

**THE AMBIVALENT SEXISM DEPICTED IN ARUNDHATI ROY'S
*THE GOD OF SMALL THINGS***

THESIS

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LITERATURE
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI MAULANA MALIK IBRAHIM
MALANG
2024**

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THESIS

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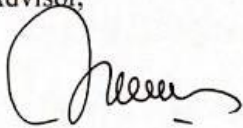
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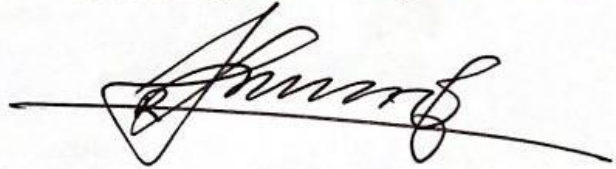
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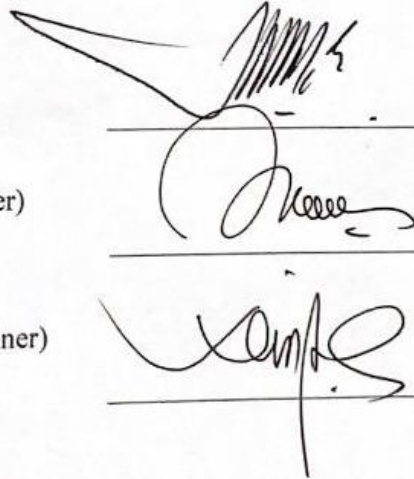
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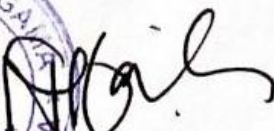
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MOTTO

“Hate no one, no matter how much they’ve wronged you. Live humbly, no matter how wealthy you become. Think positively, no matter how hard life is. Give much, even if you’ve been given little. Keep in touch with the ones who have forgotten you, and forgive who has wronged you, and do not stop praying for the best for those you love.”

-Ali bin Abi Thalib

“Almost everything didn't go smoothly at first, but it was my own decision. The thrill of following my dreams outweighed the hard times.”

-Shohei Ohtani

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my dearest parents and sister, who have never ceased to support me in my ambitions to get this bachelor's degree through their prayers and efforts.

I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to my brothers and sisters, whose strength and resilience during the conflict in Palestine have been a source of inspiration to me. Their unwavering courage, strength, and hope in the face of unimaginable challenges have reminded me to remain grateful for the opportunity given to pursue and complete this academic journey. While this thesis may not directly address their struggles, it is driven by the spirit of perseverance and determination that they continue to embody.

And to my closest friends, who never grow weary of pulling each other up by the bootstraps.

As well to the women out there who are no less great than those who try to be superior to women, we are equal to them.

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ABSTRACT

Rafifah, Tasyania Muthi (2024) *The Ambivalent Sexism Depicted in Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things*. Undergraduate Thesis. Department of English Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Advisor: Dr. Hj. Istiadah, M.A.

Keywords: Ambivalent Sexism, Feminist Literary Criticism, The God of Small Things, Discrimination

Despite progress in gender equality, societal norms and structures continue to discriminate against women, shaping attitudes and behaviors that reinforce the unequal power that constrains women. The phenomenon of ambivalent sexism—a blend of hostile and benevolent attitudes toward women—offers a nuanced lens for understanding gender discrimination. This study examines the portrayal of ambivalent sexism in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, employing feminist literary criticism and the theoretical framework of the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory by Peter Glick and Susan Fiske. By analyzing character interactions and narrative flows, this research reveals how the novel reflects discriminatory treatment, and a sense of power that perpetuates gender inequality through paternalism, gender differentiation, and heterosexual. Drawing upon textual evidence, the findings illuminate the pervasive impact of both hostile and benevolent sexism on the experiences of the characters. Hostile sexism manifests as acts of violence, exclusion, and dominance, vividly depicted in *The God of Small Things* through Pappachi's physical abuse of Mammachi out of jealousy for her success, and Chacko's assertion of control over family resources, disregarding Ammu's contributions. In contrast, benevolent sexism refers to seemingly positive attitudes or actions that idealize women in traditional roles, as seen when Ammu was dismissed from her job as a receptionist for health reasons, on the grounds that the hotel needed “healthier” employees. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the nuances of gender discrimination in literature, underscoring the need for continued examination of literary works through a feminist lens.

الملخص

رفيفة، تاسيانيا موثي (2024) التحيز الجنسي المتناقض في رواية *The God of Small Things* لأرونداتي روي.

أطروحة جامعية. قسم الأدب الإنجليزي، كلية العلوم الإنسانية، جامعة الإسلام الحكومي مولانا مالك إبراهيم مالانغ .

المشرفة: الدكتورة حجة إستعادة، ماجستير.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التحيز الجنسي المتناقض، النقد الأدبي النسوي، *The God of Small Things*، التمييز.

على الرغم من التقدم في تحقيق المساواة بين الجنسين، تستمر الأعراف والهياكل المجتمعية في التمييز ضد النساء، مما يشكل مواقف وسلوكيات تعزز السلطة غير المتكافئة التي تقيد النساء. يقدم مفهوم "التمييز الجنسي المتناقض"—وهو مزيج من المواقف العدائية والخيرة تجاه النساء—عدسة دقيقة لفهم التمييز على أساس الجنس. تبحث هذه الدراسة في تصوير التمييز الجنسي المتناقض للكاتبة أرونداتي روي، باستخدام النقد الأدبي النسوي وإطار العمل النظري لـ *The God of Small Things* في رواية، الذي طوره بيتر غليك وسوزان فيسك. من خلال تحليل تفاعلات الشخصيات وتدفقات السرد *Ambivalent Sexism Inventory*، تكشف هذه الدراسة كيف تعكس الرواية المعاملة التمييزية والشعور بالسلطة الذي يعزز عدم المساواة بين الجنسين من خلال الأبوية والتمايز الجنسي، والغيرية الجنسية. من خلال الأدلة النصية، تظهر النتائج التأثير الواسع لكل من التمييز الجنسي العدائي والخير على تجارب الشخصيات. يمثل التمييز الجنسي العدائي في أعمال العنف والإقصاء والسيطرة، التي تم تصويرها بوضوح في رواية من خلال إساءة باباتشي الجسدية لزوجته ماماتشي بسبب غيرته من نجاحها، وسيطرة تشاكو *The God of Small Things* على موارد الأسرة متجاهلاً مساهمات أمو. في المقابل، يشير التمييز الجنسي الخير إلى مواقف أو أفعال تبدو إيجابية ولكنها تمجد النساء في أدوار تقليدية، كما يتضح عندما تم فصل أمو من وظيفتها كموظفة استقبال لأسباب صحية، بحجة أن الفندق يحتاج إلى موظفين أكثر "صحة". تساهم هذه الدراسة في فهم أعمق لتفاصيل التمييز على أساس الجنس في الأدب، مما يؤكد الحاجة إلى مواصلة دراسة الأعمال الأدبية من منظور نسوي.

ABSTRAK

Rafifah, Tasyania Muthi (2024) Seksisme Ambivalen yang Digambarkan dalam *The God of Small Things* karya Arundhati Roy. Skripsi Sarjana. Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Fakultas Humaniora, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang. Pembimbing: Dr. Hj. Istiadah, M.A.

Kata kunci: Seksisme Ambivalen, Kritik Sastra Feminis, *The God of Small Things*, Diskriminasi

Meskipun terdapat kemajuan dalam kesetaraan gender, norma dan struktur sosial tetap mendiskriminasi perempuan, membentuk sikap dan perilaku yang memperkuat ketimpangan kekuasaan yang membatasi perempuan. Fenomena seksisme ambivalen—kombinasi sikap bermusuhan dan sikap penuh kebaikan terhadap perempuan—menawarkan sudut pandang yang lebih mendalam untuk memahami diskriminasi gender. Penelitian ini mengkaji representasi seksisme ambivalen dalam *The God of Small Things* karya Arundhati Roy, dengan menggunakan kritik sastra feminis dan kerangka teori *Ambivalent Sexism Inventory* oleh Peter Glick dan Susan Fiske. Melalui analisis interaksi karakter dan alur naratif, penelitian ini mengungkap bagaimana novel tersebut mencerminkan perlakuan diskriminatif dan rasa kekuasaan yang melanggengkan ketidaksetaraan gender melalui paternalisme, diferensiasi gender, dan heteroseksualitas. Berdasarkan bukti tekstual, temuan penelitian ini memperlihatkan dampak luas dari hostile sexism dan benevolent sexism terhadap pengalaman para karakter. Hostile Sexism muncul dalam bentuk kekerasan, pengucilan, dan dominasi, yang digambarkan dengan jelas dalam *The God of Small Things* melalui tindakan kekerasan fisik Pappachi terhadap Mammachi karena cemburu atas kesuksesannya, serta kontrol Chacko atas sumber daya keluarga yang mengabaikan kontribusi Ammu. Sebaliknya, Benevolent Sexism merujuk pada sikap atau tindakan yang tampaknya positif tetapi mengidealkan perempuan dalam peran tradisional, seperti ketika Ammu diberhentikan dari pekerjaannya sebagai resepsionis karena alasan kesehatan, dengan dalih bahwa hotel membutuhkan karyawan yang lebih "sehat". Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi pada pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang nuansa diskriminasi gender dalam sastra, menekankan pentingnya pemeriksaan lanjutan terhadap karya-karya sastra melalui perspektif feminis.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers a number of topics, including the following: background, issues, goals, scope and constraints, importance, definitions of key words, and earlier research in this study.

