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Deep Ecology in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

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Approval Letter

This thesis is submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University by Mr. Kamal Lamichhane entitled “Deep Ecology in Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things*” has been approved by the undersigned members of the thesis Research Committee.

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Abstract

*This research paper makes an attempt to explore a concern for deep ecology in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. Due to the eco- imbalance and the environmental pollution, the whole world is under the curse of global warning. The healthy well balanced environment is the need of time. The world needs eco-friendly atmosphere for the proper growth and development, sustainability and prosperity. Roy has dealt with the subject matter with the environmental concern. In her novel, she has focused her attention on the value of eco balance and environmental balance. This paper deals with exploitation of nature beyond its limits of regeneration.*

Key words: Nature, Eco criticism, urbanization, modernization, deep ecology

Deep Ecology in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

This research deals with the relation of nature with human beings. The novel *The God of Small Things* begins with the description of nature. Environment has its own meaning in the story. Roy represents nature as a foreshadowing technique. Environment or nature is regarded as a God because we all beings are totally depended on nature. Without nature life in this earth is impossible. Nowadays in the name of modernization and urbanization we use a lots of natural sources which has made our earth ugly and it also affects in our life. In this novel, Roy presents nature as synonym of life. She also shows the destruction of nature, and she symbolically tells us to protect the nature. This novel begins when Rahel is coming back to Ayemenem from Europe to visit her twin brother. They have been separated before twenty-three years ago.

The novel is a comparison between nature and environment of Ayemenem of the past with the present. The novel tells that nature is being destroyed in the name of modernism and urbanization. Nature has lost its beauty. It has affected our life. By presenting nature in her novel *The God of Small Things* she points out the impact of human activities on nature. She aims to create awareness and to caution the readers about the impending dangers awaiting them. This paper focuses on how Arundhati Roy has expressed her concern for nature which has been exploited by human beings in the name of civilization, urbanization and modernization.

Roy is an eco-critical writer and thinker. In this novel, the cover picture also indicates her concern on nature; where three lotuses are blooming along with green leaf. In this novel, she presents a story about twins: Rahel and Estha. From the view of the twins she analyzes the environment of Ayemenem that has gone through

changes in twenty-three years. She opens this story with natural description of Ayemenem when Rahel returns from Europe to meet her twin brother Estha, “the river shrinks and black crow gorges on bright mangoes in still, dustgreen trees” (1). Eastha had left Ayemenem twenty-three years ago and had sent to his father’s home when his divorcee mother Ammu had kicked out from her parents’ home after her relation had discovered with a low caste, untouchable man called Velutha. Now Eastha sees the changes in the Ayemenem. The old natural beauty has been totally destroyed. That village has turned into a town; several houses have been built near their house, less greenery, main road becomes narrow, thick river is now very thin and polluted etc.

Ammu is a female victim of the story. She is the mother of the twins. She is marginalized in this story because she is female. Her parents had invested in the study of her brother and sent him London for higher education but they thought that investing on daughter’s education is wastage of money. There is not much initiative as to arrange the marriage of Ammu. After she met a Bengali man in a marriage ceremony of one of her relatives in Calcutta, she decided to marry him. This marriage becomes frustrating to her because her husband comes out to be a drunkard and even wants Ammu to have a sexual relationship with his boss, so that he can retain his job. After this incident, Ammu divorces her husband and comes back to her father’s home with her two children though she is not warmly welcomed at her parents’ home. In Ayemenem, they get humiliated, segregated, and tortured. Baby Kochamma is younger sister of her father, who obtains a diploma in Ornamental Gardening from America. She spends most of time in the front house garden to cultivate, decorate and design the garden. That garden is so beautiful so that people come to see her garden from far away. When she installs disc antenna in the roof of the house, she completely

loses her interest in garden. She spends most of her time on television.

