

Identity crisis in 'The White Tiger' by Aravind Adiga

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ABSTRACT

Through the perspective of author, Aravind Adiga, *The White Tiger* is a mirror of contemporary India. His study focuses mostly on the effects of globalization. The ideas in this book definitely jump out and leave an impact. Overall, the language and writing style of the author received a higher grade. Additionally, this book includes representations of marriage, untouchability, the caste system, feudalism, and the practice of untouchability. This narrative exposes the Indian political system and the extent of corruption in a somewhat unsettling manner. Additionally, he gave voice to those who hide in the shadows in the underdeveloped areas of rural India. A guy called Balram Halwai, who lives on the outskirts of an Indian rural hamlet, serves as the book's primary character. He was born into poverty and belonged to a lower caste. He wanted to become more socially advanced. Every facet of his personality began to be dominated by greed and rapacity. The majority of this work was devoted to portraying India's two opposing sides: the dark and the light.

Key words: Globalization, Untouchability, Poverty-Stricken, Freedom, Political system.

INTRODUCTION

In addition to living in Australia and the UK, Aravind Adiga was born in the Indian city of Madras. The so-called "Man Booker Prize," which launched him into the public spotlight and earned him worldwide praise, was awarded to him in 2008 for his first and best book, "The White Tiger." Throughout the whole novel, there are aspects of magic realism. A mesmerizing work of art with a dark sense of humour and a fury, *The White Tiger* is extremely intriguing. Unexpectedly, it turns out to be a tour of a different India. To Balram, entrepreneurship is a crucial concept. Balram's story makes no mention of this, and he begins his life in a remote area with very little money. He is open about the little formal education he had. He is the result of his own labour of love. He claims that he had previously worked for a rich guy by the name of Mr. Ashok. Ashok speaks to his wife in passing. Balram Halwai, a member of a lower social class, is literate and can write, but he struggles to understand what he reads. He is still developing. You may find people very much like him all around the country.

The writing style of the book is intellectual, even treatise-like. Balram divides individuals along the lines of their wealth. The "India of Lightness" is what he calls people who are affluent, while the "India of Darkness" is what he calls those who are not. His mother died while he was young, his grandpa drove a car, and he is surrounded by a big family. The Halwais seem to be a relatively poor group of people. Balaram Halwai uses flashbacks to narrate his story when he does so. He kills his employer Ashok before disclosing all of this knowledge. He is clever, well-informed, and materialistic. He lived in the area around Bodh Gaya which is where the Buddha is said to have acquired enlightenment. His hometown is like a nirvana. The scumbag landlords were given the titles Buffalo, Stork, Wild Boar, and Raven due to the high calibre of their work. All four of the creatures were said to reside in high-walled mansions outside of Laxmangarh, which served as the proprietors' residences (p.25)

The peasants that are impoverished are always unhappy. Balram is also ineffective in his work and has a political interest. He then obtains his driver's license and begins hunting for employment right away. He was fortunate that Ashok recruited him. Following that, Balram kills Ashok in order to take his money. Balram recounts the events surrounding the Laxmangarh election, which pitted the great socialist and the head of the Darkness against one another. Balram moves in the direction of Banglore after killing Ashok. He is accompanied by his relative Dharam. He also carries the crimson bag that contains the master's money. While he is at Hyderabad's train station, he observes the police's billboard concerning his posture. He pays off a police officer with a bribe before signing on to work as a transporter for firms that subcontract their services. The last scene of the novel is the White Tiger's rumination on the process we call life. This book offers a great deal of critique on every aspect of Indian society.

Indian Diversity and Indian Writing in English

In nations, the finest results often come from the hardest times. In addition, India has seen its fair share of hardships throughout its illustrious past, including invasions, enslavement, starvation, etc. Every facet of history is unique, and the nation's conscience has always looked to the writers of the day for an essential outlet. The same is true of modern India, which has become the voice of the country thanks to writers like Chetan Bhagat, Vikram Seth, and Amitav Ghosh. But given India's demographic, economic, and cultural variety and division, new era writers there could find the task more difficult than those who came before them. One of the world's most populated countries, India is almost unfathomable and cannot be contained in a single book. There are too many intricacies to include in a single item. Chetan Bhagat has therefore mostly centered his works on the experiences of college students, particularly engineering students. In his novel "The White Tiger," Aravind Adiga also made a risky attempt to represent the huge, helpless, and powerless lower classes of the biggest democracy in the world.

White Tiger – A Riveting Tale of the Realistic Anti-hero

Aravind Adiga, an Australian-educated Indigenous author who won the Man Booker Prize in 2008, fought off tough opposition from authors like Salman Rushdie in the first essay, "The White Tiger." The 2008 Booker Prize jury chairman, Mr. Portillo, said that he was searching for anything in India that will "blow his trousers." Balram Halwai is a realist anti-hero who was born in a lowly environment but is determined to overcome his default destiny of birth and death in "the dark," which he does by his gloomy plotting on the death of his master Ashok.

