

Portrayal of Marginalized Sections in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

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Abstract

*Toni Morrison, the Nobel Prize winner African-American woman novelist basically deals with the problem of racism and the neglected world of the African-Americans. As Elizabeth Janeway observes, Morrison's "stunning insight reveals the disrupted emotions produced by living in a world where White standards and goals are presented to Blacks as uniquely important and, at the same time, impossible for them to achieve." (qtd. Sumana 50) While Arundhati Roy, The Booker Prize winner and the stalwart in the field of Indian English literature, boldly exposes the caste and gender marginalization in her debut novel **The God of Small Things**. She deals in this novel with the chauvinism in Indian patrimonial set up. She stands against the conventional notion that women are weaker and inferior to men. She also exposes the ghastly evil of casteism and hierarchy. The struggle between the mainstream culture and sub-culture is visible in her novel. The present paper studies Morrison's **The Bluest Eye** and Roy's *The God of Small Things* and investigates that how the blacks in America and the Dalits and women in India are humiliated, exploited and marginalized on the account of falsehood of societal laws of racism, casteism and male chauvinism. The marginalized sections want to have their own sub-culture in order to survive, but their attempts have not been recognized and accepted by those from the so-called dominant mainstream culture. The cry for liberty and freedom by the marginalized sections can be seen in the respective novels.*

Key words: Racism, casteism, sexism, male patriarchy, exploitation, marginalization, etc.

The Bluest Eye is an ultimate product of age-old racism in African American society where Morrison does a superb attempt to condemn this age old practice. She strongly believes that this color politics has devalued the black generations for hundreds of years. The novel offers a realistic picture of three African families i.e. Breed loves, Peals and Louise who try to imitate the ways of the Whites. In this attempt some of them like Peals exploit the members of their own community in order to become close to the ruling class. Breedlove family is at the centre of the novel and all incidents in the novel are concerned with this family. Cholly Breedlove ,the black unemployed youth is portrayed in such a way that it clearly indicates the marginal existence the blacks in 1920s.

The Breedloves go through the experience of dependency, repression, internal racism and alienation. The Breedlove family consists of four members- Cholly Breedlove, Pauline Breedlove, their son, Sammy and daughter, Pecola. They live at Thirty-fifth streets in Lorain, Ohio. The life they lead is not a pleasant one. They lived there only because they were poor and the Blacks. Morrison writes about their living: “Like a sore tooth that is not content to throb in isolation, but must diffuse its own pain to other parts of the body-making breathing difficult, vision limited, nerves unsettled, so a hated piece of furniture produces a fretful malaise that asserts itself throughout the house and limits the delight of things not related to it.”(27) The dominant White culture underrates the Blacks. It is indicative of the lower status of the Blacks in White America. This shows that they are made to live peripheral livings, and so they think that they are ugly. It is this ugliness, which makes their life vulnerable. The relationship between Cholly Breedlove and Mrs. Breedlove is not a harmonious one. Because all they have ever known is nothing but rejection. This is the only thing they can offer each other, to their children and themselves. The close study of Pauline and Cholly highlights this element of rejection. When Cholly was four days old, his mother placed him wrapped in two blankets and one newspaper on a junk heap by the railroad. This terrible reality in his life indicates his marginal existence, while Pauline too has been suffering from her infancy. She had nothing but to take care of the house. Later on they met each other. As Morrison Writes: “He [Cholly] seemed to relish her company and even to enjoy her country ways and lack of knowledge about city things.” (90)

Pecola Breedlove is told from the day she is born that she is ugly. Her mother Pauline nourishes all her love upon her White employer's children, while she hates Pecola. So Pecola considers herself so ugly that her only concept of self is in terms of a White girl, Shirley Temple. She consumes enormous quantity of milk so that she can hold the cups and gaze the image of Shirley Temple. She even eats Mary Jane candies. "To eat the candy is somehow to eat the eyes, eat Mary Jane. Love Mary Jane. Be Mary Jane." (38) By doing so, Pecola tries to avoid the ugliness which is a concept or prejudice imposed upon Blacks by the Whites. She goes through traumatic experiences throughout the novel. Her encounter with fifty - two year old store-keeper makes her aware about her subordinate place in the society. Black boys too harass her at school. Her encounter with Maureen Peal, is one of the disgusting experiences she faces in her life. Maureen humiliates and attacks Pecola in the words: "I am cute! And you ugly! Black and ugly." (56) Geraldine, a middle class woman also considers her inferior. Pecola knows that it is her ugliness which made her marginal even in her own community. She is treated as 'others' not only at her home but also in the society at large. She becomes alienated and leads a futile existence. As Morrison writes: "Long hours she sat looking in mirror, trying to discover the secret of ugliness, the ugliness that made her ignored and despised at school, by teachers and classmates alike. She was the only member of her class who sat alone at a double desk. (34)

