

Chapter – 2

Poverty: “An Inexhaustible Source of Tears”

Today, India is poised for a giant leap from the rank of developing country to developed country and its economic growth is robust. It is shown as an emerging entrepreneurial power in the world. Advancement in the field of science and technology, transportation, hotel industry, tourism, real estate, expansion of the cities, mall culture, industries and outsourcing etcetera characterize the best image of India and the nation is portrayed as ‘incredible’ across the globe. In spite of all the progress that India has made during the years, poverty has not been eliminated and it is a silent killer of India. Even after sixty-nine years of independence from the British rule, large scale of poverty remains the most shameful spot on the face of India.

Neeru Tandon in the article “*The White Tiger: A Realistic Portrayal of the “India of Darkness”*” furnishes a report that

India’s position in the global economy has improved from the 8th position in 1991 to 4th place in 2001. . . India has been significant beneficiary of globalization despite its rather modest integration into the world economy. . . Despite this progress poverty remains one of the most serious international challenges . . . millions still are living in grinding poverty.

(122)

There is a growing realization that the positive upturn in the growth is lesser than the adverse impacts of poverty in India. It indicates a condition in which a person fails to maintain a standard living and suffers by inadequate basic human needs such as nutrition, health care, education, food, clothing and shelter. In the 21st century, the epitome of modernization, the rapid development of the global finance worsens the fate of the

poverty-stricken where millions of people reel under the struggles for survival, and also remain undernourished and under-privileged. Atulindra Nath Chaturvedi, in the book, *A. P. J. Abdul Kalam: Scientist and Humanist* proves that India's achieved economic growth is a mirage by stating the precious words of the great personality A. P. J. Abdul Kalam who says

We have made significant achievements in the last fifty years in food production, health sector, higher education, media and mass communication, industrial infrastructure, information technology, science and technology and defense. Our nation is endowed with natural resources, vibrant people and traditional value system. In spite of these resources, a number of our people are below the poverty line, undernourished, and lack primary education
itself . . . (61)

Poverty, one of the interminable issues that India faces today, attracts the attention of not only sociologists and economists but also writers as well. V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga, in their writings apparently portray the picture of Indian poverty and reflect the struggles, humiliations, atrocities, and cruelties of the dominating class towards the poor, inferiors and servant classes. They are socially condemned, medically neglected, economically exploited, and educationally ignored. These suppressed people of the Indian soil struggle to keep their body and soul together. The attempts of the writers seem favourably inclined and sympathetic towards the neglected classes of India.

Oscar Lewis, in the article the “Culture of Poverty” expresses that

People in a culture of poverty produce little wealth and receive little in return. Chronic unemployment and underemployment, low wages, lack of property, lack of savings, absence of food reserves in the home and chronic shortage of cash imprison the family and the individual in a vicious circle. Thus for lack of cash the slum householder makes frequent purchases of small quantities of food at higher prices. The slum economy turns inward; it shows a high incidence of pawning of personal goods, borrowing at usurious rates of interest, informal credit arrangements among neighbours, use of secondhand clothing and furniture. (21)

V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga opine that poverty is the dreadful social issue and they make their fellowmen understand the aftermaths of it. V. S. Naipaul’s semi-autobiographical works – *An Area of Darkness*, *India: A Wounded Civilization* and *India: A Million Mutinies Now* and Aravind Adiga’s works – *The White Tiger* and *Between the Assassinations* explore the causes of poverty and reflect the tangible vision of it in India. These works are of their keen observation and assertion of the crude and dark image of the nation, which stand as the documents of Indian poverty.

The vigorous writers V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga prove their prodigy through their writings which are blended with their own experiences and leave an indelible impression on the human sufferings in India. When V.S. Naipaul first visits India in 1962, he observes that the country is infertile and is filled with extreme disorder. Wherever he visits, he is much pained to view dirty districts, poor beggars, clusters of shabby houses, lump of dung heaps, over crowded streets and large area of slums. This panoramic view makes him state in the first book of his trilogy, *An Area of Darkness*, that India is “the poorest country in the world” (41) and “the world’s largest slum” (173). His first visit to

India is full of hopes and speculations, but unluckily it leads him to shocks and disappointments. Instead of glory, he finds only ugliness, squalor, boredom and horror.

Although the negative descriptions subvert V. S. Naipaul, he succeeds in projecting the true melancholic picture of India with an intention to redeem the nation from the degradation and the inflictions. Chetan Trivedi in the article “*An Area of Darkness: Naipaul’s Incursion into Indian society*” quotes the unexpected reply of Naipaul to the question as to what the reason is behind his interest in India, for which he states that “. . . I was interested in India because of my concern, I hate distress, I hate poverty and I wish to see it alleviated that’s what I go back to , I look for signs of that” (74). The author brings the dreary vision of Indian poverty by highlighting the woeful picture of his ancestor’s native Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. In *India: A Wounded Civilization* he remarks that “. . . Bihar, for centuries the cultural heartland of India . . . now without intellect or leaders . . . a land of drought and famine . . . (18), where most of the people are not even able to garner two meals for the day. Bihar is supposed to have shown the way to the rest of the country – a land of economy, but it is ill-fated to remain a land of tears in the geography of India. V. S. Naipaul in his study infers that the agricultural sector and its potential are slashed, since Bihar is meant for the creation of a class of landlords whose only objective is collection of rents with no interest of agricultural development. This is an important factor for the sharp deterioration in the social development of Bihar. Hence it has lost its status of being the heart land of India. India is a land of birth of many religions, the place of mystics, saints and sages. One of them is Lord Buddha, who is said to have attained enlightenment under a tree in Gaya, Bihar. Adiga expresses his sarcasm over the current condition of streets in Bihar through Balram, who writes: “I wonder if the Buddha walked through Laxmangarh – some people say he did. My own feeling is that he run through it – as fast as he could - and got to the other side – and never back!”(18).

Aravind Adiga's attitude to poverty is similar to that of V. S. Naipaul, who directly expresses his intolerance against the deadly issue with multifaceted problem. After fifteen years, when he returns from Australia to India in 2003, he notices the vast desirable changes and he realizes that everything has changed except poverty. He also is wounded with the sights of the pathetic life of the poor in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in particular which stimulates him to ponder about the needy people in overall India.

In *The White Tiger*, Adiga brilliantly portrays the staggering life of the poor people of Bihar through the village, Laxmangarh where development and democracy are still part of oblivion. It lies deep in the dark dungeons of inequality and poverty. Both the authors focus the two places – Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, situated near the river side of Ganges which should exemplify the paradoxical situation in India, but the cities are mired in utter poverty while the coastal cities prosper. The writers expose the little-known dark under belly of modern India. They also opine that although Indian economy has grown steadily over the last two decades, its growth has been uneven when compared to the different social groups, the geographic regions and the rural and the urban areas.