Chacko is Ammu's four years older brother. He meets Margaret in his final year at Oxford and married her. They have a daughter Sophie but when Margaret has relation with another man, he divorces her and returns to Ayemenem. After the death of Margaret's second husband in a car accident, Chocko invites her and Sophie to spend Christmas in India. Ayemenem family goes to airport to receive them, as they return home they see a dead elephant on the way. Elephant is dead due to the high tension line which has fallen in the ground. They express their sympathy towards the elephant's death. Ayemenem family has a pickle factory where Velutha works. Though he is an untouchable he is an extremely gifted carpenter and mechanic and get a chance to work in the pickle factory. Velutha has a light brown birthmark, which like a pointed dry leaf. He is very loving and kind for Eastha and Rahel. Children's love for Velutha causes Ammu to realize her attraction to him. Ammu and Velutha fell in love and they meet at night continuous for thirteen day, on the bank of Meenakal river. River is the witness of their love. When Velutha's father knows about their relationship he has taken it as a great sin and crime. He closes the way for Velutha to his home. He enjoys in the nature. He sleeps on the bank of river. He catches fish in the river and cooks it on open fire. When their relation is discovered in Ammu's family, Ammu is locked in her room and Velutha is banished. In her rage, Ammu blames the twins and calls them as millstones around her neck. After mother's accusing they decide to run away. Sophie comes with them when they are leaving the home. At night when they cross the river, their boat is capsized and Sophie is drowned. Baby Kochamma accuses Velutha of being responsible for Sophie's death. She claims that Velutha has tried to rape Ammu and kidnapped the children. Police savagely beats him and arrests him. Due to serious injurious he dies in the police lock-

up. Baby Kochamma convinces Chacko that Ammu and the twins are responsible for his daughter's death. Chacko kicks out Ammu from the house. Ammu sends Eastha to live with his father. Eastha never sees Ammu again. Ammu dies few years later at the age of thirty-one. Rahel grows up in the Ayemenem and goes to America for further study. When she informs Eastha has returned to Ayemenem, she also returns and they are reunited after twenty-three years at the age of thirty-one. They had been separated at about the age of 8 years. If we begin to trace the story of environment and ecology from the narrative telling us about life in Ayemenem in the twins' childhood and reach the chronological end at the time of their reunion, then a significant trajectory of history in this regard will have been covered.

The book *The God of Small Things* has generated a series of critical commentaries. Several critics belonging to various backgrounds have ventured to interpret and analyze it from diverse angles and point of views.

While commenting on Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, Eric Bryant in his article "A Silver Thimble in Her Fist" views the novel as containing the sense of critiquing the elite myth of untouchability and as subverting the contemporary class hierarchies with the dramatization of subaltern's resistance. In this regard he argues:

To turn from the negative Big God to the positive Small God is to enter into an entirely different realm of values. As unwanted dependants, Ammu and her twins live on the margins of her parents' family; as a low-caste servant, Velutha lives on the margins of a class- and caste-based society. They are small in terms of their inconsequence, but they are big in terms of their integrity and dignity, loyalty and loving kindness. All four are equally unaware of any caste or class distinction, of any barrier to fellowship. This is because they are loyal only to the

instinct within them and not to any institution outside. These four free spirits or transgressors constitute a circle of their own, a circle of love and interlinked fate. They are the votaries of love and the victims of power. (102)

Eric points that Roy is trying to rewrite the history of India from the perspective of margin by giving emphasis on the minute things.

Likewise another critic Robert Ross, in his essay “Devil in the Details” argues:

With the narrative moving backward, then forward, then reversing itself and taking an unexpected turn, then falling into repetition, the reader learns of Sophie Mol’s drowning, the twins’ possible responsibility for their cousin’s death, their mother’s disgrace and banishment, the social structure that leads to the mistreatment of the untouchable class, the forced parting of the twins, the dwindling family fortune, and the disintegrating relationships. Finally, each character suffers separation from family, from love, from security, and from the larger world. This painful tearing apart comes about by chance events and by small things over which they appear to have no control: “It’s true. Things can change in a day,” the narrator observes. (61)

That’s why, Ross brings out Roy’s challenging task of discovering the multiple discourses constructed by the elite people to hegemonize the marginalized people and her attempt of analyzing the things that are taken as insignificant by the traditional society.

Robert Bell, in his article “A Subversive Salvo” talks about Roy’s hovering of the Indian society to bring out the social and cultural binaries and her effort of challenging the cannon’s discourse that takes the sexual copulation between higher

and lower class people as crime and sin:

The patrician Ammu and the plebeian Velutha transgress not only all Love Laws, but also all laws of a class- and caste-based society. They are subversion incarnate. Similarly, when Estha and Rahel commit incest, they push subversion to its limit. As Siamese twins, their common soul fuses their now-separated bodies. The transgressive reunion through the self's integration with its lost body is enabling and empowering for them. The novel is an elaborate exercise in the Derridean inversion of such binaries as Big God and Small God, center and periphery, and high and low. However, Roy packs all her iconoclasm into her title by privileging her Small God over society's Big God and above all by making a god of a subversive lover. (17)

It focuses on evils and vices of caste system, networks of power relations, resistance towards the traditional society by the subaltern people, hegemony on lower class, excremental method of writing by Roy that is the deconstructing process of transcendental approach. It studies the Roy's looking the Indian society and culture from the view of margin, and analyses the power relations.