A. Background of the Study

Paying attention to sexism in one's own life might influence women and men differently (Becker & Swim, 2011). Men's higher status could support desires to maintain current gender inequality (Schmitt, Branscombe, & Kappen, 2003). Many women experience interpersonal and institutional gender discrimination not only within the workplace, but also across a wide spectrum of other domains, including health care, higher education, housing, and the legal system (SteelFisher et al., 2019). Historically, women have been portrayed as subordinate, which has contributed to the development and reinforcement of sexist attitudes and beliefs (Harker et al., 2005).

Discriminatory behavior based on gender differences, often referred to as sexism, is rampant in various aspects of life. It includes unfair treatment, prejudicial stereotypes, and unequal treatment of women in particular. Sexism itself can take form in prejudices, demeaning and derogatory comments and behaviour, and sexual objectification (Swim et al., 1998). This behavior results in unequal rights and opportunities for individuals based on their gender. It is a harmful phenomenon involving the privileging of individuals based on their sex, which is a broader practice of gender discrimination. Sexism involves the attitude which favors people

based on sex. In broader sense, sexism is part of the practice of gender discrimination (Istiadah & Afifah, 2020).

The large number of individuals who maintain sexist attitudes can be explained by a variety of complex factors. Gender attitudes, such as sexist attitudes, are often based on stereotypical beliefs about gender and can be perceived as a form of prejudice (Rudman and Glick, 2008). Sexist attitudes and beliefs confine and influence future life trajectories by (often subtly) influencing beliefs, feelings, and behaviors (Eckes and Trautner, 2000; Ridgeway and Correll, 2004). Lack of in-depth education on gender equality also plays a role, where insufficient curriculum or learning about the importance of valuing all individuals regardless of gender can lead to gender-biased thinking. Undoubtedly, sexist attitudes negatively impact women's lives in multiple ways (e.g., Undurraga and López Hornickel, 2020). In literature, the presence of sexist or ambivalent sexism can shape narratives and character portrayals in ways that reinforce harmful gender stereotypes. Female characters can be restricted to roles that prioritize domesticity, beauty, or submission, limiting their depth and agency compared to male characters. The ways in which gender is portrayed in literature can have a significant impact on shaping societal perceptions and expectations (Diekmann & Murnen, 2004).

Set in India in the 1960s, Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* explores themes of suffering, social injustice, and power structures in Indian society. In this story, Rahel and Estha, fraternal twins, and their family navigate the social and political environment of Kerala, a state in southern India. The narrative revolves around tragic events involving the twins Rahel and Estha, serving as a metaphor for

suffering and death (Babu, 2014). The novel critiques the caste system, particularly the treatment of untouchables, and examines the struggles of women in a patriarchal society (Kumar, 2020). Roy's portrayal of lower-class characters has been both praised and criticized, with some viewing it as a fantasy that simultaneously idealizes and fears the subaltern (Nandi, 2010). The story highlights the interrelationships of power structures based on caste, gender, and race, and their impact on human interactions (Rama Devi, 2022). One of the most striking aspects of Roy's work is her depiction of ambivalent sexism, a multifaceted phenomenon that encompasses both hostile and benevolent forms of gender-based discrimination.

This research specifically aims to examine the novel through the lens of ambivalent sexism, analyzing how hostile and benevolent attitudes towards gender roles are portrayed. This view neglects a significant aspect of sexism: the subjectively positive feelings toward women that often go hand in hand with sexist antipathy (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Through this lens, this research intends to contribute a nuanced perspective on the discrimination experienced by a gender within this work. *The God of Small Things*, has received wide acclaim and recognition since its publication in 1997. It was awarded the prestigious Booker Prize, affirming its position as an important work in contemporary literature. It has also been celebrated for its narrative complexity and multi-layered themes, which address issues of social hierarchy, forbidden love, and family dynamics in Indian society. Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* has been translated into multiple languages, reaching readers around the world, and remains an important work of

South Asian literature. These achievements, combined with the exploration of postcolonial theory and socio-political themes, make *The God of Small Things* an interesting subject for further research.

To conduct this research, some previous studies that have been researched from two categories of previous research are mentioned, namely in terms of novels and theories. To begin with, the research entitled *Class Struggle in "The God of Small Things" by Arundhati Roy (A Marxist Analysis of the Novel)* by (Bibi et al., 2021) this study analyzes through a Marxist lens, focusing on class struggle and socio-economic inequality in Indian society. The research examines how Roy portrays the gap between the upper and lower classes, particularly through the lives of his characters. These findings show that Roy criticizes the caste system and capitalist structure, portraying it as exploitative and discriminatory. Through her narrative, she illustrates the limitations and contradictions in traditional and political systems, such as Marxism and communism, in addressing these entrenched social hierarchies. The study concludes that despite independence and social progress, caste-based and colonial oppression continues to impact marginalized groups in India.

The researcher (Gladio & Vince, 2020) in *Post-Colonial Aspects in Arundhati Roy's the God of Small Things* aims to explore the postcolonial elements intricately woven into the narrative, analyzing how the characters navigate the lingering effects of colonial rule and how their stories mirror significant socio-political changes in the post-independence era. The study reveals that the novel not only embodies the essence of post-colonial India but also enriches the broader

discourse on colonialism's continuing relevance. Serving as a powerful testament to the subtle legacies of colonialism, the novel invites readers to reflect on the intricate connections between history, identity, and societal evolution.

Arundhati Roy's novel through the lens of citizenship was analyzed by (Kazim Syed & Hussain Malik, 2020) under the title *A Textual Analysis of The God of Small Things- A Citizenship Perspective*, focusing on themes of identity, rights, and duties as outlined by Cogan's theoretical framework. The analysis investigates how caste, class, gender, and post-colonial dynamics are portrayed in the novel, illustrating the deep-rooted inequalities in Indian society. It highlights the denial of rights to marginalized groups like Dalits and women, and examines the responsibilities neglected by those in power, including law enforcement and patriarchal figures. The results revealed that the novel clearly criticizes the structure of society, depicting a hierarchy that disenfranchises and oppresses certain groups and concluded that the novel can be a valuable resource for teaching and understanding the themes of citizenship, offering a critical reflection on the intersection of identity, rights, and obligations in the context of Indian society.

The Concept of Mimicry in The God of Small Things (Hashim & Alahmad, 2023) examines the idea of mimicry in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* using a postcolonial framework. The research explores how characters mimic Western norms, language, culture and behavior, reflecting the lingering influence of colonialism on Indian society. The analysis highlights characters like Baby Kochamma and Chacko, whose actions and preferences signify the adoption of Western ideals, often at the expense of their own cultural identity. The research

underscores that Roy critiques this phenomenon through his characters, emphasizing the detrimental impact of colonialism on cultural and personal identity.

Research conducted by (Yimchunger & Alinger, 2022) explored the representation of trauma in their study entitled *Locating Trauma in Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things*, focusing on its psychological and social impact on the characters. Using trauma theory as a framework, the research examines the nonlinear narrative structure, catastrophic events, and recurring memories in the novel that reveal the pervasive effects of trauma. The analysis identifies trauma across generations, emphasizing how caste, patriarchy and societal norms perpetuate the cycle of suffering across generations. The results show that trauma manifests in characters through silence, emotional emptiness, and disrupted lives. Characters like Estha and Rahel carry psychological scars from childhood events, such as Sophie Mol's death, Velutha's unjust punishment, and family rejection. This research highlights the cultural specificity of trauma, showing how trauma is deeply connected to place and memory. Ultimately, this paper underscores Roy's critique of social inequality and the use of literature to give voice to the marginalized and oppressed.

This article, entitled *Resistance and Identity in The God of Small Things* by (Dizayi, 2021) explores the themes of resistance and self-identity in the novel. It examines how characters, especially women, challenge oppressive social structures rooted in caste, patriarchy and colonial legacies. This study reveal that resistance is closely linked to the search for identity, especially for women who are marginalized by rigid social norms. The research emphasizes that these acts of defiance whether

against caste, gender roles or colonial influences represent a broader struggle for equality and freedom. While the resistance of these figures often led to personal suffering, it symbolically challenged entrenched power dynamics in post-colonial India.