Besides Pecola, all the other Black women in *The Bluest Eye* are oppressed and humiliated on account of their race and gender. Claudia explains the harsh reality about her mother and other women in the community. She says: "Being a minority in both caste and class, we moved about anyway on the hem of life." (11) Here, Claudia is seen became aware about their dark existence. When the novel opens, Pecola is seen living with the MacTeers family. For Cholly has put the family outdoors, that to leave at the margin. Cholly who does not find place in society is a victim of White culture. Cholly's unnatural rape of Pecola is one of the poignant affairs in the novel. To rescue Pecola from the dehumanizing gaze of the White people Cholly rapes her. As a Black girl, she is humiliated by the Whites as well as by her own community and as she is a girl she has no freedom like Sammy, her elder brother. In order to avoid all kind of humiliation and oppression, Pecola yearns God daily for blue eyes.

Her last encounter with Soaphead Church, the West Indian of mixed parentage is also one of disgusting. Pecola's request for blue eyes stuns him. He too victimizes her by making her innocently poison a dog he detests. He assures her that she has got the blue eyes which makes Pecola over passionate and she degenerates into insanity. Later on she is found pregnant by her own father, Cholly. People talk about her, the father and the unborn child. Some people blame her. At last Pecola gives birth to the child but the baby dies very soon. Her miserable condition can be guessed. As the narrator writes: "She spent her days, her tendril, sap-green days, walking up and down, her head jerking to the beat of a drummer so distant only she could hear." (162)

Through the character of Pecola, Morrison portrayed the suppression, devaluation of the Blacks in general and women in particular. The Breedlove family thus represents the pathetic condition of the lower class Blacks in America, they are extremely poor and ostracized. Patrik Bryce rightly asserts: The double jeopardy of being both 'poor' and 'ugly' excludes Pecola from sharing in whatever social and economic tidbits that may be offered. Pecola and parents can not fully comprehend the depth of ostracism and are powerless to change the situation. (39) Toni Morrison portrays the sorry fate of the Blacks in a racist America. *The Bluest Eye* basically focuses on the problem of racism, how Blacks are victimized due to the racial prejudices of high and low, and how they lead a marginal existence. Pauline and Geraldine try to assume their fake identities. In Breedlove family there is nothing but disintegration, there is no love for each other, while the MacTeers have a sense of maturity and feeling of genuine love. In an interview, Morrison explained the theme of her work: "Beauty, love... Actually I think, all the time that I write, I'm writing about love or its absence." (Bakerman 60) Thus, *The Bluest Eye* portrays the tragedy and suffering of Black people through the character of Pecola and the Breedloves as well. It culminates in the rape scene of Pecola. Pecola's rape by her own father is the distortion of his love for Pecola. Her mother Pauline wishes to accept the white values but in vain. She is not accepted by the mainstream white culture and remained at the margin of the society. Both Pauline and Pecola humiliated and exploited at home as well as in society lead a marginal existence throughout the novel. It is indicative of the tragic condition of a Black woman and her

marginalization in her own community. The humiliation and marginalization of Black community as a whole, culminates in Pecola's triple Jeopardy of race, class and gender.

