods are strongly affected by the cultures around them" (52). Ammu asks him to take the exit and he chooses this as he thinks it would be the better idea for him to sing openheartedly going outside the hall. But after being molested by the man, he feels terrible. When she asks Estha to stay with the man for some time till the show ends, he reacts in such a way that he is completely shocked and terrified with the person. The description goes in this way,

"Estha, you stay here with Uncle. I'll get Baby Kochamma and Rahel," Ammu said. "Come," Uncle said. "Come and sit with me on a high stool." "No, Ammu! No, Ammu, no! I want to come with you!" Ammu, surprised at the unusually shrill insistence from her usually quiet son, apologized to the Orangedrink

Lemondrink Uncle. "He's not usually like this. Come on then, Esthappen." (110) How strongly he gives the disagreement to stay with the man repeating the negation word thrice. He is completely fearful with the man because of his sudden, uncontrolled and negative incident. He not only develops a sense of fear, but he has also hatred upon him as he reacts when he gives sweet to his sister. He responds: "Take mine! Estha said quickly, not wanting Rahel to go near the man" (111). How fearful the circumstance has been for Estha is beyond imagination of a young boy. This all affects the psychology of the child and suffers being traumatized. In another incident, Estha and Rahel experience fear and terror. The circumstance becomes much terrified for the innocent twins that they cannot react:

Screams died in them and floated belly up, like dead fish. Cowering on the floor, rocking between dread and disbelief, they realized that the man being beaten was Velutha... They heard the thud of wood on flesh. Boot on bone. On teeth. The muffled grunt when a stomach is kicked in. The muted crunch of skull on cement. The gurgle...stomach is kicked in...crunch of skull on cement. The

gurgle of blood on a man's breath when his lung is torn by the jagged end of a broken rib. (308)

The person they love after their mother is Velutha. It is the moment they encounter the live incident of the police beating him brutally. The happening is unimaginable for the children. They cannot even scream and numb. This kind of exposure to brutality gives a deep shock to anyone. The terrifying reaction is the result of the brutally violent incident in their presence.

Ammu is also the one who has terrifying reaction upon the happening with her in her lifetime. She is in a hotel room. She goes to the town intending to secure a job after facing an interview. She feels everything strange: "Ammu sat up in the strange bed in the strange room in the strange town. She didn't know where she was, she recognized nothing around her. Only her fear was familiar" (161-62). This is the reaction of Ammu on her death night. She feels everything unfamiliar, strange and the thing that vividly holds her is the fear. This sense of fear is not the immediate reaction of somebody or something in the hotel, but it is the byproduct of the life experiences as all were psychologically presented for children as an obstruct.

In the similar way, Velutha suffers the similar miserable condition that ends his life. He is beaten brutally by the police charging him to join the revolutionary party. In addition, he has been considered guilty in making the attempt to rape Ammu. The truth is that he never made a rape attempt, he loved Ammu. In the narrative portion, the author discloses the fact, saying, "They hurt Velutha more than they intended to" (309). It is a hint that Velutha dies under the custody of the police: "The lock-up was pitch-dark... Someone switched on the light... Velutha appeared on the scummy, slippery floor... naked... Blood spilled from his skull... One of the policemen prodded Velutha with his foot. There was no response" (319-320). Because of the brutality of the police, Velutha dies inside the lock up. Baby Kochamma conspires him to be guilty for the rape attempt to Ammu. These charges are enough for the police to exercise their brutality and exercise the power as well. His death does not only take his life, but also remains as a matter of terror to the innocent children who see the brutality. This traumatizes them so that they get psychologically hurt.

Trauma gives a very strong impact to the characters of the novel such as Estha and Rahel. They cannot find peace in the world. They develop a false impression that they can find it being in the arms of each other. They consummate love despite the fact that they are twins. The society and culture do not allow them to do so. The cultural condition becomes the unexpressed law of the society as they break away with the idea of incestuous relation. They reach this extreme as the impact of psychological trauma, for instance,

Estha, sitting very straight, waiting to be arrested... His hand is held and kissed. Pressed against the coldness of a cheek, wet with shattered rain. Then she sat up and put her arms around him. Drew him down beside her. They lay like that for a long time. Awake in the dark. Quietness and Emptiness. (327)

Although they consummate love breaking the familial, social and cultural law, they cannot find peace in them. They are more deserted by sexuality as "a rite of passage" (Trites 84). They remain in each other's lap for long time, but there remains darkness and emptiness with them. They are not happy to break everything.

Estha and Rahel, being twins, consummate love but this does not give them happiness. They go into the state of grief. They experience the circumstances of trauma throughout their lives. They could not realize their life happier. Rahel quits her marriage and Estha quits communicating with the people. But finally, the decision they take pushes them further to the state of emptiness: "Only that they held each other close, long

after it was over. Only that what they shared that night was not happiness, but hideous grief. Only that once again they broke the Love Laws. That lay down who should be loved. And how. And how much" (328). Thoroughly, they are empty from inside and out. In the outside world, they have nobody and nothing. They made inside journey, but that gives them nothing more than darkness. This is the way the innocent children get traumatized psychologically.

Conclusion

To conclude, the characters of *The God of Small Things* like Rahel, Estha, Ammu and Velutha are exposed to the traumatic environment that is more concerned to the child world and the behaviours towards them. Velutha dies whereas Estha and Rahel feel empty and deserted completely from inside and out. The traumatic situation creates a psychological impact on the children, providing the distinctive experiences, which lead the children to extreme nervous prostration and pushing them towards annihilation, mutilation, or psychosis. This psychological impact is in the form that destroys the mental and physical tolerance capacity of the children.

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