

## CHAPTER I

### Story Telling in *The White Tiger*

The central point in narratology is the narrative technique. The term 'narratology' was coined by a French linguist – Tzevetan Todorov. It was Gerard Genette who used it in English for the first time and developed the theory of narrative grammar in English fiction. Narrative situation is one of the narrative compendiums that are analyzed within narrative theory. It deals with the questions who sees and who speaks. In other words, it covers the concern of perspective and voice in narrative analysis. The term narrative technique is a broad one which includes both the literary narrative techniques and the linguistic narrative techniques. Each of the narrative techniques has its own existence and each of them is different. In literary narrative techniques, we deal with the narrative devices or techniques like satire, irony, factual description, metaphors, symbols, images and so on, whereas in linguistic narrative techniques, the techniques like anachronies, analepses, prolepses, paralipsis, and metalepsis and so on are used.

In *The White Tiger* we can find the use of narrative techniques like analepses, prolepses, complex analeptic prolepses and proleptic analepses and so on. Analepses are the narrative techniques in which the order of the story is presented in such a way as to present the beginning part of the story in the latter part of the written discourse of the novel. Prolepses are the narrative techniques in which the latter part of the story is presented in the earlier part of the discourse in the novel.

We can find both analepses and prolepses in *The White Tiger*. The novel begins with the epistolary form, addressing the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. The novelist gives explanation on why he is making use of English language and then shifts on to the description of the fact that the Chinese Premier is coming. In the

letter he asks if he is really coming to Nepal and then goes on describing other things like God and politicians. Then he describes his room and the candler under which he is writing the novel. In this way, the novel makes use of both prolepses and analepses or in other words it makes use of flash back and flash forward. From the above description, we can also find shifting of different subject matters, or in other words, there is the use of stream of conscious techniques. It has employed the literary narrative techniques like satire, irony, images, and symbols as well. The concern for the present study is not the literary narrative technique. We will come to this context at its right place.

Thematically, *The White Tiger* is an image of new India developed after socialist economy was adopted since 1990. It paints India with two images: India with her dark figures and India with bright ones. Adiga divides India into two parts: India of light and India of darkness.

Aravind Adiga is a prolific novelist and short story writer. His desire for creation is burning. No sooner had he produced *The White Tiger*, his debut novel, than he gave us his second creation, *In Between the Assassinations*. Then within the gap of two years, he produced another novel which is lyrical and compassionate – *The Last Man in Tower*.

Through the mirror of *The White Tiger*, Adiga unveils the rigging exploitation which is grinding the Indian society after the change in political system in 1947. He infers that only fists of people have been amassing the privileges of the governance and explains that Ruthless greedy politicians, their sidekicks, their bootlickers have been taking advantage of the resources, properties and authorities of the country. These fists of people have been exploiting billions of the people in the country in the name of caste. He says that these rich people have kept the poor people as fowls and

animals in the rooster coop. In the name of religion, they have cheated the naïve citizens of the country. In the form of prayer to the god, they have looted the property of the country. These rulers have degenerated themselves to such an extent that Aravind Adiga is compelled to call them animals. They are the animals with ruthless heart who do not have even a pint of pity in them towards human beings, towards their fellows, towards their brothers and sisters.

*The White Tiger* is a satirical novel. It is pertinent to differentiate among satire wit and irony. Satire refers to a genre that shows opposition between what is said and what is done or between what is expected and what is found in reality. Irony is a technique of expressing satire. Satire is a cover term whereas irony is a part of satire. By the term wit, we mean extreme humour that is created due to discrepancies between what is thought and what is found or between what is said and what is found. It is exposition of ludicrous situation by comparing and contrasting something with something else. So, wit is the illustrating and highlightening the sense of absurdity by sudden and unexpected likeness or opposition of the thing.

Written in epistolary form, *The White Tiger* is a satirical novel. It is satire on the political system of India. Adiga explains that the politics in India has undergone a change and that it has changed from the law of the zoo to the law of the jungle since 1947 when India became free from the British rule. Now, animals with big appetite, animals of ferocious hunger have come out of the zoo to the external world. They have begun eating not the fodders, not the foliages, not the shoots and buds of plants, not grasses, but human beings. Grasses, shoots, buds and foliabes couldn't appease their ravenous hunger, and now they have begun eating human beings. They have eaten up billions of people like Munna's mother and father. Balram speculates the same as to his parents. He narrates such a story:

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. The people began...Someone must have eaten my grandfather's shop... My father had not the belly to fight back. (64)

From the above lines we come to know that on the fifteenth of August 1947, the British left India and the country became independent.

During the rule of the British the wild people were enclosed and trapped within the law of the country. When British rule was over, the zoo law turned into the jungle law: wild people could do anything they liked; in fact, there were no state laws; what existed was the law of the wild. When we analyze further excerpt from the text, we can be clearer; “Those that were the most ferocious, the hungriest, had eaten everyone else up, and grown big bellies. That was all that counted now, the size of your belly. It didn't matter whether you were a woman or a man, Muslim or an untouchable; anyone with a belly could rise up” (64). These excerpts testify the fact that such a trend grew in India after 1947 in which people began to be like animals: they began to behave like animals; they did not only harm others but also began to deal with others as if they were eating others like animals. The hungriest ones, the ones with the most ferocious hunger had eaten up everyone else and grown big bellies. All that was important was the size of the belly. It made no difference whether a person was a man or a woman, a Muslim or an untouchable. Anyone who had a big belly could rise up; one with big belly could exist in the Indian society.

M.Q. Khan tells that the author in *The White Tiger* has made use of satire and that satire gives a shocking insight into the Indian politician, minister and ruler.

Ironically, he calls the Indian public man as the Great Socialist who uses his own

mechanism of exploitation. Khan's point gets support from this part of the novel:

Now, imagine that I'm a doctor. I beg and borrow the money and give it to the Great Socialist, while touching his feet. He gives me the job. I take an oath to God and the Constitution of India and then I put my boots up on my desk in the state capital. He raises his feet on to an imaginary table. Next, I call all the junior government doctors, whom I'm supposed to supervise, into my office. I take out my big government ledger. I shout out, "Dr. Ram Pandey." (50 – 51)

This has been the trend in modern India and such is the system. It is replete everywhere. Be it hospital or a school, everywhere exploitation is replete. The modern Indian society is overwhelmed by exploitation. Whether it is the profession of teachership or the doctoral one, every of it is viled by the tint of exploitation. What to talk about the people who are involved in police, they are the most rotten ones.

The corruption prevailing in India can be corroborated, analyzing further lines from the text, "My father's father must have been a real Halwai, a sweet-maker, but when he inherited the shop, a member of some other caste must have stolen it from him with the help of the police. My father had not had the belly to fight back. That's why, he had fallen all the way to the mud, to the level of a rickshaw-puller" (54). These lines verify the situation in India where the trend of exploitation has been grinding many people. Balram's grandparents had been exploited to the extent that they had to lose their land.

The narrator Balram Halwai further says that his grandparents must have been a real Halwai; a real human who could not cheat others. They were the ones who did not grow big bellies because they did not have appetite to exploit others; they were the real humans. Moreover, Balram says, "a member of some other caste must have

stolen the shop with the help of the police and they did not have bellies to fight back either. That's why, Balram is cheated by his destiny to be fat, and creamy-skinned, and smiling. To sum up, in the old days, there were one thousand castes and destinies in India. 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.

*The White Tiger* is a picaresque novel written in epistolary form. A picaresque novel is the one in which the major character in the novel is a villain or rogue and the rogue tries to testify whatever s/he does is good and praiseworthy. It is a novel that describes the adventure of a villain.

*The White Tiger* narrates the adventure of the central character Balram who kills the son of his master. He calls his master Stork who is the landlord of Laxmangurh, and had two sons: Mukesh whom the narrator Balram calls Mongoose and Ashok whom he thinks like a lamb. Balram kills Ashok for money. Balram, the murderer of Ashok tells the adventure of his life in *The White Tiger*.

Being a big belly man, he is writing a letter to the Chinese Premier. He is murderer, the white tiger, a big belly man and is trying to ramify his adventure and his deeds. He tells that in the law of the jungle it is wise to be an animal; it is wise to be a white tiger and kill a lamb. He says that it is necessary to kill a person like Ashok to live the life like a human being.

*The White Tiger* is an irony towards the person like the white tiger. *The White Tiger* represents Indian entrepreneurs – thousands and thousands of them who are half-baked ones; and these entrepreneurs who have been ruling the India after 1990. The narrator himself says:

If you are really coming, I am going to tell you the story of my life... I offer to tell you, free of charge, the truth about Bangalore... the story

of my life is the story of an Indian entrepreneur... it is the story of half-baked man... the story of an Indian entrepreneur is the story of half-baked entrepreneurs... it is the story of how the entrepreneurship is grown in India. (13)

The above statements corroborate the fact that *The White Tiger* is an irony towards Indian entrepreneurs. It proclaims that Indian entrepreneurs are the white tigers like Balram. And the economy of the so-called modern India is made of the white tigers like him. It is not economic growth in real sense of the term.

*The White Tiger* uses animal imagery to refer to inhuman brutal people. He uses animal imagery to refer to their brutality and ruthlessness. Imagery of buffalo, of raven, of wild boar and of stork has been created. And there are images like mongoose and lamb. Images have been created according to the appetite that people have, according to the bellies that they have. Bigger the bellies, bigger the appetite they have and accordingly, their name.

The Stork is a man with an abnormal appetite. This is why, he is given the name of an animal. He is a fat man with a fat moustache, thick and curved and pointy at the tips. He owns the river that flows outside the village, and he takes a cut of every catch of fish caught by every fisherman in the river, and from every boatman who crosses the river to come to Laxmangarh village. What a greedy fellow!

The name of the Stork's brother is Wild Boar. He is the man with wanton desire for women. This fellow owns all the good agricultural land around Laxmangarh. If you want to work on those lands, you have to bow down to his feet, and touch the dust under his slippers, and agree to swallow his day wages. He is such ravenous fellow. When he passes by women, his car stops; the windows roll down to reveal his grin; two of his teeth, on either side of his nose, are long, and curved, like

little tusks of wild boar.

The Raven, who owns the worst land, is abnormal in his emotion. He owns the land which is the dry, rocky hillside around the fort, and he takes a cut from the goatherds who go up there to graze their flocks. If they do not have any money, he likes to dip his beak into their backsides, so they call him the Raven.

The Buffalo is the greediest of the lot. He has eaten up the rickshaws and the roads. So, if you run a rickshaw, or use the road, you have to pay him his feed – one - third of whatever you earn, no less. As a result, he has a biggest belly among his brothers.

And all the four animals, all these agents of exploitation, the pervert ones live in highwalled mansions just outside Laxmangarh – the landlords’ quarters. Inside their highwalled mansions, they have their own temples, their own wells and ponds, everything whatever they need; everything they need, they can get inside.

M. Poonkodi says that Adiga comfortably demonstrates these common but perverse characteristics of landlords in contemporary India, using precise context and restricted vocabulary. He parallels them with specific animals and reduces the task of describing their wickedness in detail. The landlords who Balram sees alighting from an ambassador, bear no names but are metaphorically rebuked as ‘the Buffalo,’ ‘the Wild Boar,’ ‘the Stork’ and ‘the Raven.’ Cumulatively, their images suggest “the peculiarities of appetite that had been detected in him (them)” (24).

As explained above, M. Poonkodi as well, describes that *The White Tiger* uses animal imagery to refer to the brutality of the landlords. The animal imageries have been employed by the author in *The White Tiger*. He uses animal imageries like the Buffalo, the Raven, the Stork and the Wild Boar according to the peculiarities of appetite the landlords have.



So, we find symbols in *The White Tiger* – the symbolic use of animal imagery. The Stork symbolizes the animal that lives in the river and makes its livelihood eating the fishes in the river. Despite being a human being, he is not like a human being. How can a river belong to a single person? He has such an abnormal appetite that he takes a cut from anyone who comes to the river. The Raven is the symbol of a bird of hoarse manner. He is so unpleasant that he wants to sting his bick on the back of goatherds who come to graze their goats or any other animals without taking any money. The Rooster Coop symbolizes bondage or trap that has enclosed billions of people in the country. Mongoose symbolizes shrewdness whereas the Lamb symbolizes simplicity, naivety and simpletonness.

Through the use of such symbols, images and satire, the novelist has produced irony towards the so-called economic growth seen after the advent of liberal socialist economy after 1990s. The rapid economic growth of India after 1990s is not the economic growth in real sense of the term. It is the growth of persons like the white tiger and not the majority of people. Moreover, if we see the different aspects of the economy of the country, we find the sordid picture; we can see deformed structure of the country.

M.Q. Khan stipulates that *The White Tiger* is full of bitter irony in giving an interesting history of the poor and the rich. He presents the fact further from the text that the history of the world is the history of a ten-thousand-year war of brains between the rich and the poor. Further he says that it is such a war in which each side is eternally trying to hoodwink the other side. He concludes saying that it has been this way since the start of time and that the poor win a few battles (The peeing in the potted plants, the kicking of the pet dogs, etc.) but, of course, the rich have won the war for ten thousand years.

He further says that the irony becomes all the more pungent in the lines of the book, “See the poor dream all their lives of getting enough to eat and looking like the rich. And what do the rich dream of? Losing weight and looking like the poor” (225). What an irony *The White Tiger* presents! The new India created is such that the poor ones dream all their lives of getting enough to eat and looking like the rich. What the rich dream of you know? – All their lives they dream of losing weight and looking like the poor. What an irony! What a world! One class of people, trying to copy the other class! What a world has liberalization era created?

Further, we can put forward examples of irony from the text. While narrating the autobiography of his life, Balram tells the Chinese Prime Minister:

I am proud to inform that Laxmangarh is their typical Indian village paradise, adequately supplied ...

Electricity poles – defunct

Water tap – broken.

Children – too lean and short for their age, and with over-sized heads from which vivid eyes shine, like the guilty conscience of the government of India. (Adiga 20)

The above cleft sentences are remarkable and describe the deplorable situation of recent India from the eye of Aravind Adiga. He wants to tell how well arranged is India after the implementation of socialist economy. Electricity poles – defunct; and water tap – broken! He further says one day he’ll have to come to China and see if Jiabao’s village paradises are any better.

