

COLLECTIVE CONSCIOUS IN THE NOVEL 'THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS'

Abstract

The God of small things was a novel written in 1997 by Booker Prize winner Arundhati Roy. The novel primarily talks about the multiple issues which are happening around us and creating such chaotic situations have become human's inheritance in post-colonial India. Though, India has become freed from colonizers still some roots prevalent in society's mind, so these things are clearly shown in the novel. Here the writer is even though in Globalized Era how she portrayed the characters through some cultural constraints, of course these cultural constraints have become finger points in the novel to show what is happening around us. Roy particularly focused on contemporary issues which become primordial in individual's life. As Rabindranath Tagore says in Gitanjali that the great world has been broken down into several narrow domestic walls such as caste, class, race, women subjugation, community, creed and other beliefs. These are all the most crucial and primary instruments that The God of Small Things uses to illustrate its points. Generally discrimination has the potential to occur on the basis of any difference. It is a natural consequence that happens in any society whether it is India or other countries. On the whole in this paper, we are going to make a different attitude on different perspective by using the Archetypal criticism in the writings Arundhati Roy. This paper technically tries to present that how archetypes become part of writer's mind, when the author lives in society because of the totality of the cultural constraints happened in the novel. That we are going to look into them in the paper.

Keywords: Characters, Archetypes, Human psyche, patterns, Analysis, Cultural constraints, Women subjugation, Marxism, Collective unconscious.

Author

Mr. K. Jayaramudu
Assistant Professor
Department of English
Sreyas Institute of Engineering and
Technology
Nagole, Bandlaguda, Hyderabad, India.

I. INTRODUCTION

The novel *God of Small Things* was a fictional story published in 1997 in the southern India Kerala especially in a small traditional village Ayemenem. It is a story which revolves around the orthodox family and has some patriarchal dominance. So, in the story there is a character named Ammu who was born in the upper middle class family and got married to an alcoholic husband. When the plot gets developed in the novel Ammu character undergoes many hurdles, because as an alcoholic husband she faces many problems. In the story there are some major characters which have some significant roles to show some specific cruel minds in the novel. However, the novel was written in post-independent India things were portrayed as they were before independent India. So, here we are about to understand some significant points which would come from the totality of the society irrespective of religion, creed, discrimination and other beliefs. In general what we are going to understand is how archetypes affected the writer's mind despite they were living in a globalized country.

In this context, it becomes evident that two key factors unleash the brutal violence that transpires: (a) the convergence of individuals from diametrically opposing classes, encompassing the high and low strata, the wealthy and impoverished, and the high and low castes, and (b) an underlying apprehension of natural instincts, predominantly centered around sexual desires. Ammu and Velutha's actions constituted a challenge to humanity's pursuit of dominance, structure, and restraint. Their punishment served as a manifestation of society's aversion to the forces of nature. Velutha's demise transcended mere mortality; it marked the conclusion of his existence. His death prompted various maneuvers and strategies to come into play. He was accused of abduction and murder. The Communist party accused the police of eliminating one of its party members, but took no action to save him, seeking political gain from his demise. Baby Kochamma poisoned the minds of Mammachi and Chacko, implicating Ammu and her twins in the unfortunate events. Consequently, Ammu was forced to leave her home and worked in various roles elsewhere for a meager salary for four years before her eventual passing, attributable to multiple factors. The Church refused her burial, leading to her cremation at an electric crematorium. Her life came to a close, and her remains were placed in an urn.

To grasp the essence of the story, it becomes evident that the writer cannot break free from the cultural confines that surround them, and this theme permeates "*The God of Small Things*." In the novel, Roy portrays women as victims of oppression, subjugation, domestic violence, discrimination, societal pressures, and prejudices. What's intriguing about Arundhati Roy's narrative universe is that it doesn't solely consist of moral monsters, yet instances of evil manifest throughout. "*The God of Small Things*" narrates the life of Ammu, a woman who has experienced divorce and neglect by her family. Ammu is the daughter of Pappachi and Mammachi and the sister of Chacko. Her childhood was marked by trauma, witnessing her father's abuse of her mother and enduring her own mistreatment during sadistic outbursts of rage. Her pursuit of higher education was thwarted by her father's belief that girls should not pursue it. Pappachi, her father, presented himself as a model citizen outwardly, displaying servility and deference when dealing with white men. However, within the confines of his home, he transformed into a cruel tyrant toward his wife and children. For Ammu, home felt like a prison, motivating her to hastily enter into matrimony as an escape.

