

A Study on Human Relationships in the works of Arvind Adiga's

The White Tiger

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Abstract

With Aravind Adiga's debut novel *The White Tiger* winning the prestigious Man Booker Prize for Fiction in 2008, a master-servant connection emerged, emphasizing a harsher picture of Indian social life. *The White Tiger* is a book about two India's "in one: a Light India and a Dark India" (p. 14). The purpose of this study is to investigate the common system of hierarchy among Indian social classes and how Adiga interacts with it. The imaginary connection between Balram Halwai and his master, Mr. Ashok, reveals the economic difference between the affluent and the poor. The work "shocked and delighted in equal measure," according to Michael Portillo (Portillo, 2008). The split between those who are well off and the less wealthy may have an unsafe impact in case it is unsettled. However, the poor

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in India hasn't rebelled against mean conduct and double-dealing by the rich individuals, there is an inclination of hatred and who can say for sure when this stifled feeling is changed into insurgency.

Keywords: Aravind Adiga, Indian Fiction, The White Tiger, Class Consciousness, Caste Issues.

Introduction:

The White Tiger is a seven-part epistolary letter to Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao written in epistolary form. Through a retrospective narration by Balram Halwai, a country child, the novel depicts India's socioeconomic struggle in a globalized world. The novel examines issues such as poverty, caste, corruption, loyalty, and religion through the journey of Balram from a have not to a have power to manipulate the system. The novel also explores the ethical differences between rural and urban India. “Attempts to catch the speech of guys you encounter as you go around India—the voice of the gigantic underclass,” says Aravind Adiga. The White Tiger is a fictional depiction of how the protagonist, a son of a puller, rises from humble beginnings to become a wealthy businessman. This study focuses on the “visible” slavery that servants and lower-caste people in India face on a daily basis. The Rooster Coop from which Balram seeks to flee is not built of thin bars, and breaking out of it requires the guts and intellect of a white tiger.

This isn't the first time a grim portrayal of Indian culture has been shown in a novel; in fact, it may have begun with Mulk Raj Anand's *Coolie*. With the Booker Prize for Fiction, *The White Tiger* received great acclaim. The novel's divergence from the Rushdiesque creative tradition is one of the numerous grounds for its high acclaim. *Native Son* by Richard Wright has been likened to the novel. Both works show a dichotomy of wealthy and poor, master and servant, strong and oppressed, according to critics and scholars. Both protagonists turned to violence to escape their lords' cruel actions.

Adiga has been affected by Frantz Fanon's thought to some extent. In his seminal text *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), he argues that revolutionary violence is a constructive means for colonial people to achieve emancipation and self-expression. Assimilation, adaptation, and struggle are three stages that postcolonial authors go through, according to Fanon. The struggle stage is when a revolutionary and national literature is produced. *The White Tiger*, according to Fanon's matrix, is a third-stage book. Balram's assassination of Ashok exemplifies Fanon's theory of constructive violence.

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In her seminal essay, *Can the Subaltern Speak?*, Gayatri Spivak draws attention to the silent subalterns. Day workers, the homeless, and the jobless are among her subalterns. Balram's father, a rickshaw driver, belongs to the same social class.

Balram Halwai is being hailed as the modern India's hero, despite the country's recent economic boom. He represents the underprivileged who desire for their 'future.' Balram's journey from rural Bihar to Gurgaon to Bangalore exemplifies the growing divide between the affluent and the poor. In India's economic structure, a small minority controls the majority of the country's material wealth. "At a time when India is undergoing significant changes and, alongside China, is set to inherit the west, it is critical that writers such as me strive to emphasize society's cruel inequities... the huge chasm" (Raaj, 2008, p. 9).

Only a limited number of individuals have profited from the recent decade's neoliberal economic policies. The majority of the country's people is still living under the same conditions. They are subjected to all forms of prejudice at the hands of strong individuals. In their study "Democratic Practice and Social Inequality in India," Amartya Sen and Jean Dreze look at the impact of democracy in modern India. How India's democracy failed to destabilize social disparity, despite the fact that democratic practice may be a potent instrument for reducing social inequality. According to a UN research, millions of children in India are malnourished, with India having the largest number of malnourished children when compared to other nations. India is home to one-third of the world's impoverished.

