Cognitive Stylistics and Petit Recit: An examination of the narrative consciousness in

The God of Small Things

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Abstract

As has been pointed out be many critics, "God" in **The God of Small Things** by Arundhati Roy functions as a metaphor for Velutha and becomes symptomatic of power relations that cut across the several binaries: man/woman, post-colonial,/imperial, upper caste/lower caste, Hindu/ Christian, upper class/lower class resulting in notions of "big things " and "small things " which, one realizes as one reads the novel , acquire multiple meanings. The subversion of the "big things " by the "small things " is articulated by the variegated narrations of Rahel, who, in her own person, projects this dichotomy. She is one of a twin, a girl as opposed to her male twin and the narration through her consciousness is dualistic because it encompasses both her voice as a child and also as an adult creating a rich and complex narrative that confounds as it explicates lending itself to various interpretations. While there have been many interpretations of the novel both in terms of its themes and its language, and most critics praise Roy for painting a canvas that is both multihued and multilayered, and yet congealing into a harmonious whole, they have largely ignored the narrative voice of Rahel and the ambivalence that is projected through it.

My paper is an attempt to unravel the plurality of the competing discourses through Cognitive Stylistics. I argue that the Derridean slippage that occurs in the novel is because of the different schemas of Rahel 's narrative as a child and as an adult. Cognitive stylistics therefore provides a useful tool in the analysis of the novel thereby affirming what is stated in the epigraph: "Never again will a single story be told as though it is only one." (The God of Small Things:1997).

Introduction

In the past 50 years, Post colonial writing has grown into an exciting body of literature which challenges the norms of traditional publications not just in terms of the themes, but also in developing new forms of expression. Writers from different parts of the world articulate their quotidian reality embracing the diversity of their

cultures and delineating them in all their manifestations. Post colonial writers are excavating occluded histories and exploring those stories which have been papered over or underwritten   by "Grand Narratives". While a number of texts which are written by the diaspora focus on loss of identity, identity formation and exilic experiences, contemporary writers in the post colonial nations use the medium of fiction to engage with their own history and politics in transformative ways. These texts generate new histories which subvert, enrich, and pre-empt formal closure for the narratives of history. In India, writers have to contend with not just the history of colonization but also with a hoary tradition which casts its shadow over everything. Writers creating a fictional world within this tradition essentially struggle to escape it through a retelling of multiple histories which subvert grand narratives like the Mahabharatha and Ramayana. These stories are the "petit recit" (Lyotard), the lost histories of the disenfranchised,   about cultural degeneration, the loss of racial or cultural purity, the racial other, sexual subversion and the threat that colonial-era usurpation and violence might one day "return," deploying images of transgressive women who threaten to expose the dark underbelly of their own historical and political contexts.

The God of Small Things , (henceforth GOST) by Arundhati Roy written and published in 1997, which won the Booker prize is a post colonial novel which captures the trauma and pain of the subaltern embodied in Velutha, the Untouchable and Ammu, the divorcee mother of twins. It burst upon the literary scene and received rave reviews from all its reviewers. It has been describes as " gripping" tale of love and loss (Uttara Chowdary, Financial Times), "an intricate clean skillfully constructed   story which overwhelms by its exuberance   and its verbal virtuosity"(Philips Ziegler, Daily Telegraph), "a beautifully fractured tale … infused with luminous imagery, wry wit and butterfly delicate characters "(Esquire), "an uncoiling spring of human foreboding and inevitability" (Rajgopal Nidamboor, Sunday Observer).

GOST has also received its due share of critical acclaim since its publication. Most critics identify it as a post colonial novel and explore the post colonial elements in it. However there are others who examine GOST with other tools to gain a richer understanding of the novel. Discussing desire and death in the novel, Brinda Bose (1998) states the politics of desire is closely linked to the politics of voice in the