Arundhati Roy, as a socially committed writer, shows her deep concern over environment in *The God of Small Things*. She has presented environmental problem as one of the small things which is neglected for a long time in Indian society. Like the Indian women who remain silent against the patriarchal social oppression, environment has been enduring a wanton destruction for ages which stirs Roy's eco-conscious mind. Jason Cawley, one of the five Booker Judges writes: "Roy's achievement... is never to forget about small things in life, insects and flowers, wind and water, the outcaste and despised" (28). In *The God of Small Things*, "you connect

the very smallest things to the very biggest: whether it is the dent that a baby spider makes on the surface of water or the quality of the moonlight on a river or how history and politics intrude into your life, your house” Arundhati says in an interview with David Barsamian. All these small things certainly stand for the environment which is the biggest concern for the eco-critics.

One of the crucial concerns of eco-criticism is nature. It talks about how to preserve nature, how to make people aware about it and how to dwell in a harmonious relationship with it. Although Arundhati Roy shows how nature has become a subject to destruction, her real intention in the novel is to take people back to nature for their own betterment. Therefore, she has set this novel in the 1960s in a village named Ayemenem in Kerala, an Indian State which is full of natural grandeur- trees, green fields and river. It is significant to mention here that Roy herself spent her childhood days here in this village in close harmony with nature. She describes this paradisaical world of village greenery and the river Meenachal.

Arundhati Roy very consciously portrays the scenery of the village Ayemenem in her novel *The God of Small Things*, describing both the picturesque beauty of the landscape and its subsequent degradation through decades of human intervention. The destruction of nature emphasizes and reflects the moral corruption of characters in the larger narrative. The river Meenachal that runs through the village and the landmark "History House" are focal points in depicting ecological abuse. In this paper, I will draw on deep ecological approach to analyze the representation of the environment in *The God of Small Things*.

This paper tries to analyze the text with eco-critical perspective. Researcher for this propose brings various insight related to eco-criticism. Eco-critic Cheryll Glotfelty in his book *The Ecocriticism Reader: Landmarks in Literary Ecology*

defines “. . . ecocriticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment” (viii). It means eco-criticism is a theoretical aspect which examines the role of nature or environment in any text. It has the fundamental premise that human culture is connected to the physical world, affecting it and affected by it. Ecologist seeks to demonstrate the reality of plant and animal in relationship with human activities.

The term was first coined by William Rueckert in his essay “Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism.” Ecocriticism for Rueckert is “the application of ecological concepts of the study of literature” (qtd.in Glottfelty 10). His definition especially connects with the science of ecology which includes all the possible relationship between literature and physical world. The relationship concerns with the literature of the environment encompassed all continents of the earth. Roy has delineated environmental issues in this novel to stir the conscience of human beings in Indian society and to make Indian readers realize their sensitivities about the importance of preserving the harmonious relationship between the people and the physical environment.

Science and technology, on the other hand, is not minimizing the environmental crisis and the environmental degradation but functioning as a lubricant for the promotion of the exploitation of nature by increasing the development. Modern world aims at the great benefit and profit to the human beings. This is the major cause of environmental crisis.

Arundhati Roy in *The God of Small Things* has presented natural environment as a victim of the human greed and callousness that put forward a clear threat to the existence of all living beings. Therefore, Deep ecological approach may be a viable one to show how the natural environment is disturbed in Indian society by people

from top of the government to the individuals with a view to drawing their attention to the fact that they should dwell in a harmonious relationship with natural environment. She has committed herself to exploring the environmental issues through this work. Her work show ecology as an important or dominant theme, expresses his deep concerns about depletion in natural environment.

The deep ecological movement finds real authenticity and purity only in the virgin wilderness and attributes intrinsic value to all lives. The Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess coined the term “deep ecology” in 1972 which is the latest branch of ecological philosophy to consider human kind as an integral part of the environment (qtd. in Greenblatt and Giles 144). It takes humans not as a separate but as an organic entity of the nature and advocates for the concept of ‘economy of nature’. Human life play role in the ecosystem, therefore, it is an inseparable part of the environment. It strengthens the voice of green movements as well that of the environmental ethics. Similarly deep ecology places more value in species, ecosystem and processes in nature that is allowed by established environmental and green movements, and therefore leads to a new system of environmentalism.