We can see in the description above what a village paradise the modern India has created. What a beautiful world! What a utopia! Children with emaciated look! The Indian government must have fed them nutritious diet so that they are looking

gaunt and emaciated. What shine their vivid eyes have! Electricity poles are defunct, and water-taps are broken. What a provision!

We come to know what the narrator Balram tells the Chinese Prime Minister further. Though they do not have good roads, well-arranged drainage system, clean-drinking water, electricity, public transportation, sense of hygiene, discipline, courtesy, or punctuality, they do have entrepreneurs – thousands and thousands of them, especially in the field of technology. And these entrepreneurs have set up all these outsourcing companies that virtually run America now. And these entrepreneurs are half-baked ones like Balram – the white tigers.

Again what an irony! What an Indian world! They do not have good roads; they do not have well-arranged drainage system; neither do they have clean-drinking water, nor electricity, nor public transportation; nor they have sense of hygiene, nor discipline, nor courtesy; nor they have punctuality. But they do have entrepreneurs – thousands and thousands of them, thousands of the white tiger. What a prosperous world! What a modern India!

Such has been the system in India, he says. Kill your fellowman in the country and eat him up, that is, kill one of your brothers and rise in your life. How can a person live in such a situation? If you do not have a belly, you cannot withstand in the society. If you are not animal, you cannot live in such a society of animals. You necessarily have to become a white tiger. The oppressed ones who are aware of this fact are enlightened ones. And Balram, the white tiger has a covetous longing to produce such white tigers that can break the rooster coop and form New India, his ideal India.

*The White Tiger* is successful in its way of writing. The author himself accepts the fact that people read not because the theme is important but because people like

the way it has presented the subject matter of the novel. The novel is amalgamation of irony and comedy, happiness and sadness, pathos and kindness.

*The White Tiger* is a blend of styles. Aravind Adiga uses not only cleft and short sentences like that of Hemingway but complex and compound sentences where required. He prefers short explanations to the long ones. In most of the places, he has used short, terse, cleft sentences like, “Look at that.’ ‘What?’” (Adiga 136).

The novelist makes use of parallelism, for example; “I drove the brothers to the railway station. Pinky madam did not come along. I carried the Mongoose’s bags to the right carriage of the train, then went to a stall and brought a dosa, wrapped in paper, for him” (Adiga 141). Clearly these lines are the examples of parallelisms which refer to balanced expressions used as a style of expression. Such balanced expressions exert rhetoric effect in expression of ones own thought.

The present study deals with a linguistic narrative technique. Among the different narrative techniques, it has selected narrative situation. So, it makes detailed analysis of the narrative situations on *The White Tiger*. In other words, it inquires into the question – who sees and who speaks? The question who sees deals with perspective and focalization, and the question who speaks deals with narrator or the person of the narrator in general.

With the birds eye view of the narrative situations in *The White Tiger*, the study speculates that the narrative voice of *The White Tiger* is fixed first person character narration; the narrator is the fixed focalizer Balram, the protagonist of the novel; narrative perspective is internal one, the internal character perspective; and the focalization on *The White Tiger* is fixed character focalization with Balram, the protagonist, as a focalizer and whatever he deliberates on as focalized.

This study provides a new insight into novel using a linguistic narrative technique. This is less explored area of the novel. It will provide them a tool for having knowledge on linguistic narrative techniques. The works cited will provide ample materials for carrying out further study works on any of the narrative techniques included so far. As it has clear and simple description of some of the narrative techniques and several collections of citations pertinent to the study, it is inferred that this study will be beneficial to those who are on the way to writing a novel or a short fiction. It has greater significance for those who want to make comments, reviews on *The White Tiger* or write articles on it. Those who would like to study the novel, *The White Tiger*, will find it of great help. It also provides a resource on the narrative techniques on *The White Tiger*. The study also gives details on Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* and, to some extent, brief information on his literary creations.

This study is basically based on textual analysis of the text *The White Tiger*. In order to do this, the ideas of Gerard Genette's narrative techniques are used as analyzing tool. Besides, literary criticisms about the text and the writer, articles of journals, etc. are also used. If they contribute to the area of the study, the socio-political situation of the contemporary India, which is the setting of the novel, is given due importance for the thematic discussion of the novel. Viewing the length of the analyzing tools, only the narrative techniques which are used in the analysis of the text, have been described in detail. All the other narrative techniques apart from perspective, focalization, narrative voice and its sub-categories have been excluded in the explanation of the theoretical device.

## Literature Review

Critics have different views about *The White Tiger*. It is a social commentary. It repugantly satirizes the social condition of present India, the poverty prevailing in the country despite her economic growth after 1990 when she adopted socialist economy. According to *The White Tiger*, the economic growth of the recent India is only so called and under the façade of economic growth, there lies the system which is causing grinding poverty, exploitation and violent crimes resulting from it. Some of the critics call it as facts of truth whereas some call it as mere allegation and as an attempt to blaspheme India. Some of the views of the critics have been presented below:

M. Poonkodi under the title, *The Voice of Servility and Dominance Expressed through Animal Imagery in Adiga's The White Tiger* tells that the title *The White Tiger* is the symbolic one which symbolically refers to something else rather than to a tiger and that it is a satire on the contemporary Indian society. He says it is a satire on Indian democracy, its status, its strategies and the provision that it has made. He opines:

Aravind Adiga's maiden novel that won him the Bookers Prize bears a symbolic title *The White Tiger*. The novel is a satire on the contemporary Indian milieu, proud of its long-lasting democratic status and ongoing political strategies that seem to confer judicious grades of equality to Indian populace... it is amusing to note that the Indian English novels... bear a common theme of conflict or war.... (186)

What M. Poonkodi probably means is that the novel has made use of symbols and that it is a satire on the contemporary Indian social condition. India is proud of her long-lasting democratic status and ongoing political strategies that seem to confer judicious

grades of equality to Indian populace. M. Poonkodi is probably right. Aravind Adiga satirizes the social milieu that the socialist economy has created. About the condition of the village paradise, Adiga presents that the Indian government has offered nutritious diet to the children. That's why; children of Laxmangarh are gaunt and emaciated.

Similarly M.Q. Khan under the title "*The White Tiger: A Critique*" tells that the title symbolically refers to the protagonist Balram. It refers that he is not the one who tolerates exploitation and servitude. His opinion is:

The title of the novel *The White Tiger* attempts to suggest a good deal of symbolical values ... The school inspector spotted him as the brightest boy for having answered all his questions... when he visited Delhi zoo and under the impact of the white tiger in the cage... The entire significance of the novel revolves round the white tiger in a cage... can't live the rest of my life in a cage. (90)

Khan wants to tell that the title suggests a good deal of symbolic meaning. He means that the title symbolically refers to Balram who is the brightest and smartest boy. This can further be corroborated by the presentation of the event in which he visits the Delhi zoo, faints under the impact that he sees the white tiger in the cage. Further, Balram narrates that he cannot live the rest of his life in the cage. The narrator as well wants to refer to himself as the white tiger. To tell in short, the title itself symbolically refers to Balram.

Sara D. Schotland in "Breaking out of the Rooster Coop: Violent Crime in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* and Richard Wright's *Native Son*," expresses her opinion that *The White Tiger* presents exploitation in Indian society and hints us being involved in assault and violent crime as the only solution to the problem. She does not

think that Adiga has presented a better solution to the problem. What she writes is presented underneath:

Underlying *The White Tiger* there is the message that violence is necessary tool to achieve radical reform. The injustice and corruption of twenty-first-century India is so rooted and so pervasive that a poor man can better his life only by means of aggression to the extent of murder. But what has Balram's violence really achieved? ... bettered his own condition, not a better society. Adiga's vision remains dystopic.

(18)

Schotland wants to say that underlying *The White Tiger* there is a most horrifying message that violence even at the cost of murder is necessary to achieve a radical reform. The injustice and corruption in twenty-first-century India is so deep rooted and so pervasive that the only way the poor can better their lives is through aggression even at the extremes of theft and murder. She is probably true. *The White Tiger* expresses the similar facts. Balram, the narrator of the story, says that similar is the condition of contemporary India. Kill your brother and rise up. Here only those who have big bellies and appetite like animals can exist. The law of jungle is prevalent here. No one can live a human life being a human. He necessarily has to be an animal. At the same time, she is not satisfied by the ideology of *The White Tiger*. She questions on what Balram has done, employing violent means. He has bettered only his life. He has not created a better society. So, she says, the novel is able to create only dystopic world, not a utopic one.

Mohsin Hamid under the title *The White Tiger* tells; "Compelling, angry, and darkly humorous, *The White Tiger* is an unexpected journey into a new India and Aravind Adiga is talent to watch the cosmos" (1). What we come to know from the above excerpt is that Mohsin Hamid opines on the style of the novel and also tells that



*The White Tiger* makes journey into the new India. Probably he meant that the novel has made a journey into the New India formed after the advent of liberal social economy in 1990.

Neel Mukherjee in “*The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga,” writes:

Blazingly savage and brilliant, *The White Tiger* is an excoriating piece of work, relentless in its stripping away of the vaneer of “India Rising” to expose its rotting heart. The growth in India after adoption of socialist economy is only façade. Beneat it there is something else. Adiga is apt in showing this ... Adiga is going to go places. We’d do well to follow him. (47)

Neel Mukherjee probably wants to say that it is the excoriating piece of work which unveils the reality of India’s rising after 1990. He also tells about the novel’s savage description and brightness but at the same time he iterates the truth that the novel depicts.

In his critical essay “The Secret of His Success,” Akash Kapur writes:

*The White Tiger* is a penetrating piece of social commentary, attuned to the inequalities that persist despite India’s new prosperity. It correctly identifies – and deflates – middle-class India’s collective euphoria. But Adiga, a former correspondent for The Times magazine who lives in Mumbai, is less successful as a novelist ... relentless and ultimately a little monotonous. Every moment, it seems, is bleak, pervaded by ‘the Darkness.’ (13)

Akash Kapur tells that *The White Tiger* is searing and makes penetrating social commentary of contemporary India and fruther says that it highlights the inequalities that persist despite its new prosperity. It expresses the truth of the present India. He

puts forward his notion that the novel only sees the dark aspect of Indian world and that it is slightly monotonous.

In his essay entitled, “*The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga” Pankaj Sakseena questions the authenticity of the novel and says:

Most of the Indian writers who have won awards like Booker, no longer live in India or have no connections with the rural India which they claim to write about. They are rootless and hence their works lack authenticity; more the rootlessness, more the arrogance. Arundhati Roy is rootless and so is Adiga. Both of them live outside India and both have similar concept about her. (1)

Pankaj Sakseena here tells that most of the Indian writers who have won awards like Booker do not live in India at present. They do not have relation with the rural people in India and hence whatever they write about the rural India lacks authenticity; their writing is full of bogus statements as they are rootless. Further he adds that the more the rootless they are the more the arrogance they possess.

Under the title “*The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga,” Aamera Jiwaji expresses his opinion that *The White Tiger* presents the culture of servitude which is prepared by the rich in Indian society and that it is a stark reality of the society. He writes; “*The White Tiger* is not a book that indulges in any soft or tender moments. It is harsh and realistic – and as stark as binary of light and dark that the book develops in its narrative. One which examines the culture of servitude in India which pits the rich against the poor...” Here, Aamera Jiwaji, contrary to the above description of Akash Kapur, says that *The White Tiger* represents stark reality of Indian society; it is not the expression erupted out of emotion. She also writes that it not only sees the dark India but also the India of light.

Paul Milachi, while making comments on *The White Tiger* in “Political views and Policy Prescriptions,” writes:

Aravind Adiga’s views could be taken as representative of India’s large and growing middle and upper middle classes-especially those who grew up on the two sides of the great divide. He remembers the pre-liberalization era with the growth-up in a provincial town in a socialist country before it became a booming town with malls and call-centers. (19)

Milachi, here, tells that through *The White Tiger*, Adiga expresses the truth about the period of great divide in 1990 when the city began to make malls and call-centers. It was the period in which growing middle and upper middle classes began prospering, building malls and call-centres.

Staff Pick, in *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga” tells; “it is a remarkable first novel ingeniously written in the form of a letter to the Chinese Premier soon to visit India. Adiga’s dark yet witty debut brings to western readers the tense drama of a developing country and a character caught up in corruption and class struggle.” What Staff Pick tells here is that *The White Tiger* is an outstanding novel which is ingeniously written in the form of a letter to the Chinese Premier even if it is his first novel. Despite scouring dark aspect, it is witty to express the class struggle and corruption.

Gary Shteyngart, under the title “The White Tiger,” comments in the following words; “An exhilarating, side-splitting account of India today, as well as an eloquent howls at her many injustices. Adiga enters the literary scene resplendent in battle dress and ready to conquer. Let us bow to him” (21). Shteyngart says that *The White Tiger* is not only an exhilarating account of India today but also side-splitting

one. It howls eloquently at the brutal injustices that are taking place after the introduction of liberal economy in India after 1990.

John Burdett, the author of *Bangkok 8* comments on *The White Tiger* in the following words:

There is a new Muse stalking global narrative: brown, angry, hilarious, half-educated, rustic-urban, iconoclastic, paan-spitting, word-smithing – and in the case of Aravind Adiga, she hails from a town called Laxmangarh. This is the authentic voice of the Third World, like you’ve never heard it before. Adiga is a global Gorky, a modern Kipling who grew up, and grew up mad. The future of the novel lies here. (1)

Probably what Burdett wants to say about *The White Tiger* is that it stalks from the Oriental East to the West and is a source of inspiration. The narrator is not only hilarious, half-educated, rustic-urban, iconoclastic, paan-spitting but also word smithing. He regards it as the authentic voice of the Third World which, he says, we have never heard before. He calls *The White Tiger* a global Gorky and a modern Kipling.

Tarquin Hails, under the title “The White Tiger” comments saying that *The White Tiger* contains modern, cool and very English and that it is engaging without being trivial and that it presents both the village and the cities in India. His words are:

This book is written in a relentlessly modern, “cool,” and very English (as opposed to Indian) language style. It is engaging without being trivial; Balram’s letters vividly evoke the rural countryside as well as the incredible traffic jams in Delhi and Gurgaon. The vast contrasts between poor and wealthy in India, and the extreme rarity associated

with rising from the lower classes to the rarefied “white tiger” level, are shown so strongly that one finds oneself actually rooting for the murderer as the hero of this novel. (1)

Hails finds that *The White Tiger* is modern and cool. He highlights the fact that, opposed to other Indian works, its languages and styles are such that it looks as if it were written by an English author. It is interesting which involves the readers with vivid descriptions of rural countryside as well as of the truth of cities like Delhi and its suburb Gurgaon.

