

Vol 2 Issue 9 March 2013

Impact Factor : 0.1870

ISSN No :2231-5063

Monthly Multidisciplinary  
Research Journal

*Golden Research*

*Thoughts*

Chief Editor  
Dr.Tukaram Narayan Shinde

Publisher  
Mrs.Laxmi Ashok Yakkaldevi

Associate Editor  
Dr.Rajani Dalvi

Honorary  
Mr.Ashok Yakkaldevi

**IMPACT FACTOR : 0.2105**

**Welcome to ISRJ**

**RNI MAHMUL/2011/38595**

**ISSN No.2230-7850**

Indian Streams Research Journal is a multidisciplinary research journal, published monthly in English, Hindi & Marathi Language. All research papers submitted to the journal will be double - blind peer reviewed referred by members of the editorial Board readers will include investigator in universities, research institutes government and industry with research interest in the general subjects.

### ***International Advisory Board***

Flávio de São Pedro Filho Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil	Mohammad Hailat Dept. of Mathematical Sciences, University of South Carolina Aiken, Aiken SC 29801	Hasan Baktir English Language and Literature Department, Kayseri
Kamani Perera Regional Centre For Strategic Studies, Sri Lanka	Abdullah Sabbagh Engineering Studies, Sydney	Ghayoor Abbas Chotana Department of Chemistry, Lahore University of Management Sciences [ PK ]
Janaki Sinnasamy Librarian, University of Malaya [ Malaysia ]	Catalina Neculai University of Coventry, UK	Anna Maria Constantinovici AL. I. Cuza University, Romania
Romona Mihaila Spiru Haret University, Romania	Ecaterina Patrascu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest	Horia Patrascu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, Romania
Delia Serbescu Spiru Haret University, Bucharest, Romania	Loredana Bosca Spiru Haret University, Romania	Ilie Pinteau, Spiru Haret University, Romania
Anurag Misra DBS College, Kanpur	Fabricio Moraes de Almeida Federal University of Rondonia, Brazil	Xiaohua Yang PhD, USA
Titus Pop	George - Calin SERITAN Postdoctoral Researcher	Nawab Ali Khan College of Business Administration

### ***Editorial Board***

Pratap Vyamktrao Naikwade ASP College Devrukh,Ratnagiri,MS India	Iresh Swami Ex - VC. Solapur University, Solapur	Rajendra Shendge Director, B.C.U.D. Solapur University, Solapur
R. R. Patil Head Geology Department Solapur University, Solapur	N.S. Dhaygude Ex. Prin. Dayanand College, Solapur	R. R. Yaliker Director Managment Institute, Solapur
Rama Bhosale Prin. and Jt. Director Higher Education, Panvel	Narendra Kadu Jt. Director Higher Education, Pune	Umesh Rajderkar Head Humanities & Social Science YCMOU, Nashik
Salve R. N. Department of Sociology, Shivaji University, Kolhapur	K. M. Bhandarkar Praful Patel College of Education, Gondia	S. R. Pandya Head Education Dept. Mumbai University, Mumbai
Govind P. Shinde Bharati Vidyapeeth School of Distance Education Center, Navi Mumbai	Sonal Singh Vikram University, Ujjain	Alka Darshan Shrivastava Shaskiya Snatkottar Mahavidyalaya, Dhar
Chakane Sanjay Dnyaneshwar Arts, Science & Commerce College, Indapur, Pune	G. P. Patankar S. D. M. Degree College, Honavar, Karnataka	Rahul Shriram Sudke Devi Ahilya Vishwavidyalaya, Indore
Awadhesh Kumar Shirotriya Secretary, Play India Play (Trust),Meerut	Maj. S. Bakhtiar Choudhary Director,Hyderabad AP India.	S.KANNAN Ph.D , Annamalai University,TN
	S.Parvathi Devi Ph.D.-University of Allahabad	Satish Kumar Kalhotra
	Sonal Singh	

**Address:-Ashok Yakkaldevi 258/34, Raviwar Peth, Solapur - 413 005 Maharashtra, India  
Cell : 9595 359 435, Ph No: 02172372010 Email: ayisrj@yahoo.in Website: www.isrj.net**