Deep ecologist Arne Nears is in opposition to both advanced industrialism and shallow environmentalism. It goes beyond the so called factual level to the level of self and earth wisdom. Ecologist as Arne Nears says that, “stresses a post-anthropocentric bio spherical egalitarianism to create an awareness of the equal right of all things to live and blossom” (qtd in Luke 5). In the present world, human have occupied and used the resources of the nature haphazardly without concerning the right of other creatures and the future of human beings. These activities may lead human being to the tragic consequences. Due to the modernization and industrialization, the natural environment has been disturbed. Due to the unplanned

development, many plants and animals are in the condition of extinction. The human should focus on the bio-centric approach rather than anthropocentric.

Arne Naess says "the aim of the supporters of the deep ecology movement is not a slight reform our present society, but substantial reorientation of our whole civilization" (Naess 4). Deep ecologists do not see the nature and human separately but analyze the entire human civilization. It does not make only a slight reform of the present society rather concerns on overall development of the human. It favors not only a slight development but a sustainable development. She focuses that there is a necessity of planned development which help to balance the natural environment. We need to study well about the deep ecology in order to the substantial reorientation of the whole civilization. Human beings need to focus on the instrumental utility and they have to focus on the natural environment. Human centered present world needs to make the core study of deep ecology for the substantial development of the whole civilization. Deep ecology makes people aware about self and there interconnection of life with other plants and animals.

As Edward O. Wilson in his article "The Environmental Ethnics" in *Literature and Environment: A Reader on Nature and Culture* says that "Humanity is part of nature, a species that evolved among other species" (677). He further says that the more closely we identify ourselves with the rest of life, the more quickly we will be able to discover the sources of human sensibility and acquire the knowledge on which an enduring ethic, a sense of preferred direction, can be built. Wilson tries to say that human is a part of nature which evolved and exist in on nature as other species. There is no difference between human and other species. Human regard self as the superior being but such claim of human is a groundless claim. There is no truth. If we closely identify ourselves we will know that we just a species as other many. By learning this

we will be able to know make the sustainable relation with nature.

As Dixy Lee Ray in his essay “Green House Earth” depicts:

We can conclude from these volcanic events that the atmosphere is enormous and its capacity to observe and dilute pollutants is also very great. There is no excuse, of course, to pollute the air deliberately, which would be an act of folly. But it does give us some perspective on events. So far we have considered only those phenomena that occur on earth that might influence global temperature, weather and eventually the climate. (554)

Ray argues that due to the deliberate pollution the temperature of the world is rising. Though the nature has the capacity to observe the pollution, the human should not deliberately make the nature or resources polluted. Such actions cannot be excused. The problem reflects to the human. The pollution from the unmanaged and unplanned urbanization results to the global warming. Global warming is seen as the major problem of the world because of the carelessness of the human beings.

Human being regards self as the superior than other beings and things in the earth. Human does not think themselves as the part of nature or the small unit of nature but always thinks beyond. Human are not concerned to them but always longs for property, house and power. Human beings are more concerned to their desire and destroying the nature to achieve their desire. What is the relation of human being with the nature? Can human sustain without the nature? The people do not think about the nature on the way of earning money. The nature is our source of everything so we should not harm the nature rather we have to conserve and protect. But the human only to achieve the human desire they are being brutal toward the nature. The people are self-centered. The things which protect the human race should be obeyed by

them. Human behavior should be supportive to the nature then only the human race can exist. We should be bio-centric which focus and value living organisms and emphasize upon the value of individual organism. Human beings should understand that the nature is the source of their life. If the human beings destroy the nature, they will be affected and face the dire consequences.

As Cheryll Glotfelty in his essay “Literary Studies in an Age of Environmental Crisis” says:

Regardless of what name it goes by, most eco-critical work shares a common motivation. The troubling awareness that we have reached the age of environmental limits, a time when the consequences of human action are damaging the planets basic life support systems. We are there. Either we change our ways or we face global catastrophe, destroying much beauty and exterminating countless fellow species in our headlong race to apocalypse. (331)

Glotfelty evokes that people should be aware on human limits. There should be awareness among people for the conservation of natural resources. If we go on destroying natural resources we have to face tragic consequences. If the human beings destroy the natural resources without taking care about the environmental limits human beings may also have to suffer from natural resources crises and global catastrophe. Over use of natural resources and damaging them carelessly may lead us to the apocalypse. We human beings as being earthly creature, we have to be sincere about the environmental limits which may lead our life to comfortable and support for the environmental conservation.

