

Abstract

This research entitled “Prioritizing Darkness over Lights: A Postcolonial Reading of Adiga’s *The White Tiger*” explores the representation of both positive as well as negative aspects of the Indian society. India, being in the process of modernity, falls under light part of representation whereas being it in the cage of poverty, religious tension, corruptions, crimes and murder fall under dark part of representation of India. Although both realities exist in India, the focus of the novelist lies more on the dark side makes him an orientalist in his representation. By examining these two forms of representation, the research makes its central argument that the novelist highlights on the negative part of Indian society to be fit in the taste of western readers. To carry out this analysis, the research is based on the theory of postcolonialism.

Chapter I: Introduction

Aravinda Adiga's *The White Tiger* in Indian Context

Aravinda Adiga's *The White Tiger* dramatizes both positive and negative aspects of Indian society. It is portrayed through the narration of its protagonist, Balram Halwai. The main theme of the novel is the contrast between India's rise as a modern global economy and its working class people who live in crushing poverty. The entire plot of the novel turns round the protagonist, Balram Halwai (also known as 'White Tiger'), a young man born and brought up in a remote village of Bihar, who narrates his life story in the form of a letter to a foreign dignitary, Chinese Prime Minister, Wen Jiabao, who is going to have a visit to Bangalore on an official assessment. Jiabao wants to know the truth about India while staying there. Balram writes the letters in seven consecutive nights and addresses to the Chinese Premier about the entrepreneurship in India. Balram begins to tell the Chinese Premier the story of his life and describes his village Laxmangarh which is in the district of the rural Gaya. He explains how he escapes a life of servitude to become a successful businessman, describing himself as a successful entrepreneur. While telling about it, Balram tells about his birth place, family, country, struggle and achievements. He suggests the Premier not to believe in the words of Indian Prime Minister and other high officials. So, he offers himself as an informer, and indirectly presents the decayed and corrupted state of Indian society which is highly influenced and dominated by the West.

Halwai is born in Bihar, a community deep in the "Darkness" of rural India. Like most families in this region, his family is very poor. Balram is the son of a rickshaw puller. His family is too poor for him to be able to complete school education. Despite being clever and being promised learning, Balram is forced to

break coals and wipes tables in a Dhanbad teashop. He witnesses his mother's premature death and the slow decline of his rickshaw-puller father due to malnutrition and tuberculosis. Furthermore, he loses his parents very early. His family neither gives him a name nor a date of birth. He originally goes by the name 'Munna', as his parents have never named him, but his school teacher gives him a new name since Munna simply meant 'boy' in Hindi. He names him 'Balram' in reference to the brother of the Hindu god *Krishna*. His last name, Halwai, is derived from "sweet-maker" in the caste system. One of the most important facts is that the school inspector names him "The White Tiger", the rare animal in the jungle because he is the cleverest child in Laxmangarh.

Balram begins to work in a teashop with his brother in Dhanbad. While working in a teashop, he begins to learn about India's government and economy from the conversations of the teahouse guests. He describes himself as a bad servant and decides that he wants to become a driver. As he wants to become a driver, Kushum, his granny, pays his fee, in condition that Balram supports his family when he is a driver. In Dhanbad, he learns to drive after learning about the high salary paid to drivers. After learning how to drive, Balram gets his break when a rich man from his village known as "The Stork", hires him as a chauffeur for his son, Ashok, who lives in the city of New Delhi. Having recently returned from a time in America, Ashok is conflicted by the corruption and harshness of life in India, and has to deal with his family's unhappiness with his foreign marriage to his current wife, a member of a different caste. The city is a revelation for Balram. As he drives his master and his mistress to shopping malls and call centers, Balram becomes increasingly aware of immense wealth and opportunity all around him. That creates the contrast between the

master and servant classes. Through these experiences, Balram becomes increasingly worldly and ambitious.

As Balram broods over his situation, he realizes that there is only one thing he can do to become part of this exciting new India – murder his employer, and escape from servitude. Ashok’s increasing involvement in political corruption and divorce from his wife provides Balram with his opportunity. One day as Ashok is carrying seven hundred thousand rupees in cash; Balram murders him and flees to Bangalore with his nephew, Dharam. Balram uses the loot to bribe a police commissioner and creates his own taxi company. He changes his name to Ashok Sharma and becomes a wealthy ‘entrepreneur’ in India’s new technological society thus completing his emergence from the ‘Darkness’ into ‘Light’. In that sense, the novel is a portrait of present India society as; society of servitude and uncontrolled corruption. The protagonist, Balram Halwai, is shocked by the scarcity and corruption that he witnesses in the city. He begins to realize how the Indian society is transformed into “Rooster Coop” (175) keeping all innocent people into it by few cunning politicians and businessmen. Balram states:

That’s because we have the coop. Never before in human history have so few owed so much to so many, Mr. Jiabao. A handful of men in this country have trained the remaining 99.9 per cent-as strong, as talented, as intelligent in every way-to exist in perpetual servitude; a servitude so strong that you can put the key of his emancipation in a man’s hands and he will throw it back at you with a curse. (175-76)

The lines explicitly show the exploitative and domineering condition of Indian society in which most of the poor and underprivileged people live in crushing poverty and complete darkness whereas powerful and rich people of the same country are having

all the luxuries possible on earth. At the same time, the protagonist shows his continual excitement to flee from the coop of poverty by any means possible. He states, “servants need to stay servants and most actually live their jobs. They must do anything for their masters, always knowing what they want or do” (78). They are the basis of the entire Indian economy and society. The only way to break from this rooster coop is being a White Tiger as Balram is.

The novel opens the fact that the poor people in Indian society are badly treated. The poor people in Indian society are trapped like the rooster into the coop. The rooster coop symbolizes the cage that Balram lives in. He is dependent on his master who decides what to do and where to go. The majority of people in Indian society are servants. Balram is one of them and he is caught in the rooster coop as well. The author first describes how the rooster coop looks like in the market in the Dark India, in order to give the visualization to the target audience, Adiga write:

Hundreds of pale hens and brightly coloured roosters, stuffed tightly into wire-mesh cages, packed as tightly as worms in belly, pecking each other and shifting on each other, jostling just for breathing space; the whole cage giving off a horrible stench...The roosters in the coop smell the blood from above. They see the organs of their brothers lying around them. (173)

However, the chickens are not trying to escape from the poor-constructed cage. Hence, the author compares those chickens living in miserable condition with the poor class in India. The same thing is done with human beings in this country. It shows that liability for the suffering of the servant also lies in the mentality of the servant class. Balram says, “What if one day, for instance, a driver took his employers money and ran? What would this life be like? I will answer both for you... It would, in

fact, take a White Tiger” (176-77). Here, Balram thinks for the first time in a not-loyal about his master. He begins to imagine which possibilities he seems to have if he hazards a crime. Up to this point he considers the thought again and again. His thinking changes from total loyalty towards his master to thinking in an egoistic way. ‘White Tiger’ is a rarity like a man from the ‘Darkness’ who gets into the ‘Light’. Balram calls himself like this as he reaches this aim.

India is divided into two parts: the “Darkness” and the “Light”. People in the “Darkness” are poor and live under bad conditions while the “Light” is for people who have brought it to something. In this sense, Balram addresses the Chinese Premier, “Please understand, your Excellency, that India is two countries in one: an India of Light, and an India of Darkness” (14). Sometimes it is not enough to change the city and hope for a better life. Although Delhi is described as the city of light, it still can be the darkness to people who have no money and no political status. So the poverty and the low status of people have created the “Darkness” and the “Darkness” is marginalization to the most Indian working class people in Indian society.

A large number of working class people are marginalized within Indian society. Religion and cultural supremacy, class and social injustice and rising poverty have created internal marginalization within Indian society. The poor within the society are marginalized by the so-called caste system. In India there are not social classes, there are social castes. The novel portrays India’s society as very negative towards the lower caste. Balram refers to it as the “Darkness”. When Balram is asked which caste he is from. He knows that it can ultimately cause a biased stand in his employer and determine the future of his employment. There is definitely a big difference seen in Balram’s lower caste from back home and his current higher caste in his lifestyles, habits, and standards of living. The caste system in India is a social

system that divides the Indian population into higher and lower social classes. The caste system is still remaining in rural India although it is said to be disappearing in urban India. A person is born into a caste, and the caste one belongs to determine the occupation. Balram states:

The old driver asked, 'What caste are you?'

'Halwai.'

'Sweet-makers,' the old driver said, shaking his head. 'That's what you people do. You make sweets. How can you learn to drive?' (56)

Balram gives his own breakdown of the caste system in India. He states, "These days, there are just two castes: Men with Big Bellies, and with Small Bellies. And any two destinies: eat – or get eaten up" (64). The usual result is that due to disparity in income the rich grow richer and the poor turn poorer.

