

***TRAUMA AND PSYCHODYNAMICS OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIP  
IN SELECT NOVELS OF ARUNDHATI ROY***

*(A Dissertation to be Submitted to Nagaland University in Partial Fulfilment of Requirements  
for Award of Master of Philosophy in English)*

By

**Lakiumong Yimchunger**

**Reg. No.- NU/M.Phil./Eng./68/2021**

Under the Supervision of

**Dr. Lemtila Alinger**



Department of English

School of Humanities and Education

Nagaland University,

Kohima Campus, Meriema- 797004



Nagaland University

(A Central University by the Act of Parliament, 35/1989)

*Department of English*

Kohima Campus, Meriema, Kohima-797004

NU/Eng/2020

**SUPERVISOR'S CERTIFICATE**

I certify that the thesis entitled *Trauma and Psychodynamics of Human Relationship in Select Novels of Arundhati Roy*, submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) by Mr. Lakiumong Yimchunger is the record of research work carried out by him during the period from 2020 to 2022 under my guidance and supervision, and that this work has not formed the basis for the award of any Degree, Diploma, Associateship and Fellowship or other Titles in the University or any other university or institute of higher learning.

Date:

Place: Kohima

Dr. Lemtila Alinger

Assistant Professor

Department of English

Nagaland University, Kohima campus, Meriema

Email- alingerlemtila@gmail.com

### **CANDIDATE'S DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that the work which is being presented in the Dissertation entitled *Trauma and Psychodynamics of Human Relationship in Select Novels of Arundhati Roy*, in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy in English and submitted to the Department of English, Nagaland University, Meriama Campus is an original piece of research work under the supervision of Dr. Lemtila Alinger, Assistant Professor, Nagaland University, Meriama Campus, Nagaland, India.

The matter embodied in this dissertation has not been submitted by me for the award of any other degree of any other University/ Institute.

Date:

Place: Kohima

Name- Lakiumong Yimchunger

M. Phil Scholar

Reg. No.- NU/M.Phil./Eng./68/2021

### **Countersigned by**

Dr. Lemtila Alinger

**Supervisor**

Department of English

Assistant Professor

Nagaland University

Kohima Campus, Meriama

Dr. Jano S Liegise

**Head of Department**

Department of English

Professor

Nagaland University

Kohima Campus, Meriama

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

The completion of the study would not have been possible without the able and eager guidance provided to me by my supervisor Dr. Lemtila Alinger, Assistant Professor, Department of English, Nagaland University, Meriema Campus. My sincere gratitude also to the HoD and the faculty members, Department of English, Nagaland University, Meriema Campus for giving me the opportunity to undertake this research with their unceasing support throughout this period.

I also want to thank each and every individual who motivated me directly and indirectly along the journey of undertaking this study. It simply would have been, a utopian dream without your continuous encouragement, love and prayer support.

Date:

Place: Kohima

Name- Lakiumong Yimchunger

M. Phil Scholar

Reg. No.- NU/M.Phil./Eng./68/2021

## **CONTENTS**

	<b>Pages</b>
Supervisor's Certificate	i
Candidate's Declaration	ii
Acknowledgement	iii
Contents	iv
Abbreviations	v

## **PREFACE**

Chapter 1. Introduction	1-25
Chapter 2. Trauma, A Non-Bias Calamity	26-53
Chapter 3. Trauma and Social Dogmas	54-80
Chapter 4. The Psychodynamics of Relationship	81-107
Chapter 5. Conclusion	108-121
Works Cited	

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

1. GOST: *The God of Small Things*
2. MOUH: *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*

## **Preface**

The ever-increasing number of cases relating to anxiety attacks and people suffering from mental related problems is endemic as well as alarming. This has in-fact become a part of normal lingo or status quo of the modern life style. One most fascinating fact about this case scenario is that, it is everywhere and spreading like wildfire. Schools, colleges, universities and work places have been dealing with its adverse effects and perhaps will also do in the future. It sees no age, no religion, no gender, no state of life and so forth thereby encompassing everyone in its circle of vulnerability.

Psychological trauma, which may be described as a sudden and catastrophic effect on the human psyche and its impact on the relationships that we share with our fellow humankind, makes the bulk of the present study. The term 'relationships', in the following paper will be treated as an inclusive term encompassing both familial and societal parameters. The fact that psychological trauma is sudden and latent; reoccurring in the future to disrupt or disintegrate the mental state makes it very crucial in the present generation that we are living in. Although, many factors go into the making and unmaking of a relationship, like economic status, beliefs and customs. It is inextricably intertwined and complex in nature, hence qualifying it as a fitting subject for the present research process. The study tries to detangle all relationship strings as portrayed in the selected novels and how it progresses for better or for worse in a traumatized ecosystem.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Psychoanalysis which originated from Freud has expanded and diverged significantly in recent times. It has infiltrated social and literary thoughts and theories as well. However, all Psychoanalytic Theories, do share a common assumption and affiliation that took birth with Freud. Similarly, in support of the present context, Stephen Frosh in *The Politics of Psychoanalysis* 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition states, "...the idea that in each of us there is a realm of psychological functioning which is not accessible to ordinary introspection, but which nevertheless has a determining or at least a motivating influence on the activities, thoughts and emotions of everyday life" (2). In *Contemporary Literary Theory*, W.R Goodman draws the emergence and application of psychoanalysis to literary works, from the development of Applied Psychoanalysis, to Archetypal Criticism, Ego Psychology, Object Relations Theory, Lacanian Psychoanalysis and the Psychoanalytic Concept of Transference.

#### **1.1. Psychoanalysis from Freud to Lacan, its Emergence and Development**

Psychoanalytic Criticism as popularly known as the 'theory (of) the human mind' (Nagarajan, 216), is prevalent in everyday life. The emergence of psychoanalytic literary criticism in the field of literary studies and other allied spheres has its origin in the therapeutic technique developed by Sigmund Freud for the treatment of hysteria and neurosis at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. "It came into being in 1920's" and emerged from "the romantic view that literature is an expression of its authors' persona",



(Nagarajan, 216) as supported by the Applied Psychoanalytic Theory, which will be discussed in the later parts. It was popularly called as 'the talking cure', (Waugh, 119) which consists of an interchange of words but following the fundamental rules that the patient must say everything, which comprised of all thoughts going in the analysand's mind. Thoughts which were aggregable and disagreeable or trivial were supposed to be communicated to the analysts without any reservations as such. The therapy evolved from the initial observation where the patients were relieved of their neurotic symptoms by the act of remembering certain events or repressed memories and ideas related to infantile sexuality. It involved the process of transference where by the patient unconsciously took the analyst to be the rebirth of important figure from the past or childhood. Here the repressed affective experiences were repeated. As a form of mental therapy, it aimed to cure mental disorders by investigating the interaction of the consciousness and the unconscious elements of the mind. Sigmund Freud gave this idea of his, the name of Psychoanalysis in 1896. Psychoanalysis sees a continuity between pathological and normal occurrence; what started as a therapy slowly expanded into a theory encompassing the human psyche and culture. This therapeutic theory uses the term 'dream work' where 'displacement' and 'condensation' (Barry, 99) play a vital role by transferring repressed emotions and feelings which are the forces stored in the memory into dream images. According to this theory the unconscious mind is active and dynamically at work. It controls the individual from the very depth of its being. Defence mechanisms like transference, projection, repression and sublimation etc keeps check on the unconscious mind. They are called the therapeutic tool. The breakdown of any one of the defence systems may result in anxiety or panic attacks. It is through dreams and creative activities that one may have access to the unconscious realm of the mind.

M.S. Nagarajan in *English Literary Criticism and Theory- An Introductory History*, divides the history and evolution of psychoanalytic criticism into three phases.

**First Phase:** The first phase also known as the Freudian Criticism because of the pioneering works on the theory been done by Sigmund Freud was linked to a dream or fantasy of the writer. It focused on the psychoanalysis of the author and the characters in literature was taken and treated as real living beings. In this phase Freud applied his interpretation of symbols in a rigid manner to the language of a work of literature which was referred to as ‘vulgar Freudianism’. Psychoanalytic critics treated literary texts as (1) analogues to dreams and (2) maintained that a diagnostic analysis of the text informs the reader about the author and his personal life. This also means to say that the knowledge and information of the workings of the creator’s mind would help in the interpretation of the text in a great way. Applied Psychoanalysis designates two related forms of criticism. First the literature of psychoanalytic concepts and secondly the psycho-biography of the artist or the creator or the author. The manner of accepting the text as merely a symptom of the author’s particular neurosis or the surfacing of his or her hidden desires and also as a sign of the author’s unconscious mind is central to this type of psychoanalysis. Ernest Jones’s *Hamlet and Oedipus* (1994), Marie Bonaparte’s the *Life and Work of Edgar Allen Poe-A Psychoanalytic Interpretation* (1949), and works of authors like Edmund Wilson, D. H. Lawrence, Albert Camus, and Arthur Miller etc., can be set as very good examples of the Applied Psychoanalysis phase. The sole interest in literature seems to be in what it could reveal about an individual author’s psychology or how it could validate the psychoanalytic concepts. This phase missed to appreciate the literariness of literature.

In Archetypal Psychoanalytic criticism and its development, the name of Carl Jung is a prominent one. According to him, an archetype is a primordial symbol or an image which does not exist in individual psyche as such but in the 'collective unconscious' which is transcultural and trans-historical. He has had an extraordinary influence on both literature and literary criticism through his analytical psychology developed what is known as the Archetypal Criticism which is as distinguished from the Freudianism proper. Another important work in this connection is Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) where he structured literature around four 'pre-generic' archetypes or narrative categories namely;

- i. the romantic (summer)
- ii. the tragic (autumn)
- iii. the ironic (winter)
- iv. the comic (spring).

**Second Phase:** During the period between 1960 and 1970 came the second phase of the psychoanalytic criticism. It emphasised more on the reader, than the author. During this phase the believe that the source of the pleasure derived from the literary work is imbued in the transformation of the unconscious-wishes and fears into culturally acceptable and meaningful substances was prevalent. Norman Holland and I. A Richards were two among the famous author of this period. DEFT- which stands for Defences, Expectation, Frustration and Transformation was the acronym used by Holland. He believed in the dictum that reading recreates the reader's identity. His 'Transactive Criticism' examined the interaction between the reader and the text.

Norman N. Holland in, *The Dynamics of Literary Response* (1968) places the meaning making process solely to the reader. For him, the way in which readers adapt their identity in the process of interpretation is the concern which confirms a sense of self and autonomy. While on the other hand Ego Psychology, which progressed during this phase of psychoanalytic criticism, has its roots in the psychoanalysis developed in North America which abandons Freud emphasis and the importance of the unconscious process. Concentrating their work on strengthening the ego, this phase of psychoanalysis saw meaning as deriving from what is publicly shareable and socially encoded. According to them meaning doesn't rest in the psyche of the author but in the conversations between the reader and the text, in close connection with the Reader Response theory.

**Third Phase:** The third phase of psychoanalytic criticism may be mapped in an around the period of life and work of Jacques Lacan (1901-1981). Often called the 'French Freud' (Nagarajan, 219). Jacques Lacan, a French psychoanalyst like his predecessors took Freud's base model of psychoanalysis and came up with his own interpretation of the human psyche and its workings. He presented his famous paper 'Mirror Stage' in 1936 was later in life influenced by works of Saussure and Levi Strauss. Lacan was something of a rebel. By publishing his book *Ecrits* in 1966 he became a prominent Parisian intellectual and also started to be known as a 'structuralist psychoanalyst' due to his interest in structuralist and post structuralist concepts and ideas of literature and art. It is with him that the modern psychoanalytic criticism and theory started. From his works like *Antigone: The Sublime Object* (1959), and works on Allen Edgar Poe and James Joyce, his seminar paper on 'Poe's *The Purloined Letter*' (26<sup>th</sup> April 1955) can be considered the most influential piece where he discussed how

the human subject is constituted through language and within a symbolic order. He focussed on two main themes. First the abnormal nature of the letter itself and secondly the way in which possessions of the letter by individual characters immediately sets them within a triangular relationship with the other main characters. Utilising the traditional methods of Applied Psychoanalysis, where the literariness of the text itself is ignored, he engineered the transportation of the Freudian notion of the unconscious and repressed desire from the individual level to the realm of language. Psychoanalytical approach as applied in literature are interpretative in nature and tries to find the hidden meanings of a literary text by exploring the innate ‘conglomerate’ (Hossian, 2017) of the writer’s personality.

Another adaptation of psychoanalytic theory begins from the assumption that the psychological life of human being is created in and through relations with other human beings. It distinguishes between the physical birth and the psychological birth of the individual. “Lacan was interested in the re-writing, re-interpreting classical Freudian psychoanalysis in the light of poststructuralist theories” (Nagarajan, 219). Following a pre- Saussurian view he dismissed the concept of the unconscious preceding language. For Lacan the unconscious is the product of language and so comes into being as language evolves. This results in the structuring of desire by language. Lacan speaks of the unconscious being structured in the form of language and “the ‘kernel of our being’” (Nagarajan, 220). It consists of signifiers rather than instincts for him and more so that the dream is structured like a sentence where subject comes into being when it acquires its consciousness. Further he developed the concept of self and selfhood, ‘the mirror stage’, ‘the imagery stage’ and ‘the symbolic stage’ (Nagarajan, 220). He believed that the unconscious functions according to the rules of language primarily metaphor and metonymy thus replacing Freud’s concepts of condensation and

displacement with Roman Jakobson's idea of metaphor and metonymy. In *Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism*, edited by Maud Ellmann, while quoting John Trilling states, that "Psychoanalysis is a science of tropes, metaphor and its variants, synecdoche and metonymy". (5)

## **1.2. 'The Unconscious', 'Repression', 'Sublimation', 'Displacement' and 'Condensation'**

Freud in his later career suggested the idea of the Id, Ego and the Superego, three levels of the personality roughly relating it to 'the consciousness, the conscience, and the unconscious.' (Barry, 98). Perhaps Freud's most troubling discovery is "the centrality of sexuality to psychic life" comments, *Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism*, edited by Maud Ellmann. He adds more by saying that he would argue with Yeats if given a chance that intellectual is inextricable to sexuality and that the most lofty and beautiful things emerge out of the "foul rag and bone shop of the heart" (*Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism*, 4). Although there is much argument following the aspects of Freud's idea of 'Infantile sexuality' (Barry, 98) yet in order to properly understand the theory of psychoanalytic and many theories coming out from it, this aspect cannot be done away with. Md. Mahroof Hossian, in 'Psychoanalytic Theory used in English Literature: A Descriptive Study' describes it as "... a theory that is regarded as a theory of personality organization and the dynamics of personality that guides psychoanalysis." and "Among the critical approaches to literature... one of the most controversial ...(and) ...the least appreciated". (2017). According to Freud sexuality begins not at puberty and physical maturity, but in infancy, especially through the infant's relationship with the mother or caregiver. Linked with this concept comes the

Oedipus and Electra complexes. ‘Another key idea is that of the *libido*, which is the energy drive associated with the sexual desire’ says Barry. Three stages of focus namely the oral, the anal, and the phallic stages is presented by the classic Freudian theory.

### **1.2.1. The Unconscious**

The topographical structure of the mind as presented by Freud suggests the Conscious, the Preconscious and the Unconscious states of mind. Prior to the concept of Id, Ego and Superego developed by Freud divided the human “mind into two parts- *conscious*, and *unconscious*.” (Singh, 295). Those mental elements or materials that the individual is aware at any given time consists of the consciousness. In the famous ‘iceberg’ analogy, the uppermost small portion of the ice represents consciousness. The conscious realm is again divided into two different levels- the unconscious proper and the preconscious. This level of the mind consists of all elements which are not readily available to the conscious mind but can be obtain with very little effort. For this reason, it is also called as ‘available memory’ (Singh, 295). Singh, further delineates the two important sources from where the contents of preconscious comes. According to him, the “First source is conscious perception.” and “The second source (is)” being “the unconscious.” (Singh, 295). The things one perceives is retained in the consciousness for a temporary period of time and which subsequently, shifts into the preconscious as and when with the movement of the person’s attention. The preconscious in Freudian psychoanalytical system acts as the bridge between the conscious and the unconscious. Ideas that come to conscious from unconsciousness through preconscious portal is often masked in the forms of dreams, slips of pen or slips of tongue etc these ideas can easily slip out of the unconsciousness.

The understanding and the interplay of the unconscious plays a very important role in all Freud's work. The unconscious as taken from Freudian psychoanalysis is that part of the mind beyond consciousness but which nevertheless has a strong influence upon one's actions. It is a "container of many crude wishes and fantasies incompatible with the ideals and morals of a well socialized adult: a hoard of lustfulness and aggression, including incestuous wishes towards mother and death-wishes against the rival father." (Binswanger & Wittmann, 2019). Although Freud did not discover the unconscious his contribution lies in his attributing to it such an important role in the psychic realm of life. It is the most vital part of the mind and the also the largest part of the mind, following the 'iceberg analogy'. The unconscious carries those mental materials which cannot become conscious or can become with much difficulty. They can be considered as the inner most part of our mind. This realm holds one's deep, dark and sometimes forbidden desires and wishes like childhood experiences and sexual desires as well as conflicts.

### **1.2.2. Repression**

Although Freud did not discover the unconscious his contribution lies in his attributing to it such an important role in the psyche realm of life. In connection with his idea of unconscious is the concept of defence mechanism, which the individual uses to fight or adjust the overflow of emotions. *Repression*, *displacement*, and *sublimation* among other types of defence mechanism will be looked into for the purpose of the present study.

According to Peter Barry, "the idea of *repression*, ... is 'the forgetting' or ignoring of unresolved conflicts, unwanted desires, or traumatic past events," (97). This



set of emotions and feelings are often forced out of conscious awareness and into the realm of the unconscious in the course of the life circle or due to the effect of a sudden shock or trauma. Freud distinguishes between the primal repression and the repression proper. According to primal repression the mental representation of instinctual impulses is denied access to consciousness. It remains unconscious. While repression proper happens after the pressure it felt. In this type, materials which is available to consciousness becomes repressed because of its association with the already repressed mental representatives of the instincts. Freud's later theory of the mind makes object relations and hence social events play a central aspect of development in how the politics of the external world enters into the mind of the individual. This he terms as social repression. According to Freudian system humans are instinctual being and so "achievements of pleasure through expression of those being the aim of life" (Frosh, 39) providing the essence of society and the individual. These two poles oppose each other.

### **1.2.3. Sublimation**

On the other hand, through the process of sublimation, the repressed material as it is called is 'promoted' into something bigger and grander or disguised into something 'noble'. It is the force that transforms the unwanted impulse into something less harmful. This process of sublimation may result in a simple distracting release of the unwanted negative energy or may result in a constructive or creative and valuable piece of work. According to many psychologists' sublimation is probably the most useful and creative of the defence mechanisms as it takes the harmful and unwanted energy and invests it into making something good and useful. Freud believed that the greatest

achievements in civilization were due to the effective sublimation of our sexual and aggressive urges that are sourced in the Id and then channel by the Ego, as directed by the Superego. The defence mechanism of repression drains one's ability to function by pushing the emotions and feelings and desires seeming unacceptable or unattainable in the unconscious. Sublimation on the contrary makes the individual more productive.

#### **1.2.4. Displacement and Condensation**

Some other important Freudian terminology and terms what might be called psychic process, such as transference, which according to Barry is 'the phenomenon whereby the patient under analysis redirects the emotions recalled in analysis towards the psychoanalyst' (98), *projection*, *screen memory*, *Freudian slips* and *dream work* stands worthy of mention. Slip of the tongue or *parapraxis* which Freud himself termed, may also be looked as a kind of defence mechanism whereby latent material lying in the unconscious finds an outlet through the medium of everyday activities, like talking, singing, writing etc. 'The process by which real events or desires are transformed into dream images' (Barry, 99) is what is called as 'dream work' in the Freudian Psychoanalytic theory. In order for this dream work to work, the mechanism of *displacement*, comes into play where an interchange of person, is worked out. The real person or feelings can be represented by somebody else or another activity thereby fulfilling his/her innermost desire. Barry calls it as 'symbolic substitution'. A technique by which an illusion is replaced for something real and substantial. It can also happen when the focus is shifted from something important to something of less importance. Freud viewed displacement as a form of dream-distortion.

Another, process is the mechanism of *condensation*. Here a number of people, events, or meanings are represented as a single image in the dream. The phenomenon of ‘condensation’ according to Freud is the result of two or more incidents of displacement. When displacements merge and fuse or condense together condensation occurs.

### 1.3. Trajectories of Trauma Studies

The term trauma derives from the Greek word ‘traumatikos’ (Abubakar, 2017), meaning a serious wound to the body. Earlier to its categorisation and proper compartmentalisation as a separate field of study. ‘Trauma’ was linked to the female hysteria studied largely by Freud and his associates and ‘shell shock’ related to violence and terrors faced by war victims. In this field of study, the crust of the project is to look at the representation of mental or psychological experience. Here in the psyche or the psychological wound is valued more than the physical injuries. It is a special kind of psychological experience, which creates and re-creates the experiences. Trauma is both negative and disruptive. It strikes against a normal state of mind thereby producing an interrupted identity. The idea or the concept of trauma is collective in nature. Traumatic events can be individual or shared. They are a set of violent recalls, numbness and mental neurosis. Trauma as a psychological experience of interruption strikes against a psychic process gives rise to a new identity altogether through a drastic disruptive event.

Sarah Wood Anderson in the introduction to her book *Readings of Trauma, Madness and the Body*, traces the emergence of trauma theory during 1860 when clinicians began to notice victims of railway accidents having prolonged and alien

reactions that extended beyond their physical injuries. According to Christa Schönfelder, “Historical investigations of trauma are usually structured as a chronological series of milestone events that attracted particular attention to the phenomenon of trauma and as a succession of physicians, psychiatrists, and psychologists who engaged in significant ways with the traumas resulting from these events”. (Schönfelder, 42). The author adds, that Trauma, as a product of the railway age is commonly connected with the rise of industrialisation and the rise in the technological and statistical society.

The history of trauma may be traced back to John Erichsen’s (1860) when he diagnosed a condition caused by railway accidents. He assumed that the cause of the disturbance to the nervous system might be physically produced in railway accidents. The studies that took place after this shifted the focus from the ‘organic and pathoanatomical to more psychological and psychosomatic explanations’ (Schönfelder, 42) or in other words from after which the works of Pierre Janet, Jean- Martin Charcot and Sigmund Freud came. Earlier to this phase psychological theories regarding the origins and effects of trauma arose in the 19<sup>th</sup> century pertaining to study of cause and effects of shock and hysteria by researchers who in addition to Freud includes Joseph Breuer, Pierre Janet, Jean Martin Charcot, Herman Oppenheim, Abram Kardener and Morton Prince. Freud’s early theories in *Studies on Hysteria* (1895) with Joseph Breuer where they presented the ‘seduction theory’, which was recanted within few months of publication, and adapted theories in his career found in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) and *Moses and Monotheism* (1939), dominate trauma’s conceptual employment by literary trauma critics today.

After the ‘hysteria’ extravaganza the first world war brought trauma studies back to public consciousness. The casualties of war brought victims suffering both

physically and mentally eluded the scenario. A dark picture of the crises that a soldier faces in a post war period is presented very vividly by authors like Virginia Woolf in *Mrs Dalloway*. Septimus Warren Smith who has lost a dear friend to the war is misunderstood and regularly expected to maintain masochism in his life after the war. This lack of understanding leads to his feeling lost and lonely and ultimately leads to suicide. *Catch 22* by Joseph Heller, is another example of novels about psychological trauma caused by war. In a tragic comic tone, the author portrays the struggles that John Yossarian has to go through in a war zone and maiming of masculinity and heroism of war. It is commonly agreed that trauma studies began in USA in 1980 when a campaign by Vietnam war veterans influenced the American Psychiatric Association to include Post traumatic stress disorder in the diagnostic canon of the medical and psychiatric profession.