The writers V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga make their point clear in the growing difference between the rich and the poor which is a problem that has been brewing for a long time. They find that on the one hand, India has millionaires and billionaires and on the other it has millions of people who struggle to earn their daily bread. V. S. Naipaul decries the fathom between rich and the poor in *An Area of Darkness* who says “. . . in Uttar Pradesh town . . . you might see the rich and very fat man in . . . clean white sitting in a cycle rickshaw being pedalled by a poor and very thin man, prematurely aged, in rags (76). The writer pays attention on the disparities between the haves and the have-nots and expose that the society is divided into a binary structure of two classes – the rich and the poor, in close orbits without ever colliding.

Aravind Adiga asserts in *The White Tiger* that “The dreams of rich and the dreams of poor – they never overlap, do they? See, the poor dream all their lives of getting enough to eat and looking like the rich. And what do the rich dream of? Losing weight . . . with all these late-night parties, all that drinking and munching, the rich tend to get fat in Delhi. So they walk to lose weight (225). Adiga analyses that in India, one group of people stand still without a penny and the other stand still not knowing the way to spend their pennies.

The authors probe the veracity of the ageless and everlasting issues of poverty which create infinite darkness among the poor and make them feel that they are destined to remain poor forever. It is the rich who have the economic and the political power that gives them the advantage to manipulate and control the poor, whereas the indigence of the poor leaves them with no choice other than to negotiate the socio-political exploitative situation.

Indian villages are the most affected areas by the poor-rich divisions. In villages, poverty has its multi-facets to crush and squeeze the needy people. Exploitation, one of the predominant factors gives them a precarious way of living. The grimace of exploitation is zamindari system, which is a dangerous power to suppress the underclass. V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga feel that exploiting the working class has been the national sin which is committed for centuries together.

The zamindari practice reflects the influence of the British who used Indians as slaves and exploited them. The authors find that the landlords use the same strategy of exploitation in extracting work from the poor peasants. There is no one to record the fact that the profits and the wealth of a land lord are made on the backs of these poor. The wealth and all the resources are owned by the landlords while the poor people are very weak in economic conditions and struggle to sustain themselves and their families. The financially weak labourers are under the thumb of the zamindars and are used as puppets.

In this system, poor people are denied their rights and their man power has been plundered for very low wages.

V. S. Naipaul focuses upon the tussle between the zamindars and the labourers. He expresses in *India: A Million Mutinies Now* that “The zamindars employed women for three rupees a day and men for five rupees a day. The minimum wage at that time was five rupees for women and nine [rupees] for men” (275). They suck their blood by giving hard manual works such as breaking stones in quarries, cattle grazing under scorching sun and building constructions etc., and leave their body as dross. They are forced to a depth that they sink lower and lower and cannot rise above. They have been pushed to such a deprived life, which makes them feel subhuman.

V. S. Naipaul in *India: A Wounded Civilization* describes the power of Mr. Patel, the landlord of a village in Bihar who is financially strong and so the villagers depend on him for financial help at the time of their need. Naipaul describes the prominence and power of Mr. Patel that he “. . . was the landowner in the village. He owned fifty good acres; and though he didn’t own people, the fate of whole families depended on the Patel. And to these people he was literally the master” (80). The author expresses that it is impossible for the poor people to escape from the ruthless clutches of these landlords.

In *The White Tiger*, Aravind Adiga through the protagonist Balram narrates clearly, how the poor people in his village Laxmangarh, are trapped and are exploited by the landlords. They are forced to work for subsistence wages in the lands of the landlords. Due to their monstrous nature, exploitative tendencies and the particularities of money appetite that has been detected in them, Balram calls the four landlords of the village as ‘Buffaloes’, ‘Storks’, ‘Wild boars’, and ‘Ravens’ who “fed on the village, and everything that grew in it, until there was nothing left for anyone else to feed on” . . . (26). These

animal names of the landlords reveal their animal traits that these individual possess.

Balram abominates the horror and enormities of these land lords and expresses that

The Stork was a fat man . . . owned the river . . . he took a cut of every catch of fish caught by every fisherman in the river, and to toll from every boat man who crossed the river to come to our village. His brother was called the Wild Boar. . . owned all the good agricultural land . . . If you wanted to work on those lands you had to bow down his feet, and touch the dust under his slippers and agree to swallow his day wages . . . The Raven owned the worst land, which was the dry rocky hill side around the fort, and took a cut from the goat herds that went up there to graze with their flocks . . . He had eaten up the rickshaws and the roads. So if you ran a rickshaw, or used the road you had to pay him his feed – one – third of whatever you earned, no less. (24-25)

The parasitic landlords adopt various malpractices to amass wealth by exploiting the poor. The poor farmers in extreme poverty are put under constant financial pressure and left with no option rather than to borrow money. Just as poverty forces them to borrow, it is his poverty again which forces him to have so little for paying off his debt. Farmers once caught by the money lender can rarely come out of their clutches. The author gives a vivid picture as to how the landlords confiscate the lands of the peasants who fall a prey to the hard-heartedness, greed, lechery, callousness, arrogance, hypocrisy and selfishness of the feudal landlords. Their ruthless behaviour and the land acquisition push the poor farmers into depletion and diminution.

V. S. Naipaul, in *India: A Wounded Civilization* quotes the painful tragedy of the atrocities against the farmers which was published in *Times of India*, on 2nd September, 1975 in which

The Maharashtra chief minister, Mr. S. B. Chavan, admitted . . . that he was aware of big landlords in the rural areas using the local police to driver poor peasants off their land, particularly during the harvest season.

Seemingly legal procedures were being used by the police and the landlords to accomplish this purpose . . . (76)

The man-made exploitative conditions such as oppressive agricultural indebtedness, land acquisition and administrative apathy towards issues concerning the farming community etc., are some of the factors that cause distress in the farmers' life. V. S. Naipaul in *India: A Wounded Civilization* brings the plight of the peasants and its terrible consequences by saying that “. . . the land, though bare, offering nothing or very little . . . people who had been squeezed out and had nowhere else to go, except . . . near the highway, close to the towns, exchanging nullity for nullity: people fleeing not only from landlessness but also from tyranny. . . (77). The confiscation or otherwise considered as land grabbing by landlords or money lenders change the farmers as refugees in their own mother land. They have no livelihood in their own villages and face the odd scuffle of basic needs and it drives them to adopt a nomadic way of life. The writer highlights how land grabbing undermines human rights and it stands as a cause of poverty alleviation. The writer challenges the readers to investigate the received definitions of land grabbing and ask questions about the role of the government. He strongly advises that each one must fight against any forceful land evictions and also build up a rural world which gives new perspectives for people to live in.

V. S. Naipaul's views project that the contributions by the farmers to a nation are blindly casted out and they lose their identity. The cultivators should be given utmost importance. People should realize that a nation will be shaken by drought when peasants

are ignored. V. S. Naipaul demands due importance, if not the extinction of the farmers and farming is unfortunately not very far from the surface of India.

