

# THE SOCIO-CULTURAL CHALLENGES IN THE NOVELS OF ARAVIND ADIGA: A POSTCOLONIAL STUDY

V.S. SANKARA RAO CHINNAM<sup>1</sup> Dr. S. K. NAVIN<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of English, RTM Nagpur University, Nagpur.

<sup>2</sup>Research Supervisor, Department of English, Nabira Mahavidyalaya, Katol, Nagpur.

**Abstract:** This article focuses on the representation of Postcolonial socio-cultural challenges in India with reference to Aravind Adiga's novels like *The White Tiger*, *Between the Assassinations* and *Last Man in Tower*. Aravind Adiga's novels provided authentic information about the actual life conditions, social institutions and cultural organizations during the time of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The novelist brings out the socio cultural challenges and subjects: jungle versus city culture, bossism, caste system in Indian, national identities, crime and corruption. There are evocative descriptions of feudal system in India. It presents issues of ethics and socio-economical relationships that relevant even today.

**Key Words:** Post colonialism, Society, Culture, Crime, Corruption and Imperialism.

**Introduction:** The present article focuses on the Postcolonial socio cultural challenges in Aravind Adiga's novels. Defining post colonialism Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms says, "Colonialism considers vexed cultural-political questions of national and ethnic identity, otherness, race, imperialism and language during and after the colonial period" (2008: 265). Aravind Adiga's novels are wonderful example of the interface of cultural challenges in the society. Postcolonial socio cultural challenges in India are especially in power-politics, schisms, personality clashes, caste system, crime, corruption, institutional structure, individual and social problems.

Aravind Adiga's novels are the record of the sharp and glaring look at modern day India. Adiga exposes the ancient division between the rich and the poor, existing caste system, corruption in Indian politics and the miraculous economic growth in India. Adiga clearly expresses the disparity exist in the country as haves and have-nots. M.S Nagarajan's remarks, "Post colonialism tries to unearth the operations and ideologies, political, economic etc. at work during the period of colonialism" (2006: 185).

The article shows a modern day, capitalistic Indian society with free market and free business. It shows how it can make economic division. His novels are based on the disparities of two worlds: darkness, inhabited by poor; and the lighted world, inhabited by politicians, businessmen and land lords. Adiga's novels dealt with economic, social and cultural emancipation. It was a difficult struggle as he had been "confined behind bars of class, caste, economic disparity, illiteracy, zamindar system and poverty" (2012: 232).

In Adiga's novels deal with Caste system is the major classification of people according to their caste is one of the underlying causes for many violence in the country. Even though the country is fast developing in all the sectors, still there are many murders done due to the bane of caste system. In the olden days, "you had caste, and you had religion: they taught you how to eat, marry, live, and die. But in Bombay caste and religion had faded away, and what had replaced them" (2008: 217).

Aravind Adiga's novels reflected this aspect of crime, corruption and violence are exhibited. Corruption and crime do play major role in modern Indian. The novelist gave a delicate hint of how corruption degenerate the morality of the people and makes them do their shrewd business fight and play dirty games in order to make money (2012: 2).

Although it may seem that his position in society will forever remain the same, he manages to go from a sweet shop worker, to a personal driver for a rich man and finally to an owner of a small business. Aravind Adiga's novels have shown the economic system India that creates socio-economic gaps big division in society. It controls opportunity, social flexibility, health and other rights and pleasures that should be given to all. There is a big difference in the amount of money spread around in society today and his novels are alluding to that fact. Adiga enriches the readers with probing perspectives to examine life in the fast changing Indian societies evoking our conscience to "the abject poverty" (2012: 170).

The speaker regularly mentions the rooster coop when describing the condition or characteristics of the servant class in India and he also protects himself for killing his master with it. Adiga's novels are reproducing of crime, corruption and violence. The caste system in India is a social system that divides the Indian population into higher and lower social classes. Although it said to be disappearing in urban India, the caste system still remains in rural India. An individual is born into a caste and the caste one belongs in decides his or her profession.

*The White Tiger* is about a disgruntled driver who kills his master for money, was praised for its outspokenness about class inequalities but also criticized for the unconvincing voice of its driver character, Balram whose idiom seemed remote from the 'authentic' voice of the uneducated Bihari working class. Balram Halwai born a poor villager, witty and pensive Balram ends up a driver for a corrupt businessman in Gurgaon. He became a successful businessman because he had gone through the bitter experiences of life. He was in midst of the rooster coop of the downtrodden people and saw how the illiteracy, unemployment, social taboos, rigid caste discrimination and culture conflict, corrupt politicians and bureaucrats, economic disparity, superstitions, corrupt education system and health services, shrewd entrepreneurs, flood and mall culture contribute to the sufferings of underclass (2009: 104).

Adiga's novels deal with an India slap in the central of the prosperous and it encounters a lot of comfortable expectations about Indian democracy and finances. Balram tells the story of how India still has a caste system, political and economic corruption is still present. Balram opposes the country of India in which an individual great on the caste system can bribe people such as police officers with money to cover up killings, damage political opponents by rigging votes and money and have treats such as shopping in a mall explicitly for those of extraordinary social and economic significance. There are many serious problems facing in India in the twenty first century. The problems like the negative impacts of globalization, social inequality, religion, corruption and conflict between social classes also present a case for being the largest hindrance to Indian progression.

The main themes of Aravind Adiga's novels are caste, corruption and its strong presence in Indian political culture and society. The central characters personal accomplishments are based around corrupt acts which act as the substance for effectively plot improvement. The novels are portrayed a very dark side of every-day in India where corruption is common and often necessary for career advancement or societal reputation. Corruption truly manifested itself in India in the 1990s and it was not unique to India as other Asian countries like China also saw corruption play the largest role in society and politics.

Adiga's novels are the study of the balance of power in a master and servant relationship. *The White Tiger* emphasizes on a separate illustrative of an enormous countryside population and it are the people that have to take the initiative to overthrow corruption with the co-operation of the government. Balram started exploiting all the loopholes of the society to become a successful businessman. When the novel closes, the readers see him taking an upper caste name 'Ashok Sharma' to become a member of the elite class. Unable to change the century old caste tradition and endemic corruption, applying shrewd business policies, doing malpractices, and adopting an upper caste name are not only the deeds of "Balram but it can be the story of many underclass boys" (2012: 24).

Observing cultural norms and values as a resource structure for entrepreneurial activity makes sense when one considers that the rules of economic behavior are embedded in national, regional and organizational cultures. Cultural values acting as resources include a society's support of entrepreneurial behaviors like risk-taking, individualism and profit-seeking. Cultures that value and reward such behavior encourage individual initiative and innovation, whereas cultures that reinforce conformity, group interests and control over the future are not likely to show entrepreneurial behavior.

In enlightening the dual India's, Cristina Mendes fittingly remarked, "The India of Light is that of wealth, technology and knowledge, while the India of Darkness is that of misery, destitution and illiteracy" (2010: 277). Culture is advantageous for entrepreneurship can be done with two perceptions. The first outlook inspects the collective psychological qualities of a country. The second perspective has to do with societal acceptance or legitimization of entrepreneurship which can be assessed in different ways through levels of social acceptance of business ownership, through society's tolerance of failure and finally through society's tolerance of bureaucracy and corruption.

Adiga has graphically portrayed the different images of India, India of Light and India of Dark but his focus is on the latter and he tries to give it a literary voice. Adiga's novels distribute an unconquerable dominant character and India stiffening with economic opportunity, challenging loyalties and class struggle. Adiga has magnificently emphasized the subaltern apprehension in the novel and brought home the idea that in the story of India's progress role of the underclass is significant.

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