Similarly, Arundhati Roy shows the marginalization of the downtrodden Dalits and women in India. The Dalits in India are exploited and humiliated like blacks in America. They are treated badly and marginalized on the account of their caste in the society. Velutha, an untouchable, a Paravan is portrayed as a victim of casteism. The tragic condition of the untouchables is very well reflected in the novel through him, his father and brother. In Mammachi's time the Paravans like other untouchables were not allowed to walk on public roads, not allowed to cover their upper bodies and carry umbrellas. They had to put their hands over their mouths when they spoke. As Mammachi tells to the twins: "Paravans were expected to crawl backwards with a broom, sweeping away their footprints so that Brahmins or Syrian Christians would not defile themselves by accidentally stepping into a Parvan's footprint." (73-74) This throws light upon the social barriers and attitude of high-castes towards dalits, and untouchables. Brahmins in India wanted to dominate the whole population of India; they frightened and terrified the lower caste people and women in the name of God and his Manusmriti. Accordingly they humiliated and oppressed the untouchables or Dalits and women, and pushed them to marginal existence. It is due to such a tragic condition of them, Velutha's grandfather, Kelan along with a number of Paravans, Pelayas and pulaylas had embarrassed Christianity to avoid the scourge of marginality. But in vain! After conversion, they were known as the Rice-Christians. Their condition has been very pathetic after independence. For, officially on paper they are Christians and therefore casteless, and so no government benefits like job reservations were entitled to them. This shows how even after conversion, the Dalits, the untouchables have been exploited and oppressed due to the fourfold division of the Verna system. Velutha, being an untouchable is suffered throughout the novel. He comes with his father Vellya Pappen to the Ayemenam house to deliver the coconut plucked from the trees. No high castes would allow them into their house. They were not treated properly at Ayemenam. They would have to low their backs before the high castes. All this created in them a slave mentality.

This shows that there was no place for the untouchable in high-caste society. But for her selfish purpose, Mammachi successfully used Velutha. She recognized his talent for carpentry. She often said that if he had not been a Paravan he might have become an engineer. In spite of his superior skills in carpentry, Velutha is paid less than the touchable carpenters. He is not entertained and accepted as a fellow worker by the touchable workers. It throws light upon the shabby nature of Mammachi and the touchable workers. Thus, Velutha is a marginalized figure in the novel and has been considered inferior than other touchable workers not for his any weakness but only because of his inferior caste. Ammu, as a woman is treated as a subhuman and second sex. Her humiliation takes terrible forms when she returns to Ayemenam as divorcee. Rahel and Estha, as children of a divorcee woman have no place in the orthodox society. They are suppressed and suffered at home and in the society for no fault of them. Like Velutha they too lead a life of the marginalized. In the novel Ammu is compelled to have an easy taste of chauvinistic brutality and hypocrisy through her own father. No one is serious about her education. Ammu's father Pappachi is of the opinion that "a college education was an unnecessary expense for a girl." (38). On the other hand her elder brother Chacko goes to Oxford for education. When money is not enough, Ammu's mother Mammachi secretly pawns her jewelry to send him abroad. On the contrary Ammu's education is denied. This indicates how woman is neglected and subhumanised in the male dominated society. Patriarchy made women as marginalized. Her eighteenth birthday comes and goes away unnoticed. Since her father has no suitable dowry no marriage proposals come for Ammu. This indicates that the life of women in India is made vulnerable due to the patriarchy as well as the social customs like dowry. As Stephen Knapp rightly narrates:

"This system helps divide the classes and puts the financial burden on the bride's family to have their daughter get married...This system is also another reason for the increased rate of infanticide and abortions when it is discovered that a woman is pregnant with a baby girl. The present-day system of dowry is now mostly a materialistic and shameful arrangement." (<http://www.Stephen-knapp.com/casteism.htm>)

Ammu wants to go away from the Ayemenam, so as to escape from the brutality of the male domination. Her plan becomes successful when her father agrees to let her spend the summer with a distant aunt who lives in Calcutta, where she meets her future husband, Baba. She decides to marry him with the hope that marriage will improve her position in society. Her attempt to create her own identity becomes spoiled. Baba, her husband is not only an alcoholic but a liar. Meanwhile, Ammu gives birth to twins, Rahel and Estha. Her condition becomes more critical when Baba does nothing but lays in bed. Baba in the novel is portrayed as a man who uses his wife for his own selfish purpose. He considers her as a means of fulfillment. His boss at the office, Mr. Hollick wants to enjoy sex with Ammu. Baba does not hesitate to order her to do so. And therefore Ammu takes divorce from Baba, and returns to Ayemenam, but her humiliation has no end. After her return to Ayemenam, no one consoles her but treat badly. Every one humiliated her calling her as divorcee. Ammu's mother Mammachi is also a victim of male chauvinism. Her father Pappachi does not care about her. He is jealous of the fact that she is seventeen years younger than him. Even her good attempt to start a pickle factory is criticized by him. He is of the view that her job is not suitable to the ranking of an Ex. Government official. He does not help her in her business. On the contrary he takes pleasure in beating her. As the novelist writes: "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". (47)