The early 1990s came out to be a phenomenal period in the era of Trauma and memory studies. The publication of a seminal text by Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub's *Testimony: Crisis of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History* in 1992, Cathy Caruth's edited collection *Trauma: Explorations in Memory* which came in 1995 and her monograph titled *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* 1996 opened up the humanities to Trauma Studies which was earlier considered as a subject fit and confined to medical field or the field of psychiatry. The theorist like Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub relied on the Freudian theory to develop a model of trauma that imagines an extreme experience which challenges the limits of language and even ruptures meaning altogether and holds suffering as an unrepresentable entity. Trauma Theory and Studies owes also to the theory of deconstruction, post structuralism and psychoanalysis but is also informed by clinical work recorded with the survivors of traumatic experiences. This can be proven with the

contribution by the neuroscientist like Van der Kolk and Van der Hart and literary theorists like George Bataille and Harold Bloom.

#### **1.4. Emergence of Trauma Studies in Two Waves**

Nasrullah Mambrol in his essay “Trauma Studies: Literary Theory and Criticism” maps the development of Trauma Theory and Studies in two waves. The central theme in the field of Trauma Studies according to Nasrullah Mambrol (2018), is the representation of psychological trauma in language and the role of memory in shaping individual and the cultural identities. It is generally understood as a severely disruptive experience whose impact on the self’s emotional organization and perception of the external world is considered to be profound. Trauma Studies explores the effect of trauma in literature and society by analysing the psychological, rhetorical and cultural significance. It goes on in exploring the complexities of psychological and social factors which influence the self’s understanding of a traumatic event and how such an experience shapes and is shaped by its (trauma) language.

**First Wave:** Some of the key ideas that informed the first development in trauma studies scholarship that addresses the theory of trauma and the ways that trauma influences memory and identity are Freud’s critical theories; which posits that traumatic experiences are repetitive in nature, this repetition of traumatic events divide the psyche by creating a split of the ego; that trauma influences the memory and is unable to be experienced initially but only in a narrative reproduction of the past which appear after a certain gap of period between the actual event and the reproduction. In his early

works Freud argues that traumatic hysteria develops from a repressed earlier experience of sexual assault, popularly termed as the ‘seduction theory’ 1896, which he recanted within few months of publication. The reasons to this recantation of the study done by Freud are not yet known. However, many critics believed that it was due to the prejudice and one-sided nature of the study. Critics also point to the manhandling of ‘hysteria’ associated with women in the study, as being considered a feature of their (women) gender and weak constitution and a “faulty heredity exacerbated by the biological and social crises of puberty” (Showalter, *Female Malady*, 130), pointing out that the reasons for the patient’s abnormal behaviour was related to the sexual trauma experienced by the patients. He believed that the original event was not traumatic rather the remembrance of the extreme event was. Since the original event inflict harm the talking cure or the abreaction was required. In Freud’s model of trauma, a traumatic event is understood only after a latency period of deferred action, which delays the effect and meaning of the past. Trauma defined in relation to the process of remembering is an event nestled within the unconscious, which repeats itself and causes split of the ego or dissociation. Freud’s later work on war neurosis and the problem of traumatic repetition in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) states that traumatic events create conflicts in the ego which ‘split off’ from the unity of the ego and are repressed but return later often in dreams. Traumatic neurosis which is ‘a consequence of an extensive breach being made in the protective shield against stimuli’ (Freud, 35) is created by the conflicts caused by trauma.

According to Nasrullah Mambrol in *Trauma Studies* (2018), Trauma studies central concerns are psychological trauma, its representation in utterances, and the role of memory in shaping individual and cultural identities. It explores the impact of trauma in literature and society by analysing its psychological, rhetorical and cultural

importance and bearings on the daily lives of the individuals. The scholarship in trauma studies deals with the complexities in psychic cycle and its social factors which influence the self's comprehension of traumatic experiences and how such experiences shape and is shaped by language. It is very vital to mention here the critique the concept of trauma itself presents, which generally is understood as severely disruptive event that profoundly impacts the emotional organisation and perception of the external world.

The first wave criticism popularised the concept of trauma as an unrepresentable event, meaning an event that remains outside normal memory and narrative representation which fragments consciousness and shatter identity leaving the psyche irrevocably damaged. This model emphasized on the fact that suffering caused by an external source makes internal changes to the mind which changes the identity. The event is absent in the normal consciousness but preserved just beyond the limits of understanding in a timeless, wordless state which continues to inflict pain on the psyche. Cathy Caruth takes a particular interpretation of Freud's trauma theory to forward a larger poststructural concern with the referential limits of language and history. Viewing trauma through the theories of Freud and Lacan as the delayed return of the repressed and a defining absence, Cathy Caruth argues that trauma is 'not locatable in the simple violent or original event in the individual's past' but only identifiable in 'the way it is precisely not known in the first instance-returns to haunt the survivor later on' (Caruth ,17 &4).

**Second Wave:** The pluralistic trauma theory by giving greater attention to the variability of traumatic representation, challenges the unspeakable trope in seeking



to understand the structural and cultural dimensions of trauma that often develops in terms of trauma's dissociative effects on consciousness and memory and the diversity of narrative expression. It moves away from the position that centralizes pathological fragmentation by suggesting that traumatic experience uncovers new relationships between experience, language and knowledge that detail the social significance of trauma. Criticisms in this connection include works by Ann Cvetkovich, Greg Forter, Amy Hungerford, Naomi Mandel and Catherine Malabou. This model conceptualises trauma as event that alters perception and identity. The effect of a catastrophic event creates a gap and in the wake of such disturbance new knowledge is formed about self and external. Catherine Malabou in *The New Wounded* (2012) defines trauma as a reformation of psyche which is deformed as well as reformed. She adds the idea of the plasticity of destruction or the plastic nature of a traumatic event which results in a 'metamorphosis of identity' (Malabou, *The New Wounded*, 17). This new model understands trauma's effect on identity and memory as an interplay of external and internal forces as well as individual character traits and cultural factors thereby creating a broader appreciation for the links between the singular and the collective traumatic experience.

## 1.5. The Writer and Her Works

From her first professional writing assignment for Ashish Chandola's documentary film, *How the Rhinoceros Returned* to the most recent thoughts on freedom, fascism and fiction in *Azadi* (2020), Arundhati Roy has time and again amazed and fed the reader's appetite with unflinching audacity. Suzanna Arundhati Roy best known for her debut novel *The God of Small Things* (1997) is a gong that sounds and

resounds for a revival. She, through her marvellous narrative skills perceives the society with all its atrocities. Roy is a fighter for the human cause. She is a spokesperson of the anti-globalisation movement and a social activist involved in human rights and environmental causes. Roy has never failed to raise her voice upon issues which she felt was an infringement of the simple law of equality and freedom, be it political, economic or social. This can be proven very aptly by her many engagements with different movements and other social workers. Some of the important events and works worthy to be mentioned can be Narmada Bachao Andolen, support for Kashmiri Separatism, *Great Indian Rape Trick-I and Great Indian Rape Trick-II* (1994), collection of essays like *The End of Imagination* (1998), *The Algebra of Infinite Justice* (2002). Her views and opinions had undeniably heaped a mass of criticism upon her yet it would be wrong to simply overlook the truth that she speaks through her brave and unwavering advocacy.

Born on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November, 1961 at Shillong in Meghalaya to Mary Roy- a daughter of a respected Syrian Christian family at a village in Ayamanam and a Bengali Hindu from Calcutta in West Bengal. Mary Roy the author's mother although coming from a very strictly religious and an iron hand patriarchal family had the guts to marry a Bengali Hindu on her own choice at Calcutta, India. This proves to be an unsuccessful union and ends up in divorce. And so, after the divorce with her husband Mary Roy with no other option comes to her paternal house with little Lalit Kumar Christopher Roy and Arundhati Roy, both barely two years old. Arundhati Roy's mother commits a heinous crime in the eye of the society like Ammu in, *The God of Small Things*. She trespasses the boundaries and limits that the society had erected. It is a dead end. She just like Ammu had to go through many problems and difficulties to set a good and respectable life for her children and herself. However, she was a strong lady. She fought

against the old traditional values and customs and was able to set a school name Corpus Christi on the outskirts of Kottayam where both her children had their initial schooling. The case registered in the court by her in connection to the rights of a Syrian Christian daughter to inherit the paternal property goes loud enough to prove the kind of fight she put forward. Narendra Tiwary in, *Arundhati Roy: Concepts and Concerns*, states,

...she had crossed the forbidden territory of love and marriage. Neither the family nor the society was willing to accept the mother and her children as a part of the community. She had to suffer all the insults and humiliations of a society dominated by patriarchal tradition. She had committed triple crime. First, though she was a girl, she married a person of her own choice. Second, she married a Bengali Hindu. Third, she divorced and came back to the fold of the family, the authority of which she had dishonoured once by marrying outside the caste and community and most of all divorcing the same. In the eyes of the society, she had lost all the possibilities of a meaningful life along with the children. In the eyes of the people, she had lost ground to take shelter at Ayamanam where she was shunned and treated as an outcaste. (Tiwary, 14).

Arundhati Roy, as an architect structures and restructures the very brick of the society and tries to stabilise and give it a sturdy stand. Roy builds to break and breaks to build. As an ardent writer for a social cause, she has always kept the subject of society and the injustices and the inequalities faced and meted out to it. With her narrative genius she gives birth to individual personas intertwined and entangled in each other emotions and feelings. All the characters in her novels are fighting battles. They have khawb, aspirations, and desires. This, inhibitions make and unmake them. Through a careful stroke of delicate themes, the writer projects the mental state; the unconscious realm of the individuals in her work. Ammu is struggling with her ill-fated patriarchy,

Velutha from the so-called untouchable state of life. Rahel and Estha suffers from alienation and lack of love, Baby Kochamma from her unfulfilled love for Padre Mulligan, Anjum is fighting her sense of lack of belongingness and so and so forth. Thus, resulting in a traumatic and unstable state of the individual as well as collective minds.

## **1.6. Chapters**

The wake of the twenty first millennium may be looked at a paradox. While it has given a lot of impetus to the growth, development and progress of the human world, it has also taken from them. The machines, the modern gadgets and inventions without which we cannot imagine our existence is the gift of the modern world, which again cannot be termed as harmful and disastrous. However, a careful and deep insight into this paradigm shows a sensation of loss. The loosing or estrangements of human ties has in fact become a daily and casual phenomenon. The whole point of the above discussion is not to measure the advantages and disadvantages of the discoveries and inventions of the modern world but to connect it with the bigger and more pressing concerns faced by this generation which are very beautifully as well as forcefully painted by the author in focus. The booker prize winner author in novels which are only two in number for the moment in a very modernist approach projects the problem of the brooding and deadening mental state of the characters. Since literature is in part a caricature of human live and the world, Roy's thoughts and feelings painted very wonderfully in her novels selected for the study does justice for the topic of the research. Psychological trauma or trauma narrative is one among many issues discussed by the author, although she is for most part of her writing and social career known as a social

activist. Her take of the world is a place where the powerful have the upper hand in the making and unmaking of the individual's life. Following, Caruth's philosophy of transhistorical quality of trauma, one gets the idea that the effects of trauma or a catastrophic event can have a lasting impact upon him and even people surrounding him. This quality of wound or the wounded is carried through from one individual to the other as much as it is carried from her first novel to the second one. The interplay of traumatic events and its brooding effect on the cycle of human relationship is another pivotal issue portrayed in the selected novels. Estha and Rahel are less loved by their grandparents and maternal family only because Amu, the mother married for love. There seems to be no freedom or sense of ownership of one's own life in the extended family where they are staying. When Sophie Mol, the children's English cousin dies in an accident leading to the arrest and murder of Velutha. Estha and Rahel are permanently traumatised but this trail of events climaxing to Amu's lover also shakes her deep within. After this incident she like Anjum decides to go and settle up in her own Duniya. The transgender Anjum succeeds but she doesn't. Amu dies lonely in a hotel room, battered by the sticks of the society. Mammachi suffers in the misogynist iron hand of her husband and Amu had to go through shame and dejection from the society and her own family. These events in their history repeat themselves in the life of Rahel, when she returns to her maternal home at Ayemenem (Kerala). Although the cause of the pain and shame is different for Rahel from that of her mother and her grandmother, the effects can be equated very vividly. On the other side of the world Anjum saved after nearly being killed by the Hindu mob at Gujarat, succumbs to loneliness, low self-worth and silence as also supported in 'Exploring Social and Situational Transgender Trauma in Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*', by Sara Shahbag, Qamar Khushi and Hafiz Muhammad Qasim. They are of the view that

traumatic experiences can be looked at from three perspective i.e. social, situational and narrative. Another author Young Sarah Longworth, in “Trauma and the Ethical Dilemma in Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things*” (2006) also writes that when viewed from the light of trauma narrative the novel may not only be read as either pessimistic or optimistic about the future but as a warning that even societal pressure can perpetuate trauma. The characters’ wounds are the result of the societal dogmas which are false and empty. It seems to haunt and chase the characters in the novel selected for the study, till they lose and find themselves again. Julia-Reka Vallasek in her article titled ‘From Small Things to Big Symbols: Transgressability of Borders in Arundhati Roy’s Work’ (2018), speaks about the delusionality of boundaries created and cemented by society and the emergence of a neo colonial India through a new model of patchwork narrative. This narrative resounds much of the trauma narrative used in the earlier novel of Arundhati Roy.

**Chapter two** discusses the occurrence of the traumatic events and its universal nature. The two-way workings of trauma as seen in the novels selected for the study makes the body of this chapter. This statement can be looked in the manner that, when a person is traumatized, it is not him/her alone that suffers or goes through the pangs of the events but people connected to the traumatized patient also carry the burden. However, the level may differ as trauma passes on to from one person to the other. Following this line of conversation, the transhistorical or transgenerational quality of trauma as propounded by critics like Cathy Caruth, and Anne Whitehead will also be mapped into the novels selected there on. The non-bias nature of trauma, can be seen as one important factor of the present generation. It as seen in popular literature and media, encompasses not only the victim but also the victimizer. There is a certain form

of liquidation of the term's 'perpetrator' and the 'prey'. When given a deep insight, none can demarcate the line between these two entities. There is a constant shift between the stakeholders. Trauma, which also borders towards an ill maintained mental health and its recurrence as a common theme of this generation is foregrounded in this chapter.

**Chapter three** of the study which is entitled as Trauma and Social Dogmas, discusses the evils of the degrading social restrains and regulations heaped upon the characters of the novels selected. Roy one of the biggest voices among many voices when it comes to social inequalities and injustices. Her books, interviews, and tireless works on behalf of the marginals of the society is enough proof for her heart for the cause of the downtrodden of the society. As witnessed in the novels she has written, social fore bearings and customs handed down from generation to generation is one of the causes of the poor situation her characters are stuck in. As the borders of gender identities and sexual preferences keeps widening every day, so thus the importance of looking at trauma and its cause and casualty from every angle. It is not only female gender, nor male, or the in-between, or children, or Hindus, or Muslims, or Christians that has to pay the price but all human beings that ever walked this earth.

This thought is carried forward in **chapter four**. The dynamics of the purity and beauty of human relationship at the back drop of social, economic and political strata makes up the content of this chapter. Relationship(s) plays a very vital role in the movement of the plot as it does in measuring the effects of trauma in the individual's life. There seems to be a visa versa interfering between relationship and trauma in the

selected books. While traumatic events may sometimes disenchant relations, it also at some occasion goes to make newer ones. Thus, keeping the cycle moving. The pace at which trauma and relationship intersect may be haphazard, yet it seems to be helping the characters to gauge out the best qualities in them. Anjum aka Aftab, an intersex in *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* can be taken as an example. Her drastic departure from the Duniya she knew and the trauma she faces amounts to her more dramatic re-entry, later in the novel. This chapter also dissects the interplay of relationships in connection to psychodynamic of individuals' lives, as presented by the novelist. It tries to unearth emotions and the interplay of feelings at the backdrop of social and family bondages. There by bringing out its relevance and their effects and side effects to the reader's mind.



## Chapter 2

### Trauma, A Non-bias Calamity

“In its general definition, trauma is described as the response to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events that are not fully grasped as they occur, but return later in repeated flashbacks, nightmares, and other repetitive phenomena” states Cathy Caruth in her seminal book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History*. This idea of trauma is also supported by Michelle Balaev, when she says that, trauma is timeless, repetitious and infectious in nature in ‘Trends in Literary Trauma Theory’ (2008). It is understood as not so much as a physical wound but more as a psychological injury or a lesion caused by not any event but a significantly shocking and unexpected occurrence of an accident. It is the repetition of catastrophic events, that replicate themselves for those who have ‘passed through them’. The phrase ‘passed through them’ may be looked as the nomenclature which include both the individual who has suffered and those suffer through the medium of literature. The event of repetition has an uncanny and belated quality. It is out of the control of the individual who is suffering from the remembering of the traumatic event. Cathy Caruth, in the introduction to her book *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* 1996, mentions the story of Tancred and Clorinda from Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure principle* to bring in the idea of the pain; the voice that is released through the wound, felt when Tancred slashes the tree, where the soul of his beloved Clorinda is residing. In the introduction to the book (*Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative and History* 1996) Caruth states:

“The most moving poetic picture of a fate such as this”, Freud writes, “can be found in the story told by Tasso in his epic *Gerusalemme Liberata*”:

Its hero, Tancred, unwittingly kills his beloved Clorinda in a duel while she is disguised in the armour of an enemy knight. After her burial he makes his way into a strange magic forest which strikes the crusaders’ army with terror. He slashes with his sword at a tall tree, but blood streams from the cut and the voice of Clorinda, whose soul is imprisoned in the tree, is heard complaining that he has wounded his beloved once again.”

Trauma is more than a pathology or the simple illness. It is the ailment of a wounded psyche which has far reaching effects. Trauma is much like any other social epidemic. It has been present in our world from time immemorial yet its affects and impacts on human minds and human relationships have been felt much urgently in the present times. It can be equated to any event which produces calamitous results which are more concerning the wound of the psyche than physical. Trauma is universal and non-bias in nature. By this I mean that it can occur to anyone. It sees no gender, class, creed, nationality or race. It is an all-encompassing entity.

Following Catherine Malabou’s categorization of the ‘new wounded’ in *Ontology of The Accident* (2009), it is safe to say that all people- people suffering from brain lesions or other neurological condition but also people in a state of shock, comprises the realm of the wounded. Trauma in recent times of the global pandemic has marked for itself a place of medical and social emergency. However, the importance of distinguishing it from other mental illness needs a thorough study and understanding of an intellectual eye. The literature world reads and writes about trauma story and events related to war and abuse but with the rise of suicide and cases of people suffering

from depression, anxiety and diseases concerning mental well-being, trauma studies has become more of a carter of all studies. Trauma can be equated with any other calamity for it results in great loss and misfortune. Writing in the preface to the book *The New Wounded* (2007), Catherine Malabou states about the sources of trauma as being political and organic and continues her discussion of the resemblance displayed by the sufferer of a sociopolitical trauma- like war, abuse, terrorist attacks, or sexual assaults - to that of brain damage. Its disastrous effects on the human society are a readymade answer for any argument concerning its stand. Since mental health has become one of the most important topics of concern, this study which will deal on the occurrence of trauma and its effects on human relationships in the select novels.

## **2.1. Trauma Narratives in the Select Novels**

*The God of Small Things* (henceforth to be abbreviated as *GOST*): The book which won Arundhati Roy the much-coveted Man Booker Price in 1997, follows the experiences of two twins Estha and Rahel and their extended family in Kerela in 1969. Ammu, their mother is a Christian Syrian divorcee who, after leaving her Bengali husband had come back to live with her parent in Ayemenem. Estha and Rahel are 7 years old in 1969 and live with their mother Ammu and part of their extended family which include Ammu's mother, her brother Chacko and Baby Kochamma- a cruel and prejudiced spinster. Velutha- a Paravan, is like a surrogate father to the children and a long-time friend of Ammu. He is an untouchable who grew up with Ammu. He would make wooden toys for her and allowed him to touch Ammu as a child, thereby breaking the caste differences. In 1969 they found out that they are in love and begin their love

affair which sets the novel in motion. From the first paragraph the author seems to anticipate an ending which might not be a happy one. She writes,

“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 tress. Red bananas ripen. Jackfruits burst. Dissolute bluebottles hum vacuously in the fruity air. Then they stun themselves against clear windowpanes and die, flatly baffled in the sun”. (Roy, *GOST*,1).

The time of Sophie Mol’s arrival and the incidents leading to her death in the river traumatizes Estha and Rahel with its effects lasting as long as the end of the novel. The narrative pattern of the novel is very interesting as it moves from timeline to another. Half of the story takes place in the past over two weeks in 1969 when most of the events happens in the novel and the half of it takes place on one day in 1992 in the present. *GOST* follows a traumatic narrative pattern in the form of nonlinear plot, a shifting timeline and childlike tone and by this immerses the readers to follow the strain of the events. The novel shifts the timeline between two weeks in 1969 and one day in 1992. The incidents which happen changes the timeline and thus disorients the reader by forcing to experience the dislocation and distress of the characters.

Arundhati Roy in both her novels employs a cosmopolitan tune of conversation and a narrative tone that shifts constantly. She is in the line of Virginia Wolf, Emily Bronte and other writers who had used the stream of consciousness technique in their writings. These methods which are so masterfully applied in her novels produces a sort of interruption in the reading psyche of the reader. The interruption in the sequences of the events and the continues shift in the novel’s timeline aggravates the trauma of the characters and thus help the pain and sufferings portrayed in the books to seep in her

audiences. The novel adopts an extremely childlike or infantile tone which allow the readers to experience the feelings and thoughts of Estha and Rahel, as children. It includes clips, incomplete sentences and paragraphs combined words and non-words, emphatic capitalization and punctuation and repetition of words and phrases all of which are typical to the speech and thought process of children. The way Arundhati Roy builds up the atmosphere of catastrophic events in the novel is much in the likes of a movie. Sophie Mol's death, the events after that and the separation of the twins for twenty -three years leaves Estha and Rahel traumatized for life. While the author deals with it separately in different ways it maims the psyche of the children. This results in Estha's quietness and Rahel's emptiness. Sophie Mol is laid in a 'Child- sized coffin. / Satin lined. / Brass handle shinned'. (Roy, *GOST*, 4). Everyone is standing together around the coffin while Ammu and her children aren't allowed to come close to the coffin. The readers read the lines of prejudice and smell, the smell of hypocrisy here. Sophie Mol and her English mother Margarete is valued and loved more than Ammu the real daughter of the house (Ayemenem). The only reason being that Margaret is the half wife of the only son of the house while Ammu despite being from the same womb disobeyed her parents. This act of disobedience is overtly examined and stressed by the members of the house. While the fact is that both Chacko and Ammu are on the same footing when it comes to marriage in fact considering the waywardness of the children's uncle, he is the one whom the family members should abhor. One occasion the children decide to go to the river in a boat, "Estha waited until Rahel got in, then took his place, sitting astride the little boat as though it were a seesaw. He used his legs to push the boat away from the shore. As they lurched into the deeper water they began to row diagonally upstream, against the current, the way Velutha had taught to. ('If you want

to end up there, you must aim there'.)" (Roy, *GOST*, 292). The boat accidentally capsizes. Estha and Rahel swim to the shore but Sophie drowns.

"They were past the Really Deep, only yards from the other Side, when they collided with a floating log and the little boat tipped over. It had happened to them often enough on previous expeditions across the river, and they would swim after the boat and, using it as a float, dog-paddle to the shore. This time, they couldn't see their boat in the dark. It was swept away in the current. They headed for the shore, surprised at how much effort it took them to cover that short distance". (Roy, *GOST*, 292)

Estha and Rahel sleep at the boathouse and the next thing they know is that they are taken to the police station with some policemen dragging Velutha, who also happens to be sleeping where the accident happened. Velutha is beaten badly although he has nothing to do with the scene that had occurred. Baby Kochamma, taking it as a great opportunity manipulates the situation by forcing the children to testify that it was all Velutha's doing, making the situation worse. She is able to take revenge on the world of love, in the sense that, this world did not allow her to fulfill her love for father Mulligan. She had been able to detect that Ammu and Velutha were in love and this she as a member of the upper caste cannot allow. This event can be looked at not only from the angle of caste superiority but also from the sphere of revenge protruding out of an unrequited love of the former. While this happens and Ammu is disowned by her own family, Estha is sexually molested by a man at the Abhilash Talkies where they had gone to watch a movie. These events heavily take a toll upon the children. The memory of the small coffin, the swollen face of their surrogate father, the effects of the death of their cousin and the image of the orange drink man keeps the novel hauntingly traumatic.