Analyzing the opinions of the above critics, we come to know that some of the critics have deliberated on the thematic aspect of the novel, whereas some of them have put forward their opinion on the title of the novel. Yet some of them have pondered on the styles contained in the novel. However, some of them question the authenticity of the novel.

About the title of the novel, they say that the title bears the symbolic name. Symbolically it refers to the major character of the novel, Balram. It refers to him, inferring that he is no longer such a person who would be entrapped in the values and norms made by the rich to entrap the poor. He is like white tiger that can break the enclosure and exist accordingly in the environment of the jungle with jungle rule.

Whereas Pankaj Sakseena questions the authenticity of *The White Tiger*, many of the critics like Burdett, Dollacker, Hails, Milachi, Jiwaji and so on are of the opinion that the voice of *The White Tiger* is authentic. About the thematic aspect of the novel they say that *The White Tiger* is a penetrating piece of social commentary and that it satirizes the socio-political milieu of the contemporary India, her democracy, long-standing democratic status, the judicial grades of equality that she claims to have conferred to her populace.

About the style of the novel they say that *The White Tiger* is hilarious, side-splitting, realistic, harsh, stark, impolite, compelling, darkly humorous, Blazingly savage, brilliant, exhilarating, relentlessly modern, cool and in very English.

Whatever the critics have said, their opinion if majority of them are similar, it is better to accept that they are authentic. *The White Tiger* is the less explored one and less study has been carried out till now on the novel. So, the present study is quite relevant for the incumbent student.

### **Organization of the Study**

The study has been divided into four major parts and accordingly into four chapters. The first chapter is the introductory part which broadly introduces the area of the study. In other words, it introduces the term narrative techniques, *The White Tiger*, the author of *The White Tiger*, Aravind Adiga and his literary creations. The second chapter presents in detail the theory on which the present study is dependent. In other words, it describes the compendiums used in the structural analysis of narrative discourse. These are the compendiums introduced by Tzvetan Todorov and developed and introduced in English fictions by Gerard Genette. The third chapter makes analysis of the particular narrative technique that the student has decided to analyze whereas the fourth chapter deals with conclusion of the study.

## CHAPTER II

### Narrative Techniques

The use of the term ‘Narrative Techniques,’ in this study, is solely constrained to the structural analysis of narrative discourse. Here, the chapter deals with narratology, that is, narrative theory pioneered by French structuralist Tzvetan Todorov, developed and introduced in English by Gerard Genette in his epoch making book entitled *Narrative Discourse: an Essay in Method* (1980).

The techniques pertinent to the present study will be dealt. Accordingly, the first concern is dealing with the term narrative. ‘Narrative,’ according to Gerard Genette, has three meanings.

The first one refers to a succession of events, real or fictitious. This concept is current today among analysts and theoreticians of narrative content. Another meaning is ‘oral or written narrative discourse or statement that undertakes to tell of an event or series of events’ (25). The third meaning refers to an event. Not, however, the event that is recounted but the events that consist of someone recounting something (26). To avoid confusion and semantic difficulties between story and narrative, Genette specifies the term story for the signified or narrative content whatever story is narrated and uses the term narrative to the text itself.

Though the distinction has been made among the term ‘story,’ ‘narrative’ and ‘narrating,’ there is an inherent relationship among them. Narrative acts as the intermediary between the story and narrating. Reciprocally, the narrative (the narrated discourse) can only be such to the extent that it tells a story, without which it would not be narrative like, let us say, Spinoza’s *Ethics*; and to the extent that it is uttered by someone, without which (like, for example, a collection of archaeological documents) it wouldn’t itself be a discourse. As narrative, it lives by its relationship to the story

that it recounts; as discourse, it lives by its relationship to the narrative that utters it (Genette 29).

Thus, analysis of narrative discourse for Genette is, essentially, a study of relationships between narrative and story, between narrative and narrating and between story and narrating. As such, he classifies narrative techniques under three dimensions in the same way as Tzvetan Todorov has done – the dimensions of ‘Tense,’ the dimensions of ‘Aspect,’ and that of ‘Mood.’

For our purpose, we shall describe and explain narrative perspective, focalization and narrative voice which are discussed under narrative situation in the analysis of narrative discourse.

### **Perspective**

The term perspective here refers to narrative perspective. It is the second mode of regulating information arising from the choice of a restrictive point of view. The term narrative perspective refers to perspective or viewpoint which is undertaken by a novelist to present the story on the vision or perspective of the author himself or his character.

If he chooses to present the matters in the story through a character or characters in the story, he has an array of choices. He can choose first-person narration, which, in turn, most generally makes use of first person as a protagonist narrator or first person narration as an observer and minor character in the story. There has also been trend to use two protagonists in a narrative and let the viewpoints be expressed from the mouth of each of the protagonists in his/her perception. One may be major and the other as assistant protagonist in the story. Swann in *Recherche du Temps Perdu* is the co-protagonist of Marcel of the novel. So ‘I’ can be used as co-protagonist and can express his/her viewpoint. It has also been found that ‘I’ is used



most closely as if a character who knows everything of the character as if he/ she is intimate friend of the character. In *The Rose for Emily* written by William Faulkner, the narrator is I and describes the events and the proceedings of Emily as if he is the lover or well-wisher of Emily, but he is not a character in the novel. Such a narration in the First Person is named as ‘I’ – as an uninvolved – eyewitness. First Person Narration can also be in plural, using ‘we’ as a narrator. The examples of some of the points of view have been presented below.

In 1943, Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren proposed a concept equivalent to point of view under the topic ‘Focus of Narration’ which is presented below:

	Internal Analysis of Events	Outside Observation of Events
Narrator as a character in the story.	1. Main character tells his story.	2. Minor character tells main character's story.
Narrator not a character in the story.	4. Analytic or omniscient author tells the story	3. The author tells the story as an observer.

Table No. 1

(qtd. in Genette 186)

Only the vertical demarcation refers to the point of view. The horizontal demarcation refers to the narrative voice. This has been the traditional problem regarding the topic ‘Point of View.’ The researchers or authors present perspective along with narrative voice. We can see that the question of point of view is inherently related to narrative voice. The question who the narrator is, usually determines whose perspective is presented in the narrative. But it is not always the case. As we have already expressed, when the narrator gives floor to characters in the story, the story is presented as if by a character, and here, the perspective of the character is presented even though there is

omniscient narration by author narrator. In the above table, two perspectives have been presented: the external and the other, internal. There is external perspective if minor character tells the story of the major character in the story or if the author tells the story as a mere observer. The perspective is internal if the main character tells his story; in such a narration, the narration is from inside the story. Narrator narrates being a character in the story. The perspective of omniscient author can also be internal. If the analytic omniscient author tells the story, the perspective to be internal, the author must give floor to a character and present as if by a character. Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren have forgotten to specify this fact.

In the year 1955, F.K. Stanzel distinguished three types of novelistic narrative situations. The first type is 'Authorial Narrative Situation' in which the narrator is the omniscient author. The second type is 'Character Narrative Situation' in which the narrator is one of the characters in the story. The third type is the 'Personal Narrative Situation' in which the narrative is conducted in the third person narration in the point of view of character. It is also called figural narrative situation.

The above categorization deals with both the problems of narrative – The problems of Narrative Perspective and the problems of Narrative Voice. Under the broad term narrative situation, F.K. Stanzel deals with Narrative Perspective and Narrative Voice. In authorial narrative situation, the perspective is presented on the author's view point. In character narrative situation, the perspective is presented from inside the story; the perspective is one of the characters. In the third type described above, the narrator is the omniscient narrator, but speaks as if by a character, adopting the view of a character; the character speaks through the mouth of the narrator. In the beginning it may be difficult to find out who is narrating. The omniscient author is hiding behind the character and lets the character speak but, in fact, it is not the character but the narrator who is speaking; it is the narrator speaking covertly.

In the same year, Norman Friedman presented most complex narrative point of view with eight-term classification. They are given below:

Two types of Omniscient narrating, with or without authorial intrusion (Henry Fielding or Thomas Hardy); two types of First-Person narrating, I-witness (Conrad) or I-Protagonist (Dickens, *Great Expectations*); two types of Selective-Omniscient narrating, that is, with restricted point of view, either Multiple (Virginia Woolf, *To the Light House*) or Single (Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist*); finally, two types of purely objective narrating, the second of which is hypothetical and moreover, not easily distinguishable from the first: the Dramatic Mode (qtd. in Genette 187)

The above categorization by Norman Friedman is extensive and shows that he made extensive study on narrative and its discourse. He has classified two types of first-person narration, two types of omniscient narration with and without authorial intrusion, and two types of selective omniscient narration with restricted point of view of a single character or of multiple characters.

Here we see two types of authorial narration under one heading and another two types of authorial narration under another heading as selective restrictive point of view. The former ones refer to the perspective of the authors whereas the latter ones refer to the view points of the characters where the floor is given to the character, either to a single character as in *The Portrait of the Artist* or to many characters as in *The Light House*. The seventh one is the objective narrative in which the narrator employs maximum restriction on himself and on the part of a character, expresses his/her view solely on his/ her perspective. The narrator tells as much as the character knows. This is, in fact, omniscient narration, but with minimal presence of the

narrator. Hemingway has used it in his *The Killers*, *The Hills like White Elephants*, and so has done Marcel Proust in his *Recherche du Temps Perdu*.

Among these definitions, Genette wants to make remarks on the sixth type of Norman Friedman and says that if a story is told as if by a character in the story, but told in the third person, it creates obvious confusion between the reflector and the narrator. What Genette means is the readers may assume as the narrator to the character of the focus whose perception is presented and the narrator as the character. Mentioning the works of Wayne Booth, Genette further says, “The same assimilation obviously occurs with Wayne Booth who in 1961, under the title ‘Distance and Point of View’ devoted to the problem of voice” (qtd. in Genette 188).

In 1962, Bertil Romberg puts forward Stanzel’s model again, adding objective narrative in behaviouristic style. So, his category contained four types: 1) Narrative with omniscient author 2) Narrative with point of views 3) Objective Narrative 4) Narrative with first-person narration.

Genette puts forward his views and says, “It is certainly legitimate to envisage a typology of narrative situations that would take into account the data of both mood and voice; what is not legitimate is to present such a classification under the single category of point of view...” (188). These statements by Genette emphasize that there has been trend to present the question of who sees and the question of who speaks under the same heading ‘Point of View.’ He says that it is not legitimate to include these questions of narrative mood and narrative voice together. If we are to keep both these concerns under the same heading, we have to envisage a new typology under the heading narrative situations. So, it is convenient here to consider only the purely modal determinations, those that concern what we ordinarily call point of view or according to Jean Pouillon and Tzvetan Todorov ‘vision’ or ‘aspect’. On the basis of Jean Pouillon and Tzvetan Todorov, Genette puts forward three-term typology; the

first type corresponds to what English language criticism calls the narrative with omniscient narrator. Pouillon calls 'vision from behind' and which Todorov symbolizes by formulae, Narrator > character (more exactly, narrator says more than any character knows). In the second term, Narrator = character (narrator says as much as a character knows). This is what Lubbock says 'The narrative with point of view'; Blin calls, 'the narrative with restrictive field' and Pouillon calls it, 'vision with.' In the third term, Narrator < character (The narrator says less than the character knows), the minimal presence of the narrator. This is the objective behaviorist narrative what Pouillon calls 'vision from without' (qtd. in Genette 189).

Bal describes viewpoints in several terms. He says that a novelist adopts certain angles, visions, viewpoints, and ways of seeing on whatever he expresses. These viewpoints or vision that a novelist adopts for narrating his stories is known as perspective. According to him, there may be external perspective, or internal ones or even diverse or multiple perspectives. He prefers using the term focalization to refer to what the traditional narrative grammarians use the term perspective and shows the concern for both the question of the viewpoint and the narrative voice (Bal 1985).

Genette, too, prefers using the term focalization instead of perspective. He takes the term focalization instead of the term vision or field or point of view. Bal describes the term focalization as being wider and so does Michael J. Toolan who prefers the term focalization instead of vision or perspective as, according to him, by the term focalization we mean perception which includes not only what a person sees or thinks but all the things that a person perceives. To be clear, Bal analyzes the related terms as focalizer and focalized as well as focalization. Michael J. Toolan, too, does the same (Toolan 1988). On our part as well, we shall try to present them, analyzing those different aspects.

Focalizer is the term that refers to the person or agent from whom we see an event, a story or any matter. It may be the omniscient author or a character in the story or it may change as there is change in the scene or internal story or it may be multiple or even collective ones.

Focalized refers to the person, event, scene, or anything that the focalizer is describing. He may be telling about a place, or describing about a situation or scene of green forest or lofty mountain or about a person. All the things the focalizer is talking about are the focalized.

Focalization refers to all the combination of focalizer, focalized and their relation. Genette himself says that the term focalization corresponds to Brooks and Warrens' expression 'Focus of Narration' (qtd. in Genette).

### **Focalization**

As described above, the term focalization used for the first time by Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren refers to focus of narration. They have used the term to refer to both the aspect of mood and narrative voice, that is, it deals with both the question who the narrator is and the question from whose perspective the narrative is presented. In fact, in the determination of the perspective, the narrator plays inevitable role. This is why, the classical novelists and the theorists have propounded the perspective along with the question of narration. So, the term focalization refers to focus of narration, that is narrator and the one whose viewpoint is presented in the narrative.

Genette christens the first type of the perspective of the classical narrative as non-focalized narrative or narrative with zero focalization. The term first type of the perspective refers to the first category point of view that we mentioned before.

Repeating Todorov's formulae, we can label it Narrator > Character (qtd. in Genette

189). Narrative with omniscient narration in which narrator narrates in the third person, he knows everything, narrates every event, and tells about different things about different characters. It may frequently express the view of omniscient author or tell less as that in the novel of Thomas Hardy.

