

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the writer will provide and develop an analysis toward the novel based on the statement of the problems noted in the first chapter. The first section of the analysis is elaborated from Althusser's theory of ideology as its framework. It will be used to illustrate the complex apparatuses of caste found in the novel mostly through the interaction between the characters. In this illustration, the caste border between Touchable and Untouchable will be revealed from the subtle version to the extreme one. The analysis in this first section will provide an important instrument in answering the second statement of the problem. The writer believes that the domination of caste through its apparatuses has great effect upon the lives of the society members, both in public and personal sphere. In particular, it takes shape in several punishments toward the characters who violate the rules of caste and some others who refuse to conform to this ruling ideology.

A. The Apparatuses of Caste-oriented Society in The God of Small Things

It would be too simplified if one thinks about caste merely as a matter of religious practice or moral order without considering other elements such as socio-cultural values involved within. Since this novel is situated in India after independence, some progress has been made to lift the social position of the Untouchables, indicating the vision of modern India of casteless society.

However, in reality, this issue has to deal with the old deep-rooted traditional view, especially of the upper-caste people who have gained lots of advantages and privileges —socially and economically—from their caste-status. So, although officially Untouchability is not permitted, in social range this phenomenon still exists.

The existence of caste is greatly determined by the way social instruments works, involving both external and internal forces within the society. These social instruments are manifested in some groupings or key institutions which the characters in this novel belong to. According to Althusser, these groupings are the apparatuses that foster the dominant ideology. Thus, this part of analysis will be divided into religion, politics, family—as the Ideological State Apparatuses, and also the police as the Repressive State Apparatuses. Within these four institutions, we can recognize the values of caste maintained by the society.

A. 1. Religion

Caste is often related with Hinduism, as a part of religious Hindu concept which dominates the social life in India. In reality, the practice of caste becomes more complex and ironic, for the society does not only consist of one religious community such as the dominant Hindu. For centuries, India has become a place of many religious communities, not to mention other ideological groups. Naturally, this fact will raise a sense of interest on how a person or minor community treats a certain concept which has dominated this country for several ages.

In The God of Small Things, caste becomes an irony for it raises a serious issue in the setting where most of the characters are Christians. Entering India since the pre-colonial era, Christianity had become a kind of utopia for those who have been discriminated by the practice of caste system. Many low caste people converted to Christian, to escape from their Hindu low-caste status. The result was disappointing, for Christianity was able to adopt their India social structure and cultural values, including caste barrier.

The setting of the novel is situated in a Syrian-Christian community located in Ayemenem, Kerala-India, in 1969. It is mentioned that the Syrian Christians in Kerala are originally the descendants of one hundred Brahmin priests who had highest position in caste-order: "Twenty per cent of Kerala's population were Syrian Christians, who believed that they were descendants of the one hundred Brahmins whom Saint Thomas the Apostle converted to Christianity when he traveled east after the Resurrection" (Roy, 66). This is one factor that causes them to set an imaginary-status of upper caste, especially supported by the fact that most of the Syrian Christian are usually associated with "the wealthy, estate-owning...feudal lords" (66). The Syrian Christian superior image is also proved by Baby Kochamma's hatred toward her niece's twins children who were born from a (divorced) inter-religious marriage. As Baby Kochamma said, they are "doomed, fatherless waifs, half Hindu-hybrids whom no self-respecting Syrian Christian would ever marry" (45).

The family—of which this story revolves—is a Syrian Christian family from the Touchable caste. They are well known among the Christian community

as the family of the late Reverend E. John Ipe, who was the priest of the Mar Thoma church (22). The priest is known as *Punnyan Kunju* (Little Blessed One) who had been blessed personally by the Patriarch of Antioch, the sovereign head of the Syrian Christian Church. Reverend Ipe's respected reputation is proven by so many people who came down the river in boats with children to be blessed by him (21).

His daughter-in-law, Soshamma Ipe (Mammachi), runs a pickle factory known as "Paradise Pickles & Preserves", with her son, Chacko, an Oxford scholar (30). Her husband (Pappachi) was known as an Imperial entomologist, a man with respectable position and social reputation. Ammu, her daughter, is a divorcee with two twin-children. Her position is very vulnerable, not only because she is a daughter in a patriarchal family, but also the fact that she had married a Hindu man. Inter-religious marriage is a big subject for the community, particularly due to the exclusiveness of Syrian-Christians.