In some extreme cases when borrowers are unable to return the debt, the landlords never hesitate to take their children as bonded labourers. V. S. Naipaul indicates in *India: A Wounded Civilization* that “a boy seized by a village money lender for an unpaid debt of 150 rupees, fifteen dollars, and used a slave for four years” (37). Child must be nurtured with care and affection within the family and society. But unfortunately due to socio-economic and cultural problems, the code of child-centeredness is replaced by deprivations particularly in poverty affected sections of the society. Bilal Ahmad Bhat, in the article “Gender, Education and Child Labour: A Sociological Perspective” quotes the words of Homer Folks, the chairman of the U.S. National Child Labour Committee who says that “. . . the term child labour is generally used to refer any work by children that interfere with their full physical and mental development” (324).

In *The White Tiger*, Aravind Adiga narrates how Balram as a child, is highly wounded by the local landlords when their family fails to repay the borrowed money from them. The marriage of Balram’s cousin Reena pushes his family into a world of misery. His whole family gets screwed with a large dowry, which they cannot afford. Balram highlights the plight of the bride’s family by writing that “. . . we were the girl’s family, we were screwed. We had to give the boy a new bicycle, and cash, and a silver bracelet . . . (36). To fulfill the dowry demands, the family takes a loan from the village landlord and become a bunch of slaves.

In the marriage incident, Aravind Adiga pinpoints another glaring error that marriage is a celebration but it is being maligned in India by the convention of dowry which plays a crucial role to deepen the wretchedness of the pathetic people. In India,

there is a social pressure to make marriage extravagant. Hence they borrow for this social reason which is questionably heavy but socially demanded expenses.

Marriages get such families indebted because of borrowing which in turn ruins their lives especially in the case of Balram. He is compelled to drop his education even though he is brilliant and is sent to a tea shop as an employee to bear the debts of his family. He says that “The family had taken a big loan from the stork . . . Now the stork has called his loan. He wanted all the family members working for him . . . he had seen me in school . . . They had to hand me over too. I was taken to the tea shop” (37). Children who work are not only the subject to the strains and hazards of the labour, but are also denied the education that could enable them to escape the poverty trap. Education is fundamental human right and a major element of human and economic development of a nation. It strengthens personal integrity and shapes the societies in which one lives. But the child labour system mutilates the literacy ratio of the country.

V. S. Naipaul regrets the fact that these poor children are denied normal social interaction, personal development and emotional support from their family. It is obvious that their childhood is stolen. With a heavy heart, he pays a close attention to the hardships of the child labourers and deals with the repression of the fragile hands. He stresses that the conditions in which the children work are completely unregulated and they are often made to work without food and very low wages, resembling situations of slavery. V. S. Naipaul, in *India: A Wounded Civilization*, portrays the deplorable fact by narrating that “In the morning in the rain I saw young child labourers using their hands alone to shovel gravel on to a waterlogged path. Groundnuts were the only source of protein here; but the peasants preferred to sell

their crop; and their children were stunted, their minds deformed . . .” (25). The poor farmers have small-sized cultivated lands cease them to be economical as well as the yield from the land becomes insufficient for the family maintenance which create starvation and hunger in their life. The inadequacy of food or a poor diet causes physical as well as mental retardation in particular to their children which distort them from the normal way of healthy living.

Since child labour is a serious issue, V. S. Naipaul reasons out that the increasing gap between the rich and the poor adversely affects the children more than any other group. Even though child labour is against the law and constitution, the landlords exploit the children. His description of the prevalent practice of child labour indicates how laws continue to be flouted by the rich and the powerful. The plights of the weaker and the downtrodden sections persuade them to accept the bitter truth that they don't have any option except agreeing child labour of their own children. With perturbation, the poverty-stricken are forced to endure their exploitation as normal. The author in *India: A Wounded Civilization* very sorely records that

In the village I went, only one family out of four had land; only one child out of four went to school; only one man out of four had work. For a wage calculated to keep him only in food for the day he worked . . . and children, being cheaper than men, were preferred . . . Children were a source of wealth, available for hire after their eighth year for, if times were good, fifteen rupees, a dollar fifty, a month. (18)

V. S. Naipaul's hopelessness increases with the sight of the children employed as cheap labourers. The children are required to perform grueling and physically demanding tasks and in return receive only meagre wages. This social evil is hard to

monitor as it is the desperation to keep the fires in their homes running that prompt the parents to send their kids for such hard and heartless toil. Children are preferred to adult workers because they are submissive and low paid. Immature and inexperienced child labourers are completely unaware of risks involved in their work. In *The White Tiger*, Balram says about the ruthless behaviour of his master that

Whenever he saw me loafing around a table or pretending to be doing a spot of wiping . . . he would shout, ‘you thug!’ then jump down from his seat, chase me around the tea shop with the ladle he had been using to stir the sugar, and whack me on the head with it. The burning syrup singed me wherever the ladle touched, and left a series of spots on my ears . . . (52)

The unfortunate children are deprived of their joyful childhood and are forced to face the reality of adulthood. In Aravind Adiga’s work *Between the Assassinations*, Ziauddin, a twelve year old Muslim boy is from a poor family and works in a tea stall in a railway station. The poverty compels the small boy to work and he develops a sense of isolation from the society. To shoulder the burden of his family, he struggles like an adult for his survival. In his village, he “. . . was going to do his duty to his family and work alongside his father and mother and brothers. Weeding or sowing or harvesting in some rich man’s field for a few rupees a day” (6) to tackle their impoverishment. The poor parents subject their wards to child labour so as to be the main or supplemental contributors to family income. They see their child as an additional resource for income generation.

Aravind Adiga says that it is a little different with regard to a girl child whose labour goes unrecognized because home based work is seen as an unskilled nature with

low status. Through the character of Jayamma in *Between the Assassinations*, the author makes a little documentation on the girl child labour which is seen as an evidence of the invisibility of her labour, though she contributes widely to the family, community and the society at large. Jayamma confronts a horrible life when she turns as a child labourer. Due to her family circumstances, from the age of ten, she started to travel from one town to another to work as a domestic servant. The writer disdainfully records that “. . . she’d been put on one bus or the other . . . to cook and clean in someone else’s house. To feed and fatten someone else’s children . . . She wasn’t even told where she’d be going next . . .” (158). The toilsome domestic works change her life nomadic and hellacious. Through Jayamma and Ziauddin, Adiga reveals the pathetic picture of Indian poverty that makes one think on the fate of such child labourers.

The negligence of the parents due to poverty also creates duskiness among the poor children. The poor parents give birth to the child, but their impoverishment force them deviate from their parental-responsibilities. They ignore the childrens’ social and emotional needs. Balram in *The White Tiger* says “. . . people in the darkness . . . have eight, nine, ten children- sometimes they don’t know the names of own children” (164). In the poverty-stricken society, young kids are given no formal names. His name ‘Balram’ has a hidden and a pathetic story. Initially, he does not have any proper name by which one can address him. He is simply called ‘munna’. Neither the mother nor the father is concerned about his name. The education inspector in his school asks “Didn’t your mother name you? (13)”. Balram reports that “she’s very ill sir. She lies in bed and spews blood. She’s got no time to name me (13). Then he asks about his

father. Balram says “He’s a rickshaw puller. He’s got no time to name me” (13). It is the school teacher who names him Balram and marks his age in the school ledger.