Hannigan states that the first National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit which was held in October, 1991 in Washington D.C. identified

three strands of environmental equity: procedural equity, geographical equity and social equity (50). The delegates of this summit, guided and spirited by the eco-centric principle espoused by Aldo Leopold, John Muir, Geroge Marsh, the pioneer of environmental movement ratified a document “Principles of Environmental Justice.” In Hannigan’s words “the principles also argue that the people have a right to clean air, land, water, and food and the right to work in a clean and safe environment” (50). Beside other basic needs of human they have the right to clear air, land and water.

Hannigan says that the people have a right to clean environment. Everyone in the world should have access to clean air, land and water. Human is the sensible creature of the world that is why human should be the most responsible for the protection and preservation of the natural environment. People should not hamper the natural environment. They should play vital role for maintaining healthy environment. It is our responsibility to make the environment clean. No one should be deprived of safe environment. It is the basic need of people. The people should have access to the clean air to breath, land to stay, pure water to drink and healthy food to eat. The working place of human should be safe and clean. The ecosystem is dynamic, complex of plants, animals, organism and other varieties of habitats.

Man is the creation of the nature. He is the part of ecosystem. Man has lot of needs but some needs are quiet essential which should be fulfilled but human always desire more and wants to achieve.

Nature and human should not be viewed as a separate entity but they are a single entity. We are directly related to the nature. We get everything in the nature to sustain our life. We born in nature and die in nature. Every life activities are connected with the nature. The people of the present world are only focusing only about their desires without caring the natural environment. Human beings are

restructuring the natural environment without being conscious about the upcoming disaster caused by their activities. In the present world, people have to suffer from many natural disaster by which many people have to loss their life and property. Human and nature relationship need to be strong. There should be good relationship between nature and human beings. If we protect nature then only we can live a better life. If we go no destructing the nature we have to face many challenges to sustain our life. As Edward O. Wilson, in "The Environmental Ethnics." says:

This estimate comes from the known quantitative relation between the area of habitats and the diversity that habitats can sustain. These area biodiversity curves are supported by the general but not universal principle that when certain groups of organism are studied closely, such as snails and fishes and flowering plants, extinction is determined to be wide spread. (676)

Every plant and animal that we find in the environment are biological wealth. They need to be preserved for the environmental balance. We human being will not be able to balance the natural environmental if plants and animals go on extinction due to the natural destruction. There should be good interconnection between nature and human beings. Human beings should play vital role for balancing the environment.

As Barry Commoner's in his book *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man and Technology* states that "everything is connected to everything else" (34), eco-criticism connects man to man and with the entire cosmos. We are fully connected to the nature. We are just a part of nature and we cannot survive without it. Our existence is dependent on the nature. The living and non-living cannot only give the meaning of life. Without one part another is incomplete.

We can never win the nature. We are just the tiny part of it. It is always greater

than us. Christopher Manes in his essay "Nature and silence." writes; "ecological knowledge means metaphorically the language of birds – the passions, pains, and cryptic intents of the other biological communities that surround us and silently interpenetrate our existence" (25). Here, we can say that all the creatures are connected to each other. Though we don't see the direct connect with the nature but on the one way or other we are connected. We should not try to destroy the nature. If we ever attempt then before it we are the one who suffers. Our existence can come to the end. We have to show the rational behavior toward the nature.

Arundhati Roy in his novel *The God of Small Things* presents the concern of nature. Her concern is about the impact of urbanization, modernization and civilization in the nature. She has presented the environmental problem which is neglected in our society for a long time and taken it as one of the small things. But it is very important and biggest thing for the existence of human and living organism. Roy's real intention is to take people back to the nature for their betterment. To make aware the people, she has presented nature as subject of destruction. At the beginning of the novel, Roy has pictured the Ayemenem's atmosphere:

The nights are clear but suffused with sloth and sullen expectation. But by early June the south-west monsoon breaks and there are three months of wind and water with short spells of sharp, glittering sunshine that thrilled children snatch to play with. The countryside turns an immodest green. Boundaries blur as tapioca fences take root and bloom. Brick walls turn moss green. Pepper vines snake up electric poles. Wild creepers burst through laterite banks and spill across the flooded roads. (1)

In this environment, when Rahel and Estha returns to the Ayemenem after twenty-

three years, they expose the natural beauty of the village with their childhood memory. The deplorable condition of the river Meenachal take them back in their memory where the river was very clean and beautiful. Meenachal, the river of Ayemenem is described as:

It was warm, the water. Greygreen. Like ripple silk.