The protagonist, Balram, tries to explain to the Chinese Premier through his letters about the corruption and immoral ways of India's caste system and its economic gap. Although it may seem that Balram's position in the society will forever remain the same, he manages to go from a sweet shop worker to a personal driver for a rich man and finally to an owner of a small business. Balram's quest to becoming an entrepreneur shows the oppression of the lower caste system and the superiority of the upper caste. He tells the story that the caste system and political and economic corruption is still presented in Indian society. "We've just paid half a million rupees in a bribe...That's how you corrupt servants" (139). Balram shows the dark side of India in which those who are born into poverty, low caste may forever remain there and so will their children. Balram is a rare exception, as he experiences both sides of the caste system and manages to move of the social ladder.

The novel portrays the real picture of Indian society including the problem of

caste and class, poverty, labor and politics. This novel exposes the decline of religious values from all spheres of life. Religion plays a major role in an Indian's life as it symbolizes tradition and honor. The Chinese Premier is welcomed by Ashok and is introduced as a guest, "With garlands, sandalwood and small statue of Gandhi, and a booklet full of information about India's past, present and future" (5). It is a traditional religious rule in India when a guest of great value arrives. Adiga, in his novel seems to question logically the very basis of these performing religious activities and consider them baseless without much deliberation:

Now, I no longer watch Hindi films – on principle but back in the days when I used to, just before the movie got started, either the number 786 would flash against the black screen – the Muslim think this is a magic number that represents their god – or else you would see the picture of woman in a white sari with gold sovereigns dripping down to her feet, which is the goddess Lakshmi, of the Hindus. It is an ancient and venerated custom of people in my country to start a story by praying to a higher power. (8)

The concept of religion as it has been defined as presented in Indian society has been understood by Adiga thoroughly. He seems to be aware of its merit and demerit both. His vision of religion is much more influenced by the modern globalised world with scientific progress and advancement. This is the reason that he is critical of established religious beliefs and tries to challenge them with ambivalent nature of Balram.

There is discussion on Hinduism in the novel and it plays a number of roles throughout the story. Balram takes advantage of the limited knowledge of rural beliefs of the upper classes by making up signs of respect for various objects or buildings like

a sacred temple, statue, or tree. Balram doesn't take his religion too seriously and often pokes fun at it, especially at the number of gods Hinduism has, which he quotes as:

I guess, Your Excellency, that I too should start off by kissing some god's arse. Which god's arse, though? There are so many choices. See, the Muslims have one god. The Christians have three gods. And we Hindus have 36,000,000 gods. Making a grand total of 36,000,004 divine arses for me to choose from. (8)

This is probably secular views of Adiga that he doesn't talk of one God from one religious community but all gods of all religious communities who reside in India. Talking of one will lead to conflict with other i.e. he mentions all without assuming one as superior.

Religion is revealed through the marriage of Ashok and Pinky Madam as Ashok's father does not approve their union because she is not from the same religion, community, caste and even country. Mr. Ashok repents and emphasizes on the values of religions and castes that exists in Indian society, "Of course, in your caste you don't... Let me tell you, Balram. Men drink because they are sick of life. I thought caste and religion didn't matter any longer in today's world. My father said, "No, don't marry her, she's of another... I..." (185). It is well known fact that god is earnestly remembered in crisis, disappointment, sorrow and suffering. Mr. Ashok is disappointed due to the divorce of his wife he is thinking of life and death. He says, "Sometimes I wonder, Balram. I wonder what's the point of living. I really wonder..."(186). Balram is trying to pacifying him ridiculously not because he is receiving three and half thousands per month if his master will not live how he will get his payment. Balram says Ashok, "You must believe in God, sir. You must go on.

My granny says that if you believe in God, then good things will happen” (186).

There is also some debate on the tensions between Hindus and Muslims. According to what is depicted in *The White Tiger*, there is not much love for Muslims in India. For instance, Balram is able to get the other driver of Ashok’s family, Ram Persad, fired because Persad is a Muslim in hiding. However, Balram does feel sorry for Persad and feels some regret for his actions.

Similarly, it has raised the issues like immoral corruption inherent in Indian society, familial loyalty versus independence, cultural and religious tensions among people and so on. It is a critique of the inequalities of caste, wealth, religion found in India. It is a dominant exposure of new India. It is a story of entrepreneurship and corruption. The exploitation of the lower caste people who are trapped in the cycle of poverty will shock the reader, but at the same time, the achievement of Balram provides hope for the future. The novel raises other issues like globalization, freedom, individualism; culture and economic domination of the West upon non-Western countries, and ambivalence on the part of non-Western societies like Indian society are compelled to follow western ways of life. The people of non-Western societies are being fascinated and assimilated with Western culture, economic system and the ways of life. They take Western culture as superior and their own culture as inferior. In the novel, Mr. Ashok, the son of the landlord, feels uncomfortable to adjust in Indian society who has been educated in American universities. He finds many limitations in his own country and feels nostalgic towards the American way of life. He expresses his feelings in such a way, “Pinky, that was New York – you can’t drive in India, just look at this traffic. No one follows any rules – people run across the road like crazy-look-look at that....It’s on the wrong side of the road! The driver of that tractor hasn’t even noticed!” (81). The novel is full of such instances which makes clear what kind

of opinion the native Indians hold about India and other developed Western countries.

Adiga, in the novel, *The White Tiger*, shows the internal dilemma of the postcolonial people. The postcolonial people can neither adopt the colonizer's culture totally nor create a different identity following the native culture. The same kind of dilemma is the main characteristic of the protagonist, Balram and his master, Ashok Sharma. Ashok's wife, Pinky Madam always insists him to return to America whereas he cannot make any bold decision and follow the decisions of his guardians. Finally, they get divorced and Pinky returns to America. She shows her fascination towards America and hatred towards India in the novel time and again.

Similarly, the protagonist shows his pride towards the achievement and the work of the East, and criticizes the Western people and their way of life in such words:

Out of respect for the love of liberty shown by the Chinese people, and also in the belief that the future of the world lies with the Yellow man and the Brown man now that our erstwhile master, the white-skinned man, has wasted himself through buggery, mobile phone usage, and drug abuse...Don't waste your money on those American books.

They're so yesterday. I am tomorrow. (5-6)

In this way, Balram tries to glorify the achievement by the Eastern people and countries in the modern time. He tries to resist the Western dominance saying that they are the matter of the past. But at the same time, he shows his unlimited desire for English language, music, book and wine, white woman, Western culture and society, and feels sad for the degraded condition of their own. Such anglophile mentality of protagonist is revealed in such sentence, "The 'blackish face' bit is still true-although I'm of half a mind to try one of those skin-whitener creams they have launched these

days so Indian men can look white as Westerners” (12). Likewise, he shows his hatred towards his own country, “See, this country, in its days of greatness, when it was the richest nation on the earth, was like a zoo. A clean, well-kept, orderly zoo” (63). As usual, Ashok Sharma, who has got his education in America, shows his fascination towards America and says, “No, its not, Really, its not. The way things are changing in India now, this place is going to be like America in ten years” (89). The lines, “Which meant doing things in India for Americans over the phone. Everything flowed from it – real estate, wealth, power, sex. So I would have to join this outsourcing thing, one way or the other” (298) show how the America has spread its control over India. These lines of the novel explicitly show the new type of colonization is taking place in the Eastern countries and how powerful countries like America is playing the vital role in keeping the powerless countries in their grip and control through the means of media, language, technology, money, and culture. The novel also projects the light on the sorrowful condition of Eastern people and how they are behaving and reacting in such circumstances.

Adiga presents the minute description of postcolonial India which is full of corruption, exploitation, and poverty. He describes the Delhi life saying “The main thing to know about Delhi is that the roads are good, and the people are bad. The police are totally rotten. If they see you without a seat belt, you’ll have to bribe them a hundred rupees” (124). It makes clear that how the policemen in India are participated to corrupt the people. He reflects on the condition of the poor people of India, who got independence technically on August, 1947 but they are still dominated by the rich and the powerful people of their own country. Adiga writes:

And then, thanks to all those politicians in Delhi, on the fifteenth of August, 1947 – the day the British left – the cages had been let open;

and the animals had attacked and ripped each other apart and jungle law replaced zoo law. Those that were the most ferocious, the hungriest, had eaten everyone else up, and grown big bellies... 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. (63-64)

The protagonist distinguishes the native Indians on the basis of their class and social status in this way “...in this country we have two kinds of men: ‘Indian’ liquor men and ‘English’ liquor, naturally, is for the rich. Rum, whisky, beer, gin-anything the English left behind” (72-73). All the rich characters are always willing to get the things that are imported from America and the West. They prefer to eat pizza and drink English liquor. They prefer to go to malls and discos. They prefer foreign women over natives. They prefer the Western clothes, language and books. The same attitude is for the poor people of India who want to have all those things that are foreign.