IDENTITY CRISIS IN THE NOVEL: THE WHITE TIGER

The White Tiger by Aravind Adiga is a story about a man's search for freedom. The protagonist Balram Halwai writes a series of letters to the visiting Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao during the course of the book. Balram Halwai, a country lad who gives a retrospective narration throughout the book, offers a darkly hilarious view on class conflict in a globalized society. According to Peerzada Abrar, the Chinese Prime Minister Mr. Wen Jiabo travels to India to meet with young Indian entrepreneurs in Bangalore, the epicenter of information technology. Balram Halwai and Mr. Wen are introduced during the Bangalore summit. Balram identifies as a "thinking man of action and changes," a self-taught entrepreneur, and a much better person than those with formal education. Balram, aka Munna, tells Mr. Wen his tale. He claims to be a native of the impoverished Bihar hamlet of Laxmangarh. Despite living in misery, his parents never asked for money. His father, Vikram Halwai, battled destiny by pushing rickshaws and pursuing his son's education.

My whole life, I have been treated like a donkey.

All I want is that one son of mine-at least one-should live like a man(Adiga).

He worked at the tea business to pay debts from his uncle's marriage. He discovered that he had been caught up in the cruel exploitation process while he worked at the tea business. He must be attractive in his life. Balram resumed his confession by saying that he had killed Mr. Ashok, his owner, on the second night. After his father passed away, he carried on with his life, quitting his job as a waitress at a tea store to pursue his education in greater economic driving. In Thakur Ramdev alias "The Stork," his life led him to the "Laxmangarh" house in the city of Dhanbad. Mr. Ashok was overjoyed to not have to look for food, lodging, and a uniform when he was successful in nominating Stork's son as a driver. Balram discussed the differences between caste and class at his master's residence. Balram is the creator of an unbalanced world. Balram and the Chinese Prime Minister spoke about the glorious democracy in India. His ideas are really radical. Since Fidel Castro has vowed to drive the underprivileged out of Cuba, he is a fan. Balram explains how the Chinese Prime Minister runs democracy in Laxmangarh and the election process. He saw the dark side of democracy firsthand while working at his master's estate. In order to assist in illegal mining, Balram moved to New Delhi with his boss Mr. Ashok and his wife Pinky. Balram believes that everyone struggles to identify himself in culture.

Balram represents the corrupt aspect of the New Delhi administration. He saw that the poor's great sadness and prosperity were both extravagantly alive. Corrupt masters pay the higher authorities to carry out their will. Balram believes

The history of the world is the history of the ten-thousand-year war of brains between the rich and the poor. Each side is eternally trying to hoodwink the other side(Adiga, 254).

Balram learned from his fellow drivers how to deal with miserly bosses, dishonest police officers, crooked authorities, society, and the weather. Balram is responsible for the accident caused by Pinky Madam's intoxication. Balram learned from the terrible occurrence that his owner is not very nice.

Balram proceeds to describe his interactions with Mr. Wen while also explaining an event that occurred in the household of his master Ashok. Pinky madam, Ashok's wife, asks Balram to drop her off at the airport when she departs for America without first telling her husband. At the airport, Balram dropped her off. He received a large brown envelope with 4700 rupees as payment. After returning from the airport, he was met with his master's wrath for his carelessness. Though he begged innocently, his effort was in vain.

Pinky Madam has left, leaving Mr. Ashok alone. Mr. Ashok's life was made lonely and unpleasant by this circumstance. Because of his loneliness, he was drawn to call girls and regularly went to hotels and shopping centers to unwind. Mr. Ashok's hunt for prostitutes in the red-light district also sated his repressed need for vengeance. Balram saw the disparities between the affluent and the poor. He believes that a revolution of the working class will soon overthrow the variations. Balram says

Have you heard about the Naxals? ... They've got guns ... a whole army. They've got stronger by the day ... when the time is right, all of India will
(Adiga, 208)

Balram becomes vengeful against the rich.

On the sixth night, Balram tells the Chinese Premier how he begins to cheat his master to get money. As his hunger increased, he eventually decided to kill his master. He took all of his money, ventured into the future, and created an unrivaled identity for himself.

Balram successfully avoided capture, fled the scene of the crime, and eventually arrived in Bangalore. He made the decision to provide a cab service for contact center workers. He imitated his boss by paying off the police and political figures to drive out competitors in his line of work. He quickly acquires control of a sizable business with a fleet of SUVs and dozens of drivers. He says:

I wasn't alone ... I had thousands on my side! You will see my friends when you visit Bangalore-fat, punchy men swinging their canes harassing vendors, and shaking them down for money. I'm taking off the police, of course
(Adiga, 299-300).