Beside Ammu, this vulnerability of 'no-status' family member is also shared by Ammu's twins children, Estha and Rahel. Baby Kochamma (Ammu's aunt) made a sharp definition of them which represents the superior image of Syrian-Christian. She called them as "doomed, fatherless waifs, half Hindu-hybrids whom no self-respecting Syrian Christian would ever marry" (45).

While Ammu's family represents a respected Syrian Christian family of Touchable caste, Velutha's family represents the low status Untouchable Christians. Velutha is the youngest son of a Paravan family who works for Mammachi, Ammu's mother. As a Paravan, one of Untouchable's *jati*, he belongs

to low caste-status people in the society, a social condition which is determined by birth. Many generations of the family and also other Untouchable families have experienced the same situation, being discriminated and subordinated by the upper caste members. Therefore some Untouchables have tried to escape from this condition by converting their religion, expecting equality which is absent in Hindu's religious set-up.

When the British came to Malabar, a number of Paravans, Pelayas and Pulayas (among them Velutha's grandfather, Kelan) converted to Christianity and joined the Anglican Church to escape the scourge of Untouchability. As added incentive they were given a little food and money. They were known as the Rice-Christians. It didn't take them long to realize that they had jumped from the frying pan into the fire. They were made to have separate churches, with separate services, and separate priests. As a special favour, they were even given their own separate Pariah Bishop. After independence they found they were not entitled to any Government benefits like job reservations or bank loans at low interest rates, because officially, on paper, they were Christians, and therefore casteless. (74)

Converting religion was a double loss for the Untouchable. They are twice discriminated by the society—once as Christians and again within Christianity as low-caste converts. Even church as a religious instrument has the same social mechanism, by separating the Untouchable from the Touchable.

Mammachi as the older generation has seen the practice of untouchability in the past which was much more rigid than the recent condition:

Paravans were expected to crawl backwards with a broom, sweeping away their footprints so that Brahmins or Syrian Christian would not defile themselves by accidentally stepping into a Paravan's footprint...were not allowed to walk on public roads, not allowed to cover their upper bodies, not allowed to carry umbrellas. They had to put their hands over their mouths when they spoke, to divert their polluted breath away from those whom they addressed.

(74)

Mammachi's memory gives a clear sight on how great the gap between Touchable and Untouchable was, that it seemed to dehumanize the Untouchable. These strict rules were not just found in Hindu community but can also be found in other religious community exist in India, such as Syrian Christian. Once again, Syrian Christian identified their caste-status into the same level as Brahman who believed that they are on the highest level of purity. They should not mix with the impure ones, such as the Untouchable. This practice of subordination toward the powerless Untouchable is carried into an extreme point, where casteless religion such as Christian turns a blind eye on this fact. The way Christian church or Syrian Christian people respond to this matter shows that the ruling ideology of the Touchable has overtaken their own religion's idea of casteless society. This bias condition even suggests a new term of "Caste Christians" (73) which refers to the continuation of caste hierarchy in Christian community in India.

A. 2. Politics

Another interesting aspect of this novel is the political context of its setting and characters. The political situation of Kerala in 1969 was influenced by Marxism - Communism which manifests its power through political parties. As Roy stated in her novel, in 1957, under E.M.S. Namboodiripad, Kerala became the first Indian state to elect a communist government. In 1967, E.M.S. Namboodiripad's party was re-elected, but some people are not satisfied with his policy, especially the party members who demand more revolutionary acts to improve the standard of living of the low-paid workers/ peasants.

Contrary to its casteless perspective, the Marxists in Kerala continue the traditional structure of the society, for some political intentions. Critically, it is said that this was one factor that makes communism succeed in Kerala.

“The real secret was that communism crept into Kerala insidiously. As a reformist movement that never overtly questioned the traditional values of a caste-ridden, extremely traditional community. The Marxists worked from within the communal divides, never challenging them, never appearing not to. They offered a cocktail revolution. A heady mix of Eastern Marxism and orthodox Hinduism, spiked with a shot of democracy” (66-67).

The best illustration of this “cocktail Marxism” is found in Comrade Pillai's character. As the chief of a local Marxist Party, he performs more as manipulator than a faithful leader. For Comrade Pillai, casteless society is no

more than propaganda and speeches that he brought to attract the potential labours to join the party. He was more interested to carry out his political strategy and personal interest than concern about issues of caste discrimination in reality.