Beside other subjects, the traces of internal colonialism can also be found in *The White Tiger*. Internal colonialism refers to political and economic inequalities between religions within a single society. The term may be used to describe the uneven effects of state development on a regional basis and to describe the exploitation of minority groups within the wider society. An internal colony typically produces wealth for the benefit of those areas most closely associated with the state, usually the capital area. The members of the internal colonies are distinguished as different by a cultural variable such as ethnicity, language or religion. They are then excluded from prestigious social and political positions, which are designed by members of the metropolis. Adiga brings this concept of internal colonialism into the front position by calling the villages the “Darkness” and the cities the “Light”.

Chapter : Theoretical Methodology

Colonialism and Postcolonialism

Colonialism refers to a process of one country's domination over another people or country. This process seems possible through either psychological or military at first the specific culture of the colonies regarded as the source of power, it is difficult to control any country without surpassing or destroying it. Arjun Appadurai puts his opinion in such way, "minorities in many parts of the world are as artificial as the majorities they are seen to threaten" (163). In colonial literature, English man becomes an iconic figure being the medium of cultural imperialism of the West. The deprivation of decolonized is the almost direct result of the advantages secured to the colonizers on the nature of colonialism.

Postcolonialism can be defined as an approach to literary analysis that consists itself particularly of literature written in English in formerly colonized countries. It was an intellectual direction that exists around the middle of the 20th century. It develops form and mainly refers to the time after colonialism. The postcolonial direction was created as colonial countries became independent. It refers to all the characteristics of a society or culture from the time of colonization to the present.

Postcolonialism is a set of theories in philosophy, film, political sciences and literature that deals with the cultural inheritance of colonial rule. As a literary theory, it deals with literature produced in countries that once were colonies of other countries, especially of the European colonial powers Britain, France, and Spain. In some context, it includes countries still in colonial arrangements. It also deals with literature written in colonial countries and by their citizens that has colonized peoples as its subject matter.

During the nineteenth century British emerged as the largest imperial power, and by the turn of the twentieth century the British Empire ruled one quarter of the earth's surface, including India, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, and significant holdings in Africa, the West Indies, South America, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. British colonial domination continued until the end of World War I, when India gained independence in 1947, and other colonies gradually followed suit. By 1980, British had lost all but a few of its colonial holdings.

Postcolonial writers in English have attempted a rereading of cultural histories throughout the previously colonized countries such as reading a way to reconstruct indigenous literature. The pioneers of postcolonialism like Edward Said, Franz Fanon, Homi Bhabha among others concerned themselves with the social and cultural effect of colonization. They regarded the way in which the West paved its passage to the orient and the rest of world based on unconfounded truths. They asserted in their discourses that no culture is better or worse than other culture and consequently they nullified the logic of the colonialists.

The field of postcolonial studies has been gaining prominence since 1970s. Postcoloniality in literature emerged after the publication of Edward W. Said's widely recognized book *Orientalism* in 1978 and it is the foundational work in the establishment of Postcolonialism. Edward Said, in his work, *Orientalism* clarifies how the West politically, socially and culturally dominates the East through the means of postcolonial doctrine. He says:

My contention is that Orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine willed over the Orient because the Orient was weaker than the West, which elided the Orient's differences with its weakness...As a cultural

apparatus Orientalism is all aggression, activity, judgement, will-to-truth, and knowledge. (201)

The distinctions between the East and the West in terms of culture and representation are the major concerns to the postcolonial discourse. They misinterpret the culture in the East and try to impose their ideology in their culture. Said clarifies:

My whole point about this system is that it is a misinterpretation of same Oriental essence-in which I do not for a moment believe-but that it operates as representations usually do, for a purpose, according to a tendency, in a specific historical, intellectual and even economic setting. (273)

In *Orientalism*, Said talks about the discourse in which the West has created about the East on the basis of binary opposition to enhance their imperial mission further. Said further clarifies the concept of Orient as:

The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories, landscapes and remarkable experience. The Orient is not adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestants and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the other. (87)

For him, Orientalism is the style of thought which is nothing more than the Western fantasy that prevailed through all histories and the locations. The purpose of Orientalism is to rule. He argues that it is the West which pretends to know the Orient. This pretension of knowledge generates power for the West to exercise over the non-West. But the Orient is always represented through the imagination of the West. In

representing such reality, they present Orient as mystic, exotic, peculiar, feminine, storage, submissive, passive, degenerated, timeless, and something which is unlike the West.

Said claims that Orientalism in twentieth century has taken the American turn and Western power is centralized in America whereas oriental space is more centralized in the Middle-East. In the latest phase, American cultural policy is guided by the binaries of the West versus the Islam. Their foreign policy is directed towards treating the Islam as the other, American relies on the stereotypical image of the Islam. This generalization is done by mass-media so that the image remains in the mind of all the Western people. This representation in mass-media shows the American prejudice against the Islam. America and the West label the Islam as dishonest, superstitious, untrustworthy, irrational, dogmatic, degenerated and thoughtless. They think 'Middle East' as enemy. In the same manner, he hints at latest thinking of the West which does not recognize the Islam as a part of humanity.

Postcolonialism seeks to intervene to force its alternative knowledge into the power structures of the West as well as the non-West. It seeks to change the way people think, the way they behave, to produce a more just and equitable relation between the different peoples of the world. So, it is about changing world, a world that has been changed by struggle and which its practitioners intended to change further. As Leela Gandhi in *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* says:

Postcolonialism can be seen as a theoretical resistance to the mystifying amnesia of the colonial aftermath. It is a disciplinary project devoted to academic task of process of returning to the colonial scene discloses a relationship of reciprocal antagonism and desire between colonizer and colonized. (4)

This view interprets and unfolds troublesome relationship between colonizers and colonized and it focuses on the ambivalent postcolonial condition. It urges reader to recollect the invasion and seduction of colonial power. Postcolonialism narrates multiple stories of uncomfortable condition to participate with colonizer's culture. It is not only the reservoir of raw political experience that can be theorized from the enlightened perspectives of present. It is also the scene of intense discursive and the conceptual activity described by the large amount of thought and writing about the cultural and political identities of colonized subjects.

Postcolonial criticism locates diversity in a history of the uneven representational and material relations between variously privileged people and places in the world. Homi K. Bhabha elaborates of the postcolonial criticism in his *The Location of Culture*:

Postcolonial criticism bears witness to the unequal and uneven forces of culture of representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order...They formulate their critical revisions around issues of cultural difference, social authority, and political discrimination in order to reveal the antagonistic and ambivalent moments within the 'rationalizations' of modernity. (171)

Those incidents are often the grounds of historical necessity for elaborating empowering strategies of emancipation, staging other social antagonisms. To reconstitute the discourse of culture difference, demand not simply a change of cultural contents and symbols. A replacement within the same time – frame of representation is never adequate. It requires a radical revision of the social temporality in which emergent histories may be written. The rearticulating of the 'sign' in which

cultural identities may be inscribed. Lois Tyson further elaborates about postcolonial criticism:

Postcolonial criticism seeks to understand the operation-politically, socially, culturally, and psychologically – of colonialist and anticolonialist ideologies. For example, a good deal of postcolonial criticism analyzes the ideological forces, that on the one hand, pressed the colonized to internalize the colonizers' values and, on the other hand, promoted the resistance of colonized peoples against their oppressors, a resistance that is as old as colonialism itself. (418)

It is clear that postcolonial criticism defines formally colonized people as any population that has been subjected to the political domination of another population. Colonialist and anticolonialist ideologies can be present in any literary text. A work doesn't have to be categorized as postcolonial to be able to use postcolonial criticism to analyze it.

Postcolonial theory deals most significantly with cultural contradictions, ambiguities and ambivalence associated with the history of colonialism. It accounts for the experience of displacement of the third world people in the metropolitan centres mainly the chief cities of Europe and America and cultural hybridity generated by the first and third world interaction. This theory evokes the contemporary theoretical writing, placed both first and which attempt to transcend the binarism of third world militancy. This theory has often used to cover such a wide area that includes multiplicity of identity and subject positioning which results from displacement, immigration and exiled without policing and original lines. In other words, it includes multicultural perspective all together and represents multiplicity of

experiences as described by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin in *The Postcolonial Studies Reader*:

Postcolonial theory involves discussion about experience of various kinds: migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race, gender, place and responses to the influential master discourses of imperial Europe such as history, philosophy and linguistics and fundamental experiences of speaking and writing by which all these come into being. None of those is essentially postcolonial but together they form the complex fabric of the world. (2)

It means that Postcolonial theory is not a single index of linguistics philosophy, literature, culture and geography. It is rather a mixed identity. Though the term 'postcolonial' refers to something that came after the end of colonialism, there is no fixed time and place of its origin, rather it is a process that goes on developing with the passage of time as Padmini Mongia says: "[...] the term postcolonial refers not to a single periodization but rather to a methodological revisionism which enables of wholesale critic of Western structure of knowledge and power, particularly those of the Post-Enlightenment period" (2). It is arguable that the colonial period has been followed by post innocence after colonial one. Used with an uncritical emphasis on the 'post', the term directs attention away from present inequities – political economy and discursive in the global system. Other critics, though, read the 'post' in postcolonial as signifying both changes in power structure after the official end of colonialism continuing effects as they are manifested discursively. Taisa Abrahams writes: "Postcolonial theories explain the significance of the politics of location by showing how the effects of colonial rule intersect differently with different societal power structures" (6). Postcolonial theories in this sense are incompressible tied

with questions of nationalism and citizenship. However, it is important to note that modern nation-state itself as it has emerged through colonialism, is problematized by postcolonial theories.

