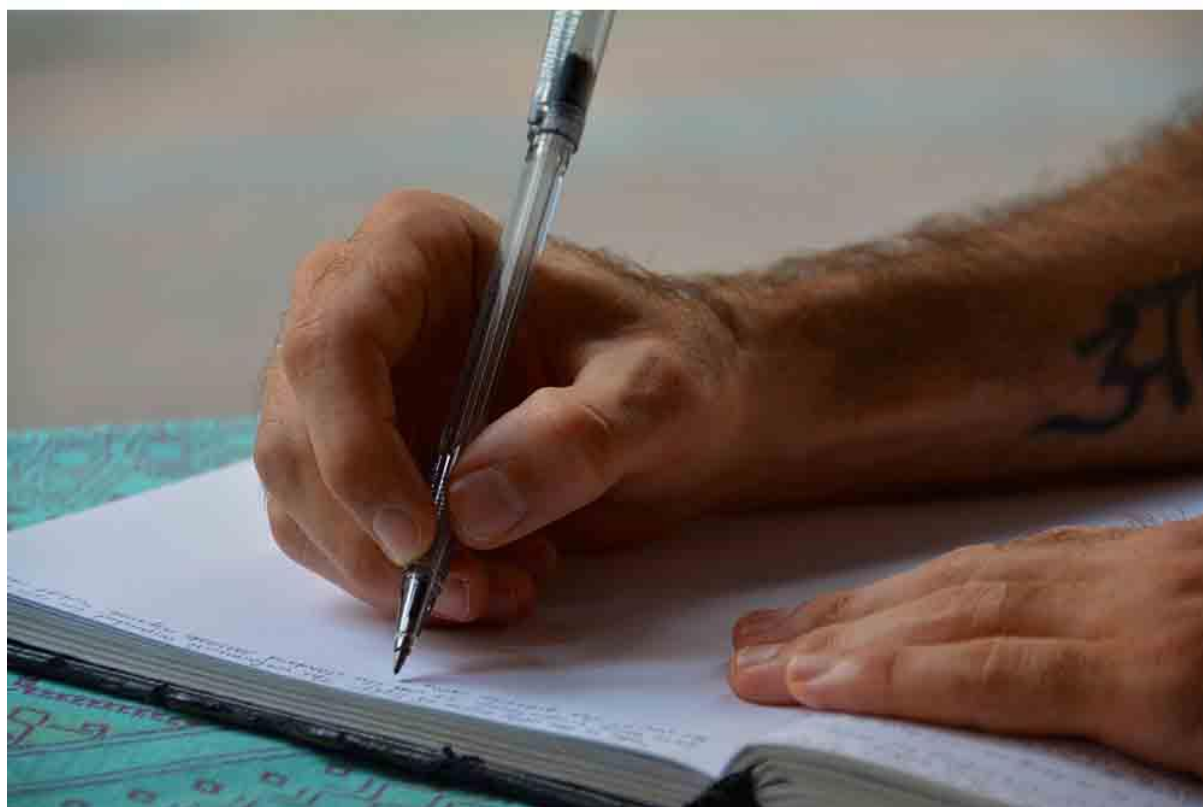


ISSN INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
ISSN-2321-7065

IJELLH

**International Journal of English Language,
Literature in Humanities**

Indexed, Peer Reviewed (Refereed), UGC Approved Journal



Volume 7, Issue 4, April 2019

www.ijellh.com

Mrs. Rekha Tiwari

Professor

Jain Vishva Bharati, Deemed University

Ladnun, Rajasthan, India

Mr. Vishnu Kumar Sharma

Dean

Yagyavalkya Institute of Technology

Tonk Road, Sitapura

Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

vk_english75@yahoo.in

Big man the laltain, small man the mombatti – A study of *The White Tiger* and *The God of Small Things*

Abstract

The present paper “Big man the laltain, small man the mombatti – A study of *The White Tiger* and *The God of Small Things*” deals with how the power politics play very prominent part in both the selected novels. Thanks to game of gap between poor and elite, powerful and weak, mighty and marginalized the underdogs are suppressed in the society to exclude themselves from accessing equal joys in social life. The grounds after their inhuman plight are social attributes such as race, caste, gender, economy or religion to which I have focused on thoroughly.

Keywords: crime, mutilate, nexus, prominent, scot-free.

