

**Comparative study of Class Struggle in Urban and  
Rural societies from the novels *The White Tiger* by  
Aravind Adiga and *Kankan da Katlam* by Ram Sarup  
Ankhi**

Dissertation submitted to the Central University of Punjab

For the award of  
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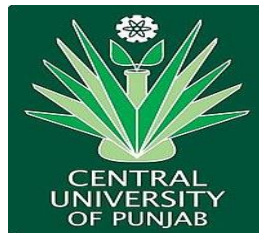
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## CERTIFICATE

I declare that the dissertation entitled “Comparative study of Class Struggle in contrastive societies from the novels *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga and *Kankan da Katlam* by Ram Sarup Anghi” has been prepared by me under the guidance of Dr. Alpna Saini, Associate Professor, Department of Languages and Comparative Literature, School of Languages, Literature and Culture, Central University of Punjab.

No part of this dissertation has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

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## ABSTRACT

Comparative study of Class Struggle in contrastive societies from the novels *The White Tiger* by Aravind Adiga and *Kankan da Katlam* by Ram Saroop Ankhi

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The present study deals with the issues of the social division of different classes in society as upper and lower class on the economic bases. The division further leads to the dependency of lower classes on upper classes for basic needs which accounts for the subjugation of lower classes. The scenario of class struggle is different in the metro cities as depicted by Adiga in *The White Tiger* as compared to the agrarian society depicted in Ram Sarup Ankhi's *Kankan da Katlaam*. The comparative study deals with the similarities and differences in the portrayal of both the writers.

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## Chapter: 01

### Introduction

The Marxist school of thought lays its ground on the materialistic philosophy. The society in which we live and the concrete world determines the materialistic philosophy. The Marxist philosophers deny the earlier concept of the idealist philosophy and a spiritual world. When other philosophies tried to interpret the world the Marxists tried to change it. Karl Marx said, "The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it." This statement by Marx explains the revolutionary nature of Marxism. The Marxism theory is the socioeconomic theory that lays its foundation on the works of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Karl Marx was born on 5 May 1818 in Trier in a middle-class family. His father was a lawyer. Marx became stateless due to his political publications and lived in exile in London. In London he met Friedrich Engels, Engels was the son of a large textile factory owner. They both contributed articles to the same journal which led to their meeting. They called their economic theories as "Communism" and they announced the beginning of Communism through their jointly written *Communist Manifesto* in 1848. They claimed that the struggle between the opposing classes always result in social transformation and the progress of society. This lead to the Class struggle as one class always exploits the repressed one. Karl Marx in the benchmark document *The Communist Manifesto* states that:

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome, we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones (Marx and Engels).

The major claims of the theories of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were that the evolving history of mankind, of its social groupings and interrelations, of its institutions, and of its ways of thinking are largely determined by the changing mode of its “material production” – that is, of its overall economic organization for producing and distributing material goods. Changes in the fundamental mode of material production effect changes in the class structure of a society, establishing in each era dominant and subordinate classes that engage in a struggle for economic political and social advantage. Marx in *Manifesto of the Communist Party* states that the *Bourgeois* class has played the most revolutionary part in the history as it has changed the political and religious exploitation into the naked, shameless and brutal exploitation. It has led to the rise of two different classes in the industrial age. These two classes are the capitalist class or Bourgeoisie and the working class or the Proletariat. The Class is defined as a group within the society whose members share a common distinctive feature in the form of inferior or superior position in terms of economic status. Broadly, the classes are of three types’ upper class, middle class, and lower class. There is a constant struggle going on in the society where the upper class wants to maintain itself on the top and the lower class is continuously struggling to escape the barbarous oppressed zone.

The class struggle can be understood from the very first line of the famous *Manifesto of the Communist Party* that is “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles”. So Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in that manifesto explains as

[...] In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social ranks...Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other- *Bourgeoisie* and *Proletariat* (Marx and Engels).

Although Marx didn't explain these classes, Engels defined Bourgeoisie as a class of modern capitalists who owns the production and Proletariat as the class of wage laborers who sell their labor power to live.