Postcolonial literature is different from colonial literature because it is the outcome of the independence of former colonies. Unlike the colonial literature it is written by the authors of such colonies. The primary purpose of the text written by colonialist author is to serve the colonialism. Through their writings they create certain truths and discourse about colonized nation, culture and people with their superior mentality. Their false nation and negative analysis of the non-Western nation, culture and people are obliged to be hegeomonized before the Europeans.

Ania Loomba in *Colonialism and Postcolonialism* says that literature has to represent the struggle, passion, pain and landscapes that lie close to the colonized people. In colonialist criticism, she makes a criticism against European colonization over Africa and Asia. She makes a suggestion to the African writers to write about African experience. She opens:

From the early days of colonization, therefore, not only text in general, but literature, broadly defined, underpinned efforts to interpret other lands, offering homes audiences a way of thinking about exploration, Western conquest, national velour, new colonial acquisitions. Travelers, traders, administrators, settlers, ‘read’ the strange and new by drawing on familiar books such as Bible or ‘Pilgrims Progress’. Empires were of course as powerfully shaped by military conflict, the unprecedented displacement of peoples, and the quest for profits. (14)

Colonialism brought organized system of government and law to many territories. The colonial power gradually built up administrative system based on

European system of government. Gradually many colonial people became accustomed to regarding their territory as a separate country distinct from neighboring territories. In such territories they were influenced by the European ideas. They had the knowledge and confidence to rule their own territories. Albert Memmi elaborates the condition of colonialism in *Colonialism and Neo-colonialism*:

These people excluded from system will proclaim their exclusion in the name of national identity it is colonialism that celebrates the patriotism of the colonized. Maintained at the level of animals by an oppressive system they are not given any rights not even the right to live and their condition worsens day by day: when a person's only remaining option is in choosing how to die when they have received from their oppressors only one gift despair what they got left to lose? (4)

On the other hand, the colonizers have also created fictitious discourse that simply other whelms the tender mind of the colonized. His follower Edward Said extends his theory of discourse and links it with real social political struggle. He propagates that discourse are the result of real power struggle in the relation between the East and the West and the role of Orientalism as a governing force in this relationship. About the large sector of post colonial study, the *Post-colonial Studies Reader* mentions as follows:

While postcolonial theory was a certain of literacy study, it has provided a methodology for this wide range of disciplines because it has acknowledged the very specific forms of colonial and neo-colonial power operating in the world today. [...] One way in which the term 'post colonial' has come to be deployed is in the engagement with issues of cultural diversity, ethnic, and cultural difference and the power

relations within them—a consequence of an expanded and more subtle understanding of the dimensions of neo-colonial dominance. (5)

It is clear that the term postcolonial covers the various issues in the dimensions of its study. The writings from the postcolonial perspective always carry some feature of postcolonial literature because the text itself is shaped according to the power relation between colonizers and colonized as the postcolonial texts. The authors always try to capture the issues of diasporas, restraint, resistance against the colonial power, celebration of self identity, etc.

The term postcolonial carries its implication that colonialism is now a matter of the post undermining colonialism economic, cultural and political reformative traces in the present. The post colonial inadvertently glosses over the fact that global hegemony even in the post cold war era, persists in forms other than over colonial rule. The hegemonic structure and conceptual frame works, generated over the colonial era has developed the consequences of worldwide cultural disjunction.

The westerners always try to impose their norms and values to the people of non-West. They have the colonial mentality. In the period of colonization they had the tendency of imperial colonization by capturing the large territory of foreign land. But, in the phase of postcolonization, they aim to colonize the world by imposing their cultures, thoughts, tendencies as well as norms and values. They aim to create the universalism in the issue of culture by hegemonizing the rest of the world apart from the West. The cultural imperialism functions through their superior mentality. In this regard, Lois Tyson writes:

Colonialist ideology was based on the colonizers' assumption of their own superiority, which they contrasted with the alleged inferiority of native (indigenous) peoples, the original inhabitants of the lands they

invaded. The colonizers believed that only their own Anglo-European culture was civilized, sophisticated, or, as postcolonial critics put it, metropolitan. (419)

Therefore, native people were defined as savage, backward, and undeveloped because their technology was more highly advanced, and they ignored or swept aside the religious, customs, and codes of behavior of the people they subjugated. So the colonizers saw themselves at the centre of the world. The colonized were at the margins. The above idea also takes it granted that European culture becomes the standard to which all other cultures are negatively contrasted.

In postcolonial discourse, representation is associated with Foucault's concept of discourse as a 'system of representation'. Discourse forms knowledge and truth which are contextual, historical and subjective. Discursive practice can not be objective which is also claimed by Said in his *Orientalism*. He takes the Western perspective about the East as 'the other'. Orientalism has the base of Western interests, ideologies and politics. This is exposed in what Said calls:

Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient-dealing with it by making statements of it, authorizing views about it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism is a western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. (3)

Likewise, colonial discourse constructs hierarchy and binarism between the statuses of colonizers and colonized. Colonizers are assumed to be educated, civilized, and superior, and their main purpose is to educate and civilize the colonized people. The colonizers create colour-gender discrimination between themselves as 'whites' and 'men' opposed to 'non-European' as 'blacks' and 'women'. The hierarchies and

binarism constructed by the colonial discourses primarily vests upon the concept of 'fixity' laid by colonizers upon colonized people, as Homi K. Bhabha discloses:

An important feature of colonial discourse is its dependence in the concept of 'fixity' in the ideological construction of otherness. Fixity as the sign of cultural/historical/racial difference in the discourse of colonialism is a paradoxical mode of representation. (293)

The colonizers always follow the fixed and stereotyped construction while representing the countries and people they colonized. These sorts of stereotypical representation and negative images against orientals create myths of the native and licensed with power; form the sole force of colonialism.

Colonial discourse would not have been the effective weapon of domination. It however, consisted solely of the more tautological assertion of power over others. Its effectiveness was in the magical nature, in that it sought primarily to enable the conqueror to possess the conquered, to make it possible for the colonizer to occupy the minds of the colonized, so that ultimately the colonized would identify with the colonizer and adopt the latter's worldview.

Postcolonialism as a concept enters into critical discourse in the late 1970s and early 1980s. But both the practice and the theory of postcolonial resistance go back much back indeed to the origins of colonialism itself. Postcolonial studies, thus direct its critique against the cultural hegemony of European knowledge in an attempt to reassert the epistemological value and agency of non-European world.

These studies have focused especially on the Caribbean islands and South African scholars however extend the scope of such analysis also to the discourse and cultural productions of such countries as Canada, Australia, and New Zealand which achieved independence much earlier than the third world countries. Post is also an

aspect of British literature is viewed through a perspective of the non-West. It tries to address and resist the literature underwritten by colonial exploitation.

After World War I, territorial colonialism is transferred to textual colonialism. This textual discourse or colonialism continues to underpin the positive portrayals of the colonizers and the native portrayals also of the colonized. In order to endorse the colonizers, Lois Tyson unveils the colonialist ideology in such a way, “Colonialist ideology was based on the colonizer’s assumption of their own superiority, which they contrasted with the alleged inferiority of indigenous people, the original inhabitants of the lands they invaded. The colonizers believed that only their own Anglo-European culture was civilized sophisticated” (366). This idea also takes it for granted that European culture becomes the standard to which all other cultures are negatively contrasted. These lines stand European culture as standard for all humankind and other culture today is called Eurocentricism. A common instance of Eurocentric is the philosophy of so-called universalism. British European and later, American cultural standard-bearers judged all literature in terms of its universality. It means that literary text had to be of the universal themes and characters and judged on the standard for European literature. Thus the colonization now is in the form of text and representation of universal culture.

Besides economic benefit, European countries tried to expand their cultural and religious hegemony. They imposed their religion and culture in the name of civilizing mission. They took native people as ignorant and uncivilized and found ‘Christianity’ only means to civilize those people. In some places, they fully converted to Christianity whereas in some countries, they combined the Christianity with their existing beliefs and culture. At that time, colonizing power had justified their colonial activities on what they called humanistic motives as they call nowadays

'human right', 'individual freedom' and make war with those countries which do not conform their ideology.