Besides Ammu and Mammachi, Margaret Kochamma also is marginalized on the account of gender. She is portrayed as a woman who wants to assert her own identity, but after marriage with Chacko her life becomes meaningless. Thus, the women like Ammu, Mammachi and Margaret Kochamma are portrayed as the victims of male chauvinism. It indicates how women are oppressed, humiliated and made to live a marginal existence due to the domestic violence, which is the result of patriarchy. As Rujuta Deshmukh writes: "Domestic violence prevails all over the world but its gravity is much in South Asian countries. Domestic Violence is very much rooted in India. Its age-old system of patriarchy and the patriarchal structures are responsible for that." (The Hitavada) Thus, Roy highlights man's attitude towards women in our social hierarchy. Women have been seen as means of

wish fulfillment. In the novel Ammu and Mammachi are marginalized on account of gender. They are the victims of domestic violence and patriarchy. They have no any fault of their own, the only thing that they are 'women'. To quote Rujuta Deshmukh: According to available statistics from around the globe one out of every three women experience violence in an intimate relationship in her life. This is an average based on available national surveys across industrialized and developing countries (World Health Organization, 1997). The data reveals a shocking 71.5 percent increase in cases of torture and dowry death during the period from 1991 to 1995 reflect increased reporting of violence. (The Hitavada)

Chacko who represents male domination does not care about his sister, Ammu. On the contrary, he asserts himself and is ready to humiliate her. He monopolized both his mother and the Paradise Pickle factory. The presence of Ammu in the house always disturbs him. He denies her share in the ancestral property saying: "What's yours is mine and What's mine is also mine." (57) It is indicative of the lower status of women in patriarchal set up of India. Women are denied their right upon their ancestral property and they are treated lower like the Dalits. Being exploited and humiliated by parents, Ammu becomes a lonesome figure at Ayemenam. Since she is neglected almost by all the members in the family, she enjoys midnight swim and spends her lonely hours on the bank of river. Naturally she gets attracted towards Velutha's physical feature. As Ashok Chasker rightly observes: "Ammu, a member of Syrian Christian family touchable (but a woman) can not suppress her biological needs, her sexual appetite. Basically, she is a young widow who can not go without someone irrespective of his caste and community for satisfying her sexual needs. She is bound to submit to the natural urge for sex and gets sexual satisfaction by Velutha, a member of the Untouchable community." (75) Both Ammu and Velutha the two unwanted and neglected individuals begin to love each other and enjoy short happy life. Since they have no plans, no future all they could do stick to the small things. As Roy narrates: "Even later, on the thirteen nights that followed this one, instinctively they stuck to the Small Things. The Big Things ever lurked inside. They knew that there was nowhere for them to go. They had nothing. No future. So they stuck to the small things" (338).

Ammu and Velutha made love that night when they meet first time and the next thirteen nights. She does not think of the social barriers. Velutha also is unaware about the future consequences. Ammu, being a woman can not suppress her biological needs. As G.D. Barche points out: “She [Ammu] has disobeyed the social laws of love but obeyed the instinctual laws ‘Swadharma’ by sharing the body with Velutha, an untouchable.” (43) Velutha’s father, Vellya Pappen informs Mammachi about the love affair between Ammu and Velutha. Suppression for ages made Vellya Pappen too weak to stand against the high castes. He does not want to rebel against high-caste Christians. Knowing about their love affair, Mammachi shouts at Vellya: “Drunken dog! Drunken Parvans liar!” (256). Mammachi’s anger is very oblivious. She calls Velutha at Ayemenam and humiliates him. As the novelist writes: She had screamed, eventually. ‘Out!’ If I find you on my property tomorrow, I’ll have castrated you like the pariah dog that you are! I’ll have you killed!” ...Mammachi spat into Velutha’s face. Thick spit. It splattered across his skin. His mouth and eyes. (284) The love relationship between a high-caste Ammu and Velutha, an untouchable has been seen as disgrace. They both are viciously condemned and punished for their conduct. Nothing was wrong in their behavior. But their relationship is considered as illicit. Her basic need of having sexual pleasure is treated as a sinful act. She is marginalized because of having love affair with an untouchable. In Sophie Mol’s funeral all neglect Ammu and her children. In their home they become untouchable. Roy successfully shows the drawbacks of Indian orthodoxies, which outlived women by depicting the Ayemenam realistically. As C. Gopinthan Pilliai rightly points out, “ The problems of patriarchal domination and female subalternity and the clash between the two are rooted in the specific geocultural reality of Ayemenam” (88) Baby Kochamma also hates Ammu for her relationship with an untouchable. She does not hesitate to give consent for Chacko’s incestuous relationship with labour women workers but turns her nose at Ammu’s relationship with Velutha. She comments, “How could she stand the smell? Haven’t you noticed, they have a particular smell, these Paravans?” (78) It’s disgusting how Baby Kochamma could believe that Paravan men have different smell than Parvan labour women with whom Chacko flirted. This is indicative of the hypocrisy of the high-caste people. They