*The Ministry of Utmost Happiness* (henceforth to be abbreviated as *MOUH*):

This is a 2017 novel by Arundhati Roy which deals with the lives of several characters whose lives are inextricably interconnected. Spanning from 1950s to the 2010s the book is set against the backdrop of contemporary India. The novel skips backwards and forwards in time freely, often pausing for detours into the stories of minor characters and includes several texts within the main text. However, at heart, the novel consists of two main narrative threads, one of which is centered in Delhi, and the other in Kashmir.

The first begins with Anjum, a Muslim hijra. Anjum who is born intersex lives his childhood days under the name, Aftab. He is initially raised as a boy. However, once Aftab enters adolescence he rejects this male identity and joins the “Khwabgah- the House of Dreams” (Roy, *MOUH*, 19) - a local hijra community. There he takes the name Anjum and spends more than three decades of her life earning her living as an entertainer and a sex worker. Despite her popularity she longs to experience life as an “ordinary” woman and in her 40s, adopts an abandoned toddler. Anjum names her Zainab. When Zainab gets sick and after trying everything and with her suspicion that one of the members of the member of Khawbgah is behind the ‘silfi jaddu’ is making her daughter sick. Her suspicion is projected towards the newcomer, English speaking transgender Saeeda. Anjum decides to go to a religious pilgrimage. She is attacked by rioting Hindu nationalists in the Indian state of Gujarat. This event leaves her too traumatized to care for Zainab and eventually prompts her to leave the Khawbgah altogether.

Anjum moves into an old Muslim cemetery, intending to stay there until she herself dies. Over time, however, and with the support of friends from her former life, Anjum begins to come to terms with her experiences, and makes a real home for herself in the graveyard. She builds a house, complete with facilities like electricity, and

eventually takes in fellow lodgers. The two most significant of these are a blind man and a Muslim spiritual leader name Ziauddin, and a young man who gives his name as Saddam Hussain, but who is in fact a Dalit seeking vengeance for his father's murder.

The second major storyline takes place partly in Delhi but primarily concerns events that occurred in Kashmir in the 1990s which the author explores and dissects from several points of view of different characters point of view. A girl of the new age, S. Tilottama meets Musa Yeswi, a Kashmiri decent who is latterly known as Commander Gulrez, Naga and Biblap Dasgupta during the rehearsal of a college drama. All three men falls in love with Tilo. She is the illegitimate daughter of a well-to-do Syrian Indian women who "adopted" her several months after the child was actually born grows up to attend architectural school in Delhi. Biplab Dasgupta, is a cautious and pragmatic man who goes on to work for the Indian government, Nagarajan Hariharan, the charming and passionate son of the upper-crust Hindu bureaucrats becomes first a radical journalist and later a security analysist and Musa Yeswi formerly living his life in the peace and serenity of the beautiful valleys of Kashmir is thrust into what the national security force calls insurgency. In the novel all four characters fall out of contact after the college, but their lives intersect again years later in Kashmir, where separatists are waging a war for freedom against the Indian army.

One night when Dasgupta receives a call while he is in Kashmir. The giver of the message has written "Garrison Hobart". He takes no time in identifying that it is Tilo and since he cannot go, sends Naga instead. She had come to Kashmir to meet Musa who by now is a separatist. After the rescue, Tilo marries Naga on Musa's advice but soon leaves him. She finds out that she is pregnant with Musa's child but decides to abort. Drifting and wavering from one branch to the other of life, Tilo finally lands in Jannat guest house. By this time, she also has a baby named Miss Jebeen who she



had whisked from Jantar Mantar giving the intention of a promising future, “Because Miss Jebeen, Miss Udaya Jebeen, was come” (Roy, *MOUH*, 438).

As trauma is the response to an unexpected or overwhelming violent event or events, the effect that this creates is in a sort of an interruption produced through a shock or shattering of the ego and since trauma repeats itself and has a nightmarish nature to it, the question of understanding what triggers trauma becomes a pivotal concern and more so from both the individual and collective level. In *GOST* and *MOUH*, the trauma that the characters go through are the result of an imbalance and confrontations between ‘the God of big things’ and ‘the God of small things’ (Dwivedi & Sharma, 2013). These conflicts on the individual and the social level is the agent that triggers trauma. According to the patriarchal rule of the house headed by Pappachi, Ammu’s marriage on her own choice is a null and void situation. She is not given opportunities and privileges as is provided to Chacko the male child. Ammu because is the girl child of the family do not have rights to choose for her own. This makes her feel suffocated and so in a thrust to break away lands into a wrong marriage. But even on her return the family is not so welcoming and looks at her and her children from a very indifferent and casual eye. Velutha, her childhood friend is the God of small things. Ammu falls in love with him which infuriates the already tense atmosphere in the Ayemenem house. Since Velutha is a Paravan, the society can never accept the relationship. Mammachi quivers at the thought of her white daughter touching the black skin of the untouchable. Estha and Rahel are no less than Ammu, their mother when it comes to the ill treatment inflicted upon by the family and the society. They are the offshoots from an estranged marriage and their father’s religion adds much to the fire. Pappachi, is much against a Christian marrying a Hindu. He is against any sort of inter caste inhibitions. The wrongful conviction and death of Velutha after Sophie Mol’s

death causes a deep shock in the children's psyche. They are to carry this wound for all their life and so altering and shattering their inner being as they grow. In *MOUH*, Anjum's source of trauma is not so the bullies and scathing remarks that she has to go through owing to her intersex state but it is the bitter realization of her whole existence that causes her trauma. She is allowed to live and to tell the tale only because she is neither male nor female. And that her killing will bring bad luck to her murderers. Dayachand aka Saddam owes to avenge his father's death by murdering inspector Sherawat. While Musa and Revathy are able to turn their trauma to a powerful weapon to fight injustices and for which they are ready to lay their life. A traumatic event interrupts and raptures the mind. It has a paralyzing effect, which alters identity of the survivor. In a way that the cause of an individual trauma may become the cause of a trauma faced by a collection of individuals.

## **2.2. Trauma and its Disruptive Quality**

According to Catherine Malabou, trauma's interruption has a disruptive and annihilative quality. She takes the example of a wound or lesion in the brain which drastically brings about a change in the person carrying the wound. Trauma has the power to alter the personality traits by erupting the older self. This process gives in the way for a new form and a new self with no connection to the older self whatsoever. Following the non-bias nature of trauma and its effects the lines between the perpetrator and the victim is blurred. In the sense that if trauma is universal then one cannot distinguish between the victimizer or what traumatizes and the victim or who is traumatized. Everyone is suffering at one point or the other in the story narrated by the author selected for the study. Although, the event may look and sound different when

viewed from different angles of study, the general interpretation of the catastrophic events may be seen as having a similar yard stick for all individual high and low.

An example can be Mammachi's trauma from a relationship infused with domestic violence. She is a dutiful wife but before anything she is a woman and an individual. This is repressed and hidden away in the halo of her husband. Pappachi, is a wife beater and a misogynist. He does not support his wife taking music class nor developing and progressing in life. When looked at this situation from the female perspective Mammachi is the victim and Pappachi garners loath from the readers valve of disgust yet the fact that Pappachi is also suffered set back in the face of his failed promotion and lack of discipline taken to give him due credit for his discovery cannot be ignored altogether. Both are suffering and so both are traumatized. Even though the level of pain they go through may differ.

This can be linked to the recent studies on trauma being done in connection to poststructuralism and deconstruction. Trauma is also self-inflicted at times. *The Fly*, by Catherine Mansfield is a wonderful example in this context. The protagonist in Catherine Mansfield, *The Fly* is a middle-age, head of an office. He had lost his son in the war and the readers know this by the photograph that he keeps on his office table. He puts up a manly show but inside he is shredded by the loss of his son. He lets the door of his office shut and tells his staff that none should disturb him for some moment. This in a way can be looked as the time he prepares to let his guard down and cry inside his office; alone and desolate.

Although, in *GOST* Pappachi is presented in the novel in the light of a degrading misogynist, he can be considered a candidate for the form of this type of trauma. After he retires as the 'Director' of 'Imperial Entomologist' (Roy, *GOST*, 48 &49) he goes

through a downward fall in life. He has been a wife beater and these events increase as he finds himself idle. In one occasion Chacko who had just returned from abroad intimidates him by holding his hand while he is going through a regular ritual of beating Mammachi. On top of this her success in pickle business infuriates him more. Pappachi is a kind of man who cannot in any circumstances digest his wife's progress. He makes all effort to keep her under his shoes. In Vienna he pulls Mammachi out of the violin class just because her violin teacher commented on his wife's concert worthy violin skills. "It was during those few months they spent in Vienne that Mammachi took her first lessons on the violin. The lessons were abruptly discontinued when Mammachi's teacher, Launsky-Tieffenthal, made the mistake of telling Pappachi that his wife was exceptionally talented and, in his opinion, potentially concert class." (Roy, *GOST*, 50). He is a jealous man, with outward glam and emptiness inside. While Rahel's emptiness is the result of the traumatic memory that the twins carry with them, Pappachi's emptiness is a kind of self-imbued one.

In both the novels, Roy projects the mental state of the characters which is the effect of an overwhelming number of events and experiences faced by them. Although these events and happening presented in the novel may be considered an outlet to other more popular movements like the Feminist movement or the fight for freedom in *MOUH*, trauma and its effects seems to be seated upon the fountain from where all these later factors flow. *GOST* has been considered and read from many angles and point of view. Some critics see it as a feminist novel while some other see it a book speaking volumes about social and political issues faced by the new India. But above all the tags happily and some unnecessarily attached to it, Arundhati Roy's *GOST* is a marvelous creation wrapped in with home issues served with all the species available in the pantry. The novel in simple terms, tells a story of a single-divorced mother trying to relocate herself

and her twins in a, not so welcoming ecosystem she calls, home. It is the story of her struggles less physical and more emotional and psychological that makes the book a global celebration, allowing every man and woman to participate in the procession called life. Everybody is striving for that inner peace, the stillness of the soul and acceptance. Velutha, Ammu, Mammachi, Baby Kochamma, Pappachi, Chacko, Anjum, Tilo, Saddam Hussain- all of them. The question of who is the victim and who is the perpetrator is a kind of a hoax at this juncture. Estha and Rahel after the death and the dreadful events that follows are left with a mark like the one left by an indelible ink.

Christa Schönfelder remarks, “Traumatic childhood experiences, as is often emphasized, tend to have a particularly severe impact, leaving scars that--- deep into the psyche as well as the body.” (Schönfelder, 72). While Velutha suffers physically the twins carry the pain psychologically. It turns their life upside down. The trauma of the catastrophic event produces a deadening ‘silence’ or ‘quietness’ in Estha and makes Rahel a ‘drifter’. She grows up to be a young woman but is unable to fill the ‘emptiness’ she feels inside her. Both of them seven years at that time are held responsible for the unfortunate death of Sophie Mol. Margaret Kochamma makes it a kind of habit to slap poor Estha whenever she gets a chance till the time she returns to England. “Margaret Kochamma’s grief and bitterness at her daughter’s death coiled inside her like an angry spring. She said nothing, but slapped Estha whenever she could in the days when was there before she returned to England”. (Roy, *GOST*, 31)

This can be looked from a therapeutic and self-relaxing action to ease her mind, but the causality of the actions proves to be far reaching. Another crisis in the life of the twins is their separation. Ammu is helpless because she is been disowned by the family and so sends Estha to live with his father where he becomes just like a side show. He learns to cook, to shop and to sweep. The novelist says he learned to earn his living

in a way by doing household chores, like cleaning the house, doing grocery shopping and cooking for the family in his father's house in Calcutta. Estha becomes a loner. He seldom talks or 'participate in group activities' (Roy, *GOST*, 11). Even after he is being returned from Calcutta when Estha's Bengali father decides to go to Canada with a job opportunity, and he is sent him back again to Ayemenem, he follows the same routine. Estha returns with terrible memories in his head. This terrible picture keeps haunting him. He would never forget the swollen face of the man behind the bar wrongly put and wrongly accused. He decides not to go to college after high school and stays at home. The effect of the death of Sophie Mol and the events that follows leave a deep impact in Estha's life that he is no more him. He is physically a young man but with the bitter old memories. He remembers the 'bloodshot eye that had opened, wandered and fixed its gaze on him' (Roy, *GOST*, 32). He remembers saying, '*Yes, it was him*' inside the police station. These memories keep coming back and haunts him like a ghost. There is alienation, in fact in Estha's case it is self-alienation. As readers one reason can locate the cause for this alienation and for the lonely long walks. Another reason for this perhaps can be linked to lack of companionship. After his separation from Ammu and Rahel, he is surrounded by many who could not call his own. From a child psychology perspective, the environment where both the children are brought up is a very clear picture of lack of care and poor parenting. Baby Kochamma reports to Rahel when she comes back after a gap of twenty years is vivid and to the point. "'I told you, didn't I?' she said to Rahel. 'What did you expect? Special treatment? He's lost his mind, I'm telling you! He doesn't recognize people any more! What did you think?'" (Roy, *GOST*, 21). There is some sense of absence created. He is there and not there at the same time. Estha sees but does not feel. He goes for long walks but seldom talks or greets people.

The condition Estha is in as presented in chapter one of the novels can be compared with the condition of Septimus Warren Smith in *Mrs. Dalloway*, Virginia Woolf. Both are suffering from the PTSD. Septimus Smith is suffering from the trauma of the war. He has come home safe but has lost his dear friend to war. This loss and the killing and bombing of war has left him incumbent and made him an invalid of the society. When he is back after the war, he does not belong in his own country and to his own people. To make the situation worse, nobody not even the medical doctors understand his pain. His suffering is taken as a sign of timidity and hysteria. Estha is going through a similar pain. He carries memories so bitter in his head that it has 'silenced' him.

Urvashi Butalia, in *The Other Side of Silence*- a monumental text on partition, trauma and memory talks about the memories and philosophy of a family divided by the India- Pakistan partition. The text looks at the ethnographic account of the horrors and experience of partition through silence which can be mapped in Estha's life. This silence speaks volume about the mental condition Estha is going through. It seems as though his quietness is asking for help. At the end of chapter one Rahel notes, "...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" (Roy, *GOST*, 32). This is the language of trauma in Estha's case. He is so shaken and shattered by the events in his life since his childhood that words are not adequate to express his pain. In his boyhood days Estha had to go through a lot. Lot more than he should. He and Rahel and Ammu are not love and accepted enough at Ayemenem. The incident where he had to wrongly testify that Velutha is the culprit under Baby Kochamma's underhand workings acts as the icing on the cake. Many other incidents and situations play a vital role in numbing his tongue

and leaving him as a silent as a night. Like Urvashi Butalia, in *The Other Side of Silence*, there is a story to be told and listened to. The silence speaks louder than words in Estha's case. What is left with him is his memories and long walks around the village and the river. Anjum's case can also be linked to Estha's silence and quietness. After the incident in Gujarat and when she is brought back to 'khawbagh', Anjum who earlier was a singing and dancing parrot had diminished into a silent tattered scare-crow. She starts spending most of her time in her room and does not mingle much with the other inmates. However, in Rahel's case it is a different path altogether. She is also traumatized like her twin brother. The result of the lack of care and love coupled with the traumatic incident makes her a sort of rebel. She transgresses into roles and un-transgresses herself back. Her waywardness and careless living become a signifier for the trauma that she is living her life with.

While the effects of the traumatic event produce a deadening silence on Estha, his 'monozygotic twin(s)' (Roy, *GOST*, 31) becomes a drifter in life. There seems to be 'hollow'- an emptiness in her life. After Ammu dies, Rahel jumps from one school to the other largely ignored by Chacko, Mammachi and Baby Kochamma. After the family is split up, Rahel is sent away to school. She is expelled for misbehavior though her personal brand of misbehaving is kind of harmless and weird: decorating heaps of dung with flowers. The last straw at one school comes when she hides behind doors and pops out to collide with the unsuspecting senior girls. She gets thrown out of two more schools, one for smoking and one for setting someone's hairpiece on fire. In every case, the narrator tells us, Rahel's teachers note that she is an extremely polite child with no friends. Rahel continues to wander until she is thirty-one when she returns to Ayemenem. She enters an architecture program in Delhi, not because she's particularly interested in architecture, but more because she just falls into it. She meets Larry



McCaslin, who is doing his research in Delhi and goes back to United States with him. But the marriage does not stand for long and Rahel after leaving Larry drifts again from one job to the other. This drifting seems to be stemming out from her earnest desire to belong somewhere like the protagonist of Saadat Hasan Manto's short story, *Toba Tek Singh*.

This sense of belongingness envelopes all the characters in both the novels. Rahel's frantic search to belong and settle somewhere makes her a banjaran, leading a nomadic life in a modern world. *Toba Tek Singh*, is Bishan Singh's fight for this same right to belong. As an exchange program after the partition, India and Pakistan decides to send some Muslim, Sikh and Hindu lunatics to their homes. Bishan Singh is from the town of Toba Tek Singh. Upon reaching the border, he is told that his hometown is not in India but in Pakistan. He refuses to go to India and lie down in the no man's land between the two barbed wire fences. "There, behind barbed wire, on one side, lay India and behind more barbed wire, on the other side, lay Pakistan. In between, on a bit of earth which had no name, lay Toba Tek Singh." (Manto, 18). Pakistan would not take him back and he would not go to India. This dilemma of where home is also moves Rahel and Estha around. Rahel's suffering and pain are in no manner lesser for she shares the same memory with Estha: same memory different brains.

### **2.3. Effect and Manifestation of Trauma**

Literary critics have been trying their hands in studying 'trauma' in connection to other fields of study and theories. Trauma, as we know has its roots in psychoanalysis of Freud and his 'talking cure' but in recent times it is studied with varied dimension which emerges out from the application of other theories with it. Apart from studying

trauma in connection with Poststructuralism and the tenets of Deconstruction, a new and refreshing evolution in this field of study, is the combination of neuroscience and trauma. *The New Wounded* (2007) and *Ontology of The Accident* (2009) two very famous book by Catherine Malabou, gives a new definition to what was earlier known as ‘neurotic’ and ‘madness’ as the ‘new wounded’ (Malabou, *The New Wounded*, 17). She defines certain terms in locating the ontology of trauma by offering a new definition to mental injury or wound. A post Freud and Lacanian philosopher Malabou connects post structuralism to trauma thereby giving it a distributive structure. She offers the idea of trauma having a nature and characteristics of a sort of ‘plasticity’. Taking the medical idea of neuronal plasticity to a more philosophical poststructuralist condition she bridges the gap between the medical, the existential and the political effects and causes of trauma. The term “plasticity” she says should be understood in three important principles.

- Capacity of certain materials, like clay or plaster. It has to power to receive form.
- One that impowers to give shape or form like that of a sculptor or a plastic surgeon.
- Also, referring to the possibility of the power to deflagrate or annihilate the very form. This third principle is linked to the French word ‘plastiquage’ which means bombing.

This suggests that the notion of plasticity is at both extremes of the creation and destruction of form. She tries to understand trauma as a reformation of psyche in ‘deformed’ as well as ‘reformed’ particulars. The third form of plasticity is the most common form. In this form trauma is considered not as a passive category but as active, regenerative and pervasive persona. In this connection Malabou debunks the Freudian

idea, of a core fundamental prototype self, which never changes. In a very post structural tenet, she opines that the whole idea of plasticity brings about a significant change which is existential in nature. This confers a certain degree of agency on trauma as an event thereby suggesting that plasticity is not the formlessness or absence but the form of trauma. This new form created by the destruction of the older self may not necessarily have to be connected to the older subject.

This scenario of the plasticity of trauma can be mapped in the women characters in *MOUH*. When Anjum decides that she will go and visit the shrine of Ajmer Sharif to ask blessings for the sick bandicoot Zainab, Anjum faces the horror of her life. When she and Zakir Mian are in Gujarat, a riot based on religion starts. Both of them are Muslims and are stuck in Gujarat. Zakir Mian is murdered in front of her eyes. Anjum remembers “-how they had folded the men and unfolded the women. And how eventually they had pulled them apart limb from limb and set them on fire” (Roy, *MOUH*, 61&62). Men and women are killed in hundreds and thousands. While Anjum, neither wholly male nor woman feigns death in the pool of dead bodies, one of the saffron parakeets spot her. But she is set free not because of love or any other compassion but because they believe that killing a hijra will bring bad luck. Being a transgender saves her. She is spared to ‘tell the tale’, and we as readers also feel the pain and suffering Anjum is going through. The question here is, what tale should Anjum tell? Of the mercilessness, of humiliation or of the eyes that looked at her in despise. She is given life in the pretext of the ‘butchers’ luck’ which she could never forget in her life. Anjum is awestruck after seeing all the horrors and terrors of a riot. She witnesses from her own eye the killing and maiming of humans by own fellow humans. This incidents in a sense shock her and we see that she takes time to come to her senses. The head of the house of dreams, Ustad Kulsoom Bi, directs that she gets

enough time to settle down. Silence and quietness had got better of her. Once the most popular hijra of the house is locked up in her room. It has brought about a ‘metamorphosis of identity’ (Malabou, *The New Wounded*, 17) in her. The trauma that had created a new subject altogether and, in her case, it is a creative one.

After this phase of butcher luck’s life, she decides to go back to the old Duniya she left to enter the world of ‘the others’ as Shyam Selvaduria, calls it in *Funny Boy*. There is a reversal of the term ‘the other’ at this juncture. Anjum a-she and a-he sets to create a new world within a preexisting world. Jannat guest house becomes a safe haven for all sorts of people. It is Saddam’s refuge as it is for Tilo, Dr. Azad Bharatiya, for the prostitutes, whom no main land graveyard wants to bury, for the old touchable(s) who is no more needed by their sons and daughters and for untouchables alike. Her reformation occurs in such a way that she emerges like a tree encompassing all creatures from far and wide. Julia Reka Vallasek in ‘From Small Things to Big Symbols: Transgressability of Borders in Arundhati Roy’s Work’ (2018) writes that the crises in Anjum’s life is not only by her recognizing her transsexuality but by the external world. The struggle of the outer world thrusts Anjum into a state of unhappiness. “The riot is inside us. The war is inside us. Indo-Pak is inside us; I will never settle down. It can’t” (Roy, MOUH, 23). Thus, explaining their position in the Duniya.

Tillotima went to Kashmir to meet Musa, although this is kept as a secret because by then Musa her old lover had identified himself as one of the soldiers of the ‘Azadi’. While she is in Kashmir, she stays at a boat house where a half-witted man, who himself is a fall out of the terrors of war, is the care taker. Musa gets away by a small boat, off for selling vegetables, when someone comes to apprehend him. Instead, the caretaker is tortured and murdered and the next morning’s newspaper reveals the perpetrator as Commander Gulrez. Tilo is taken to the police station for enquiry by

Major Amrik Singh and investigated by the cruel lady inspector. After returning from Kashmir, she marries Naga but is not able to keep the marriage for long for there is no love, at least from Tilo's side. She is constantly reminded of the cold-blooded murders happening before her eyes and this makes her lose her peace of mind. Later in the story she rents a house from Dasgupta and finally goes to stay in Jannat Guest house as a safety precaution.