Balram abandons all morals and ethics in the pursuit of discovering who he is. He makes the claim to be a creator of the new India. That, according to him, won't happen unless a poor guy begins to stand up for himself." BalramHalwai describes how he went from being a village yokel to becoming an astute businessman with ruthless ambitions with chilling frankness, according to Robbie Goh. He is the direct spokesman for India's Everyman." The main character of BalramHalwai fights against corruption, enslavement from antiquity, and identity. He expressed his ferocious disgust and anger against the "haves." Balram brilliantly illustrates prejudice towards racial and social issues in culture. Adiga depicts both impoverished, unsightly regions like Bangalore and Delhi. The daily bread and butter still has an impact on the impoverished. Popular racial, gender, historical, religious, and national identities, professions, educational systems, and economic factors all discriminate against, ignore, and eradicate them. The White Tiger struggles to be recognized and has little expertise. In the book, Balram recounts his seven-night existence to Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. Under the landlord's law, he spends his early years discovering individuality rebellion. Balram is unable to recall his childhood's real name. He was called by his parents

Munna': "Munna? That's not a real name. He was right: it just means boy."
(Adiga,13)

On his first day of school, Krishna, one of his teachers, gives him the name "Balram." He is always praised by the teachers and authorities for his sincerity in his studies. The School Inspector says:

In any jungle, what is the rarest of animals the creatures that come along only once in a generation? I thought about it and said: The White Tiger; That's what you are in this jungle. (Adiga, 35)

Since India's independence, Balram claims, progress and development have been unevenly distributed in Delhi, Bangalore, and Laxmangarh. Laxmangarh is a site that struggles to stand out amid the other well-known spots on the map. Balram's family's filth and poverty prevented him from completing his schooling, so he joined the store alongside his brother Kishan. He accepted every degrading job to support himself. Balram anticipated a strong education would lead to a decent position and financial success, but the demands of his family forced him to labor. When a wealthy landlord employs him to drive his kid about and take care of his two Pomeranian dogs, his fantasy comes true. Adiga says:

"His eyes seemed full of wonder! How could two such contrasting specimens of humanity be Produced by the same soil, sunlight, and water?"
(Adiga, 80)

Due to caste inequality, the underprivileged segment of society was never treated equally with upper castes. In the human world, they are unknown and unrecognized. They were likened to animals in terms of birth and death. Balram made the decision that he would not pass away as a driver, a servant, or a member of the Halwai group who had poor birth. He struggles to forge a new identity as a wealthy guy. In "The White Tiger," Mr. Ashok, Kusum, Pinky Madam, Balram's grandmother, and others battle for their beliefs, way of life, and sense of self. Balram, the protagonist, made an angry decision. He considered murdering Mr. Ashok and stealing money to start his own company. He carried out his strategy well, establishing himself in Bangalore as a prosperous businessman. For his independence and advancement, he committed the crime. As the famous Urdu Poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz says:

If these poor beasts ever lift their heads Mankind would, then, forget all deeds of rebellion. If they decide, they can own the Universe, Even chew down the bones of their cruel masters.

(The Dogs: SainSucha)

Aravind Adiga raised his voice in the book *The White Tiger* to warn the dominant groups in society about the dangers that could result from oppressing the weak. Adiga sends a powerful message that if the oppression and dominance continue, they might turn to crime.

CONCLUSION

As a result of consistently erasing their former selves and imitating the behaviors of people in more advantageous situations, the characters—especially Balram—gradually rise to a position of social establishment. The fact that we can state that this is the case justifies this. Pinky spends time alone in her room in New York City, trying to figure out who she is. Adiga commissioned a book in which the portrayal of subalterns and their fight for their identity and position is shown as their battle desiring to be from peripheral to centre. This was brought up by Ram Bhawan Yadav. Balram's lifelong pursuit may not have morally cleansed him, but as Ram Bhawan Yadav said, "Adiga has commissioned a book in which portrayal of subaltern and their fight for their identity and position is depicted as a kind of moral purification." Balram is intended to represent the large majority of underprivileged Indians who are unable to express who they are and who live in the "dark" in this sense. Balram is an inspiration for those who want to throw off the chains and venture out to create their own identities, as Kaharudin and Kurnia noted in their article, "Adiga's *The White Tiger* must be so close to this anticolonialism where Balram tries to be himself, not as a slave, not as a driver, but as an entrepreneur." This is due to the fact that the spirit of the new India is concealed inside Balram's basic persona. It seems that by urging India to be like him and be free and without expectations, he is serving as an example.

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