Power politics play very prominent part in both the novels. Look at the difference between the treatments/punishments for the same work/murder/love/emotion/sex thanks to game of gap between poor and elite, powerful and weak, mighty and marginalized. Balram murders his master Ashok and all the police are behind him. So many big *WANTED* posters at railway station like public places were adhered. *That large piece of paper on the wall was a police poster—my police poster. It had already arrived here. I looked at it with a smile of pride.*ⁱ (Aravind Adiga , *The White Tiger* 293)

It reads as:

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 rickshaw-puller is wanted for questioning. Age: Between 25 and 35. Complexion: Blackish. Face: Oval. Height: Five feet four inches estimated. Build: Thin, small. ...The suspect comes from the village of Laxmangarh, in the district of Gaya. ...The suspect was last seen wearing blue checkered polyester shirt, orange polyester trousers, maroon colour sandals.....in the Dhaula Kuan area of New Delhi, on the night of September 2, near the ITC Maurya Sheraton hotel...The missing man was employed as driver of a Honda 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, ...any person having any information or clue about this missing man may kindly inform at CBI Web site (<http://cbi.nic.in>) e-mail ID (diccbi@cbi.nic.in), Fax No. 011-23011334, T No. 011-23014046 (Direct) 011-23015229 and 23015218 Extn. 210 and to the under-signed at the following address or telephone number or numbers given below. DP 3687/05

SHO—Dhaulta Kuan, New Delhi

Tel: 28653200, 27641000ⁱⁱ (Aravind Adiga , *The White Tiger* 12-39)

But Balram is not alone in the setting of the novel to do such work. There are others also who did the same crime/job. Here I intentionally choose the two words crime/job in combination. And the intention is that the same work that is a crime for a poor man may be a job for a privileged man so the latter goes scot-free.

The same job/crime is done by *Vijay and a policeman had knocked the rickshaw-puller downⁱⁱⁱ* and beat him to death during the election fever without any fault. Perhaps one may say his fault was that he wanted to cast his vote.

The same job/crime is done by Buffalo's gunmen. When Buffalo's son got kidnapped by the Naxals and then tortured and killed. Buffalo blamed the servant for kidnapping; *The servant said he had nothing to do with the kidnapping; the Buffalo did not believe him and got four of his hired gunmen to torture the servant. Then they shot him through the head. And Buffalo said Fair enough. I would do the same to someone who let my son get kidnapped.^{iv}* (Aravind Adiga , *The White Tiger* 66)

But then, because the Buffalo was sure that the man had deliberately let the child be kidnapped, for money, he went after the servant's family also. One brother was set upon while working in the fields; beaten to death there. That brother's wife was finished off by three men working together. A sister, still unmarried, was also finished off. Then the house where the family had lived was surrounded by the four henchmen and set on fire.^v (Aravind Adiga, *The White Tiger* 67) No FIR. No one to object. Really a powerful rich man can do the most illegal offense against poor without a least fear of any type – neither of morality nor of rule of law. Really the marvel of money! The miracle of landlord! The wonder of democratic workings! Certainly power is morality divorced and the rule of law is always napping.

The same job/crime is done by the Great Socialist. If Balram is declared *WANTED* on the ground of murdering and looting *Seven hundred thousand rupees* why not the Great Socialist is declared so. Great Socialist is said to have *embezzled one billion rupees from the Darkness, and transferred that money into a bank account in a small, beautiful country in Europe full of white people and black money*. But no FIR is lodged ever. Total *ninety-three criminal cases—for murder, rape, grand larceny, gun-running, pimping, and many other such minor offenses*^{vi} (Aravind Adiga, *The White Tiger* 97) are pending against the Great Socialist. But no wanted poster hanged anywhere. Moreover he is welcomed, honoured and saluted everywhere by everyone both police and public! Why? Perhaps corruption like blossoms bloom on the top and like the roots is watered from underground.

The same job/crime is done by *The Kottayam Police. A cartoonplatoon. New-Age princes* when they slaughtered Velutha without any guilt. He was so immorally and inhumanly dismembered that;

His skull was fractured in three places. His nose and both his cheekbones were smashed, leaving his face pulpy, undefined. The blow to his mouth had split open his upper lip and broken six teeth, three of which were embedded in his lower lip, hideously inverting his beautiful smile. Four of his ribs were splintered, one had pierced his left lung, which was what made him bleed from his mouth. The blood on his breath bright red. Fresh. Frothy. His lower intestine was ruptured and hemorrhaged, the blood collected in his abdominal cavity. His spine was damaged in two places, the concussion had paralyzed his right arm and resulted in a loss of control over his bladder and rectum. Both his kneecaps were shattered.^{vii} (Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* 310)

After beating to semi-conscious condition to Velutha the six reverend policemen of Kottayam Police plundered and looted many items from the hut;

The policemen looked at one another. They knew what they had to do.