Karl Marx has given another important concept of *dialectical materialism*. The German philosopher Hegel originally used the concept of dialectic in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He was an idealist philosopher and believed that thought governs the world and material existence in the expression of immaterial spiritual essence. However, Marx used this concept in a reverse manner. He was of the view that all ideological products are the products of social and economic existence. The ideas originate as products and reflections of material conditions.

The other fundamental concept of Marxism is the concept of Base and Superstructure. It relates the material means of production and the cultural world of art and ideas. This concept is explained by the symbolic structure of the building in which the foundation or the base stands for the mode of production and the superstructure stands for law, art, politics, religion, and ideology. According to Peter Barry "The essential Marxist view is that the world of ideas, art, religion, and law are not innocent, but are 'determined' by the nature of the economic base." This view is known as *Economic Determinism*.

Louis Althusser has been the most influential Marxist theorist of the recent times. He has introduced certain key terms and concepts that turned out to be benchmarks in Marxist literary criticism. He has redefined the term ideology as earlier it was defined by Engels as "false consciousness". Althusser's definition for ideology is that "Ideology is a system (possessing its logic and proper rigour) of representations (images, myths, ideas or concepts according to the case) endowed with an existence and a historical role at the heart of a given society" (Goldstein 23). In his trademark essay *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus* (1970), he defined the working of ideological state apparatus in society. The state power is implemented upon the citizens through the repressive state apparatus that is police, prison, and law courts etc. and these are imposed forcefully. The ideological state apparatus such as schools, media, church, family etc maintains the state control. According to Peter Barry, "The ideological state apparatus foster an ideology – a set of ideas and attitudes – which is sympathetic to

the aims of the state and the political status quo. Thus, each of us feels that we are freely choosing what is, in fact, being imposed upon us.” Thus the ideological state apparatuses work in the favour of the state and the ruling class.

Marxism has noble goals in working towards the classless society and having a better facility for the working class. Literature has been the tool in conveying the principles of the Marxism to the society. It is the mirror of the society and reflects all the flaws in the society. English literary critic Terry Eagleton describes the Marxist criticism as:

*Marxist criticism is not merely a 'sociology of literature', concerned with how novels get published and whether they mention the working class. Its aim is to explain the literary work more fully; and this means a sensitive attention to its forms, styles and, meanings. But it also means grasping those forms, styles, and meanings as the product of a particular history.*

### **Marxist Literary Criticism:**

Marxism theory is a socioeconomic theory and as such, Marx and Engels gave no particular comprehensive theory of literature. According to Peter Barry, the Marxist literary criticism maintains that a writer's social class and its prevailing 'ideology' have a major bearing on what is written by a member of that class. The Marxists believed that the social contexts shape the thought process of the writer. It is not the consciousness of writer, which determines their being, but the social being of a writer that determines his consciousness. The language and the form of a text also reflect the political overtones. As British Marxist Terry Eagleton suggests “in language ‘shared definitions and regularities of grammar both reflect and help to constitute, a well-ordered political state’” (Eagleton 1).

This study will use the basic economic and cultural theory of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels that lays claims as the changes in the fundamental mode of material production effect changes in the class structure of a society, establishing in each era dominant and subordinate classes that engage in a struggle for economic, political, and social advantage. This will further identify the class division and class struggle. The concept of *ideology* as used in Marxist context will also be used in the study as Marxist theory

claims that “human consciousness is constituted by an ideology that is, the beliefs, values, and ways of thinking and feeling through which human beings perceive, and by recourse to which they explain, what they take to be reality”. The reigning ideology in any era is conceived to be, ultimately, the product of its economic structure and the resulting class relations and class interests. Louis Althusser’s concept of “ideological state apparatus” will be used to determine the cultural institutions operating in society. Thus by using this theory and concepts, the hidden elements in these novels can be extracted. Mainly the comparative method will be used to compare both the texts and study the class struggles depicted in the texts one by one and later comparing the social disparities to examine, interpret and conclude.