The second type is the narrative with internal focalization. By the term 'the narrative with internal focalization' we mean the narrative in which focus of narration is from inside the story. In this type, the narrator becomes a character in the story and the viewpoint is expressed in his perception. Internal focalization, in turn, is classified into fixed focalization, variable focalization and multiple focalizations by Genette. Banfield adds another category of internal focalization which he calls collective focalization (Banfield 1982). Stanzel follows Banfield and puts forward the same category of collective focalization (1984: 172).

Fixed Focalization, as we discussed above in Norman Friedman's category, is an omniscient focalization which Friedman gives the name Selective Omniscient Narrative with restricted field on a single character. As given by him Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is the example of fixed focalization. In fact, the narration is omniscient but the narrator most often gives floor to the fixed character in the novel and expresses opinion on that character's perspective.

Variable focalization is the one in which partial restriction is laid on the narrator and he expresses the opinion from the viewpoint of not only one character but on the viewpoints of two or more characters. The focalization may shift from the character named A to B and to C and again to A or to B. Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* is an example of variable focalization.

Multiple focalization is the one in which the focalization takes place from the viewpoint of several characters. In many of the epistolary novels, this type of

focalization occurs in which the same event is expressed in different way according to different characters. Robert Browning's narrative poem 'The Ring and the Book' relates a criminal case as perceived successively by different characters like the murderer, the victims, the defense, the prosecution and the like (Genette 190).

Collective focalization is the one in which focalization is made through either plural narrators with plural narrative or a group of characters as collective reflectors. By the term collective reflectors, we mean the characters in group for whom the narrator is speaking as if they are speaking themselves – their perspective is reflected.

External Focalization is the one in which focalization is made from external to the story. It is a kind of omniscient focalization. We have already mentioned that the omniscient focalization of the first category is classified as zero focalization.

Likewise, we have already discussed the fact that the omniscient narrative with fixed or partial restricted field falls under internal fixed or variable field of the internal focalization.

The third one described under perspective such as a narration in which the narrator makes minimal presence, the one which is also omniscient narration but the narrator presents the matter in such a way as if by a character, falls under external focalization. In this type of focalization, the omniscient narrator, while giving floor, shifts the focalization and expresses himself according to the need of the situation.

There are other cases as well in which external focalization is used. External focalization is also used in the novels of intrigue or suspense. Inevitably, it also has been found in the novels of adventure in which, too, like in the novels of suspense, the narrator wants to express in such a way as to arouse curiosity. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, even the serious novels have been found using external focalization.



Most often external focalization is used in the beginning scene in which there is presentation of an event or situation or a person which is a matter of curiosity for the readers. It is not completely presented or described as to engage the reader in the text.

Focalization usually does not remain the same throughout the text. So, the concept of variable focalization has gained much popularity. Whereas in the beginning there is usually (but not always) external focalization, it changes into internal when the story is unfolded and the major and other characters are known. This is the case with *Bovary* and so is the case in *La Pau de Chagrin*.

In external focalization, while we discuss about a character, it may be external for one character whereas it may be internal focalization for the other character. External focalization for Fileas Fogg is internal focalization for Passepartout. Filias Flog is the major character in the novel and is being described by Passepartout, the minor character and the observer (qtd. in Genette 192).

Internal focalization is rarely applied in a totally rigorous way. In a part of a fiction, there may be internal focalization whereas it may not be the same throughout the text. Indeed, the very principle of the narrative mode implies in all the strictness that the focal character never be described or even referred to from the outside, and that his thoughts or perceptions never be analyzed objectively by the narrator.

In other words, if there is a protagonist and narrator wants to describe or explain or interpret his/ her views through the character, he/ she never should be described using third-person narration. In such a case, first-person narration is suitable whereas when there is a description of what the character thinks and does, we do not have internal focalization. Genette puts forward the following example to corroborate his statement:

We do not have internal focalization in statement like this one –

Without hesitation, although ready to yield up his soul with disgust, Fabrizio flung himself from the horse and took the hand of the corpse which he shook vigorously, then he stood still as though paralyzed. He felt that he had not the strength to mount again. What horrified him more than anything else was that open eye. (192)

The above description seems to have come from omniscient novelist. The novelist narrator is describing the scene from outside. Usually in such a narration, the perspective is from outside. The narrator is describing what the events in the narrative are. Moreover, the narrator is describing what undergoes into the mind, thought and feeling of the character. Clearly such a narration is that of omniscient novelist narrator, not an internal one.

Describing about the relevance of the internal focalization, Genette states; “on the other hand, focalization is perfect in the following statement which is content to describe what its hero sees: A bullet, entering on one side of the nose, had gone out at the opposite temple, and had disfigured that corpse in a hideous fashion. It lay with one eye still open” (193). Genette here wants to say that the internal focalization is perfect in the above narration in which the major character is narrating what had happened to one of the combatants of the war. The major character can narrate in his perspective. Such an internal character perspective to describe the condition of the minor characters is legitimate in narrative structuring.

Similarly, internal focalization finds its way in the narrative of interior monologue. Genette, in the following excerpt, says:

Internal focalization is fully realized only in the narrative of interior monologue or in that borderline work. Robbe Grillet’s *La Jalousie*

where the central character is limited absolutely to – and strictly inferred from – the term internal focalization... the term whose minimal criterion has been... the personal mode of narrative... into the first person. (193)

From the above explanation by Genette, what we learn is internal focalization is fully used in the narrative of interior monologue or isolated monologue. It is the personal mode of narrative. The narrative fully explores the internal feelings, emotions and views of the character involved in the narrative, and it is in first- person narration.

Focalization and narrating are different things. They are different even in the first person narrative. It is better to quote Genette's statement again:

Focalizing and narrating which remain distinct even in first-person narrative, that is, even when the two instances are taken up by the same person except when the first-person narrative is a present tense interior monologue... the narrator almost always knows more than the hero, even if he himself is the hero, and therefore for the narrator, focalization through the hero is a restriction of field just as artificial in the first person as in the third person. (194)

What Genette wants to tell here is that in the first-person narration even if the hero is the narrator, in reality, the hero and the narrator are different; hero narration is restriction of field on the narrator. Narrator and hero are different. A narrator always knows more than the hero.

### **Polimodality**

The term polimodality refers to the way some of the modern novelist opt for adopting several modals or modes of narration instead of sticking to only certain modes of narration. Though it is easier to choose omniscient modes of narration or

adopt character narration, modern novelist like to blend various ways of narration.

One of such novelists who opted for polimodal was Marcel Proust. Proust adopted not only internal character narration, but also an external omniscient one. He has created the narrators like Swann and Marcel. At times, he gives floor to the omniscient novelist and he has made use of diverse speech, even such speeches which are not from ordinary language – a deliberate use of expression beyond language (qtd. in Genette).

### **Narrative Voice**

By the term narrative voice, we mean voice of narrator. It deals with – Who speaks? Who is the narrator? Whether omniscient narrator or first-person character narrator? Not only these, it also deals with story, narrating and discourse. Without event, there is no story; without story, there is no narration; and without narration, there is no discourse. So, the story is of utmost importance. It also deals with time. There is time of the story when it has taken place, and there is time when it is narrated. It also deals with narratee to whom it is written.

Most often, a story takes place before it is narrated. But it is not always the case; before some events take place, a story can be made. On the basis of time of narrating, stories are classified as: i) Subsequent Narrative ii) Predictive Narrative iii) Interpolated Narrative and iv) Simultaneous Narrative (Genette 217).

Subsequent narratives are those that are narrated after the event or story has taken place. Many of the narratives are in this form in that a large number of stories are made after they take place. The simple use of preterit markers shows narrative subsequent, without indicating temporal interval between narrative and narrating instances. Whereas some of the narratives have, to some extent, made use of present tense which shows more or less simultaneousness of the event and the narrating. They

make use of the present tense either in the beginning or at the end of the novels. Some of the novels like *Tom Jones*, *Le Pere Goriot* have used the tense at the beginning of the novel whereas *Madame Bovary* and *Eugenie Grandet* have made use of it at the end of the novel.

A predictive narrative or prior narrating has until now enjoyed much less smaller literary investment. Even novels of anticipation from Wells to Bradbury, though they belong fully to prophetic genre, almost always postdate their narrating instances, making them implicitly subsequent narratives. Predictive narratives hardly appear in literary corpus except on the second level narratives.

Simultaneous narratives are written in present tense. But there are uses of preterit to show the gap whatever exists between the story and the time of narrating it. The use of past tense depends on whether the narrative is laying emphasis on the story or it lays emphasis on the discourse that is, narrating.

If the narrative gives emphasis on the story, it makes more less use of past tense; the use of present tense increases. It is behavioristic in type and more objective. Many of the French new novels are written in this model. Robbe Grillet's early novels have adopted this model. The more the use of present tense, the more objective the text is. Using present tense, it moves towards transparency. In total transparency, it looses the use of preterit.

On the other hand, if the narrative lays emphasis on the discourse, it makes more use of past tense. The more the use of the past tense, the less mimetic the text is. Novels that make use of interior monologue have been written in this model. Here, it is the action that seems to have been reduced to the condition of simple pretext and ultimately abolished. This effect was already noticeable in Dujardin and became more remarkable in a Beckett, a Claude Simon, and a Roger Laporte (qtd. in Genette 219).

Interpolated narratives, unlike simultaneous ones are more complex in that story and narrating most often over-lap which causes confusion. Narrating most often hurdles the story, creating difficulty in understanding. Epistolary novels have the matters which adopt interpolative subject matter. Letters are both the medium and elements in the plot, and there are journal forms and newspaper clippings used in the plot.

Many of the epistolary novels employ several correspondents. It becomes even more delicate when the journal form loosens up to form a sort of monologue after an event without a definite temporal position, even incoherent one. Many of the journal and epistolary novels are mixed to form live and pre-recorded account, the quasi-interior monologue and the account after an event. Here the narrator is at one and the same time the hero and someone else; the events of the day are already in the past, and the point of view may have been modified since then; the feelings of the evening or the next day are fully of the present. Here, the focalization through the narrator is at the same time the focalization through the hero.

Narrative level is one of the important elements analyzed under narrative voice. To describe the narrative level, Genette says that though the story may have crossed a long way it may not have reached the narrative which tells the gist or main theme of the fiction. While travelling from the beginning of the story to its end, the narrative is classified into: i) Extra-diegetic ii) Intra-diegetic or diegetic and iii) Meta-diegetic. Accordingly, narrators may be extra-diegetic, diegetic or intra-diegetic and meta-diegetic ones.

Most often, novels have extradiegetic narration, that is, omniscient narration from outside the story in the beginning until the major character is introduced and he informs that he is going to tell the story. After this introduction, the diegetic or intra-

diegetic level starts. When the diegetic character begins telling the second level story that is, story within story, meta-diegetic level starts and rests in it as well.

Meta-diegetic narratives are the second level narratives. They are the narratives within narrative. In most of the novels, the novelist pretends to have met an important person who tells him a story. In such a narrative, the story told by the important person will be meta-diegetic narrative. The story that the novelist overtly says before meeting him falls under extra-diegetic narrative.

To describe the meta-diegetic narrative, Genette calls the second-degree narrative as a form that goes back to the very origins of epic narrating, since book IX – XII of *Odyssey* are devoted to the narrative Ulysses makes to the assembled Phaeacians.

A meta-diegetic narrative bears certain relationship with diegetic one in which it is inserted. The first type of relationship is the relationship of direct causality between the event of meta-diegesis and the diegesis, conferring on the second narrative an explanatory function. It is the Balzacian type of annexing the meta-diegesis into the diegetic text.

The second type of relationship consists of purely thematic one, implying no spatio-temporal continuity between meta-diegesis and diegesis – a relationship of contrast, for example, the deserted Adriane's unhappiness in the midst of Thetis' joyous wedding or of an analogy as when Jocabel in *Moyse Sauve*, hesitates to execute the divine command and Amram tells her the story of Abraham's sacrifice.

The third type of relation involves no explicit relationship – a function of distraction or a function of obstruction. In *The Thousand and the One Nights* the major character holds off the death with renewed narratives. These renewed narratives are in some way related to the earlier corresponding narrative. In the first type, the

relationship of linking is direct; in the second type, the relationship is indirect; in the third type, the relationship is only between narrating act and the present situation with the meta-diegetic content.

Metalepses, which are minor stories meant to produce either comical effect or fantastic ones, are most popular narrative devices. Without metalepses, a story may be monotonous presentation of uniform events. Metalepses are required as spices to the story. They make the major stories lively and create not only consistent interest in readers but also their concentration, emotional and sentimental involvement. Genette calls it as an intrusion by extra-diegetic narrator or narratee into the diegetic universe or the inverse, producing an effect of strangeness that is either comical or fantastic. Genette says, “Cortzar produces metalepsis interfering extra-diegetic text, telling the story of a man assassinated by one of the characters in the novel he is reading. But metalepses are very short and immediate and are not exaggerated...” (234).

Person is one of the most important compendiums that concern narrative voice. By the term ‘person’ in narrative, we mean narrator. This is the trend that narrative grammarians have been using. We can also use narrator or narration and these come under narrative voice as well.

Most often in prose narrative, or in other words, novel in strict sense, first-person or third-person narration is used. If we choose the first person, it may be the omniscient narration from outside the text as many of the classical novelists have done from Homer to Flaubert. Homer in his *Iliad* has used this type of narration and so has Flaubert in his *Le Education sentimentale*. The narrator in such a narration is named as heterodiegetic narrator by Genette.

If the novelist uses the narrator person ‘I’ to refer to the character narrator, he has to go, as the trend has been seen, for three choices. One, as a hero narrator who is



the protagonist in the story and the story is presented or narrated in his perspective. Such a narrator is named as autodiegetic narrator and the text is known as autodiegetic text. The other, he can use it as a minor character and observer who is narrating the story. And the other, he can use it as co-narrator in a story in which there is another major narrator in the story. All the first-person narrations are classed under homodiegetic narration by Gerard Genette if the narrators are presented as characters in the narrative. We also find, the next use of I as an uninvolved character who like omniscient narrator knows everything about characters in the story. For instance, in *The Rose for Emily*, which uses first-person narration as if the narrator is her lover, knows everything about Emily.