## THE WHITE TIGER: AN EXPOSITION OF REAL INDIA

IRFAN AHMAD THOKER

Research Scholar

### Abstract:

*The author of the novel The White Tiger realistically depicted contemporary India at a time when the leaders of the country are boasting that India is the second fastest growing economy in the world, which in reality contradicts with the progress that India has made so far. The poor in India are still struggling to survive, lacking basic necessities while the rich are busy in amassing wealth, winning elections and doing everything that pleases them. Aravind Adiga went deep to delve this difference that astonishes every reader and compels them to comment.*

### INTRODUCTION

At once a fascinating glimpse beneath the surface of an Indian economic “miracle”, a heart-stopping psychological tale of a premeditated murder and its aftermath, and a meticulously conceived allegory of the creative destruction that is driving globalization....That may sound like a lot to take in, but The White Tiger is unpretentious and compulsively readable to boot (Medintz).

The novel The White Tiger has fascinated every reader, because the author has portrayed the bright and the dark sides of contemporary India, which no other Indian writer has done so far to such an extent. The novelist has opened the unrevealed chapters of economically fast evolving India. He realistically depicts the modern India that is still facing the grave problems of poverty, hunger, death and disease.

The modern India has two sides; one is its progressive side and other the dark side that shows the miserable life of Indian middle class society. The progressive side of India is its growing economy, advancement in science and technology and the research. The dark side of modern India is the major part of the world's poor population that lives in India. The poverty stricken people of India exist by resorting either to menial professions like begging, hard labour, theft etc or suffer hunger. One cannot deny the fact that huge population provides man power to any country which is necessary for the development of a nation. If this man power is utilized properly it can prove a great source of energy and strength to a nation. On the other hand if it is left to waste, it will breed only poverty and add problems to the country. Unfortunately in India increase in population means increase in poverty and unemployment. People do not have work to do. In Indian villages more than 95% people are unemployed. The main source of their income is agriculture but unfortunately natural calamities increase their sufferings. There are floods and unseasonal rainfall and drought that destroy most of their crops.

No doubt India has become a nuclear power, it has done wonders in the field of space research and technology, yet there is a lot to be done. Only the advancement in technology is not sufficient in the present Nuclear Age. The progress India has done so far is meaningless unless the larger section is not benefited from it. What is needed is the overall development of all classes. There are still basic problems of food, clothing and shelter. The majority of the people are living in a very pathetic condition:

In bare, unsentimental prose, he stripes the sheen of self congratulatory nation and reveals instead a country where the social compact is being stretched to breaking point. There is much talk in this novel of revolution and insurrection: Balram even justifies his employer's murder as an act of class warfare. The White Tiger is a penetrating piece of social commentary, attuned to the inequalities that persist in India

Title : THE WHITE TIGER: AN EXPOSITION OF REAL INDIA  
Source:Golden Research Thoughts [2231-5063] IRFAN AHMAD THOKER yr:2013 vol:2 iss:9

(Sundras).

Aravind Adiga's portrayal of India is more vibrant and fantastic than that of any other Indian writer. He gives a panoramic view of India. He takes the readers from the dark corners of India to its bright and dazzling cities to make the difference between the appearance and the reality. He makes this clear that India is not as rich as presented by our politicians and policy makers. S Prasannaranjan says about the novel: As a debut, it marks the arrival of a storyteller who strikes a fine balance between the sociology of the wretched place, he has chosen as home and the twisted humanism of the outcast. With detached, scatological precision, he surveys the grey remoteness of India where the dispossessed and the privileged are not steeped in the stereotypes of struggle and domination. The ruthlessness of power and survival assumes a million moral ambiguities in this novel powered by an Indian where Bangalore is built in Bihar (India Today).

It is something different that can be understood when one looks into the bulk of the Indian population. By giving the grim picture of India, Adiga puts our hands on the pulse of the so called economically fast growing India which is shining on one side and is utterly dark on the other side. He zooms to the Indian map to make his readers see the real India. He exposes the ugly marks on the bright face of 'Rising India'. The bright side of India is attractive:

Over the past couple of years, an extraordinary thing has happened in India. Driven by vertiginous economic growth, the burgeoning of an aggressively consumerist, astonishingly wealthy urban elite and the rise and rise of the bellwether stock-market index, a phrase has gained unrivalled currency: New India. This isn't India shining-the tagline previously used to describe a country whose economy had just begun to catch fire. This is an India so dazzled by the glow of its own success that it has turned an adjective into a proper noun -we have learnt to embrace New India as a different entity- like the New Testament, perhaps or New Labour (Saumaya).