In India the class struggle works on different level in different regions. In ancient India the classes were divided on the basis of caste but in independent India and with the introduction of reservation the sole criteria for the division of classes remained the amount of the capital owned by a person. The caste structures in India largely determined as how class structures will work. There is a class structure within each caste, and a caste structure within each class. The class struggle remained weak as the caste system created binaries within each class for example the poor upper class worker never considers the poor lower class worker as his equal. Second is the distribution of capital within few hands. There are mainly three areas where the class struggle can be witnessed that is the fight between indigenous people and the corporate sector over the land, the fight of urban poor for greater access to rights and jobs and the fight of labor against capital. The rural region or the agrarian society basically depends upon agriculture as major source of income. It witnesses this struggle between the farmers and wealthy businessmen who wants to acquire their land for setting up industries. These class struggles lead to exploitation of the lower class as the upper class or the capitalist class controls the various power structures which gives them an edge over the indigenous people. Literature has been an extensive medium in representing these class struggle and exploitation at public level. Many of the writers have unconsciously addressed these issues in the form novels,

short stories and poetry but there have been some authors who self-consciously made an effort to describe the class struggle and capitalism through their works. In context to Indian writing, these authors are Arunaditi Roy, Mulk Raj Anand, Aravind Adiga, Rohinton Mistry, Amitav Ghosh and many more. They have written various novels which highlight the class struggle and other flaws in the society, and got acclaimed at international level. According to Peter Barry “*The Rise of the Novel* by Ian Watt , relates the growth of the novel in the eighteenth century to the expansion of the middle classes during that period. So the novel ‘speaks’ for this social class”. Similarly the novel has been the widely employed literary genre when it comes to the representation of the working class.

### **Aravind Adiga:**

Aravind Adiga was born in Chennai on 23 October 1974. His parents Dr. Madhava Adiga and Usha Adiga were from Mangalore. His paternal grandfather late K. Suryanarayana Adiga was the former chairman of Karnataka Bank and a maternal great-grandfather U. Rama Rao was a Congress politician from Madras. Adiga grew up in Mangalore and studied at Canara High School and then at St. Aloysius College. Later on he migrated to Sydney with his family. He studied at James Ruse Agricultural High School. He later studied English literature at Columbia College of Columbia University in New York City. He is the alumni of Magdalen College Oxford. He began his career as a financial journalist during his internship at the *Financial Times*. He covered the stock markets and investments and interviewed many celebrities including Donald Trump. His literary review of the Booker Prize winner Peter Carey’s book *Oscar and Lucinda* appeared in *The Second Circle*. He shot to success with his debut novel *The White Tiger*. He won the Booker Prize in 2008 for *The White Tiger*, becoming the fourth Indian- born author to win the prize. The novel narrates the story of the rise of Balram from the crushing poverty to one of the top entrepreneurs of the country in the time of rise of India as a global economy. Adiga was accused of not being connected to land as he spent most of his life outside India. The second allegation was that he glorified the murder through which Balram escapes the poverty. But Adiga was of the view that “*criticism by writers like Flaubert, Balzac and Dickens of the 19<sup>th</sup> century*

*helped England and France become better societies”*. He further justified his writing by saying that *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 [Indian] society. That's what I'm trying to do – it is not an attack on the country, it's about the greater process of self-examination.*

His other works include *Between the Assassinations* and *The Last Man in the Tower*. *Between the Assassinations* is a collection of the short stories, which is on similar plot line with *The White Tiger*. *The Last Man in the Tower* is a novel, which depicts the story of a retired teacher who refuses to sell his flat in an apartment as all other residents agreed to sell theirs to the buyer. It poses the problems for the buyer and the residents.