On the other hand, if the narration is the third person, it can be an authoritative narrator, using third -person narration, with his frequent intrusion as Norman Friedman has said. It is F.K. Stanzel's first model. It can also be omniscient narration with less intrusion of the novelist or narrator. It can also be omniscient narration with point of view. Here the narrator presents through the perspective of a character, says as much as the character knows. It can also be the narrator who makes his less presence, most often lets his characters speak in their perspective. Such a narration is called objective narration. It is an omniscient narration which Flaubert calls the transparency of the narrator. Emphasis is laid on the text or scene or information and the text is more mimetic.

Though we described the above use of persons, there is not a steady use of fixed persons. Modern texts prefer variable narration and variable focalization. We can find many novels which make use of narration from the perspective of different characters so that whatever they say is lively and may undergo into the mind of readers effectively. Many novels make use of first-person to the third-person and

some from first-person to the third-person. In *Autre étude de femme* the novelist moves all of a sudden from 'I' to 'He'. In *Jean Santeuil*, the novelist moves from 'He' to 'I'. *Jean Santeuil* is a disguised autobiography, and it is a part of *Rescherche*. It is antithesis of Jean Santeuil and Marcel Proust's narration of his beginning part. So, in his shift from earlier part of his narrative to the story of Jean Santeuil, he has made use of the narrative person from 'I' to 'He' (qtd. in Genette 248). Nevertheless, while in his narration in *Jean Santeuil*, we can find the use of 'I' to 'He' as well.

Another aspect in the analysis of narrative voice is narratee. By the term narratee in narrative grammar, we mean the personage whom the narrator addresses or tells something; the story is addressed to a narratee, that is, it is told to the narratee. Like narrator, narratee is one of the elements in the narrating situations, and he is necessarily located at the diegetic level, that is, he does not merge with the reader.

An intradiegetic narratee corresponds to an intradiegetic narrator. The second person marks, which we find in the epistolary novels to refer to a narratee, indicate to the correspondent who is involved in receiving the letter. The narrator assumes certain narratee in a fiction. Thus, Des Grieux addresses to M. de Renoncourt and Aravind Adiga addresses to the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao.

About the extradiegetic narratee Genette remarks, "The extradiegetic narrator can aim only at the extradiegetic narratee, who merges with the implied reader and with whom each real reader can identify" (Genette 260). This means extradiegetic narratees are the people whom the author aims at expressing his belief and ideology. They are the people who the novelist thinks will be the possible reader of his work.

About the implied reader, Genette further opines, "The implied reader, in principle, is undefined, although Balzac does turn particularly sometimes towards a reader from the provinces, sometimes a Parisian reader, and Sterne sometimes calls

this personage as madam or sir Critick” (Genette 260). What we mean from this explanation is that for different author, the implied readers are different. They refer to the ones whom the author thinks the possible reader of his work. So, Adiga may assume Indian readers of novels as his implied readers, a French novelist may think people in France to be his implied readers.

To tell in short, the study analyzes narrative concerns: Who sees and who speaks? The question who sees deals with narrative perspective and focalization. And the question who speaks deal with narrative compendiums like epistolary narrative technique, narrative levels, metalepses, person, narrator and narratee.

## CHAPTER III

### Narrative Situations in *The White Tiger*

As narrative situation comprises the narrative voice and the narrative perspective, the chapter deals with the analysis of these aspects of narrative techniques. Though there are many precursors who have made research in this field, many of them seem to be unclear until F. K. Stanzel's work was published. They conducted their study under the title perspective but were not able to clarify their views without analyzing the narrative voice. Genette as well puts forward his view that it is precise and pertinent to put forward the matter under a single heading narrative situation.

### Narrative Voice in *The White Tiger*

One of the concerns of narrative situation is the analysis of the gap between the story time and its narrative time. The following description is pertinent in this context:

Aravind Adiga's views could be taken as representative of India's large and growing middle and upper middle classes – especially those who grew up on the two sides of the “great divide”. He remembers the pre-liberalization era when he grew up in a “provincial town in a socialist country” before it became a “booming town with malls and call-centers”. (Milachi 1)

The above statements assert that Aravind Adiga's novel *The White Tiger* satirizes especially large and growing middle and upper middle classes, especially who come in existence on the two sides of the great divide. The novel compares pre-liberalization era and the era after it in a socialist country when it becomes a booming town with malls and call-centers.

Like Paul Milachi, Aravind Adiga has expressed about the matter in an interview with Brad Frenette in Toronto in ‘World Voices in Fiction’ reading in 2008. He stipulates that he always has an idea for two related books on India which would be set on the either side of the great divide in modern Indian history which is 1991 when India opens its socialist economy to the world that creates the ‘New India’, the India of rapid economic growth and great disparities of wealth, which is the India of *The White Tiger*.

Analyzing the above views of Paul Milachi and Aravind Adiga, one can infer that *The White Tiger* represents the rapid economic growth after 1991 when it opens socialist economy. So, the theme *The White Tiger* holds is the current issues of India. Such a current issue or interpolated subject matter, as Genette says, is conventionally written in epistolary form. Aravind Adiga, too, has presented his subject matter of the novel in epistolary form.

With perspective of time of narrating and the story it holds, *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga is in Epistolary form. He has employed the form as if he is writing a letter to his confidante to confide his secret matter. The letter forms the plot and element of the narrative of it.

The novel begins, writing a letter to the Chinese Premier in this way:

For the Desk of:

His Excellency Wen Jiabao,

The Premier’s Office,

Beijing,

Capital of the Freedom-Loving Nation of China

From the Desk of:

The White Tiger

The Thinking Man

And an entrepreneur

Living in the world's centre of technology and Outsourcing

Electronics City Phase 1 (just off Hosur Main Road),

Bangalore, India.

Mr Premier,

Sir,

Neither you nor I speak English, but there are some things that  
can be said only in English.... (Adiga 3)

Clearly, these are the designations that express the outside covering of a letter – the address of the receiver and the one, writing the letter. The novelist is writing the letter from Bangalore, the city of technology and outsourcing. He is writing his letter to tell the secret matter that he can tell only to the nearest one, and the nearest one for the novelist here is the Chinese Premier. He has heard that the Chinese Premier is coming to India. He wants to ask if he is really coming. The All India Radio is broadcasting the news that the Chinese Premier is coming to India soon, and he wants to tell the secret of India and the secret of her entrepreneurship which the Chinese Premier would be intending to know.

To tell the secret of India, Balram, the protagonist of the novel, tells the story of his own life. The All India Radio tells that the Chinese Premier wants to know the secret of entrepreneurship of India, especially that of Bangalore. So, he offers to tell the secret of entrepreneurship, and it is the story of his own life that would appease the quest of knowledge of the Chinese Premier.

The extradiegetic part of the novel depicts the fact that it is in monologic epistolary form. It is written only from one side; it is not responded by the receiver. It

is only Balram who writes the letter to the Chinese Premier. There is not pretense of a letter by the Chinese Premier. At the end of the novel, that is, at the end of the eighth chapter, the novelist ends the novel as if writing a letter as well. It goes like this:

Yours for ever,

Ashok Sharma

The White Tiger

Of Bangalore

boss@whitetiger-technology drivers.com (Adiga 321)

The part of the letter presented above is the description of the latter part of the novel, and it indicates that it is in the epistolary form and is written by the white tiger, the major character in the story.

The analysis of intradiegetic or diegetic content presents the fact that the letters are written monologically by the granny of Balram. Kusum, the grandmother of Balram writes letters to him. She has written the letters for money. It begins with:

Dear Grandson.

This is being written by Mr Krishna, the schoolteacher. He remembers you fondly and refers to you by your old nickname, the White Tiger.

Life has become hard here. The rains have failed. Can you ask your employer for some money for your family? (Adiga 119)

This is a letter written by Balram's granny Kusum to Balram. She has made Krishna, the school-teacher write the letter. She says that the teacher fondly remembers him and calls him with his old nickname the white tiger.

Furthermore, she gives explanation to why she is asking for money and iterates that he has to remember to send money home:

With your brother Kishan I said, "Now is the time", and he did it – he married. With you I do not order. You are different from all the others.

You are deep, like your mother. Even as a boy, you were so; ... But  
you must stop thinking only about yourself and think about us too.

First you must visit us and eat my chicken curry.

Your loving Granny. Kusum.' (Adiga 190)

The above lines are the part of body, conclusion and suggestion of the letter. Here, she is describing the news related to her family matters. She tells that Kishan has got married. He is forced by her to get married and she says that she does not want to order Balram to do so as he is different from childhood. She further says him that he must stop thinking about himself. The end part is the final salutation or subscription of the letter.

Thus, the lines above are the parts of the letter written by Kusum, the granny of Balram to him. Balram does not write a letter in response.

In fact, a response letter can be found in the novel which is shown below:

I called out to the people around me and we carried Uncle to a banyan tree. Someone poured water on his face. The good people slapped Uncle hard and made him wake up. They turned to me and said, 'Your uncle is raving – he's saying goodbye to his grandmother. He must think he's going to die. 'Uncle's eyes were open now. 'Are you right, uncle?' I asked. He took my hand and he said, 'I am sorry, I am sorry, I am sorry.' ... And that was all that happened today. (Adiga 278)

This is a part of the letter written in response to the letter of Granny not by Balram himself but by Dharam, Balram's nephew who is staying with Balram since he has brought the first letter from Granny to him. In it, he has written about Balaram to Balram's Granny.

Here is another letter written within intradiegetic content by Granny to Balram:



Dear Grandson,

It has been a long time since you came to visit us and an even longer time, a total of eleven months and two days, since you last sent us any money. The city has corrupted your soul and made you selfish, vainglorious, and evil. I knew from the start that this would happen, because you were a spiteful.... (Adiga 263)

The above lines clearly show that it is in the form of a letter. The beginning part is the salutation of the letter in which the granny greets formally to her grandson Balram, calling him grandson.

In the main or body part of the letter, she is writing him for money. She wants him to send money and says that the city life has made him selfish, vanglorious and corrupted:

I knew from the start that this would happen, because you were a spiteful, insolent boy. Every chance you got you just stared at yourself in a mirror with lips and I had to wring your ears to make you do any work. You are just like your mother. It is her nature and not your father's sweet nature... Also it is your duty to look after Dharam.  
(Adiga 263)

The above lines are the main parts or the body of the letter. Here she is describing what she wants to say in the letter. Here she is giving explanation to why she says that the city life has made him selfish, vanglorious and evil. She says that she knows the fact that one day Balram will grow to become such a fellow. She gives further explanation that since childhood he is a spiteful and insolent boy. His activities show that he is such a boy like his mother. She further says that it is his mother's nature not his father's sweet nature.

The end part of a letter, that is, subscription can be obtained when one analyzes the further part of the letter:

Now take care of your health, and remember that I am preparing lovely chicken dishes for you, which I will send to you by mail – along with the letter that I will write to your master.

Your loving Granny,

Kusum (Adiga 263)

The beginning of the above part of the sentence is conclusion and suggestion by the sender of the letter. The end part is the final greeting or subscription of the letter. So, we can clearly see that it is a letter written by Kusum, the granny of Balram to him. She has written and sent the letter to Balram for money.

Analyzing the above letter, we find that the letters that make *The White Tiger* an epistolary are monologic in nature. They are one-sided whether we see the extradiegetic or intradiegetic content.

An epistolary novel also contains journalistic writing or newspaper clippings. *The White Tiger*, too, contains several newspaper advertisements or posters. The following lines extracted from the novel refer to the poster of Balram:

#### **Assistance Sought in Search for Missing Man**

General public is hereby informed that the man in the picture namely Balram Halwai alias MUNNA son of Vikram Halwai richshaw-puller is wanted for questioning. Age: Between 25 and 35. Complexion: Blakish. Face: Oval. Height: Five feet four inches estimated. Build: Thin, Small. (Adiga 12)

This is the extract about his poster which is advertised and posted in a train station in Hyderabad by police when he is fugitive, running away for escape after he has

committed murder of his own master Ashok. The further part of the poster says; “The Suspect comes from the village of Laxmangurh, in the District of Gaya. (18)... The Suspect is last seen wearing blue chequered polyester shirt, orange polyester trousers, and maroon colour sandals”... (22). This is further description of the poster about Balram. These are the examples of newspaper advertisements.

A newspaper clipping or journalistic writing is complicated and delicate when the character is submerged into interior monologue. Such a journalistic writing that turns into interior monologue can also be found in *The White Tiger*. The following extract of the journalistic writing submerges into interior monologue:

Now there is one phrase in this poster that does annoy me.

The son of Vikram Halwai, rickshaw-puller...

Mr Vikram Halwai, rickshaw-puller- thank you! My father was a poor man, but he was a man of honour and courage. I wouldn't be here, under this chandelier, if not for his guidance. (Adiga 23)

He is so inflicted that whatever is written in the poster is obsessed in his mind. He bursts with anger when the poster writes the remarks ‘the son of Vikram Halwai’, the rickshaw-puller. So, now he repeats the expression Mr. Vikram Halwai, rickshaw-puller. Degeneration to his father makes him angry and he retorts saying that though he was a poor man he was a man of honour and courage.

Similarly, the following lines are newspaper advertisements about a hotel in Delhi:

In the Dhaula Kuan area of New Delhi, on the night of a September, near the ITC Maurya Sheraton hotel... Now this hotel, the Sheraton, is the finest in Delhi – I have never been inside, but my ex-boss, Mr Ashok, used to do all his late-night drinking there. There's a restaurant

in the basement that's supposed to be very good. You should visit it if you get the chance. (Adiga 31)

Again the above lines express Balram's preoccupation. His mind is preoccupied with the thought of the hotel. He has emotional attachment about the hotel's standard and its quality. He says that it is one of the finest hotels in India and that his master goes to do late-night drinking in the hotel. He also prescribes us to visit the hotel if we have time.

The following lines are the finest examples of the journalistic writing turned into interior monologue:

The missing man was employed as driver of a Hinda City vehicle at the time of the alleged incident. In this regard a case, FIR No. 438/05, P.S. Dhaula Kuan, Delhi, has been registered. He is also believed to be in possession of a bag filled with a certain quantity of cash... Red bag, they should have said. Without the colour, the information is all but useless. (Adiga 32)

Balram is so irritated by these poster advertisements that he says they should have written red bag as well. He thinks that the police are the worst lot in India. They are the most rotten ones. What they need is the money and commission. Their advertisement is only the advertisement for namesake. In fact, they do not want the criminal to be caught instantly. This is why, they have not written full description of the criminal. He says that they should have written the full description.