Balram works as a chauffeur for a landlord's son Ashok and his wife Pinky. He formerly resided in Laxmangarh's rural village with his grandmother, parents, brother, and other relatives. He was a bright kid who was forced to drop out of school to aid his family. He was given the nickname "white tiger" as a child because he was the only intellectual, honest, and lively child among a jungle of bullies and morons. He begins driving for Ashok and his wife Pinky after learning to drive. "The Autobiography of a Half-Baked Indian," as the narrator puts it, is the title of his life narrative (p. 10): Me and thousands of others in this country like me, are half-baked, because we were never allowed to complete our schooling. Open our skulls, look in with a penlight, and you'll find an odd museum of ideas [...] - all these ideas, half formed and half-digested and half correct, mix up with other half-cooked ideas in your head, and I guess these half formed ideas, and this is what you act on and live with. (pp. 10-11)

It proves crucial to Balram to reject the philosophy of radical Hindutva to rise from poverty and oppression through ruthless self-interestedness. He rebukes Hinduism for the oppression

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of the poor and resisting the social progress of India. He finds the doctrines of servitude in Hinduism very regressive:

[...] Sir, do you know who Hanuman is? We adore him in our temples because he was the deity Rama's dedicated servant, and he is a brilliant example of how to serve your masters with utmost dedication, love, and devotion. Mr. Jiabao, these are the types of gods they imposed on us. Now you know how difficult it is for a guy in India to get his independence. (p. 16)

Balram criticizes not just Hinduism's beliefs, but also India's economic corruption. He has witnessed several instances of government officials accepting bribes in order to avoid paying taxes. Corruption is one of the key causes of India's socioeconomic disparities. On the one hand, Ashok pays millions in bribes to avoid paying taxes, while Balram gets mocked for misplacing one penny in an incident. As a result, there are two India's.:

To summaries, there were a thousand castes and fates in India in the past. There are only two types of men nowadays: those with large bellies and those with little bellies. And there are only two options: eat or get gobbled up. (p. 54)

Balram had no self-doubt or guilt after assassinating Ashok. It was important, he believed, for the sake of mankind and access to resources. He believes that the money he took after assassinating Ashok does not belong to him because the tax Ashok was evading was supposed to be spent for the wellbeing of common people. So, he maintains, what he did was the need of the hour.:

[...] I'll never admit that slitting my master's throat that night in Delhi was a mistake. I'll claim it was all worth it to learn, if only for a day, an hour, or a minute, what it's like not to be a servant. (p. 276)

He seemed to have enough money to start a new life and a new business. “My style of life is completely incorrect, Balram,” Ashok admits to Balram. I'm aware of it, yet I lack the confidence to alter it. 'I simply don't have... the balls....' Balram, I let others take advantage of me. In my whole life, I've never done what I've desired.” (pp. 237-8).

It may be ideal to believe that the government should take strong action against economic corruption, illiteracy, and the farming crises, but without addressing these issues, India would be unable to prevent more Balrams from coming out and claiming their part, even if violently. It's an excellent remark on India's social and economic inequity. Balram is a member of the have-not's group, while Ashok and Pinky are members of society's upper class, and they all appear to defend their beliefs via their deeds. We can avoid many Ashoks and

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Balrams if everyone plays their part in the system honestly, and everyone can enjoy a good life. One of the causes of poverty and animosity among the ordinary people is a corrupt institution that fails to bring justice to its residents. When poverty and anger cross the line into intolerance, victims may seek violent retribution. But, before that occurs, Indian policymakers and intellectuals should take a hard look at the present welfare systems and ensure that each one is designed and implemented with the last human being in mind. The greatest impediment to India's growth is poverty and wide disparities in social and economic standing among the ordinary people.

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