

SOCIAL ISSUES IN ARVIND ADIGA'S THE WHITE TIGER

Prabha Parmar

Associate Professor, Department of English, Motherhood University, Roorkee, Uttarakhand

Sonia Saini

Research Scholar, Department of English, Motherhood University, Roorkee, Uttarakhand

ABSTRACT

The societal issues facing modern-day India are examined in this research paper. The White Tiger paints an accurate view of modern civilization. It draws attention to the hardship and exploitation faced by India's underprivileged and common people. It is a realistic book that captures the raging caste, social, and religious conflicts in the culture. It focuses on how the underprivileged segments of society are exploited and discriminated against. It addresses important socio-cultural problems like terrorism, violence, poverty, starvation, corruption, and the suffering of Indians. Balram, the protagonist of The White Tiger, wants to start his own business because he is becoming more and more dependent on his family's financial stability. He is the lower class's representative. He writes a string of seven letters to Wen Jiabao, the Premier of China.

This research paper analyzes the portrayal of poverty and injustice present in the novel The White Tiger written by Arvind Adiga. It also presents the position of Balram overcomes adversity to become a successful entrepreneur. The white tiger novel presents two faces of Modern India, including the rich and poor, the rural and the urban, and the spiritual and the corrupt. It also presents socio-cultural issues of the present modern India such as poverty, hunger, corruption, violence, terrorism and suffering of people in India. The main theme including in the novel is based on psychological barricades, economic struggles, and entrepreneurship, blurring lines of morality social breakdown, self-interest, darkness, rooster coop and new India.

KEY WORDS: Caste, Class, Marginalization, Exploitation, and Entrepreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

The White Tiger was published in 2008 and won the 40th Booker prize in the same year. The novel provides Indian struggle in a globalized world as told through a retrospective narration from Balram Halwai, a village boy. Adiga claims his novel as an attempt to catch voice of the men which can meet as we travel through India-the voice of the colossal underclass. Balram Halwai is the protagonist and narrator of the novel throughout the novel, Balram is portrayed as a complex and multidimensional character with several defining traits. Balram is highly ambitious character who desires to break free from his humble origins and achieve success and wealth. However he is also a sympathetic character who is forced to navigate a corrupt and oppressive society. He is a survivor who is able to adapt the changing circumstances and overcomes obstacles. He is a cynical character who is deeply critical of Indian society and its institutions. Overall Balram is a complex and compelling character who embodies many of the themes and ideals in the novel including the struggle for self determination, the cost of ambition and the corrupt nature of the Indian society. Literature serves as a societal mirror, and Arvind Adiga's book The White Tiger captures the social problems facing ancient and contemporary India. It was set in rural Bihar, New Delhi, and its suburbia, Gurgaon, and it portrays postmodern ambiguity. It tells the story of Balram, an anti-hero who stands in for the

oppressed people of India. Despite its assertions of having a thriving economy, India is still in the dark and not glowing.

The story highlights the stark contrast between India's ascent to prominence as a global economy and the suffering of the underprivileged, who endure extreme poverty in both rural and urban areas. Adiga discusses a number of social problems and gives instances of wrongdoing in Indian democracy. It is a social critique that focuses on India's sociopolitical issues as well as its poverty and suffering. Two important advantages of democracy are equality and liberty. These two essential facets of human existence have an impact on growth and awareness. But there are innumerable evil forces that destroy human liberty and equality. Corruption is one of the fatal evils that exist in the society. Laxmangarth is Adiga's fictional village in this book, where the village owner exploited, tortured, and tormented the populace. Balram's village began to provide him with his elementary education. After recognizing his talent, the teacher gave him the name Balram. His parents gave him the name Muna, which translates to 'boy'. The school inspector praised his intelligence and genius and dubbed him "White Tiger." Naturally ambitious, Balram worked to elevate his social standing. That inspired him to travel to Delhi to drive Ashok, a westernized son of the landlord.

Balram sensed the divide between two castes and the rich and the impoverished in Delhi. There are men who eat and those who are eaten, men with large and little bellies. The attitude of revolt, resistance, and retribution is gradually ingrained in Balram's consciousness by all of these social, political, and economic inequalities. For years, these motivations were kept hidden in Balram's unconscious mind, motivating him to fight against and better his inferior situation.

Driven by a desire for freedom and success, Balram hatches a plan to kill his employer Ashok to break free from his servitude and start his own business. The novel ends with Balram committing a shocking act of violence which he believes is necessary to achieve his goal of becoming a successful entrepreneur in modern India. As a revenge for his action the stock family killed all of them in Balram's family but he never visits his family again. After killing his employer, Mr. Ashok, Balram uses the stolen money to start his own taxi rental business in Bangalore for call center workers.

This is the fact that a lot of Indians have very little political freedom, especially in the north of India. That election is rigged in large parts of the north Indian state of Bihar, and they are also accompanied by violence. There are so many ways in which India's system fails horribly. The book deals with an Indian smack in the middle of "The boom" and it challenges a lot of comfortable assumption about Indian democracy and economics. I want to challenge this idea that India is the world's greatest democracy. It may be so in an objective sense but on the ground, the poor have such little power.