novel. The novel depicts the politics of desire and the ways in which sexuality has been perceived through generations in a society that coded "love with a total disregard for possible anomalies "(p.68). Ahmad ( ) argues that love and desire are indulgences when pursued by the elite (Ammu) and radical when pursued by Velutha, the poor untouchable which makes his death credible, but less arbitrary. Ahmed points out that Velutha transgresses boundaries of caste and class. Identifying the government and police on the one hand and colonialism on the other with Althusser's repressive state apparatus and the ideological state apparatus Chris (2011) argues that "the character of Velutha … marks the intersection of the object and trauma in the novel, not only because his body becomes the site of the trauma, but because his body, as the body of the untouchable, also represents the socially abject. Chan (2006) identifies it as a post-colonial novel in which Roy addresses "the problem of doubly, simply marginalized people that is becoming focus of attention" (Chan: 2006). For Comfort (2008) central to the novel's project is it's interrogation of the commodity logic that underlies the construction of patriarchal ideological formation under capitalist imperialism (p.1). Shukla (2009) states that the novel deals with the division of caste and class in India. However, for Lutz (2009) the 'novel emphases potential sites of resistance to capitalist exploitation and patriarchal domination" (p:57). While all of the above   examine GOST as a post-colonial novel for the others, it is a feminist novel which "challenges man-made structures, not only thematically but linguistically as well. (Kunhi:2010:142)

In his description of the role of subaltern historians Bhabha (1993, 106) says: "they have been able to release into this discourse, into the sphere of their concerns, forms of historical contingency, small events, *petit recits*, a number of what I would call enunciatory sites. So there is a very complex re-writing of what the history of a colonised nation would be, what the history of a transformative, anticolonial moment would be." The *petit recits, therefore* is a recording of events as they happen to the insider, by an insider and not told from an objective, external standpoint. GOST epitomizes the *petit recits.* This, then is the subject of my paper. I would like to focus on the petit recits, on the play between BIG and Small as encapsulated in the text, GOST to contrast the retelling of the traumatic past through the consciousness of an eight year old child and her adult self as it

unfolds in the novel arguing that power and poignancy of the narrative is the result of the clash between the two text worlds. I propose to use cognitive stylistics, drawing upon schema theory, text world theory and conceptual metaphor theory for my analysis. In making use of a framework that embraces three different types of cognitive stylistic analysis, it is my intention to move from the general tropes to more specific ones in the novel.

Cognitive stylistics

Cognitive stylistics which has grown as a major sub-discipline in the field of applied linguistics, is the interface between linguistics, literary studies and cognitive science. Subscribing to the explicit, detailed and rigorous framework of stylistic analysis, scholars working in cognitive science extend the boundaries of   linguistic analysis of literature by articulating different theories such as schema theory, cognitive metaphor theory, conceptual metaphor theory, text world theory, blendings, mental space theories etc. All theories mentioned provide frameworks for analysis of literature, also focusing on reading and cognition. The synthesis of cognitive approaches to literature allow for new ways of reading both traditional, literary texts, as well as postmodernist, post structuralist and I argue, post colonial texts. I will now provide a brief overview of some of the key issues in cognitive stylistics that I intend to use for my analysis. For the purposes of this paper, I focus on Schema Theory, Text World Theory and Conceptual Metaphor Theory. The main reason for including only the theories mentioned above is because in my analysis I proceed from the macro-linguistic level of analysis to the micro-linguistic level thereby shedding new light on the interpretation of the text.

Schema Theory

First articulated in the 1920^s as part of gestalt psychology, schema theory applies "both to the processing of sensory data and to the processing of language" (Cook:1994:9). Its premise is that all experiences are stored in the memory and the human mind activates and draws upon this memory in the process of understanding or grappling with new experiences or data. Culpeper (2002) points out that in understanding language we draw upon "internal stimuli" and "prior knowledge" which is called schemata. Schemata can be defined as "structured

bundles of gnomic knowledge" (p. 257). Grasser el al (1997) state that for the purposes of interpretation "the human mind actively constructs various types of cognitive representations (that is, codes, features, meanings, structured sets of elements) that interpret linguistic input. Discourse analysts and stylisticians seized upon schema theory to gain new insights into reading, cohesion and coherence. Pragmatics and stylistics directly engages with the impact of reading and meaning on the reader or receiver. Cook (1994) points out that "schemata are essential to text processing (p.10), but can be both a potential barrier to understanding or enable a greater understanding of a text." He argues that 'certain uses of language can change our representation of the world "(p. 23) and literary language and literature by its very nature is schema altering or schema refreshing or schema reinforcing relative to reader expectation or knowledge. According to Cook schema altering or disrupting is brought about through linguistic deviation and literature has the potential to being about schema refreshment resulting in "cognitive change "(p.44).