The three principal significations of the concept of trauma as being plastic in nature can be mapped in both the novels. First, Estha and Rahel 'receives' the trauma, which is involuntary through the fatal incidents that occur when Sophi Mol comes to spend vacation in Ayemenem and the Abhilash Talkies incident. The family had gone to the cinema to watch *The Sound of Music*. Estha at a tender age is molested by a 'the Orangedrink Lemondrink Man' (Roy, *GOST*, 102). This incident is very disagreeable that it makes poor Estha sick; 'feeling vomity,' (Roy, *GOST*, 107) Estha says to Ammu. The effect of this horrifying and shameful act committed by that Orange-drink man is felt by Estha, as flashbacks come to him in the form of words.

"Finish the drink.

Watch the picture.

Think of all the poor people.

Lucky rich boy with porketmunny. No worries." (Roy, *GOST*, 107).

In addition to the death of their cousin Velutha's conviction and murder, Baby Kochamma and the rest of the family's callous attitude towards Estha, Rahel and Ammu solidifies the trauma in the children's psyche. Ammu is disowned and Estha had to be sent to his father in Calcutta, thereby by separating the twins for twenty-three years long. In *MOUH*, Anjum receives the trauma when she goes to a pilgrimage for seeking

blessing for the sick Zainab. When the old Zakir Mian and she is in Gujarat, a hectic religious riot starts. It is followed by burning of a train with hundreds of passengers and merciless maiming of humans by fellow humans. Anjum is spared, but only because she is neither male nor female. The murderers call it the butchers' luck. Saeeda explains to 'Doctor Sahib' about Anjum's post- Gujrat riot condition which has altered her behavior, "-the brooding, the rudeness, the *reading* and most seriously, the insubordination" (Roy, *MOUH*, 55). Readers may sometimes take Anjum's trauma as a result of her sexual orientation. She is called names and taunted by the neighborhood children but the author makes it clear that her trauma is a sort of the disaster brought by the external world, thus proven by the Gujarat incident.

Secondly, it 'gives' form to the survivors of the trauma. The trauma that the children go through makes them hide themselves in the cloud of the ill effects of the event. As the readers read through the story a sense of complete silence had engulfed Estha's persona. Freud's 'talking cure' if skillfully applied to Estha's case, things might have been better but there is an acute lack of people around him who really care. The separation of the children and Ammu being disowned by Mammachi makes the situation even worse. As mentioned in the above sections also. Rahel becomes a sort of 'drifter'. Her life apart from her monozygotic twin is a 'Rolypoly' (Roy, *GOST*, 149) ride. She drifts from one school to the other and from one station in life to the other. On the other hand, Tilo is shaken by the revelation of the terror and loss of war. Her Kashmiri encounter at the houseboat and Shiraz Cinema Hall turns her into a household material. Tilo, who during her college days was known by her rebellious and unapologetic temperament turns into a dutiful wife to the journalist Naga. Although her marriage to Naga is staged under circumstances which Naga, Tilo and Musa have a great hand to play she shapes herself in the upper end society of the bureaucratic lane

of Delhi. What makes a freedom fighter a freedom fighter is a question that envelopes Musa Yeswi's and Comrade Revathy's story in the book. The trauma both faces are the result of the politics of the external world of power and ownership. Musa receives a major set-back when his wife Arifa and innocent Miss Jebeen are killed in fire that broke out. Although it appears to be a daily show in terror-stricken Kashmir, Musa's 'quietness' like that of Estha speaks at great length about the condition people are trying to live in. Among the thirteen coffins laid to rest at the martyr's cemetery, Musa buries his old self. The long fingers that drew the delicate and sophisticated picture of the horse with charcoal receives callous by attending hard training campaigns. Miles away in the hot and humid jungles of Bastar, Comrade Revathy, "working as a full-timer with the Communist Party of India (Maoist)" (Roy, *MOUH*, 417) reveals in her letter that she is raped by six men of law and left half death to tell the tale and give a message.

## 2.4. Negative Plasticity

According to the Malabou's third principle of 'Plasticity', a severe wound in the psyche has the power or possibility to destroy and annihilate the subject suffering from the wound. This may appear in a sort of changing the whole personality of the individual with no connection or affiliation to the older self. Malabou uses the term 'bombing' to describe this principle of plasticity, which comes from the French word, 'plastiquage' as mentioned in the earlier part of this chapter.

Miss Udaya Jebeen, Comrade Masse's daughter is born in 'Dandakaranya forest' (Roy, *MOUH*, 417) during sunrise as she mentions in the letter, she writes to Tilo. She adds in the letter that by the time she reads it she will be martyred somewhere in one of the operations. Udaya Jebeen is presented like a ray of hope not only for

Revathy but for the whole lot residing in the Janaat Guest house and even people like them living outside the boundary of Anjum's surveillance. There is a complete transformation in Revathy's life. The birth of Udaya symbolizes her rebirth. There is a 'metamorphosis of identity' in the words of Malabou. This new body will carry her legacy and so it's a sort of 'adventure of form' (Malabou, *The New Wounded*, 17). There is a complete destruction of the old self and the new one has emerged out of the traumatic event.

Another example of the negative plasticity of trauma can be found in the life of Saddam Hussain, the young permanent guest of the Jannat Guest house actual name is revealed to be Dayachand- a chamar. In one occasion, Saddam testifies to Anjum, "One day, in answer to a phone call, he and his father, along with three, men hired a Tempo to drive out to the nearby village to collect the carcass of a cow that had died on someone's farm" (Roy, *MOUH*, 86). And so, they went but the negotiation with the police station master did not go well because he asked more than the usual amount. This unsettled business settles and seals the fate of Saddam and his father. The police station master falsely accuses his father and his team of killing the cow. Saddam remembers that time to be Durga Puja season and thus the usual crowding of people in the streets. The news spread and in no time a mob gathers and kills Saddam' father. This trauma affects him so much that he pledges to murder Sehwat- the Station House Officer and later changes his name too from Dayachand to Saddam. There is a complete transformation in this case. The changing of name itself symbolizes his transformation. He has left his old body and soul to venture in his new endeavor. Anjum's back and forth movement out of the Duniya and in the Duniya also presents a strain of negative plasticity. After the Gujarat massacre there is a 'split in her ego. She is shattered and disheveled. Yet it gives her a new form and a new set of rules to follow for her and her



beloved Zainab. She tears down her usual hijra voluptuous dresses for simpler toned down pathan suit. She even teaches Zainab to chant 'gayatri mantra' and buys her boy's clothes as a line of defense. The way she settles in life and builds her own empire and gives shelter to all people like her- desolate and despairing is a sign of reformation. She becomes a symbol of hope and belongingness to the other 'fall out(s)'. This act of regeneration can also be understood from the view point of the ontology of the accident- taken in a broader interdisciplinary approach, caused by trauma.

Catherine Malabou, in the *Ontology of the Accident* (2009), explains that the whole idea of becoming can be disrupted by an unbecoming of the/an event- which is a sudden shock or interruption. This disruption according to her is a cognitive and a psychological condition which happens from inside and outside both. It is a combination of centripetal and centrifugal operations. The changes or the transformation brought in the lives of the characters of the selected novels can be taken as examples here. It is sort of political and organic trauma working to bring about the metamorphosis or the split in the ego of the survivors of trauma.

Estha and Rahel go through the trauma and shell out, the old -them and shrouds in the pieces of silence and emptiness. There is this sense of lack of connectivity between them until the incest scene towards the end of the novel. Tilo's course of life and love is shattered, Saddam changes his name and thus his identity and Anjum steps back to the world which she left at a young age. Hence, the effects of the accident are both from the incidents that happen around the characters as in Musa Yeswi's case and from the inside- the psyche which receives the trauma regenerates a new subject. This new subject takes up all the room. Musa is not alone when it comes to be a victim of the trauma of war. Gul-kak, the caretaker of the houseboat 'became hysterical' as Musa tells Tilo, after he was shot at and beaten black and blue by the army whom he thought

were Pakistani soldiers coming to liberate them. However, since the concept of negative plasticity is not only reformation but destruction of the self, there is a lysosome case scenario, in the sense that there is an involuntary killing of self within the self. Therefore, the new self has in no way any connection to the shell it has left behind.

Malabou in her introduction of the book *Ontology of the Accident* (2009), takes the example of the Alzheimer's disease and puts the concept of the complete destruction of the older self. According to him it is not only someone who has changed or have been modified but rather the subject or the person who had suffered the 'lesion/trauma' has become someone else. 'You must understand that it isn't she who is uttering those ugly words' (Roy, *MOUH*, 253) says Dr. Jacob Verghese to Tilo. She has been putting all her efforts to calm down her mother who is sick. Her sickness has made her a very angry and bitter lady. Tilo's mother is seen as a reflection of her own self- rebellious and headstrong. Earlier in her life when Tilo was born her mother did not accept her but adopts her after she is born. Tilo had found out a way to calm her mother by letting her dictate notes which she would write happily. Like the example of Alzheimer's disease and the change that it brings in a patient Malabou uses, Tilo's mother goes through a same kind of transformation. However, in her case its more to do with the wound of the psyche. She in her endeavor of dictating notes to Tilo reciprocates a sense of love and care for Tilo which she had never done when she was well. One of her notes reads;

"Hello Doctor this is my daughter who is homeschooled. She's pretty nasty. She was awful today at the races. But I was pretty awful too. We gave everybody a kicking." (Roy, *MOUH*, 250).

The popularity and urgency of trauma and its effects in the lives of this generation needs no introduction. Plainly speaking, trauma's existence has been a very old tale. It has been affecting families and relationships even before it was defined or researched upon. It works on all levels. If it maims the individual life and relations, the collective distresses produced by trauma is not far behind. Trauma is both individual and collective. By collective, it, means that trauma also happens at the level where more than one individual suffers from the event. An example of the collective trauma can be the genocide and mass killing during wars and world crisis. Therefore, from this juncture the non-bias nature of trauma can be easily drawn forth. It may happen to anyone and on unpredictable time. Trauma is also calamitous and can be equated to another world epidemic. Its seriousness and catastrophic character lie in the fact that it effects the whole life activity. Trauma has no signal flags. Although a healthy mental state and proper care of one's mental well-being is a key factor in avoiding such dire circumstances.

All the characters in both the novels suffer from one or the other form of trauma. It's a non-gender conforming type. It is non-bias, which means to say that all go though its yard stick at one or the other time. This nature and quality of trauma significantly blurs the line of divide between the perpetrator and the prey. Since all pass through the environment of being traumatized, which sometimes is self-inflicted, all are wounded. The incidents in the lives of the characters like the drowning of Sophie Mol and the subsequent arrest of poor Velutha on wrong charges and his death, the Godha Riots killing and its effects on Anjum, the lynching incident of Saddam's father so and so forth alters the individuals who go through these horrifying situations. There is a permanent change in Anjum, as she comes back from Gujarat and prepares herself and the bandicoot Zainab for the battle that has to come

in future. The memory of how his father and his friends were killed by a mob wrongfully stirs a revengeful spirit in Saddam. His many business entrepreneurships and his endless search for opportunities to change his class is a clear sign of the effect of trauma in him. His state in the society is the cause of the troubles he and his kinds are facing and so he wants to emerge into a new self. Rahel, Estha, Ammu and Velutha are all trapped in the loop of who should love whom, how much and how. The stakeholders of power, the so-called upper caste makes the rule. There is no freedom and this has a dire effect not only on those who do not hold powers in their hands but also the law makers. Thus, making all, the high and the low, the great and the small, one under trauma's theme.

## Chapter 3

### Trauma and Social Dogmas

If psychological trauma causes a sudden shock or lesion in the mind which alters the entire personality of the traumatized or the sufferer. Then there must be a source or an incident or a situation that causes this shock or ripples in the lives of the traumatized. Therefore, in this case social dogmas may also be taken as one indicator that causes trauma. Social dogmas which include the degrading ills of the society like discrimination against the marginalized lot of the society, subjugation of the weaker sections of the society by the powerful etc. The relationship of trauma and social dogmas is as old as trauma is. Although Trauma Studies and scholarship started gaining popularity with the Vietnam war survivors and the effects of war on soldiers. The rules and regulations and traditions and customs which are not always helpful and productive have been quite instrumental in creating a traumatizing environment and traumatized individuals.

Arundhati Roy has been known to the reading population in many avatars. From amongst all the titles accreted to her, the social worker tag has been closest to her heart. She has written and worked a lot in and for the social well-being of the society. It is only about India that she writes but speaks to all nations through her dictum. Human being is a social animal and so is bound to live in a society. Although in recent years there has been few experiments done by some individuals who have been brave enough to try out living in isolation. Yet, the fact that the world is a global village brings home the assurance that a well build community is a mark of any civilization. In her 2018 article titled 'From Small Things to Big Symbols. Transgressability of Borders in

Arundhati Roy's Works', Julia-Reka Vallasek pointing out her work done on social field during the intervals between *The God of Small Things* and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*, which include notable collections of essays, interviews and pamphlets like *The Algebra of Infinite Justice*, *War Talk*, *Broken Republic*, *Walking with the Comrades*, *Kashmir: The Case for Freedom*, and *Capitalism: a Ghost Story*, states that the writer was far from being quiet and had a lot to say. She adds with the examples of the above mentioned publication from the author's end that, '...the two decades during which she did not publish a novel she did not lead her life in the manner of some author of high aesthetic demand and low sociability who retreats into her artistic ivory tower and chisels her new novel to perfection,...', but was busy in the capacity of a political activist, 'who worked, gained experience and wrote pieces which were primarily intended to mobilize people and secondly, to document events.' (Vallasek, 2018). Also, Shurti Das in "Trauma and Transgender space in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*" says in her novel Roy along with other stories narrates the trauma of Anjum by exploring, side by side the cultural trauma experienced by the transgender individual and the people associated with them.

### **3.1. The Politics of Inequality in *The God of Small Things* and *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness***

Both the novels taken for the study are so to say masterpieces when it comes to the championing of social cause. *GOST*, portrays characters suffering from the over brooding patriarchal type of family rules and regulations. The women suffer the most. The pain and injustice have been coming from a long time that the victims have learnt to live with it. Mammachi, although she herself is a victim of the male dominance fails

to understand and so do not take a stand for her daughter. The reason for this act can be looked from two angles. First, she musters disgust from the reader for not being able to support her own kind. But she is not to be blame altogether. She is not literate and so cannot and does not know her rights. This leads the reader to the second reason. Mammachi's stand can be viewed as one of a numbness created by a long ulcerous wound. She has been a victim of the misogynist movement for all her life and so perhaps believes this to be the right thing or the rightful position for her and her other kind. Again, in the other novel Roy brings forth the social and political inequalities that the individuals are living with. There is mass killing, lives are paralysed, fellow humans jailed and massacred for promotions. The novel presents a very gruesome picture of the contemporary India. The police and the media who are actually the guardian of the people's law and order are also sold out to mere show of lights and sounds like the one in the red fort.

In *GOST*, Arundhati Roy writes a scathing criticism of caste and gender politics in a globalising India by focussing on a family's tragedy and pain through the coming-of-age story of the twins. The novel can also be mapped in the arena of women's right and the atrocities faced by the female gender called as 'the second sex' by Simone de Beauvoir with her most famous book *The Second Sex*, which appeared in the interim between the first and second wave of feminism. This philosophy of discrimination and alienation leading to the blunt rejection of the women's right and freedom of speech and expression is again carried forward in her second novel too. Her second novel 'articulates a postcolonial nation's history from the perspective of the marginalised', according to Nalini Ayer. The main characters in the novel- Anjum, an intersex, Saddam, the chamar and Tilottamma, a maverick south Indian Syrian Christian woman, are all painted in the strokes of the weaker section of the society. The infringement of

right in the case of Saddam, the despair, shame and alienation Anjum faces during the 2002 Godha Riots from where she nearly escapes death and Tilottama's observation of the war and terror inflicted Kashmir in her diary makes the main concerns dealt in the novel. In 'Narrating a Fragmented Nation' Nalini Ayer states that, 'Roy writes about Dalit lynching, the pogrom against the Sikh in 1984, the rise of the Hindu fundamentalist, the communal riots in Gujarat, the impact of the army occupation, the jihadi movement in Kashmir, the growth of resistance movement against the Indian government raises the question about India's democracy and the plight of minorities.'. 'Societal Contexts in the Writings of Arundhati Roy' Jaya Dwivedi and Swarnita Sharma states about the intricacies and interplay of different themes yet similarities if voices raised 'for the people, of the people and to the people' (Dwivedi& Sharma, 2013) in her writings.

"The God of Small Things has instinctive qualities of Indian Ethos, the narrative, the plot, the theme and the characters unfold the web of Indian emotions, events, incidents, conflicts, psychological probing, societal laws, political perspective, history, caste distinction, gender determination and manipulation of love laws (who should be loved and how and how much) suffering and hypocrisy" people'. (Dwivedi& Sharma, 2013)

*MOUH* is much a trauma novel in relation to war, partition and riots as much as it is a dire sarcasm on the Indian politics and the ruling of the government encompassing all its tributaries. Peter C. Kunze in 'For the Boys: Masculinity Gray Comedy, and the Vietnam War in *Slaughterhouse-Five*' states about the travesty of military heroism. He adds that war damages both physically and psychologically by haunting the traumatized after the big events happens and goes away. It produces a sense of alienation and an absence of will



which sometimes connect with the idea of guilt and the inability to act on will. According to Vickory (2011) an individual can depict varied responses to a traumatic event which means to say that the victims of trauma can be re-traumatized and wounded by social opinions. Anjum's family history starts with the partition and its impact on the Muslim Dalits. She is a victim of the communal riots that takes place in Gujarat in the novel.

Taslima Nasrin writes of a similar story in *Lajja* (1993). *Lajja*, chronicles the terrifying disintegration of the Dutta family in Bangladesh. It is the story about the impact of the communal riots that broke out after the Babri Masjid was demolished in India in 1992. There is a divide of opinion on the question of home. This divide of opinion can also be traced in connection to the tense situation in Kashmir. Musa had joined the separatist group after his wife and daughter, Miss Jebeen the first is killed in the fire caused by the army, who actually are posted there for their safety. Roy presents the atrocities of the regime in a very dark shade of light in the persona of Major Amrik Singh. He is a violent lover, a promotion miser and a wife beater. His treatment of his wife Loveleen and the suspects speak volumes about his nature proven by his hand in the murder of Jalib Qadri, Gul Kak and many innocent unknown and unknown names. "Death was everywhere. Death was everything...Dying became just another way of living" (Roy, *MOUH*, 314).

According to Ayesha Jalal the partition is a 'defining moment that is neither beginning nor end' while Vazira Zamindari understands "the long partition' beyond the 1947 event and it 'stretch our understanding of 'partition violence' to include the bureaucratic in some lives, interminable.'" So, is Musa's life and the lives of every Kashmiri. Interrogation, search and cordon during the wee hours, cold blood murders on the street had become a daily activity in the 'supermarket of sorrow' (Roy, *MOUH*,

327). Musa buried his daughter and wife silently but the trauma of losing both of them in one day and one bullet that came from the ‘friends of the hill people’ navigates the future road for him. Miss Jebeen was neither a member of this committee or that organisation that demanded freedom for Kashmir but ‘then the algebra of infinite justice was never so rude. In this way, without being consulted on the matter, she became one of the Movement’s youngest martyrs.’ (Roy, *MOUH*, 310).

### 3.2. The Feminist Strain and Trauma

The word feminism is popularly associated with a range of issues and themes in the socio-political arena of the society. Feminism is the movement that advocates equality of the sexes, fight against gender stereotypes and campaign for women’s rights, their suffrage, work, equal pay, property rights, education and equal rights within marriage. It ensures access to contraception, legal abortions, social integration, protection from sexual harassment and domestic violence etc. Feminist literary criticism, advocates equal and rightful representations of the female figure and character in popular literature. They test the subordinate and submissive roles attached with the female gender. It points out and challenges the traditional notions by ‘redressing the balance’ (Nagarajan, 206) between the sexes. They advocate in giving equal share and recognition to women in popular literature and media.

According to M.S Nagarajan two axioms can be enumerated on which feminism is built upon:

1. Gender difference is the foundation for structural inequality between men and women by which women suffer sympathetic social injustice, and

2. the inequality between the sexes is not the result of biological necessity, but is produced by cultural construction of gender differences (Nagarajan, 206).

According to the feminist literary critics, the literature before the 1960s movement was male dominated, where female characters were presented by the male authors. Considering the lack of freedom and rights for female writers under the patriarchal society, female authors didn't have much options then to accept the image created thus by the male authors. This is looked as unauthentic and dubious. Popularly women were projected as good mother or house wife, or a maid, caretakers, nurturers, or a seductress. Tracing back the condition of women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century M.S. Nagarajan in *English Literary Criticism and Theory- An Introductory History* states, "... , women were scarcely an influential presence in public life, even in the so-called advanced countries. They were powerless to counter the prevailing view of male supremacy. They felt that male supremacy was even desirable. A woman's place was supposed to be in the home. She was the 'angle of the home', as the poet Coventry Patmore called her."

There are two broad areas of discussion as is taken by the feminist theorists. This 'criticism of their own' comprises of two variables.

1. Woman as reader and
2. Woman as writer.

The first aspect of the variables discusses the "re-visioning, re-reading from the perspective of the woman." (Nagarajan, 208 & 209). It dissects the literature of the past bearing in mind to find out the place of woman in its literature and thereby expose the patriarchal and misogynistic hand of writing and representation in its production. It "examine(s) female characters in male authored works as well as in the works by women in order to show which of the images of women are more authentic."

(Nagarajan, 2009). The second tenet of the feminist theory is woman as writer. There are two main factors involved in these aspects. It seeks to find out the female writers of the past who were not given due credit and recognition and the creation of a world of literature by women and of women. Two important works in this connection are Elaine Showalter's *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), and Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's, *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1979). Peter Barry remarks that, "The feminist literary criticism of today is the direct product of the 'women's movement' of the 1960s". This movement did not start feminism but it revamps the old traditions and set believes that existed in the society and suggested solutions. The movement saw the dire need to give women equal footing in the social and political fields of governance. Some of the important books of this period were Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), Olive Schreiner's *Women and Labour* (1911), Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929), Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1969) and John Stuart Mill's *The Subjection of Women* (1879).

Peter Barry in his book *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (2018) comments that, "The story so far of feminism's relationship with psychoanalysis is simple in outline but complex in nature" (Barry,132). The feminist literary criticism starting from the early 'women's movement' of the 1960 and the subsequent debates on the question of how a female body is presented and was characterized in popular literature, right to equality in the sociological as well as political arena has basically made the central theme of the feminist literary criticism of the present generation. In-fact the 1960 movement was a renewal of an old tradition of thought and action already possessing its classic books which had detected the germ of women's inequality, of pain and suffering in a society and thus proposed a solution.

Following Dr. Narendra Tiwary's comment on the Indian women writers in English as 'distinguishing women writers' (Tiwary, 19) winning global recognition, studying Arundhati Roy from the feminist point of view seems justified. The rich literary tradition that started with names like Toru Dutt and Cornelia Sorabjee and later gaining momentum with Anita Desai, Kamala Markandaya, Ruth Praver and Nayantara Sahgal in the second half of the twentieth century saw the rise of novelist like Vimla Raina, Jhumpa Lahiri, Shashi Deshpanda. To this latest phase of women writers from India is Arundhati Roy, who needs no formal introduction as such. She writes as an architect of the society, marking each poles piece by piece while binding the theme in a unified whole.

Therefore, in the vein of the above background on Feminism and its tenets Arundhati Roy's novels can be evaluated in terms of the social fore bearings that leads to the infringement and hijacking of women's right and their subsequent representation in popular literature. This discussion can be taken forward thus to measure the impact of old and degrading societal dogmas (here rules and regulations heaped upon and expected to follow blindly) in the traumatized life of the characters in the selected novels.