As soon as the dark side of India comes in view, one forgets about the propaganda of New India: "Elsewhere, everyday India limps, coughs, splutters and throws up a good deal of blood. One of every six Indians continues to live in the shadow of insurgency. Farmers with little access to irrigation and devastated by the failing crops continue to kill themselves" (Saumaya).

Adiga's novel instills a desire to know more about India. His novel provides an opportunity to know the harsh realities about the Indian society and its customs and traditions. He represents India as it is. He is not eluding his readers but he gives all that he has learned about it. Most of the people who live in urban areas are unaware about the problems that people living in villages and slum areas of India face in their daily life. A close observation of these areas gives the readers the truth. The people living in slums are living their life worse than animals. In rural areas where including other problems people are illiterate. They are living sub human life.

The novel The White Tiger is written in a series of letters in a period of seven nights by a self made entrepreneur, Balram Halwai to the Chinese Premier, Wen Jiabao. The Premier is going to visit the Indian "Electronic City" Bangalore soon. Balram gives him an account of his journey from poverty stricken Laxmangarh to the luxurious cabin at Bangalore. Balram is the son of a rickshaw puller. As the white tiger is "the rarest creature that comes along only once in a generation"(p 35), Balram is also the rarest one among the poor. Balram is the smartest boy. He is sharp and intelligent. He is the only boy in the village who has the ability to read and write. That is why the school inspector gives him the name of the white tiger. His family members are of the opinion that he will definitely do something in his life. But he fails to complete his earlier education because he is taken away from the school to work on the village roadside teashop. His aim of becoming a driver is fulfilled when after learning driving the land lord hires him as a driver. First he drives a Maruti Suzuki and then after sometime the Honda City. Balram drives his master and mistress around Delhi, Gurgoan and Laxmangarh. He also drives them to malls, hotels and government offices. During these travels' he sees a lot of opportunity and wealth. As time passes, he gains experience and knowledge about the life of the rich. He ultimately commits the murder of his kind master Ashok and escapes with the bag of money to Bangalore. He establishes his own business there and becomes a successful entrepreneur in Bangalore.

The novel The White Tiger is about the two faces of Indian society. Balram depicts these two facets through his development from the poor family at Laxmangarh to the luxurious cabin with a "chandelier" at Bangalore. He emerges from poverty to become a successful man by committing a crime which shows that there is a great conflict in the Indian society. The past sixty five years have seen many changes in Indian society, and these changes have overturned the traditional hierarchies, and the old securities of life;

At first, this novel seems like a straight forward pulled-up-by-your boot straps tale, albeit given a dazzling twist by narrator's sharp and satirical eye for the realities of the life of India's poor. But as the narrative draws the reader further in, and into the darkness, it becomes clear that Adiga is playing a bigger

game. The White Tiger stands at the opposite end of the spectrum of representation of poverty from those images of doe eyed children that dominate our electronic media- that sentimentalize poverty and even suggest that there may be something ennobling in it. Halwai's lesson in The White Tiger is that poverty creates monsters and he himself is just such a monster (Adam).

Adiga's novel is a mirror to contemporary India. Through this novel he has given his microscopic observation of the Indian social set up. It is this mirror image of contemporary India that surprised almost every reader who is unfamiliar with the Darkness of India. It is because of this truthful representation of India, that the novelist received a great applause from the reviewers and critics: "The unpleasant reality of contemporary Indian society is revealed via mordant sketches of characters from millionaires in the air conditioned tower blocks to the unfortunates who live literally below them, catering to their whim" (Higgins). In this way The White Tiger shows the image of the two classes who have a vast gap between them.

Contemporary India as depicted in the novel The White Tiger has a rich cultural, social and political heritage of the past. India's 5000 year old history has fascinated the world with its richness in every aspects of life. It is believed that the Harappan culture was the first major civilization that flourished around 2500 BC in the Indus Valley. From 1500 BC the Aryans came to settle here. Then afterwards many power kingdoms ruled India till the British Colonial Rule. A few well known kings like Ashoka, Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan etc led India to the zenith of prosperity. It was this development that Marlow wrote in his play Dr Faustus: "I'll have to fly to India for gold/ Ransack the ocean for oriental pearl" (Act I, 81-82).