Cook points out that while some writers (van Djik and Kintsch: 1983) regard cohesion as an instance of coherence and others (Brown and Yule:1983:191, de Beaugrande and Dressler 1981:48-111) consider the two as distinctive in linguistic terms. Coherence is the result of an interaction between text and reader. Cohesion need not necessarily result in coherence. In fact, in literature, even if there are instances of incoherence that readers read on, filling in the gaps either through their own schema or withhold the desire to fill the gaps and seek information elsewhere. In fact it is curiosity that makes the reader turn the page and incoherence motivates the reader to read on

Many stylisticians (Culpepper and Semino:2002, Sperber and Wilson:1986, Lahe:2010, etc)have broadened the application of cognitive stylistics under the broad umbrella of schema theory in order to gain new insights into the literary texts that they have analysed. Whereas, on the one hand, Cook has focused on cohesion and coherence of the text at the discoursal level in order to explicate its impact on the reader, Walsh (2010) Culpepper and Semino(2002) have paid attention to mind style in fiction not just to gain new insights into the representation of characters, but also assess its impact on readers.

Text World Theory

As stated in Werth (1999) Gavins (2007) all discourses are characterized by construction of a set of richly defined conceptualized spaces known as 'worlds'. According to them, there are 3 levels :

1. **Discourse world** – spatio temporal context in which the discourse take place which contains 2 discourse participants which are the writer and reader or speaker and listener and naturally occurring language event such as discourse.

2. **Text world** – text driven process whereby linguistic cues activate relevant general or specific knowledge upon which further inferences about the parameters of the text world space may be drawn. The *world building propositions* in the text provide deictic and referential information which partially establish the text world's situational variables such as time, location, entities and interrelationship, while *function advancing propositions* are those which provide information about actions, mental processes, states and attributes of entities in the text world.

3. **Sub-world** – arise as a result of a deictic shifts or modal shits away from the matrix world from which they arise. Modal world switches are cued by propositions which are modalized according to the conventional separation between deontic, boulomaic and epistemic contexts and account for such things as expressions of beliefs, desire and obligation. Metaphors are a type of epistemic sub-world.

Metaphors

Conceptual metaphors are considered to be very important in cognitive stylistics. Werth (1997) and Gavins(2001) state that metaphor forms a type of epistemic subworld in the text world. According to Lakoff and Turner (1989) and Lakoff and Johnson(1980) point out that metaphors are ontological and epistemic mappings across conceptual domains, that is, from source domain to target domain. For instance, (from Weber:1996), *argument* which is the target domain, can be conceptualized as *war* which is the source domain and these can be realize din

different ways linguistically: *attacking* someone's arguments, *defending* your own position, *planning a strategy* to wipe out one's opponent in debate, etc. Porto Ruekijo (2007) points out that metaphors play a very important role in text worlds because, in actuality, we make sense of the text world through our knowledge of the real world. The expectation that this correspondence sets up, however, is thwarted when textual representations challenge mental representations. In schema theory, metaphors create new ways of mapping the real world on the textual world, therefore they extend or alter the schema. Mostly metaphors are conventional, culture specific and understood within a community of speakers. But metaphors in literature create new and challenging ways to interpret the world, thereby creating new schemata. As Ruekijo(2007) states, "creation of new metaphors in a text can produce significant, even if transitory changes on the way we perceive the world around us."(p.58) For my purposes, I wish to use the notion of the Megametaphor, which, according to Werth, represent " the most prototypical and primitive frames of our culture" (1993:323) and draw upon the schemata of the discourse participants who share cultural values along with a brief description of some of the metaphors that are significant in the novel.