Postcolonialism also deals with conflicts of identity and cultural belonging. Colonial powers came to foreign states and destroyed main parts of native tradition and culture. Furthermore, they continuously replaced them with their own ones. This often leads to conflict when countries became independent and suddenly faced the challenge of developing a new national wide identity and self-confident. However, postcoloialism has increasingly become an object of scientific examination since 1950 when Western intellectual began to get interested in the "Third World countries." In the seventies, this interest led to an integration of discussions about postcolonialism in various study courses at American Universities. Nowadays it also plays a remarkable role at European Universities.

Chapter : Textual Analysis

Representation of India in Adiga's *The White Tiger*

The novel, *The White Tiger* paints a vivid and unsettling picture of life in the remarkably different societies that include modern India. Indian population is more than 15 percent of the world's population. The country has grown to become an economic power, and yet vast numbers of its inhabitants have little to show for its prosperity. The novel takes the form of a series of letters to Wen Jiabao, the Chinese Premier, from Balram Halwai, the Bangalore businessman who is the self-styled "White Tiger" on the title. He writes these letters to inform the Premier so that he will not be fooled by any of the false picture of the politicians about the life in India when he comes for his official visit. Wen Jiabao is impartial to visit India to learn why it is so good at producing entrepreneurs. Balram presumes to tell him how to win the power and influence people in the modern India.

In the novel *The White Tiger*, the writer tries to depict the reality of the people within Indian society in the modern time. He shows Indian society in suffering due to corruption, poverty, exploitation and domination of the poor people. Likewise, he shows the Western influence upon the people and society of India. The very first line of the novel, "Neither you nor I speak English, but there are some things that can be said only in English" (3) indicates the influence of the West upon the people of the non-Western countries. The novel is presented in the epistolary form. The first line of the novel indicates that they have to use English as common lingua franca to communicate with each other although their native language is different. They have to use something which has been brought from the West. An Indian native is forced to use the language of their past master.

The novel gives the detailed accounts of the Indian society, rural as well as urban and its various features. Laxmangarh, Gaya, Dhanbad, Delhi and Bangalore are represent the portrait of India. Poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, caste and culture conflict, superstition, dowry practice, economic disparity and exploitation of marginal farmers and landless labourers, corrupt education system, poor health service, entrepreneur success and its fallout etc. constitute the basic structure of the Indian society which largely forms the Dark image of India. Adiga writes:

A month before the rain, the men came back from Dhanbad and Delhi and Calcutta, leaner, darker, angrier, but with money in their pockets. The women were waiting for them. They hid behind the door, and as soon as the men walked in, they pounced, like wild cats on a slab of flesh. There was fighting and wailing and shrieking. (26)

The narrator tells us that all the poor Indians act the same way in that they are stuck in a disgusting situation that they will not leave. But because they are part of the rooster coop, they will not take advantage of the careless mistakes of the upper castes.

The protagonist in *The White Tiger* points out that India is divided into two: India of 'Light' and India of 'Darkness'. India of Light belongs to the rich of India who can create their desired life style, even in the dusty and scorching Indian plains. They possess the money that is the ultimate source of power whereas India of Darkness is the India of the poor. Residents of the Dark India are blazed by the India of Light which shines only because of the lights stolen from the Dark India, its inhabitants and its rich resources. Poverty rules supreme in India of Darkness because its wealth fills the bank accounts of the ones living in the India of Light. It is the India of the Darkness that the novel sympathizes with, presenting a desolate, gloomy and brutally realistic image of it. Dark India is rotten, corrupted and blackened to the core

by those who are filthy rich. The rich want their dogs to be treated like human beings and the poor human beings live like the dogs. As Balram says: “India is two countries into one, India of Light and an India of Darkness. The ocean brings light to my county. Every place on the map of India near the ocean is well-off. But the river brings darkness to India – the black river” (14).

Living conditions for the residents of the darkness are frightening and animal like. Electricity poles are there but they are outdated. Dark India has water taps but those are broken and get no supply of water. Adiga disapproves at the way that the government plans for the provision of better facilities of life to the poor masses. Instead of providing them clean drinking water, government provides these thirsty populaces the mobile phones and cheap call rates: “What do you people in Delhi give us? You give us mobile phones. Can a man drink a phone when he is thirsty?” (269). Children in dark India are like ghosts with over sized heads because of malnutrition.

Many residents of Dark India move to the cities in the hope of a better life. They can be seen scattered in the city, with expectant eyes though their expectations hardly get fulfilled. They fail because they do not have the moral strand to say good bye to their slave like ways and get rid of their inner demons which bar them from showing any disobedience to the rich who restrict their upward way to progress and better opportunities. People who come from darkness can be recognized very easily. “You can tell by their thin bodies, filthy faces, by the animal – like way they live under the huge bridges and overpasses, making fires and washing and taking lice out of their hair while the cars roar past them” (119-20).

Most of the things about the residents of Dark India are unalterable. Their diseases never get cured, because of their inaccessibility to the medical facilities. They have no sense of individuality. They sleep together at nights with legs crossed

around each other. They fight and quarrel daily without any definite reason, pull each other's hair, slap each other and after few hours become friends again:

Every now and then they stop their work, because it is time to fight this means throwing metal vessel at one other, or pulling each others' s hair, and then making up, by putting kisses on their palm and pressing them to others' cheeks. At night they sleep together, their legs falling one over others, like one creature, a millipede (21).

They do not own even their own bodies. Their bodies are owned by their rich masters. They do not have any control on their lives. Their lives are controlled by the rich people who rule over them and make all the decisions for them. They are born with their destinies. These destinies are generally of their castes. Balram says, "See: Halwai, my name, means 'sweet-maker. 'That's my caste – my destiny. Everyone in the Darkness who hears that name knows all about me at once" (63).

Similar opinion is expressed by the protagonist again which shows the two Worlds within one country: one is for the poor people and another for the rich people of the country:

That Delhi, is the capital of not one but two countries-to Indias. The Light and the Darkness both flow into Delhi. Gurgoun, where Mr. Ashok lived, is the bright, modern end of city, and this place, old Delhi, is the other end. Full of things that the modern world forgot all about- rickshaw, old stone building and Muslims (251).

While the novel moves from country to city, the whole world of poor also migrates – their exploitation and sufferings. Big cities like Delhi and Bangalore witness both kinds of India. Balram's journey from Laxmangarh to Dhanbad then Delhi and finally to Bangalore endorses that the socio-psychological condition of the poor people

remains unchanged. Everywhere the poor people are trapped in rooster coop, struggling to come out of the cage: “One night, will they all join together – will they destroy the Rooster Coop?” (303). Balram is the conscience of poor – their anger, frustration, protest and revenge, ready to adopt a new moral code of conduct to succeed in life. Balram says, “I’ll never say I made a mistake that night in Delhi when I slit my master’s throat” (320). Murder of Ashok by Balram is the reaction of deep-rooted frustration of poor experiencing the polarity between the upper class and lower class. Apart from these, pollution, chaotic routine of life, harmful effects of mobile, impact of city culture etc. create new territories of Darkness in India.

Zamindari practice is also a powerful source of exploitation and suppression of the poor people. Buffalo, Stork, Wild Boar, and Raven are four landlords who got their names from the peculiarities of hunger that had been distinguished in them. Due to their exploitative tendencies, Adiga calls them “Animals” (25). The landlords are at the top level in India who have got special position in the society. The narrator describes his village landlords to show how they are different from other commoners, “All four of the Animals lived in high-walled mansions just outside Laxmangarh – the landlords’ quarters. They had their own temples inside the mansions, and their own wells and ponds, and did not need to come out into the village except to feed” (25). In the same manner, the protagonist talks how the four landlords have imposed their authority upon the resources of Laxmangarh village:

The Stork was a fat man...He owned the river that flowed outside the village, and he took a cut of every catch of fish caught by every fisherman in the river, and a toll from every boatman who crossed the river to come to our village. His brother was called the Wild Boar. This fellow owned all the good agricultural land around Laxmangarh...The

Raven owned the worst land, which was the dry, rocky hillside around the fort, and took a cut from the goatherds who went up there to graze with their flocks... The Buffalo was the greediest of the lot. 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)

In the above lines, the protagonist shows the exploitation done by the landlords upon the poor people of the village. It is the use of satire that gives a shocking insight into the Indian politician, minister and ruler. Balram further says, “Animals stayed and fed of the village, and everything that grew in it, until there was nothing left for anyone else to feed on. So the rest of the village left Laxmangarh for food” (26).