The menace of addiction among the poor parents is also a cause of miserable life of the children. In Aravind Adiga’s *Between the Assassinations*, the children’s Soumya and Raju are out in the streets to beg, since their father, Ramachandra is an unskilled worker and also a smack addict. Adiga picturizes the unimaginable condition of the children that they are sent by their irresponsible father to do the horrible job of begging, not only to lead their livelihood but also to meet his illegal demands. The children face an arduous day without food. When Soumya begs for alms, she says

Uncle, have pity, I am starving ...

Mother, I am hungry (rubbing her tummy),’

give me food’ . . . Big Brother, I’m hungry’

‘Grandpa, even a small coin would ’ . . . (145)

After begging, the hapless children Soumya and Raju approach the people who sell drugs and give them the money to buy the smack for their father. The children are too innocent to give their hard earned money instead of getting something to eat for them and struggle to confront the atrocious life. The pitiable children love their parents and worry about them and yet feel hurt that their parents do not love them enough to stop using substances. If the parent does not earn enough for the family, the children suffer by the economic consequences. As in the case of Soumya and Raju, their youth is filled with pain and fear and they are powerless to change things. As a whole it can be stated as the massacre of the innocence.

Himanshi Dawan, in the article “Changes to Child Labour Law Contradict Governments Make in India, Digital India and Smart Cities Mission” states the views of the Nobel Prize winner Kailash Satyarthi, a child rights activist, who says that

[Government law] has covered some miles but we have not reached the destination yet. These welfare laws are not amended every day. The original law was brought in 1986 after a long struggle and at the time socio-economic arguments like poverty were given in defence of child labour. We are repeating the same arguments to further victimize the child. We need to outlaw child labour completely and not in a piecemeal manner. We have lost three generations of children. It is ironical that the land of Buddha and Gandhi has decided to look at children through the commercial lens and to take away their divine right to childhood. (10)

Child labour is a barbaric practice and hence eliminating is a moral imperative that Indians can no longer ignore. Aravind Adiga and V. S. Naipaul explore and expose the disturbing scenario of child labour. They express their strong disapproval of it and bring out the deplorable conditions of these charred blooms to indicate the appalling life of the poor children. It is cosmically accepted that children are considered as the most valuable asset for a nation and its development. But the fundamental rights of a child such as survival, protection and development are grossly denied to a child labourer. They are condemned to a life of poverty, illiteracy and prolonged misery with no end in sight.

This problem continues as an irremovable flaw to plague the nation. It is not that the efforts have not been made to do away with this malady, but lack of uniformity in legislations and other anomalies which leave this field open for exploitation to perpetuate child labour. The descriptions of V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga about the child labourers insist that no child's childhood is to be destroyed. Child labour is a complex problem that is basically rooted in poverty. Without eradicating poverty, it cannot be abolished. So through the works, the writers in a way compel the individuals to turn the spot light on this

forgotten issue and its gravest cruelties. It is the moral right of every citizen to raise a voice against it.

All the desperate and unendurable conditions make the sympathetic people decide to abandon their place for better future. To encounter the poverty and the oppressive conditions, the suppressed masses move from the rural darkness to the light of the developed cities in hope of bright and abstemious living standards. V. S. Naipaul admits in *India: A Wounded Civilization* that “. . . every day 1500 more people, about 350 families, arrive in Bombay . . . They come mainly from the countryside . . .” (47) to get away from their penuriousness. Large scale of migration is fueled by economic necessity and aspiration for better life.

Aravind Adiga in *The White Tiger*, makes a similar reference of migration through his character, Balram. In his village, it is extreme poverty that pops up an ocular situation of migration of jobless youths. Balram narrates that

Each year, all the men in the village waited in a big group outside the shop. When the buses came, they got on – packing the inside, hanging from the railings, climbing on to the roofs – and went to Gaya; there they went to the station and rushed into the trains – packing the inside, hanging from the railing climbing on to the roofs – and went to Delhi, Calcutta and Dhanbad to find work (26).

For the needy people, this shift, from village to city is the only remedy to avoid living under oppressive conditions and unpleasant economic environment of their villages which are filled with hopeless squalor. They mistakenly believe that the city life offers a wide arena of opportunities and facilities which would help them to escape misery. But they fail to think of the major drawbacks of living in large metropolises. The villagers like Balram go to the cities as complete strangers and are caught up in the urban melee.

V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga bring the clear differences between the city and the village life. City-life is fascinating and delightful. There are magnificent multi-storied buildings, glass paned skyscrapers, broad roads, multiplexes, electric lights and uses of advanced technologies etc. All these dazzle the eyes of new comers to the city. While entering Delhi, Balram is astonished with these developments and feels that life in village is indeed very basic and conditions are primitive where one faces difficulties in obtaining even the basic facilities such as medication and education.

Aravind Adiga highlights the luxuriousness of cities by stating that “. . . the cars of rich go like dark eggs down the roads of Delhi. Every now and then an egg will crack open – a woman’s hand dazzling with gold bangles, stretches out of an open window, flings an empty mineral water bottle on the road – and then window goes up, and the egg is released (134). The life of the village is so simple and plain but full of trials and tribulations.

Balram thinks that his home town, Laxmangarh, is a typical village of ‘darkness,’ which is opposed to the city of ‘light’. In his village, the poor live in their congested dilapidated shanties which are crowded around narrow lanes, with no light into their ill-ventilated houses. There is hardly any regularity in supply of electricity and so they stagger in the dark. In shops of the village, stale and back dated materials are sold. The village tea stall is also located in a place where pigs and stray dogs scatter and “the smell of dust, and sand, and pig shit would blow in the shop” (24). The world of the poor is surrounded by foul smell, abuse, suffering, torture, exploitation, dirt, heat and sweat.

V. S. Naipaul declares that the development of the nation has touched the people unequally. He expresses that there is a wide gap between the city and the village in the matter of amenities in life. He expresses his view in *An Area of Darkness* that “Indian villages: The narrow broken lanes with shine in the gutters, the choked back to back mud houses, the jumble of faith and food and animals and people, the baby in the dust, swollen

bellied black with flies, but wearing its good-luck amulet” (42). He is moved by witnessing the people, who instead of finding proper measures to develop their living status, simply believe in the ‘good-luck’ amulet which obviously shows their ignorance.

V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga dissect several lacunae in rural-urban lives and importune that the developed sectors or the cities and its beneficiaries, march towards greater progress and comforts and the ignored areas or villages and its suppressors sink deeper into the abyss. Providing the basic facilities, such as decent shelter, clean water, adequate sanitation, reliable health services, affordable medicines and proper road ways etc., to the citizens is one of the important responsibilities of a democratic country like India. But many of the poverty affected villages are neglected from the basic needs and the unfocussed villages still live in the Stone Age. Government declares that villages are the spinal cords of a nation, but it has been broken by the negligence of the same government. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam, in the book *Mission India: A vision for Indian Youth* writes about his vision on the development of village that

India’s heart has always lain in its villages – 70 percent of our people live there . . . Indian villages can no longer be poor and lacking facilities. They are to be transformed with the modern knowledge. The developed India will be a network of prosperous villages empowered by various connectivities: physical as well as virtual, telemedicine, tele education and e-commerce . . .