### **The White Tiger**

The novel is an epistolary novel in the form of unsent letters from the Balram halwai to Chinese Premiere. Adiga chose the Chinese Premiere because he consider China among one of those countries who never let themselves to be ruled by foreigners. The second reason being that China is a communist nation. There are total seven letters written over seven nights. Sanjay Subramaniam states that *The novel just rolls on like an Indian Railways train, from one stop to another, over seven chapters that are notionally recounted over seven nights* (Subrahmanyam). It is the dark humorous depiction of Indian class struggles from Balram’s point of view. In his journey Balram works as a chauffeur to village landlord and then moves to Delhi with one of landlord’s son. From there he moves on to Bangalore after killing his landlord and establishes himself as an entrepreneur. He explains as how he, the son of a rickshaw puller, escaped the life of servitude and became a successful businessman. Balram was born in the rural village of Laxmangarh, where he lived with his grandmother, parents, brother and extended family. He is a smart child but is forced to leave school in order to help pay for his cousin's dowry and begins to work in a teashop with his brother in Dhanbad. While working there he begins to learn about India's government and economy from the customers' conversations. His informal education begins there as form the customers conversations he used to learn about life in India. Balram describes himself as a bad servant but a good listener and decides to become a driver.

After learning how to drive, Balram finds a job driving Ashok, the son of one of Laxmangarh's landlords. He takes over the job of the main driver, from a Maruti to a heavy-luxury described Honda City. He caught the first driver red-handed who was actually a Muslim but in order to get a job he claimed to be a Hindu. After becoming a first driver he stops sending money back to his family and disrespects his grandmother during a trip back to his village. He did this to escape the miseries of the village life as his grandmother was about to arrange his marriage. Balram moves to New Delhi with Ashok and his wife Pinky Madam. Throughout their time in Delhi, Balram is exposed to extensive corruption, especially in the government. In Delhi, the contrast between the poor and the wealthy is made even more evident by their proximity to one another. Balram learned as for how the money runs the country.

One night Pinky Madam takes the car from Balram, while drunk, hits something in the road and drives away, she had killed a child. Ashok's family puts pressure on Balram to confess that he had been driving alone. Balram started thinking about his last days as he had to go to jail for the crime which he hasn't even committed. But thank God no one was there at the time of the accident, it came as a big relief for Balram. Ashok was actively involved in bribing the officials and was every day dealing with lots of money. Balram then decides that killing Ashok will be the only way to escape India's, *Rooster Coop*. One day he got the opportunity, after killing Ashok with a bottleneck and stealing the bribe money, Balram moves to Bangalore, where he bribes the police in order to help start his own taxi business. Ashok was also portrayed as if he was a part of Rooster coop as his family governed his actions and society dictated it. Balram works on the lines of Ashok and pays the family of a child who was killed in an accident by his taxi. Balram explains that his own family was almost certainly killed by Ashok's relatives as revenge for his murder. At the end of the novel, Balram justifies his actions and considers that his freedom is worth the lives of his family and of Ashok. And thus ends the letter to Jiabao, letting the reader think of the dark humor of the tale, as well as the idea of life as a trap introduced by the writer.

**Ram Sarup Ankhi**

Ram Saroop Ankhī was born in 1932 in Indian Punjab. Ankhī was a Brahmin by caste but Sikh in appearance. He kept the Hindu name as is the custom in the Malwa region of East Punjab. He left his college and later got a job as a school teacher and retired in 1990. He started his career as a poet and ended as a fiction writer. He mostly wrote about the village life of Punjab the farmer suicides and indebtedness. Known as a mesmerizing storyteller, Ankhī chronicled rural life in Malwa in the latter half of 20<sup>th</sup> century. In his writings, Malwa landscape comes alive. He received Sahitya Akademi Award for his novel *Kothe Kharak Singh* in 1987. The novel was named after a fictitious but typical Malwa village, it covers the story of three generations. He also edited a Punjabi short fiction quarterly *Kahani Punjab* along with his son Krantipal, who is currently a professor at Aligarh Muslim University. He died on 14 Feb 2010. After reviewing his autobiography, Punjabi columnist and playwright Atamjit wrote: It is not only his art of storytelling that mesmerises its reader; his simplicity, honesty, and bluntness also produce magic.