The journal and epistolary confidence constantly combine what in broadcasting language is called the live and pre-recorded account, the quasi-interior monologue and the account after the event. Here the narrator is one and at the same time the hero and already someone else.

In *The White Tiger*, too, while narrating, he is the hero, the narrator and vice-versa. He is already someone else, not a hero, but Munna, the son of a rickshaw-puller and Balram, the name given by his school teacher. This can be learnt viewing the excerpt from the text:

I offer to tell you, free of charge, the truth about Bangalore, by telling you my life's story. The autobiography of a half-Baked Indian.' That's what I ought to call my life's story. Me and thousands of others in this country like me are half-baked... See, my first day in school, the teacher made all the boys line up and come to his desk so he could put our names down in his register. (Adiga 10-13)

Balram offers to tell the Chinese Prime Minister, free of charge, the truth about Bangalore by telling the story of his life. He says that the story of his life is the story of a half-baked Indian. So, by the term Indian entrepreneur we mean half-baked fellow. The Indian entrepreneurs are the half-baked entrepreneurs as they are not allowed to read; they are not allowed to get full education. And these half-baked ones have become entrepreneurs and have been operating the business world in the country.

Moreover, when we analyze the further part of the story what we come to know is that he is not even given a name when he goes to school: In the following words, the text elaborates the fact:

When I told him what my name was, he gaped at me:

‘Munna? That's not a real name.’

He was right: it just means ‘boy’.

‘That's all I have got, sir,’ I said.

It was true. I'd never been given a name. (Adiga 13)

The above lines express that he is known as Munna. Clearly, Munna is not a name as such. It only means a boy; it is not a real name. The narrator says that it just means a boy and that he is not given a name.

Why he is not given a name will be explained in the lines that follow:

‘Didn’t your mother name you?’

‘She’s very ill, sir. She lies in bed and spews blood. She’s got no time to name me.’

‘And your father?’

‘He’s a rickshaw-puller, sir. He’s got no time to name me.’ (Adiga 13)

The above lines give the explanation that he is not given the name because they do not have time. His mother does not name him because she is ill; his father does not name him because he is a rickshaw-puller and because he has no time to name him.

The further part of the text tells that he is given the name Balram by his teacher:

‘Don’t you have a granny? Aunts? Uncle?’

‘They’ve got no time either.’

‘Well, it’s up to me, then, isn’t it? ‘We’ll call you... Ram. Wait- don’t we have a Ram in this class? I do not want any confusion. It’ll be

Balram. You know who Balram was, don’t you? (Adiga 14)

The above lines express the fact that his aunts and uncle does not have time either to name him. May be his grand pa and granny do not have time either to name him. So, he is nameless. Whatever name he has is Munna; it means only a boy. With this name he has gone to school.

It is his teacher who has named him. He names him as Balram because he likes him very much. He wants to make him his own sidekick. His name is Krishna. He wants to name him Balram as Balram is the sidekick of Krishna:

‘No, sir.’

‘He was the sidekick of the god Krishna. Know what my name is?’

‘No, sir.’

He laughed.

Ho! Krishna. Ha! Ha! (Adig 14)

The above conversation is a part of the episode of the beginning in which the teacher and Balram are talking about the name to be given to him.

To tell in short again about the above description from the text, the narrator is the character in the novel, and he is going to tell autobiography of his life. The story of his life is the autobiography of a half-baked Indian. He is half-baked, and such are thousand and thousands of entrepreneurs in India. He does not have opportunity to be fully educated; he does not have opportunity to get education at the best precept. Neither do any of the Indian entrepreneurs have. The readers are informed about it by the narrator himself.

The narrator also unfolds the fact that his parents have named him Munna which means a boy. It is not a name indeed. His name that the novel uses is given by his school teacher as mentioned by the dialogue above. Reading the novel, later, we happen to know that because of marriage of his cousin, Rina, he is compelled to leave his school and work at a tea shop in Dhanbad as his family has to pay the loan taken during the marriage. The narrator, that is, Balram says, as he does not have opportunity to continue his education in the school, he thinks he will continue his education by listening to every important person who would come to the tea shop in which he was working. This is why, he says, he does not do the work honestly but spends time listening to the people. He just pretends to wipe out the table and goes on pondering over the people. As a result, the owner of the tea shop does not only hit him

with the sizzling ladle, leaving reddish and pink spot on his temple but dismisses him from his service as well.

Learning to drive for a month of training at a driving institute and making a great effort to find a job, he becomes a driver and has an opportunity to work at a landlord whom he calls Stork. While being a driver he kills the son of his landlord while they are going to pay money to a politician. Killing him on the way, he escapes, goes to Bangalore, runs a company named White Tiger Technology Drivers and has become a rich person. Within a year, he has earned fifteen fold more than that he had looted from his landlord, killing his son. Now he is an honest businessman and shows modesty to people. He is the white tiger, the hero of the story and is narrating his past life and how he became a successful entrepreneur.

Analyzing the narrative level, the novel can be classified into extradiegetic, intradiegetic or diegetic and metadiegetic level. Again Genette's assistance can be taken to clarify what extradiegetic, intradiegetic and metadiegetic levels refer to:

M.de Renoncourt's writing of his fictive *Memoires* is a literary act carried out at a first level, which we will call extradiegetic, the events told in those *Meimoires* including Dex Grioux's narrating act are inside this first narrative. So, we describe them as diegetic or intradiegetic, the events told inside Dex Grioux's narrative in the second degree, we will call metadiegetic. (Genette 228)

Interpreting the above explanation, one can infer that a novelist's writing his novel is classed under extradiegetic, the events or story described by him/ her is classed under intradiegetic or diegetic whereas the story further told within the diegetic or intradiegetic content is called metadiegetic.



The extradiegetic content contains the part of diegetic one until the novelist is able to introduce the character or characters who play the role in the events of the story. So, if we analyze, the content of *The White Tiger*, we can classify the narrative until the narrator is able to tell his identity as extradiegetic up to page No.13. Thenafter, the story of Balram including how he becomes white tiger, can be included under diegetic or intradiegetic content. The story within the story of Balram, the story of how he murders Ashoka and becomes a successful entrepreneur can be classed under metadiegetic content. It is better to depict from the novel:

The story of my upbringing is the story of how a half-baked fellow is produced... See, my first day in school, and the teacher made all the boys line up and come to his desk so he could put our names down in his register...

...Munna? That's not a real name.'

He was right: it just means a boy...

Well, it is up to me then, isn't it? We'll call you...Ram. I do not want any confusion. It'll be Balram. (Adiga 11-13)

The story upto above that introduces the major character is extradiegetic part of the story. The major character is Balram. It is the name given by his school teacher. He is only given the name Munna by his parents, and it is not a name in proper indeed.

The narration after extradiegetic part, in other words, the narration after the introduction of the major character who is telling the story is intradiegetic or diegetic. This part includes the whole part of the story as well. Metadiegetic narrative that falls within intradiegetic starts from the last sentence of page No.112. The description of the narrator is:

We reached Delhi late at night.

It is not yet there I could go on a little while longer. But I want to stop, because from here on I have to tell you a new kind of story. When I peer into the portion of my story that unfolds in New Delhi, I feel the same way. The story gets much darker here. (Adig 112)

From the narrator's own perception his own story gets much darker here. This very beginning of the darker story is the beginning of the metadiegetic story. The metadiegetic story, as the narrator says, is the story of dark part of narrator's life. The city life makes him not only vanglorious but also criminal.

The extradiegetic content is that novelist is writing a novel and that he is writing a secret matter to his close friend, the Chinese Premier.

The intradiegetic content is the story of an Indian interpreneur. The story of an Indian entrepreneur is the story of half-baked fellow of India. The story of Balram also represents it. So, the narrator, Balram, tells his own story. The story is that Balram, born in a middle class family is named Munna by his parents. His guardians do not have time to name him. Previously, his parents must have been shop owner. The narrator infers it. The people with big belly, the ones with great appetite must have eaten up their shop. Munna or Balram is Halwai by his caste. Now because of exploitation replete in India, the narrator Balram says, his family has become victim of grinding poverty. To meet their hands to mouth, his father has to pull a rickshaw. Amidst the poverty, Balram is born. With his name Munna he goes to school; his school teacher Krishna names him Balram, adoring him and thinking him as his own would be sidekick. He cannot continue his school education as he becomes the victim of exploitation. His family has to pay back the money taken during the marriage of his cousin sister Reena. He is victimized by the grinding monster of exploitation.

Despite the ruthless situation in India, Munna or Balram here is not a pathetic character. He is not the one who is crushed by the ruthless power. He breaks the social chain of exploitation, tries to rise from his social and economic position. Being removed from school, he is kept at a tea shop where he does not work whole heartedly for he wants to continue his education by listening to the important people who come to the teashop. As the shop owner sees him, loitering most often, he dismisses him from the job. He learns to drive, visits door to door for his job and finally, gets a job at the landlord whom he calls Stork.

The metadiegetic content is the story of how Munna or Balram turns into murderer, fugitive and a successful entrepreneur. In fact, he has inborn the impulse and character from his birth which is not naïve or meek, but stubborn, quick and shrewd. The school inspector as well has named him as the white tiger. While working at Stork in Dhanbad, he turns himself from driver number 2 to driver number 1. It is the onset of his rise from his position. All these things happen in his city life, and he feels uneasy to tell about them:

When I peer into the portion of my story that unfolds in New Delhi, I feel the same way. If you ask me to explain how one event connects to another or how one motive strengthens or weakens the next, or how I went from thinking this about my master to think that – I will tell you that I myself do not understand these things. I cannot be certain that the story as I will tell it is the right story to tell. (Adiga 113)

He meets one of the drivers whom he calls Vitiligo-Lips as he has pink reddish marks on his lips. The person makes him aware of the city life and about the life itself.

Balram has regular information about rape, murder, hypocrisy, and dirty politics from

the magazines. And his fellow drivers encourage him to be involved in such activities. Motive of earning money and living city life inculcates and stimulate in him a desire to kill his master. As a result, he kills his master.

Internally, the novel accommodates metalepses, that is, minor stories, which can be found inter-woven effectively. There are metalepses which are created within the intradiegetic level, and there are such examples within the metadiegetic level either. Such metalepses which make the whole narrative interesting are replete in the novel.

Here is an example of a metaleptic story in the diegetic level; “The teacher turned aside and spat – a jet of red paan splashed the ground of the classroom. He licked his lips” (Adiga 13). This story is frequented within the diegetic level which describes the sordid act of the school teacher Krishna who teaches in the school where Balram studies.

The story of policeman frequenting to the village near the tea-shop where Balram works is a spice for many of the readers, and so is the story of pornographic film shown in the village theatre for many of the readers. Balram, the central character narrates:

The policemen would park their jeep here when they came to bugger someone in the village. A little before sunset, a man circled around the tea shop three times, ringing his bell loudly. A stiff cardboard-backed poster for a pornographic film was tied to the back of his cycle ...

What traditional Indian village is complete without its blue-movie theatre, sir? (Adiga 23)

The above lines express metaleptic stories which make the plot of the novel exciting. A novelist inevitably annexes metaleptic stories with plot to add spices to the plot of

the novel. Here he employs emotional measures which not only may entertain many of the readers but also involve the mind of the readers intently as the mind has intimate relation with the emotional aspect of a person. They also help in consolidating the learning on the part of the readers.

Balram further annexes metaleptic story; “A cinema across the river showed such films every night; two-and a-half-hours fantasies with names like He was a True Man, or We Opened Her Diary or The Uncle Did It” (Adiga 23). These lines are further extension of metaleptic stories. The villages across the river show such films. Some names of such films are labeled in the above paragraph. Some more metaleptic stories from the text have been presented below:

I walked with the driver, my mouth open, gaping at all the gorgeous women jeering and taunting me from behind their grilled windows – all of them begging me to dip my beak into them!

The old driver explained the nature of the wares on offer.

Up in one building, sitting on a windowsill in such a way that we could see the full spread of their... (Adiga 58)

Here the novelist is serving with stories which may be entertaining for many of the readers and almost all the readers may be surprised and emotionally inflicted to read the above stories. These lines describe the beautiful women in the brothel house or prostitution centre. The women are taunting and jeering at the narrator and telling him bizzare things. The older driver explains him about the women.

The further part of the story expresses even sleaziness of the city life:

Up in one building, we could see their gleaming dark legs, were the ‘Americans’: girls in short skirts and high platform shoes, carrying pink handbags with names in English... slim and athletic – for men

who like the Western... 'traditionals' – fat, chunky types in saris...

There were eunuchs in one window – teenagers in the next window....

(Adiga 58)

The above lines express the fact there are different types of women and girls and even eunuchs. Clearly such a story pulls the attention of a reader and makes his/ her mind aware of the situation. He/ She may be emotionally or sensually involved in the story for some moments.

Such an emotional involvement has its own role in understanding the story and arousing interest towards it. The metaleptic story about Pinky Madam's interest in badminton adds flavor to the novel:

One morning there was a knocking on the door of the drivers' quarters, and when I went out, Pinky madam was standing with two rackets in her hand... A net had been tied between two poles in one corner... side of the net and I got on the other side. She hit the shuttle – it rose up, and then fell near my foot... 'Hey! Move! Hit it back!'... 'Sorry, madam. I'm sorry.' (Adiga 77)

The above lines also express interesting episode that takes place one morning. Pinky madam is at the servants' door in the early morning. In her hand, there are two rackets. It is really interesting for those who play badminton.

Moreover, metaleptic stories express emotional or sentimental aspect of a character:

I hit the shuttle back to her, and it went straight into the net.

'Oh, you're useless. Where is the other driver?'

Ram Prasad dashed up to the net at once. He had been watching the game all the time... He knew exactly how to play badminton... I

watched him hit the shuttle cleanly... shot for shot, and my belly  
burned. (Adiga 77)

The sentences in the above lines, express the further emotional expressions of Balram. He is involved in playing badminton. When he hits the shuttle, it goes straight into the net. Ram Prasad has been intently watching them playing the game as he is very much interested in the game. When Balram is not able to hit the shuttle well, the madam reproaches him and wants the other driver to play the game. Ram Prasad dashes to play the game. And now Balram watches him play the game. Ram Prasad is hitting shot for shot and Balram feels very much envious.