The Qantas koala they took for their children.

And the pens and socks. Police children with multicoloured toes. They burst the goose with a cigarette. Bang. And buried the rubber scraps.

Yooseless goose. Too recognizable.

The glasses one of them wore.

They left.

Six princes, their pockets stuffed with toys.^{viii} (Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* 312)

The same job/crime is done by Inspector Thomas Mathew when the truth was exposed that the Kottayam Police had acted on the basis of a false F.I.R. filed by Baby Kochamma and the innocent Velutha was mutilated. For fear that lest public should know the mutilation of an innocent marginalized, the inspector thinks Velutha has *to die anyway* (Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* 318) so he managed *Death in Custody of a technically innocent man*^{ix} (Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* 314).

Here Balram reflects how the police can call him a murderer with wanted poster when police themselves are murderers along with their politicians;

If I may go back for a moment to that WANTED poster, Your Excellency. Being called a murderer: fine, I have no objection to that. It's a fact: I am a sinner, a fallen human. But to be called a murderer by the police!^x (Aravind Adiga, *The White Tiger* 102).

There are a lot of differences and double standards in the way people expect the two sexes (male and female) and two classes (rich and poor) to act in the same home or society. All in all, the siblings Ammu and Chacko act very similarly throughout their lives; however, because of their sexes, they get treated very differently for their actions. Chacko has several doxies whom he often invites to the Kochamma house for some special one-on-one time. Instead of condemning extramarital sex inside the walls of her house, Mammachi has a separate entrance built for Chacko's courtesan or inamorata so that they might have not been

seen going through the house. And, additionally, Mammachi's only explanation for accepting this behaviour from Chacko is that *he can't help having a man's needs*.^{xi} (Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* 168). Chacko being a landlord forces his attentions on women who depended on him for their livelihood.^{xii} (Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* 65). After they have done their job, Mammachi puts money in their pockets because in her mind, a fee clarified things. *Disjuncted sex from love. Needs from Feelings*^{xiii} (Arundhati Roy, *The God of Small Things* 169). There is no one to object Chacko's behaviour or act of using these women for fulfilling his *man's needs* that should not be accepted is the society.

If Velutha is mutilated to death, thanks to his relations to Chacko's sister Ammu why Chacko is to let go scot-free even after his relations with so many women. When Ammu is compelled to leave not the home but town also why is Chacko welcomed in the home? Simply, because Velutha is socially and economically marginalized while Ammu is marginalized on the ground of gender. Both are poor. Chacko is the landlord. To show the difference, I have compared Ammu with her brother Chacko. They both marry someone outside their community, and they both have children and later divorced. However, only Ammu is treated badly for acting like this; Chacko is welcomed back with open arms and immediately assents the patriarchal place in the family. Moreover, Ammu has a love affair with an untouchable, and Chacko has numerous affairs, but only Ammu gets punished for this kind of behaviour. For Chacko, however, a separate entrance is built so that it gets even easier for him to fulfill his sexual needs. Now it is crystal clear how the game of gap between poor and elite works. Though the man's needs are as same as natural whether it were Velutha or Chacko but the treatment meted out to them is sharp opposite on one hundred eighty degree angle. The germination ground also has sharp contrast. In velutha's case the man's needs spring from the feelings of true love while in Chacko's case man's needs get their heat

from the lusty sexual feelings. But lo! love is sacrificed and lusty sex is honoured. So Arundhati Roy regrets *on* the tragedy of our social system where *Love is polluting. Rape is pure.*^{xiv}

In their writings, both the writers have attempted to cut the chains that chained the marginalized peoples by attacking on the nexus between criminals and government and anti democratic working of the bureaucracy. Both the writers focus on how the different power politics are alleged and constructed for the individual benefits of the upper class; how the underdogs are victimized to various hardships.

References

Adiga, Aravind *The White Tiger* (Noida: Harper Collins Publishers, 2008) 293.

Adiga, 12-39.

Adiga, 102.

Adiga, 66.

Adiga, 67.

Adiga, 97.

Roy, Arundhati *The God of Small Things* (New Delhi: India Ink, 1997) 310.

Roy, 312.

Roy, 314.

Adiga, 102.

Roy, 168.

Roy, 65.

Roy, 169.

Roy, Arundhati *The Doctor and the Saint: Caste, Race, and Annihilation of Caste, the Debate Between B.R. Ambedkar and M.K. Gandhi* (London: Verso 2014)15.