Ammu's marriage was not arranged, which was the customary practice; rather, it was her own choice. She wedded a Bengali man from outside her community, who worked as an Assistant Manager at a Tea Plantation in the north. After marrying him, she discovered that he was a reckless alcoholic who, in order to avoid being dismissed, was willing to accept the indecent proposal of his boss, Mr. Hollick. Shocked and dismayed, she left him, taking her twins Rahel and Estha with her. When she returned to Ayemenem, her parents' home, she was met with a lack of warmth. She found herself back in "everything she had fled from only a few years ago," and her father refused to believe her story because he couldn't fathom that an Englishman, or any Englishman, would desire another man's wife. While her brother Chacko went to Oxford, she was denied higher education even in India. Chacko, who had married abroad and later divorced, returned with the child from that marriage, Sophie, who was placed in her mother's care in England. Chacko's sense of entitlement to his parents' property is apparent early in the novel through his habit of claiming everything as his own, often joking, "What is yours is mine, and what is mine is also mine." In Ayemenem, Ammu's life came to a standstill. She felt lonely and restless in the dreary and unwelcoming environment. As a married woman and divorcee, she had no place in her parents' home. The novel emphasizes the lack of status for a divorced daughter, particularly after she had married outside her community and breached trust.

Here, if we apply Carl Gustav Jung Archetypal criticism and Collective unconscious to the fictional story then we will come to know that these characters come from writers collective unconscious. If we study the female character, Particularly in the story Ammu character it shows as if it was drawn from our Indian mythology. Therefore, all the major fictional characters in the story seemed the same in the scriptures like Ramayana and Mahabharata. If we take an example from the Ramayana where an orthodox woman Sita is humiliated by sending into woods but in believing in other words at the end of the Ramayana. Similarly in the novel The God of Small Things Ammu an orthodox women humiliated because of her divorce with her husband. So in the novel what happens is she is not given the respect and priority in male dominated society. On the whole what we are going understand is that what ever happened in the scriptures same things are portrayed in the novel The God of Small things.

We are here understanding not the novel but also the scriptures through collective unconscious by studying Archetypal criticism.

The philosopher and psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung viewed the complete human self as encompassing all psychic processes. In contrast to Freudian theories that confined the libido to the sexual realm, Jung argued that the libido was a form of energy that could be directed into various domains. Another significant departure from Freud's ideas was Jung's introduction of the concept of archetypes.

As we have previously discussed, Freud typically attributed dreams and fantasies to the unconscious mind. Jung, on the other hand, suggested that although the unconscious played a significant role, the self was also shaped by societal norms and the external world.

Another important thing that Jung suggests that the human imagination draws upon images and ideas from myths and legends that occur across cultures and time-spans.

These images he termed as Archetypes, and they emerge from collective unconscious which is common to all human kind and not restricted to a particular individual or self.

Art argued Jung often exhibited universal images, so Jung's significance lay in a radical shift

- Here Jung says from the individual unconscious to the social-collective one and
- From the individual creation of particular dreams to social store house of common images and themes.

As we have seen C.G. Jung's collective unconscious and how it impacts the writer's psyche the whole. At the same time as we see the characters in the story like Ammu and Velutha of course they are leading characters in the novel, but in fact they were oppressed in the scriptures and also in the novel.

II. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research paper tries to portray that authors' collective and past circumstantial aspects always get inserted unconsciously into literary characters. According to Carl Jung's collective unconscious and his twelve archetypes it is analysed and paved that Arundhati Roy memory into her novel characters, Ammu and on the other hand Velutha have been described in this paper. Finally we are to understand how the major characters in the novel suffer and assassinated that happened in Indian scriptures. According to the theory of 'collective unconscious' this unconscious and suffered incidental ideology will influence the works and behaviour patterns of a person unconsciously, this influence is an everlasting process in the field of literature. And it will be shared among the beings of the same species inevitably alike the influence of sunlight over the world.

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