This attitude will lead to minimizing the rural – urban divide. (4)

Migrants hop from one place to another to get away from their wretchedness, but the opportunities are not as plentiful as they expect and continue their past miserable life in the new places. Aravind Adiga with poignant disgust admits that all-pervasive opulence of cities gives no solution for the suffering of poor and proves that wherever they move, these people struggle to liberate them from the clutches of poverty.

Balram's journey from Laxmangarh to Delhi and finally to Bangalore endorses the miserable life that the migrants undergo in the cities and proves that the socio-psychological conditions of the underclass remain unchanged. He notices the scummy and deplorable living style of poor migrated people. He says "Thousands of people live on the sides of the road in Delhi. They are from the Darkness . . . you can tell by their thin bodies, filthy faces, by the animal-like way they live under the huge bridges and over passes, making fires and washing and taking lice out of their hair while the cars roar past them . . ." (119-120). Finding accommodation is a predominant issue for the working class who shift from the villages. The pavement is reserved for the people to make their life more miserable. People have great difficulty in negotiating the uncaring hostile; hence the city continues to be the predicament of the rural poor. By witnessing the miserable life of the poor, Balram realizes that discrimination between the rich and the poor is not only in the village but Delhi is no exception to this discrimination and he concludes that they are still in the darkness

In *An Area of Darkness*, Naipaul provides information about a man named as Jivan who ". . . left his village to look for work in Bombay. He has no friends in the city and nowhere to go. He slept on the pavements . . . He earned fifty rupees a month. He did not look for lodging; he continued to sleep on that stretch of pavement . . . (51) as his shelter and also Naipaul states in *India: A Wounded Civilization* that "The poor are needed as hands, as labour; but the city was not built to accommodate them. One report says that 100,000 people sleep on the pavements of Bombay . . . Whatever the number, it is now felt that there are too many" (48). It is painful to see the gaps between the poor workers' ambition and the reality that they experience in their migratory existence.

Some of the rich masters refuse to provide proper housings to their workers. Servants who reside in their employer's house face a traumatizing experience. In Delhi,

when Balram is given the servant's quarters, he does not find it to be a safe and a comfortable home. He lives in rotten basements below the glass apartments of his masters which exposes a wide range of hazards. His disappointments begin there. He peevishly comments,

Who wants to live alone?' It was horrible, this room. The floor had not been finished, and was a cheap whitish plaster on the walls . . . There was a flimsy little bed, barely big enough even for me, and a mosquito net on top of it . . . The wall was covered with cockroaches . . . *Maybe everyone who lives in the city gets to be slow and stupid like this.* I thought, and went to sleep. (131)

The description gives an idea that servants are asked to sleep in a small room which seems to be deliberately designed to dehumanize them. This shows the unconcerned nature of the master. Balram makes a comment on how the masters callously ignore the plights of their servants. He says, "What blindness you people is capable of here. You are sitting in glass buildings and talking on the phone night after night to Americans who are thousands of miles away, but you don't have the faintest idea what's happening to the man who's driving the car" (257). The rich people live a contrasting lifestyle when compared to those living in the homeless shelters. They live in luxurious houses with all facilities and ignore people living in slums is what disheartens the distressed.

The poor people bear all the hardships of dislocation, isolation and vulnerability to unchain them from the suffocating web of poverty. Migrant workers' hopes and wishes go vain, when in the working areas, the poor migrant people are often abused by their rich masters. The humiliation is more horrible for them and at every stage they encounter the violation of human sensibility.

Aravind Adiga presents India as a place of brutal injustice where the rich only 'feel good' in 'shining India' and the poor are always dispossessed and victimized by their age-old enemies, the rich. They use and exploit the poor for their own selfish desires but never worry in the least about the welfare of the poor. V. S. Naipaul explains that in Bombay "there is a large area marked 'Mills Mills Mills'" (49) in which many workers are from villages. Having a job at the mill does not mean the workers have a better quality of life. The giant mills have created the monsters of capitalists who virtually suck the blood of the workers where sheer survival must be looked upon as a triumph and the will to live must be reckoned as strength.

The poor workers work for the rich and for the development of fast-forwarding India but their existence are poles apart. They use them as ladders to reach their destination after which they are neglected and are thrown to debris. Aravind Adiga in *The White Tiger* enunciates that "These people were building homes for the rich, but they lived in tents covered with blue tarpaulin sheets, and partitioned into lanes by lines of sewage" (260). One can never deny that the hard works of these poor men have never provided them a self-sufficient and peaceful life, but it promotes the wealth of the affluent. They remain poor not because they want to be so but they are kept to quench the rich man's thirst. They are most faceless, voiceless and invisible group in city's populace. The contributions of migrant workers to national income are enormous but there is little done in return for their security and well-being. There is an immediate need for solutions to transfer migration into a more dignified and rewarding opportunity.

Aravind Adiga exposes that the major difference of Indian societies is not of any other reason but money. He comments on the rising power of money that segregates the people as rich and poor or master and servant. Adiga gives his remarks about the 'dying city,' Mumbai in the novel *Last Man in Tower*. As he says "what is the definition of dying

city? . . . I will tell . . . as you don't know: a city that ceases to surprise you. And that is what this Bombay has become. Show people a little cash, and they'll jump" (39). Poverty is best understood not just as the unanticipated effect of national and global processes of economic change but as the intended result of class politics favouring the interest of the economic and political elites.

Aravind Adiga ironically gives names for the two different groups as 'big bellies' and 'small bellies' to show the bright and dark sides of India respectively. Big belly people or the rich eat up the share of the poor, yet the poor raise no voice against them. The city life makes Balram to conclude that ". . . these days there are just two castes: Men with big bellies and men with small bellies. And only two destinies: eat or get eaten up" (64). These words speak about being rich and the privilege, callousness and arrogance that comes with it; while men with small bellies have learnt to live with sorrow and agony. The country might have gained independence from the British but the majority of people is still trapped in darkness and has not attained their freedom.

With the rising prosperity and busy schedule of the rich, the need for domestic help is increasing and so is the class divide. When the rich are 'servant-dependent,' more men and women from the poorest end of the society walk into their lives and households. Aravind Adiga raises the existence of disparity between people for the simple reason that they are not born equal, as well as have unequal abilities and skillsets. In *Between the Assassinations*, George, the mosquito man who sprays the pesticides tries to establish a relationship with a rich lady, Mrs. Gomes. He slowly wins her confidence and becomes her part-time gardener then driver. George feels happy to see that Mrs. Gomes has become his good friend. His delusion is shattered soon when he comes to know that she still treats him like a servant. He understands and says that rich people ". . . just use us and throw us out. A rich . . . can never see a poor man as a man. Just as a servant" (208).