The broken promises of socialism in India are symbolized by the great socialist. Balram views the great socialist as a representation of development and promise, but he soon comes to see that he is a hypocritical and crooked individual. Vijay, Balram's childhood hero, backs the parts and rises through the ranks over time to become one of its top lawmakers. But as the story goes on, it becomes evident that Vijay is not the hero Balram initially thought him to be. Rather, he is portrayed as a cynical and corrupt politician who is more focused on preserving his own authority than standing up for the rights of the populace.

The white tiger is first mentioned in the novel when a school inspector praises Balram as a White Tiger on account of his talent and intelligence. As the story progresses, the white tiger becomes a recurring symbol for Balram's own aspirations and desires. Balram believes that he must break free from these systems in order to achieve his dreams, and he sees the white

tiger as a representation of his own struggle for liberation. The White Tiger also represents the darker side of ambition and success involves him committing crimes, betraying friends and employers, and ultimately becoming a murderer. The white tiger symbolize the violence and aggression that Balram must embody in order to pursue his dreams.

As a subaltern in this book, Balram became the spokesperson for many Indians who were suffering from poverty and marginalization. Adiga depicted the treatment of the lower caste by the upper caste. Through this book, we were able to comprehend how pitiful the people's situation would have been. The upper class dominated the lower class by using their position. Balram provided his repressed, mistreated, and exploited brothers and sisters a voice. In his book, Adiga represents various facets of Indian civilization with light and gloom. Light is frequently connected to achievement, advancement, and understanding.

Adiga depicts the tough decisions people have to make in order to succeed in a corrupt society and overcome poverty. The conflict between contemporary, western-style capitalism and traditional Indian values is depicted in the book. It investigates how these two forces interact and clash in modern-day India.

The protagonist and narrator, Balram Halwai, sees light as a means of escaping the oppression and poverty of his village life. When he relocates to Delhi and begins working for Ashok and Pinky Madam, he perceives their contemporary apartment, complete with air conditioning and bright lights, as a representation of their success and wealth. But in the book, the light isn't always good. It may also symbolize the grim reality of India, where violence, inequality, and corruption are pervasive. Balram highlights the darkness that lies beneath the surface of Indian civilization by describing the dazzling headlights of cars on the roadways of Delhi as a source of danger and anxiety. The widening gap between India's affluent upper elite and its struggling working class is explored in the book. Adiga reveals the widespread corruption in Indian society, ranging from minor bribery to big political corruption. He illustrates how corruption contributes to social inequality and status maintenance. The book examines the ways in which Balram struggles to take charge of his life, succeed, and become free. The novel examines the moral concessions Balram must make in order to accomplish his objectives, since his ascent to fame is not without cost.

Balram describes India's social structure using the analogy of a rooster coop. Balram compares the impoverished to roosters stuck in a coop, unable to get out even if the door is open. This represents the concept of social disparity and the challenge of escaping one's situation. Adiga stands for the elegance and prosperity that India's upper classes enjoy, which Balram hopes to achieve. He represents his own social rise from a humble chauffeur to a wealthy businessman by enveloping himself in chandeliers. The chandeliers in Stork's house captivate Balram, who interprets them as a symbol that inspires him to pursue a similar way of life for himself.

CONCLUSION

All things considered, *The White Tiger* is a biting indictment of Indian culture that reveals the oppression, unfairness, and corruption that are widespread there. Arvind Adiga's book *The White Tiger* is set in many locations in India, where light and gloom coexist. The book can be viewed as a potent subaltern critique of the economic and social systems that uphold exploitation and inequality in modern-day India. The novel's social themes are sufficiently recalled by Arvind Adiga, who also returned the recommendation that underclass management is essential to India's prosperity. It tells the tale of a man who rises through the ranks of achievement. It reveals a number of corrupt systems, including election-related riots, unemployment, poverty, corruption, and welfare plan abuse. Adiga has the guts to examine

India's terrible reality. It takes place against the backdrop of India's economic growth, which caused a widening divide between the rich and the poor. The dazzling pictures of contemporary India show the country's growing influence in the global economy, science, and politics. However, the ruling class in this case was blind to the plight of the oppressed.

WORK CITED

1. Adiga, Arvind. (2008). *The White Tiger*. India: Harper Collins Publishers.
2. Bhattacharjee, Archana. (2016). Introduction Reflection of Social Ethos In the selected Novels of Arundhati Roy, Kiran Desai and Arvind Adiga. India: Authors Press.
3. Chawdhary, Vinita Singh. (2014). Arvind Adiga's *The White Tiger*: Injustice and Poverty
4. in the Present Scenario. *The Criterion*, 5 (3).
5. Kumar, Sanjay & Surjit Singh. (2014). Arvind Adiga as a Novelist of the New Generation. *Language In India*, 14(11).
6. Moovendhan, (2019). Social-critical Analysis of Arvind Adiga's *The White Tiger*, Between the Assassination and Last Man in Tower. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, 6 (3).
7. Pathak, Vandana. (2004). The Marginalized Psyche in 'The White Tiger': A Sociological Perspective. Nimsarkar & Shubha Mishra, (Eds.), *Arvind Adiga an Anthology of Critical Essays*. (59-68). New Delhi: Creative Books.
8. Pasari, Priyanka. (2015). 'The White Tiger' On Half Baked India and Social and Political
9. Deterioration. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 20 (5).