With fish in it.

With the sky and trees in it.

And at night, the broken yellow moon in it. (123)

The river has its natural beauty. It also shows the richness of river and its relation to other natural things such as fish, sky, trees, moon etc. But when Rahel returns to Ayemenem after twenty three years it is picturized as “when Rahel returned to the river, it greeted her with the ghastly skulls smile, with holes where teeth had been, and a limphand raised from a hospital bed (124).” Even the when raining the river’s condition is presented as

Despite the fact that it was June, and raining the river is no more than a swollen drain now. A thin ribbon of thick water that lapped wearily at the mud bank of the either side, sequined with the occasional silver slant of the dead fish. It was choked with succulent weed, whose furred brown roots waved like thin tintacles under water. Bronze-winged lily-trotters walked across it. Splay-footed, cautious. (124)

This is the condition of the Meenachal river which “had had the power to evoke the fear” is now “a slow sludging green ribbon lawn that ferried fetid garbage to the sea. Bright plastic bags blew across its viscous, weedy surface like subtropical flying-flowers” (124).

Roy also shows the pollution of the river when Estha walks along the bank of

the river “that smelled of shit and pesticide bought with World Bank loans. Most of the fish had died. The one that survived suffered from fin-rot and had broken out in boils” (13). The novelist is here critical of the hands behind polluting the river and the government policy of buying pesticides with World Bank money, both of which ultimately contribute to making the life of the people miserable. Roy paints a very realistic picture of how river pollution is caused by human insensible act. The pollutants spoil the quality of water and kill the living organism in it. The river loses its purity due to the careless activities and attitudes of the local people who live very close to the river. Pollution of the river also affects the whole Ayemenem. The writer writes “On the warm days the smell of shit lifted off the river and hovered over the Ayemenem like a hat” (125). Pollution of environment also affects the whole atmosphere because we also live in the same environment and we depend on it. So it harms us and it is also the pollution of our society and civilization.

Rahel and Estha are on the way to Cochin with uncle, mother and grandmother, they look the beautiful Ayemenem and its neighbouring places:

It was a sky-blue day in December sixty nine... A sky-blue Plymouth, with the sun in its tailfins, sped past young rice-fields and old rubber trees, on its way to Cochin. Further east, in a small country with similar landscape (jungles, rivers, rice-fields)... It was peace time and the family in the Plymouth travelled without fear or foreboding. (35)

People who live in the lap of nature they get peace, happiness, and satisfaction on it. Nature is regarded as a God. People feel like haven in the nature but now this natural beauty is no more in Ayemenem.

Urbanization is another factor that precipitates the environmental degradation in Ayemenem. There are many other instances of urbanization in the novel. The dish

antenna, the Ooty cupboards, the plastic basket chairs, the Delhi beds, the dressing table from Vienna with cracked ivory knobs, and paint flaking fridge in the Ayemenem house are all symbol of urbanization. The modern comforts, such as high heels, puffs sleeves, and lipstick in the houses of foreign returnees can also be considered as instances of urbanization in the Ayemenem village. The estate of Karri Saipu is known as history house is renovated. It has changed to a five star hotel called Heritage. In hotel's brochures it is described as God's Own Country but the reality was:

The view from the hotel was beautiful, but here too the water was thick and toxic. No swimming signs had been put up in stylish calligraphy. They had built a wall to screen off the slum and prevent it from encroaching on Kari Saipu's estate. There wasn't much they could do about the smell...They knew, those clever hotel people, that smelliness, like other people's poverty, was merely a matter of getting used to. (125-126)

This is an important process of modernization and urbanization that an old house has changed into a five star hotel. Though urbanization is a symbol of progress, Arundhati is critical about its process. In no way she can welcome it in exchange of environmental degradation. She believes that urbanization disregarding environmental issues brings danger in the life of us and other beings.