It is very important to note that most of the Indian population, after sixty five years of independence, does not have even the basic necessities of life. There are still millions of people who do not have a roof over their heads. They do not have proper food, pure drinking water, proper clothes and toilet facilities. There is still a big chunk of the masses that do not write or read. They are managing with thumb impressions. India has 74.04 per cent literacy rate (Census 2011). It is not the percentage for which Indians would feel proud of when majority in rural India fail to complete primary education, though it shows improvement in last ten years. There is a lack of infrastructure in schools, deficiency of schools and teaching staff, and above all corruption in the education system: "We have got to get beyond that as Indians and take responsibility for what is holding us back? The corruption, lack of health services for the poor and presumption that the family is always the repository of good" (Jefferies).

Today Indian's have denounced their culture and are aping the West. Though India has given birth to many enlightened people who still have ideals and vision, their number is not so great to be relied on forever. They are working for the betterment of the nation but the people who always impede in their ways outnumber them. The people who work as servants in present India are not better than the slaves of the British rule. The rulers and bureaucrats who still follow the British neglect the poor class in the society.

Jawhar Lal Nehru envisaged that India should focus upon the abolition of certain evils from society, social structures and institutions which perpetuated exploitation and poverty, which promoted parasitic mentality of feudalism and hindered the growth of scientific world view. But unfortunately Indians digressed from the ideologies of these leaders. There still exist these institutions which result in the differences among the citizens. It is because of these institutions, there is a long controversy of caste system that now has changed into two prominent classes i.e. the upper class of masters and the lower class of servants. The upper class people enjoy every part of their life where as the lower class people suffer throughout their life. The rickshaw pullers, daily wagers, men who work at construction sites, in coal mines, in fields etc have to struggle for every loaf of bread. There are people who die because they cannot afford the cost of their medicines. They have no money to pay fees to the Doctors or private hospitals. The beggars are increasing day-by-day because of the faulty policies. In rural areas people are facing the problem of unemployment. The money they earn is not sufficient for them to buy meals. Adiga says,

At a time when India is going through great changes and with China is likely to inherit the world from the west, it is important that writers like me try to highlight the brutal injustices of society. That what writers like Flaubert, Balzac and Dickens did in the 19th century and as a result, England and France are better societies. That is what I am trying to do -It is not an attack on the country, it is about the greater process of self examination (Jefferies).

While talking about his book, he says that his book is a novel. The course of action that takes place in the novel is not real but the portrayal of characters is based on the real situation in India. Then he says that here is an example;

Balram's father, in the novel dies of tuberculosis. Now this is a make-believe figure, but underlying it is a piece of appalling reality—the fact that nearly a thousand Indians, most of them poor, die every day from tuberculosis. So if a character like Balram's father did exist, and if he did work as a rickshaw puller, the chance of his succumbing to tuberculosis would be pretty high. I have tried hard to make sure that anything in the novel has a correlation with Indian reality. The government hospitals, liquor shops and the



brothels that turn up in the novel are all based on real places in India that I have seen in my travels (Interview)

The White Tiger also highlights the issues related to pollution in India. There is no proper drainage system in India. The water of the once famous rivers is so polluted that its smell is unbearable. It is even difficult to live amid the capital of India, Delhi, because of the various pollutions. Moreover, all the cities are crowded and polluted. It is because of the pollution that many diseases take birth and then cause death to hundreds of people who live in unhygienic conditions.

Aravind Adiga successfully deals with all those issues that prevail in India through his mouth piece, Balram, who set the tale of two India's in these words: "Please, understand Your Excellency that India is two countries in one, an India of Light and an India of Darkness. The ocean brings light to my country; every place on the map of India near the ocean is well off. But the river brings darkness to India -the black river" (p 14).

The India of Light is the India of metropolitan cities where people have many facilities as compared to rural areas. Many people in these cities are rolling in wealth. Industries and factories provide jobs to millions of people. Essential needs like electricity clean drinking water, health centers etc. are provided to the urban dwellers. Whereas the majority of the population, that lives in slums and rural areas, are still in a pathetic condition. They are being ignored. Different projects for the development of these areas are announced but little is done in reality. There is still, after sixty one years of independence, a large portion of the India's population which is being neglected from the basic facilities like water, electricity, health care, education and other necessities. In India the writer knows that life is a bit harder. No doubt the facade of prosperity is adopted to hide the ugly reality of its tolls of teeming millions of the poor people, but it cannot be kept hidden from the keen eyes of conscious human beings for long. Adiga says,

There is a lot of triumphalist noise in India today. There is a sense of profound economic achievement and much of it is justified, but it is also important to hear the other noises. A large number of people are not benefited from the economic boom. It is a fact that most of the poor, there are only two ways to go up...either through crime or through politics, which can be a variant of crime (Amit).