Content with his life in his native village Dhaula, its surrounding areas and later on in the town of Barnala, Ankhī has always sought his themes, locales, and characters from within this region. His vast canvas of narratives never required anything from outside. Many may like to see it as a limitation but he is happy to portray what he knows best. He explains how with the passage of time the same landscape has seen a sea change and this transformation is depicted in his novels like *Kothey Kharhak Singh*.

Ankhī creates the much-desired diversity by using characters from different economic, social and religious backgrounds. There are many divergent tendencies and traits in his personal life too: he is Brahmin by caste but Sikh in his appearance; he was wild in his childhood but is very disciplined in his writing; he started as a poet but ended up as a fiction writer, and he married thrice. (Chandan)

Ankhī belonged to the Malwa region of Punjab and most of his novels narrates the story of the rural life of this region. He wrote in the *Malwai* dialect of Punjabi language. His

other works include *Kothey Kharak Singh, Gelo, Partaapi etc.* Each novel depicted the problems persisting in the agrarian society.

### **Kankan da Katlaam (Slaughter of the Wheat)**

It is a story set in a remote village in the Malwa belt of Punjab. The protagonist of the novel Harchand is son of an ex-serviceman *fauji* Makhan Singh. They are the small landowners but the land in that area was mostly barren. One of the businessman Lala Mulakh Raj bought the large part of the barren land to establish a paper mill over there. With the setting up of factory the conditions of the village changed as it is being connected to nearby cities and some colonies were also built there. The factory owner had established a *mandir* and *gurudwara* in one corner of the factory. After getting retirement, Makhan Singh devoted his time to the land owned by them and managed to make their land fertile and they were having a good time. One day Harchand's mother passed away as she was suffering from Cancer, one of the most widespread disease in the Malwa belt of Punjab. Harchand was engaged to a girl named Meeto from nearby village. Now as Harchand's mother was no more so they required someone to take care of their home. So they started planning for Harchand's marriage. The marriage was about to happen after the harvesting season but then something disastrous happened. The businessman proposed to acquire more land to which the villagers didn't agreed as farming was their main occupation. Lala contacted the local minister and urged him to help him in acquiring the land. With the help of government policies and some land law the land got acquired which made half of village landless. Harchand, a land-owning farmer turned into a landless laborer which resulted into his broken engagement. Meeto's parents refused to marry their daughter to a landless farmer as Harchand's land got acquired. His father died during their protest against acquisition of land. Everything was over for Harchand as he had lost his mother to Cancer, his father and his land to the businessman and his soon-to-be wife to the circumstances. He started working as a labourer with other low caste people. Government has issued payment for the acquired land but due to peer pressure no one bothered to get that payment from office. Cases were filed against factory owners but no judgement was there. So in the end people decided to bring the payment cheques and Harchand got

fourteen lac rupees. He bought three buffalos and four acre of land from that money. Now he again became a landowning farmer. He started working hard with his business and soon became the eligible bachelor. Now all he wanted was a wife to help him with household work. One of his relatives arranged his marriage with their known girl. Harchand was very happy that finally his life was on track. Next day there were notices stick on the walls that Parveen Industry has acquired the whole village for their industry.

### **Literature review**

The class struggle in India is eminent from the ancient times. It appeared in term of caste conflicts in earlier times. Karl Marx was the first thinker to draw attention to the impact of the caste system on Indian society. In his famous work, *The Future Results of British Rule in India* Marx characterized the Indian castes as “the most decisive impediment to India’s progress and power.” He argued that the caste system is based upon a hereditary division of labor. So the lower classes wish to participate in class struggle but when it is determined by caste than it is in a brutal circle.

Irfan Habib, the noted Indian Marxist historian, in his essay *classifying economic formations in pre-colonial India* accepts the basic difference drawn by Marx in European feudalism and Indian society that it was the village community rather than the individual peasant which represented the basic object of subjugation by exploiting class. The whole of village community suffered due to their segregation from the modern industrial society.