Aravind Adiga makes striking comments on the terrible and dolorous condition of the servants. The homes of the wealthy Indians are staffed by team of servants who cater to their masters' every need. Apart from Balram's duty as driver, he has to do all menial jobs like massaging the legs of his masters when they enjoy whisky in the sunshine, ferries them around Delhi with bags stuffed with millions of rupees to use as bribes, brings liquor and women for their pleasure, carries all the shopping bags as they came out of the malls, and also works such as washing utensils, sweeping the floors, cooking, and taking care of their pets. Even the dogs of the rich are treated better than the servants. Balram illustrates that

The rich expect their dogs to be treated like human . . . they expect their dogs to be pampered, and walked, and petted, and even washed! I got down on my knees and began scrubbing the dogs, and then lathering them, and foaming them and washing them down . . . and drying their skin. Then I took them around the compound on a chain while the king of Nepal . . . shouted, 'Don't pull the chain so hard! They're worth more than you . . .

(78)

Balram is treated worse than a dog when Ashok's brother, Mukesh asks him to get down on his knees and look for his lost one-rupee coin on the floor of the cars. He is castigated for losing a one-rupee coin. This behavior of the master, picturizes the stingy behavior of the rich and the insult Balram faces for not retrieving a rupee coin he lost while getting out of the car. Ashok is bothered about one-rupee coin after bribing someone with a million rupees. Out of frustration he says that "I got down on my knees and sniffed in between the mats like a dog, all in search of one rupee" (78). When he is in the village, as a boy he wished to become someone's servant, with a nice uniform, regular meals and a

monthly salary. But now, he is confronted by things he could not even imagine in the countryside.

Balram is hurt for his lack of English education. His master Ashok and his wife, Pinky madam for their amusement, they make Balram as a clown by wearing a red turban with dark cooling glass to serve the food on the occasion of Pinky madam's birthday. He suffers constant humiliation in the hands of his master and his wife with ever increasing menial duties. She goes to the extent of insulting Balram by addressing him as an uncivilized monkey. Verbal abuse is worse than physical abuse.

The mean-minded rich say the choicest of rude things. The rich try to diminish their poor servants by verbally abusing all the time. It wears down one's spirit and makes one depressed. The attitude that the poor are 'born to serve' can be viewed as a dehumanization problem. The effect is, it can diminish, shrink and lower one's consciousness. Balram consumes hatredness on his cunning and unkind master who derives pleasure in humiliating him and sets him up to take the rap for the crime committed by his wife. He is reminded of his father's longing that "All my life I have been treated like donkey. All I want is that one son of mine . . . should live like a man" (50). Like his father, Balram too, is treated as an animal and he detests this slavish life. People like Balram put in hard labour to earn their living but the attitude of the society forces them to believe that they are no more than an animal to his boss.

The suppressed class like Balram and many more find themselves trapped in constant mental pressures. They have to work under elite class regardless of their personal demands and satisfaction. Balram is degraded as a human being and deprived of the basic rights to enter a shopping mall just because he is a poor driver. Even walking into a shopping mall requires mustering up courage. This is his first taste of the fugitive's life. He reminisces one of the newspaper reports on the malls entitled 'Is there No Space for

the Poor in the Malls of new India?’ (148). The realistic portrayal fabricates the city as a peculiar site of unequal battle between the urban vice and rural ingeniousness. This is a world where the poor huddles beside fires fed by plastic while their masters shop in glass-enclosed malls that their servants are not allowed to enter. The affluent urbanites do not regard the poor as human beings with dignity.

Aravind Adiga records that India is like a zoo in which the masters behave as ring masters to control the pauper. V. S. Naipaul too records a similar view in *India: A Wounded Civilization* that “India was like a zoo because India was poor and cruel and had lost its way” (122). The idea brought by the writers’ shows that one is not aware of the cruelty behind ‘zoo.’ The captive animals in the zoo are deprived of everything that is important to them. As a result, they are unhappy and they risk their lives in desperate attempts to free themselves. The writers explain that the Indian condition is worse and pathetic as that of the ‘zoo’ animals.

V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga strike on Indian democratic ideal of equality that is being shattered by the inhuman relationship of master and servant. The novelists consider that a change of heart is necessary for recalling human values. The rich are too dazzled by luxuries and therefore they are unaware of the suffering of those who die from hunger and deprivation. They seem to have lost all moral and human values and they follow the materialistic ways and don’t understand the meaning of ideal human relationship based on selfless love.

The employers offer a false gesture of kindness and never hesitate to frame fake cases on their innocent employees. When a master is trapped in crimes such as accidents, hit and run cases or drink and drive, they unscrupulously use their servants as a substitute to escape from the accusation. The poor workers are made to write confessions of the crimes that they have not committed by them, but only to absolve their master’s blame.

In Aravind Adiga's, *Between the Assassinations*, a rich engineer who "... was drunk ... he hit the fellow like some stray dog, and drove away, leaving him there, with his guts out on the street" (123). The merciless rich man immediately frames a case on a poor man who works in his firm. The poor man is the engineer's scapegoat in the accident case since the sole aim of the workers is to appease their masters as they cope with a constant sense of insecurity and live with the fear of being fired for the smallest mistake.

The cruelty of the masters again touches its climax when Balram is persuaded to accept the blame of the car accident committed by his master's wife, Pinky. They influence his fine sensibility by stating that he too, is a part of Ashok's family. So he should be offered as a scapegoat to repay their kindness bestowed on him. He is asked to sign a paper prepared by Ashok's brother, Mukesh that contains his confession of the crime. But he fortunately escapes from the conspiracy because no complaint was lodged from the dead's relations, because they are too poor to launch protest against the wealthy master class. Balram feels that justice is not for the poor in India. Balram is saved, but bitterness crammed his mind. He starts seeking opportunities for liberation. Aravind Adiga conveys that wealth is completely tied in with political power and often to crime without punishment.

V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga infer that poverty fosters frustration, ill-feeling and a brooding sense of injustice. Law does not protect the poor. The writers highlight the solidarity of combats of the injustice and the exploitation. Aravind Adiga mentions in *The White Tiger* that "... the jails in Delhi are full of drivers who are there behind bars because they are taking the blame for their ... masters. We have left the villages, but the masters still own us, body, soul and arse" (169). The poor have no access to legal assistance which results in the migrants being poor forever. Poverty is a lack of hope. It becomes a network

of disadvantages. As a result, generation after generation, the poor are the most vulnerable in economic oppression and they are powerless to improve their circumstances.