### **3.3. Social Trauma and Patriarchy**

As mentioned in the earlier section of this chapter Arundhati Roy critiques caste system, religion and gender politics prevalent in Indian societal topography. Patriarchy and its maiming effects on women, is one important issue among many discussed by the author in her books. Right from the beginning of the story the reader sees that Amu and her mother are living under a patriarchal iron hand. This kingdom ruled by

men does not have a place for women alive or death. While Ammachi struggles to secure a place in her husband's heart by obeying and dutifully receiving the wounds from Pappachi, Ammu wriggles her way through the male dominated field of her ancestral home. For Ammu, home is where her heart belongs, for she feels herself when she is with Velutha, the paravan. Even after the death of Velutha when she tries to resettle herself in her own space the sting of the past events haunts her. She dies alone in a hotel room, alone and unseen. Although she suffers for no sins committed by her. Who is to be blamed for her plight, is a big question? Is it the society or her own kind mentally and emotionally mutilated by the society? She suffers in the hands of her own sex too. Her own mother considers her as an unwanted member in the family since now she has returned from her unhappy marriage with her Bengali Hindu husband. Her adventurous stride in life to study and following her own rules in life is much despised by the family. To this band of gossip and complaints coming from the family, joins the society. The difference of treatment between Amu and the foreigner wife goes to prove her dislike of her. Mammachi is partial towards the male gender even after all the atrocities and injustice she faced in the hands of her husband. She supports Chacko's lecherous and elicit extravaganza but cannot tolerate the fact that her daughter married a Hindu Bengali. On top of that Amu's divorce from her husband seals the deal of hatred for her. Mammachi is illiterate and has no avenue to grow but when she does prosper, the jealous egocentric Pappachi declares a cold war with her after that one occasion when his son who had come from abroad prevents him from the daily routine of wife beating and the show of male power. To Pappachi his collection of moths and the 'skyblue plymouth' (Roy, *GOST*, 48) is more important than her wife and Ammu. It is not felt necessary for her to attend college and so Ammu in desperate need to go

out of Ayemenem and the suffocating environment of control and bigotry goes to Calcutta to spend a holiday where she meets the father of the twins.

Loveleen Kaur in 'The Right of Girl child in Indian Society as Foregrounded by Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*' (2014) points out that Arundhati Roy through the novel presents three generations of a girl child. She accounts their suffering, humiliation and the way they are considered from the male eye. Between the three generations in none of the phases is the girl child is treated with respect or equality considered. The childhood phase may be said to be projected by Rahel's childhood days. She is often compared with her English cousin Sophie Mol. Rahel is neglected while Sophie is smattered with love from every corner of the Ayemenem house because she is a daughter of a male member and of a ruling class while on the other hand Rahel is not. She is a daughter of a divorcee born from a communion of an inter caste and inter religion marriage. Ammu, represents the second generation of women. She suffers because she is a daughter of the family which only gives rights and freedom to the male child. By freedom and privileges the author means all things that can be found under heavens. Ammu's brother Chacko is given the privilege to study abroad, to marry whoever he wants, the 'Paradise Pickle & Preserves' even belongs to him although the majority of labor and brains is invested from Mammachi's end. He had never given interest in Ammu his real sister and often compares her to Margaret Kochamma his divorced English wife. Talk about members of the family, even the police man 'Inspector Thomas Mathew' (Roy, *GOST*, 7) mistreats Ammu when he goes and informs them about Velutha's innocence. The inspector with his sly and greedy eyes says, "It's a little late too late for all this, don't you think?" (Roy, *GOST*, 7). She is also manhandled in the police station. The narrative in the police station reads, "Then

he tapped her breasts with his baton. Gently. *Tap, tap*. As though he was choosing mangoes from a basket.” (Roy, *GOST*, 7).

While Amu suffers because she is a woman, Aftab latterly known as Anjum suffers from and because the dilemma of her gender itself. *MOUH*, if one thing that is not achieved is the essence of ‘happiness’. Nimmo, one of the hijra at Khwabgah pointing at the fakeness of their life states:

“Who is happy here? It’s all sham and fakery,...No one is happy here. It’s not possible. *Arre yaar*, think about it, what are things you normal people get unhappy about? I don’t mean you, but grown-ups like you- what makes them unhappy? Price-rise, children’s school-admissions, husbands’ beatings, wives’ cheatings, Hindu-Muslim riots, Indo-Pak war- *outside* things that settle down eventually. But for us the price-rise and school-admissions and beating-husband and cheating-wives are all inside us. The riot is *inside* us. The war is *inside* us. Indo-Pak is *inside* us, It will never settle down. It *can’t*.” (Roy, *GOST*, 23).

Anjum is given a second life because the murders in the riots cannot kill her because she is a *hijra*. The life she is given is the blessing of a butchers’ luck. Comrade Revathy, Miss Jebeen the second’s mother is raped by the system and left to tell the story. The story of pain, of humiliation and the unimaginable plight of the society. In this connection the lives of some minor characters can also be put forward to make the point more vivid and effective. Comrade Revathy in her letter written in broken English tells the readers about her own mother who suffers badly at the hands of her husband and the useless and baseless norms of the society. She says, ‘My mother’s name is Indumati...She is married with my father when she is 18 years...During marriage ceremony itself they made my Mother got up from the pandal and demanded more



dowry... Mother felt very much ashamed.” (Roy, *MOUH*, 418). The relationship between Tilo and her mother can be taken as another example of the atrocities faced by women in the society. Tilo, for all her life is considered an illegal child. Tilo’s mother like Ammu had trespassed the man-made boundaries of the society by choosing to love and marry on their own terms. This meant even to the extent of marrying out of caste or religion. It is only when she is bedridden that she and Tilo becomes close physically; spiritually being one and the same since when she was born.

The abreactive model of trauma which produces a ‘temporal gap’, a dissolution of the self by an act of shattering the psyche imagines an intrinsic epistemological fissure between traumatic experience and its representation which means that ‘trauma stands outside representation altogether’ (Caruth, 17). In *Unclaimed Experience*, Caruth states, “trauma is not locatable in the simple violent or original event in an individual’s past but rather in the way it’s very unassimilated nature- the way it was precisely not known in the first instance- return to haunt the survivor later on” (Caruth, 4). The origin cannot be traced due to the inability of the brain to properly encode and process the event but the literal event is ever-present and intrusive. This theory argues that trauma is traceable only through the repetitive flashbacks. The concept of trauma being timeless, repetitious, and unspeakable yet a literal, contagious, and mummified event supports the theory of transhistorical or transgenerational trauma. It makes a parallel causal relationship between the individual and the group and the traumatic experience and the pathologic responses thereon. According to the theory a massive trauma experienced by a group in history can affect an individual centuries later by virtue of the similarities such as race, religion, nationality, caste or gender. By this it means that individual trauma can be passed through one generation to the other and the trauma faced earlier can become one. According to Michelle Balaev, in “Trends in

Literary Trauma Theory” (2008), trauma, ‘creates a speechless fright that divides or destroys identity’ or in other words, since trauma ‘shatters identity’, a new identity is formed through the destructive quality of trauma. “This leads to the claim that trauma narratives can recreate and abreact the experience for those who were not there - the reader, listener, or witness can experience the historical experience first- hand (Felman and Laub).” (Michelle Balaev, 2008). Following the Freudian model, Traumatic experience is understood as a fixed and timeless photographic negative stored in an unlocatable place of the brain but has the ability to interrupt the consciousness and can be transferred to a non-traumatized individual and group. This transfer is being carried out by the act of speaking or narration which also had been used by Freud as the primary method to recovery from a traumatic experience popularly known as the ‘talking cure’.

### **3.4. Social Stratification and Trauma**

As it has already been pointed out that Arundhati Roy’s ability and sincerity as a writer of the social milieu. She writes for the people, of the people and to the people. It is not only through her novels that she speaks against inequality and injustice but through many publications of articles and non-fictions in her name go a long way to bring the plight of the marginalized into light. Her interviews and speeches in India and the world over are much loved and appreciated for their message as it is critiqued by the lot who brands her as a leftist. Roy has faced many charges on her support of issues like the Kashmiri Separatist Movement, the Narmada Dam project, and so on and so forth. However, this penalty has not deterred her from working tirelessly towards the cause that she started with her debut novel.

The characters portrayed in both her novels are divided into two water tight compartments. This segregation is seen as the fallout of the loose political and social rules and regulations of the country, according to the author. India suffered a long period of different rulers controlling its resources ranging from home to the courts. It looks as though the rule has been thrown over and India is an independent country yet the old rules and regulations and bigotry still exists in all streets and bazars of the country. One of the major themes in Roy's novel is the conflict or confrontation between the majority and the minority. The rift between the rich and the poor, the powerful and the powerless, the privileged and the unprivileged. Velutha, Saddam, Anjum and others like them make one part of the population who are struggling for their position in society. They are the untouchables of the society. The situation of this lot is just like that of the intersex community, neither here nor there. Velutha couldn't enter the life of the Syrian Christian Ammu and her family. It is through his ingenuity and resourcefulness that Mammachi's Pickle factory has been running. Chacko heavily relies on him for the repair of the factory machines but when it comes to giving him due credit and value to his work, he is somewhat lost in his own thoughts of his old Oxford days. It is not only Mammachi, Chacko and Baby Kochamma but even the workers in the factory who also disagree about Velutha's presence in the factory premises. While on the other hand those who control the love laws are the people who will not bend the tradition and customs even if it were to take something priceless from them. Pappachi won't agree to Ammu's marriage to a Hindu and so is Mammachi who is nothing but a shadow, a dust swept from Pappachi's great family lineage. The social positions which the characters are found to occupy in the novels do affect the level of trauma they go through. However, it does not mean that those perched upon the comfortable situation of life and society are immune of trauma and its effects. As

already discussed in chapter one, all go through the gruesome ordeal of trauma as it sees no classification to occur.

The suffering and pain that is meted to Ammachi, Ammu, and Rahel in, *GOST*, in continuation of the age-old tradition and customs seems to be travelling like a priced family heirloom. The trauma seems to hold a transhistorical quality in this sense. Ammu's Bengali husband is an alcoholic due to his inability to control his drinking habit but this could also mean that since male members of the society are given more rights and more freedom in the society, he uses his freedom to do whatever he likes. The society that includes the manager of the tea estate who wants to sleep with Ammu, and her husband who is ready to send her to him-the other man to save his position in the tea company. This same society and its useless norms give enough power to Pappachi to let him use upon Mammachi in such a way that she has no room to grow and develop. When in Vienna to kill her boredom, she starts taking violin classes her husband stops her. This is instigated by the praise heaped upon Mammachi's 'concert' worthy violin talent by the music instructor. While Ammu is allowed to attend high school only, Chacko her brother from the same womb is allowed to go abroad to study. The trauma of the first and the second generation flows in the third generation. In Rahel's generation too the same social dogmas prevalent in the society impacts on her humiliation and pain and thus scaring her for life. She is taken as an inferior sibling because she is a daughter of a divorcee and also because of their half breed origins. Apart from the traumatic events that appears in the twins' life Rahel also suffers because she is a woman.

### 3.5. Caste Entrenchment

Velutha, Ammu's childhood friend and later her lover is an untouchable because his father is an untouchable. According to Rose (2018) the portrayal of trauma in literature is a key to understanding real life problems. Since trauma can be caused by cultural values and social situation or position, it can be understood by framing them to larger social context. This can help in offering multiple interpretations to the reader for understanding the plight of the individual and the community as well. The state of speechlessness and silence that Velutha and Saddam go through is the makeshift construct of the society. Saddam, couldn't do or say anything when his father was beaten to death by the mob. It looked like the humiliation and the shame had passed down from generation that choked their throat. This same passing down of the name 'paravan' and the position and the customs with it led to Velutha's wrongful conviction and death. He couldn't live nor love freely. In-fact it is this bold step and courage to touch and love an upper caste lady that infuriates Baby Kochamma. The love rules set by the society must not be broken. "who should be loved and how. And how much" (Roy, *GOST*, 33) is the marker of 'norms of decency' set by the society. Love laws which were made as early or even before the beginning of civilization which is broken by Ammu and Velutha. Love is given a framework and its own boundaries. No one is to break it and who so ever does have to pay a price. And so, Ammu and Velutha do pay the price. Ammu, who belongs to a respected Syrian Christian family dare to love and have sexual relationship with Velutha, who is a Paravan. He is an untouchable. "Touchable and untouchable cannot fall in love. This is a social-taboo." (Tiwary, 22).

In Anjum case there is a ray of hope. She is an intersex and she too goes through the shame and humiliation and low self -esteem in her earlier life comes back to the Duniya she left behind to join the hijra community. She is one of the main characters of the novel; born as an intersex in a Muslim family of Old Delhi during the post-emergency period. Anjum's life is narrated in three phase- the childhood, the Khawbgah, and the Jannat Guest house. She is hurled names and insults by the neighborhood children. Jahanara Begum and her husband tries every trick to treat Aftab but in no avail. He is admitted to music school in his childhood days but soon stops going and starts staying at home all day and all night. The neighborhood children teasing her, '*a He or She. He's a He and a She. She-He, He-She Hee! Hee! Hee!*' (Roy, *MOUH*, 12). According to Herman (2009), low self-esteem or low self-worth and alienation can be looked as some of the symptoms of trauma victim. This humiliation, insults and lack of understanding causes severe pain to Anjum. After this phase of her life, she decides to move-in to Khawbgah- the house of dreams and join the hijra community, finds a girl child and brings her home. This girl is given the name Zainab and soon becomes the darling of the house. Later when the girl becomes sick Anjum goes on a pilgrimage to Gujarat and is attacked by the 'saffron parakeet' (Roy, *MOUH*, 62) army. The trauma of the event is so deep that she is not able to forget why the murderers left her alive and killed all the rest including Zakir Mian. Anjum is so disturbed that she decides to go back to the Duniya yet create a new Duniya for herself. It is the municipal graveyard she chooses to stay. She, carves herself a safe haven for herself and for 'others' like her. She becomes the tree that gave shelter to all the misfits or the fall out of the society. She notes:

“Once you have fallen off the edge like all of us have, including our Biroo,’ Anjum said, ‘you will never stop falling. And as you fall you will hold

to other falling people. The sooner you understand that the better. This place where we live, where we have made our home, is the place of falling people. Here, there is no *haqeeqat*. *Aree*, even *we* aren't real. We don't really exist" (Roy, *MOUH*, 84).

Christa Schönfelder, in her book *Wounds and Words....* quotes Kirby Farrell and while stressing on the post traumatic themes that infuses the present culture states, 'we are creatures susceptible to infectious fear and arousal' (Schönfelder, 48). One important assumption according to Kirby Farrell on the PTSD culture is the contagiousness of trauma as one of the significant qualities. This nature of trauma is fulfilled or comprehended by the system that exists in the present society that we are living in. Even in the novels selected for the study, there is a large divide between the majority- the rich, the powerful and the privileged from that of the marginalised- the poor, the under privileged, and the fall outs of the society. Thus, if one follows the above assumption then there is no running from trauma. It seems to have become an integral part of our world. However, according to Kai Erickson, a sociologist who was the first one to find in depth the effects of trauma on communities discusses in his article titled, 'Note on Trauma and Community' (1995) the disruptive and damaging effects of trauma on communities is not all destructive in nature but it also holds the community together. In support of this view, Christa Schönfelder quotes Vickory and stressing that trauma studies and writers who narrate traumatic stories not only present 'terrifying, alien experiences more understandable and accessible' (Schönfelder, 29). It also paves the way for listening to the history of the marginalised people through the medium of witnessing and testimonies. In this way the knowing and healing and recovery from trauma in both the individual and collective level is achieved to a large extent.

### 3.6. Transhistorical or Intergenerational Trauma

With the emergence of trauma studies as a new field within the humanities its concept has departed and disintegrated from its original disciplinary ground. It has in a way crossed lines between various fields and discourses thereby becoming ‘increasingly (even) notoriously complex and slippery’. (Schönfelder, 28). The unspeakability of trauma of Caruth is being questioned by trauma narratives and its potential to ‘display the interrelation between wounds and words’ (Schönfelder, 31). Which means that through the process of narration been employed in trauma literature the gap of understanding that trauma cannot be reached or understood is debunked. In *Wounds and Words...* Christa Schönfelder, explains the potential of trauma narratives to represent traumatic experiences and to illuminate its complexities. Some authors like Ann Kaplan in *Trauma Culture* (2005) and Jennifer Griffith in *Trauma Possessions* (2011) distances themselves from the ‘unspeakability’ and ‘unrepresentability’ value of trauma as foregrounded by Caruth. They assert that relating or vocalisation of happenings or telling stories is one way to ascertain a certain kind of emphatic relief for the victim.

The divide between man and women, the touchable and the untouchable, the privileged upper caste and the lower caste, the socially normal and the not so normal ones, make up the bulk of the novels selected for the study. This discrimination and injustice faced by the individuals carry a wound that affects the shattering or splitting of the ego. And the trauma that the individuals have to go through is the result of shared traumatic event which began ages ago and is repeated through social memory by the virtue of similar attributes like gender, social norms, caste and religion. Velutha and



Saddam suffers because of their caste; Ammu, Rahel and Mammachi because of their gender and Anjum because of her religion and her biological construct. The pain and sufferings that appear in the life of the present generation characters is a passed down as effects of the social trauma that happened ages ago. Mammachi is suffering because of the heavy patriarchal rule imposed upon her. she has grown into it. She accepts it as her destiny to be disrespected and beaten by her God like husband. In Ammu's case again the old and traditional dogmas of the society that a Christian should marry a Christian and Hindu should marry a Hindu overshadows her present. The rule of who should be loved and how and how much are a predetermined ritual. Going against this welcomes dire consequences. For Ammu, she crosses boundaries from where there is no turning back, marries a Hindu, gets divorced and comes back and falls in love with an untouchable. This happening sure does affect Ammu's life but the ripples are carried forward to her daughter's life also. Seeing her mother dying in a hotel room, alone and unloved, Rahel sets out to find love and acceptance. These three generations suffer the trauma that has a similar source. The three women's trauma is a result of the similar social and familial situations which causes the trauma. This is like a contagious disease that spreads from one person to the other unless care and medical assistance is provided on time. In *MOUH* also a similar strain of trauma being transferred from one generation to the next is presented. Saddam inherits his chamar status from his father and with this he also seems to be inheriting the shame and disgust shown to him by the other touchable. Velutha's case is no different. And, so to say Anjum stands no different in this juncture. They all carry with them the burdens which are age old and weary. All of them are attached to the traumas of their past ancestors with an unseen umbilical cord. The traumatic incidents are carried forward through story telling in the novel. Saddam reveals to Anjum his true identity and relates the story of how his father and his

associates were lynched by a mob on a street one day. He was helpless then and he is helpless now but hopes to garner enough power and authority to avenge his father's death.

Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved*, is about spectrality, slavery, dehumanization, re-memory and different kinds of memory experiences. Sethe, the mother sets her child free from the bondage of slavery. She kills her child and the title of the novel comes from the tombstone of the child, to whom the mother intended to write 'Dear Beloved' but could not. The transgenerational type of trauma affecting the lives of the people suffering from the atrocities of the slave masters is depicted here. The memory of the blood-stained hands is fresh and it haunts the mother. Similarly, Florina Bast in 'Reading Red: The Troping of Trauma in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*' (1987), also talks about the interesting use of color red and its representation of certain kinds of nervous conditions- traumatic conditions in the novel. According to Anne Whitehead, "theories of trans-generational trauma suggest that affect can leak across generations; that a traumatic event which is experienced by one individual can be passed on so that its effects are replayed in another individual one or more generation later." (Whitehead, *Trauma Fiction*, 14). Adding on she brings in the works by Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok on trans-generational haunting. Whitehead by taking examples from the two authors mentioned earlier suggests that the symptoms are transfused from one generation to the next as and when a catastrophic or heinous event occurs. This event which is an unreachable event is hidden in the unconscious and kept as a secret. In this case trauma can be transferred without even been spoke of and thereon begins to live in the next generation as 'a silent presence or 'phantom'. (Whitehead, 14). Then, if trauma can be passed on from one generation to the other, the question of medium through which it transfuses emerges. There cannot be one straight answer for this

problem because as Freud and Caruth says, trauma is outside the boundaries of ordinary language. It cannot be simply described; it is unclaimed and stuck somewhere in the unlocatable part of the brain. It has an uncanny recurrence and uncontrollable vibe to it. Thus, the transgenerational and trans historical trauma can be experienced through the sharing of stories written or oral from one generation. One example of this type of trauma can be the pain and suffering or valour felt by the reader of a patriotic book. When soldiers or children are given testimonies by the survivors, of the struggle that their forefathers had to go through to buy the freedom they are enjoying now, there is a sense of empathy with the stories and the struggles made thereon.

### 3.7. Trauma and Landscape

Place and the topographical image in the head of the traumatized where the catastrophic event took place becomes an important element in connection to the transgenerational trauma. In *Trauma Fiction*, chapter 3 of part I Anne Whitehead argues that Anne Michael's *Fugitive Pieces*, studies the role of landscape after the Holocaust, and suggests that it can help in absorbing the shock of trauma. It interrogates the relationship between trauma and landscape which reminds us that landscape always highlights matters of not only how one sees but also from what vantage point we see. She notes that "the notion of 'place' occupies a rich and interesting position in contemporary trauma theory..." (Whitehead, 48).

In *MOUH*, Arundhati Roy speaks clearly about the terror and tense situation in Kashmir. The beautiful valleys and lakes are now hideouts for villagers for they can no longer stay in their house. One is not safe; not anywhere. In the 'supermarket of sorrow' lives are sold and bought in a hefty discount. While some benefited from the emergency

some had to pay enormously. ‘The corrosion in Kashmir ran so deep that’ (Roy, *MOUH*, 335) Amrik Singh that crook had no sense in picking up a man for interrogation who had just lost his wife and daughter with a single bullet. While at Sheraz Cinema hall Musa sees the amount of marring done on Junaid Shah, an Area Commander of the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen. He had been captured a few months ago when he committed the greatest mistake of paying a visit to his wife and an infant son. Hizb- ul- Mujahideen once a brave man now stands trembling in front of Major Amrik Singh. Along with the tremor of his hands and the ‘dancing cups’ (Roy, *MOUH*, 341,342) the readers feel the shaking within the tectonic plates. The land suffers with its people as the people fight for the land. Musa after the long interview with the Major comes home cold body and heart. “He entered his house with snow on his shoulders. The cold of that was nothing compared to the cold that was gathering inside him” (Roy, *MOUH*, 344) and continues this strain of coldness when he tells Tilo that, “We’re a valley of idiots and schizophrenics...” (Roy, *MOUH*, 359).

According to Michelle Balaev (2008) traumatic experience in relation to a particular place indicates that trauma is understood as a culturally specific event. The memory of Velutha’s swollen face behind the bars bagging for his life is fresh in Estha’s mind in through-out the novel. He could never forget the police station and the river where Sophie Mol drowned. There is also a mention of the river which takes Sophie Mol’s life. Perhaps, the reason why is always walking could be to avoid the images to become clear in his mind. Rahel, also drifts like a log been carried away by heavy rain in search of love and care. She travels from Ayemenem to the abroad and comes back to her ancestral house. The gap of twenty-three years has of course changed the setting of the house. The house looks shabby and dull but the memories are so fresh in the twin’s mind as it happened yesterday. This effort of the twins brings the essence of

place in the working of trauma and more so in the ghost like nature of traumatic incidents. Lan Cao's novel *Monkey Bridge*, presents a classic example of the relationship between trauma and landscape. Thanh's traumatic Vietnam war experience as a civilian is depicted through a screaming earth that has been bombed with napalm. However, there is always this fear of blurring the effects of the trauma. The theory of transgenerational trauma may limit the meaning of trauma by conflating the distinction between personal loss and a historical absence found in one's ancestral lineage. This means to say that although trauma experienced by a group or individual generation ago may pass to the next generation, sharing sameness in the social attributes in the earlier section, there is this chance of numbing the frequency of the effect of the trauma. One may not feel or feel a little less than what had already been felt. This may be due to the change in the social and familial upbringing or the change of the social status.