One more metaleptic story is presented below:

The next evening Mr. Ashok and Pinky madam came down to the  
entranceway fighting, got into the car fighting, and kept fighting as I  
drove the Honda City from Buckingham Towers B Block... ‘Going to  
the mall, sir?’ I asked, the moment they were quiet ... Pinky Madam  
let out a short, high laugh. I expected such things from her, not from  
him – yet he joined in too. (Adiga 146)

These lines as well, express a metaleptic story. Here there is a story of fighting of husband and wife. Their fighting is entertaining activity. Probably it entertains readers as well.

Moreover, they are entertained when Balram says, “Going to the mall, sir? Pinky Madam giggles. Balram says that he expects such things from her not from Ashok. He is expressing basic human instinct. In a funny way, “It is not maal; it is mall,” Ashok said. ‘Say it again’ (Adiga 147). Balram keeps on saying maal, and they keep on asking him to repeat it, and then giggle hysterically each time he does so.

Without the provision of such metaleptic stories, a novel may be a banal stretch of discourse, vapid array of unrelenting stories that the readers may not be

interested in. This is why, an author has to insert flavor inside his fiction.

The analysis of aspect of the use of person in the novel, unfolds the fact that the novel has made use of the first-person narration. The first-person narration, as Genette says, may be heterodiegetic or homodiegetic. In the beginning, it is difficult to find whether the novel has made use of heterodiegetic or homodiegetic first-person narration. But as the story unfolds up to page No. 13, homodiegetic narration finds a way. It is the narration in the first-person, and the narrator is one of the characters. This fact can be corroborated through the story of the text:

I offer to tell you, free of charge, the truth about Bangalore. By telling you my life's story... 'The autobiography of Half-Baked Indian.'

That's what I ought to call my life's story. Me and thousands of others in this country like me are half-baked... two or three days passed. I was in my classroom, sitting at the back, with the black slate and...

(36)

The above lines are the expression that the major character of the novel is telling to the Chinese Premier. He informs that he is going to tell the story of his life free of cost. It means he is going to be the narrator in the novel.

The novel is the story about Balram, and it is he himself who is going to tell the story. In other words, it is an autobiography. It is an autobiography of a half-baked Indian. The narrator begins to tell the story of his life starting from the days of his schooling. He is telling about a day in which he is with a black slate and a piece of chalk that his father has brought for him from Dhanbad. His father thinks that Balram would learn alphabet on his own. While he is in the classrom, the boys are chatting or fighting. The further part of the novel proves the same fact:

The teacher had passed out.



Kishan was standing in the doorway of the classroom. He gestured with his fingers. 'What is it, Kishan? Are we going somewhere?' Still he said nothing... 'Should I bring my book along? And my chalk? Why not?' he said. And then, with his hand on my head, he led me out.... (Adiga 36)

The above part of the novel clearly shows that Balram is the narrator in the novel. Now he tells that the teacher has gone out of the classroom when Kishan appears at the door of Balram's classrom. Kishan gestures with his fingers. But Balram, the narrator does not understand what he bekons. Then he asks, "What is it, Kishan? Are we going somewhere? Should I bring my book?

The further part of the novel narrates:

I was taken to the tea shop.

Kishan folded his hands and bowed to the shopkeeper. I bowed to the shopkeeper too.

'Who is this? The shopkeeper squinted me.

... My brother, 'Kishan said. 'He's come to join me.' (Adiga 37)

The narrator is further narrating the story of his life. He says that he is taken to a tea-shop by Kishan and further tells about Kishan's greeting to the shopkeeper and the shopkeeper's enquiry of the acquaintance of the narrator and Kishan's explanation about the narrator, Balram.

In the further part of the story, Kishan informs the shopkeeper that Balram has arrived there to join Kishan in the work; "Then Kishan dragged the oven out from the tea shop and told me to sit down. I sat down next to him. He brought a gunnysack; inside was a huge pile of coals. He took out a coal, smashed it on a brick and then pured the black chunks into the oven" (Adiga 37). Here, the narrator is speaking in

first-person narration. He is telling his stories in which he is compelled to leave school and has joined in the tea shop to pay for the loan taken during the marriage of his cousin sister Reena. He has just begun working at the tea shop.

In the second chapter, we find that the narrator leaves his work at the tea shop and starts working at Ashok. The narrator calls the father of Ashok as Stork and he calls Mukesh, the elder brother of Ashok as Mongoose. The following lines clarify this fact:

The Mongoose told me, 'Wait, I have instruction for you.'

I squatted in a corner of the railway carriage.

'Balram, you're not in the darkness any longer.'

'Yes, sir.'

'There is a law in Delhi.'

'Yes, sir.' (Adiga 141)

This part of the conversation between the narrator and the brother of Ashok takes place in Delhi to which the Mongoose calls the city of light. The name of the narrator is Balram which is already given by his teacher Krishna at school. Before that the narrator's name was Munna which is not a name in reality as it means only a boy. One can simply call a man a boy when he is a child. Later, when he goes to work at Ashok, he changes into a murderer. When he escapes to Bangalore, he disguises himself in the name of Ashok and calls himself as the white tiger. When the narrator is the white tiger, he is the hero. Overall the position of the narrator is the hero and the narrator of the story.

The narrator's status, in the beginning is extradiegetic homodiegetic. The narrator is describing or narrating the story, and his identity is not confided. When he introduces himself as Balram, it is the diegetic or intradiegetic part. Here the status of

the narrator is intradiegetic homodiegetic or intradiegetic autodiegetic – the narrator is telling his own story inside the novel. At the latter part, the narrator tells another part of his story within his story. This is metadiegetic part where the narrator is telling his own story again as a murder and as a successful entrepreneur. Here the status of the narrator is metadiegetic autodiegetic.

Analyzing the role of the narrator as a protagonist, he is found as the hero in the story. As the story proceeds the narrator tells the story of his life as a positive character. He is a character who is suffocated by the exploitative system of the country but is not a pathetic one. While working in the tea shop or at Stork, he works in his own status but not as a bootlicker. He does his work in his own manner and improves his condition.

When the metadiegetic part of the story unveils, he is not a hero. He has a villain character; he murders his master who is as naïve and gullible as a lamb. So, a lamb becomes victim of a white tiger. While the narrator describes the activity of the white tiger, he is so decent and gentle, and does everything thoughtfully and successfully. As a whole, like in other autobiography, the narrator in *The White Tiger* is the hero and the protagonist.

Eventually, the search of narratee, divulges the fact that Chinese Premier is the extradiegetic narratee. The whole of the narrative is written addressing to the Prime Minister of China, Wen Jiabao. But the implied narratee, as the novelist Aravind Adiga has said himself, is the Indian reader. He has especially written the novel for Indian readers. India has a large mass that can buy his books and read them. So, the implied readers are the Indian readers. Inside the intradiegetic part, he is talking to the characters in the novel:

‘That’s all I have got sir,’ I said.’

‘Didn’t your mother name you?’

‘She’s very ill, sir. She lies in the bed and spews blood. She’s got no time to name me.’

‘And your father?’

‘He’s a rickshaw-puller, sir. He’s got no time to name me.’ (Adiga 13)

In this part of the conversation, the narrator is Munna who has not yet been given a name, has only the name Munna and the teacher is the narratee to whom he is meant to tell the story.

It is better to analyze further inside part of the story:

‘What is the creature that comes alone only once in a generation?’ one boy asked loudly.

‘The coal breaker,’ another replied.

And then all began to laugh.

‘Ignore them,’ Kishan said. ‘They’ll go away on their own.’ He looked at me. You’re angry with me for taking you out of school, aren’t you?’ (Adiga 37)

In this part of the story the narrator tells how he is teased when he leaves school. He is narrating it to Wen Jiabao but his implied narratees are those for whom he is writing the novel.

The characters in the metadiegetic story are the narratees in the metadiegetic part:

Mukesh sir looked at me... ‘Do you drink?’

‘No, sir. In my caste, we never drink.’

‘Halwai...’ Mr Ashok said with a grin.... Can you cook for us?

‘Certainly, sir. I cook very well. Very tasty sweets. Gulab jamuns, laddoos... I said. I worked at tea shop for many years.’ (Adiga 65)

In this part of the conversation there are both intradiegetic and extradiegetic narratee as the narrator is narrating and speaking to the diegetic narratee Mukesh sir.

We find that sometimes Stork, sometimes Ashok, sometimes Pnky madam and at times Vitiligo-Lips are the narratee in the metadiegetic part of the novel.

### **Narrative Perspective in *The White Tiger***

The analysis of the perspective of the narrative shows that narrative perspective in *The White Tiger* is polimodal. It does not choose only one modes of narrating or regulating information. As said earlier in the second chapter, by the term polimodal, we mean the novel that opts for not only one mode of regulating information in the novel. It chooses various modes of regulating information. It makes use of various kinds of speeches – direct speech, indirect speech, interior monologue and so on. It makes use of various perspectives; sometimes, it seems as if the novelist himself is narrating.

To tell in another word, polimodal is such an amalgamation in which we can find the mirror of several modes of narration. Here, we have such a narration which seems as if it is fixed first-person narration. There is the place for expression of views of other characters as if through their own mouth. There also may be such a narration which seems omniscient that is, the narrator knows everything as if he or she is god.

In *The White Tiger*, we find polimodal narration. We find the mirror of different kinds of narration. It seems that the perspective is internal throughout the narrative; most of the narrative is presented through the angle or view of Balram, the central character of the novel. So, in one one way, we can say that the narrative perspective in *The White Tiger* is of fixed first-person narrative.

However, Aravind Adiga gives floor to the other characters as well. In the following lines Stork retorts at the remarks of Ashok; “Oh! You young people and your modern ideas!’ the Stork said. He put his hands on me. ‘I have to steal the driver, Roshan. I’m sorry you’ll have him back in an hour, okay?’” (Adiga 70). This part of the story is in the perspective of the Stork. It is presented in such a way as if Stork himself is speaking. In fact, it is narrated by Balram. The part of the speech of Stork is presented in direct speech within inverted commas. The narrator does not say anymore things than Stork. Such a narration is known as narration with restrictive field or point of view.

Contrary to the above, almost all the narrative is narrated in the perspective of Balram, the protagonist of the novel. So, the perspective in *The White Tiger* is internal one – an internal character perspective. It again tries to verify that the novel adopts fixed first-person perspective.

However, in many parts, the perspective seems to be from behind as Jean Poulloin has said. It seems as if it is the omniscient narration from the novelist above the protagonist narrator. In Proust’s such a narration is on part of the novelist as well. In the first glimpse, it is difficult to discern from whom the following lines are expressed:

The cockroach flew down and landed right above my head.

You should have asked them for money when they made you sign that thing. Enough money to sleep with twenty white-skinned girls. It flew away. Another landed on the same spot. ...A hundred. Two hundred. Three hundred, a thousand, ten thousand golden-haired whores. And even that would still not have been enough. (Adiga 230)

This part of narration seems from the perspective of omniscient novelist narrator. In fact, Marcel Proust in his *Recherche du Temps Perdu* uses such a narration which tells about what undergoes in the mind of the major character as the narration from the novelist. We may think that the above lines may represent the interior monologue of the narrator Balram. Again, analyzing the words: A cockroach flew down... right above my head... 'you should have asked them for money... to sleep with twenty thousand white-skinned girls. Clearly, we can classify this type of stylistic, rhetoric and mimetic narration only under omniscient perspective. So, this is the perspective from behind. Only the god can hear a cockroach say you should have asked for more money. Such an omniscient perspective is also known as perspective from behind.

In the above context, the novelist has arranged the narration so smoothly that it is difficult to differentiate the narration whether it is from Balram or the novelist. Moreover, the narrator has not used I. So, it is the other part, the omniscient one that is narrating.

This part is not clearly narrated in different context from the narration of Balram. It is annexed to his narration. Adiga employs his narrator Balram as fixed first-person narrator, but transgresses the limit of first-person narration. Generally, the first-person narrator cannot be at two places at the same time. In this instance, he is not only listening to the cockroach speaking but also a character, Balram. A human character cannot speak in a normal way and understand an animal's speech. This is an omniscient act. And again, he is acting as both the listener and a talker. So, Balram in *The White Tiger* is somewhere an omniscient narrator as well. An animal cannot talk; in fact, it is the omniscient narrator that is talking and listening. It is breaching the two laws: The law against bilocation and the law of other minds problem.

Analyzing the above perspective and narration, it is difficult to discern who is narrating. Obviously, we come to know that it is an omniscient narration. The narrator is Balram, an omniscient narrator here. But he gives floor to the cockroach as if he is speaking in his own language. Moreover, there is no clear indication of reference that either the cockroach is speaking or the narrator. Such a narrator is known as an omniscient covert narrator and the narration is objective narration.

Related to perspective, another compendium is focalization. *The White Tiger* makes use of internal focalization; to the most extent, the focalization takes place on the part of the narrator protagonist Balram. The focalization is from homodiegetic narrator 'I' as first-person narration. It is not heterodiegetic first-person narration; unlike Homer's first-person external omniscient narration in *Iliad* or Proust's such narration in *Education Sentimentale* Aravind Adiga uses internal first-person homodiegetic narrator focalizer. Almost all the theme is presented in his perspective, in his opinion and views. Most of the time, he tells about his own story. So, it is also be known as autodiegetic focalization. In the beginning, it is external focalization:

Now you are visiting us this week, Your Excellency, aren't you? All

India Radio is usually reliable in these matters.

That was a joke, sir.

... That's why I want to ask you directly if you really are coming to

Bangalore. Because if you are, I have something important to tell you.

See, the lady on the radio said, 'Mr Jiabao is on a mission: he wants to

know the truth about Bangalore.' (Adiga 4)

The above text is the initial part when the protagonist narrator Balram has not confided his identity yet. It is called zero or external focalization. Anyway, it is Balram who is narrating and the above lines corroborate that the narration in *The*



*White Tiger* is homodiegetic. In other words, it is narrated in first-person narration. It is Balram, the narrator protagonist, on whose perspective the novel is narrated. It has character focalization.