Comrade Pillai's next target was the workers of Paradise Pickles factory, for bringing in a new labour union, however small, would be an excellent beginning for him to enter the Legislative Assembly (120). It was odd enough to know that although he had a private business dealing with Chacko for printing the Paradise Pickles labels, he still managed to carry the plan cleverly by separating the position of Chacko-the-Management and Chacko-the-Client. Everything goes smoothly, except for the fact that he must exclude Velutha, the real threat to his plan.

“Of all the workers at Paradise Pickles, he was the only card-holding member of the Party, and that gave Comrade Pillai an ally he would rather have done without. He knew that all the other Touchable workers in the factory resented Velutha for ancient reasons of their own. Comrade Pillai stepped carefully around this wrinkle, waiting for a suitable opportunity to iron it out” (121).

It is the same fear felt by a Touchable toward an uncommon Untouchable. Comrade Pillai realizes that when an Untouchable had chosen to join a political arena, particularly a party that offers future casteless society, it becomes a serious issue. Velutha has learned from his grandfather's mistake in his failed religion-converting effort. Thus, he tries another way of resistance, which is a political activity. The fact that he is the only card-holding member among all factory

workers is something that Comrade Pillai cannot ignore. It shows how intense Velutha's effort to break the chain of his Untouchability is. Comrade Pillai understands that he cannot underestimate Velutha's potency; therefore he must perform his action very carefully. Comrade Pillai's plan is clear: he must win the sympathy of Paradise Pickles' workers, and controversy about Velutha's status is obviously an obstacle toward this plan.

The opportunity to get rid of this obstacle came when Chacko visited him to make a business deal. He tried to persuade Chacko by saying that he can not allow the Paravans entering his house because of his wife's caste prejudice (278). Comrade Pillai even gave further argument to Chacko about the antipathy of the factory workers toward Velutha and then tried to offer him a sly collusion:

“...any benefits that you give him, naturally others are resenting it. They see it as a partiality. After all, whatever job he does, carpenter or electrician or whateveritis, for them he is just a Paravan. It is a conditioning they have from birth. This myself have told them is wrong... frankly speaking... Change is one thing. Acceptance is another. You should be cautious. Better for him you send him off...” (279).

When Velutha had been banished by Mammachi from her land because of the forbidden love affair he had with her daughter, he intuitively came to see Comrade Pillai, hoping that his chief could help him with his political influence and social status. Besides, it is very reasonable that a person with Communist

ideology such as Comrade Pillai expected to support the low status people such as Velutha in caste-prejudice matter.

Unexpectedly, Pillai failed Velutha's only hope. He turned out to be the loyal member of the society with his Touchable mind. He refused to help Velutha, by reason that the Party did not suppose to take care such personal matters.

...you should know that Party was not constituted to support workers' indiscipline in their private life...

It is not in the Party's interests to take up such matters.

Individuals' interest is subordinate to the organization's interest.

Violating Party Discipline means violating Party Unity. (287)

Furthermore, while the police investigating him about Velutha's crime reported by Baby Kochamma—Ammu's aunt, he even refused to admit to the police about Velutha's status as the member of the party. He was afraid that it may cause trouble to his political career. As a chief of the party, he had the responsibility and capacity to defend his innocent member, but he did not take the chance.

Comrade Pillai told Inspector Thomas Matthew that he was acquainted with Velutha, but omitted to mention that Velutha was a member of the Communist Party, or that Velutha had knocked on his door late the previous night, which made Comrade Pillai the last person to have seen Velutha before he disappeared. Nor, though he knew it to be untrue, did Comrade Pillai refute the allegation of attempted rape in baby Kochamma's FIR. He merely assured

Inspector Matthew that as far as he was concerned Velutha did not have the patronage or the protection of the Communist Party. That he was on his own. (262-263)

His way in dealing with Velutha's matter shows the double-sidedness and the hypocrisy of the Party. Pillai exploits caste issue in his political speeches by mentioning the "Rights of Untouchables" and his famous jargon "Caste is Class, comrades" which reinforces casteless vision of the Marxist Party (281). But when it comes to sensitive cases that can affect his social reputation, he would conform himself with the Touchable side. In this case, political ideology label does not guarantee someone of being free of the social norms and tradition where they live. Though his Marxist ideology undoubtedly regards classless or casteless society, he is still associated with his caste and social position. It remarks how hard it is to abolish the sense of caste supremacy and social hierarchy, related to the way this structure controls the society.