A continuous confrontation can be seen between groups in both the novels. This is the tussle between the powerful and the less-powerful. This tug of war fought at the back drop of the evils of the society thus effects the mental wellbeing of the characters. Anjum is not accepted in the normal duniya due to her intersex condition. She is considered a bad omen while in the Godha Riots in Gujarat. These conflicts and rifts between different poles for control and power results in confusion and chaos. Everyone is affected and at the same time devastated by it. These troubles hit like the double-edged swords that cuts the victim and also the victimiser. The inter-play of power politics emerging out of the game of controlling and maintaining a dictatorship leads to a sort of mismanagement and disarray. This also results in a shift of power; like a sort of tables have turned situation. Shayam Selvaduria's, *Funny Boy* may be projected here to prove the point further. The confrontation between majority and the minority and the

tension produced thereby is presented in both the writings of the authors. The ‘self’ comprises of characters in the novel who projects and follows the natural law of love and reproduction. They are the heterosexual lot of the society, straight and norm conforming. Appa, Diggy, Dayrl Uncle, Anil, are all male; Amma, Radha Aunty, Sonali, Ammachi, Chithra Aunty are all female and nothing in between. They are the ones with power and authority, like the Singhalese in majority in Colombo. Bending rules and making adjustment are not at all an option for them or that matter is against the empty principal they follow like Pappachi, Mammachi, Chacko, Pillia and Baby Kochamma. They go by the rules and breaking them is an abomination. An instance of ‘self’ could also be seen in the play of power infused with madness. It is the mob’s fire that burns the ideal atmosphere of peace and tranquillity in Ajum’s life. One is also reminded of the multiple records of murder and destruction in Taslima Nasrin’s *Lajja* (1993). ‘What ailed the city?’ (Nasrin,210), Suronjon asks. He (Arjie, Suronjon, Anjum, Ammu, Velutha, Saddam and Tilo) is surely the ‘other’ in the self. He is the funny one as Cyril Uncle exclaims, “looks like we have a funny one here’ (Selvedurai, 14). The sense of otherness or being different is instilled in him by the ones near him. He is singled out and ‘projected outwards’ (Barry, 147).

*GOST* unmasks the evils of caste system and gender issues at the backdrop of a family’s trauma. The twins’ mother Ammu is never considered equal to his brother Chacko. The twins’ uncle is given all the privileges that the family can afford. The novel beautifully presents among all things bitter class antagonism, class exploitation, exposure to hypocrisy, Marxism, unequal rights for girl child and the women lot and callous police administration. While the Ayemenem house is clouded by the patriarchal raj which gives no room to the population of the other opposite gender to grow the outside society is infested by man-handling and malpractices carried on for the profit

of the few and loss of the majority. “Thus, the central theme of ‘The God of Small Things’ is the confrontation between ‘the Big Man, the trees and the Small Man, the shrubs’. In other words, the book shows maladjustment between ‘the God of Big thing’ (Pappachi, Baby kochamma, Mammachi, Chacko, Comrade Pillia and Inspector Thomas Mathew) and ‘the God of Small things’ (Ammu, Velutha, Rahel, Estha. Sophie Mol)”. (Dwivedi & Sharma, 2013).

Mohd Inam Ul Haq in “A Polyphonic Study of Arundhati Roy’s *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*”, speaks about the many voices calling out for justice and due recognition in the system. These voices are the pleas and cries of the weaker sections of the society, the marginalised and the unrepresented lot. He states, “the voices of the hijras (transgender), the Kashmiris, struggling for the autonomy; of the farmers, the outcasts, the underclass, and the displaced due to the building of dams; of the mothers (Kashmiri) of the disappeared; of the owl, kittens, and dung beetle named Guikyom” (Haq, 2021). These voices are the sounds of the ill maintained machinery of society. Individuals, groups, mothers, sisters, fathers and brothers have been affected by the system that is ruling them and the country. Roy’s second novel is a dire criticism of Indian political system, the media, the government, the public administration. The question of inequality and discrimination in respect of caste, gender, race, color and region is beautifully portrayed. In this case social dogmas becomes one of the major indicator and marker of trauma henceforth occurring.

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Psychodynamics of Relationship**

According to Merriam Webster Dictionary the word Psychodynamics refers to “the psychology of mental or emotional forces or proves developing especially in early childhood and their effects on behaviour and mental states.” These workings in the mental and psychological level of the human world effects the way the individual react to situations and environment. The psychological make of the mind which is the product of the mechanics of psychodynamics effects the relationships thus developed in the future. Since Psychodynamics starts from early childhood, it has far-reaching influence in the mental and psychological make of the child which in turn effects his/her dealings with the environment and individual around him/her. The psychodynamics of relationships can be detected in both the novels selected for the study. The author carefully and meticulously designs the inextricably interrelated relationships among the characters in all levels including all age group and all genders. These relationships and its development reveal the character’s identity so also the deadening effects of the social evils and the trauma thereon suffered by the victims.

#### **4.1. Psychodynamics**

It is described as the interrelation of the unconscious and conscious mental and emotional forces that determine personality and motivation. Also known as psychodynamic psychology in the broadest sense, is an approach to psychology that emphasises systematic study of the psychological forces that underline human



behaviour, their feelings, emotions and how one might relate to early experiences. It is interested in the dynamic and kinetic relations between conscious motivation and unconscious motivation. The mental forces involved in psychodynamics is divided into two important parts. First, the interaction of the emotional and motivational forces which affect behaviour and mental states especially on the subconscious level. Secondly, the inner forces which may be repressed or latent and which affects the conscious behaviour. This psychodynamic theory was earlier used to refer specifically to the psychoanalytical approach developed by Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and the others who popularised the approach after him. Among whom, some honourable mention can be made of the names of Carl Jung, Alfred, Meanie and the like. Freud was inspired by the thermodynamics (theory) of the brain; this can be connected to Freud's medical background and the circumstances in which the theory of Psychoanalysis took birth. The term 'psychodynamics' was used to describe the processes of the mind as flows of psychological energy (libido or psi) in an organically complex brain. It depends upon the theory of inner conflict, i.e the repressed behaviours and emotions that surfaces into the characters conscious in the scenario of a piece of literature. The overview of the study of psychodynamics is the study of the interrelationships of various parts of the mind, personality or psyche as they relate to mental, emotional, or motivational forces of life which works especially at the unconscious level. Freud proposed that psychological energy was constant hence emotional changes consisted only in displacements and that it tended to rest through discharges. In Mate Selection psychodynamics is defined as the study of the forces, motives and energy generated by the deepest of human needs. According to American psychologist Calvin S. Hall (Primer in Freudian Psychology, 1954), 'A dynamic psychology is one that studies the transformations and exchanges of energy within the

personality.’ Keneth Levy in his 2009 article titled ‘Psychodynamic theories of relationships’ states:

“In many ways, contemporary psychodynamics theories can be thought of as theories of relationships. Although Sigmund Freud’s original theory was primarily concerned with the ‘internal world’ of the mind, psychodynamic theories have evolved to encompass a more complex understanding of the interplay between interpersonal and intrapsychic experiences. Psychodynamic theories ask how relationships shape people’s internal world, specifically how interpersonal experiences come to be internalized as aspects of personality. Conversely, psychodynamic theories also ask how the internal world affects relationships color people’s understanding of their interpersonal experiences.”

#### **4.2. Psycho-Social Interface of Roy’s Characters**

One aspect of Arundhati Roy as a novelist that leaves a long-lasting impact on the mind of her readers is her sensitive yet vulnerable touch that she gives to the characters in her stories. Almost a majority of her character springs from the familial portal of breeding and are therefore highly and inextricably tangled with each other. Both the novels discussed in this paper does enumerate upon the relationships the character share and the plot that is carried forward by this relationship’s proceedings. It is not only about the one-to-one relationship that Arundhati Roy speaks about but it is presented in both the interpersonal and intrapersonal perspective. This issue of relationship is more like in a cosmopolitan vibe and style of nature. Firstly, there is the familial and personal relationship like that of a father-daughter, husband-wife, loved-beloved etc. The second kind is the individual’s relationship in terms of the society.

The Indian society that the author depicts has a major role to play in the development of the story as well as the downfall or redemption of the characters. This relationship's dice that Arundhati Roy rolls in her novels can be dissected from an inverted prism position. For an instance, Anjum's failures and victories in life seems to be depending on the workings of the society. The bullies and her realisation of her sexuality and the trauma at the Godha riots pulls her out and in to the house of dreams finally growing her roots in the cemetery Guest house. At the backdrop of all the talks and discussions going in the novels selected for the study, is the interrelations of the men, women, children and other individuals, identifying themselves as per the biological assigned gender or sexual preferences. This politics of relationships is not only familial but one that goes beyond the boundaries of societal constraints. The universality of relationship is being propounded here. The term relationship hence cannot only be taken to mean blood relationship but one that goes much beyond that, which break boundaries of the categorisation and the segregation set by the society. It travels from one part of the country to another and from one individual to the other, thereby affecting each and every organism that breeds in the ecosystem of this relationship(s). Thus, joining Kashmir to Kerala as much as it connects people from all walks of life- upper caste, lower caste, Christian, Hindu, male, female, intersex so on and so forth. Everyone is struggling and going through some form of pain which may be looked as a negative aspect yet on a broader perspective this similar situation thus binds all in a relationship. Arundhati Roy has succeeded so beautifully in bringing all humanity under a common umbrella, that shares the same pain and suffering caused by different set of problems. Her idea of a country is an amalgamation of people from all the races, gender type, religion, creed and caste living in peace and harmony; a house like the 'Jannat Guest House' where all will prosper and develop with equal and fair chances. The narratives

that the writer had used for both of the novels is aligned in the way that an architect plans to construct. This is no wonder to us, as we know the fact the Arundhati Roy is a trained engineer. Just like a building needs different parts having different structures and material made up assembled in a certain manner to stand the wind, sun and the rain. Roy brings in different sets of people, with different ideologies of life, and standing at different levels of life to create a garden with different flowers but all having its own life. In this connection one is reminded of the ornamental garden comprising of ‘dwarf hedges, rocks and gargoyles’ (Roy, *GOST*, 26) that Baby Kochamma, which she meticulously sculpts after her return from ‘Rochester with a diploma in Ornamental Gardening’ (Roy, *GOST*, 26). This bouquet is held together by the string of relationship thus bringing out its meaning and beauty.

### **4.3. Freudian Unconscious and Interpretation of Relationships**

Freud’s work on the reading of minds and the human behaviour has been quite influential and controversial too. With the publication of his book, *The Interpretation of Dreams* in 1900. Freud introduced the Topographic model of the mind and contented that the mind could be divided into three regions.

- i. conscious
- ii. preconscious
- iii. unconscious.

He suggests that much of our behaviour is determined by psychological forces or workings of which we are largely unaware and that we literally don’t know what’s going on in our minds. Although his theories that humans have strong sexual feelings

from a very early age and the gravitational force of the Oedipus and Electra complexes have been criticized by many especially in the contemporary world where parenthood is not only limited to opposite sex partnership, the assumption of the psychodynamic theory that behaviours and feelings are powerfully affected by the unconscious motives. According to Wilson (2002), ‘the unconscious mind comprises mental process that are inaccessible to consciousness but that influence judgements, feelings, or behaviour’. Unconscious processes influence our behaviour as the psychodynamic perspective predicts. Following this assumption one individual is capable in accumulating much more information one may than realize, through perceiving and processing.

In this case *GOST* and *MOUH* can be very well looked at from the angle of the workings of the unconscious mind resulting in the varied types and prototypes of relationships in the novel. The trauma narrative of *GOST* moves from one individual to the other individual in a series of incidents. Ammu is hurt and full of indignation for the laws made by the society and her family. She is looked down in the family because her ideologies are different from that of Baby Kochamma or her own mother. Her marriage to a Hindu Bengali and later her divorce is viewed as a sheer fountain of shame and well deserving insults. This series of rejection is ignited by her love affair with the God of one arm man; Velutha. It is an act of shame that Ammu could love an untouchable man. Mammachi could not imagine the thought of the black Velutha touching her white Ammu. she is disowned and discarded from the family while Velutha had to pay the price of breaking the ‘love laws’ with his life. According to Freud the unconscious mind is the primary source of human behaviour. Thus, Ammu’s behaviour and feelings towards Velutha and her children can be mapped in the vein of this context. If the most important part of the brain is the part which is not visible like the part of the iceberg which is concealed under the water, Ammu’s actions or as a

matter of fact, the daring and challenging step to love below her caste and the so-called status can be the result of her repressed emotions and anxiety that she surfaces through it.

Although at the wake of the novel and its popularity after the declaration of the booker prize result many critics hurled their indignation on Arundhati Roy's slaying remark on who should love whom and how much and why, Ammu's choice of Velutha as a suitable lover can be seen as a culmination of all the pain and sufferings she had to endure in her lifetime. She is unloved by her family and the impact of her unsuccessful attempt to find love in the selfish vagabond Bengali husband, Ammu finally finds true love in the shape of Velutha, the Paravan. This love is not based on who is using whom, how much and why but solely based on the true essence of understanding and compassion. Her feelings, motives and decisions which although are disastrous and out of the norms of the society according to Baby Kochamma, Mammachi and the others are actually influenced by her past experiences stored in her unconscious state of mind.

#### **4.4. Trauma, its Impact on Relationships**

The sudden shock endured by the brain produces experiences which are for most part 'unclaimed' according to Cathy Caruth. These, traumatic events are stored in the inaccessible part of the brain and this when applied to the psychodynamics of Freud and the other philosophers contending the same assumption, directs one's behaviour and motives in life. This part of the reservoir deals with the overall physic interplay and interpretations of the person dealing with the earlier trauma. Anjum, formerly known as Aftab after she returns alive but dead inside from the Godha Riots in Gujarat, directs her attention towards it. Her motive after the incident is to keep her founding

daughter Zainab safe from the murders. For this she is ready to go to any extent. Anjum teaches Zainab to recite the Gayatri Myntra and dresses her as a boy. This actions of Anjum can be looked from two perspectives. Firstly, her motherly love overpowers her love for all the feminine things in the world. Being an intersex, she is drawn towards the feminine side of the dice but this changes after the return from Gujarat. The effect of the 'butcher's luck' conundrum is ever ringing in her ears and this mediates her behaviour towards Zainab and herself. Secondly, Anjum's yearning to be a mother is viewed by Saddam as a sort of utopian dream. They are on the terrace of the Jannat Guest House when Anjum declares her desire to be called and loved as a mother. Although she had found Zianab outside the Dargha she does not live with her just then due to her mental state as advised by the Khawbgah housemates. She is very much aware of the fact that she can never give birth or reproduce due to her biological condition, the 'India-Pakistan', the in-between state. The mocking and insults hurled upon her, on her feminine nature and hijra-ness produces a strong desire to attain what seems to be biologically impossible. In Anjum's case the outburst of the feelings and emotions stored in her unconscious state of mind works in a sort of therapy for her. She is able to go back to the Duniya from where she came and steps into the world of the Khawbgah. She is able to establish the Jannat Guest House. This is not only hers but everyone's. The house belongs to all the 'fallouts' of the society like herself, Tilo, Saddam, Musa, Comrade Revathy, Zakir Mian, other Hijras, Dr. Azad Bharatiya, late. Gul-gak and Miss Udaya Jebeen.

#### 4.5. The Unconscious and its Functions

Another assumption of the psychodynamic theory states that all behaviour has a cause (usually unconscious) and therefore all behaviour is determined. Psychodynamic theory is strongly determinist as it views one's behaviour as caused entirely by unconscious factors over which one has no control. Unconscious thought and feelings can be transferred to the conscious mind in the form of what Freud termed as 'Fehlleistungen' (faulty actions) in his 1901 book, *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*. These parapraxes or the slips of the tongue reveal the hidden desires and unconscious thought, belief, wish, or motive. Freud believed that it provided an insight into the unconscious mind and that there were no accidents and every behaviour was significant.

Similarly, it is only through the dictation that Tilo does to calm her ailing mother in the hospital that she reveals her affection for her. Her sickness has blurred her senses but it makes Tilo aware of the fact that her mother had always loved her although she never expresses it during her good days. Just like Ammu and Velutha's relationship, Tilo was born out of a relationship that was much discarded by the society. "Her mother was indeed her real mother, but had first abandoned her and then adopted her. There had been a scandal, a love affair in a small town. The man, who belonged to an 'Untouchable' caste (a 'Paraya'..." (Roy, *MOUH*, 155) says Mammen P. Mammen in a whisper to Dasgupta. Another example of the slip of the tongue, although not the literal sense can be seen in Anjum. On her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday Ustad Kulsoom Bi throws a party for Anjum. Anjum wears a sari for the first time. After the party she dreams that she was a new bride on her wedding night. "She awoke distressed to find that her sexual



pleasure had expressed itself into her beautiful new garment like a man's" (Roy, *MOUH*, 27). Anjum's desire to become a woman, a mother and feel all the pleasure of being a real woman slips from her unconscious realm of mind and manifests itself into her sari.

Psychodynamics is the connection between the energetics of emotional states in the Id, Ego and Super-ego. According to Freud the heart of psychological processes is the ego, which he envisions as battling with two other forces;

i. Id

ii. Super-ego.

Id, is the seat of desires and has an animal instinct. It consists of all the inherited that is the biological components of personality present at birth, including the sex (life) instinct-Eros, consisting the libido and the aggressive (death) instinct- Thanatos. Ego represents the logical, reality-oriented part of the mind. It develops in order to mediate between the unrealistic id and the external real world and the super- ego is basically our conscience- the moral guidelines, rules and prohibitions that guide ones' behaviour learnt from one's parents and others. According to this model of psychodynamics the parts of the unconscious mind (the id and the superego) are in constant conflict with the conscious part of the mind (the ego). This conflict creates anxiety, which is another important variable in psychoanalytic system and could be dealt with by the ego's use of defence mechanism. Arun Kumar Singh in *The Comprehensive History of Psychology* defines anxiety in this manner, "(Therefore) anxiety is understood as the emotional unpleasant state that is followed by a physical sensation, which signals the person against impending danger" (Singh, 298).

In order to protect ego from the ensuing anxiety, it adopts some strategies called as defence mechanisms or ego defence mechanisms. These mechanisms working at different levels protect the ego from an obvious expression of id impulses and opposing superego directives. In this case Baby Kochamma's unreciprocated love and almost sexual desire for Father Mulligan, the young priest can be taken as the deep seat of Id's working. Another example of the libidinal interplay of Id can be traced and connected to the licentious incest between the twins. The society with its love laws acts as the torch bearer of the conscious ego. There is an ending tussle between these two forces which takes the plot of the novel towards its narrative realisation. However, society as presented and believed by Roy, is a transgress-able and boundary less entity where individual is the most important specimen. Thereby, what is right and wrong according to what religion and which text is not a matter of discussion for Roy. It is the individual's development and progress in all spheres of life that she all in for. Therefore, the society which is the stakeholder of the laws- of love, of education, of wealth and of life is criticized upon by the author in the novels taken for the present study as well as other essays and articles.

#### **4.6. The Interplay of Defence Mechanism**

Defence mechanism operates at the unconscious level therefore occurring without the awareness of the individual. It is involuntary and hence self-deceptive. It makes anxiety less intense and threatening by trying to distort the reality. For the purpose of the study the defence mechanism of 'Repression' and 'sublimation' may be taken forward in the discussion. Peter Barry states "...the idea of *repression*, (which) is the 'forgetting' or ignoring of unresolved conflicts, unadmitted desires, or traumatic

past events,...” (Barry, 97). These forgotten emotions are forced out of the consciousness and into the realm of the unconsciousness. Stephen Frosh in, *The Politics of Psychoanalysis* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, mentions Freud’s distinguishing between (i) a primal repression and (ii) a repression proper. According to him the mental representation of instinctual impulses that is denied access to consciousness is an example of primal repression. It is said to remain unconscious. Whereas repression proper is a sort of after pressure attack. It is the material available to the consciousness which becomes repressed because of its association with the already repressed mental representative of the instinct. The aftermath of the children’s (Rahel and Estha) traumatic event produces a series of feelings and emotions. Both of them are so moved by the event and it results in a state of ‘quietness’ and itinerant state respectively. The traumatic event coupled by the attitude and behaviour of the society has led to the shattering of the ego but there is a sense of hiding away the emotions and feelings of all the characters in the novel. Trying to repress or pushing away the bad memories to the unconscious level of the brain here in the children’s context leads only to them feeling lost, alienated and unwanted, thus highlighting the effects of trauma in their lives.

Anjum from her early childhood days has been accustomed to all kinds of bullying and unacceptance of the society around her. Since she has no one to share her feelings she keeps it repressed within her. This act of repression produces a ripple that affects her outlook of the world later in the novel. Her unsatisfied notion of life is projected in the words of Nimmo, another hijra of the House of Dreams. She says that their existence was “...an experiment. He decided to create something, a living creature that is incapable of happiness.” (Roy, *GOST*, 23). By establishing Jannat Guest House and funeral home Anjum in a way displaces her repressed feelings and emotions and projects it out in a less threatening one. It is a place for all the fallouts just like her.

There is a sense of satisfaction and pride when she welcomes Tilo, Miss Udaya Jebeen and prepares to bury all whom the normal society's graveyard could not allow to bury. The end of life becomes the start of a refreshing relationship. Anjum knows that she will never be able to give birth given the state of her biological body, however she redirects her wish to become a mother by adopting first Zainab and latterly Tilo and Miss Udaya Jebeen. Although the novelist does not clarify on her adopting Tilo and Miss Udaya Jebeen, the readers are aware that this bond that begin at the protest ground and culminated at Tilo's arrival with the kidnapped child will flourish in a motherly manner. Baby Kochamma is in love with Father Mulligan. She utilizes every trick in her pocket to win the priest's favour. "Every Thursday morning, just when Father Mulligan was due to arrive, Baby Kochamma force-bathed a poor village child at the well with a hard red soap that hurt its protruding ribs." (Roy, *GOST*, 23). But all these efforts of her avails nothing and frustrated as she may be, decides to enter the convent. Although, her motive behind the act of living a life of penance and abstinence is wholly directed to Father Mulligan. Baby Kochamma thinks of substituting her amorous youthful love with that of godly love. It is of utter dismay for her that even in the convent she is not able to get her wishes fulfilled. Even though it is in a way a very cheap material of sublimation but the impression of substituting something for other grander thing or action can be noted here. This same strain of sublimation can also be located in Rahel's search of love in her one-time husband. She is not loved by Chacko her uncle, even his father had to call only Estha, his male child. Apart from this Baby Kochamma's and Mammachi's attitude towards her is very indifferent. And so, this emotion of wanting to be loved unconditionally by someone whom she could call her own finds its temporary shift in the man, whom she marries and gets separated from after a short while. While Estha tries to makes a way out of his traumatic memories by

earning his livelihood by doing the daily chores at his father's house. His long walks and not talking to people is looked at with disgust by K. M Pillia and Baby Kochamma but to him this act sublimates his earlier memories of Velutha's swollen face and incidents leading to Sophie's drowning and subsequent death.

#### **4.7. The Khawb(agh)- an Antidote**

Dwi Utami in "Psychoanalysis of the Dream works" to show Roy's Despair towards Indian society in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (2006) writes, Roy puts the dreams as the way to reach her own dream. Further to find out the realistic values behind the dream of the characters to become more optimistic and introspective during tough times. Dreams are manifestation of repressed desires. This sequences of 'khawb' or dream that Anjum has oozes from the ashes of dejection and spit filled torments of the society. "She woke distressed to find that her sexual pleasure had expressed itself into her beautiful garment like a man's." (Roy, *GOST*, 27). Arundhati Roy takes the liberty in moving back and forth through the memory of her creations. She visits their past to relive it, which are often floating with a stronger sense of realism, in this way, an outlet to the bent-up emotions and the water tight feelings are released. Dreaming eases, the mental hurricane at-least for a short period of time. Khawbgah, the house of dreams is like an antidote for Anjum and her likes. Earlier in her childhood when the intersex situation is revealed to the father of the child. Jahanara Begum with her husband makes all the effort to enhance Anjum's manly side. They take him to a doctor, offer prayers at the shrines and is fed with "stories about their warrior ancestors and their valour on the battlefield" (Roy, *GOST*, 17). All these actions leave Anjum untouched. While her father narrates the "...story of how Temujin-Changez Khan- won

the hand of his beautiful wife, Borte Khatun, how she was kidnapped by a rival tribe and how Temujin fought a whole army virtually single-handedly to get her back because he loved her so much, Aftab found himself wanting to be her.” (Roy, *GOST*, 17). In fact, if Anjum is in a way fulfilling her desires and wishes by entering the House of Dreams and dressing up like woman, the same can be said about all the rest transgenders who enter the other world by passing the world’s fencing between the normal and the not so normal.