Sara D. Schotland in her paper *Breaking out of the Rooster Coop: Comparing Crime in Aravind Adiga’s The White Tiger and Richard Wright’s Native Son* compares as how both Balram halwai and Bigger Thomas were born into the lower class which suffers in poverty without any hope. She examines “the extent to which poverty, frustration, and hopelessness figure into the complex of causes that result in violent of crimes.” Although the murder is never justifiable what circumstances led to murder are to be taken into account.

Sudhir K. Arora in his work *Aravind Adiga's The White Tiger A Freakish Booker* questions the very mantra given by Adiga in his novel as to murder and steal and enjoy life with wine, women and wealth. Arora questions the moral of the story that what an Indian should learn from Adiga's tale that how to commit a murder and walk clean through it. Although Adiga is an Indian as he was born in India but later on, he migrated to Australia with his family, which makes him an Australian also. He had worked as a financial journalist. Adiga has thrown a light on the corruption, class and caste system and other flaws prevalent in Indian society. Adiga is accused of not being connected to the land he is writing about.

Prabhjot Kaur, a Punjabi research scholar, in her work *Ram Sarup Ankhi de navlan vich pesh kisan da samaj* (Agrarian society as depicted in the novels of Ram Sarup Ankhi) analyses all the novels of Ram Sarup Ankhi as how they realistically portray the rural society and the conditions of the farmers. The selected text *Kankan da Katlaam* was not a part of the study but as the subject matter covered in all the novels were same so she establishes the fact that Ankhi had tried to focus on all the problems faced by the farmers in different novels.

Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* is one of the most explored texts for the Marxist themes chiefly for the depiction of the class structures and the other major flaws in the Indian society. On the other hand, *Kankan da Katlaam* by Ram Sarup Ankhi is one of the least explored texts. So the reason for comparison is to analyze the texts for the depiction of the class struggles and the comparative analysis of the regional text with the other major text.

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## Chapter: 02

### Depiction of Class Struggle as reflected in Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger*

The Marxist idea, from the beginning of the movement, was to establish a classless society. A society where the working class has better living conditions and they get all the privileges. The working class was always treated in inhuman ways but their contribution to the economy is vast. The Marxist writers have always targeted this class to know their rights, their goals and to have an idea of a good life. Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* is one such work which aims at the conditions of poor and lower class in the Indian society.

The novel *The White Tiger* realistically portrays the class conflict, caste system in India, Indian family, corruption, individualism and quest for freedom. Out of these themes, the major theme is the class conflict. Many of the Indian English writers have represented the Indian poor or the lower class in their works especially in the novels such as Mulk Raj Anand, Arunaditi Roy, Kiran Desai and Aravind Adiga. In one of the interviews with Lee Thomas for *Fiction Writers Review* Adiga talks about what made him represent the most disenfranchise class in India.

[...] In India too, we have our myths—God, Gandhi, and family—but we have always questioned these myths enough, we have allowed room for dissension. And so we alone thrive while South Asia burns. In the past ten years, however, these dominant myths have grown stronger and the space for self-questioning has diminished within India. The majority of the country is still poor—up to 700 million Indians live in poverty—and the poor are no longer happy to keep quiet. The government isn't investing in the schools, hospitals, and jobs that will allow these poor people to rise. Aspiration grows, but not opportunity. This can only lead to trouble. Anyone who points this out is called a traitor. (Thomas)

He found that the biggest reason in the suppression of the poor is the negligence of the government and the ones who are in power. The poor or the lower class is deprived of basic amenities and education. The division of the society into two strata that is the

powerful and the powerless lead to the control of the poor and the lower class in the hands of Industrialists, capitalists and the upper classes.