A. 3. Family

Family is a small social unit that can be very effective in imposing certain ideology. The idea of caste is also brought by parents to their children or by the elders to the young family members. In this part, it will be described how caste is maintained both by the Touchable and Untouchable family. Though it works only in a small scope, the power and influence is great.

Velutha's family lived in a little laterite hut, downriver from the Ayemenem house (78). As Untouchables, they were made to live in separated area

from Touchables. However, in daily life, these two groups are still connected in social activities, though it is carried with the sense of superiority of Touchables toward Untouchables. Although Velutha's family works for Mammachi (Ammu's mother), both of the families try to keep their social distance exist.

Since he was a little boy, Velutha had been taught about this social distance. Helping his father—Vellya Paapen—who works as a toddy tapper, he would come to the back entrance of the Ayemenem house to count and deliver the coconuts they had plucked from the trees in the compound (73). The Untouchables were prohibited to enter a Touchable's house or touching their household properties. In an extreme way, it is said that "Pappachi would not allow Paravans into the house. Nobody would. They were not allowed to touch anything that Touchables touched. Caste Hindus and Caste Christians" (73). When Velutha must give something to a Touchable, he must do it in certain "Untouchable manner". He often made intricate toys and would bring them for little Ammu, holding them out on his palm (as he had been taught) so she wouldn't have to touch him to take them (74).

The figure of traditional Paravan or Untouchables is best described in Kuttapen's character, Velutha's older brother who was paralyzed and unable to work after falling off from a coconut tree. Kuttapen was a good, safe Paravan, and could neither read nor write (207). He has spent years doing his duty as a Paravan that "the soles of his feet were still stained a pale orange from years of walking barefoot on red mud...grey callouses on his ankles from the chafing of the rope that Paravans tied around their feet when they climbed coconut trees." (208). His

unability to work has been “terrorizing him with the spectre of his own significance” (207). He even thought to exchange his sanity for serviceable legs, which indicates the only significance of an Untouchable is the ability to perform his work according to his *jati*. Mostly, the Untouchables are associated with physical work, so having a paralyzed body will cause double burden, not only being an Untouchable, but worse than that, a useless Untouchable.

The socialization of these caste values has been taught internally by the family from early childhood. Even when Ammu and Velutha had already grown-up, they still carry this social distance to some extent. For example, the adults (including Ammu) forbid Ammu’s children (Rahel and Estha) from visiting Velutha’s house. These children and Velutha had grown to be the best of friends. Estha and Rahel often spend time together at his house or going with him to the river for fishing (79). Baby Kochamma hated the closeness of these children with Velutha that she told Rahel, “please stop being so over-familiar with that man!” (184). When Ammu found out that the children often visited Velutha’s house, she instinctively reminded them how careless they were: “I’ve told you before, I don’t want you going to his house. It will only cause trouble” (220). She is aware of the social distance that still becomes an important issue in the community. Therefore she tries to protect her children from negative social opinions.

Another incident in the family tells us more about this caste prejudice. While the family’s car was trapped in Cochin, in the middle of the march of Marxist party workers who protest their political chief, Rahel—Ammu’s

daughter—recognized Velutha among them. She rolled down her window and shouted Velutha's name out loud.

'Velutha! Ividay! Velutha!'

He stepped sideways and disappeared deftly into the angriness around him.

Inside the car Ammu whirled around...slapped at Rahel's calves...

'Behave yourself!' Ammu said...*'You're a stupid silly little girl!'*

'But it was him!' Rahel said. *'Shut up!'* Ammu said. (71)

Ammu's angriness made Rahel shocked and puzzled for she saw that "Ammu had a film of perspiration on her forehead and upper lip, and that her eyes had become hard, like marbles" (71-72). It is a real anger, demonstrated by a protective mother to her careless daughter. Rahel does not understand what has made her mother so angry. For her, there is nothing wrong to call her friend's name, especially the most familiar one as Velutha. But Ammu sees it differently. It is completely wrong, not for the way Rahel did it, but worse than that, the way Rahel mentioned to the public that they have relationship with an Untouchable.