According to Freudian terminology, dream works is “the process by which real events or desires are transformed into dream images.” (Barry, 99). Condensation and displacement play curial role in the process of dream works. Therefore, Anjum’s strong desire to one day become a mother is attained when Tilo becomes a permanent guest of the Jannat Guest house, thereby giving her a chance to call Miss Udaya Jebeen as her own. She in a metaphorical manner really becomes queen Borte Khatun, the wife of Chingez Khan by looking after the other ‘fallouts’ of the society just like herself, like a big tree sheltering all kinds of creature.

If ‘dream works’ are looked at from Freudian psychoanalysis perspective, it would strictly mean the manifestations of repressed or latent emotions, feelings, desires or wishes in the form of dreams. This fulfilment is to be achieved while a person is asleep or in other words his physical self or conscious realm is sedated or hypnotized, which was a popular method used by Freud to heal the mentally ill or hysteric patients. However, as the reading populace grew and the emergence and development of other subordinating theories and theorist came up, the theory of ‘dream work’ began losing its grip, although its importance still exists as a mark of a very vital findings and practice of the psychoanalysis theory. Arundhati Roy in both the novels paints almost all the characters with wishes and desires and dreams. They have aspirations. And why not

so? They all are creatures, living and talking among us. The author had created them in full flesh and blood. In this connection, the dictum of dreams may also be looked from a different angle. It may not only be considered as something that comes and plays when one is asleep but also the pandora of wishes that the characters want to be seen fulfilled as they live on their daily chores. For an instance, Saddam, whose actual name is Dayachand changes his name and wants to come up of his untouchable status. This 'Chamar' position of life has caused him a lot. When he is very young, he sees his father being lynched along with his friends by a mob instigated by a police in-charge. Therefore, in order to take revenge, he plans to get powerful. He is an entrepreneur trying to earn and rub his hated bloodline with money and authority. Ammu's relationship with Velutha, which costs him his life may also be again measured as the manifestation of the repressed desires. Veltutha, is an untouchable and had to bow in respect and broom away his footsteps so that no touchable may tread upon them. His state in life automatically handicaps him to love and to be love both. While on the other hand, Ammu although she is a touchable and marries, soon comes back because the marriage doesn't work. She is not loved and cared enough both by her Bengali husband and her family. Her longing to be loved unconditionally by someone is burning within her. Their relationship lasts only for a few moments. It appears and disappears like a dream or a flash sale advertisement. The children's uncle, Chacko also dreams that Margaret Kochamma, his former wife from America will stay on with him. He loves and cares too much for Sophie Mol, who in fact is not also his real daughter. Chacko, has this very irritating habit of always comparing Ammu with Margaret and Sophie with Rahel and letting the later feel inferior and angry. The arrival of the mother-daughter duo in Ayemenem symbolically fulfils Chacko's dream. Ammu, is not loved enough and the same status is been transferred to her children. The reason for this

injustice and unequal treatment is that they are the offshoot of a broken family- children of a Christian woman who married a Bengali Hindu and got divorced. Nor Rahel and Estha neither Ammu is to be blamed here. It is the society that evaluates people based not on their ability but on the age-old traditional values and dogmas. Therefore, in a quest to find love and respect Rahel ventures out of the family and actually finds it but which proves to be a temporary one. In-fact psychologically speaking, Rahel may not be able to stick with one person or love one person for a life time. This can be said in connection to the mistrust that has slowly grown in her towards the male counterparts. Her father, when he wanted to meet his children calls only for Estha, the male child on top of divorcing her mother and disserting them altogether. Chacko, her uncle has no interest or value for her and Estha whatsoever and Pappachi and Mammachi are too busy in their own personal affairs. Both the children are ‘fragmented’ and ‘disconnected’ (Roy, *GOST*, 225) and long for love. This disintegrated demeanour in the lives of the trio (Ammu, Rahel and Estha) make them transgressors of the worst kind.

“Perhaps, Ammu, Estha and she were the worst transgressors. But it wasn’t just them. It was the others too. They all broke the rules. They all crossed into forbidden territory. They all tampered with the laws that lay down who should be loved and how. And how much. The laws that make grandmothers grandmothers, uncles uncles, mothers mothers, cousins cousins, jam jam, and jelly jelly.” (Roy, *GOST*, 31)

So, at this juncture the incestuous relationship that the twins share in the course of the novel after their reunion can be taken as a partial fulfilment of their dream- the desire to be loved and cared for without cost. Although, this episode in the story had



given impetus to a large volume of upheaval among many spokespersons. This act which may sound illicit and unnatural yet carries a certain amount of beauty with it.

#### **4.8. Trauma and Relationships**

According to Michelle Balave, “A traumatic experience disrupts attachments between self and the other by challenging fundamental assumptions about moral laws and social relationships that are themselves connected to specific environments.” (Balave, 2008). In *GOST*, Arundhati Roy follows a narrative pattern similarly to that of an architect. She builds up her stories into a unified whole by interweaving many subjects and themes. One glaring thread that binds the book can be the human relationships portrayed. Following Michelle Balave’s statement on traumatic events and its disruptive effects on attachment between the self and the other one can easily map out the making and the unmaking of relation ties constantly evolving in the novel. Ammu’s audacity to marry on her own terms, getting divorced, coming back to Ayemmenem with her twins and having an affair with Velutha is much disliked by the family. All have reasons to show for the disgust. Pappachi and Mammachi are blinded by the old traditions and customs. As old as their physical bodies, is their thinking and ideology. The readers do not expect any sign of modernist ideology from the ‘Joint Director of Imperial Entomologist’ (Roy, *GOST*, 49). He has been a jealous wife beater. Mammachi is blind, she cannot see both in literal sense and in the manner of not being able to safeguard her own daughter. She herself is a victim of domestic violence. Chacko, Ammu’s real brother himself has no love and concern for her, instead he considers her as inferior to Margaret Kochamma, his one-time wife. Chacko is the nominal owner of the ‘Paradise Pickles & Preservers’. He has this habit of always

comparing Ammu and Rahel to the Englishers- Magaret Kochamma and Sophie Mol his daughter from his divorced English wife. Even before the arrival of Sophie Mol, Estha and Rahel are forced to speak in English and this task is taken by the Baby Kochamma, the half-nun bickering aunt. Both are shown the mirror of inferiority at a very tender age. This, instances produce a gap between the individuals who suffer and the individuals who torment. The result of this taunting is the feeling of loneliness, alienation and lack of sense of belongingness. They are the 'Hairy Ape' of the house- unwanted, unwelcomed and unloved. Hence in relation to Michelle Balave understanding of trauma, it can be conceived as a culturally specific event thereby encompassing all organism included in the arena of the occurrence. One cannot escape the effect of the catastrophe. However, the level of effect may differ in context of the individual's closeness to the event and the survivor itself. There is a sort of war waged between the powerful and the powerless in the novels of Arundhati Roy. They un-mask the evils of caste system, gender inequality, land issues and the like at the backdrop of a family and individual trauma. they are stories within a story- a multileveled plot, intertwining and often crossing their paths. Aftab's story of fighting and coming through the shame and bullying and insults of the people who think he is less of a human being to the 'khawbgah' and finally opening a unique paying guest to the plight of Tilo, her lovers, the adopted child of a freedom fighter and the gruesome condition of the beautiful and majestic Kashmir brings home memories of killings and beatings and betrayals and rejections by connecting lives that in other sense would not have known each other. These and those memories fill the psyche of the characters and the readers alike with both awe and disgust. Awe, because of the strength with which the battle is fought. The battle within and outside oneself, and disgust owing to the corrupted ideology of greed and avarice that fills the Nation's environment.

Mohd Inam Ul Haq employment of Mikhail Bakhtin's concepts of 'Polyphony' may be restated as such; "the voices of the hijras (transgender), the Kashmiris, struggling for the autonomy; of the farmers, the outcasts, the underclass, and the displaced due to the building of dams; of the mothers (Kashmiri) of the disappeared; of the owl, kittens, and dung beetle named Guikyom" (2021). *MOUH*, 'is a story of everyone and everything' (Haq, 2021). It is '*shattered story*' told by '*slowly becoming everybody...by slowly becoming everything*' (Roy, *MOUH*, 432). There is not only one voice but a polyphony of opinions, each given equal importance and value, similarly there is also a polyphony of traumatic incidents. It is not only the trauma faced by women, or war infested lot, or children but all humanity seems to suffer from the pangs of trauma. In one glance the novels are a critic of the privileged and the so-called upper caste. Those with power and status seem to be immune from the effects of trauma. Yet an insightful study of the workings of the novel reveals the universality of trauma. As discussed in chapter two, trauma follows a non-bias policy. Thereby encompassing and devouring everyone and everything. Roy tells and retells the contemporary history of India through the voices of the hijra, a Dalit man disguised as a Muslim, of Kashmiri's demanding secession from India, of the displaced due to the building of dams, of Indian Civil servants, of the cold-blooded killers and puppet media, of Adivasis and of artists, of the Manipuri Nationalist asking the withdrawal of AFSPA Act and of the Kashmiri mothers of the disappeared. The novel follows the interconnected lives of the neglected, the outcasts, the fallouts of the society and the shattered people. The story travels back and forth in time and place including and encompassing several lives and texts within the texts. For an instance Dr. Bhartiya's manifesto, Tilo's Kashmiri- English Alphabet Dictionary, Comrade Revathy's letter, Musa Yeswi's story of lost or Major Amrik Singh's asylum request. Their lives meet, depart and meet again in the inextricably

woven plot of the book. This can also be said in context of *The God of Small Things*, where the lives of the characters are not only interconnected but they interact with each other just like Anjum's double voice coming out from the same mouth. Along the path of the making and unmaking of the characters their relationship too burns peeling itself anew each time. The circle of life is kept moving. It keeps pushing and striving. Anjum leaves the Duniya because she feels she doesn't belong there. At one point her relationship with her parents is broken but as she enters the Khawbagh she makes a new house mother and many sisters. Zainab is left behind at the steps of the Dargha but she gets a new mother and many more khalas (aunts). For Saddam is born when Dayachand kills himself after the lynching scene and with that a new ray of hope ushers in. He is fueled by his motive of revenge and anger at the irresponsible and sly inspector Sherawat. Tilo's mother is dead, she leaves Naga and Musa Yeswi might not return from Kashmir but she meets Miss Udaya Jebeen, the baby she kidnaps and who is a new breed which perhaps will bring the much-awaited change in the country's socio-political map.

Robert Bornstein in his article 'The Psychodynamic Perspective' stressing on the origin of the theory opines that the psychodynamics perspective has evolved considerably since Freud's time which now in the present time includes innovative new approaches such as the Jungian Object Relation Theory and Neuro Psychodynamics. Psychodynamics perspective continues to influence many different areas of contemporary psychology and is being used in many different fields of study apart from its wide use in psychology and clinical psychology.

The empirical research on psychodynamic theory has produced mixed results. On the one hand the notion that one expresses strong sexual feelings from a very early stage has not held up to the empirical study whereas the idea that there are dependent, control-oriented, and end competitive personality types- an idea also derived from the psycho-sexual stage model does seem to be helpful in determining and dissecting the problems at hand. According to yet another assumption of the psychodynamic theory our behaviour and feelings as adults including psychological problems are rooted in our childhood experiences. The theory states that events in one's childhood have a great influence on one's adult life, shaping personality. The events that occur in childhood can remain in the unconscious, and cause problems later in the adult stage. The theory explains personality in terms of unconscious psychological process. It contends that personality is shaped as the drives are modified by different conflicts at different times in childhood during the psychosexual development phase.

*GOST* and *MOUH*, the novels selected for the study can be looked as a series of eventful occurrence in the lives of the characters, from one angle. There is no denying of the fact that both the novels present themes and subject much greater and pressing yet, the affects that the events occurring in the early lives of the characters which later shapes their outlook of the world can be taken as one important aspect of the novels and more so for the present research process. Not all the characters suffer in their childhood but the mental state that they are in can be very aptly linked to the past which comes out very obvious to the reader. For an instance Ammu's estranged demeanour of mind is caused by the lack of equal treatment, lack of love and the sense of unsupportiveness from the family. Roy presents the inheritance of trauma caused by injustice and unequal treatment towards women. Mammachi's sufferings is passed on to Ammu. She is not given the opportunity to go for further study, she is treated like

stranger in her own house, she is disowned and thus dies in a dirty hotel room at the age of 31. Her only crime is that she wanted to live and take decisions on her own. Her marriage with the Bengali Hindu and later the affair with the untouchable Velutha seems to be the cause of her downfall. She is much wronged by her family and the society. While on the other hand Chacko her brother is overfed with opportunities which he doesn't deserve also at some point. He is sent abroad to study; he is also a divorcee just like Ammu but the family and the society are all love and respect for him. In fact, Mammachi in a sort of the situation becomes his pimp, by providing a backdoor in his room for a convenient management of his manly needs. It is surprising to notice that Mammachi being a woman herself could tolerate this level of grievances plated out for Ammu and her kind. Psychodynamic theory that postulates that childhood experiences shape the personality in adult life can be applied here to the effect of events that shape and mould Saddam, Estha and Rahel.

Arundhati Roy in *MOU* presents the event where young Saddam aka Dayachand, son of a 'Chamar' becomes the crowd that lynches his father. Latterly known as Saddam after the incident, embarks on the mission to murder the inspector Sherawat and thereby bring the poetic justice. The event has a drastic mark in his psyche that he alters his name to Saddam Hussain from Dayachand, in an attempt to add power and strength to his second-class demeanour. This act of name change brings him the sense of freedom; freedom from the restriction of his low caste stature, freedom to move around freely. Although the thought of avenging his father's death is not accomplished by him but he states that his task will be carried by his kindred. The ones who will fight tooth and nail for equality and justice. Rahel and Estha are just seven years old when Sophie Mol, their English cousin drowns and dies as the boat three of them are rowing topples. Rahel becomes a drifter in life. The lack of concern from her maternal family

tolls heavily on her life. She is always considered less in comparison to Sophie Mol by her uncle Chacko and Mammachi. To top the charts is the unacceptable behaviour of Baby Kochamma towards her. The attitude of Baby Kochamma on Rahel and Ammu is fuelled by the hatred and in a sense revenge because she herself is a failure when it comes to loving someone unapologetically. When Baby Kochamma is presented in the novel, the readers come to know that she is in love with Father Mulligan but is not able to consummate the love. And, so when she sees Rahel and Ammu, loving and breaking the love laws she is all abhorrence for them. This leads to her coercing Estha to say that Velutha is the one who kidnapped Sophie Mol which leads to her death. Roy writes in *GOST*, “They provided the care (food, clothes, fees), but withdrew the concern. Therefore, she ventures outside the family in search of love and acceptance. Goes to places, studies, works, marries and returns as a divorcee just like her mother Ammu. Estha, ‘...occupied very little space in the world’ (Roy, *GOST*, 11). A brooding silence overshadows his presence and life. Not very welcomed at Ayemmenem house for the fact that he and his sister are the product of an ill match and an unacceptable union. He is separated from his other half (Rahel) after the tragic death of Sophie Mol. But before his father calls to Calcutta and sends him back to Ayemmenem, he goes through a lot of pain and suffering. The in-between time and space converts him to “A quiet bubble floating on a sea of noise” (Roy, *GOST*, 11). He is Rahel’s nemeses, while she rebels and makes her way out. Estha’s whole being is silenced by the childhood memories. He could never forget the eyes behind the bar that looked at him, when he witnessed Velutha’s hand in kidnapping Sophie Mol on Baby Kochamma’s malicious instigation. Loneliness and alienation take the better of him. Estha carries the mark of the childhood cold experiences to his youth. Taking long walks, doing household chores when in Calcutta, mapping the beaches and very less talking is become his usual activity. The

lack of care aggravated by the traumatic experiences makes him, “*An average student*,” and a child who, “*Does not participate in Group Activities*”. (Roy, *GOST*, 11). Zainab on other hand is loved not only by Anjum, but by many mothers in the House of Dreams. Although a foundling she becomes a demi fashion designer- fashioning and stitching a relationship based on love, respect and equality.

Psychodynamics thus plays a very crucial role. It is through the workings of the character’s inner mind that the readers are informed about the ups and downs in the story. The thoughts and feelings and desires which are sometimes unfulfilled or unreciprocated slips in the unconscious mind. These materials are then manifested in the form of dreams, or in the present study, strong desire like revenge for love through mindful acts and through slips of emotions and tongues. The author’s presentation of the characters in the select novels thus brings out the working of the conscious and the unconscious mind. Since all them are painted in flesh and blood and since literature is in a sort of mirror of the society. Estha, Rahel, Anjum, Saddam, Mammachi, Chacko, Pappachi etc., are our own reflections and their doings, our own experience. In this way the readers are able to connect with the author, thereby making the meaning of the working of the mind more reliable and apt for the study. The usage of defence mechanism by the characters are also one of the important points in the domain of the psychodynamics of relationship. It is through these systems that the individual inner desires or more appropriately conflicts are given an outlet. This way the realisation and fulfilment of the desires which sometimes are seen as harmful to the self and the society at large is mutilated and altered for a much nobler cause. Among this mechanism the dream work plays a vital and crucial role in the novels. Dreams here is taken both as the images created in the brain and picturised in sleep and those emotions and wishes that are fulfilled with the eyes open and awakened senses.



The interplay of the psychodynamics of relationship in the select novels thus gives an impetus in the evolvement and development of characters. The traumatic early childhood experiences in the case of Rahel and Estha coupled with the carefree and unsupervised upbringing in the later years contributes to the person they become in their teens. The emotions and feelings and desires hidden away in the unconscious pops up as Anjum enters the other side of the hedge at 'Khawbgah' thereby giving it a sort of volcanic outlet. For Tilo, she finds her type of humankind at Jannat Guest house. She is a fallout like all the rest residing at Jannat. The interrelation of the unconscious desires hidden away for a while which are either caused by a series of manhandling of childhood days, kinship and traumatic events plays a very vital role in building the relations of the characters. It is this factor that decides the closeness and aloofness of the characters from each other.

However, Roy's tactic and intent of relationships are not all dull and melancholic. As can be seen from the creation of a new society of fallouts at the end of the *MOUJ*. The loss and estrangement of one relationship gives way to a newer one. The cycle of relationships of life is maintained in a disruptive manner. It has a volcanic tune to itself. The old relationship may break with the imbalances and differences in views causing trauma. Nevertheless, the recovery and aftermath of this breakage is much more beautiful and fertile than the former one. The Jannat Funeral and Guest House, represents the perfect ecosystem for the development and growth of people like Anjum and Saddam and Tilo. It is the place where no one can judge or discriminate other. The reason being that they all belong to the weaker sections of the society. The society they have created is a combination of members from the intersex community, men who are no longer wanted or no longer an asset to the family, women who are rejected and not accepted by the society. Comrade Revathy, although dead by the time

the letter she wrote is read, is very much the member of this society. She is a dark skinned, low caste girl, who is raped mercilessly and left in the jungle to die. One may compare Anjum's butcher's luck incident with that of the inhuman act committed by the stakeholders of the law to Comrade Revathy. The author remarks that Miss Udaya Jeeben, as representative of the new breed that will usher a classless society. A society where the touchable and the untouchable, women-men-intersex may co-exist peacefully and harmoniously.

## **Chapter 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

In the wake of the new millennium, estrangement in areas inside the family and outside homes have appeared to be a common phenomenon. With increasing numbers of suicide cases, depression and anxiety attacks the world seems to be pushing towards situation more challenging than the days one has previously seen. Trauma, which was earlier connected to only people who had survived terrors and havocs of war, has become as common as everyday life occurrences. Trauma termed as ‘shell shock’ earlier can be linked with the Holocaust period and Vietnam war survivors. Later after the war and due to subsequent studies done by the American Psychological Association and others, the term Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PDST) was added in the manual. The occurrence of trauma itself is a catastrophic event yet its effect on relationships and their effect on the occurrence in the individual’s life is the main focus of the study. Traumatic occurrence understood in this study is not only a one-time event but that of having a transgenerational or transhistorical quality. According to Caruth and other critics, trauma can be transferred from one generation to the other by the virtue of sharing similar attributes like caste, gender, religion, nationality etc. As discussed earlier in the introduction and subsequent chapters, when trauma happens it encompasses all, big and small, high and low, male and female, undifferentiated, affecting the cycle of life and human existence.

The interrelation of the conscious and the unconscious plays a very important role at this juncture. The unconscious holds the thoughts and emotions that seems to be bizarre and unacceptable and are repressed and bottled up in some parts of the mind.

These emotions get an outlet through actions and situations upon which the individual have no control. They are just like the images that traumatic incidents project as they appear repeatedly in the life of the traumatized. As long as the dictum that human beings are social animals will remain, so also life and society will be affected by its mechanisms either good or bad. The psychodynamics of relationships through its various workings, like the interplay of Id, Ego, Superego, kinds of defence mechanism, dream works, weave the structure of the kinds of relationship that the characters in the selected novels show. This interpretive method helps tools in dissecting the workings of the mind, thereby bringing out the behaviour and the impact on the relationships in the ecosystem. Although, Freud's over emphasis on infantile sexuality has been questioned a lot and not all his theories will fit the parameters of the present world that we are living in. Yet, there is no denying about its importance and indispensability in the field of psychoanalytic criticism.

The word trauma finds an easy access in any normal conversation in the present times. Its usage has been prevalent in the common parlance since the time of its emergence with authors like Cathy Caruth, Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub but how much of its usage is truly taken to be meaningful is a question to ponder upon. Perhaps this easy access is revelatory of the unhindered passage of trauma into the lives of the victims. Trauma might as well be equated with any epidemic. Its effects are so devastating and far reaching. Since it is related with the human psyche, its occurrence creates overlapping ripples that touches almost every corner of the soul and every relationship. Thus, slanting heavily towards the calamitous nature of psychological trauma, the effect and the impact that the event produces, is not a one time show but has a transhistorical tune to it. Its sound can ring miles away and even after centuries. The hereditary quality and nature of trauma may be connected to some physical

malfunction. For instance, if one member of the family suffers the ailment then the chances of one or more member of the same blood line suffering the same disease. A traumatic event is not an individual's affair but connected to all related to the event and the person who went through the event. Hence its far-reaching effects foregrounds the presence of trauma. After its passage from Freud's study of hysteria and shell shock alleys it reached its peak after the Vietnam war. Perhaps the term itself is yet to be understood. However, in simple terms it is understood as different from other mental anxieties and psychological ailments.

Roy in her novels brings an array of characters. The world she believes in is a world where human beings irrespective of the many differences live and progress, revealing its multifaceted and multifarious character. It is particular and general at the same time. To this landscape the non-bias tenets of trauma fit well. Although some of the characters in her novels do not face trauma yet it cannot be taken altogether as abated or unaffected. All suffer and as stated earlier too, the distinction between the perpetrator and the victim is an elusive line.

The concept of trauma having a 'plastic' quality and nature is put forward by Catherine Malabou. Her books like *The New Wounded* and *The Ontology of the Accident*, are two very influential materials in this connection. By plasticity she points towards the quality of the trauma that has the power to change the person who has gone through a traumatizing event. The altering process is induced with the shattering of the ego and a birth of a completely new being which may not have any connection to the characters of the past or past memories.