V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga establish that though the cities provide ample job opportunities to the underclass; they are still entrapped in the same standard of living, since the life style and the behaviour of the upper class is identical everywhere, be it landlord, bureaucrats, upper caste people, politicians, rich men, industrialist or entrepreneurs. The pathetic environment of the deprived people, make them endure all the heinousness hardships to lead a decent life. The poor workers continue to do their work as, it is the need to survive and not the promise of comfort or wealth. Ultimately it contorts and distorts the person and makes them reel under poverty. These misfortunate groups are inseparable from tears as V. S. Naipaul writes in *An Area of Darkness* that “This is poverty, our special poverty, and how sad it is! Poverty is not as an urge to anger or improving action, but poverty as an inexhaustible source of tears . . .” (41).

Aravind Adiga equalizes the hopeless survival to death and records his thoughts as “To live under some concrete bridge, begging for their food and without a hope for the future, that’s not much better than being died” (214). The writer vehemently condemns the social system in India which fails to lift the living condition of poor people when they are alive, but does it after their death in the funeral procession by spraying the perfumes, covering their body with silk or cotton clothes and with rose-garlands and feed them milk and rice which actually goes vain. Balram says about his mother’s death that “My mother’s body had been wrapped from head to toe in a saffron silk cloth, which was covered in rose petals and jasmine garlands. I don’t think she had ever had such a fine thing to wear in her life. Her death was so grand that I knew, all at once that her life must have been miserable” (16).

Aravind Adiga cleverly projects the vast difference between the dominant and dominated group through the soft and hard skins of a rich and a poor man. In the novel *The White Tiger*, he narrates that

A rich man's body is like a premium cotton pillow, white and soft and blank. *Ours* are different. My father's spine was a knotted rope, the kind that women use in villages to pull water from wells; the clavicle curved around his neck in high relief, like a dog's collar cuts and nicks and scars, like little whip marks in his flesh ran down his chest and waist reaching down below his hip bones in to his buttocks. The story of a poor man's life is written on his body, in a sharp pen. (26)

It is disconcerting that things have changed so little for the Indian poor in the space of so many years. The poor are deprived, abused and hated for their low status, but they are expected to be honest at any cost. In India, the rich masters expect their servants to be dedicated like Ram's bhakt, Hanuman but in turn they don't act like the master of Hanuman, Lord Ram. Balram propounds,

Do you know about Hanuman, sir? He was the faithful servant of the god Rama, and we worship him in our temples because he is a shining example of how to serve your masters with absolute fidelity, love, and devotion.

These are the kinds of gods they have foisted on us now, how hard it is for a man to win his freedom in India. (19)

V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga observes that a poor Indian can never get rid of the slavery existence and pauperization till their death, because Indian people are not ready for revolution and most of them have accepted their servitude as the only condition of survival. The age-old slave-like mentality of underprivileged is the cause of their poverty and oppression. Adiga says they "exist in perpetual servitude . . . so strong that

you put the key of . . . emancipation in a man's hand and he will throw it back at you with a curse" (176). The same view is projected by V. S. Naipaul in his *An Area of Darkness* where he discusses the 'defeatist mentality' of Indians that they have become habitual of digesting one defeat after another. Indians have allowed themselves to be ruled and dominated since long. They are not free even in free India.

The authors skillfully reveal the psychology of people who are born in a poor family who despite their loyalty, are victims of servile attitude towards their masters. They are unable to come out of the mental block of being a servant. Due to the slavish attitude, instead of thrashing the debacles and the enslavements, people lead a passive life. Aravind Adiga gives similar views of the renowned Urdu poet, Iqbal who talks about the mental make-up of the slaves that "*They remain slaves because they can't see what is beautiful in this world*" (40). Neeru Tandon highlights the statement of American Anthropologist, Oscar Lewis in the article "The Theme of Poverty in the 21st Century Indian English Novel with Special reference to Kiran Desai, Kamala Markandeya and Aravind Adiga" who says that "The poor realize that they have a marginal position within a highly stratified and individualistic capitalistic society, which does not offer them any prospect for upward mobility. In order to survive, the poor have to develop their own institutions and agencies because the larger society tends to ignore and bypass them" (51).

The unadorned and the miserable condition of the millions of subalterns is well depicted by the authors using the imagery of the 'rooster coop' where the chickens are stuffed tightly in the wire mesh cages in the butcher shop, awaiting to be slaughtered. They are terrified by the blood and the body parts of their brethren but it dares to escape. Aravind Adiga's expression of the 'rooster coop' through the words of Balram is that

Go to Delhi behind the Jama Masjid and look at the way they keep chickens there in the market. Hundreds of pale hens and brightly coloured

roosters, stuffed tightly into wire – mesh cages, packed as tightly as worms in a belly, peeking each other and shitting, on each other. Jostling just for breathing space; the whole cage giving off a horrible stench – the stench of terrified, feathered flesh. On the wooden desk above this coop sits a grinning young butcher, showing off the flesh and organs of a recently chopped-up chicken, still oleaginous with a coating of dark blood. The roosters in the coop smell the blood from above. They see the organs of their brothers lying around them. They know they're next. Yet they do not rebel. They do not try to get out of the coop. The very same thing is done with human beings in this country. (173)

The same view of living shadow of darkness is well projected by V.S. Naipaul in *India: A Million Mutinies Now* who narrates that

People could be made by the condition in which they lived. Animals could be made by the conditions in which they were reared: as chickens . . . reared in a small cage, found it impossible to walk when they were released, and half hoped, half flew, as they had done in their cage. So people who lived in the little spaces of Bombay dwellings got used to the communal life of those spaces; got used to the communal life, life of privacy emotionally disturbing. (70)

The writers give the exact and poignant living condition of the poor that the downtrodden and the poor people are stuffed in the cage like chicks and live under the gallows. These victims do not have the power to break this deadlock. They believe themselves in the state of bondage, from which they do not expect to be relieved due to hegemonial power which control them. But, unless impoverished people dream for betterment and freedom, no change or improvement is possible.

The protagonist, Balram is highly affected by the social structure, but he has not accustomed himself to live in the rooster coop and so wants to change his future and destiny. Balram is not a passive sufferer like others, but actively produces the counter power. He is rare and eccentric like the ferocious animal, white tiger which is very uncommon and which originates once in a generation. He makes bold efforts to cross the boundary marks which are drawn by the ruling class. The norms of loyalty and sincerity start to breakdown when the capitalist relations replace the tradition of trust, respect and loyalty. Humanity is betrayed by materialistic notions. It is Balram who says “. . . trustworthiness of servants which is the basis of the entire Indian economy” (175). In a desperate attempt to escape his self-destructive fate, Balram makes a giant leap of faith and ends up inventing new kind of mortality for himself which allows him to grow beyond what the Indian social structure may permit a man of his background.

According to Balram, an individual’s brave action is the key to come out from the enslavement and realizes that by breaking the ‘rooster coop,’ he can put an end to his poverty. He says “I think the Rooster Coop needs people like me to break out of it” (320). Beena Agarwal in the article “Adiga’s *The White Tiger*: The Twilight of Two Indias” quotes the words of Hatterr, who comments “All impossible are probable in India” (56). Balram to liberate himself from the bondage, perceives that it is the right time for a revolution and he gains the courage to break his slavery line drawn by his masters. He finds it possible only by murdering his master Ashok. Simultaneously, if anyone thinks to protest against their masters by breaking the ‘rooster coop,’ they must prepare themselves to tolerate all the breaking repercussions. He says that “. . . can man break out of the coop? The answer . . . is only a man who is prepared to see his family destroyed – hunted, beaten, and burned alive by the masters – can break out of the coop. That would take no normal human being, but a freak, a pervert of nature” (176).

Balram does not even look back to his family, because he knows his family has to pay the retribution of his crime. One day, in the newspaper he reads the death of all seventeen members in a family in Laxmangarh and stoically accepted it to be his own. He finally deserts everything and justifies his function as a ‘white tiger’. Simmi Gurwara establishes the fact in the article “Aravind Adiga’s *The White Tiger*: A Study in Social Criticism” that Balram “. . . is a white tiger who neither has a family nor friendship . . .” (168).

The illimitable humiliations of servants figure into the complex of causes that develop enmity on their masters which turns into violence to escape from the oppression that relentlessly threatens their aspirations for livelihood and manhood. Balram kills his master Ashok and breaks the rooster coop, gaining power and freedom from the domineering clutches of his masters. He declares “I’ve made it! – I’ve broken the Coop!”(320). In the merciless society, though Balram lives an honest life by being loyal to his masters, his good qualities don’t take him anywhere; rather it makes him a sufferer and finally turns him a pervert. He learns the aesthetics of violence to save his mind and spirit from the loss of oblivion. The unbearable misery changes a man who is a rustic innocent into an opportunist, selfish being and finally a murderer.

Balram tries to justify his act of murder by blaming the social structure and declares the murder as a social justice and class welfare. He does not repent nor pays a second thought to this venial crime, because it is necessary for his liberation. Devika Khanna Narula, in the article “A View from the ‘Down-Under’: The ‘Discourse’ of *The White Tiger*” enunciates that “. . . Balram Halwai has the temerity to learn . . . the effective trickery and emotionless amorality that are shown to be essential to climb socially and politically in life” (174). Aravind Adiga declares poverty is the true cause of breaking laws and plays as a crucial tool to create monsters in the society. Through the horrible murder,

Adiga not only portrays the reality that criminals are created by the inequality but also gives a warning call to the dominating groups. If the rich masters do not change their barbarity, it may give birth too many Balrams which is perilous to the nation.

Meenakshi Choubey in the article “The New Morality in *The White Tiger*” quotes the words of Bhagabat Nayak who says

A desperate man becomes violent and aggressive when his freedom is endangered . . . Balram’s journey from Laxmangarh to the light of Bangalore makes him an odyssean protagonist for his loyalty, commitment, sincerity, endurance and spirit of freedom. One can call him a cold-blooded monster from the land of Buddah but he is the one who does not accept his fate, rather he defines it to his fellow beings who are still asleep in the darkness. (192)

Aravind Adiga expects a society based on the principles of equality and justice. Naipaul records his anxiety in *An Area of Darkness* that “The poverty of the Indian streets and the country side was an affront and a threat, a scratching at my old neurosis” (9). The overall portrayal of the authors speaks volumes of oppression against the lower strata of society by financially powerful men. They also show the means by which a small minority subjugates the majority.

Change never comes on its own in the society; it has to be brought by creating awareness and realization among the masses. V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga with their writings reveal the irksome realities in the life of the downtrodden and create awareness of the role of human beings in shaping their destiny. They stress upon the desirability of social justice and radical reorganization. The authors’ outlook is very much an effective way to change the world or system through realization.

V. S. Naipaul's ground reports from the various poverty affected zones are very effective to illustrate the real vision of Indian poverty. Aravind Adiga's works also travel in the same path of Naipaul and give a detailed account of perpetual suffering of the forgotten people. The two sublime authors stress the motto that, to break this slavery existence, the suppressed people must have awareness and courage to revolt against the dominating groups. Naipaul condemns that people run away from the responsibility in the name of difficulty and neglect the blush of defeat on their faces. Aravind Adiga also pinpoints the ineffective attitude of people in *The White Tiger* that

People in this country are still waiting for the war of their freedom to come from somewhere else – from the jungles, from the mountains, from China, from Pakistan – that will never happen . . . Your revolutions sit in the pit of your belly, young Indian. Crap it out, and read. Instead of which they're all sitting in front of colour TVs and watching cricket and shampoo advertisements . . .” (304)

The authors renew the energy of the slumbering people to find all the possible solutions to uproot their painful existence. To them awareness is the most significant remedy for that societal problems. They want to awaken the exploited, suppressed, and dehumanized classes of the society. M.S. Wankhede, in the article “Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*: A Histography of Indian Culture and Society” quotes the words of Ambedkar who says that “revolt and rebellion against the Establish order is a natural part of the history of the poor in all countries of the world” (136). The writers are highly affected by the desire to get rid of extreme poverty from India, the incredible nation. Every statement of the authors draws the readers into mind-numbing and compels them to think about the emotional and psychological state of the lower class people. They prove that unless the

economic equality is achieved, the country's rapid progress in science, technology and other fields is meaningless.

To eradicate the impoverishment from India, it requires sustained and concrete efforts from all the directions to address all these social issues which elevate the poverty. The writings of V. S. Naipaul and Aravind Adiga are the wake up call to the Indians of the heart of India's darkness to take the initiative, to shed their weakness and to grab their share. Only then, there can be a healthy society and progressive India. Their works are the paramount importance to realize that the invisible boundaries, lie upon the poor and try to liberate them to the new horizon of equality and prosperity.

The prominent writers convey a clear message to the poor and the underprivileged that those who have a slave-like existence should join their hands and must destroy their humdrum life. Their works provide a reminder that this is the hour of revolution and if people do not pay heed to it, there is no surprise that undoubtedly, India will have poverty as an undefeatable challenge.

Although various systematic efforts have been made by government to alleviate poverty over the past six decades, the shallowness of government policies is another thing for the poor people to stay as poor. Most of the policies announced for the upliftment of the poor do not reach them in time. There is a chasm between targets and achievements. Benefits of the government schemes are frittered away owing to improper implementation and the illegal attitudes of public servants. Most of the times, poor people are not aware of their rights which is taken as an advantage by government officers who utilize their ignorance and enjoy their profits. Hence, poverty reduction remains mystery and incurable.

The crying voice of poor goes invisible. Unless people create hope and confidence in the future for every Indian, India's progress will not be sustainable. This is an onerous

responsibility of every one in general and youth in particular. To reach the goal of poverty eradication, people should instinct courage, confidence, discipline, honesty, sacrifice and hard work. Jawaharlal Nehru in his magnum opus *The Discovery of India* quotes the words of Mahatma Gandhi who says that “I shall work for . . . India in which the poorest shall feel that it is their country, in whose making they have an effective voice . . .” (398). The words of the father of nation implies that poverty reduction is not the work of one economist, sociologist or a writer; rather each one should contribute in their own way in combating poverty.