

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of The Study

*The God of Small Things* is the first novel of Indian woman writer which immediately grabbed worldwide commotion since its publication in 1997. The writer, Suzana Arundhati Roy, began to write since 1992 and finished in 1996. The novel was first published in 1997 by Flamingo. Besides its achievement as the only India novel which gained British most prestigious literary award called Booker prize, London October 1997, this novel has also been criticized dealing with the concern of culture and religion as the very sensitive issue (Gisela: 2015:1).

The novel tells about the cultural, social, and political phenomena set in Kerala, India. There lives a respectable high-class family, Ipe family, which has its own economic source that is pickle factory. Besides that they could fulfill the economic need, they could also employ some labors from the lower caste. This family has a good reputation since that they are a high caste of Syrian-Christian. However, Ammu (the daughter of Ippe) is portrayed as the one who could break the family's reputation. It is shown from the action that Ammu got married with Hindu and finally divorced but then they get back to the house of Ippe, her mother. So then it is really her who tries to go out of the limit of norm and religion dogma by having love affair with the Untouchable caste, Vellutha. While Baby Kochama considers that this would bring their family into harm. So then Ammu and Baby Kochama try some ways in order that phenomenon does not break the family's reputation. The story is set in the point of view of the twin children (Estha and Rahel) as the daughter of Ammu.

The most interesting side of the novel is that it tells us about how class and caste system is interwoven together to make such kind of social discrimination. There has been the study which concern about the case of Ammu as the higher caste and Velutha as the lower caste, as called love affair in the novel, done by Gisela Swara (2015) entitled *Breaking the Love Law: Identity and transgression in Arundhati Roy's The God of Small Things*. Her analysis was based on the theory of feminism in analyzing Ammu attitude dealing with the case having love relationship with lower caste Velutha. The second related previous study was done by Devi Prasad Siwakoti (2010) entitled "Disruption and Subversion of Patriarchal Normativity in Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small*

*Things*. She analyzed the novel dealing with the concept of subversion and disruption of the patriarchal normativity.

However, it has not been any study concerned with the idea of the form of social inequality of how class and the class system is interwoven in order to legitimate any form of social discrimination. The term of social inequality refers to hierarchical distribution of social, political, economic and, cultural resources or a situation when unequal opportunities or rewards exists in society for people of different social status or position. Moreover, it does not mean that the existing unequal position of certain society that becomes the main point. There, social inequality might create an unjust law where certain society would be served based on his power or position inside of the society.

The aim of this study is, therefore, to find out the form of social inequality in the novel and therefore will be examined a number of characters. To make it clearer, the writer would then apply Marxist Literary criticism as the basic theory which would be elaborated with the conception of “social inequality”. Then, this thesis would comprehend the social inequality itself in the relation of making an unjust law for a certain characters in the novel using Marxist literary criticism as the basic theory applied.

## **1.2 Research Question**

The aim of this work will be about finding social inequality told in the novel. Trying to elaborate class system discrimination, and absolutely gender discrimination using the concept of Marxist literary criticism. These may be stated as follows:

- 1) What types of social inequality are presented in the novel of Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* ?
- 2) How is social inequality explored in the novel of Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Thing*?

## **1.3 Objective of the Study**

The objectives of the study are:

1. To analyze the novel in the relation with Marxist literary criticism
2. To analyze the novel using the approach of “social inequality” as a concept.

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study hopefully gives some benefits as follows:

1) Theoretical benefits

This study is expected to give additional information dealing with the novel *The God of Small Things*

2) Practical benefit

The practical benefit of the study of social inequality is none other than to awaken the masses that every human being is born and grows up with the same rights. Since that this study is in some cases closely related to any racism phenomenon that occurs in society, it is certainly expected to be an alarm for every scholar themselves and for the society as a whole.

#### **1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

There should be certain scope and limitation of the study in order to avoid any destruction on the central topic of the study. The scope and limitation of this study, as it is a kind of sociological study, would only be focused on the extrinsic elements by examining the idea or concept of social inequality in the correlation of Marxist literary criticism.

#### **1.6 Research Paper Organization**

In order to make the research easier to follow this research paper is organized into six chapters. Chapter I is introduction which explains the background of the study, research question, objective of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study and research paper organization. Chapter II is reviewing some previous studies concerned about *The God of Small Things and* underlying theory in form of theoretical framework that consists of the notion of Marxism, the principles of Marxism, structural elements, and the theory of social inequality. Chapter III is describing the research method applied. The research method comes with an order starting from the research design, research instruments, data source, data collection procedure, and data analysis procedure. Chapter IV will cover the structural analysis of the novel by describing the extrinsic elements of the novel and a brief discussion and analyzing the novel using the theory Marxist analysis dealing with the concept of social inequality by only considering selected characters. Chapter V contains conclusion.