

The White Tiger: Quest of Existence

Prof. Sakate Bharat Shamarao

M.A. NET
Balwant College vita

I. INTRODUCTION

Indian English literature is full with the novelists who presented their protagonist character in relation with the humanism. Mulkraj Anand's *Bakha*, Tagore's *Gora*, *Coolie* of the Mulkraj Anand and Arvind Adiga's *Balram Halwai* alias *Munna*. Everybody craves for his identity, his existence, in this world. *Balram halwai* has done same act He attempted to get life of human being but his attempts with the moral are in vain. Who born on this earth, he asks the question to the creator "Who am I"? Some becomes ascetic in search of this, life begins and ends, nothing remains in our hand because we are mere pawns in the hands of destiny. But things are not true with the *Balram*, he is not ascetic, but he pursued this question in the novel. Although he is the person who born among low class, but like hero of the postmodern fruit he challenged his destiny.

"Today, I am really Indian." (Rabindranath Tagore-406) Like *Gora* he never declared his existence, so it is not only quest of *Balram* but it is of the reader too. Reader goes through the page to page in search of humanity. The novelist has used epistolary form for novel to express the feelings of the *Balram*. *Balram* has several names among the novel in them he finds his existence. *Balram* is the name given by his teacher named *Krishna*. *Balram* is the kickside of the *Krishna*. Like *Coolie* journey for search of existence starts in his life from small village, *Laxmangarh*, in Bihar in the heart of darkness. The animal imagery is used to suggest the *Balram Halwai* amoral victim of the society.

The white tiger is the nickname of the protagonist *Balram Halwai*. He earned name from an education inspector, even Adiga described as "so that's how I became the White Tiger, There will be third and fourth name too, but that late in the story." Arvind Adiga-page-35 Like *Coolie* of Mulkraj Anand he had several names. Difference among them is *Coolie* died with the identity of *Coolie*, *Balram* proceeds life as owner of the *White Tigers Company*. Like *coolie* he is working on the tea stall, when *Balram* hitting the piece of coal he is hitting unknowingly, his childhood. A huge portrait of the *Mahatma Gandhi* was watching the every chunk of coal burning the childhood of the *Balram*. He got another name with new profession "the coal breaker". He remarks about children in India are weak, fragile, looks like "the guilty conscience of the government"

At the tea shop one boy asked "What is the creature that comes along only once in a generation"? "The coal braker" Arvind Adiga-page-37 Feelings of alienation aroused in him. *Balram* is gradually turning himself towards explosion. Every incident making him shell to explode. *Balram* is not the original thinker but he was original listener. he listened carefully, so he turned himself into the new profession of driving. Though he had lost

his childhood days, with humanitarian view he is dreaming to start Language school. Where he wants teach not about *Gandhi*, *God*- "nothing but facts of life for these kids. A school full of *White Tigers*, unleashed on *Bangalore*....." Arvind Adiga-page-319 *Balram Halwai* alias *Munna* is the son of rickshaw puller *Vikram Halwai*. *Balram* is the youth of 25- 35 blackish in complexion, oval face, five feet four inches youth. But he is craving for identity his anguish is in Indian society father forget to give names to their children But he is craving for identity his anguish is in Indian society parents forget to give names to their children. Time makes them orphan. Alienation made *Balram* to passes comments "now what kind of place is it where people forget to name their children". - Arvind Adiga-page-14.

Balram speaks about *Buddha's* philosophy, scared *Ganga*, *Hanuman* the Hindu god in the *Ramayana* as well as fidelity, love and devotion, which reader as well as *Balram*, couldn't see anywhere it is the feelings of alienation. He had surrendered to the society of the evil like *Dr. Faustus* in search of physical luxury. Even on a tea shop owner named him *thug*. He searched his identity in the half baked, person of the postmodern world. *Balram* driver fascinated so much due to the moll wants to enter in the moll where only big bellies have permission to enter, when he entered the guard pushed him outside of the moll. These small Bellies had not right to enter into the society of the big bellied person. As driver, he had new name given by the society 'country mouse'. Rootlessness is slowly developed in the mind of the *Balram*. Cleaned society needs clean clothes but they need not clean mans. *Balram* changed roles as per demand of the period, because he observed on the tea stall, the people use the paper to wrap greasy *samosas*, where written the philosophy "May be once in hundred years there is revolution that frees the poor." Arvind Adiga - page - 303. But the representative of the poor, *Balram* had had his view. According to him revolution wouldn't take place in India because people are waiting for the war which would give him freedom. But it would come from somewhere else. Apathy of related life can be clearly seen on the face of *Balram Halwai* by through this opinion. He became murder, thief by snatching the amount from his master *Ashoka* whom he considers *Ram* and *Seeta*. He founds the white tigers company.

He ponders over country, culture. He wrote that if people started to biting judge then what is the future of this country. The protagonist calls himself half baked, even he noted that his story is "The Autobiography of a Half Baked", who made of the half-baked clay We can see sense of loss in his dialogue and action. Still he has compassion about poor people, he helped to the parents of victim. Reader has to search *Balram* existence He admitted his crime in front parents although he rescued from court. Reader has to search *Balram* existence According to Adiga- "The novelist *U R Anatha Murthy* in an essay published

in Kannad newspaper last year, pointed that Dickens had had virtually no impact on his contemporaries. Thoms Hardy and Gorky showed them how to describe the social forces (capital, tradition and patriarchy) that constrained the protagonists of their novels, also how to withhold any overt commentary on these forces. Dickens in contrast is shamelessly didactic and sentimental; a writer who shows us divided society not to demand revolution but only “change of the heart” from rich and poor alike. No self-respecting Indian novelist has wanted to imitate him”. The Times of India- page-3

Arvind Adiga is interested not only in demand of revolution but also change of heart. So Balram Halwai changed many roles, to get value of human beings. Rootlessness, alienation, loss identity, attitude of big bellies made him loose his identity among the hands of corrupt people. So he wrote “I’ve made it! I’ve broken out of the coop” Arvind Adiga-page-320 “That’s why I was cheated of my destiny to be fact, and creamy skinned and smiling.” (Arvind Adiga-page-64)

These lines remarks that he is *White Tiger* in the society of the beasts. The destruction of the identity laid him to prove existence by hook or crook. He would not want to die like his father

suffering from the TB. So he proved his existence with beastly way.

REFERENCES

- [1] Arvind Adiga. *The White Tiger*. Harper Collins Publishers India & India Today Group. New Delhi. 2008
- [2] Arvind Adiga: A Tale of Two Artists. *Times of India*, (Newspaper) Pune Saturday March, 3 2012.
- [3] Mulakraj Anand. *Untouchable*. Published by Gulabo Vazirani for Arnold Heineman publishers (India) Delhi. 1981
Mulakraj Anand, *Coolie* (London: Bodley Head 1972)
- [4] Ravindranath Tagore. *Gora*. Macmillan India limited Edition -1999

AUTHORS

Prof. Sakate Bharat Shamarao, M.A. NET, Balwant College vita
Email id - kingofindia.1696@rediffmail.com