Ammu's anger comes out so spontaneously and fiercely, that she must commit such physical action to 'educate' her daughter. It does not even come out of real hatred toward Velutha. If Rahel sees the world with her innocent child's eyes, Ammu sees it with her own adult's perception that acknowledge the great social distance between Touchable and Untouchable. On this kind of situation, the adults will deny this social relationship. Their denial is manifested in Ammu's anger and Velutha's disappearance.

Velutha also carries the same burden of inter-caste restriction. When he realizes that they were attracted to each other, he tries to avoid it. Knowing their different caste status, he told himself of the bitter fact that “she’s one of them...just another one of them” (214). These young people have been taught to identify a person by their social attributes, in this case, their caste labels. In a situation where they appear to be a free individual, physically and emotionally attractive, the idea of caste distinction becomes absurd, yet too powerful to be ignored completely.

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

The Love Laws, the old social rule that control the way people treat one another, the way people see each other and other things in life—including love, is another term of caste system. There is no space in their society where they can grow a cross-caste love relationship: “They knew that there was nowhere for them to go. They had nothing. No future” (338). The only way to make this kind of love survive is to keep it as a secret, to hide it from their families. Once their families know about their affair, their lives are at great risk. It made Velutha asking himself: “What’s the worst thing that can happen? I could lose everything. My job. My family. My livelihood. Everything.” (334). The price of breaking Love Laws can be so incredible, that it may sacrifice everything they have.

The caste restriction runs deeply in everyone's mind, haunts every characters in the novel, and even some Untouchables have accept it as the way it is. They believe on caste and see it as a natural thing, even when this system enforces social distance and other discriminating treatments upon them.

Vellya Paapen, Velutha's father, also believes on caste difference wholeheartedly. He has the mentality of an "Old World Paravan", a loyal Untouchable who performs his duty according to his jati. Therefore, noticing the unusual attitudes, skills, and the potency of rebellion in Velutha, he felt afraid and tried to remind him. He did not like his youngest son's potency which resembles an educated Touchable: "an unwarranted assurance...in the way he walked...or the quiet way in which he disregarded suggestions without appearing to rebel" (76). He thought that these "qualities that were perfectly acceptable...even desirable in Touchables...in Paravan they could...would...should be construed as insolence" (76).

With such antipathy on Velutha's rebel character, it was clear that Vellya Paapen will never approve this cross-caste relationship. When he knew about his son's affair with the daughter of his patron, he came to Ayemenem House on one afternoon and brought that news to Mammachi. He feels obliged to show and proof his loyalty towards Mammachi who has done many good things for his family (256). Therefore, he offered to kill his own son, knowing that his son has committed a 'crime' by breaking the rule of caste and the taboo of their untouchability. For Vellya Paapen, having a son such as Velutha who dare to love

a Touchable is a great humiliation, especially a Touchable (Ammu) whose family has become their patronage for many generations.

The same humiliation is also felt by Mammachi. She was very angry with the thought of her daughter's behavior that could ruin the good name and reputation of their respectful family.

She had defiled generations of breeding... and brought the family to its knees. For generations to come, for ever now, people would point at them at weddings and funerals. At baptism and birthday parties. They'd nudge and whisper. It was all finished now. (258)

For Mammachi, the reputation of the family in the society is very important and she would do anything to protect it, although it would sacrifice Ammu's happiness. She could not imagine her Touchable daughter "naked, coupling in the mud with a man who was nothing but a filthy coolie" (257). This sexual affair is so intolerable for her that she described it "like a dog with a bitch on heat" (257). So, when Velutha came, she banished Velutha from her land and then insulted him by spitting into his face (284).

'Out!' she had screamed, eventually. 'If I find you on my property tomorrow I'll have you castrated like the pariah dog that you are! I'll have you killed!'

'We'll see about that,' Velutha said quietly. (284)

Velutha took it calmly, but actually he was hurt, shocked, and hopeless: "Though the rain washed Mammachi's spit off his face, it didn't stop the feeling that somebody had lifted off his head and vomited into his body. Lumpy vomit

dribbling down his insides... All his organs awash in vomit. There was nothing the rain could do about that" (286). After all, it was Mammachi who had supported him in most of the progress he made. She was the one who acknowledges his carpentry skills and sent him into the Untouchables School that belongs to her father-in-law. It was her who hired him as a family carpenter. Since he is also experienced in machine, Mammachi gives him another position in charge of the general maintenance of the factory. The other Touchable workers feel upset with this decision, since they believe that "Paravans were not *meant* to be carpenters" (77). Moreover, there has been rumour about Velutha's involvement in Naxalite activities which made him as a "prodigal Paravan" that were "not meant to be rehired" (77). But, Mammachi insisted to hire Velutha. She was the one who make a compromise by paying him "less than a Touchable carpenter but more than a Paravan" (77). Nonetheless, Mammachi remains to be a traditional figure with her Touchable dignity. Like Vellya Paapen, she sees this cross-caste relationship as an intolerant crime.