Analysis

Schema Theory and GOST

Before I start my analysis, let me briefly recapitulate the story of GOST. The story of the novel is mainly narrated from the point of view of Rahel (a girl) who is one of a dizygotic twins, the other being Estha(a boy), her brother. The narrative moves between Rahel's present in which she is 31 years old, " a viable, diable age" (p.3) as stated by Roy, and her past in which she is 8 years old. The story is about the illicit relationship between their mother, Ammu, who is a divorcee from a marriage to a Hindu Bengali and who herself belongs to a rich, Syrian Christian family in Ayemenem in Kerala a State in South India and an untouchable carpenter, Velutha, who works in the Pickles factory owned by her family. Roy carefully and skillfully delineates the post colonial milieu with several binaries: Man/woman, Untouchable/touchable, Upper, rich class/labour, poor class, Hindu/Christian, North Indian/South Indian, Colonial/Post colonial. Velutha, another binary here because the word "velutha" means white, whereas, the character himself is described as

chocolate brown (p.31); and finally the over arching binary of BIG and SMALL that is all pervading in the novel. Chacko's ex-wife, Margaret Kochamma, a British lady visits Ayemenem with her daughter, Sophie Mol.   The secret dalliance between Ammu and Velutha is discovered by his father, who proceeds to confess to his employer, Baby Kochamma who is the co-owner of the Paradise Pickles and Jam factory along with Chacko, Ammu's bother. Ammu is locked up in her room by her brother, Chacko. In her frustration she yells at her two children who run away from home along with Sophie Mol who drowns when they try to cross a river which is in full spate. Baby Kochamme disgusted and horrified by the sinful act committed by Ammu files a report with the Police stating that Velutha has raped Ammu. The Police beat up Velutha savagely and he dies. The twins are separated, Estha is "returned" to his father, and Ammu who leaves her parental home to eke out a living by herself eventually dies of tuberculosis.

Catherine Emmott (2002) describes the "split selves" phenomenon in literature and real life where a character in a novel or a real life individual is "divided or duplicate in any way in the narrative"(p.154). She argues that cognitive linguistic theory can provide some insights into the "split selves" phenomenon in narratives and the narrative itself "creates different selves by juxtaposing different description and different voices"(p.177). Even though the novel is narrated by a third person, extradiegetic narrator, the focaliser of major sections of the novel is Rahel, both as a child and as an adult. The temporal-spatial switches from Adult Rahel to Child Rahel happen several times in the novel, and Rahel's is the narrative consciousness in GOST. Therefore, two text worlds are created: One that belongs to Rahel the Adult, which I will refer to as Rahel 1 and the other that belongs to Rahel, the child, which I will refer to as Rahel 2.

For the purposes of illustrating the two text worlds and schema theory, I will now examine the first chapter of the novel. The novel begins with :

May in Ayemenem is a hot, brooding month. The days are long and humid. The river shrinks and black crows gorge on bright mangoes in still, dustgreen trees. Red bananas ripen. Jackfruits burst. Dissolute blue bottles hum vacuously in the fruity air. Then they stun themselves against clear windowpanes and dies, fatly baffled in the sun. ….

It goes on like this for two paragraphs when it changes to:

It was raining when Rahel came back to Ayemenem. Slanting silver ropes slammed into loose earth, ploughing it up like gunfire. The old house on the hill wore its steep, gabled roof pulled over its ears like a hat....

The house itself looked empty. The doors and windows were locked. The front verandah was empty. ...

They never did look very much like each other, Estha and Rahel....

In those early amorphous years when memory had only just begun....

Now, these years later, Rahel has a memory of waking up....

She remembers, even though she wasn't there, what the Lemondrink Orangedrink man did to Estha..

*Anyhow, she now thinks of Estha and Rahel as **Them**.*

They were nearly born on a bus...

The government never paid for Sophie mol's funeral because she wasn't killed on a zebra crossing...

Two weeks later Estha was Returned.

And now, twenty three years later, their father had re-Returned Estha....

Estha had always been a quiet child....

And it goes on.