As still with the novel research entitled, *Secrecy, Community, and Counter-History in Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things* (Valero Redondo, 2020), examines the depiction of the structure of society in the novel, focusing on the themes of secrecy, community, and alternative history. The study explores how characters like Ammu, Velutha, Estha, and Rahel challenge restrictive "Love Laws," which dictate social norms about relationships. Through Rahel's narrative, Roy critiques institutionalized oppression and offers a vision of an alternative community built on openness and common humanity, despite its fragility.

Other research on ambivalent sexism provided in the research entitled *The Ambivalent Sexism as Bolstered on Richard Russo's The Whore Child* by (Yuliastuti et al., 2022) this paper underscores the ambivalent nature of sexism, illustrating how it simultaneously degenerates and regenerates identities. By exploring the sexual condition of society, it becomes clear that sexism perpetuates both positive and negative stereotypes. Further reflection on these stereotypes can deepen our understanding of the sexual attributes ascribed to men and women, offering insights into the persistence of gender inequality.

Rani (2019) in *Portrayal of Ambivalent Sexism in Lloyd Fernando's Green is the Colour* explored the concept of ambivalent sexism by examining its various sub-components and analyzing how gender inequality is depicted through the male

characters in Lloyd Fernando's *Green is the Colour* and its impact on the protagonist, Siti Sara. Two characters in the novel, Omar and Panglima, assert their dominance as authoritative figures in Siti Sara's life, displaying behaviors associated with "dominative paternalism and heterosexual hostility." Additionally, Yun Ming exemplifies benevolent sexism by stereotyping Siti Sara as exotic, submissive, vulnerable, and docile, which makes her more appealing to him and reinforces the idea that she needs protection.

Further research conducted by (Khaled Alebrahim, 2024) in *Ambivalent Sexism Explored: A Theoretical Examination of Gender Roles in The Silent Patient by Alex Michaelides*. This analysis examines the contrasting attitudes of hostility and benevolence directed towards the female characters, Alicia and Kathy, revealing a deep dichotomy in their portrayal. By focusing on the representation of hostile and benevolent forms of sexism, this research highlights the complexity of gender dynamics. This research contributes to a broader and ongoing effort to challenge, question and ultimately expose deeply rooted gender stereotypes in society. Through this exploration, this analysis aims to provide a deeper understanding of how such attitudes shape and reinforce perceptions of women in various contexts.

The rest of the last, in the thesis *The Portrayal of Sexism Experienced by the Main Character Beth Harmon in the Queen's Gambit (2020)* by (Muhammad, 2022). The author concludes that Beth experienced both hostile sexism and benevolent sexism, with benevolent sexism being the more common type. Hostile sexism is evident in episode one, while benevolent sexism appears in episodes two,

three, four and six. These sexist attitudes contributed to Beth's insecurities about her abilities, which ultimately led her to excessive alcohol consumption.

To date, there has been no research that deeply explores Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* with the exploration of Ambivalent Sexism. Therefore, the research to be conducted aims to fill this void by taking the object of research on the novel. As a result, the researcher focuses on examining how the ambivalent sexism is depicted in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* to learn more about how ambivalent sexism could oppose gender discrimination. In terms of research methodology, the researcher of this study used feminist literary criticism approach and ambivalent sexism inventory theory. This analysis is done by gathering and analyzing data, after which the data is interpreted in based on the text itself.

B. Problems of the Study

This study aims to respond to the following query in light of the research background: How is ambivalent sexism described in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*?

C. Significance of the Study

This examination of *The God of Small Things* adds to the larger discussion on ambivalent sexism. The significance of the research is divided into two categories: theoretical and practical. The findings of this study could theoretically advance literary criticism. Additionally, this study looks at concerns about ambivalent sexism in contemporary literature. In practical terms, literature students can use this research as an additional resource. The researcher expects that other

researchers who investigate related subjects in the future will find this research to be useful resource.

D. Scope and Limitation

The analysis of sexism in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* offers a comprehensive scope while also operating within certain boundaries. The scope of this analysis is mainly to study the depiction of ambivalent sexism, dissect its various aspects, and understand the various influences that occur in the novel's story. Furthermore, this research is limited answering the problem of the study, namely that ambivalent sexism is described in *The God of Small Things*. In addition, this study will be examined through the lens of Peter Glick and Susan Fiske's theory of ambivalent sexism inventory.

E. Definition of Key Terms

There are few key terms in this study that need to be noted. Specific descriptions of the important concepts used in this investigation are provided by the researcher to avoid any misunderstandings.

Sexism : The belief or attitude that one sex is inherently superior to, more competent than or more valuable than the other" (Hurst, 2007). Definitions of sexism generally emphasize two components: hostility toward women and the endorsement of traditional gender roles (i.e., restricting women's conduct to fit societal prescriptions and confining women to roles

accorded less status and power than those of men)
(Glick & Fiske, 1997).

Ambivalent Sexism : A theory developed by Peter Glick and Susan Fiske. The theory posits that sexism has two sub-categories which are *Hostile Sexism* and *Benevolent Sexism* (Rollero & Fedi, 2012).

Hostile Sexism : Hostile sexism seeks to justify male power, traditional gender roles, and men's exploitation of women as sexual objects through derogatory characterizations of women (Glick & Fiske, 1997).

Benevolent Sexism : Benevolent sexism, in contrast, relies on kinder and gentler justifications of male dominance and prescribed gender roles; it recognizes men's dependence on women (i.e., women's dyadic power) and embraces a romanticized view of sexual relationships with women (Glick & Fiske, 1997).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The researcher discusses the theories relating to the study's scope in this chapter. The interpretation and explanation of study findings are predicated on these assumptions. The theories that examine the sexism in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* are feminist literary criticism and ambivalent sexism inventory theory.

A. Feminist Literary Criticism

Feminist literary criticism has played a pivotal role in challenging traditional literary interpretations by emphasizing the importance of gender issues and discrimination in literature. However, in literary study, the practice is encapsulated through a critical insight into representation of women in literature and their shifting roles in liberation from patriarchal structure (Boonyaoudomsart, 2018). The feminist perspective aims to analyze how gender relations are portrayed in literary works and how women are often subjected to male domination and oppression. It seeks to highlight the ways in which literature reflects and perpetuates societal ideologies related to gender.

Additionally, feminist literary criticism focuses on the unique challenges female authors face in a male-dominated literary landscape, asserting that male critics and readers may not fully understand or appreciate the nuances of women's writing. This approach to literary analysis not only examines the portrayal of women in literature but also underscores the impact of literature in shaping and perpetuating gender ideologies. The final goal of feminist criticism is “to develop

and uncover a female tradition of writing,” “to analyze women writers and their writings from a female perspective”, “to rediscover old texts”, “to interpret symbolism of women's writing so that it will not be lost or ignored by the male point of view” “to resist sexism in literature and to increase awareness of the sexual politics of language and style" (Tuttle, 1986).

Feminist literary criticism's primary goal is to understand gender relations, or how men and women interact in producing literary work. Feminist literary criticism identifies oppressive practices and the efforts of women for gender parity in rights. As a result, literary works with a strong female lead are read and reconstructed by feminist literary critique. Because it has the ability to challenge narratives of male dominance, feminist literary criticism is regarded as a revolutionary field of study (Ruthven, 1985). According to Yoder (in Suwardi, 2010,) feminist literary criticism is not a critique of women writers or of women themselves. However, readers of feminist literary critique need to be able to assess and acknowledge the issues surrounding sex, culture, literature, and public life. Furthermore, feminist critics aspire to alter the society so that women are recognized as intelligent and creative individuals (Dobbie, 2012).

Feminist literary criticism has multiple varieties within its paradigm. First, stereotypes and representations of women in literary works are the main subject of feminist literary critique directed at women readers. Additionally, this criticism looks at the reasons why women are frequently undervalued and even completely overlooked in literary works (Buana, 2009). The second is gynocritical literary criticism, which studies the writing careers of women by analyzing various aspects

of their writing, including genres, writing styles, subjects, writing structures, conventions, and the evolution of the women authors' tradition (Showalter, 1985). In addition, it looks at the writer's job, inventiveness, and traditions and norms that shape their way of thinking. The goal of this literary critique, known as gynocritics, is to identify distinctions between the writing of men and women.

The rationale behind choosing feminist literary criticism as the analytical framework for Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* is that a feminist perspective is relevant to dissecting the treatment of men and women in literary works. Through feminist literary criticism that seeks out moments of empowerment that are hidden or contradictory to the dominant patriarchal narrative, researcher gain deeper insight into how ambivalent sexism is manifested in *The God of Small Things*, as well as its impact on the understanding and construction of gender in the literary works the public reads. This method provides a more in-depth analysis of the representation of ambivalent sexism and the difficulties faced by women in the story, as well as providing insight into the challenges specifically faced by female characters.

B. Ambivalent Sexism Inventory Theory

The ambivalent sexism inventory theory posits that gender inequality is enduring partly because negative attitudes toward women often go hand in hand with superficially positive attitudes that justify gendered roles (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Developed by psychologists Peter Glick and Susan Fiske, presents a comprehensive framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of sexist attitudes towards women. Peter Glick and Susan Fiske coined the term “ambivalent

sexism” to summarize the contradictory and complex nature of attitudes towards women. The word “ambivalent” refers to the coexistence of conflicting emotions or attitudes within an individual or society. As cited (Agadullina et al., 2022), the ambivalent sexism theory suggests that there are two complementary types of sexism: hostile (subjectively negative attitude towards gender groups) and benevolent (subjectively positive attitude towards gender groups). In the context of their theory, “ambivalent sexism” signifies the simultaneous existence of seemingly positive (benevolent) and overtly negative (hostile) attitudes towards women. People may have seemingly positive attitudes towards women, such as admiring or protecting, while at the same time perpetuating traditional gender roles that limit women’s autonomy and reinforce inequality.

Ambivalent sexism, which consists of hostile and benevolent sexism, can have detrimental effects on women's performance and perceptions of their competence (Dardenne et al., 2007). People who support extreme unpleasant sexism are more likely to put up with and even participate in sexual harassment of women in a range of contexts. Supporters of these viewpoints are also more prone to tolerate and engage in violence against their intimate partners. Lastly, those with high levels of aversive sexism are more likely to commit acts of sexual violence against women, including rape, or to support them.

Glick and Fiske’s theory of ambivalent sexism inventory suggest that within societal attitudes, there is significant level of mixed feelings or contradictory emotions between genders. This perspective suggests that both genders have complex and often conflicting attitudes towards each other in the context of sexist

beliefs. Glick and Fiske divide sexism into two categories under a framework of ambivalent sexism:

1. Hostile Sexism

A highly unfavorable and antagonistic attitude toward women, marked by obviously criticizing views and behaviors, is known as hostile sexism. The idea that women are less valuable than men is the basis for this type of sexism, which frequently takes the shape of an attempt to restrict, dominate, or control women's freedom of choice. Hostile sexism believers may think that women are less capable or appropriate for particular roles than males, which can result in discrimination or a dismissal of women's skills.

Discrimination against women remains a deeply rooted issue, as Glick and Fiske (1996) argue that societal structures often perpetuate gender-based inequalities and biases. Discrimination against women in various aspects of society is still an important issue around the world, while *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy illustrates this reality through its depiction of gender disparity and the struggles women face in a male-dominated culture. Despite progress in the gender equality movement, practices that prevent women from having equal opportunities continue to exist. In the novel, female characters are subjected to social and familial restrictions that limit their choices and restrict their personal autonomy, reflecting the impact of widespread gender discrimination. Roy's portrayal emphasizes how such entrenched inequalities affect not only women's ability to thrive, but also their status and prospects in a society dominated by male authority. Peter Glick and Susan Fiske mentioned that within hostile sexism, there

are three sub-components: dominant paternalism, competitive gender differentiation, and heterosexual hostility.

a. Dominative Paternalism

Dominative paternalism refers to the belief that men should dominate women, both in interpersonal relationships and in broader social structures, rooted in the view that men have the right to control women because they are perceived as superior in terms of authority, power, and decision-making ability. Advocates of dominative paternalism justify patriarchy by viewing women as not being fully competent adults, legitimizing the need for a superordinate male figure (Glick & Fiske, 1996). In this context, women are seen as less competent or unfit to have equal roles with men, especially in aspects of leadership or important decision-making.

b. Competitive Gender Differentiation

Competitive gender differentiation is based on the view that men and women have essentially opposite characteristics, with male traits often considered more valuable, especially in the context of power and achievement, and presenting a social justification for male structural power: only men are perceived as having the traits necessary to govern important social institutions (Glick & Fiske, 1996). This view creates inter-gender competition by promoting stereotypes that favor male dominance and undermine women's contributions, particularly in public or professional spaces.

c. Heterosexual Hostility

As Peter Glick and Susan Fiske (1996) stated, this concept refers to negative attitudes, suspicion and hostility towards women in the context of heterosexual relationships, often based on the belief that women use their sexuality to manipulate or control men, and for some men, sexual attraction toward women may be inseparable from a desire to dominate them (heterosexual hostility). Heterosexual hostility reflects distrust of women, particularly in terms of their intentions in romantic or sexual relationships, as well as the perception that women are a threat to men because of perceived power through sexual attraction or manipulative strategies. This component is often manifested through accusations that women “use” or “exploit” men for personal gain. These attitudes may take the form of intense jealousy, negative stereotypes of women as manipulative, or assumptions that women intentionally flirt or seduce to gain control.

2. Benevolent Sexism

Benevolent sexism encompasses subjectively positive (for the sexist) attitudes toward women in traditional roles: protective paternalism, idealization of women, and desire for intimate relations (Glick & Fiske, 1997). Benevolent sexism is a form of sexism that appears positive on the surface, but ultimately perpetuates gender inequality by reinforcing traditional gender roles and stereotypes. This type of sexism includes seemingly benevolent attitudes or behaviors towards women, which describe them in ways that, while seemingly complimentary, confine them to limited and traditional roles in society. These beliefs are frequently defined by a desire to conserve and protect women, rather than being clearly sexist. These

viewpoints are frequently referred to as traditional values or gallantry in casual conversations. Though they may appear to have beneficial aspects, the attitudes that make up benign sexism are frequently harmful to women's rights and even their personal safety (Glick & Fiske, 1996).

An additional aspect of benevolent sexism is the idealization of women who follow established gender roles. Benevolent sexism allows women to be praised or admired for embracing or adhering to cultural standards of femininity, such as being submissive, modest, or nurturing. However, it upholds the idea that women should conform to established gender roles, limiting their ability to express themselves freely and reinforcing cultural norms that favor conformity to conventional gender expectations. The idea that women are needed to complement men in everyday tasks and sexuality is one example of how this positive perspective on women does not change the fact that women still hold a lower status. Benevolent sexism is segmented into protective paternalism, complementary gender differentiation, and heterosexual intimacy, which present these attitudes as positive or affectionate justifications for maintaining traditional gender roles and hierarchies.

a. Protective Paternalism

Protective paternalism refers to the belief that women need to be protected and looked after by men, as they are perceived as weak or less capable of looking after themselves. Glick and Fiske (1996) uttered that protective paternalism may coexist with its dominative counterpart because men are dyadically dependent on women (because of heterosexual reproduction) as wives, mothers, and romantic objects; thus, women are to be loved, cherished, and protected (their "weaknesses")

require that men fulfill the protector-and-provider role). This often comes in the form of seemingly positive attention or treatment, such as providing physical protection or keeping women out of dangerous situations. Behind this attitude, however, are assumptions that undermine women's ability to be independent and manage their own lives.

b. Complementary Gender Differentiation

In competitive gender differentiation, Glick and Fiske (1996) describe the belief that women possess unique characteristics that are considered complementary to men, such as gentleness, emotional warmth, strong intuition and moral superiority. This belief is often used to justify the traditional gender role division in society, where women are positioned as the guardians of morality and social harmony, while men are considered more appropriate to lead and make major decisions. Women are rewarded for certain traits or roles, such as being a good caregiver, loving mother, or faithful companion, but these rewards are limited and only apply in contexts that conform to traditional norms.

c. Heterosexual Intimacy

Men's sexual motivation toward women may be linked with a genuine desire for psychological closeness (heterosexual intimacy) cited from Glick and Fiske (1996). This aspect of benevolent sexism idealizes romantic relationships by portraying them as essential for emotional fulfillment and harmony between genders. Heterosexual intimacy suggests that women are valued not only as objects of desire but also as sources of emotional support, nurturing, and stability for men. While this perspective may appear positive or even romantic, it reinforces

traditional gender roles that confine women to relational and caregiving roles within heterosexual partnerships. By emphasizing the indispensability of these relationships, heterosexual intimacy perpetuates the notion that women's worth is intrinsically tied to their ability to fulfill men's emotional and romantic needs, subtly limiting their autonomy and opportunities outside the context of these relationships.

The reason for using Ambivalent Sexism Theory as a framework to analyze Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* is that the theory is useful for comprehending attitudes toward women that are nuanced and conflicting. Roy's writing skillfully handles the complexities of discrimination against women, which makes it an ideal choice for analysis via the prism of ambivalent sexism. This theory provides a thorough framework for analyzing the narrative's hostile and benign instances of sexism. The theory of ambivalent sexism offers a sophisticated comprehension of the complex characteristics of sexism, facilitating an in-depth investigation of the ways in which conflicting viewpoints coexist in the text.

An analysis of how scenarios and characters in *The God of Small Things* could represent views toward women that appear to be supportive but are actually limiting, supporting the ideas of harmless sexism. In addition, it makes it easier to analyze the clearly hostile and negative behaviors or ideas that are depicted in the story and are indicative of hostile sexism. Roy's examination in this novel reflects the key issues of ambivalent sexism inventory theory, which provides an understanding of the complexity of sexist beliefs. This critical framing allows for a more comprehensive analysis of the movements, conversations, and events of the

characters in the novel. With this theory, it delves deeper into the hidden meanings, motives, and consequences of their actions within a broader narrative context.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

The researcher provides an explanation of the analysis process in this chapter. Data sources, data collecting, data analysis, and research design are the four sub-chapters that make up this chapter.

A. Research Design

This research uses feminist literary criticism. The aim of feminist literary criticism is to analyze gender relations, the relationship between women and men socially constructed, which among others describes the situation when women are in male domination (flax, 1990). One of the purposes of feminist literary criticism is to give women space to voice their feelings out so that their voices will not be subjected to sexist stereotypes (Ayu et al., 2021). Within the framework of feminist literary criticism, this research centers on the study of a literary work titled *The God of Small Things* penned by Arundhati Roy. The novel used in this research summarizes gender issues, with the main focus on the perspective of ambivalent sexism.

B. Data Source

The data source for this study is drawn from *The God of Small Things*, a novel authored by Arundhati Roy and first published in 1997. Comprising 324 pages and divided into 21 distinct chapters. This novel serves as a comprehensive resource for analysis. The data intended for examination mainly consisted of quotations sourced from the novel. This diverse collection of textual components

forms the basis for a careful and detailed analysis of the depictions of and ideological underpinnings presented in the content of the novel.

C. Data Collection

Throughout the process of collecting data from *The God of Small Things*, the researcher undertook several key stages. At first, the researcher conducted an in-depth reading of the novel to gain a comprehensive understanding of its contents. Thereafter, the researcher conducted a more thorough and focused re-reading, specifically examining passages related to the research topic and relevant research questions. Next, during this stage, the researcher carefully highlighted and annotated key points and quotes that directly correlated with the research focus, emphasizing the importance of these segments in relation to the research objectives, which included textual elements such as phrases, complete sentences, extended paragraphs, and dialogue exchanges, all of which were extracted directly from *The God of Small Things*.

D. Data Analysis

As the data were collected, the researcher proceeded to analyze them. This process involves steps such as sorting, classifying, evaluating, and drawing conclusions. All the steps in the analysis refer to the theory of ambivalent sexism inventory developed by Peter Glick and Susan Fiske; with this, the researcher gains a deep insight into the phenomenon under study. By applying this theory theoretically, the problems encountered in the research can be solved or explained further. In the end, the researcher compiles the findings gathered from this investigation, providing a clear and data-driven conclusion.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the researcher presents findings and results of the analysis of Sexism from Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*. The analysis addresses the research questions concerning how sexism is portrayed in the story and what attitudes of ambivalent sexism are depicted.

The ambivalent sexism inventory theory, which Peter Glick and Susan Fiske came up with in 1996, points out two different but linked types of sexism: hostile sexism and benevolent sexism. Hostile sexism shows old-fashioned ideas of clear discrimination and unfriendly attitudes towards women who seem to challenge male power. This kind of sexism has bad stereotypes and anger towards women who look like they're stepping out of their usual roles. On the flip side benevolent sexism is harder to spot and seems nice on the surface. It shows up as gentlemanly behavior that puts women on a pedestal seeing them as pure, caring, and needing men to protect them. Even though benevolent sexism might look harmless, it keeps old gender roles going and keeps gender inequality alive by making women seem like they depend on men. These two types of sexism team up to keep male-dominated systems in place creating a tricky situation where society both respects women and holds them back with what it expects from them.

A. Hostile Sexism in *The God of Small Things*

According to Glick and Fiske's theory of ambivalent sexism, hostile sexism includes subscales such as *dominative paternalism*, *competitive gender differentiation*, and *heterosexual hostility*. *Dominative paternalism* addresses the

belief that men should dominate women and keep them in a subordinate position, based on the view that men are naturally more powerful and have greater authority, while women are perceived as weaker or less competent. *Competitive gender differentiation* reflects the belief that women and men are distinct and competing groups, where women are seen as a threat to male superiority. This belief includes the view that women try to take advantage of men or gain power through direct competition, often colored by envy or fear that women may threaten men's dominant position in society. *Heterosexual hostility* reflects suspicion and hostility towards women who are perceived to use their sexual attractiveness to control men. In this view, women are seen as dangerous or manipulative because they are perceived to be able to use their sexuality to gain power over men, which also includes jealousy, distrust, or negative view of women who are perceived to be overly sexual or "seductive" for personal gain.

These three components demonstrate how hostile sexism serves to reinforce gender inequality by promoting views that discredit and demean women. As articulated by Glick and Fiske (1996), reveal how deeply rooted and socially pervasive sexist attitudes contribute to the maintenance of gender inequality by encouraging overt and subtle forms of discrimination against women.

1. Dominative Paternalism

As Glick and Fiske, (1997) stated, the hostile aspect of this ideology, dominative paternalism, is the belief that women ought to be controlled by men. It supports traditional gender roles, positioning men as natural leaders and authority figures, while women are placed in subservient roles. This concept goes beyond

simple control, as it works to justify male dominance by promoting the idea that women are inherently dependent on men for protection and guidance, thus maintaining patriarchal norms. It was the time when Babà, Ammu's husband was an alcoholic, who initially married Ammu under normal and good circumstances like a good man. However, as time went on, some oddities about him began to surface, leaving Ammu confused and unsettled.

There were things about him that Ammu never understood. Long after she left him, she never stopped wondering why he lied so outrageously when he didn't need to. Particularly when he didn't need to. In a conversation with friends he would walk about how much he loved smoked salmon when Ammu knew he hated it. Or he would come home from the club and tell Ammu that he saw Meet Me in St. Louis when they'd actually screened The Bronze Buckaroo. When she confronted him about these things, he never explained or apologized. He just giggled, exasperating Ammu to a degree she never thought herself capable of. (p. 36-37)

As time passed after the marriage, Ammu's husband turned into a man who did not respect women. His actions lied to Ammu and did not feel guilty and apologize for his feel-good actions. He lied for no reason and refused to explain or apologize when confronted-demonstrating a lack of accountability and a dismissive attitude towards Ammu's perspective and feelings, reflecting a domineering paternalism and condescending attitude.

Chacko said, "What's yours is mine and what's mine is also mine." He had a surprisingly high laugh for a man of his size and fatness. And when he laughed, he shook all over without appearing to move. (p. 53)

Ammu's brother, Chacko, took action to take control and assert control over his family's pickle factory and the financial resources associated with it. After resigning from his job, Chacko took over the factory, which had previously been a successful small-scale operation under the leadership of his mother, Mammachi. He changed its name, expanded its operations, and secured loans using the family rice

fields as collateral, which led to financial instability. Although Ammu, his sister, contributed significantly to the running of the factory, she was legally and socially disenfranchised because, as a daughter, she was not entitled to inheritance under the regulations in place at the time. Chacko's line, "*What is yours is mine and what's mine is mine,*" summarizes his dominative paternalism. Dominative paternalism, as part of the theory of ambivalent sexism, describes overt control and domination justified by societal norms that perpetuate male authority and privilege. Here, Chacko reinforces his rights by claiming exclusive ownership of resources and labor shared or contributed by others, especially women like Ammu. His tone and laughter suggest a mockery of resistance, emphasizing his unwavering dominance and dismissing the idea that women have no right to challenge his words.

She was vaguely conscious of Chacko—concerned and gentle voiced when he was by her side—otherwise incensed, blowing like an enraged wind through the Ayemenem House. So different from the amused Rumpled Porcupine she had met that long-ago Oxford morning at the café. (p. 253)

Still with the same character, this time Chacko is described as "*concerned and gentle-voiced*" when interacting directly with Margaret during her time of grief, yet he is also described as "*incensed, blowing like an enraged wind*" elsewhere in Ayemenem House. This duality reflects dominative paternalism, especially in how Chacko's care appears conditional and his underlying anger demonstrates his assertion of control and dominance in the household. Dominative paternalism is seen in how Chacko's behavior reflects the male right to organize and control the situation around him, even in the context of shared grief. The contrast between his current anger and the "*amused Rumpled Porcupine*" personality of their early days in Oxford further underlines the shift from a seemingly friendly nature to a

dominating force, which Margaret now experiences as oppressive and excessive. His actions at home most likely extend beyond Margaret to others, His actions at home most likely extend beyond Margaret to others, emphasizing the power of a man and ignoring alternative emotional responses or agency from those around him.

2. Competitive Gender Differentiation

Competitive gender differentiation is the hostile side of this ideology. Through negative stereotypes of women, men have long been able to gain self-confidence by believing that they are better than the other half of the population (Glick & Fiske, 1997). Often it works through negative stereotypes and derogatory beliefs that help men boost their self-esteem by putting women down. By positioning women as inferior, competitive gender differentiation reinforces male power structures and maintains gender inequality.

Being a daughter with no right to further education is what Ammu experienced when her father, Pappachi restricted what Ammu would do. Ammu's limited opportunities were a result of the traditional mindset of her father, Pappachi.

Ammu finished her schooling the same year that her father retired from his job in Delhi and moved to Ayemenem. Pappachi insisted that a college education was an unnecessary expense for a girl, so Ammu had no choice but to leave Delhi and move with them. (p. 35)

After completing school, Ammu's education was dismissed as Pappachi considered higher education to be an “*an unnecessary expense for a girl*” As a result, Ammu had no autonomy to determine her future; she was forced to leave Delhi and move to Ayemenem with her family. In Ayemenem, her options were further limited, as she was expected to help with household chores while waiting for a proposal that never came due to her family's inability to provide a bride price.

This scenario reflects competitive gender differentiation, in which men assert their superiority by reinforcing social roles that establish women as inherently less deserving of resources and opportunities. Pappachi's insistence on denying Ammu a college education stems from the belief that investing in a daughter's future is less valuable than prioritizing other family needs, effectively creating a hierarchy in which men are granted greater access to independence and social privilege. By denying Ammu access to education, she upholds the narrative that women's value is tied to their traditional roles as wives and caregivers, placing them in competition with men who are given greater opportunities to succeed and lead.

Pappachi would not help her with the pickle-making because he did not consider pickle-making a suitable job for a high-ranking ex-Government official. (p. 43)

When Pappachi retired and mammachi started a business, things came to a head. Mammachi, despite being partially blind was still able to start a pickle-making business that turned out to be successful and made her admired and financially independent. However, Pappachi refused to help her, considering pickle making incompatible with his dignity as a “*high-ranking ex-Government official*.” His humiliation is compounded by jealousy of Mammachi's recent recognition and success. This resentment manifested in his increasingly frequent physical violence, indicating his attempt to reassert control in the household. The situation changes when Chacko, their son, intervenes to stop the violence.

This paragraph demonstrates competitive gender differentiation, as Pappachi's behavior reflects a belief system rooted in maintaining male authority by belittling female achievement. She perceives Mammachi's success not as a

shared family achievement, but as a threat to his status and sense of importance. By refusing to participate in her business, Pappachi reinforces conventional expectations of gender roles, deeming Mammachi's entrepreneurial endeavors unimportant or unworthy of involvement. His jealousy and the ensuing harassment are deliberate attempts to reduce Mammachi's independence and maintain his control.

So Chacko hired a van to transport the body to the electric crematorium. He had her wrapped in a dirty bed sheet and laid out on a stretcher. (p. 155)

Even in a lifeless state, women can still experience injustice. Ammu died in a filthy room at Bharat Lodge, Alleppey, where she had gone for a job interview as a secretary at the age of 31. These tragic circumstances reflect the sense of isolation Ammu experienced both in life and after her death. The church refused to bury her, so Chacko, her brother, took it upon himself to take Ammu's body to an electric crematorium. Her body was wrapped in dirty sheets and placed on a stretcher, showing a lack of respect for her dignity. The journey to the crematorium exposes society's indifference towards women like Ammu, whose lives have been shaped and limited by social norms that favor men. This situation reflects competitive gender differentiation, where Ammu, as a woman, is marginalized and does not give space to those who are perceived as breaking the rules of morality or traditional roles. Meanwhile, Chacko, as a man, despite having the burden of responsibility, remains in a stronger position to act. This gender disparity is highlighted, illustrating the inequality of treatment between men and women.

Why not use a cushion or a pillow or something?" Baby Kochamma suggested in her friendly voice. "You'll be able to see better." "Why not mind your own business, sister?" the driver suggested in his unfriendly one. (p. 106)

In this storyline, Baby Kochamma is on a journey that takes place in a cramped and rundown taxi, focusing on the small and alert driver. The taxi is not only a means of transportation, but also a home for the driver, which is evident from the smell and condition of the interior. The driver, who has to drive in an unusual position due to his small body, drives in an aggressive manner, symbolizing the hard life he has to live. When Baby Kochamma suggested in a “friendly” tone that the driver use a pillow to increase his comfort, the driver responded sharply, telling her not to interfere. The driver's response reflects the underlying tensions of social class and gender differences. Baby Kochamma, a woman from the upper class, feels entitled to make a seemingly condescending suggestion, which she may see as considerate, but for the driver, it is a form of intrusion that underscores his inferior position. This paragraph reflects competitive gender differentiation as it shows how a man, in this case the taxi driver, feels he does not need advice from a woman. When Baby Kochamma makes the suggestion that the driver use a pillow to see the road better, the driver's sharp and defensive response shows that he perceives the suggestion as an unnecessary intrusion, despite Baby Kochamma's good intentions. A man's tendency to maintain control over situations, especially in spaces that he considers his domain, such as driving.

3. Heterosexual Hostility

While (Glick & Fiske, 1997) explains that heterosexual hostility reflects the tendency to view women merely as sexual objects, as well as the fear that women may use sexual attraction to gain power over men (because men's sexual attraction is a major source of women's dyadic power). The concept illustrates the conflicting

emotions men may feel about women, swinging between admiration and hostility based on traditional gender norms. Thus, heterosexual hostility reflects not only objectification, but also perceived hostility towards sexual dynamics, where women are perceived to use their sexuality to gain undue control over men.

In the interactions between Ammu and Inspector Thomas Mathew, violence and sexual crimes are used to humiliate, degrade and control Ammu. This paragraph is categorized as heterosexual hostility because it describes gender and power-based harassment in the context of unequal heterosexual relationships. According to Glick and Fiske's Ambivalent Sexism Inventory Theory (1996), this behavior exemplifies *heterosexual hostility* as it manifests through overt aggression and sexual objectification aimed at enforcing patriarchal dominance and punishing women who challenge traditional gender roles.

It's a little too late for all this, don't you think?" he said. He spoke the coarse Kottayam dialect of Malayalam. He stared at Ammu's breasts as he spoke. (p. 7)

If I were you," he said, "I'd go home quietly." Then he tapped her breasts with his baton. Gently. Tap tap. As though he was choosing mangoes from a basket. Pointing out the ones that he wanted packed and delivered. (p. 7)

The act of lightly beating Ammu's chest with a stick and her analogy with picking mangoes are ways in which the Inspector asserts his power through overt sexual harassment. The language used, such as insulting Ammu as a "veshya" (prostitute) and her children as "illegals," further emphasizes his role as a policeman and a man who can do anything to a woman even if it is despicable. This demeaning attitude not only reflects gender violence, but also shows sexual hostility directed at a woman as a form of sexual exploitation in a supposedly neutral and professional space.

The weeping stopped. Puzzled brown eyes looked into lurid, red veined, green ones. Over coffee Mr. Hollick proposed that Babà go away for a while. For a holiday. To a clinic perhaps, for treatment. For as long as it took him to get better. And for the period of time that he was away, Mr. Hollick suggested that Ammu be sent to his bungalow to be “looked after.” (p. 38)

Suddenly he lunged at her, grabbed her hair, punched her and then passed out from the effort. (p. 38)

There was a heated discussion between Babà and Mr. Hollick. Mr. Hollick, Babà's boss, used his position to threaten Babà with dismissal unless he agreed to an “alternative.” Mr. Hollick suggested that Babà go away for a while on the grounds of “recuperation,” while offering to have Ammu, Babà's wife, stay at his bungalow to be “looked after.” This suggestion blatantly implied sexual exploitation of Ammu. This paragraph falls under the category of heterosexual hostility as it depicts a gender-based power dynamic that is full of threats and exploitation. Mr. Hollick, with his position of superiority, tries to take advantage of Babà's economic vulnerability to satisfy his personal desires, which directly demeans and objectifies Ammu. Hostility is also seen in the reaction of Babà who, instead of defending Ammu, vents his frustration with physical violence against her, indicating the injustice against Ammu as a woman where women are victimized in various levels of exploitation, both sexual and violent.

Every night he beat her with a brass flower vase. The beatings weren't new. What was new was only the frequency with which they took place. (p. 44)

Mammachi, Pappachi's wife, experienced her own domestic violence and not just occasionally. Pappachi felt insulted and jealous of his wife's success in the pickle-making business. He often vented his insecurities by resorting to physical violence, using a brass flower vase as a battering ram. This shows a pattern of

violence in their relationship, which occurs regularly with increasing intensity. This paragraph falls under the category of heterosexual hostility as it describes the violence that occurs in heterosexual relationships, where the man's power imbalance and jealousy of his wife's success are at the root of the conflict. Pappachi not only feels unable to accept his wife's success, but also uses violence as a way to assert his dominance in their relationship.

She had woken up at night to escape from a familiar, recurrent dream in which policemen approached her with snicking scissors, wanting to hack o her hair. They did that in Kottayam to prostitutes whom they'd caught in the bazaar—branded them so that everybody would know them for what they were. Veshyas. So that new policemen on the beat would have no trouble identifying whom to harass. (p. 154)

Ammu, a woman and mother often suffers from the bad fate of being a woman. In her recurring dreams, she was haunted by images of policemen approaching her with scissors to shave off her hair - a practice carried out on women considered “veshyas” (prostitutes) in Kottayam as a form of public punishment and stigma. Ammu feels anxious and unprotected, living in fear of oppression and abuse from both society and authority. This paragraph is classified as heterosexual hostility as it describes a form of gender-based structural violence faced by women in a patriarchal society. This violence is not only physical, but also social and psychological. In the society depicted, women who are perceived as violating moral norms are attached with negative labels and subjected to systematic harassment, such as the act of shaving their hair to visually mark them. This reflects the power dynamics in gender relations, where women are controlled through fear, stigma and public humiliation, largely stemming from heteronormative views that demand absolute adherence to traditional roles. Ammu, who transgresses these boundaries,

ultimately becomes a victim of a system that leaves no room for women's freedom or dignity.

B. Benevolent Sexism in *The God of Small Things*

Although seemingly unharmed, these attitudes perpetuate gender inequality by maintaining stereotypical views of women's roles in society. Benevolent sexism (BS), as defined by Glick and Fiske (1996) in their theory of ambivalent sexism, refers to attitudes that appear positive but reinforce traditional gender roles and hierarchies. As stated by (Chen et al., 2009) BS includes three factors: *protective paternalism* (chivalry toward women), *complementary gender differentiation* (stereotypic roles for women), and *heterosexual intimacy* (believing men and women are incomplete without each other).

Protective paternalism is the belief that men should protect, look after and support women because they are considered weaker or more vulnerable, based on traditional views that reinforce the idea that men are stronger and more powerful. This belief is in line with the concept of *complementary gender differentiation*, which views women and men as having different but complementary traits and abilities. Women are considered to have unique traits such as gentleness, motherhood and caring, which complement male traits such as strength and rationality. In addition, *heterosexual intimacy* asserts that heterosexual romantic relationships are an important aspect of life, where women are seen as a source of emotional comfort and a complement to men's lives, both emotionally and sexually. This view emphasizes that men and women need each other in heterosexual romantic relationships. While benevolent sexism is milder version of hostile

sexism, it doesn't appear to demean women from the outside, but their actions also assume that women are not as capable as men.

1. Protective Paternalism

Protective paternalism is the benevolent aspect of paternalistic ideology, which states that because of their greater authority, power, and physical strength, men should serve as protectors and providers for women (Glick & Fiske, 1997). While cloaked in seemingly positive intentions, can contribute to the perpetuation of gender inequalities. It limits women's agency and reinforces stereotypes that categorize women as the "weaker sex." This attitude is characterized by the assumption that men are more competent and capable, leading them to take actions that are perceived as "helping" or "supporting" women, even if these actions are unsolicited or demeaning.

When Ammu's husband was abusive, all he did was beg his wife for forgiveness. After the brutal physical attack, her husband apologized profusely, but the apology was quickly followed by an urgent request that Ammu use her influence to help take care of her husband's job transfer. This pattern suggests that the apology was not sincere, but rather part of a strategy to gain personal advantage and maintain control over Ammu.

He apologized abjectly for the violence, but immediately began to badger her about helping with his transfer. (p. 39)

Protective Paternalism is the belief that men should protect and take care of women, but this protection is often used as a tool to maintain dominance and control. In this case, Ammu's husband's apology was a fake act aimed at restoring

the current status in which Ammu was under his influence. By asking Ammu for help with the transfer, Ammu's husband shows how this form of protection is accompanied by demands that take advantage of Ammu's subordinate position. Ammu is not only victimized but also controlled through gender role expectations that assume she is responsible for supporting her husband's ambitions despite ongoing abuse.

Ammu had lost the latest of her succession of jobs—as a receptionist in a cheap hotel—because she had been ill and had missed too many days of work. The hotel couldn't afford that, they told her. They needed a healthier receptionist. (p. 152)

Ammu's life was full of uncertainties and struggles after she left her husband and tried to be independent. In her quest to make a living, Ammu lost her job as a receptionist at a budget hotel as her health deteriorated and she was frequently absent. The hotel decided that they needed a “healthier” receptionist, so they fired Ammu.

Yet in Ammu's case, the hotel's decision to dismiss her for not being fit enough demonstrates how women are often judged by standards of incompetence or the need for protection. They are deemed incapable of meeting the heavy demands of the job without special treatment or supervision. The hotel, as an institution, demonstrates this form of protective paternalism by overriding Ammu's need for economic stability, and instead prioritizing health as a strict requirement for a relatively simple job. This shows how social and economic structures force women like Ammu to remain in a vulnerable position, reinforcing the idea that they need “protection” or substitutes, both from the work system and from male figures.

Oh... a little old churchgoing ammooma, quiet and clean... idi appams for breakfast, kanji and meen for lunch. Minding her own business. Not looking right or left.” “And

she's really a ...?" "Really a wild thing ... I can hear her at night—rushing past in the moonlight, always in a hurry. You must be careful of her. (p. 204)

Estha, Rahel, and Kuttappen talked about the river they had encountered. Kuttappen uses a metaphor to describe the river as something that seems calm and harmless, like a “churchgoing ammooma” (churchgoing grandmother), but is actually wild and dangerous. By giving this warning, Kuttappen shows that while something (or someone) may seem benign on the surface, there is a hidden side that could carry risks if not properly respected or understood.

In this metaphor, the river is seen as a feminine entity that requires caution in interactions with it, as if protecting those around it from its dangerous nature. This attitude reflects a protective paternalistic attitude that seeks to control and limit the freedom of other entities - in this case the river - under the guise of protection. Furthermore, this metaphor also highlights how women or feminine objects are often depicted in duality: appearing benign and peaceful, but in reality, full of power and potential danger. This attitude perpetuates the idea that feminine entities require attention and supervision from those perceived to be more rational or powerful, namely men or paternalistic outsiders.

2. Complementary Gender Differentiation

This complementary gender differentiation is the benevolent aspect of traditional views of women, which assigns them traits consistent with traditional gender roles (e.g., wife, mother) that men depend on women to fulfill (Eagly, 1987 cited in Glick & Fiske, 1997). This refers to the conviction that women and men have inherently different, yet complementary traits, with women often assigned traits such as purity, nurturing, and morality. Points out that while men are generally

associated with higher status occupational roles, women's traditional roles are valued for their unique contributions to family and society, thereby reinforcing the idea that women are “the better half of men”.

Mr. Hollick was chatting with Babà and said that he was a lucky husband to have a wife like Ammu. During the conversation, Hollick blatantly referred to Ammu as a “very attractive” woman physically. Babà, in a vulnerable position, was unable to respond with any meaningful resistance, but Ammu witnessed this insult with unspoken anger.

You're a very lucky man, you know, wonderful family, beautiful children, such an attractive wife ...” He lit a cigarette and allowed the match to burn until he couldn't hold it anymore. “An extremely attractive wife ... (p. 38)

“*You're a very lucky man, you know, wonderful family, beautiful children, such an attractive wife... An extremely attractive wife...*” is classified under the category of complementary gender differentiation, which describes a form of sexism that praises women based on their traditional roles or certain feminine qualities, often in ways that reinforce gender inequality. In this case, Hollick praises Ammu's physical attractiveness, but the praise is not sincere; instead, it is used to legitimize the sexual exploitation and domination of Ammu. The compliment is not a recognition of Ammu's true worth as an individual, but rather a way to subjugate and objectify her, reinforcing the stereotype that women are primarily judged by their physical attractiveness. It also reflects power dynamics in patriarchal societies, where men with economic or social power use that control to exploit more vulnerable women.

In the evenings, when he knew visitors were expected, he would sit on the verandah and sew buttons that weren't missing onto his shirts, to create the impression that Mammachi

neglected him. To some small degree he did succeed in farther corroding Ayemenem's view of working wives. (p. 44)

Pappachi was not pleased with his wife's success, so he used various means to demean and discredit Mammachi in the community. One of his strategies is to pretend to “fix” shirts in front of guests-sewing on buttons that aren't actually missing-to create the impression that Mammachi is neglecting household responsibilities to focus on her work. With this act, she not only subtly attacks Mammachi's character but also reinforces the social stigma against working women in Ayemenem society. In this context, Pappachi not only demonstrates a sense of ownership and control over Mammachi, but also attempts to create a narrative that working women neglect their domestic obligations.

This quote relates to the concept of complementary gender differentiation in the theory of Ambivalent Sexism developed by Peter Glick and Susan Fiske (1996). In this case, Ayemenem society may view the domestic role as a key attribute that “complements” a man's public role. By creating the impression that Mammachi fails to fulfill this role, Pappachi utilizes gender norms to damage his wife's image while reinforcing the belief that working women cannot fulfill their domestic responsibilities. It is a form of social manipulation that not only controls Mammachi but also reinforces the gender hierarchy in their community.

See her, for example. Mistress of this house. Even she will never allow Paravans and all that into her house. Never. Even I cannot persuade her. My own wife. Ofcourse inside the house she is Boss.” He turned to her with an affectionate, naughty smile. “Allay ediy, Kalyani? (p. 267)

Comrade Pillai suggested that Chacko remove Velutha, a Paravan (a low caste group), as his presence was perceived to cause discontent among the other

workers. To support his argument, Comrade Pillai uses his wife, Kalyani, as an example of discriminatory attitudes towards the lower castes. Jokingly, he said that even Kalyani, as the “boss of the home,” would not allow a Paravan into their home. Despite referring to Kalyani as the “boss of the home,” this comment is delivered in a derogatory manner.

In this case, Comrade Pillai presents his wife as an example of the “ideal woman” who performs traditional domestic and moral roles. He portrays Kalyani as the “boss of the home” but still reinforces patriarchal norms that give social dominance to men. Pillai's “affectionate” tone and humor affirm the view that women are respected or praised only within the confines of their traditional roles, such as maintaining the home and supporting existing social values, including caste prejudices. This reflects how complementary gender differentiation is often used to legitimize forms of gender inequality.

Kalyani brought water in a little stainless-steel container and poured it out for him. The leftover morsels of food in his plate (a dry red chili, and stiff angular brushes of sucked and spat-out drumsticks) rose and floated. She brought him a hand towel. He wiped his hands, belched his appreciation, and went to the door. (p. 274)

That time Kalyani, Comrade Pillai's wife, was depicted performing domestic duties in service of her husband. She brings water in a steel container for Comrade Pillai, pours it on a plate, and provides a towel to clean his hands. Afterwards, Comrade Pillai expressed his satisfaction by burping before going to the door. This scene highlights Kalyani's role as a domestic support who submits to her husband's needs, while her husband displays an attitude of superiority to being a man. In the following narration, Kalyani is shown fulfilling the traditional gender role of a wife who serves her husband, and also women as domestic servants who

support men, and men as dominant figures who receive such services. In other words, this relationship reflects complementary gender differentiation as it highlights the traditional division of gender roles, where women are seen as caregivers who fulfill men's domestic needs, while men remain in control of the relationship and act passively to the assistance provided.

3. Heterosexual Intimacy

Benevolent sexism includes a dimension called heterosexual intimacy, which reflects the belief that men need women to achieve emotional closeness and fulfillment in romantic relationships. This form of sexism idealizes women in traditional, nurturing roles, reinforcing dependency and unequal power dynamics. As cited from Glick and Fiske (1996), men's sexual motivation toward women may be linked with a genuine desire for psychological closeness (heterosexual intimacy), but it can also perpetuate benevolent sexist attitudes that view women as indispensable emotional caregivers. While appearing positive, such attitudes maintain and justify gender inequality by confining women to specific roles in relationships.

In this data, Baby Kochamma talks to Inspector Thomas Mathew about Velutha, a “Paravan” who is perceived as violating the social and legal norms of the local community. Baby Kochamma describes Velutha as a threat that needs to be dealt with immediately. Inspector Thomas Mathew responded by offering a cup of “police tea” to calm Baby Kochamma down, and then helped record her report in the First Information Report (FIR). He also assures Baby Kochamma that Velutha will be arrested before the day is out, showing a firm and protective response.

Inspector Thomas Mathew gave her a cup of police tea. When she was feeling a little better, he helped her to set down all she had told him in her First Information Report. He assured Baby Kochamma of the full cooperation of the Kottayam Police. The rascal would be caught before the day was out, he said. (p. 251)

This paragraph reflects the concept of heterosexual intimacy in the theory of Ambivalent Sexism proposed by Peter Glick and Susan Fiske (1996). Heterosexual intimacy refers to the view that women need male protection in order to feel safe, often within the framework of traditional gender relationships. In this case, Inspector Thomas Mathew demonstrated this by seemingly protecting and calming Baby Kochamma. This action reinforces the gender stereotype that men have the responsibility to protect women, while women are placed in a position of vulnerability or need for male support.

In this case, Comrade Pillai presents his wife as an example of the “ideal woman” who performs traditional domestic and moral roles. He portrays Kalyani as the “boss of the home” but still reinforces patriarchal norms that give social dominance to men. Pillai's “affectionate” tone and humor affirm the view that women are respected or praised only within the confines of their traditional roles, such as maintaining the home and supporting existing social values, including caste

They sat in silence for a while. Kuttappen mortified, the twins preoccupied with boat thoughts.

"Has Chacko Saar's Mol come?" Kuttappen asked.

"Must have," Rahel said laconically.

"Where's she?"

"Who knows? Must be around somewhere. We don't know."

"Will you bring her here for me to see?"

"Can't," Rahel said.

"Why not?"

"She has to stay indoors. She's very delicate. If she gets dirty she'll die."

"I see."

(p. 203)

Kuttapen talks about sophie mol, Chacko's daughter, who just arrived from England with the twins. In this dialogue, Rachel refers to Sophie Mol as “very fragile” and should be kept indoors because if exposed to dirt, she could “die.” This statement reflects a view that is not entirely serious but implies how Sophie Mol, as a foreign and special figure, is treated with excessive care and caution.

This paragraph can be analyzed through the concept of heterosexual intimacy from Glick and Fiske's (1996) theory of Ambivalent Sexism. Heterosexual Intimacy is an element of Benevolent Sexism that reflects the view that relationships between men and women should be filled with complementary intimacy. This is often manifested through the idealization of women as beings to be carefully protected and cared for, especially in the context of social roles that are considered more “delicate” or “fragile.”

In this conversation, Sophie Mol is treated as an idealized feminine figure-soft, fragile, and precious-that must be protected from the “dirty” and “dangerous” outside world. This attitude reflects a dynamic that idealizes women in a subordinate position, where they are seen as objects of beauty and weakness to be guarded, rather than as independent individuals. Rachel and Estha, though children, internalize this view by treating Sophie Mol as distinct and separate, in accordance with social expectations of gender roles and privileged status.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter presented the research conclusions derived from the comprehensive analysis and discussion outlined in the previous chapter. This chapter summarizes the main findings, emphasizing how they contribute to the overall understanding of the research topic. The conclusions are based on the application of relevant theories, interpretation of data, and examination of how sexism is portrayed in *The God of Small Things*. The chapter also highlights the significance of these findings in the broader context of feminist literary criticism, underscoring the practical and theoretical implications for the field.

A. Conclusion

This research has examined the depiction of ambivalent sexism in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*, which reveals how gender-based discrimination is deeply embedded in both hostile and benevolent forms. Hostile sexism manifests as acts of violence, exclusion, and dominance, vividly depicted in *The God of Small Things* through Pappachi's physical abuse of Mammachi out of jealousy for her success, and Chacko's assertion of control over family resources, disregarding Ammu's contributions. Other evidence shows that the characters such as Pappachi and Chacko exemplify how traditional gender norms are maintained through aggression, while injustices, such as Ammu's lack of opportunities and social marginalization, further underline the prevalence of hostile sexism in the narrative. These examples reflect how literature can expose the harsh realities faced by women who challenge or fail to conform to established gender roles.

On the other hand, benevolent sexism in the novel is no less insidious, manifesting as seemingly positive attitudes that nonetheless limit women's autonomy. The paternalism and protective behavior of the male characters highlights the traditional view of women as fragile, dependent, and in need of male guidance, subtly reinforcing inequality such as when Ammu was dismissed from her job as a receptionist for health reasons, on the grounds that the hotel needed “healthier” employees. The research also reveals how complementary gender roles and idealized femininity serve to uphold male privilege, even in contexts where women are superficially praised or rewarded. By analyzing both hostile and benevolent forms of sexism, this study offers a comprehensive understanding of gendered discrimination in *The God of Small Things*, contributing to the ongoing discussion on how literature can reflect and critique gender bias.

B. Suggestion

Both ambivalent sexism theory and Arundhati Roy's novel *The God of Small Things* offer fascinating subjects for analysis. Peter Glick and Susan Fiske's theory of ambivalent sexism remains highly relevant today, providing a powerful framework for understanding the complexities of gender-based discrimination. Meanwhile, *The God of Small Things* stands out as a remarkable narrative, interweaving themes of social hierarchy, gender dynamics and cultural identity in the context of Indian society. The novel's nuanced portrayal of hostile and benevolent sexism is particularly compelling, as it illuminates how traditional gender roles are perpetuated through both overt aggression and subtle patronization.

Further research on *The God of Small Things* could explore other aspects of the novel using alternative theoretical frameworks. Researchers are encouraged to use intersectionality theory to examine the interaction between gender, caste, and class in shaping the characters' experiences. Additionally, applying trauma theory to analyze the psychological impact of sexism and violence on the characters could provide new insights. For those interested in comparative studies, analyzing how the gender dynamics in this novel differ from those in other works of postcolonial or feminist literature could be useful. Finally, future researchers could also investigate how the themes of sexism in this novel resonate with contemporary social issues, offering a broader understanding of gender inequality.

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CURRICULUM VITAE



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