flirt with the untouchable women and drive away the untouchable men. It has been very well dealt by Muik Raj Anand as well in his novel *Untouchable*. The love relationship between Ammu and Velutha, at last turns into a disaster. Baby Kochamma files a false case against Velutha. The police treat Velutha just as an animal. They drag him to the police station and beat mercilessly. As Roy narrates:

His skull was fractured in three places. His nose and both his cheek bones were smashed, leaving his face pulpy, undefined. The blow to his mouth had split open his upper lip and broken his six teeth, three of which were embedded in his lower lip, hideously inverting his beautiful smile. Four of his ribs were splintered, one had pierced his left lung...His spine was damaged in two places, the concussion had paralysed his right arm and resulted in a loss of control over his bladder and rectum. Both his knees caps were shattered. (310)

Roy gives a heart rending detail of Velutha's beating which shows the futile existence of the untouchable and how they are humiliated, oppressed and marginalized by the another section of society which is known as powerful one. There is a struggle between the powerful and the powerless. Velutha dies in the novel at the hands of the protectors of law. Really speaking, police stands for politeness, obedience, loyalty, intelligence, courtesy and efficiency, but none of these qualities are seen in the police in the case of an untouchable, Velutha. As K.V. Surendran rightly asserts: "Police officers who were expected to protect the life and property of the people had eyes which were 'sly' and 'greedy' and 'stared at their victim's' breasts as they spoke and openly called a woman, 'Veshya' which means 'prostitute'." (51) Here Velutha stands for the people who have been marginalized and ill-treated for ages and those who are being neglected and humiliated even today. Velutha's murder is a painful experience for Ammu. Without Velutha, with whom she shared some happy moment, life becomes meaningless and unbearable for her. Throughout the novel she is shown as a helpless woman. At last she loses all her interest in life. As the narrator describes: "Her skin was stretched over her puffy cheeks like shiny scar tissue that covers old vaccination marks. When she smiled, her dimples looked as though they hurt. Her curly hair had lost its sheen and hung around her swollen face like a dull curtain." (160)

The humiliation at the hands of the police Inspector, Thomas Mathew who considers her as 'Veshya' hurts her. She gets strongly disturbed by this incident. She always sees a dream in which a policeman approaches her to cut off her hair. Ammu always sees such women in the market with vacant eyes and shaved heads. Eventually she dies a lonely death at Bharat Lodge, Allepy. A sweeper finds her dead body in the morning. The narrator writes about Ammu's death. "A platoon of aunts carried a dead cockroach sedately through the door, demonstrating what should be done with corpses". (162) This shows Ammu's pathetic condition and marginal existence. A dead cockroach being dragged by a platoon of aunts is symbolic of her insignificance and place in her family and the society. Nobody protects and takes care of her. This indicates the reality that the marginalized are denied any identity. After death also her misery does not stop. The church refuses to bury her dead body. So Chacko wraps her dead body in dirty bed sheet and takes her to electric crematorium. Ammu represents the whole female community as victims of male-domination and marginalized due to the rigidity of social laws. As Ashok Chasker asserts: "Roy examines how the sufferers are the representative of the marginalized group who are inhumanly punished due to their act of the 'Love Laws'. Their attempt of cultivating sub culture gets no support from the so-called followers of dominant mainstream culture. Finally Ammu, a heroine of the novel is destroyed and crushed." (78)

