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India through Aravind Adiga's Eyes

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Article Received: 07/03/2022,

Article Accepted: 08/04/2022,

Published online: 12/04/2022,

DOI:10.36993/RJOE.2022.72015

Abstract

Aravind Adiga describes the Indian class struggle through the narration of a village boy, Balram Halwai; in his novel, *The White Tiger*. It is dealt with the poverty-stricken areas of rural India. Balram has succeeded in the narration of his story to the successful Chinese, Wen Jiabao in the form of a letter. He has involved in bribing for the protection of the family, which led him to kill Ashok, who is the owner of the car. Gradually he changed his profession from taxi service to entrepreneur. He has been involved in corruption and found his way from a low social caste to a powerful man. He feels that beauty is meant by financial prosperity and freedom of choice. Initially, he compared himself to the white tiger which symbolizes power in East Asian cultures. If he keeps a typical character, it is a significant one for him as it is a noble and intelligent one as a white tiger. He fainted and realized on seeing the dead body of his mother and the situation of a caged tiger but he compared himself to a white tiger to fulfill his desires in the society where he lives in. Aravind could succeed in drawing contradictions and complications of Indian society.

Keywords: poverty-stricken, narration, contradictions, complications, society

The *White Tiger* is the foremost novel by Aravind Adiga. At the age of 33, Aravind Adiga was able to produce this kind of novel. It was not only published in 2008 but also won 40th Man Booker Prize. He was the fourth writer to win the prize in 2008. The demands for *The White Tiger* were to catch the unhappy and weak persons from the poverty-stricken areas of rural India. Aravind describes the Indian class struggle globally through the narration of a village boy, Balram Halwai. It was done in a darkly humorous way. Firstly, Balram took the journey to Delhi where he worked as a driver for a rich landlord. Then he turned to Bengaluru where he left the place after killing his master and stealing money. He changed his sweet-maker caste and became

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a successful entrepreneur by establishing his taxi service. The novel deals with religion, caste, loyalty, corruption, and poverty prevailing in India.

Balram Halwai tried to narrate his life in a letter that was written on seven consecutive nights and addressed to the successful Chinese, Wen Jiabao. Balram was a son of a puller. Here Balram used to explain how he escaped from slavery to become a successful businessman. He lived with his grandmother, parents, brother, and extended family at the place where he was born. It was the rural village of Laxmangarh. Though he was a smart child he was forced to leave school to pay a dowry for his cousin. Having had the circumstances, he worked with his brother in a tea shop located in Dhanbad. Having been involved in work he learned about the government of India and its economy from the conversation with the customer. He felt like a good listener than a good worker. He changed his job from tea shop to car driver. Balram became the main driver of Ashok's car.

Besides his negligence to send money to his family Balram disrespects his grandmother during his visit. He moved to New Delhi with Ashok and his wife Pinky Madam. He was involved in corruption related to the government in Delhi. After finding his drunken mood, Pinky madam took the wheel from Balram. At that time, she hit somebody on the road and drove away. Ashok's family pressured Balram to say that he had driven alone. His involvement in bribing has been increased for the benefit of the family coal business. He decides to kill Ashok to fulfill his desires. After hitting Ashok with a bottle he stole a large bribe and moved to Bengaluru where he bribed police to start his own taxi business. His actions are controlled by his family and dictated by society. At last, he finds out what he does and informs the same to Jiabao through the letter.

Americanization has been playing its role in the plot since it provides an outlet for Balram to change his caste. For the satisfaction of Pinky's want for American culture; Ashok, Pinky, and Balram moved to Gurugram, New Delhi. American Express and Microsoft have their offices in Delhi. He felt that he could do so many things there than in New York. It indicates he is noticing the rapid growth of India. Initially, he wants to become an entrepreneur to rise above his caste. Having described himself as a foreteller Balram wanted to change his profession from taxi service to entrepreneur. This Idea made him involved in corruption.

Balram is different from others. He compared himself to the white tiger which symbolizes power in East Asian cultures. Moreover, it symbolizes freedom and individuality. As a different person, he has come from the Darkness and found his way into the Light. The book,

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White Tiger questions a man's quest for freedom. Balram, the protagonist in the novel, comes out of his low social caste and finds himself a powerful man.

This novel indicates how economic division can be created. In India, social castes play a major role in the place of social classes. This negative way is the portrayal of the novel. Here the world is divided into two kinds. They are the dark world and the light world. Poor and underprivileged people live in the darkness whereas zamindars, politicians, and businessmen live in the light world. Upper-class people make lower-class people poorer for the enchantment of their splendor. Balram thought that his position would determine his employment but he has succeeded. The novel describes the disparity between Balram's earlier life and present life as he became a businessman in society.

White Tiger tells the significant story of Balram in which how he started his life in the darkness and how he found life in the light to have freedom and prosperity. His strong conviction helped him a lot to escape from the darkness. In this connection, he used to sacrifice his life differently. He thought that one murder was enough to break from the darkness. People who live in the darkness are trapped by politicians, businessmen, and entrepreneurs who live in the light. Here our country is divided into two. They are India of Light and India of Darkness. Humans are imprisoned in our country as pale hens and bright-colored roosters kept in the cage. They don't try to come out to seek their fortune.

His father guided Balram at the early stage on the idea of breaking away from the darkness to become a man in the light. So Balram has fixed the goal and tried towards it. Later Balram used the metaphor- there are two castes. They are Men with Big Bellies and Men with Small Bellies. Having kept a big belly filled with the lust for freedom and riches, he murdered Ashok and gave up his family to become a man. He used to recognize him as a special one when he was in school. At the time of inspection, the inspector identified that Balram was the only boy who could read and write. The inspector added that he was an intelligent, honest, and vivacious fellow. The inspector saw his ability. He recognized that Balram would escape from the darkness to become a man in the light.

He could exceed everyone in the jungle of his school and town. According to him, humans are always slaves as they can't see what is beautiful in the world. He means that beauty is the life of financial prosperity and freedom of choice. He fainted twice in his life. His first faint is associated with the dead body of his mother. Nobody escapes from the darkness without using some force. Because most of us are surrounded by the power of darkness which we lose our ambition to overcome. Having seen the dead body of his mother Balram thought that she

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would become part of the black mud. He thinks that everybody has to face the same situation in their lives.

Balram fainted for the second time while he was staying in the zoo. The White Tiger is trapped in the cage. He compared his life of slavery with the situation of a caged tiger. He remembered his master with whom he had love and affection. Meanwhile, the tiger vanished. Till he had never thought of his action against Ashok. Here the vanished tiger indicates how he had murdered Ashok to have his life in the light. This was his realization. Gradually he has come out from the darkness associated with the murder of Ashok. He justified himself as he had sacrificed the members of his family for becoming a man in the light. The White Tiger could fulfill wit, uncomfortable suspense, and questionable morality. It is seen in the unstable, enchanting, and good narrator. As a complicated man, servant, philosopher, entrepreneur, and murderer, Balram can tell the story of which how he became a successful man. He feels that his crime will be discovered soon but it could give him an abundant experience as a free man rather than a servant. If he keeps a ruthless, cynical, and criminal character, it is a significant one for being as noble and intelligent as a white tiger. In this connection, he uses to observe his employer's corrupt mechanics. Adiga concentrates on the sophisticated structures in India. Balram's village is owned by four rich men, affected by feudalism.

As an employer, his master used to live in a nice apartment on the high rise whereas his worker Balram used to live in a tiny space in the basement. Here Aravind's observation is highlighted rather than his comment on India. This novel is about the modern India of the 21st century. It indicates the form of the deprived, the downtrodden, and the poor condition of India. Aravind can show the unpleasant scenes of contemporary India. The same coin has two sides. One side indicates its Darkness where it is associated with exploitation, miseries, suffering, and diseases. The other side is its Light for its recognition as a breeding place for Indian spiritualism. In this regard, people may have enlightenment, wisdom, solace, and salvation. Balram's father looks lean and dark like the laborers who come from Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Punjab, and Haryana. Most of the women used involved in the fighting. A large number of pictures related to government schools and hospitals are shown. Their condition is impossible to describe. If he is a rickshaw puller, Balram's father is aware of all these things. No one has pointed out things. Especially Adiga worried about the marriage scenes that took place in the society.

In Indian society, servants stand in the corners of the room. A large number of things can be heard from the rickshaw pullers in which the physical difference between the rich and the poor is seen. The problem of the rich is obesity. The problem of the poor is dark-skin because they spend their time and work outside. They are seen as black Americans who are verbally

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skilled and utterly without illusions about their rulers. In Balram's story, things that play a major role are bribery, corruption, skulduggery, toxic traffic jams, theft, and murder. The trustworthiness of servants in India depends on the entire Indian economy as India doesn't need a dictatorship or secret police to keep its people grimly achieving economic goals. The major drawbacks in India are corruption and lack of health services for the poor. A large number of unpleasant scenes are seen. Balram, *The White Tiger* is a poor Indian Villager whose ambition is the highest position in Indian business culture, the world of the Bengaluru entrepreneur. He writes a letter to the President of China on the occasion of his impending trip to Bengaluru. He describes his experience as a driver and servant to a wealthy Indian family in which he tries to draw contradictions and complications of Indian society. Thus Aravind has succeeded in the portrayal of the Indian class struggle.

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