The novel beings with the description of the lush flora and fauna of Ayemenen. It is colourful and fecund. All the verbs are in the present tense. From this panoramic view of the country side, we are introduced to Rahel and there is a switch into past tense: *It was raining when Rahel came to Ayemenem* The deictic markers for time and the tense clearly indicate the switch from past to present to past. It should be noted that Rahel 1's text world is in the past tense whereas Rahel 2's text world is in present. In other words, The Adult Rahel's text world is narrated in the past,

whereas the child Rahel's text world is in present. As we read the text we construct the text world. But these shifts in time create an unsettling effect since narratives with a third person, extradiegetic narrator usually narrate using present tense and then use the flashback or analeptic narration to configure events in the past. In this novel however, the Rahel the Adult' story is narrated in the past tense and the story of her child hood is narrated in the present, disrupting the natural schema of story telling, but in doing so, making Rahel's childhood experiences vivid and compelling, thus forming the core of the novel. The text world that is created is constantly disrupted because new elements are introduced and they are schema altering. Let us just take one example and examine it closely:

Even before Sophie Mol's funeral, the police found Velutha.

His arms had goosebumps where handcuffs touched the skin. Cold handcuffs with a sourmetal smell. Like steel bus rails and the smell of the bus-conductor's hands from holding them. (30)

This is the first time that we are being introduced to Velutha. From the information above, we do not know anything about him. Schema theory says that if there is incoherence in the text the reader attempts to fill the gaps to make sense of the narration. This seems to be a common feature of the text, where new elements are introduced disrupting the schema requiring constant re-adjustment.

The discourse world is the world shared by the writer and the reader. GOST appeals to me because as an Indian I share the same discourse world as the writer, Arundhati Roy. Firstly, as a Hindu Brahmin, I can completely understand the reaction and revulsion of Baby Kochamma and Mammachhi when they learn that Ammu has had a physical relation with an untouchable. Whether a reader from another culture would interpret the relationship in the same way as I do, is a question that I choose not to ask at this point in time. The text world which is the over arching frame of the novel within which the human drama unfolds is the Syrian Christian world of Ayemenem. See table below:

SYRIAN CHRISTIAN WORLD
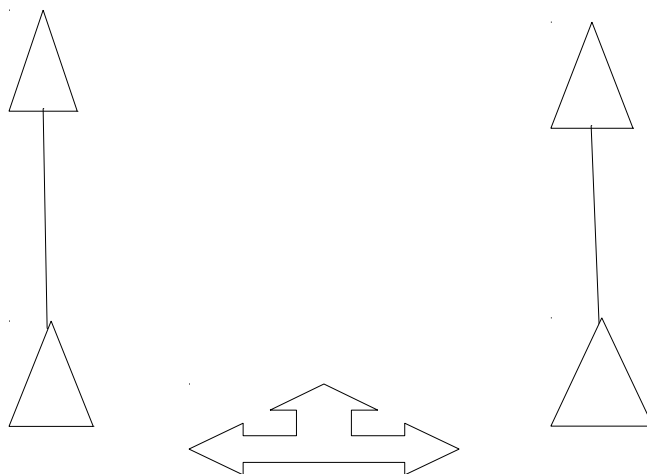
The over arching frame of the text world is the Syrian Christian world. Within this world certain facts are established: (1) Syrian Christian were originally Brahmins. Therefore, even amongst the Christians casteism continues and is practised as rigidly as among Hindus; (2) Syrian Christian families are rich and feudalistic; (3) Syrian Christian families are patriarchal, with the result, men are allowed a lot of freedom, whereas women are expected to subscribe to laws laid down by men.

Within this frame are four text worlds which belong to the four characters: (1) Baby Kochamma (2) Chacko (3) Ammu and (4) Velutha.

(1) Baby Kochamma is the grand aunt of the twins, Rahel and Estha. In her youth, she fell in love with Father Mulligan but could not get married to him. So in her text world she is rigid, uncompromising, childless because of unrequited love, and she hates the twins.

(2) Chacko is an Anglophile having studied at Oxford, married a British woman and fathered a child Sophie mol. He is divorced and the owner of a very successful pickles and jam business.

(3) Ammu, the eponymous heroine of the novel, who tries to escape her parental home by marrying a Hindu Bengali, divorces him after giving birth to twins, Rahel and Estha. She returns to her parental home where she is disenfranchised.

(4) Velutha, the untouchable carpenter who works in Chacko's factory. He is also one of the marginalized people of the Syrian Christian world by virtue of the fact that he is an untouchable. He is a card carrying member of the Marxist party which has a strong presence in Kerala.