Like Ammu, her twins Estha and Rahel also are considered as marginalized. They too have to lead a marginal existence, and are treated badly. Rahel, a girl child was deprived of parental love. After marriage also she is not happy. K.V. Surendran writes about her: "The Divorced, and the Barren' in Roy's novel is such a one who endured all kinds of assaults from all corners in her life and struggled against all kinds of adversities." (60) Rahel's life as a child is of total depravation. She is an isolated figure, wherever she is, at her own home, school and college, she is exploited and suffered. Sophie Mol's death, Velutha's encounter, his condition in police custody, his tragic death, her mother's tragic death all this makes bad effect on her. Her marriage with Larry Mac Caslin also turns into a great failure. Rahel's husband thinks that she does not love him. But when they made love her eyes offend him. As the novelist writes: "Someone watching. Looking out of the windows at the sea. At a boat in

the river. Or a passer-by in the mist in a hat.” (19) Soon they get divorced. Her attempt to get happiness is shattered. People like Pillai takes interest in asking Rahel inconvenient questions about her mother. Humiliation starts very early in her life. Baby Kochamma and Mammachi do not behave with her properly. Like Rahel, Esha too suffers as a fatherless child. Baby Kochamma dislikes both of them. She always finds an opportunity to tease them. She considers them: “...doomed, fatherless waifs. Worse still, they were Half-Hindus Hybrids whom no self-respecting Syrian Christian would ever marry. She was keen for them to realize that they like herself lived on sufferance in the Ayemenam House, their maternal grandmother’s house, where they really had no right to be.” (45)

Besides Velutha and Vellya Pappen, Kuttyapen is a tragic figure in the novel. He is Velutha’s elder brother who falls down from the coconut tree while bringing coconuts for the Ayemenam family and gets paralyzed from his chest downwards. Chella, his mother dies “a coughing, spitting, aching, phlegmy death.”(206) His mother’s death was a painful experience for Kuttyapen. It is observed that the untouchables are deprived of proper treatment. They are totally dependent upon their masters- high caste people. They do not have enough money to go to the hospital. So they are made to live marginal existence throughout their life. In the novel women like Ammu, Mammachi and Rahel are marginalized on account of gender, while Velutha, Vellya Pappen, Kuttapen on account of caste. Estha and Rahel are depicted fatherless children and so they are made to lead a marginal existence. The marginal existence of the factory workers is also reflected in the novel. Mammachi is a typical high-caste lady who harasses the factory workers. They are not given proper wages for working in ‘The Paradise Pickles and Preserves’. The factory workers demand to increase their wages but Mammachi does not response to them as they belong to the small things, that is, marginalized sections. She says: “ There are no jobs. People are starving to death. They should be grateful they have any work at all.” (121-122) This indicates the power structure in society, how the socially powerful people always oppress and humiliate the lower caste people. They do not think for the betterment of the poor and underdog. On the contrary, the woman like Mammachi uses the skill of workers in low wages. They are made to do hard work and thus made victims. The workers in the novel present the list of their demands to

Comrade E.M.S. Pillai. Their first demand is an hour's lunch break for the paddy workers in between a non-stop eleven and half hours of work. Their second demand is to increase the women labor's wages from Rs. 1.25 to 3 and men's wages from rupees 2.50 to rupees 4.50 a day. Their third demand is that untouchables should not be addressed by their caste names. In spite of all this the upper caste people do not stop discrimination and consider them inferior. There is no use of the people like Comrade Pillai. When Velutha is in police custody due to the wrong F.I.R. of Baby Kochamma, Mr. Pillai rejects to identify Velutha. Actually Velutha works hard as a cardholder member of the Communist party. But Pillai does not help Velutha. It is a clear betrayal of a worker who is loyal to the party.

Thus, both Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* and Roy's *The God of Small Things* examine the power structure in society where the weaker sections have to live as marginalized sections. The existence of the blacks in America and of Dalits in India is devalued due to racism and casteism respectively. The women in America as well as India faced the social evil of male patriarchy. They are humiliated on the account of gender. Morrison's Pauline and Pecola and Roy's Ammu and Mammachi are helpless in front of male chauvinism and became victims of domestic violence. Thus, both of the novels are true documents which bring marginalized sections to the lime light in order to criticize the age-old prejudices and misconceptions of societal norms.