The process of social punishment is also supported by Baby Kochamma as the representation of the old family guard. She wickedly arranged the downfall of these young transgressors in any possible way. She intentionally told the police Inspector that Velutha had tried to rape Ammu, not for Ammu's sake, but to contain the scandal and salvage the family reputation (259). She tries to make bad impression about Velutha by mentioning about his involvement in Marxist Party activities, also about the rumour that he had been a Naxalite.

A. 4. The Police

Unlike the previous apparatuses, the police have its own characteristic in maintaining the dominant ideology. They are likely to enforce behaviour directly by repressive and physical force rather than subtle approach. As the formal institution of the State and the long arm of law, they have the authority to do physical act in protecting the law and fighting against crime.

In the real practice, however, the police do not always represent the long arm of the legal law, for there are also other interests involved in this institution. As stated in the second chapter, although legally Indian law has abolished caste system, the sense of caste supremacy toward the Untouchable still exists. This new anti-caste policy can not easily replace the old system which has dominated India for several ages. The same case also happens to the police in this novel which still represent the superiority of Touchable.

It was not too difficult for Baby Kochamma to convince Inspector Thomas that Velutha is a criminal, for both of them come from the same position, Touchable families.

‘We are an old family’ Baby Kochamma said. ‘These are not things we want talked about...’

Inspector Thomas Mathew, receding behind his bustling Air India moustache, understood perfectly. He has a Touchable wife, two Touchable daughters — whole Touchable generations waiting in their Touchable wombs... (259).

This understanding leads him to take a precaution step, which is interrogating Comrade Pillai. Since Velutha was a member of Marxist Party, he had to make sure whether Velutha had any political support or whether he was operating alone. Though he himself was a Congress man, he did not intend to risk any conflict with the Marxist government (262).

Knowing that Velutha was on his own without the patronage or the protection of the Communist party, Inspector Thomas made a plan and instructed his police officers to arrest Velutha. These police officers were described as the long arms or agents of Touchable: "A posse of Touchable Policemen crossed the Meenachal River, sluggish and swollen with recent rain, and picked their way through the wet undergrowth, the clink of handcuffs in someone heavy pocket. There were six of them. Servants of the State" (304). These policemen found Velutha and Ammu's twins children sleeping at the History House across the river. It made his charge even worse, not just attempt of rape, but also kidnapping. They did not arrest Velutha according to the usual procedure. They abused him instead, beating him with their police batons and kicking him with their police boots. While the twins, Estha and Rahel, woke up and watched this adult violence with their children eyes. Soon enough, they learned the power of structure in their society in punishing those who violates it. It was a history lesson for these innocent children who will always memorize these terrifying scenes:

They heard the thud of wood on flesh. Boot on bone... the muted crunch of skull... the gurgle of blood... broken rib.

Blue lipped and dinner-plate-eyed, they watched, mesmerized by something that they sensed but didn't understand: the absence of caprice in what the policemen did. The abyss where anger should have been. The sober, steady brutality, the economy of it all.

The twins were too young to know that these were only history's henchmen. Sent to square the books and collect the dues from those who broke its laws. Impelled by feelings that were primal yet paradoxically wholly impersonal. (308)

There was no anger as shown by Mammachi or hatred shared by Baby Kochamma in these policemen's action. It was a mere "clinical demonstration in controlled condition...of human nature's pursuit ascendancy" (309). This violence is seen as a part of social mechanism. So, in other words, it neither consider Velutha as human or individual nor involves any personal feelings for it was done simply because of the power of these Touchable policemen have towards Velutha's Untouchable status:

If they hurt Velutha more than they intended to, it was only because any kinship, any connection between themselves and him, any implication that if nothing else, at least biologically he was a fellow creature—had been severed long ago. They were not arresting a man, they were exorcizing fear...