Poor health services and non-implementation of government policies expose the uncontrolled corruptions which collectively increase the miseries of the poor. Balram’s father dies due to the lack of hospital and medical facilities. Balram says, “The disease of the poor can never get treated. My father had TB and it killed him” (237). Medical services are shown as an object of political ridicule and social shame. The Great Socialist inaugurates Lohia Free Hospital in view of election result. There is no doctor in the hospital, doctor seldom visits the hospital; even the rooms are not safe. Balram reports:

Cat has tasted blood. A couple of Muslim men had spread a newspaper on the ground and were sitting on it. One of them had an open wound on his leg. He invited us to sit with him and his friend. Kishan and I lowered father onto the newspaper sheets. We waited there... the Muslim men kept adding newspapers to the ground, and the line of diseased eyes, raw wounds, and delirious mouths kept growing. (48-49)

Balram narrates that the corrupt and defunct education system operates in the Indian society. In Laxmangarh, there is a typical school teacher called, ‘big paan-and spit Men’ (29). He goes to sleep by the noon, and drinks toddy in the school. Supply of free food to the school goes to the teacher who gives lawful excuse for it, “He said he hadn’t been paid his salary in six months” (33). Truck full of uniform that government has sent to school is not issued to the children, “but a week later they turned up for sale in the neighbouring village” (33). The whole education system is governed by the “crowd of thugs and ideates” (35), with Adiga calls “That’s what you are, in this jungle” (35). Educational facilities are spare. School, where the protagonist Balram studies, is a nightmare. Big lizards crawl around in the school building, the walls of the school are broken and there is not any furniture for the students. Balram says, “There was a giant cupboard in my classroom, whose door was always slightly ajar – no one knew what it was there for. One morning, the door cracked open, and a lizard jumped out” (28). It shows that how the education system in the Indian society is corrupted by the handful masters.

The novel also shows the vast difference in education between the rich and the poor in Indian society. The rich usually buy English books, magazines and newspapers paying high price where as the servants or the poor are shown busy with some cheap pornographic magazine such as *Murder Weekly*. The great irony shown in the novel is that a person is selling English books though he doesn’t understand English and knows the books from their covers. Balram describes his feelings when he is around the books though they are in foreign language, “So I stood around that big square of books. Standing around books, even books in a foreign language, you feel a kind of electricity buzzing up towards you” (205). A conversation between

Balram and a shopkeeper goes like this which shows the poor are marginalized in terms of education and how much emphasis they give on English language:

‘Do you read English?’ he barked.

‘Do you read English?’ I retorted...

‘No’ he said, breaking into a smile, as if he appreciated my balls.

‘So how do you sell the books without knowing English?’

‘I know which book is what from the cover’, he said. (205)

Balram seems astonished when the shopkeeper says that one of his friends “Sells magazines from England that cost five hundred and eight rupees each” (207) and the rich kids buy them while the poor people are unable to pay even for their breads.

Balram feels dishonored as a human being, disadvantaged of basic human rights to enter a shopping mall. A poor driver can not enter a mall as he belongs to the poor class. If he walks into the mall someone will say, “Hey, That man is a paid driver! What is he doing in here? There were guards in gray uniforms on every floor – all of them seemed to be watching me. It was my first taste of the fugitive’s life” (151-52). Balram reviews one of the newspaper reports on the malls, in the early days entitled “Is There No Space for the Poor in the Malls of New India?” (148). The security guards at these shopping malls identify the poor wearing sandal let in only those wearing shoes, while a poor man in sandals is driven out. This makes a man in sandals explode “Am I not a human being too?” (148).

Balram’s master Ashok lives in a new apartment called Buckingham Tower A Block, which is one of the best in Delhi. Ashok spends a lot of time visiting malls, along with Pinky Madam, his wife and Mongoose, his brother. Balram’s job is also to carry all the shopping bags as they come out of the malls. The servants are always suppressed by their masters for not having any reason. The mean and stingy behavior

of the rich is shown through the lost coin episode where Mongoose insults Balram for not having retrieved a rupee coin he lost while getting out of the car. He is so bothered about a rupee coin after bribing someone with a million rupees. In this regard Balram narrates:

‘Get down on your knees. Look for it on the floor of the car’. I got down on my knees. I sniffed in between the mats like a dog, all in search of that one rupee. What do you mean, it’s not there? Don’t think you can steal from us just because you’re in the city. I want that rupee.’ We’ve just paid half a million rupees in a bribe... Finally, I took a rupee coin of my shirt, dropped it on the floor of the car, picked it up, and gave it to the Mongoose. (139)

The mean behaviors of the masters continue when they instruct the servants about what they have to do and don’t have to do. Balram is told never to switch on the AC or play music when he is alone. He is badly treated by his masters. He writes the Chinese Premier expressing his feelings towards the past when his country India was the British colony and the native Indians were treated as slaves in such way:

It said that you Chinese are great lovers of freedom and individual liberty. The British tried to make you their servants, but you never let them do it. I admire that, Mr. Premier. I was a servant once, you see. Only three nations have never let themselves be ruled by foreigners: China, Afghanistan and Abyssinia. These are the only three nations I admire. (5)

In such a way, the protagonist desires the freedom so much and shows how precious it really is. Similarly, the lines, “They remain slaves because they can’t see what is beautiful in this world. That’s the truest thing anyone ever said” (40) also show how

much colonized people are suffering from the trauma of the past and desiring for new kind of free life. For them, freedom from any kind of domination and restriction is the most valuable thing.

The protagonist shows the common people's mentality that they cannot think of other things besides being a servant. The people's mentality is created in such way that can't think and go out of that. Balram talks of it like this, "Why did I feel that I had to go close to his feet, touch them and press them and make them feel good-why? Because the desire to be a servant had been bred into me: hammered into my skull, nail after nail, and poured into my blood ..." (193). In this way, the protagonist shows the common people's mentality who have lost their self-respect and confidence so put themselves in lowly and degraded position. Close to this, Balram comes to give an interesting history of the poor and rich which is full of bitter irony:

The history of the world is the history of a ten – thousand year war of brains between the rich and the poor. Each side is eternally trying to hoodwink the other side: and it has been this way since the start of time: The poor win a few battles (the peeping in the potted plants, the kicking of the pet dogs, etc.) but of course the rich have won the war for ten thousand years...but when understood correctly, spill out secrets that allow the poorest man in earth to conclude the ten-thousand-year-old brain-war on terms favourable to himself. (254)

Taking of his education, Balram demonstrates how every successful entrepreneur in India is incomplete. He asserts, "Fully formal fellow, after twelve years of school and three years of university, wear nice suits, join companies, and take orders from other men for the rest of their lives. Entrepreneurs are made half-baked clay "(11). His accounts of the cities of India are full of bitter ironical remarks that

reveal the real condition of the people living there. Talking of the city of Delhi, he comments:

And all the roads look the same, all of them go around and around grassy circles in which men are sleeping or eating or playing cards, and then four roads shoot off from that grassy circle...Thousands of people live on the sides of the roads in Delhi. They have come from the Darkness too – you can tell by their thin bodies, filthy faces, by the animal-like way they live under the bridges and overpasses, making fires and washing and taking lice out of their hair while the cars roar past them. (119-20)

In fact, it is this concept of human beings bound in the cage that brings out the central theme of the novel revealing the situation wherein the poor people of India are like a rooster in a basket. Nothing could be more bitter and ironical than the following remarks: “Indian’s are the world’s most honest people, like the Prime Minister’s booklet will inform you? No. It’s because 99.9 per cent of us are caught in the Rooster Coop just like those poor guys in the poultry market” (174-75). He further adds:

Never before in human history have so few owed so much to so many, Mr. Jiabao. A handful of men in this country have trained the remaining 99.9 percent – as strong, as talented as intelligent in every way – to exist in perpetual servitude; a servitude so strong that you can put the key of his emancipation in a man’s hands, he will throw it back at you with a curse. (175-76)

This dominating theme of the novel is all that the author aims at conveying to the readers, projecting India, the poor down – trodden people of India and the Indian landscape which he calls darkness as against the rich places of rich people which are

termed as light.

Many people in Indian societies are suffering from poverty because some middle and upper class elites have absorbed all the things that can be found in their land. They are in upper position because they were selected as the agent by colonizers when the process of decolonization was taking place. In the novel, the deep – rooted corruption in Indian society is shown in this way, “You’ve got a good scam going here – taking coal for free from the government mines. You’ve got it going because I let it happen... I said a million and a fucking half...” (104-5). In this way, a renowned politician called the Great Socialist, who always claims of working for poor people, is asking bribe with a businessman. The above lines have clearly shown how the entrepreneurs and the politicians are linked and how they use raw materials for free cheating common people. The protagonist talks about Great Socialist which shows the common practice of corruption among politicians in Indian societies, “The Great Socialist himself is said to have embezzled one billion rupees from the Darkness, and transferred that money into a bank account in a small, beautiful country in Europe full of white people and black money” (98).

The protagonist talks about many differences between the rich and the poor people. Their lifestyle, income, dressing, habitat, education etc. all are different. The Poor are made to live in crushing poverty and miserable condition because some powerful people have exploited them. “What do you expect, for seven thousand? The real thing costs forty, fifty” (235). The social system is so corrupted that the desire, feelings and necessities of the poor people are always neglected. As the poor servant, Balram is always suffering and ridiculed by his masters which made him think that the society is the jungle where he has to be cruel like a ‘White Tiger’ in order to survive and progress. There is perfect communication gap between the rich and the

poor. Balram tells, “Let animals live like animals; let humans live like humans. That’s my whole philosophy in a sentence” (276). Even the policy of government is discriminatory. There is a small market for the poor where the rich never go there and there are big shopping malls for the rich where the poor are not allowed to enter.