Adiga says, "I am increasingly convinced that the servant -master system, the bed rock of middle - class Indian life is coming apart: and its unraveling will lead to greater crime and instability. The novel is a portrait of a society that is on the brink of unrest" (Interview).

Thus Adiga in his Booker Prize 2008 winning novel portrayed what he saw in New India. The two facets of New India that he saw are; one that cradles many millionaires and entrepreneurs living in huge apartments and the other that depicts the slum dwellers living in filth under open sky struggling for every morsel of food. That is why critics appreciated him for exposing reality that has been ignored by the people who raise slogans of "Shining India".

#### WORKS CITED

- Adiga, Aravind. *The White Tiger*. New Delhi: HarperCollins, 2008
- Bhattacharya, Soumya and Vijay Dutt. "Mumbai-based writer is second-youngest Booker winner ever." *Hindustan Times* 16 Oct 2008
- Census 2011. Government of India. Downloaded on 12 Nov 2012.  
<http://www.censusindia.net/>
- Higgins, Charlotte. "Adiga's White Tiger rides to Booker Victory." *Guardian* 14 Oct 2012. Downloaded on 10 Nov 2008. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2008/oct/14/booker-prize-adiga-white-tiger>>
- Interview. *India Today* 27 Oct 2008.: p 74 Jaffries, Staurt, "Roars of Anger." *Guardian* 16 Oct 2008. Downloaded on 26 Oct 2012. <<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2008/oct/16/booker-prize>>
- Lively, Adam. "Reviews." 6 April 2008. Downloaded on 13 Dec 2012.  
 <<http://www.complete-review.com/reviews/india/adigaa.htm>>
- Marlow, Christopher. *Dr Faustus*. Ed. Kitty Datta. New York: Oxford UP, 2002. Act I Sc I 81-82
- Mendtz, Scott. "India's Native Son: Arvind Adiga's 'The White Tiger.'" *New York Sun* 29 April 2008. Downloaded on 10 Dec 2012 <<http://www.nysun.com/politics/indias-native-son-arvind-adigas-white-tiger>>
- Prasannarajan, S. "New Sensations: Adiga has brought the Booker Prize India." *India Today*. 27 Oct 2008.: p 71-72
- , "Books: Driving out of darkness." Rev.of *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga, 17 April 2008. Downloaded on 25 Dec 2012 <<http://www.complete-review.com/reviews/india/adigaa.htm>>
- Roy, Amit. "Booker Tiger hunts for a Cash Cage." *Telegraph*[Calcutta]  
 <[http://www.telegraphindia.com/1081016/jsp/frontpage/story\\_9975086.jsp](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1081016/jsp/frontpage/story_9975086.jsp)>
- Saunders, Kate. "Reviews." *Times Online* 1 May 2008. Downloaded on 15 Oct 2012.  
 <<http://www.complete-review.com/reviews/india/adigaa.htm>>



**IRFAN AHMAD THOKER**  
 Research Scholar

# Publish Research Article International Level Multidisciplinary Research Journal For All Subjects

Dear Sir/Mam,

We invite unpublished research paper.Summary of Research Project,Theses,Books and Books Review of publication,you will be pleased to know that our journals are

## Associated and Indexed,India

- \* International Scientific Journal Consortium Scientific
- \* OPEN J-GATE

## Associated and Indexed,USA

- EBSCO
- Index Copernicus
- Publication Index
- Academic Journal Database
- Contemporary Research Index
- Academic Paper Databse
- Digital Journals Database
- Current Index to Scholarly Journals
- Elite Scientific Journal Archive
- Directory Of Academic Resources
- Scholar Journal Index
- Recent Science Index
- Scientific Resources Database

Golden Research Thoughts  
258/34 Raviwar Peth Solapur-413005,Maharashtra  
Contact-9595359435  
E-Mail-ayisrj@yahoo.in/ayisrj2011@gmail.com  
Website : www.isrj.net