Arundhati Roy's revelatory writings have been a question of applause and disgust too. She is a champion of women's right and a brave voice that speaks about

and for the upliftment of the marginalised lot of the society. Her organic approach to the theme of the downtrodden is true to her own upbringing and her long experience and wide range of social activism done for and on behalf of the same. This is proven by the publication of series of essays and her undying social activism for the lowly. Arundhati Roy has been an ardent supporter of women's right and right to equality with other genders of the society. Her active participation in rallies, interviews and discussions relating to the betterment of women's state is a known fact. Her bitter criticism of Shekar Kapur's celebrated film *Bandit Queen* (1994), appears in *The Great Indian Rape Trick I* and *The Great Indian Rape Trick II*. Based on the real-life story of Phoolan Devi, Roy criticised the film maker of 'exploiting both her life and its meaning' (Tiwary, 22). According to her the film maker did not do justice while portraying the protagonist's life. To her, Phoolan Devi, despite being illiterate was a courageous woman who fought against the social evils. She herself is the daughter of the kind politics of democracy where the poor becomes poor and the rich becomes rich. Her activism in recent years has not only been limited to India but has reached boundaries thus unifying the world as one single whole. "Arundhati Roy has a great concern for social justice. She has concern for all the postcolonial issues like equality of caste, gender, ecological balance, nuclear deal, privatization, liberalization, globalization and many others." (Tiwary, 164). Her excellence as a writer and a critic stands in the line of great visionaries and revolutionaries like P.B Shelly, George Bernard Shaw, Gandhi, Tagore and others.

Deexa Tiwari, in 'The Predicament of Women as reflected in the works of Arundhati Roy and Anita Desai, A Comparative Study' (2013) writes, "*The God of Small Things*, (is) a social document exposing the real-life story of a small village in Kerala. All characters in the novel are from the common lot of people who suffer

miserably especially women and the downtrodden in the society.” Her first novel, *GOST* depicts the ruthless social, cultural, economic and familial structure. Set in Ayemenem, Kerala India, the story runs with the same humidity and scorching heat like the weather in Ayemenem during May. It speaks of injustice and inequality in the field of gender, property inheritance, education, caste, and religion. From the feminist point of view, the novel can be taken as the one where women’s representation is seen from the male view point. In fact, marginalised lot like women, children and the Dalits do not seem to have a voice in the novel. The three generations of women namely, Mammachi- the grandmother, Ammu- the mother and Rahel- the daughter suffering from the male dominated family is proof enough. “Pappachi, Mammachi, Baby Kochamma, Comrade Pillai, Chacko and others are the agents of history” (Tiwary, 166). There is a sense of ironic tone with these characters. They take themselves as a breed of the modern world while the way they deal with issues relating to inter-caste marriage, love, divorce, inheritance rights belie their crown of modernity. Things cannot be changed. Tradition should not bind but people should, who actually are the crown of all creations. Ammu and Velutha had to pay the price for breaking the ‘love laws’ (Roy, *GOST*, 33) and not being able to keep the “History in live performance” (Roy, *GOST*, 309).

*MOUH*, her second and the latest novel from her vast array of thoughts came after a gap of 20 years. The issue of injustice and unequal distribution of rights is carried forward in this novel. If the former book looks more at the cluster of familial disarray the later novel widens its prospective to the outside world. The novel’s timeline runs the country’s (India) territory far and wide. Anjum, Tilo, Saddam, Musa, Dasgupta, Naga and Revathy are normal people brewed in an environment of dust and smoke of India’s political manifesto. ‘The ministry of utmost happiness’ is a sarcasm of policies

and agendas of the media, the land accession and rights of the marginalised. Her depiction of the unrepresented and the disappeared and the unheard lot is a clear clarion call against the disgust and petrifying socio-politics existing in the country. The novel, is a call for Azadi; freedom from restraints, to choose for oneself, the freedom to live and love and prosper according to one's own pace and wish. The fact that she had been summoned a couple of times by law goes in line with her unwavering and unhesitant voice for the what is due and right. It is not a single party that she focusses on but tries to bring a myriad sense of understanding. Hers is a 'polyphonic' stand and she makes it a point to stay. It is neither male nor female, she fights for but human beings at large. Anjum's double voice, characterised by a deep coarse manly voice and the shrill female voice, is much like her stand in favour of the marginalised.

Both the novels, although studying different landscapes and subjects may, be combined by a single thread of the theme of justice for people who are the 'fallouts' of the society. The sense of injustice in the first novel seems to be carried forward in the second novel too. If Ammu, suffers in the hands of the traditional laws and rules Anjum and Tilo also suffer from the system that incircles the country's atmosphere.

There are also autobiographical elements in both the novels. These similarities between real life and that of the characters projected in the novels go a long way in the depiction of the brooding and unhealthy familial and social environment that causes the shattering of the ego. These cracks which appear along the way do affect the mental and social life of the characters. Although, the author herself has no claim in connection to this opinion, the reader can see the connection between the Ayemenem house and Ammu's case in stark similarity to Roy herself and her mother's life. The authors' mother Mary Roy after a set back with an unsuccessful marriage with a Hindu man in Calcutta comes back to her parental house at Ayemenem with her son Lalit Kumar



Christopher Roy and daughter Arundhati Roy just like Ammu in, *GOST*. This strain of connection follows Tilottama's mother's life. The fact that Roy's mother, and in the story, Tilo's mother starts an English Medium School on her own has an autobiographical ring to it. Another similar connection can be drawn between the author herself and the care-free brown-skinned Tilottama. From the novel's narrative, readers learn that both took up architecture and tried hands at many ventures. The fictional representations appear to be in a way the author's redeeming intention speaking through Tilo and Anjum, betraying zeal to see a society with everyone growing and developing like those dwelling in Jannat Guest house.

Arundhati Roy is an active and fervent social activist. Her audacious work in various environmental and human rights causes which often puts herself at odds with Indian legal authorities and the country's middle-class establishment is no new news for her readers. Her support of Maoist- supported Naxalite insurgency groups, views on Narmada dam construction and the recent remarks in support of Kashmiri independence has if not famous, made her a frequent visitor of the legal quarters of the country. This outspoken advocacy of human rights although has in a sort tarnished her position in the sight of some yet, it has brought her laurels too. "...Roy was awarded the Lannan Cultural Freedom Award in 2002, the Sydney Peace Prize in 2004, and the Sahitya Akademi Award from the Indian Academy of Letters in 2006." (Tikkanen, 2021). In another article titled 'Study of Social Activism in Arundhati Roy's Work.' Anup Baul and Dr. Reena Sanasam hails, Roy's undertaking of the conflicting issues of the society persisting in Indian modern society in connection to the small things in life which affect people's behaviour and their lives. Both novels studied here portray a society infested by the old and degrading dogmas passed down from generation to generation. The timeline of the novel is the modern post-independence India but the outlook of the

society towards issues relating to women's right, inequality and injustice meted towards the marginalised like the untouchable, disparity due to religion and region is nothing but old issues and needing urgent change. The country seems to be still living and being affected by the past. Ammu and Rahel's trauma come from the injustice meted out to them because of their inferior gender- "Of course women. / Women of course." (Roy, *MOUH*, 312). She (Ammu) is denied family inheritance, love and care. Her only crime being choosing to love the one she loved. This denial of decency cannot be tolerated by the stakeholders of history. This motif of gender stereotype is carried forward in her daughter's life too. The Ayemenem house could not swallow their pride and status in the society and so couldn't accept Rahel and Estha, the children of a divorcee daughter as their grandchildren. Rahel drifts and poor Estha turns into a silent bubble floating from Calcutta to Kerala and back to Calcutta and Kerala again, earning his livelihood by his own means of helping in his father's family. Because society has all insults and scorn for Anjum, she decides to leave the Duniya and enter the magically dramatic yet dark world of Khawbgah. She is a survivor of the Godha Riot and a child of what is called 'butcher's luck'. Velutha and Saddam are the Untouchables. While the former is ruthlessly murdered by hands that keep law and crime intact in the society, Saddam's father and some of his associates becomes the victim of a mob lynching. The value of a dead cow seems to be more precious than the lives of the Chamars. Roy depicts the condition of the lower castes in the most sensitive and dire emergency. She tells the story of the society where, Baby Kochamma couldn't think of the shadow of the untouchables touching her and Mammachi's disgust on the thought of Velutha and her daughter, Ammu having a physical relationship. It is the society where Paravans and the Chamars had to go backward while at the same time sweeping away the mark of their footsteps so that no upper caste individual may tread upon them.

Social dogmas play a very curial role in the occurrence of traumatic event in the life of the characters presented in the novels selected for the study. Among many causes of Velutha's inhuman predicament, one important factor is his low stature in the society. He is a Paravan, and so cannot be imagined in a state of relationship with a daughter of the high-class family. Although, Baby Kochamma instigates the fire by forcing Estha to testify of Velutha's crime which he had not even committed. This event which leads in traumatizing the children and the mother's life is a fair example of social dogmas effecting the occurrence of traumatic event. Again, in, *MOUJ*, Anjum is traumatized because she is a 'hijra' and a 'Muslim'. Her trauma can be separately looked at from two timelines. Although Arundhati Roy does not explicitly mention Anjum's inner workings of the mind during his/her childhood. There are phrases where insults and scorns are heaped upon her by some boys. The climax comes when she is attacked by the Hindu mob at Gujarat. It is right in front of her eyes that, Zakir Mian is killed. She is the witness of the folding and unfolding of men and women. In spite of all this she survives. This life is not a gift of love or compassion but of sheer disgust and humiliation. There is a constant conflict between these two poles. The conflict, which is one of the major themes of the novel surpasses its boundaries and marks a different level of autonomy. It encompasses a variety of groups who are constantly in a kind of tug-of-war. The sole motive for this fight is, power and authority. Shyam Selvadurai, like Roy projects the struggle in a very normal shade yet which seeps deep into the conscious of the readers. Both the author props the socially constructed norms of all human being-the heterosexual, the homosexual, the powerful/authoritative, and the weaker-those without voice or choice. Therefore, after this event she is marked for life and the sounds and noises of the saffron parakeets will never leave her. Thus, impacting the future course of actions.

Human relation is a celebrated theme in both the novels selected for the study. Roy's choice and love for this motif comes from her numerous engagement and active participation towards the social cause. The period of gap between her first and the latest novel, she travelled enough and researched enough about the lives and struggles of the people. Thus, the publication of many insightful essays on myriad subjects. Human relationship as understood from the present study point of view is the state of interconnectedness and interrelation of individuals life with the sky of psychic workings upon it. Michelle Balaev, in "Trends in Literary Trauma Theory", while discussing trauma in literature quotes Kirby Farrell's statement of a 'post-traumatic culture' to describe this generation. (Balaev, 3). The intricacies of the human relationships and the way they function at the backdrop of the familial and societal laws give rise as well as meaning to trauma. Velutha, the Paravan is like a surrogate father to the twins and a dear friend cum lover to Ammu. In *The God of Small Things*, apart from this trio no one is connected in the true sense of the word. Their relationship is as beautiful and intricate as the wooden toys that Velutha makes for the kids. Ammu, also realises that this God of one arm is a real companion to them in their own house where they are largely unwelcomed. Therefore, when the incident leading to Sophie's death and Velutha's arrest and later death, shakes all three. In this sense the effect of trauma seems to be larger in connection to the depth of the relationship that the three shared with Velutha.

The occurrence of trauma and its study perhaps may not be reachable if the catalyst of relationship was not present. Psychological trauma as such may not be understood in vacuum. It seems to be in need of a carrier that will give meaning and also a language to the event that had traumatized the victim or group of people. Although, there has been a lot of argument about whether trauma has a language of its

own. The 'speakability' of trauma finds its hold in the Lacanian philosophy of the unconscious as being structured like a language system. Therefore, if the unconscious has a literal structure, then trauma which is latent or hidden away somewhere in the unreachable parts of the brain must be having a language of its own. This language constantly shapes and reshapes the survivor making him/her new each time with no affiliation whatsoever to the older self.

The theory of trauma narratives, by displaying string concern for the interrelation between scars and the language of the scars presents a potential to represent trauma and bring its complexities to a comprehensible module. By giving trauma a language and a sense of speakability there is a breaking up of the unclaimed and unreachable aspects of trauma as stated by Caruth and others like Felman and Laub. It is through the telling of stories about the past happenings that individual's traumatic experiences are witnessed and thus the process of healing and recovery begins. Literary narratives are an apt medium for representing interruptions caused by trauma and revealing altered states through narrative representation.

In *MOUH* Roy speaks about the un-consoled lot. These are the groups of fallouts from different sections of the society. They are the ones undertaking dharnas at the agitation grounds and also those who do not have the guts to come out of their cocoon and speak out or those who are tired at the slow or never happening justice. Mothers who have lost their sons, wives who are with their husband's photographs, farmers, generations suffering from the gas explosion so on and so forth. Among this struggling and fighting people is Anjum and her friends, the fall outs. They don't take part in the agitation but they surely represent the part of population that are suffering at the hands of politics, police and media that is partial and sold out to sources greater than humanity. Even Ammu, Velutha, the twins, can also be a part of the group. In a

fanatical metaphor Anjum and her friends can be said to be relatives of the family that is corroded and poisoned by the ills of the society. Therefore Roy, propagates a new kind of species born out of the amalgamation of all the fall outs of the society. Miss Udaya Jebeen is the one example of the class less society that Roy speaks about. She is neither Hindu, nor Christian, not rich nor poor, both from the upper class and lower class. A pluralistic kind, may she usher a society without any prejudice or stratification or categorisation and grow like Anjum rooting comfortably in the soil she chooses to plant herself.

The shock suffered by Estha and Rahel in the incident of Sophie Mol's death and the subsequent events and Anjum's disturbed psyche which is the effect of the inhuman treatment she receives during the riots in Gujarat, tremendously effects the characters and their relationships with the other characters in the novels. It is not only Estha, Rahel and Anjum who are traumatized by a catastrophic event in life. Other characters like Saddam, Velutha, Ammu, Mammachi, Comrade Revathy, Tilo and her mother are few among many that has to go through the test of time. The fault of the woman character in the novels is that they are second gender and so are discriminated. Both the novels are a perfect representation of woman's suffering at the hands of patriarchy and voicing out the demands of their due share at the same time. Mammachi, Ammu and Rahel the representation of three generations of women suffering at the hands of male dominance can be taken as perfect examples to the above stated lines. The marginalised community which encompasses the hijras, the Untouchables and all those people who are termed as the weaker section of the society are in a way at the mercy of the powerful. They are the fallouts of the society. Thus, in this way Roy presents trauma in her novels. It is related to the trauma of the children, women and the marginalised. In fact, all the characters in both the novels are traumatized in a way, if

one speaks in the broader sense. Since trauma is non-bias and a phenomenon which none can control, the rate of infliction and vulnerability seems to be ever increasing. These traumatic events faced by the individuals brings about a dramatic change. It is sudden and striking with a repetitive quality attached to it. This event that occurs at the outset and the recurring events which appear in the forms of dreams, flashbacks and memories alters the character going through the pain.

Trauma as suffered by the characters in both the novels selected for the study although is painful and discriminating at some instances gives a new direction to the character's personality development. By altering the individual's perspective of life which are usually caused by a sudden and at often times terrifying events. These events transform the traumatized. Trauma in this sense has a plastic or transforming quality as noted by Malabou. The change brought about by trauma in a way directs the traumatized and the course of life. Anjum, after she comes out alive from the riots in Gujarat where she is spared not in the virtue of humanity but in the name of 'butcher's luck'. She is a changed person. This is represented by her choice of the men's wardrobe for herself and the little Zainab. Her oppressors thought it would bring bad luck if they stain their hands with her blood-the blood of the intersex. The way Roy pictures the abandoned and the unrepresented is a radical remark thrown at the system of the country's politics. She in the process of advocating of the marginalised presents a criticism of the state of law and the policies held by the powerful, the media and the police/army, which even though is an establishment for the safety and protection of the weaker sections of the society seems to be acting as the oppressors instead.

This agenda further leads to Roy's focus on the trauma of characters directly and indirectly and her fight for a society where equality in terms of gender, sex, caste or stature exists. This speaks about the authors immense fervour and advocacy against

the social evils and the traumatic ripples caused by its practices. As mentioned in the earlier chapters about the author's championship of social cause, she projects her interest in the maintenance of a classless society as evident by the portrayal of the Jannat Guest House and Funeral Home in *MOUH*. It is an abode for all the fallouts and the ones society discriminates. Ammu, Velutha, the twins, Mammachi, Comrade Revathy, Saddam, the other hijras surely finds a place where they can belong and also relate. Thus, the manner in which Roy represents the unrepresented by enumerating the problems they face and the trauma caused thereon reconfirms her use of the literary art to consolidate the 'un-consolated' and the odd ones of the society.



## Works Cited

Abubakar, Sadiya. "Art as Narrative: Recounting Trauma through Literature". *IRA-International Journal of Management & Social Science*, Vol.08, 2017.

<http://resaerch-adavances.org/index.php/RAJMSS>.

Andreson, Sarah Wood. *Reading of Trauma, Madness and the Body*. Palgrave, Macmillan, 2012.

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1057/9781/37263193>.

Anne, Whitehead. *Trauma Fiction*. Edinburgh University Press, 2020.

Balaev, Michelle, "Trends in Literary Trauma Theory". *Mosaic: An International Critical Journal*, Vol. 41. June 2008, pp- 149-166. University of Manitoba, 2008.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/44029500.2008>

Barry, Peter. *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New Delhi, 2015.

Bast, Florina. "READING RED: The Troping of Trauma in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*". *Callaloo*, vol.34, 2011, pp. 1069-1086. The Hopkins University Press, 2011.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41412478>.

Baul, Anup and Dr. Reena Sanasam. "Study of Social Activism in Arundhati Roy's Work". *ISOR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol.19, feb 2014, pp- 35-38.

<https://www.isorjournals.org>

Bronstein, R. "The Psychodynamic Perspective". Noba Textbooks series: Psychology. Champaign, IL: DEF publishers. 2022.

<http://noba.to/zdemy2cv>.

Caruth, Cathy, editor. *Trauma: Exploration in Memory*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.

Caruth, Cathy. *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma Narrative, and History*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016.

Cherry, Kendra. 'The Role of the Conscious Mind' .01- June- 2020.

<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-the-conscious-mind-2794984>

Das, Kumar Bijay. *Twentieth Century Literary Criticism*. Atlantic Publishers and Distributors (p) ltd, 2014.

Das, Shurti. "Trauma and Transgender Space in Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*", 2017.

<https://scholar.google.co.in/citation?user=qUp10AAAAj&+918730876551>

Felman, Shoshana and Dori Lamb. *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*. Routledge, 1992.

Frosh, Stephen. *The Politics of Psychoanalysis: An Introduction to Freudian and Post-Freudian Theory*. Macmillan Education UK, 1999.

Goodman, W.R. *Contemporary Literary Theory*. Doaba Publications, Guru Nanak Market, Delhi, 2004.

Hall, Calvin, S. *A Primer in Freudian Psychology*. Plume and Meridian Book. The New American Library, Inc, 1999.

Haq, Moh Inam Ul. "A Polyphonic Study of Arundhati Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*". *Journal of Xi*. Vol. XIII, issue. 4, 2021.

<https://www.xajzkjds.in/gallery/27-april 2021>

Herman, David. "The Nexus of Narrative and Mind". *Basic Elements of Narrative*, 2009, pp-137-160.

<https://www.reserachgate.net/publication/285394954>

Hossain, Md. Mahroof. "Psychoanalysis Theory used in English Literature: A Descriptive Study". *Global Journal of Human-Social Science: G Linguistics & Education*, vol.7, issue 1, 2017.

<https://www.reserachgate.net/publication/353246513>.

Iyer, Nalini. "Narrating a Fragmented Nation Arundhati Roy's Ministry of Utmost Happiness". *Revista canaria De Estudios Ingleses*, 76, Issn: e-2530-8355, pp. 163-173, 2018.

<http://dio.org/10.25145/j.recasein.2018>

Jalal, Ayesha. *The Pity of partition: Manto's Life, Times, and Work Across the India-Pakistan Divide*. Princeton University Press, 2013.

Kaur, Loveleen. "The Rights of Girl Child in Indian Society As Fragmented by Arundhati Roy in *The God of Small Things*". *International journal of English language, literature and humanities*, volume II, November 2014.

<http://www.ijellh.com>.

Kunze, Peter.C. “For the Boys: Masculinity, Gray Comedy, and the Vietnam War in *Slaughterhouse Five*”. *Studies in American Humor*, series.3, No. 26, pp-41-57. State University press, 2012.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23823831>.

Levy, Kenneth. “Psychodynamic Theories of Relationships”. Sage Publications, 2009.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234138492.2009>

Longworth, Young Sarah. “Trauma and the Ethical Dilemma in Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things*”, 2006.

<https://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncw/listing.aspx?id=1596>.

Malabou, Catherine. *Ontology of the Accident: An Essay on Destructive Plasticity*.

Translated by Carolyn Shread. Polity Press, Cambridge, 2012.

Malabou, Catherine. *The New wounded: From Neurosis to Brain Damage*. Translated by Steven Miller, Forham University Press, New York, 2012.

Mambrol, Nasrullah. “Trauma Studies: Literary Theory and Criticism”.

literariness.org, 2018.

<https://literariness.org/2018/12/19/trauma-studies/amp/>

Manto, Saadat Hassan. *Kingdom’s End and Other Stories*. Translated by Khalid Hasan. Penguin Books, 1990.

*Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism*. Edited by Maud Ellmann. Longman Group UK Limited. New York, 1994.

“Psychodynamics.” Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, Merriam-Webster.

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/psychodynamics>

Radstone, Susannah. "Trauma Theory: Contexts, Politics, Ethics". *Trauma, Theory and Representation*, Vol.30, march 2007, pp-9-29. Edinburgh University Press, 2007.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/43152697>.

Rose, Kate. "Abuse or Be Abused: Traumatic Memory, Sex Inequality, and Millennium as a Socio-Literary Device". *Dignity: A Journal on Sexual Exploitation and Violence*, Vol.3, 2018.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328547621>

Roy, Arundhati. *The God of Small Things*. Random House India Pvt: Penguin, 2002.

Roy, Arundhati. *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*. Random House India Pvt: Penguin, 2017.

Shahbaz, Sara and Hafiz Qasim. "Exploring Social and Situational Transgender Trauma in Roy's *The Ministry of Utmost Happiness*". *Hamdardislamics*, Vol. 43, 2020.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/347842949>.

Showalter, Elaine. *The Female Malady: Women, Madness, and English Culture, 1830-1980*. Pantheon Books, New York, 1985.

Singh, Arun Kumar. *The Comprehensive History of Psychology*. Motilala Banarsidass Publishers (p)ltd, Delhi, 2017.

Tikkanen, Amy. "Arundhati Roy". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 20 Nov. 2021.

<https://www.britanica.com/biography/Arundhati-Roy>. Accessed

Tiwari, Deexa. "The Predicament of women as a reflected in the works of Arundhati Roy and Anita Desai A comparative study". *Shodhganga@INFLIPNET*, 2006.

<http://hdl.handle.net/10603/99527>.

Tiwary, Narendra. *Arundhati Roy: Concepts and Concerns*. Krantikaal Prakashan, Assam, 2012.

Utami, Dwi. "Psychoanalysis of the Dream Works to Show Roy's Despair toward Indian Society in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*". April 2006.

<http://lib.Uness.ac.id/2299/1/1501>.

Vallasek, Julia-Reka. "From Small Things to Big Symbols: Transgressability of Borders in Arundhati Roy's Work". *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory*, Dec 2018.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/329769764>.

Vickory, Laurie. "Voices of Survivors in Contemporary Fiction". *Contemporary Approaches in Literary Trauma Theory*, 2014.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/304864416>

Wittmann, L., and R. Binswanger. "Reconsidering Freud's dream theory". *International Journal of Dream Research*, vol.13, no. 2, Oct. 2020.

<https://doi.org/10.11588/ijodr.2020.2.73940>.

Zamindari, Vazira and Fazila Yacoobali. *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia*. Columbia University Press, 2007.