Balram reports:

Beyond the last shining shop begins the second PVR. Every big market in Delhi is two markets in one – there is always a smaller, grimmer mirror image of the real market, tucked somewhere into a by-lane. This is the market for the servants... The men who work in the cinemas, and who sweep them clean, come here to eat. The beggars have their homes here. (203-4)

Because of rising globalization, the protagonist watches countless buildings growing around, including shopping malls, call centers and clubs. All of these marvelous glass buildings are constructed by the residents of the Darkness but they are never allowed to enter there. Balram manages to go inside one shopping mall once, by wearing a T-shirt like that of Ashok. He regrets the fact that the poor builders are not allowed to peep inside the glass and the stone structures that they build with their own hands. “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). It shows the contradictions that the poor who build the malls are not allowed to go inside even to peep inside through the glass outside. The poor people build large mansions for the rich though they are obliged to live inside the small cottages or under the open space.

There are many divisions, sub-divisions and gaps in the Indian society that Adiga highlights in *The White Tiger*. People are divided on the basis of the liquor they

drink as, “‘English’ liquor men and ‘Indian’ liquor men” (73). English liquor is for the rich of India and Indian liquor is for the poor of India. The people who buy English liquor are privileged and carry an air of importance about them. The liquor sellers provide their orders quicker than the orders of Indian liquor men. On the other hand, the buyers of Indian liquor are underprivileged. They get their turn late in the row. They have to wait longer than others to get their liquor order from the sellers as they belong to the servant class, the poor. Balram says, “...In this country, we have two kinds of men: Indian liquor men and English liquor men. ‘Indian’ liquor is for village boys like me—toddy, arrack, country hooch. ‘English’ liquor, naturally, is for the rich. Rum, whisky, beer, gin—anything the English left behind” (72-73).

Adiga narrates Balram’s experience of buying English liquor for his rich masters and the deep sense of corruption that arises in the servants for their inability to drink Black Dog as it belonged to their masters, it was a luxury only for the rich. He tells us “He wanted to hold the bottle; he wanted to hold the full virgin bottle of first class whisky in his hand. He wanted to imagine that he was buying it for himself” (75). The protagonist describes of his colleague, another driver of the house showing latter’s keen desire to have English liquor like this:

On our way back to the house Ram Persad would always stop by the side of the road and slide the Black Dog out of its cardboard box. He said this was to check that Jackpot hadn’t cheated us. I knew he was lying. He just wanted to hold the bottle. He wanted to hold the full, virgin bottle of first-class whisky in his hand...my eyes still dazzled by the sight of so much English liquor. (75)

Like wine, the native Indians are fascinated to eat foreign foods like pizza. Ashok brings pizza to make his wife happy on her birthday. Balram speaks of that as

such, “I’m not talking of any ordinary home cooking, either – he got me to serve her some of that stinking stuff that comes in cardboard boxes and drives all the rich absolutely crazy” (153-54). They ridicule and laugh at him when he can not pronounce it correctly:

He goes to a good school in the Bangalore- an English school. Now he pronounce English like a rich man’s son. He can say ‘pizza’ the way Mr.Ashok said it. (and doesn’t he love eating pizza-that nasty stuff?) I watch with pride as he does his long division on clean white paper at the dinner table. All these things I never learned. (316)

The novel also presents the problem of the colonized people. Sometimes, they show their strong desire for the things that are Western. But at the same time, they show their contempt for those things and feel superior to their own culture, society and nation. Such things happen because they have experienced two cultures and modes of life. On the other hand, they show their pride for their achievements in this way, “You will know everything there is to know about how entrepreneurship is born, nurtured, and developed in this, the glorious twenty-first century of man. The century, more specifically, of the yellow and brown man. You and me” (6-7). The protagonist feels that in the twenty-first century, Asians are going to lead the World. Especially, India and Chinese are going to be forerunners in the World affairs.

At the same time, the native people also take their culture and society as degenerated and the West and the American culture as something which is superior to their culture. The narrator presents a dialogue of an Indian landlord and his son in such words: “Do you have to hit the servants, father?” ‘This is not America, son. Don’t ask questions like that” (71). Likewise, the native Indians’ strong desire to live in America is shown in such a way, “You lied about returning to America, didn’t you,

Ashok – you’re never going back, are you?” (81). Pinky asks her husband to leave India and return to America where they had got their education. Balram talks about his mistress and shows her intense fascination towards America in this way, “She’ll be happy in Gurgoan, it’s the most American part of the city” (121). At last, she goes to America leaving her husband alone without getting his permission.

In the novel, some characters show their admiration to their own culture and system. They pay respect to their achievement and criticize the West which shows their indirect revolt against the Western domination. They try to figure out the bad aspects of the Western civilization. Mostly, they pay respect to the Western things and try to achieve them but sometimes, they feel proud of their own achievement and success. The protagonist shows the proud for the achievement of Indian people in such words, “And these entrepreneurs – we entrepreneurs – have set up all these outsourcing companies that virtually run America now” (4). The protagonist, Balram shows his non-restraining fascination towards the Western things such as English language, wine, women, clothes, cars, companies, and so on. Similarly, his master, Ashok Sharma, who has returned from America getting education there, shows his praise towards America and denounces the Indian society frequently.

The protagonist shows his fascination towards the Western technology like this, “I’ve downloaded an image to my silver Macintosh laptop – I bought it online from a store in Singapore, and it really works like a dream” (11-12). Similarly, Ashok always uses his mobile phone and makes a call to America. At first, the village folk, Balram becomes surprised seeing that and puts his thought into words in this way, “Looking at him, I made two discoveries, almost simultaneously. Each filled me with a sense of wonder. Firstly, you could ‘talk’ on a mobile phone – to someone in New York – just by punching on its buttons. The wonders of modern science never cease to

amaze me” (142).

The protagonist talks about how his village is corrupted by “pornographic film” (23). Such films are brought from the West “featuring golden-haired woman from America or lonely ladies from Hong Kong...” (23) that has become the everyday part of the village life. The protagonist and other characters such as the old driver, Ramanathan, Ashok like the foreign women, “the old driver explained the nature of the wares on offer... were the ‘Americans’: girls in short skirts and high platform shoes, carrying pink handbags with names in English... ‘Good’, the old driver said. ‘I like that to – I always go for the foreign ones” (58). Many instances such as, “Listen, do you want one now? A European girl?” (216), or “Six thousand and five hundred, Country – Mouse. That’s the minimum. White skin has to be respected” (228) can be found in the novel which shows the Indian male’s desire of foreign women.

The protagonist becomes class conscious. He journeys from rags to riches because of his education. Education serves as a tool of emancipation for him. He learns from the world, from the people and from his experience as well as from the other experiences. When he moves to the cosmopolitan city, he is suddenly aware that this city is also divided. It is the capital of two different India: India of the Light and India of Darkness. Cities in Darkness are the “half-baked cities built for half-baked men” (52). “Gurgaon, Mr. Ashok lived, is the bright modern end of the city and this place, Old Delhi, is the other end. Full of things that the modern world has forgotten all about – rickshaws, old stone buildings, and Muslims” (251-52). Here Balram observes the reasons of widening and impassable gap between the rich and the poor. Ashok bribes the politicians by giving them the hard earned money of his village people.

Balram is forced even to take the blame of murder committed by Ashok's wife, Pinky. She happens to crush a child under her car while she drunk. He has to suffer humiliation in the hands of his masters with ever increasing menial duties which climaxes in his being blackmailed. He is forced to sign a statement accepting full responsibility for the accident:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

I, Balram Halwai, son of Vikram Halwai, of Laxmangarh village in the district of Gaya, do make the following statement of my own free will and intention:

That I drove the car that hit an unidentified person, or persons, or person and objects, on the night of January 23rd of this year. That I then panicked and refused to fulfil my obligations to the injured party or parties by taking them to the nearest hospital emergency ward. That there were no other occupants of the car at the time of the accident.

That I was alone in the car, and alone responsible for all that happened.

I swear by almighty God that I make this statement under no duress and under instruction from no one. (167)

Here, he realizes the cruelty of system and face of justice is torn apart as he notices the falseness of the high abstract ideals of truth actuality. His employer's family entices him to sign a statement, "You're part of my family. My heart filed up with pride. I crouched on the floor, happy as a dog, and waited for him to say it again" (166). It infuriates Balram all the more. This anger rises day by day, gradually taking the form of a storm inside him. He describes the response of police towards the crimes committed on the members of different classes. "A man on bicycle getting killed – the police even do not have to register a case. A man on motor bike getting killed – they

would have to register that. A man in a car getting killed – they would have thrown me in the jail” (309). He tries to take his revenge on Ashok in every possible way. He steals petrol from his car. He wants more money from him and he copies his life style.