Aravind Adiga uses the term Rooster coop in the novel *The White Tiger*. As this novel narrates the history of Balram halwai from being a son of rickshaw puller to an influential entrepreneur. Aravind Adiga used this term through the voice of the protagonist Balram halwai, which indeed is the voice of the writer himself, in the context of the lower class of Indian society. He explains:

[...] The greatest thing to come out of this country in the ten thousand years of its history is the Rooster Coop. Go to Old Delhi, behind the Jama Masjid, and look at the way they keep chickens there in the market. Hundreds of pale hens and brightly coloured roosters, stuffed tightly into wire-mesh cages, packed as tightly as worms in a belly, pecking each other and shitting on each other, jostling just for breathing space; the whole cage giving off a horrible stench – the stench of terrified, feathered flesh. On the wooden desk above the coop sits a grinning young butcher, showing off the flesh and organs of a recently chopped-up chicken, still oleaginous with a coating of dark blood. The roosters in the coop smell the blood from above. They see the organs of their brothers lying around them. They know they're next. Yet they do not rebel. They do not try to get out of the coop . (Adiga 173)

Here he uses this term to represent the lower class as a whole. Just as the roosters are not able to do anything against the butcher even though they know that they are the next, similarly the poor or the one from the lower class in India can't do anything against the master even though he sees the other one suffering. He never rebels and the reason being many as he is bound by many of the Indian laws and values that is the *Repressive and Ideological apparatus* respectively. He further explains it with reference to cycle-rickshaw pullers, chauffeurs and other people working under upper class. These people are some of the honest and faithful people as they have taken up these characters from their ancestors who had been faithful and honest to the upper class. They never take the money given by their master and escape though they knew

that the amount of money they are carrying can change their destiny as it did in case of Balram halwai. The trustworthiness of servants is the basis of entire Indian economy.

[...]The Rooster Coop doesn't always work with the minuscule sums of the money. Don't test your chauffeur with a rupee coin or two – he may well steal that much. But leave a million dollars in front of the servant and he won't touch a penny (Adiga, *The White Tiger* 175).

The working of Indian Rooster Coop can be explained through the 'Ideological state apparatus' that work in a society. Louis Althusser, a French Marxist philosopher mentions two major mechanisms in his essay *Ideology and Ideological state apparatus*, which work for ensuring that people within a State behave according to the rules of that State, even when it's not in their best interests (in regards to their class positions) to do so. The first is what Althusser calls the RSA, or Repressive State Apparatuses, that can enforce behavior directly, such as the police, and the criminal justice and prison system. Through these "apparatuses" the state has the power to force you physically to behave. The other important mechanism he states is the second mechanism Althusser, which he calls ISAs, or Ideological State Apparatuses. These are institutions which generate ideologies which we as individuals (and groups) then internalize, and act in accordance with. These ISAs include schools, religions, the family, legal systems, politics, arts, sports, etc. (Althusser 239). These organizations generate systems of ideas and values, which we as individuals believe (or don't believe); this is what Althusser examines. Similarly, the working of Indian Rooster coop is explained by Adiga through the Ideological state apparatuses, as '*the Indian family, the pride and glory of nation and the honesty and faithfulness*' and the Repressive state apparatuses such as '*police, and by bribing the government and by use of arms and manpower*'. All these were used from ages by handful of men to train the remaining to exist in perpetual servitude; a servitude so strong that you can put the key of his emancipation in a man's hands and he will throw it back at you with a curse (p-176). This age-old subjugation in the hands of the upper class has made them into the blindfolded followers where they remain loyal to their master no matter what the problem is. The biggest reason that lead to the subjugation of the lower class is the lack of awareness or the education as these

factors would have turned them against their 'masters'. So rather than providing them with these they provided them with the jobs which could arrange them a two square meal. As an English proverb says "give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime", such is the case with the lower class in India they are being provided with the minimum wage quite enough for two square meals but they can't rise in their status. Balram's description of his early life in village clearly depicts as how no action is sought for the teacher who single-handedly takes away the food and uniforms meant for kids, and how they had to give a certain percentage of their regular earning to the landlords. The servant system which is prevalent from the times of colonial rule and later adopted by the rich landlords continues to be the main reason behind the subjugation of lower class. The servants such as chauffeurs, cooks, cleaners etc. always live with their rich landlords and watch their luxurious life but they can't do anything to reach there.