...Touchable Policemen acted with economy, not frenzy. Efficiency, not anarchy. Responsibility, not hysteria. They didn't tear out his hair or burn him alive...or beheaded him. (309)

This passage sharply describes the harshness of a structure which is dominated by the powerful Touchable. The legal law which does not permit the practice of Untouchability, including violence, was completely abandoned by the policemen. They placed the intention of the dominant group above the legal system. They are responsible to guard this social order even if it will sacrifice a person's life. Their own status as Touchable policemen gives them an informal authority and justification to do such action.

When the policemen realize that the children were not kidnapped (by seeing many toys and equipments they had brought into the house), they quickly hid these evidences. The police Inspector learn afterwards, that this was neither a case of kidnapping nor attempted rape. The children had gone to the History House on their own will, and there was no complaint from the rape victim. Although Velutha has violated the rules of caste, but technically, as per the law, he was an innocent man (314). Actually, there was no case, but it was too late for the Paravan has been badly injured after the encounter with the policemen and would not live through the night. At this crucial point, once again, social alliance between different elements (Baby Kochamma and Inspector Thomas) is made, to save their Touchable reputation by persuading the children to identify Velutha as their kidnapper.

The next day, when Ammu found out about this manipulation, she tried to straighten the fact to the police Inspector, but Inspector Thomas Matthew rejected her and told her to go home. He tried to humiliate Ammu by saying that the Kottayam Police did not take statements from *veshyas* (prostitute) or their

illegitimate children. Ammu lost her confidence when the police inspector humiliates her further by tapping her breasts with his baton. It is not intended as sexual harassment, but it is done more to terrorize Ammu by showing his power and authority. As Roy said, "it was a premeditated gesture, calculated to humiliate and terrorize her...an attempt to instill order into a world gone wrong" (260). Through this action, the police Inspector expresses his negative sentiment on a Touchable woman who dares to love an Untouchable man. He compares Ammu with a prostitute for sacrificing her caste status only to love a filthy Untouchable. Velutha had died the night before; so this action also means a warning for her not to interfere with her statement or reveal the real version of this case to the public.

B. The Cost of Breaking Rules of Caste: The Dead and the Victims

In the previous analysis, it is shown how a society can maintain a certain ideology to its members through subtle internal approach and also repressive external forces. A part of the victimization—Velutha's death—involved in this social process has also been discussed earlier. However, the writer needs to elaborate this subject, since it is not the only kind of victimization found in the novel.

The death of Velutha was not the end of the case. At least, for Ammu and her twin children, it was only a new beginning of a more bitter future. Their family made the three of them (Ammu and her children) to live separately away from each other. Chacko, by the persuasion of Baby Kochamma, banished Ammu from Ayemenem House. Estha was sent away to live with his father in Calcutta

while Rahel remained to stay at Ayemenem with her mother's family. Being separated from her children, not to mention the guilty feeling that she must bear over Velutha's tragic fate, Ammu must live in misery which eventually affect her health. Three years later, Ammu died alone in sickness and poverty. She died as a stranger in "a grimy room in the Bharat Lodge in Alleppey...alone. With no Estha to lie at the back of her... She was thirty-one. Not old, not young, but a viable, die-able age" (161). Like Velutha whose corpse were dumped in the *themmady kuzhy*—the pauper's pit—where the police routinely dump their dead prisoners (321), Ammu's death also brings the same bitterness:

"The church refused to bury Ammu. On several counts. So Chacko hired a van to transport the body to the electric crematorium. He had her wrapped in a dirty bedsheet and laid out on a stretcher.

....

The crematorium had the same rotten, run-down air of a railway station, except that it was deserted. No trains, no crowds. Nobody except beggars, derelicts, and the police-custody dead were cremated there. People who died with nobody to lie at the back of them and talk to them." (162)

Both Velutha and Ammu were died as pariah, without proper burials from their family, without the grief of their relatives, friends, and neighborhood. It shows the way society gives social punishment so severely that even a dead body of a pariah should be treated differently from the others. Even a Touchable person

like Ammu is possible to get such bad treatment from the society because of the social violation she has done before.

It is obvious that caste-oriented society has subjugated Untouchable in almost every aspects of their life. In the case of Velutha's death, this subjugation has reached its peak as the society attempts to perpetuate its caste barrier by murdering and victimizing Velutha. For the apparatuses of caste in this society, Velutha is seen more as a filthy criminal rather than a human being. This inhumane view is also addressed to Ammu as a Touchable woman who has dared to break the rules of caste and ruined her Touchable's purity by loving an Untouchable man. So, in this case, caste-oriented society does not only cause suffering to Untouchable but also to those who refuse to obey the ideology of caste.