In the name of the modernization and technology, people ignore nature and environment. When technology and its products become the priority of people, they tend to ignore nature. Their interests got change due to the modern innovation. In the story, Baby Kochama is a baby grant aunt of Rahel and Estha, grained "a diploma in ornamental gradening." In Ayemenem house, she has very intimate relation with the

front house garden. She spends almost her time in the garden. About her involvement in gardening, the author writes, “To keep her from brooding, her father gave Baby Kochamma charge of the front garden of the Ayemenem House, where she raised a fierce, bitter garden that people came all the way from Kottayam to see” (26). Roy shows her great care of garden as:

It was a circular, sloping patch of ground, with a steep gravel driveway loping around it. Baby Kochama turn it in to a lush maze of dwarf hedges, rocks and gargoyles. The flower she loved the most was the anthurim . . . In the centre of Baby Kochama’s garden, surrounded by beds of canna and phlox, a marble cherub peed an endless silver arc into a shallow pool in which a single blue lotus bloomed. At each corner of the pool lolled a pink plaster-of- Paris gnome with rosy cheeks and a peaked red cap. (26)

Her interest in gardening got has lost when she installs the disc antenna on her house roof. Her new interest and love is television, which is the means of modernization. Due to this modernization she completely ignores the nature or garden. Television is a product of science and technology. Science and technology is helping to promote exploitation of nature by increasing the development and modernization. Modern word only conscious on human benefit and profit and ignores the environment. Science and technology have to play a great role for minimizing environmental crisis and environmental degradation. But reality is completely opposite.

Population explosion is a great problem for eco-system. Overpopulation brings a lot of problems in the environment. Agricultural and pastoral lands change into commercial and residential areas. More areas are urbanized with less trees and minimal greenery. It brings pollution on nature and over explosion of natural

resources which also affect our life. In the novel, after twenty three years Ayemenem village turns into a small town. The river is not only one victim of the novel. A lots of other changes are depicted here that destroy the beauty of Ayemenem such as freshness , matchless greenery and rural quietness. It has changed when Rahel returns to Ayemenem, the population has “swelled to the size of the little town.”

Roy refers the urbanization as “the new, freshly baked, iced, Gulf-money houses built by nurses, masons, wire-benders and bank clerks who worked hard and unhappily in faraway places” (13). In the main road behind the Ayemenem house several houses have been constructed. Roy brings how Ayemenem was and how it is at the present in these lines:

Here too, houses had mushroomed, and it was only the fact that nestled under trees, and that the narrow paths that branched off the main road and led to them were not motorable, that gave Ayemenem the semblance of rural quietness. In truth, its population had swelled to the size of a little town. (128)

Population explosion and urbanization becomes a problem for the environment of Ayemenem. It loses its original beauty. It makes Ayemenem ugly and polluted.

Another example of the urbanization of the Ayemenem village when Rahel returns to home, “small fish appears in the puddles that fill the PWD potholes on highway (1).” Porn magazine is sold in Ayemenem. When Estha walks by the side of the ration shop, he sees:

Indian cheap soft-porn magazines about fictitious South sex fiends were clipped with clothes pegs to ropes that hung from the ceiling. They spun lazily in the warm breeze, tempting honest ration buyers with glimpses of ripe, naked women lying on pools of fake blood. (13)

It shows the modernization and urbanization in the Ayemenem. The village is totally changed than Rahel and Estha's childhood memory.

One of the main characters of *The God of Small Things* is Velutha, who is the god of small things of the story. He is from low caste family. His life is more depending on nature\environment than other characters. When he was eleven, he could make "intricate toys – tiny windmills, rattles, minute jewel boxes out of dried palm reeds; he could carve perfect boats out of tapioca stems and figurines on cashew nuts" (74). And when he was sixteen, he "was an accomplished carpentry. He had his own set of carpentry tools and distinctly German design sensibility" (75). From childhood he has enjoyed with nature and he made materials by using different natural elements. Velutha has "a light brown birthmark, shaped liked a pointed dry leaf. He said it was a lucky leaf that made the monsoons come on time" (73). His birthmark also connected with nature. As he says, this mark does not bring luck in his life.

He has different opinion with his father so he is ignoring with his family. He is avoided to go home. He moves his life towards the nature. Roy describes it as: "He caught fish in the river and cooked it on an open fire. He slept outdoor, on the bank of river" (76-77). When he has no home, nature becomes his home. He becomes a part of nature. The river gives him meal and the nature gives shelter to him. It also shows the human and nature relationship. If we have none, nature will be always with us. It helps us so we have to be concern on environment.

When evaluating through the eyes of young Rahel and Estha, Velutha appeared to be a special person because of his green knowledge, or his ability to shape their world in keeping with the natural environment: "They would ... wonder how he always seemed to know what smooth shapes waited inside the wood for him. They loved the way wood, in Velutha's hands, seemed to soften and become as pliable as

plasticine. He was teaching them to use a planer"(78-79). Velutha was not only, merely by himself, living in harmony with nature even as he continued to work confidently in the Machine Age and follow its cultural parameters; at the same time, through Rahel and Estha, he was also planting in the next generation the values that made such an integrated mode of life possible.

