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## Critical Reading of Religion in *The God of Small Things*

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### Abstract:

This paper intends to analyze an ethnographic study which focuses on understanding a specific component on culture. The research is qualitative in nature and therefore, paper aims to destabilize the author through a textual analysis of the novel and deconstruct her deliberations by creating multiple meanings. This research paper also critically analyses the subversive elements in the novel against religion and find out the influence of Hindu religion over Christians and the Paper also discusses the gap between Christian ideologies and their practices in the society.

**Keywords:** Religion, Culture, Politics, Communism, Caste system, and Syrian Christians.

Arundhati Roy is a renowned novelist in the literary world and known for her different narrative style of events and portrayal of characters. She is a known through her debut novel *The God of Small Things* for which she has won booker prize in 1997. *The God of Small Things* is a semi-autobiographical in that it incorporates, embellishes, and weaves episodes from her family's history. Current novel is about the childhood experiences of twins whose live in a small village called Ayemenem. *The God of Small Things* touches upon many issues like caste system, communism, religious issues etc. The novel also explores how the small things affect people's behavior and their lives especially the life of children. Roy has narrated this novel through multiple characters and in some episodes an unknown narrative voice takes us to the depth of the novel.

*The God of Small Things* is set in the strong background of culture, religion, politics, social customs and practices. The incidents and the characters in the novel are closely related to historical facts. Understanding the history of Kerala enables the reader to comprehend the novel in a better way and reading of *The God of Small Things* having awareness of the context lead us to a positive criticism. History of the Kerala Church is as old as Christianity itself and like other Christians in the world. Christians in Kerala fall under different denominations. The major characters of the novel belong to Syrian Christians which is one among the major denominations. Christians in Kerala even though has the history of two thousand years, it is always treated as foreign religion thus the problems of conversion still exist and these resistances rise from both external and internal sources. *The God of Small Things* discusses the resistance within the religion which is indirect in nature.

Syrian Christians feel pride in their legacy of hundreds of years and they joyfully proclaim that their ancestors were converted by St. Thomas from the Brahmin families, so they could not accept the new converts especially from the lower caste. “Syrian Christians, who believed that they are the descendants of the one hundred Brahmins whom Saint Thomas the Apostle converted to Christianity” (Roy 66). Christianity as a religion does not practice caste system or any kind of discrimination but Syrian Christians supported it because caste system was part and parcel of their culture. The pre independent Indian culture was nothing but Hindu culture. Caste system in Hindu religion existed from the time of creation and it arranges the human society into dharma (socio-cosmic order). It divides the society into four parts thus it is also called as *chaturvarna*. Caste system is the concept which derived from the creation myths (purusha). Rig veda, composed between 1200 and 1000 BCE, the sacred scripture of Hindu religion gives clear idea about how caste the system originated.

The fourfold division of caste system entrust different duties and responsibilities to each groups. *Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya* and *Sudra* are the main castes and there are hundreds of sub castes fall under these main castes. *Sudras* are the low caste and they are designated to carry menial jobs in the society such as scavengers, cleaners, cobblers, disposing the dead and leather works etc. Society did not accept the *sudras* who are occupying other jobs, “Velutha wasn’t supposed to be carpenter” (Roy 73). The whole Hindu communities do not follow such type of caste system but they have alternatives which are similar to caste system or worsen than it. However *The God of Small Things* deals with the issues related to the *sudra* class. *Sudra* community is forced to depend on higher class for economic and social support. Velutha, the paravan and his entire family in the novel belong to this group.

To familiarize the caste system and the related issues of untouchability, we should understand Hindu reincarnation cycle. According to their belief *sudras* can attain Moksa only by serving people who belong to upper castes. Unlike the *sudras* the upper caste are eligible for religious rituals and they could purify themselves by performing purifying mantras. However *sudras* cannot purify themselves but by death and reincarnation they attain moksa, so that serving upper caste will help them to reach their destiny.

Upper caste Hindus observed long verities of rituals to keep them pure and some of them as follows; no bathe before sunrise, no cooking without bathe, water stored on the previous day will not use for any other purpose and so on. They treated low caste as untouchables and practiced certain rituals to purify themselves in case they come across with a *sudra*. Brahmins bath whenever a *sudra* comes closer to them and never bath from the pond used by a *Sudra*. They do not touch the soil stepped by a *sudra* but only after sprinkling the Holy water. Brahmins made rules to keep the untouchables away thus they can stay pure and the following quote in *God of Small Things* clearly portrays it.

“Pappachi wouldn’t allow Paravans into the house. Nobody would. They were not allowed to touch anything that touchables touched...Paravans were expected to crawl backwards with a broom, sweeping away their foot prints so that Brahmins or Syrian Christians would not defile themselves by accidentally stepping into a Paravan’s foot print . In Mammachi’s time, Paravans, like other Untouchables, were not allowed to walk on public roads, not allowed to cover their upper bodies, not allowed to carry umbrellas. They had to put their hands over their mouths when they spoke, to divert their polluted breath away from those whom they addressed” (Roy75).

Brahmins and Syrian Christians are closely related in following these social customs because the fore fathers of Syrian Christians were Brahmins. History provides ample evidences to prove the connection between these two religious groups, even though they differ in their faith. Syrian Christians and Brahmins transmitted this cultural awareness to the coming generations. Syrian Christians inhabited a high social status in Kerala along with the Brahmins and enjoyed the royal, political and social privileges. They created their identity which is equal to the high caste Hindus and they were awfully addressed as *Nazrani Mappilas*. Huge numbers of Christians were converted from noble Nayar families and they enjoyed the privileges of Brahmins which were denied to Nayar families by pleasing kings. Participating in the wars also enhanced their social status; they had the freedom to meet the king without the help of intermediaries and prior permission. Most of them allowed carrying weapons with them; they only left the weapons in the *mandapam* of church when they entered to church.

The customs followed by Syrian Christians signify their position in the society: just like Brahmin new born, mixed gold powder and honey were given to new Christian baby and they followed the custom of celebrating birthday of the baby by feeding boiled rice. Bangles in hands and on legs were part of children’s ornament. The Christian children write the first letter of alphabet with the help of an Ashaan and had ceremonial bathe when they reach at the stage of puberty. The ceremonial baths in connection with marriage, *manthrakodi* (decorated saree), *pudava* (veil), *thali* (wedlock) which is tied around the neck with a golden chain by promising that only death do them part. The funeral ceremonies and several feast commemorating the memory of the dead named *pula*, *shradham* are derived from Brahminical customs.

There are a lot of customs and traditions common to Brahmins and Syrian Christians. The spirit of adhering Indian culture is not only restricted in following such rituals but also they carried their mark in constructing buildings, celebrating their feasts clothing etc. White clothes were the common dress code of Brahmin and Christian women and they pierce nose for nasal ornaments. “Kochu Maria still wore her spotless half- sleeved chatta with a V-neck and her white mundu which folded into a crisp cloth fan on her behind” (Roy 170).

Like following other customs Syrian Christians also followed the observance of untouchability and pollution. They purified themselves if they happened to go near untouchables and performed prescribed ablutions so that they could maintain their name and fame before the society especially before upper caste people. In public roads, low castes were supposed to move away from Syrian Christians and “they had the right to kill anyone who would deny them this mark of distinction” (Mundadan 19). Roy has thrown light to this supremacy of Syrian Christians over low caste people by passing a comment from Kalyani, wife of comrade Pillai, “Is that all? He is lucky they haven’t had him strung up from the nearest tree” (Roy 288).

Christians also celebrated temple feasts along with their Hindu neighbours and enjoyed their cultural art forms like *Kathakali*, *Theyyam*, *Pooram*, *Kaavidi* etc. Christians were familiar with the beliefs and rituals of Hindu religion because they were the central theme of the artifacts and most of them performed in the temples or grounds which are attached to temples. *Chenda* (drums), temple elephants became the integral part of their lives. Roy has devoted an entire chapter to narrate the details of *Kathakali* and explains how it is closely associated to the emotion, feelings and life situations of the people of that time. She has approached the characters with modernistic vision and corresponded social taboos through the characters of the play.

High caste Hindus thought that the very touch of Syrian Christians were sufficient to purify the articles polluted by untouchables and they including kings often invited to live near their houses so that they could purify it easily. They also enjoyed the special privileges like to sit before the kings, to ride elephants for social and religious functions especially during processions; they used decorated umbrellas (*mutukuda*) for their celebrations which were reserved only for royal functions and temple festivals.

Syrian Christians depended on eastern churches to fulfill their religious requirements and the officials of Eastern Church were happy with the Indian Christian community, their culture and practices because Christians of the soil indigenized Christianity and Christianized Indian culture. The synod of Diamper considered Hindu practices in the Indian Christian communities as pagan and the synod fathers and bishops imposed restrictions in following the Indian culture. It triggered tensions, but they did not abandon their faith and firmly held their beliefs along with their culture. In a split Syrian church in Kerala divided into two, and a group joined with eastern Antioch Church and the other bunch of people was with Catholic Church which is acknowledged as the third largest community in Catholic Church.

Syrian Christians who were closely associated with Hindu religion and their culture created their own identity which was firm in keeping their Christian faith. Culture of Syrian Christians was mixed up but they did not adulterate their faith. Participating in Hindu religious celebrations could not divert their faith. However, the element of faith and personal pride on

their heritage played a vital role in keeping the Christian faith. Syrian Christians feel pride in proclaiming their legacy of their ancestors that they were converted by St. Thomas.

*The God of Small Things* also exposes several incidents which showcase the personal pride of Syrian Christians. Baby Kochamma is a perfect example for a self-proclaimed Christian. She always kept a distance with Velutha and never encouraged him coming home to see Mammachi and warned Mammachi for the same reason. “We should keep an eye on him,” Baby Kochamma said, if he starts this Union business in the factory... I’ve noticed some signs, some rudeness, some ingratitude” (Roy 81). Kochu Maria also had the same feeling towards Velutha, even though she is a housemaid and belongs to Syrian Christian community, a member of cultured family.

“Her kunukku, earrings were thick and gold. Her earlobes had been distended into weighted loops that swung around her neck...Kochu Maria couldn’t stop wearing her kunukku because if she did, how would people know that despite her lowly cook’s job (seventy-five rupees a month) she was a Syrian Christian, Mar Thomite? Not a Pelaya, or a Pulaya, or a Paravan but a touchable, upper-caste Christian” (Roy 170).

The behaviour of the family members of Ipe especially of Baby Kochamma towards Ammu and to her twin is notable. The family did not love vehemently because of two reasons; firstly Ammu married to a Hindu without the consent of family and got divorced, secondly the twins were not from pure blood but mixed blood. They are half Hindu and Half Christian.

Christians hold their faith as their pride and no compromise on their faith related matters. Ammu received countless rejection from the family members, friends (in the form of sympathy), and police and even from their house maid because she has destroyed the reputation of the family and put their family into shame by having sex with a paravan, Velutha. Touchable Police tortured Velutha because he is a paravan and dare to touch the untouchable one of a reputed Syrian family and charged FIR for rape. The comment of Baby Kochamma about Velutha also showcases the aversion of conservative Syrian Christian, “How could she stand the smell? Haven’t you noticed? They have a particular smell, these paravans...His particular paravan smell, like animals Mammachi thought and nearly vomited” (Roy 257).

Syrian Christians who has dual heritage of Brahmins and St. Thomas could not accept the newly converted christens especially from the lower caste. The Anglican Church has converted may low caste Hindu by giving incentives but the traditional Christians did not accept them to their community and didn’t allow them to perform religious rituals under the same roof. “They were made to have separate churches, with separate services, and separate priests. As a special service they were even given their own separate Pariah Bishop” (Roy 74).

Social traditions and customs were imprinted in the mind of the people in Kerala because the long years of cultural practices made them to think in the same line. The thought pattern of the lower caste also was not different, they submitted themselves to the practices followed by their ancestors and many of the conversions to Christianity were of physical hunger than to understand the purpose of God. Many converted to Christianity in order to escape from the caste discrimination but the Christians kept their Indian attitude in which caste system emerged. However, Roy raised serious debates on the gap she found between the Christian ideology and practices.

Church is a community of people who believe in Jesus Christ. The beginning of the Church is marked in New Testament, according to the Christian belief; Church is instituted by Jesus Christ himself and appointed his disciple Peter as the head of the church. “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it” (Matthew 16:18). Jesus had taken his disciples from various backgrounds without considering their caste, colour and other human discriminative factors. Jesus taught them to have no discrimination between people and consider everyone as sons and daughters of God. He taught the gospel of love and gave himself on the cross as an example of unconditional love by forgiving his persecutors.

The earlier Christian communities formed in and around Judea also tried to follow the teaching of Jesus Christ radically. They led an exemplary community life, “All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had” (Acts 4:32).

The disputes in the early church were rectified by the apostles. Increasing the disputes caused increased the Church to split into hundreds of denominations in the course of time. There were many reasons for the split. These splits were the result of ideological conflicts and cultural disputes. Church leaders made hierarchical structure for its smooth running and administration but later it got institutionalized because of various reasons.

Syrian Christians are a denomination in Christianity who separated from the Catholic Church to uphold its traditions. “Jesus kept the company of outcastes and neglected of the society. Jesus considered them as God’s own children...It was Jesus’ concern for this people that he was criticized by the Pharisees and leaders of his time” (Thomas 28). However the beliefs and practices of Syrian Christians were influenced by culture thus the church made a visible distance from the original teachings of Jesus Christ. Christianity as religion does not support any kind of discrimination but Christians in Kerala who followed their traditions pursued discrimination. Arundhati Roy has criticized church by showcasing this ideological gap between the teachings of the church and what have been practicing by the Syrian Christians.

Roy has criticized church for being institutionalised rather showing the merciful face of God and the criticism were true to certain extent. Roy has thrown light to the modern situations of the Kerala church especially during Church services of the Syrian Christians. Gatherings of faithful had now become a place to display their economical strength and prestige of their family. The dressing style of Baby Kochamma during funeral service of Sophiemol throws light into these tendencies. “She wore an expensive funeral sari with gently clinging curled claws” (Roy 6). She also draws the detailed picture of priest who has possessions like gold rings, when they are supposed to live a simple life and follow the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience after the model of Jesus Christ.

Roy also criticizes the faith of Syrian Christians who shamelessly pray before committing mistakes. Baby Kochamma prays ‘Hail Mary’ and traced sign of cross on her body before giving false witness against Velutha. “She kissed the crucifix. Hail Mary, full of grace” (Roy 315). Baby Kochamma was fully aware of the cruelty and Sought God’s blessings for its success. Church’s decision not to bury Ammu in the cemetery also invites criticism from Roy.

*The God of Small Things* narrates series of double standards starting from Chacko, Mammachi, Baby Kochamma and Ammu. Roy has criticised all other characters through her narrative voice except Ammu. Chacko stopped his father from beating his mother but he beats Ammu mercilessly. He also constantly had sex with untouchable workers but act against Ammu when she had a relationship with Velutha. Mammachi and Baby Kochamma supports Chacko’s relationship with untouchables by baptising it as “*Man’s needs*” (Roy 168) and made a door between factory and Chacko’s room. Mammachi supported this by giving incentives to the ladies, where Velutha was beaten unto death and Ammu was sent out of the house.

Roy has kept silence in displaying the double standard of Ammu. Ammu criticised the silent permission of Mammachi and Baby Kochamma but she repeatedly met Velutha for having the sexual relationship and made a promise that she will come on the next day. “She turned to say it once again: Naaleyi, Tomorrow” (Roy 340). Roy has portrayed the sexual relationship of brother and sister which unacceptable in any human community. It is unimaginable for Syrian Christian family to have such kinds of relationship in the family and they considered it as a great taboo thus the narrative Voice had no moral privilege to criticise Church.

Church is not constituted with buildings, but the faithful so declining the morality of the faithful is nothing but self-destruction of the church itself. Bishops, priests, nuns and other consecrated people are at the service of people, to lead them on the path of moral standard suggested by the religion. Roy also raises criticism against the Priests and nuns thus she questions their life style and the amount of gentility of their vocation. She narrates the relationship between Baby Kochamma and Irish catholic priest.

“At first Baby Kochamma tried to seduce Father Mulligan with weekly exhibitions of staged charity...Father Mulingan was more than merely flattered by the emotion he aroused in the attractive young girl who stood before him with a trembling, kissable mouth and blazing, coal-black eyes. For he was young too, and perhaps not wholly unaware that the solemn explanations with which he dispelled her bogus biblical doubts were completely at odds with the thrilling promise her held out in his effulgent emerald eyes. Every Thursday, undaunted by the merciless midday sun, they would stand there by the well. The young girl and the intrepid Jesuit, both quaking with unchristian passion. Using the bible as a ruse to be with each other” (Roy 36).

Baby Kochamma gets converted to Roman Catholic Church and joins in the convent to meet Fr. Mulingan. She finds it very difficult to cope with the convent situation and left the convent. The narrative voice of the novel generalised the behaviour of Baby Kochamma to all the nuns of the convent. It was evident that Baby had joined the convent only to meet the Irish priest but the priest kept a respectful distance with Baby Kochamma throughout his life but had a good friendship. She had no passion for religious life but for other worldly things, henceforth she herself found reasons to quit religious life.

We read in the novel that Fr. Mulingan was converted into Hinduism and became a Vishnu devotee. Roy has merged the fiction along with facts and the story of Fr. Mulingan is closely related to a Jesuit priest De Nobili. He cut himself from the foreign roots and adapted the life style of Brahmins and attracted high class Hindus to Christianity. “He shaved his head almost completely except for a tuft of hair at the back as Brahmins wore, he wore saffron robe of the Hindu ascetics” (Thomas 24). Many of Christian historians and religious leader misunderstood him and wrote letters to Rome that he had become a Hindu but later Holy Sea has given permission to continue his life style. Similarity between Fr. Mulingan and De Nobili confuses the readers and make them think that the Catholic priests had shallow faith and thus failed to lead the faithful entrusted to them.

*The God of Small Things* conveys the story of a Syrian Christian family where religion has primary focus. Roy has critically written the novel pinning the issues within the religion. She has expressed the gap between the Christian ideologies and practices. But Roy also created a false consciousness among the readers in related to Church matters. The very heading of her novel invites the attention of the reader but ‘the small things’ take the driver seat of the novel. She tried to perceive these ‘small things’ with an easy mind but the traditional community find difficult to take them lightly because they are against their cultural values and system thus Mr. Sabu, a Syrian Christian filed a case asking her to remove the last chapter from the novel. Sexual relationship outside marriage, divorce, sex between brother and sister are taboo topics even today and through addressing these issues people get distracted than attracted.

Roy has critically approached the caste politics of that time especially by the Syrian Christian community. However Christian leaders especially missionaries also tried to spread awareness to eradicate the caste system. The work of missionaries deepened the self awareness which had been growing among the people. This awareness created a feeling that they were under bondage and they had various rights which it was their duty to fight for. Many instances were noted that Syrian Christians were breaking this caste practices which led to violence between religious communities.

Roy had given enough evidences in the novel *God of Small Things*, to prove that there were diluted attitude towards low caste people. Reading the novel after understanding the cultural background of caste system in Kerala gives key to recognize the initiatives taken by the Syrian Christians especially by Ipe's family. Punnyan Kunju(father of Ipe) started a school for the untouchables when the society did not permit the low caste for schooling. Mammachi also compels Vellya Paapen to educate Velutha. "Mammaci persuaded Vellya Paapan to send him to the untouchable's school that her father-in-law, Punnyan Kunju,ha founded"(Roy 74).

Roy draws many instances where Velutha comes regularly to Ipe's house from the childhood itself. Vellya Paapen, a man of old generation who knows what caste system has done to him and to his family is grateful towards the Christian family because of the different treatment and the favours extended by the touchable to the untouchable. He also expected the same feeling of gratitude from his son. "Velutha's father Vellya Paapen , however, was an old world paravan and he had seen the days and his gratitude to Mammachi and her family for all that they have done for him" (Roy 76.)

Roy has described the gratefulness of Paapan in several occasions. He acknowledges that Ipe's family has done grater things to his family which was unimaginable at that time and Ipe's family started revolution by giving land to the untouchables much before the communist. "He started by recounting to Mammaci how much her family had done for his. Generation for generation. How, long before the communist thought of it, Reverend E. John Ipe had given his father, Kelan, title to the land on which their hut now stood. How Mammaci paid for his eye. How she had organised for Velutha to be educated and given him a job" (Roy 255).

Velutha's talents were recognised and appreciated by Ipe's family members and they have employed him in their pickle factory which was against the customs and culture of that time. Many of the touchable employees were not happy with decisions made by Ipe's family for employing low caste Paravan. "Mammachi rehired Velutha as the factory carpenter and put him in charge of general maintainance. It caused a great deal of resesment among the other touchable factory workers because, according to them, Paravans were not meant to be carpenters and certainly, prodigal Paravans were not meant to be rehired" (Roy 77). However to keep others happy Mammachi gave only less salary to Velutha but it was more than the other untouchables.

She strongly believed and often said that “if only he hadn’t been a parvan, he might have become an engineer” (Roy 75). The mended water-pumps, radios, clocks and other electronic gadgets at Ipes’s house witnessed the magic of Velutha.

Comment of Rahel gives another clue to discuss the reforming attitude of Syrian church. Many low caste people worked in and around the church. Many priest employed the low caste and it invited tremendous criticism within the church and outside the church. “She imagined him up there, someone like Velutha, bare bodied and shining, sitting on a plank, swinging from the scaffolding in the high dome of the church, painting silver jets in a blue church sky”(Roy 6).

Syrian Christians valued their traditional customs and placed their legacy in high regard but the history has another story to convey, the stories of revolution and change. They have triggered positive social and cultural changes in the society; the very life experience of Mary Roy (mother of Arundhati Roy) testifies these revolutions. She battled against the existing law which denied women’s right over parent’s property and won a verdict by Supreme Court.

Religion and politics had an important role in moulding the traditions and cultures of society. *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy critically explains the impact of the above with fact and fiction. The capital to bring out a novel would be b the personal experience of the author on a certain notion. Being a born Malayali but brought up in different metropolitan cities of India Arundhathi has a keen eye on Kerala and its reformations. The changes that had taken place in Kerala on different phases lead her to pen *God of Small Things*. The novel invites every reader to introspect the customs prevailed in 1960s.

*The God of Small Things* is a semi-autobiographical in that it incorporates, elaborates, and weaves episodes from her family’s history. It touches upon many issues like caste system, communism, religious issues etc. Humiliation leads a person to be a rebel and revolutionary. Arundhathi turns out to be a critic of conventional customs of Kerala when she and her mother were degraded by the family due to the failed marriage. Ammu and her daughter Rachel the characters in *The God of Small of things* pictures Arundhathi and her mother who were not well accepted back to a conservative family in Kerala. The unexplained element in *The God of Small things* would be the critical nature of Arundhathi to all the situations. It conveys that she will have her contribution to everything whether it fetches advantages or disadvantages.

Religion plays an important role in a social being. But Arundhathi chucked out is the value of religion- Christianity. Reaching to a general conclusion from a particular experience or incidents does not affirm facts. The traumatic experience that Ammu had in a Syrian Christian family should not be a mean to judge a good old religion in Kerala. Love marriage and divorce were not practised in Syrian Christian families on those days. Syrian Christian families had lot of emphasis on the family set up. The notion of family and the married life was a one among the basic constituent of the Syrian Christians. *The God of Small Things* finds enough ambiances to

demean the value of Syrian Christianity and the Hinduism and the religious practises both religion follow.

Arundathathi has not gone to the other side of the religion. In other words she didn't have a glance to the positive side of religion in a special way the changes that has brought by the Christians in Kerala society. The missionaries from abroad were the ones who imported the education system to Kerala. Contributions of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara in 19th Century are unforgettable. He could be the first one who made the facilities for the children of both high and low class people to sit together and learn Sanskrit the language of God. Arundhathi in *The God of Small Things* was not able to realise the moral values that has brought by the Christianity in Kerala. A journey to history will reveal the transformation of Kerala society before and after the arrival of Christianity.

Man is a political being. The power of man is actualised once he enters into politics. Roy picks out the draw backs of Communism a political group that dominates even today in Kerala. Communism focuses more on human than religion and concept of God. Communists are basically atheists and they deny the existence of God. Karl Marx could deepen the statement by quoting from *Das Capital* 'Religion is Opium'. Arundhathi's portrayal of Communist party in Kerala is nasty. She contradicts the very essence of Communist party. Arundhathi leads her reader to infer from the life experience of few people and attribute their attitude to the communist party. Arundhathi critically evaluates the negative side of both Christianity and Communism without giving any scope for its characteristics, which simply takes us to the conclusion that she is a born critic.

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