We have already known the violence done by the police toward Velutha and the horrible sight that Estha and Rahel must watched in the back veranda of History House. Estha had seen more horrible sight at the police office when he must identify Velutha as his kidnapper. He was told that Ammu would have to go to jail, unless he answered 'yes' to the police inspector's question:

Velutha appeared on the scummy, slippery floor...Blood spilled from his skull...his face was swollen and his head look likes pumpkin...with a monstrous upside-down smile...Dead fish floated up in Estha...The Inspector asked his question. Estha's mouth said Yes. (319-320)



The idea that a 7-year-old child must see this painful sight, especially of his beloved friend, is beyond imagination. He has to grow up carrying this particular scene on his memory. Roy describes the effect of Velutha's tragedy in Estha's trauma as "the receipt for the dues that Velutha paid" (55). The tragedy has not ended, for he carries this wound into the grown-up Estha: "Once the quietness arrived, it stayed and spread in Estha...unspeakable...numb... Slowly, over the years, Estha withdrew from the world..." (11-12). Estha was "a quiet bubble floating on a sea of noise" (11). He had stopped talking altogether, gradually after the departure of his beloved people. Consequently, his quietness turns him into an estranged figure. His social interaction becomes very limited, as he does not speak or communicate with other people. Part of this condition is caused by guilty feeling which he has carried for many years. He had blamed himself for taking part on Velutha's tragedy: "...and what has Estha done? He had looked into that beloved face and said: Yes....it was lodged there, deep inside some fold of furrow..." (32).

Things had not been better for Rahel. She grew up into a rebel young woman: "Rahel grew up without a brief. Without anybody to arrange a marriage for her. Without anybody who would pay her a dowry and therefore without an obligatory husband looming on her horizon" (17). Rahel does not conform to traditional norms on how a woman should be, she even shares her mother's "Unsafe Edge" (44). She was known as for her "way-wardness and almost fierce lack of ambition" (18). As trying to duplicate her mother's life who married a man outside her community, she married an American man. But the marriage could not

fulfill the emptiness that Rahel felt for being separated from the beloved people. Her husband often saw emptiness in Rahel's eyes as though they belonged to someone else (19). Roy illustrates Rahel's emptiness as "a hollow where Estha's words had been". She shares the same grief felt by her brother, Estha, the only person who knows exactly her feeling is. This feeling of emptiness could not go along with the marriage life which finally led to divorce.

Rahel has her own perspective on the incurable grief that both she and Estha had over the years. They have no way to share this guilt and grief, while sharing is the only way to overcome the shadow of the past. To release the grief they had is almost impossible, as it grows up with them and become part of their present life.

If only they could have worn...the tragic hood of victimhood. Then they would have been able to put a face on it...eventually ...exorcize the memories that haunted them....there was nowhere to lay it down. It wasn't theirs to give away. It would have to be held. Carefully and for ever. (191)

The ongoing tragedy that has happened in their life is seen as 'small events' by others, the society, the superior ones. It is 'small events' which should happen in order to save the bigger social domination, the supremacy of caste. Nonetheless, Rahel and Estha believe that it is an important matter. They can not abandon or simply forget the way 'world' took away the lives of their beloved Velutha, or the way 'world' punished their mother by social-outcasting. The fact that the society

simply accepts the way Touchable supremacy dominates powerless people, as they are, is very irritating.

Estha and Rahel learned how history negotiates its terms and collect its dues from those who break its laws....They smelled its smell and never forgot it.

History's smell.

It would lurk for ever in ordinary things...in the absence of words.

And the emptiness in eyes.

They would grow up grappling with ways of living with what happened. They would try to tell themselves that in terms of geological time it was an insignificant event...that Worse Things had happened. The Worse Things kept happening. But they would find no comfort in the thought. (55)

Rahel and Estha have definitely paid high cost for loving "a man they weren't supposed to love" (55). Velutha has paid it with his life, while Ammu has paid it with her Touchable status and the future of her twins children. The cost of breaking rules of caste may be high. But in another way of seeing, it was an extreme and incomparable cost to pay for loving a human being.

CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION