

## CHAPTER - V

## CONCLUSION

## CHAPTER – 5

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Recent years have witnessed a large number of Indian English fiction writers who have stunned the literary world with their works. The topics dealt with are contemporary and populist and the English is functional, communicative and unpretentious. Novels have always served as a guide, a beacon in a conflicting, chaotic world and continue to do so. A careful study of Indian English fiction writers show that there are two kinds of writers who contribute to the genre of novels: The first group of writers include those who are global Indians, writers, who are Indians by birth but have lived abroad, so they see Indian problems and reality objectively. The second groups of writers are those born and brought up in India and are exposed to the attitudes, morale and values of the society. Hence their works focus on the various social problems of India like unemployment, poverty, class discrimination, social dogmas, rigid religious norms, inter caste marriages, plight of women etc.

Lately the Indian novelists have shifted from rural to metro India, which is the living soul of the country. In this sequence, the Booker prize winner Aravind Adiga's works *The White Tiger*, *Between the Assassinations* and *Last Man in Tower* are the reflection of the black spots of the real India. *The White Tiger* is the first debut published in 2008 and won the 40<sup>th</sup> Man Booker Prize in the same year. Adiga has carved his name in the galaxy of eminent Indian novelists writing in English today as a writer of marvelous skills.

Adiga's novels are an attempt to catch the voice of the India. According to Adiga, the aim of his works is to capture the unspoken voice of the people from darkness and from the impoverished areas of rural India. The novel *The White Tiger* provides a dark humorous

perspective of India through a fair epistolary form. Balram's seven part letter becomes a fatal weapon and a shocking instrument in Adiga's hands to explore the miserable social issues of India.

The protagonist Balram exposes the rot in the three pillars of modern India. The secrets of success in a modern world have been summed up in the last section of the novel. Murder, manipulation, malpractices, opportunism, bribery, absconding from police and judicial proceedings – all are justified for success. Balram says “A school where you won't be allowed to corrupt any ones head with prayers and stories about God and Gandhi nothing but the facts of life for these kids. A school full of White Tigers” (319).

The novel is considered as a socialist manifesto that tries to dismantle the discrimination between the 'Big Bellies and Small Bellies' (64) and evolve an egalitarian society. Balram's letter to the Prime Minister of China is like the confession of a Catholic penitent to his priest, to save one from the sin committed. He does not seek absolution for any crime he has committed. He uses himself as an example to let the premier know the facts of life in modern day India that bribery and corruption are the catalyst of the great economic miracle of India, wheels that are still being turned by slave labourers.

Balram Halwai is a member of the invisible Indian underclass. Krishna Singh in the article “Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*: The voice of the Underclass” quotes the words of Adiga who says about his protagonist Balram:

Balram Halwai is a composite of various men I've met when traveling through India. I spend a lot of my time loitering about train stations, or bus stands, or servants' quarters and slums, and I listen and talk to the people around me. There is a kind of continuous murmur or growl beneath middle-class life in India, and

this noise never gets recorded, Balram is what you'd hear if one day the drain and faucets in your house started talking. (90)

This novel gives detailed accounts of the Indian society rural as well as urban, and its various facets. It explores all the dark sides of India. The journey of Balram from Laxmangarh to Delhi, and finally in Bangalore, proves Adiga's exploring the dark sights in the society.

The dark sights include the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor in both rural and urban areas, the brutal reality of an economic system, political culture of India, voting behaviour, social milieu, caste and culture conflicts, superstitious believes, social taboos, exploitation of underclass, zamindary practice, unemployment especially in rural India, prostitution, master-servant relationship, nexus between the politicians, criminals, police, mockery of educational system, hollowness of government schemes, poor medical services, harmful impacts of Westernization etc are well portrayed in the novel. The novel examines the major social issues like poverty, corruption, caste, religious and cultural conflicts in India.

Throughout the book, there are references as to how Balram is very different from those in his home environment. He is referred to as 'the white tiger'. A white tiger symbolizes power and strength. It is also a symbol of freedom and individuality. Balram is seen as different from those he grew up with. He is the one who got out of the darkness and found his way into the light. Krishna Singh in the article "Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*: The tale of two Indias" quotes the words of Deirdre Donahue, Lee Thomas and Sudir Apte respectively. Deirdre considers the novel as one of the most powerful books she has read in decades with, "No hyperbole ... an amazing and angry novel about injustice and power" (90). Lee Thomas says "Adiga's first novel *The White Tiger*, delivers an indomitable central character and an India bristling with economic possibility, competing loyalties and class struggle" (90). Sudheer Apte

finds the most enjoyable part of the novel is “ richly observed world of have-nots in India...with his keen observation and sharp writing Adiga takes us into Balram Halwai’s mind, whether we want or not” (90).

Adiga successfully highlights the subaltern issue in the novel and brings the idea that in the story of India’s progress the role of the underclass is important. This novel is about a man’s quest for freedom. Balram, the protagonist in the novel climbs up the social ladder, works his way out of his low social caste and overcomes the social obstacles that limit his family in the past.

Balram talks about how he is under the hegemonial power and how he breaks his boundary line to liberate himself. The novel is an account of his journey to find his freedom in India’s modern day capitalist society. Towards the beginning of the novel, Balram cites a poem from the Muslim poet, Iqbal where he talks about slaves and says “They remain slaves because they can’t see what is beautiful in this world” (311). Balram sees himself embodying the poem and being the one who sees the world and takes it as he rises through the ranks of society, and finds his freedom.

Balram is born to the low caste in India. It means that he did not have things that one normally would have. As a child, Balram is seen as an intelligent child. However, growing up, he is exposed into a lot of corruption and immoral behaviour. He ends up, one can do anything to get himself into a higher caste and into the light. Balram becomes very selfish, cunning, and does all the malpractices to achieve his aim. This is amply evident for progress of an individual in the way of offence.

The novel shows a modern day, capitalist Indian society. It also shows how it can create economic division. The novel, *The White Tiger* portrays India’s society as negative towards the

lower social caste. Balram refers to it as the 'Darkness'. When Balram is asked which caste he is from, he knows that it could ultimately cause a biased stance in his employer and determine the future of his employment. *The White Tiger* shows how economic system today creates socio-economic gaps that create a big division in society. It limits opportunity, social mobility, health, and other rights and pleasures that should be given to all. There is a big difference in the amount of money spread around in the society today.

The author mentions the rooster coop when he describes the situation or characteristics of the servant class in India. Adiga compares India's poverty to a rooster coop. In the coop, the chickens are stuffed where they struggle to be alive. However the chickens do not try to escape from the poor-constructed cage. The author compares those chickens to the poor people who lead a miserable life in India. Adiga says "The very same thing is done with human beings in this country" (173). From his analysis of the structure of the inequality in the country, the author comes to believe that liability for the suffering of the servant also lies with the mentality of the servant class, which he refers as perpetual servitude. According to his philosophy, individual action is the key to break out of the rooster coop.

Adiga discusses India's caste system. The caste system in India is a social system that divides the Indian population into higher and lower social classes. Although it is said to be disappearing in urban India, the caste system still remains in rural India. The caste determines an individual's occupation. Balram gives his own breakdown of the caste system in India. Balram is a rare exception, as he experiences both sides of the caste system and manages to move up the social ladder.

Balram educates the Chinese Premier throughout his letters about the corruption and immoral ways of India and its economic gap. He presents the sketch of the Indian democracy.

The future of the Indian democracy depends on the practices of those who are the voices of darkness. The socialist who stands the boss of darkness is the impeding peril for the edifice of democracy. There is a triumph of murder, bribery, nepotism, rape and treachery against Gandhiji's formula of non-violence. Balram presents the horrible scene of the crime and corruption. He states

You see – a total of ninety-three criminal cases – for murders, rape, grand larceny- gun smuggling, pimping and many other such minor offences are pending are against the great socialist and his ministers at the present time . . . The Great socialist himself is said to have embezzled one billion rupees from the darkness and transferred that money into the bank account in a small beautiful country in Europe full of white people and black money. (98)

Balram's quest to become an entrepreneur shows the domination of the lower caste system and the superiority of the upper caste. He tells the story of political and economic corruption. He shows how bribe helps to cover up murders committed by people of higher class, harm political opponents by rigging votes and money, and have privileges such as shopping in a mall specifically for those of high social and economic importance. He also shows the side of India in which those who are born into poverty and low castes may forever remain.

The protagonist Balram Halwai is the representative for all downtrodden. He has multifactes like, the white tiger, servant, philosopher, entrepreneur, and murderer. Adiga's *The White Tiger* awakens the citizens of India. It is not mere fiction, but it gives the actual fact about India. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Charles Dickens portrayed the wrongness of the British government and succeeded in changing England as a better society. Adiga is also trying to do the same to bring about the desired change in India.

The achievement of this novel is that it stimulates the readers to eradicate all social problems of India. Through the story, the novelist has not only sensitized people towards the growing discontents among the have-nots but also warns them against the repercussions of discrimination against the poor and the downtrodden.

Thus the novel makes a brilliantly detailed, ferociously satirical presentation of the contemporary Indian life. The village life, government schools, mid-day-meals, government hospitals, gods and goddesses, caste-system, naxalite problem, elections, marriages on loans, glamour of the metros which is meant for the foreigners are all the aspects of Indian life expolred by Adiga.

In the second novel *Between the Assassinations*, Kittur plays as a miniature of India. All the stories of this novel bring the contemporary India in the vision. Adiga's portrait brings out multitudes of people of Kittur belonging to different caste, creeds, and economic status. Life goes on in the township despite riots corruption, injustice, poor-rich divide and terrorism that raise their ugly heads time and time again. Across class, religion, occupation and preoccupation Kittur is mapped. *Between the Assassinations* is a triumph of Adiga's imagination.

The third novel *Last Man in Tower* also brings the struggling life of the suppressed class groups. This novel is a fable of money and greed. It anatomizes the corrosion of middle class value. In this complex and multi-layered novel, Adiga continues his project of shining a light on the changing facets of India. All these novels are not a depressing novels but it can be appreciated as a novel of reawakening, realization, and reconstruction of the loss of the rich and eternal cultural heritage of India. Sarita Singh in the article "Contextual Anti thesis in Aravind Adiga's '*Between the Assassinations*'" quotes the words of Adiga who says "At a time when

India is going through great changes and China is likely to Inherit the world from the West it is important that writers like me try to highlight the brutal injustices of society”(76).

Adiga's three novels encapsulate the pain and poignant life of the poor as well as the middle class people. Pollution, mechanical routine of life, changed structure of life, structure of family and society, terrorism, emergence of underclass etc., are the ample evidence to verify the dark images of India. By analyzing Adiga's three works one can conclude that poverty, corruption, caste and religious conflicts are the miserable social issues which should be eradicated. No one can raise voice against these miserable conditions. All the suppressed people are under the hegemonial power. They are helpless.

Today India is in the edge of the abyss. These miserable issues are like the dreadful diseases. Though it is true that there will be some solutions to save the nation, a malady should be diagnosed and a remedy should be prescribed. In the same way, every Indian is in need to find solutions to put an end to this miserable life. Adiga concludes that only God can save this country. God has created the remedies for all the maladies.

Poverty is a condition in which people do not have the means to afford basic human needs such as nutrition, health care, education, food, clothing and shelter. Poverty is one of the biggest problems in India. In spite of all the progress that India has made during the years, the problem of poverty has not been eliminated. On one side India has the millionaires living in their air-conditioned tower blocks and on the other hand there are the unfortunates trapped in poverty. Even after sixty two years of independence large scale poverty remains the most shameful blot on the face of India.

Causes of Poverty in India are illiteracy, ignorance, unemployment, high rate of population growth, unequal distribution of income, caste system and discrimination. There is a

connection between abolishing poverty and corruption. Government has implemented many programmes and schemes to eradicate poverty, but it is unfortunate that it does not reach all the needy people.

The craze of money stimulates the greedy groups to involve themselves in to different kinds of evil attitudes. In contemporary India, love is lost, ethics are forgotten and humanity is abolished throughout. It is now a country which remembers its caste and forgets its culture, favours hybrid culture and malpractices, shirks morals values, knows every trick to hide the uncompromising and has no shame in exposing. Everything around is corrupt – the police, the politician, the press or the judiciary. The police know the guilty but reveal nothing; the politician recognizes the guilty but exposes none, the press knows everything but shields the truth and the judiciary knows the truth but administers no punishment.

Some of the miscreants and blackgoats infiltrate inbetween the freebee schemes and the poverty stricken. They loot the government properties which should be given to the suppressed. Hence abolition of poverty continues as a question mark. Reviving the society is a dreamy one. The miserable life of Indians continues as a mystery.

Abolishing poverty is an endless problem. To eradicate this, corruption should be curbed. It is more evil than poverty. Again, this evil deed gives more pain to the poverty stricken. Prevention and eradication of corruption is an absolute requirement for better social and public life. Corruption takes an interesting turn in such a way that everyone becomes corrupt in some way or other. Illiteracy and opportunities, poor health, low standard of living, stress and frustration compel them to involvement in the activities like theft, stealing or begging for money.

Education is an integral part of the social sector of the economy. It adds to the efficiency and productivity of human resources and leads to sustainable economic growth. Its direct and

indirect effects can be observed on the performance of economic sector and social sector of the country. The role of state is important in education sector for its vertical and horizontal growth. In India's development education plays a vital role. Education system is undoubtedly the foundation of a nation.

Education makes man civilized. It makes the mankind literate in ethics and moral values. If people in a country have a well nurtured and balanced education system, then half the task of the country's development is done. But India's education system suffers with many issues that need to be addressed at the earliest. Corruption in the education system is a big and a tougher problem. Rashmi Rekha Borah in the article "Impact of Politics and Concerns with the Indian Education System" quotes the words of Dr. Abul Kalam Azad who says "When learning is purposeful, creativity blossoms, when creativity blossoms, thinking emanates, When thinking emanates, knowledge is fully lit, When knowledge is lit, economy flourishes" (326).

Education has become a remedy for every country to help their existence and development economically. India is one among them, which concentrates more on extending education. Though government is aware about the progressive schemes of the Indian students, there are some stark realities that make the Indian educational system, a serious crisis. There are many hindrances faced by the government in solving this problem. Corruption is the main cause for degradation of the education, so the government should deal with corruption in a more effective way.

Many cases of corruption take years to be given verdict. This delay in cases creates lack of fear for being corrupt and also huge time span for court trials gives sufficient time to make alterations and twist the case. The moral deterioration of youth in India is at present a blazing issue which has spread over largely in recent days. The expression of this sort of degradation is

being reflected in different undesirable aspects of the society. It is considered that youth power is the driving force of a nation, but the thought is being dwindled.

The changing culture should be avoided. The word secularism should be maintained to avoid communal riots. Therefore, it is very much essential and it is in fact the duty of everybody to find out the solution for this tyranny to establish India in the world of peace and harmony. The causes and the consequences of these issues should be encountered. Adiga's works are tailored to suit India's present condition. These novels are a realistic social commentary of India.

The inter textual analysis of Adiga's works *The White Tiger*, *Between the Assassinations* and *Last Man in Tower* establish that it is Adiga's comprehensive exploration of the past, the present and the future of India. The undertone of sarcasm is the manifestation of the growing resentment accumulated in the subconscious of those who have been dragged in the darkness and are left blind due to the dazzling light of opulence devouring the true spirit of the Indian soil.

In the article "*The White Tiger* : Challenges of Urbanization" Veena Sindhu quotes the words of Aravind Adiga, who says,

I don't think a novelist should just write about his experiences. This is the reality for a lot of Indians and it is important that it gets written about, rather than just hearing about the five percent of people in my country who are doing well." In his interview to The Guardian he further says, "At a time when India is going through great changes and with China is likely to inherit the world from the West, it is important that writers like me try to highlight the brutal injustices of society. It is not an attack on the country, it is about the great process of self examination.

That's what writers like Flaubert, Balzac and Dickens did in the 19th century and

as a result England and France are better societies. That's what I am trying to do.

(335)

Adiga's works provide a comprehensive picture of the post-modern India, where the dark shadows of humiliation of humanity, beastly existence of slum dwellers, ruin of the spirit of democracy, dazzling light of mushroom growth of Malls, the collapse of the stability of familial relationship, the developing culture of communal riots are sketched clearly.

Thus Adiga's novels give relentlessly detailed descriptions of various evil aspects of Indian life, and his novels are moving stories and eye opening pictures of Indian society. All the miserable social issues must be eradicated to save India. Being an Indian, it is the responsibility of each and every individual to scrutinize these contemporary miserable social issues and contribute to the development of India.