The protagonist dares to dream of joining the well heeled class by breaking the social, moral and religious shackles in which he has been enchained since his birth because he belonged to the lowest economic stratum of Indian society. His education, his aspirations and his quest for learning are submitted because of the oppression and exploitation of the capitalist class. He spends the early years of his life in utter poverty and misery. As he says, “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” (30). He witnesses his family members struggling to make both ends meet. His father dies because of insufficient economic means to access good medical facilities to cure his tuberculosis. His mother also dies because of the helplessness that it results from poverty.

Balram wants to escape from the rooster coop. Having been a witness to all of Ashok’s corrupt practices and gambling with money to buy politicians, Balram decides to steal the money from him. Balram explores deep into his subconscious as he plans to loot Rs.700,000 stuffed into the red bag. As he comments:

Go on, just look at the red bag – that’s not stealing, is it? She shook my head. And even you were to steal it, Balram, it wouldn’t be stealing. How so? I look at the creature in the mirror. See – Mr. Ashok is giving money to all these politicians in Delhi so that they will excuse him from the tax he has to pay. And who owns that tax, in the end? Who but the ordinary people of this country – you! (244)

The money is sufficient for Balram to begin a new life with a house of his own, a motorbike and a small shop. He conceives the murder plan in quick succession: “The

dream of the rich, and the dreams of the poor – they never overlap, do they?...And what do the rich dream of? Losing weight and looking like the poor” (225). Balram thinks of making a confession of the entire misdeed, but instead of guilt he feels, “The more I stole from him, the more I realized how much he had stolen from me. To back to the analogy I used when describing Indian politics to you earlier, I was growing a belly at last” (231).

Balram succeeds in achieving his dream through education. He is well aware of all the worldly knowledge as he has been a keen and sensitive observer: “I have always been a big believer in education – especially my own” (52). He plans to establish a school for the children of the poor to give them lessons not of the abstract ideals of gods, loyalty, truth and obedience but of the harsh realities of life. They will change the destiny of India. He wants to encourage the liberated spirit in all the future generations as he says, “Haven’t I succeeded in the struggle that every man here should be making – the struggle not to take the lashes that your father took, not to end up in a mound of indistinguishable bodies that will rot in the black mud of Mother Ganga?” (318).

Aravind Adiga has given the readers an inspiration in the character of Balram. He is a protagonist well alive to the new hopes and demands of coming times. The novel is an apt account of the exploitation of the working class at the hands of capitalists. Balram breaks the shackles of class through class consciousness. His education and awareness make him class conscious and rips the frontage of the division of society. He awaits a revolution to turn the system on its head, to make the rich capitalists powerless. His schooling in crime begins with the reading of *Murderer Weekly* as all drivers do, to while away their time. He says, “Of course, a billion servants are secretly fantasizing about strangling their bosses – and that’s why the

government of India publishes the magazine and sells it on the streets for just four and a half rupees so that even the poor can buy it” (125).

Balram sums up his success story as an entrepreneur in Bangalore. He moves from success to success – from being a social entrepreneur to a business entrepreneur. The circle is complete in his case like that of his boss Mr. Ashok, who was from a cook’s family. He claims to be different from Mr. Ashok. He states:

“Once I was a driver to a master, but now I am a master of drivers. I don’t treat them like servants – I don’t slap, bully, or mock anyone. I don’t insult any of them by calling them my ‘family’ either. They’re my employees; I’m their boss, that’s all. I make them sign a contract and I sign it too, and both of us must honor that contract. That’s all. If they notice the way I talk...I kicked them out of the office: no chitchat, no cups of coffee. A white tiger keeps no friends. It’s too dangerous” (302).

It shows that Balram is conscious how to treat his servants. He claims that he is better to behave his servants than his then master, Ashok. He also says that he is too dangerous them if they do chitchat him. He knows how to escape from being caught through corrupt means. He has got the roles reversed and justifies having masters like Ashok to enable white tiger like him to break out of the Coop.

The final impression of the novel is that it justifies every kind of trick to succeed in life. Balram Halwai transforms into Ashok Sharma – a Bangalore based successful entrepreneur is confident that he is “One of those who can not be caught in India” (320). Entrepreneurial success and modern city culture has deep-rooted impact on their life. A man, innocent and rustic, becomes a new man – selfish, opportunist and criminal which is the greatest harm to humanity. Balram’s journey from

Laxmangarh to Dhanbad then to Delhi and finally to Bangalore proves this loss: “All these changes happened in me because they happened first in Mr. Ashok. He returned from America an innocent man, but life in Delhi corrupted him – and once the master of the Honda City becomes corrupted, how can the driver stay innocent?” (197).

Adiga’s exposure of the dark area of India can be taken positively in one sense, to cure the sick image of it – if it is focused on those areas and work sincerely. However, only the priority is given to those problem and difficulties of Indian people. In this sense it is relevant to argue that the novelist is guided by orientalist perspective to write about India.

Chapter IV: Conclusion

Biasness as the Cause of Misrepresentation in *The White Tiger*

The research has examined the condition of the protagonist in the novel.

Balam is the son of a rickshaw puller. He is taken out of a school by his family and forced to work in a teashop. Balam, as a child, crushes coal and wipes dirty tables of tea stall. His ambition inspires him to learn to drive a car and in due course of time he becomes a well trained driver. His fortune begins when he is hired by a landlord of his village as a chauffeur for his newly arrived son and daughter-in-law who have come from America. From behind the wheel of the Honda City, Balam first sees Delhi and his re-education begins there to become rich like his master Ashok. Balam begins to see how a tiger might escape his cage. He makes a plan to kill his master, Ashok and flies away with his money. He thinks that it is essential for a sure and successful man who must spill a little blood on his way for going on the top. He finally murders his master and flies away with the loot to Bangalore and starts a new life there as a businessman.

Balam Halwai writes seven letters to the Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao. He decides to tell the truth about India before a forthcoming state visit. Balam is an Indian entrepreneur who writes about his life, especially about his birth-place, upbringing and achievement. Balam tells that the servants in Delhi live in rotting basements below the glass apartment blocks that are home to their employers. He tells of how Ashok's family bribes the government ministers and how the national elections are rigged. In the course of writing about his life, he raises many issues like poverty, corruption, globalization, bribery, theft and murder.

This research work makes a study of Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* in terms of positive and negative representation of India shown in the novel. How the

colonial agents of the Western empire get entry into the non-Western countries and establish their rule and exploit the native people. Using different kind of cunning means, the Western empire always proves itself as a strong master. Gradually they take grip of everything which is related to colonize. A large number of people within Indian society are marginalized. Socio-economic inequality, culture and religious supremacy, social injustice, caste and class and poverty have created the internal marginalization. People are obliged to spend their terrible life living in a dark side of the country. The society is like a cage for the poor who are trapped into it. The unusual result is that due to gap in income, the rich grow richer and the poor turns poorer. It is a dominant exposure of new India. The protagonist, Balram ignores all this social inequality and rebels to destroy because they are the main causes of the failure of the poor. Balram cannot tolerate those discriminations within the society for a long time and he breaks the chain of the social injustice to become free. Finally, his master's weakness and his own ambition provide Balram opportunity to become an entrepreneur.

In colonial rule, the Western countries use military power and direct political intervention. They use to administer the whole territory imposing their law and rule. The Westerners try to spread their ideology through such means so that they can make other people feel that they are in superior position. In the novel, *The White Tiger*, Balram, his master Ashok and his mistress Pinky always think that American way is better than their own. Their passion for luxurious things leads to crime. Pinky kills a child while driving in drunken condition. Similarly, Ashok's main business is to give bribe to some powerful politicians so that he can use public mine nowadays.

The novel shows that Indian people are confused because they are

experiencing two countries or modes of life at the same time. They can neither be totally satisfied with their own way of life nor follow the Western culture totally. So, the main problem with the native people is their dilemma. In the novel, native Indians are characterized in such a way that they seem as if they are iron pieces and the West is something like the magnet. Pinky always insists on returning to America and leaves India without her husband's permission. Similarly, Ashok always talks about America if he has to talk about something nice and blames the Indian politicians and the political system as the cause of the degraded condition of India. Many rich people send their children to American Universities. They show their fascination for English language, magazines, books, wine, women, cars, dress and food and so on. The medium of the novel itself shows the postcolonial present of the West.

The entrepreneurs of India mostly do their business with American companies. The protagonist, who thinks he is a solid pillar of Indian society, is involved in outsourcing business. He makes further plans to do business of real-estate with Americans. He wants to take apartments in rent which would be appropriate for the American people. The novel is full of many instances which show that Indians are working in India for Americans so they are obliged to work throughout the night because America is on the other side of the globe. The protagonist wish to have better India can be perceived as the positive overtone of the novelist amidst full of dark side of Indian life.

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