Both Ammu and Velutha are united by their love for each other and by their love for the twins. This love is reciprocated by Rahel and Estha. The fifth text   world is the one inhabited by Rahel and Estha and it is their text world which is of most interest to us; firstly it predominates over large section of the novel and it is a text world constituted of sub-worlds that switch between the narrative consciousness of Rahel the Adult and Rahel, the child. In Rahel 1's subworld, *world building prepositions* predominate for example:

1. *It was raining when Rahel came back to Ayemenem. Slanting silver ropes slammed into the loose earth . The old house on the hill wore its steep gabled roof pulled over its head like a hat .*

When there is a switch to the alternate sub-world of Rahel 2, *function advancing propositions predominate*. I will examine them at a later stage in my analysis.

2. *Anyhow, <u>now</u> she thinks of Estha and Rahel as <u>Them</u> because separately the two of them are no longer what they ever were or thought they'd be.*

Let us now examine Rahel 2's sub-world a little more closely. There are several features of this sub-world which are unique and distinctive.   As mentioned earlier all function advancing propositions belong to this sub world. Now if we take note of the fact that this sub world belongs to a child of 8 years, one of a twin, all the main action is filtered through the consciousness of a child. It's here that we need to examine the schema of the adult world and the child's world. The schema of Rahel 1 is very limited whereas the schema of a child's world is carefully constructed by the author.

Rahel 1

- Divorcee

- Childless

- Architect

Rahel 2

- Sound of Music

- "I will always speak in English"

- Estha: Elvis puff and beige pointy shoes

- Rahel's hair: held together by Love in Tokyo

- Toy wrist watch with time painted on it: ten to two

- Yellow rimmed, red, plastic sunglasses

- Airport frock, crisp cotton and matching panties

- Precocious reading habits: Jungle book, The Tempest, Tale of Two Cities, Mutiny on the Bounty

- World of Kathakali dancers

Rahel 2's text world is that of an eight year old child. Her schema consists of toy wrist watch, yellow plastic rimmed red sunglasses, airport frock which perform a metonymic function in the novel. It also consists of the need to fit into a text world in which English is spoken, songs from the movie *Sound of Music* sung and poetry recited. This corresponds to the text world of Chacko and an attempt to fit into it. While both Estha and Rahel long for a father's love and turn to Chacko, he is wrapped up in his own world. The twins then turn to Velutha. In Rahel 2's text world, there is no knowledge of untouchability or poverty. In the child's schema casteism does not exist. Further, the twins are also not conscious of the fact that he is in the employment of their uncle, therefore in terms of status and hierarchy, he belongs to a lower class with whom they should not mix.

Rahel's text world is not just the text world of a child. It is constructed through the knowledge that she gets from her mother and other adults who inhabit her world. Therefore they have precocious reading habits. They have read Charles Dickens' **A Tale of Two Cities**, Rudyard Kipling's **The Jungle Book**, **The Tempest** by Shakespeare, **Mutiny on The Bounty**. And the lessons that they learn from these literary texts form their schema propelling them to act in the way that leads to the death of their cousin and loss of their synchronicity. They learn about sacrifice(Sydney Carlton in **The Tale of Two cities**), love(*We be of same blood ye and I*, from Kipling) and millstones (from **Mutiny on The Bounty**). "Twins" is also a concept in Rahel 2's Schema. This has tragic consequences in the novel. Once, when the family is driving to Cochin, a neighbouring town to watch the movie, *Sound of Music* and receive Margaret Kochamma and their cousin, Sophie Mol, they are stopped at the railway crossing by a crowd of Marxist protesters, who are marching towards Cochin. Rahel spots Velutha, neatly dressed marching along with other protesters holding a red flag. Rahel is excited to recognize Velutha, but fails to identify the significance of his involvement in a Communist march since political marches are not a part of her schema. But her mother slaps her and tells her to keep quiet. Also, Velutha informs her later that the man she spotted was not him, but his twin, Urumban. Since this is part of the altered schema of the twins, later in

the novel when they are called upon to identify the man who has harmed their mother, they identify him as Urumban, the twin.

"You are right. It wasn't him. It was Urumban."(Estha).