Ayemenem family goes to airport to receive Margaret Kochamma and her daughter Sophie Mol. When they are returning to Ayemenem, they see a dead elephant. Roy depicts it, "Near the Ettumanoor they passed a dead temple elephant, electrocuted by a high tension wire that had fallen on the road. An engineer from the Ettumanoor municipality was supervising the disposal of the carcass" (153). Elephant is dead due to the high tension wire. The high tension line is little away from the residential areas for the safety of human beings. But there is ignorance for the safety of animals. Animals are also a part of environment and we have to concern on it to balance the ecosystem. Electricity is a means of modernization. It helps us in many ways in our modern life. When we use it we have to be very concern that it would not be harmful for our environment and ecosystem. Our environment is our life. It is not because of us the planet is here but it is because of planet we are here. So we have to protect it. Planet is for all of us and we can't existence by ourselves. We will live well here if everything is green beautiful, water is flowing, and air is pure. This idea has to go into every human's mind, every citizen's mind and every child mind. We must always conscious about the lives other than human life.

Arundhati Roy has deep concern for environment and expresses her thought that human beings need to express a concern for environment it order to make this earth livable for up-coming generations. As Debarati Bandyopadhyay, in her book, *Arundhati Roy: Environment and Literary Activism*, comments, "Roy writes to instill

knowledge and fear in her audience; she tries to warn so that it creates a possibility of collective awareness and action which might yet help ion survival and sustenance of life, both at the global and local level” (4). She shows that the novel warns the reader and creates awareness, which helps to sustain human being along with environment at global and local level in this modern era. We are totally depended to each other. Nature has become the subject of destruction; her intention on this novel is to keep back to nature for their own betterment.

In the name of civilization, modernization and urbanization human beings over use the natural resources that affects human life and living space. Human beings and the environment are the compliment to each other. Nature is the part of our life, we cannot isolate it from our life. Destruction of nature is the destruction of human beings and human civilization. In this novel by using minute things about nature Roy shows her concern for environment. She depicts the real picture of the modern society that in the name of modernization and civilization people ignore the nature and its beauty. Exploitation of nature makes our world ugly and it brings threat to human and other living species. This novel is the voice of protest of Roy against the environmental degradation. Through the viewpoint of the characters, Roy laments on the natural destruction and urbanization. She tries to make aware the readers about the impact of damaging the environment. She focuses on preserving the nature. We have to put our ecology in balance. So we have to stop the unlimited consume of our natural resources. We should use our resources in limit. We have to stop the environmental pollution and exploitation of nature in the name of modernization, civilization and urbanization. It brings serious environmental crisis and it also affect our existence. Thus Roy’s concern of environment on the novel makes aware the readers about the nature to make it more beautiful and livable. She focuses on the use

of natural resources in eco-friendly way which may help in sustainable development.

We think that we are superior than other creatures in fact every creature holds the same importance in the nature. One creature or incident has the direct connection with the other. So, all the creatures are of same value. Human beings should not regard great to own-self and ignore other creature's survival. It will be a blunder if we ignore the importance of other creatures and things in nature. Even small creatures are directly linked to human beings. We have to be conscious that we are only the part of nature and without nature human existence is impossible. Only due to the favorable environment the human being existed. If some disasters occur, all the human identity can come to a catastrophe. We are alive just because we can adopt and exist in the nature. Though we are involved or consume it we should also think about its protection. Only consuming may lead us to wrong path. Being the part of nature, we have to think about its growth so we can also grow with it. The relation between human beings and nature should be interconnected. Human beings do not have the alternative option to avoid the nature. It is the only some of human survival. So we have to show positive and eco-friendly behavior towards nature to continue our existence.

The God of Small Things thus reflects all the issues and concerns about deep ecological perspective. Arundhati essentially raises her voice of protest against almost all forms of environmental degradation around Ayemenem- massive urbanization, pollution, modernization and futile self-transplantation leading human beings to danger. She also draws our attention to the unscrupulous activities of the governmental agencies and the basic faults of the individual social behavior causing a fatal threat to our natural environment. With her strong agitating spirit she comes forward to emphasize the importance of preserving natural environment to save the

people from Nature's fierce consequences.

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