Though the entire plot revolves round his perception and ideology, in many parts of the novel, the narrator also gives floor to the other characters. At times, he lets Vitiligo-Lips express his ideology:

‘Well.’ He said, ‘a driver is good till he’s fifty or fifty-five. Then the eyes go bad and they kick you out, right? That’s thirty years from now, Country-Mouse. If you save from today, you’ll make enough to buy a small home in some slum. If you’ve been a bit smarter and made a little extra of the side, then you’ll have enough to put your son in a good school. He can learn English, he can go to university. That’s the best-case scenario. A house in a slum, a kid in a college.’ (Adiga 202)

In the above example, the narrator gives floor to one of the minor characters. It is Vitiligo-Lips whose perspective is being presented.

Likewise, the narrator gives floor to the other characters as well. Balram, the central character is narrating in the following words about himself but the viewpoint is that of Mukesh sir; “Mukesh sir was not yet convinced about me. He looked me up and down and said, “Do not we want someone older? He’s young” (Adiga 66). In these lines, the perspective of Mukesh is given. The narrator does not say anymore thing than Mukesh knows. He says what Mukesh had said. Such a perspective is the perspective with restrictive field or point of view.

It is better to analyze further lines from the novel; “The Stork shook his head. ‘Catch’em young, and you can keep’em for life. A driver in his forties, you get, what, twenty years of service, then his eyes fail. This fellow will last thirty, thirty-five years.

His teeth are solid, he's got his hair, and he's in good shape" (Adiga 66). The statements in these paragraphs are the perspectives of Stork. It is the focalization from Stork. Stork is the focalizer and Balram is the focalized here.

Narration with restrictive point of view and hence restrictive perspective is employed here as well. The narrator presents the vision of Stork only; he does not explain any of his vision. At times, he gives floor to Ashok:

‘You live in such a hole, Balram. I never knew. I’m sorry.’ ‘It’s all right, sir. I’m used to it.’... ‘I’ll give you some money, Balram. You go into some better housing tomorrow, okay?’... He caught my hand and turned it over. ‘Balram, what are all these red marks on your palm? Have you been pinching yourself?’  
‘No, sir... it’s a skin disease. (Adiga 237)

These lines express the perspective of Ashok. He has become sentimental and is saying something about Balram. Balram is focalized and Ashok is the focalizer here. Sentimentally, he is telling that Balram had been living in a hole. He tells Balram that he would send him in better housing the next day.

Further part of the text has been presented below:

He came close, filling my nostrils with his perfume. Bending my ear with a finger, gently, he looked... He opened his lips and then closed them without making a noise. He did this a couple of times and then he said, ‘My way of living is all wrong, Balram. I know it but I don’t have the courage to change it. I just do not have... the balls.’ (Adiga 237)

The above statements are again Ashok's perspectives. The narrator gives, in this way, floor to different characters in the novel. These are character focalizations and this kind of narration is known as narration with restrictive point of view. The narrator

knows as much as a character knows. The narrator does not interfere the character's perspective even a little. So, the narration in *The White Tiger* is also restrictive narration in which the narrator gives floor to different characters, imposes on himself total restriction whenever a character is expressing anything.

However, he does not only employ restrictive perspective. He uses other perspectives as well. It is better to analyze from the excerpts of the text:

My heart was bitter that night.

The city knew this – and under the dim orange glow cast everywhere by the weak streetlamps, she was bitter.

Speak to me of the civil war, I told Delhi,

I will, she said. (Adiga 220-21)

The perspective here is quite uncommon and rare. It is an omniscient one. How can a city know that his heart was bitter? And how can the narrator say that the city knew the fact? The narrator can say such things only if he is omniscient like God. The narrator imagines that he knows the city knew what the narrator felt. This kind of narration is known as omniscient narration.

In the narration presented above, it is difficult to find who is speaking and narrating. The narrator uses omniscient narration. Further part of the story employs similar narration:

An older man with a beard and white turban is talking to them with a finger upraised... the noise drowns out his words. He looks like a prophet in the middle of a city... unnoticed except his three apostles. They will become his three generals. That overturned flower urn is a symbol of some kind... Speak to me of blood on the streets, I told Delhi... I will, she said. (Adiga 221)

Analyzing the above text, one may be puzzled to think what sorts of perspective the narrator is using and whose perspective it is. And who is the focalizer? And what kind of focalizer is he?

The above text is absolutely mimetic, and such a text is usually expressed and narrated by external focalization from the novelists. Clearly, the text is not the focalization from a human minor character. A man cannot hear the city speaking. Delhi, the murky city cannot speak to a person.

And lo! The narrator listens what the city says. Not only does he listen what the city says but also what the prophet says. The prophet is unnoticed to the people but the narrator sees. His words are drowned in the noise and cacophony of the city; no one but the narrator listens those words. Is it omniscient external focalization then?

To make external focalization, the narrator should have clarified: The narrator should have clarified that it is not the hero narrator who is expressing his feeling; he should have clarified as Marcel Proust had clarified in a situation of death of one of the character's that Marcel, the protagonist narrator couldn't have known what the character on the death-bed said as there was no one to tell Marcel.

Obviously, such a narration, and a matter a veteran reader knows, reading it but the narrator tells that Marcel couldn't have known what underwent in the mind of the character in the death-bed. Who is narrating here then? It was the omniscient novelist narrator who was narrating in Proust's narrative of the part. So, Marcel Proust had given floor not only to other characters but also to the novelist as well. No, doubt, almost all the plot is narrated by Marcel, but not this part.

Again reverting back to the above text of *The White Tiger*, do we find exactly the same narration as that of Marcel Proust's '*Recherche du Temps Perdu*'? Here, it is not the same. It is different. The narrator is not differentiating the narration. It is

smooth narration that is extended to Balram's narration. Aravind Adiga has created Balram not only as a homodiegetic narrator but also an omniscient narrator as Hemingway has created his narrator Jake Barnes in *The Sun also Rises*.

Such a narration is objective narration in which it is difficult to find who is narrating. Usually, the narrator speaks very little and presents what he says. It is difficult to find out who is narrating. Such a narrator is known as an omniscient covert narrator and the narration is known as objective narration.

Analyzing the above text with the perspective of focalization, what can be said is that the focalization in *The White Tiger* is mostly homodiegetic internal one; it revolves around characters. Balram is the fixed focalizer. All the determining thematic perception and images have been made by Balram himself. In fact, it is also found that he has also arranged objective character focalization for variety as had Marcel Proust done. And he has also used restrictive focalization.

Fixed focalization is also autodiegetic as the story is mainly the story of his life which is related to his society and the nation. This very fixed focalization is a rare one; it is omniscient which very few novelists make use of.

The story, as earlier mentioned, is the story about how an oppressed fellow overcomes the servitude; and becomes a man and lives the life of a man. To live the life in the life of the jungle, to live the life in the law of the jungle, he has to kill one person. Without being animal, he cannot live the life of a human being because animals have big belly; they have big appetite. With their wanton appetite, they have been eating the poor. The poor are the human as they behave as human.

After liberty of 1947 from the English rule, the rule changes from zoo law to the jungle law; and there grow animals like Buffalo, Wild Boar, Stork and Raven. To live the life among animals, one needs to become a white tiger – smartest among the

tigers. And aware of the jungle law, an enlightened one breaks the rooster coop and kills one of the animals. Indeed, it is not the Buffalo or the Wild Boar, but a meek one, Ashok, the son of the Stork. In fact, he kills a lamb, Mr. Ashok. He commits one murder and it is sufficient to live the life of a human being. He is not like that of Buffalo or Raven who have appetite for killing thousands of human beings. After one murder, he begins living like human beings and behaving like human.

In the entire plot, Balram, the protagonist, is the focalizer. Almost all the events, actions, characters, images, symbols are focalized by him. It is in his perspective, his ideas, ideologies that the novel revolves around. He is not only a fixed homodiegetic and autodiegetic character but also omniscient focalizer in *The White Tiger*.

## CHAPTER IV

### Novelty in the Narrative Situations in *The White Tiger*

Written in first-person narration in epistolary form, *The White Tiger* is one of the excellent literary creations which is not only satirical, witty and ironic but also comic. At the same time, it is amalgamation of dark and white images, pathos and kindness, hatred and reverence. It is an excruciating journey to the modern India – to the India created by socialist economy after 1990s on the background of freedom from British reign.

With the surface glimpse of *The White Tiger* we can find that it is written in epistolary form. The term epistolary form is one of the aspects of narrative voice. And the narrative situation does not only include this aspect of narration. It also includes perspective, focalization and the other aspects of narrative voice. Epistolary is an old form of writing a novel and letting ones own view be expressed among the readers.

With respect to perspective and focalization, *The White Tiger* uses novel narrative techniques in the sense that it does not stick to only one mode of regulating the narrative information, it uses several modes. It does not use only first-person fixed narration but also narration with restrictive point of view and objective narration.

Within first-person narration, one can search external omniscient and classical narration. He may find it hard to decipher in the beginning whether it is omniscient narration or it belongs to first-person internal character hero narration. *The White Tiger* employs narration which is entirely by the protagonist of the novel, Balram. It is fixed internal character perspective. *The White Tiger* has adopted fixed internal hero perspective, but it is not entirely constrained within this limit. The novelist also gives floor to the other characters in the novel. The minor characters, too, express their opinions in their role, in their own perspective. So, there is slight movement towards

restrictive character perspective or focalization. And there is omniscience in the expression and narration of the protagonist Balram. This is novelty of Aravind Adiga, his style in narrative technique.

So, with respect to perspective, *The White Tiger* uses not the external one; not external omniscient perspective. First-person narrative may also be omniscient external one as can be found in many of the classical narratives. The perspective in *The White Tiger* is internal one; the perspective here is character perspective. Mostly, it is fixed character perspective as most of the narration is made with the point of view of the major character, Balram Halwai.

However, the novelist does not allow his expression to be presented entirely through Balram's perception. He also allows some of the perception be expressed in the viewpoint of Vithal-Lips, the co-character in the metaleptic part of the story. And some of the viewpoints have been expressed in the perception of Stork, some by Mongoose and some by Ashok. So, the novelist has given floor to the characters and has made use of restrictive character perspective as well.

Analysis of focalization shows similar situation as perspective. In fact, the term focalization is the developed one which covers more meaning than point of view. The term point of view refers to the perspective, the angle from which things are seen and analyzed in a narrative whereas the term focalization does not only mean the way things are seen in a narrative but the way the things are perceived. A novelist may express whatever he/she has perceived through all the sensory organs not only by seeing.

Mostly ideas in *The White Tiger* are perceived and analyzed through the perception of the major character Balram. In one way, we can say that the focalization in *The White Tiger* is fixed focalization. In *Recherche du Temps Perdu* Marcel Proust



employs perspective equally by Swann and Marcel. Marcel and Swann are the two narrators in the novel. In *Madame Bovary*, the perspective frequently moves from the character A to B to C and again to A to C or to B. The movement of focalization is irregular and inconsistent whereas in *The White Tiger* the focalization is constant and consistent in Balram, the major character and the protagonist of the novel.

Unlike those novels, in *The White Tiger*, it is not utterly Balram from whom the focalization is made. What we can say about focalization in *The Whiter Tiger* is, it has internal character focalization. Most often it is fixed character focalization; sometimes it is omniscient character focalization; at times it is objective character focalization or it is restrictive character focalization.

With the viewpoints of the time of the story and the time of the narration, the story falls under interpolative type; the story deals with the current issues of the current time. Such a narrating and story are conventionally dealt in epistolary form, and Aravind Adiga is not an exception in narrating, using the narrative technique of epistolary form. As an epistolary form, it writes letter to Wen Jiabao, the Chinese Prime Minister. Inside the narrative, there are letters written by Balram's granny to him for money and a letter written by Dharam, his nephew on the part of Balram.

In addition to the correspondence used in the novel, there is use of journals and newspaper clippings – the characteristics of epistolary form. There are many examples of journalistic writings or newspaper clippings turned into interior monologues of Balram – journalistic writing turned into interior monologue found in many of the epistolary novels. Epistolary writings mix with the journals and form pre-recorded account. Here the hero is narrator as we find in the other epistolary novels, and he is already someone else, oppressed Munna or Balram and murderer, the white tiger.

Analysis of narrative level shows proleptic narrative in the extradiegetic part in which the narrator introduces himself as Munna, his family name and as Balram, the name given by his school teacher, Krishna. The intradiegetic or diegetic part contains the whole narrative of Balram and his autobiography. The metadiegetic part is the major part of the novel and yields the entire theme of the novel.

The metadiegetic narrative is that Balram, trapped in the rooster coop as all the members in his family and the humans with human behavior and thought have been entrapped since epoch, is enlightened that the rooster coop is made by the rich for entrapping the poor; it is made by these animals to trap human beings to rule and exploit them. He now knows that only few people in India have been ruling large mass of people here. His father and mother were killed in the rooster coop, and billions of people have been entrapped in it and killed. This is the rooster coop of religion in the name of god, the rooster coop made by the animals with big bellies to exploit the poor. He learns that he is not the one to be suppressed; he is not the one to be destined to the subject of exploitation: he is the white tiger; it is the white tiger like him who can break the coop. To live the life like human beings, he has not only to break the coop but also to kill an animal; killing an animal is enough for him to live like human and behave like human. This is why, he kills the son of one of the animals.

*The Whiter Tiger* is one of the finest novels. Even if it mostly deals with the dark aspect of the recent India, it makes the plot decorated with metaleptic narrative in such a way that a reader's mind is constantly involved in the subject matter of the text. The metaleptic narratives, innumerable in the novel, constantly attract the attention of the readers with different sorts of emotion. The attention is fortified and amalgamated with emotion which makes involvement and learning of the readers stronger and long-lasting as well. The metalepses in the novel, create different sorts of

emotions towards the characters who are involved in the stories of the metalepses.

Sometimes they create hatred; sometimes, laughter; sometimes pathetic feelings; and at times, kindness.

Analysis of narratee shows extradiegetically, it is written to Wen Jiabao, the Chinese Prime Minister. The implied readers, as Adiga himself tells in many of his interviews, are the Indian readers in English. The intradiegetic or diegetic narratees are sometimes the school teacher, at times, Kishan or at times Ashok or any other characters.

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