"Thang God," Rahel whispered back.

"Where do you think he is?"

"Escaped to Africa." (p.320)

Thus they escape the terrible knowledge that would have shattered their innocence and vulnerability. They are emotionally blackmailed by Baby Kochamma into turning Velutha in to the police. For them, the choice was very easy, because they had to protect their mother. The man Estha saw, in any case, was not the man they loved, but his twin. In their schema, Velutha was their father, a man to be loved, therefore their loyalty was not compromised since they identified Urumban.

Metaphor

It is worthwhile examining the metaphors that form a part of Rahel 2's text world. At the very outset it must be stated that   Rahel 1' text world does not consist of the same metaphors that are found in Rahels 2's text world which is replete with them. While there are many interesting metaphors in the novel, for my purposes today, I will focus only on the *fear* metaphor, *silence* metaphor and the concept of Big and Small:

Fear as moth

The moth on Rahels' heart spread its velvet wings and the chill crept into her bones (113)

Rahel watched him and her cold moth spread its wings again. Slow out. Slow in. a predator's lazy blink.

The moth in Rahel's heart lifted its downy leg. Then put it back. Its little leg was cold. A little less her mother loved her.(136)

She had her grandfather's moth on her heart. (139)

Quietness/Silence /Loss as person

Once the quietness entered, it stayed and spread in Estha. It reached out of his head and enfolded it in its swampy arms.(11)

The Loss of Sophie Mol stepped softly around the Ayemenem House like a quiet thing in socks. It hid in books and food. In Mammachi's violin case. (16)

The silence sat between grandniece and baby grandmother like a third person.

The silence gathered its skirts and slid like spiderwoman, up the slippery bathroom wall.(93)

Big/Small

There are big dreams and little ones. 'Big man the Laltain Sahib and Small Man the Mombatti.(89)

Audience was the big man. Estha was a little man, with tickets. (100)

And once again Small Things were said. The Big Things lurked inside unsaid. (173)

Rahel's grandfather Pappachi was an entomologist who discovered a new moth. Unfortunately for him, he retired before the scientific community could acknowledge the discovery of a new species, with the result the moth was named after, the man who succeeded him in his job. This bitterness crept into his soul causing him to treat his family shabbily and beating up his wife. He only stopped when his son beat him up once. The moth becomes the metaphor for fear in the novel in Rahel's 2 text world. The target domain is fear and the source domain is the moth. It is a metaphor that recurs throughout the novel and at significant points in the novel when there is a switch in the text world of Rahel 1 to Rahel 2. As such, it never occurs in Rahel 1's text world. The articulation of the abstract concept in terms of the concrete is peculiar to Rahel's schema and contributes to her text world.

Silence is associated with Estha. Here again, the target domain is silence and the source domain is person. Loss is mainly associated with Sophie Mol, where loss is the target domain and source domain is person.

The megametaphor in the novel is the God of Small Things, which resonates with meaning. In the text world, Small things stand for untouchable caste as opposed to the high ranking Syrian Christian. It stands for poverty, classlessness, squalor. But at the same time God stands for generosity, talent, nobility, love. Villages in India have village deities who are worshipped by all villagers, who belong to the Hindu pantheon, but do not reside in big temples built for them by Maharajahs. The Big things in the novel are the Government, the Police , the Chairperson of the Communist party in Ayemenem, the owner of Paradise Pickles and Jams who can order the death of another human being. The small things are *"when a dragonfly lifted a small stone off their (twins') palms with its legs, or when they had permission to bathe the pigs, or they found an egg hot from a hen" (46).* All small things are associated with the twins and Velutha. Even the dreams in the novel are divided into Big and Small.

The title of the novel of course is metaphorical. The God of small things is Velutha, the untouchable who gives his abundant love to the twins with neither fear nor favour. He provides succor to Ammu who has been abandoned by her own family and by the forces of history. But the union of Velutha and Ammu is doomed from the start because of the difference in their caste and class. Their tragedy is filtered through the text world of an eight year old child whose schema does not recognize the differences between caste and class. In depicting the horror of their deaths through the consciousness of a child, Roy succeeds in adding power and poignancy to her novel.

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