In the light of selected texts, it is clear that both of them deal with different societies and represent the clear-cut differentiation in the upper and lower classes. They also throw light upon various apparatuses and social and cultural differences which are relatable to the subjugation of the lower class. The class division dates back to Vedic times. One of the reasons behind this class difference was the division on the basis of caste. Indian caste system is among the world's oldest forms of surviving social stratification. This system divides Hindus into rigid hierarchical groups on the basis of *Karma* and *Dharma* (duty) and it is accepted to be roughly 3000 years old. *Manusmriti* considered as the most authoritative and important book of Hindu law and written 1000 years before the birth of Jesus justifies the caste system to be 'the basis of order and regularity of society'. The caste system divides Hindus into four main categories, which believed to be originated from the Brahma (the God of creation), these four categories are

1. Brahmins: Priests and Teachers
2. Kshatriyas: Warriors and Rulers
3. Vaishyas: Farmers, Traders and Merchants
4. Shudras: Labourers

Outside of this caste system were the Untouchables or Dalits. For the long time in rural society this caste system worked as each group used to live in segregated colonies. They used to marry in their own caste and did not accepted food or drink from the Shudras or Dalits (Ghurye 117). This system continued for generations and accordingly the professions related to each caste were also carried from generations to generations. This system is still prevalent in both rural and urban societies. The class structures keeps shifting as in case of Balram, his grandfathers have been *halwai* but by time they lost their shop to someone more powerful than them and nowadays they are the labourers or rickshaw puller.

In the first chapter of the novel *The White Tiger* Adiga portrays the life of Balram in his village Laxmangarh and depicts as how the lower-class people remained lower for the centuries but still, they are unaware of their suppression. The novel deals with the life of Balram halwai, a son of a rickshaw puller who later became the budding entrepreneur of Bangalore. Balram's got no formal education as none from his family did. He only visited the school to get his name "Balram" as when his teacher asked him his name he replied *Munna*, a typical name among the lower class which means a boy. He said this is the name I got as my mother is very ill so she can't name me whereas my father is a rickshaw puller so he got no time to name me. This clearly depicts the life in the Indian lower class as a father is so busy to earn a two square meal that he has got no time to name his children. Children are the most prized possession in the life of any human, it's the human tendency to love children and get the best out of them but in case of Balram halwai his parents didn't have this much time to name their child which shows how much the children mean to a lower-class man. But Balram's father was very different from all other people of his society as he wanted his son to go to school and learn at least to read and write. Balram attributes the major part of his success to his father as he goes on to describe his father as a man with a plan. The condition in his village was that they all were working for the feudal lords, whatever they were earning they had to give a certain percentage to the landlords. His father didn't want him to be like them.

[...] My uncles also did backbreaking work, but they did what everyone else did. Each year, as soon it began raining, they would go out to the fields with blackened sickles, begging one landlord or the other for some work. Then they cast seed, cut weeds, and harvested corn and paddy. My father could have worked with them; he could have worked with the landlords' mud, but he chose not to.

He chose to fight it.

[...] Rickshaw puller he may have been – a human beast of burden – but my father was a man with a plan.

I was his plan (Adiga, *The White Tiger* 27).

The plan was to educate Balram so that he can read and write. His father insisted him to go to school as he said *“My whole life, I have been treated like a donkey. All I want is that one son of mine – at least one – should live like a man”* (Adiga 31). According to Amartya Sen, the economist and philosopher, *the basic problem that exists in the education setup of the country is that importance is given to higher education and the neglect of primary education has been “intolerably large”*. Furthermore, *after receiving basic education parents from poor background feel that the students do not need further education and put them to child labor*. Education doesn't play a major role in the life of a lower-class man. And above all schools transmit an ideology that the capitalism in the hands of certain ruling class is just and reasonable. The lower class did not have any access to schools. He didn't find it beneficial as the foremost function for a lower class individual is to earn a two square meal, which he can earn from the paid labour so education is not of much help. Secondly the education requires a lot of money and time which the lower class didn't have. Balram was quite good at studies and wanted to study more but he had to contribute to the dowry for his sister's wedding. The state tries to implement certain schemes to allow the poor to get the education as providing students with the free food and the uniform but as Adiga explains that the pay of the government teacher was quite low so the teacher used to steal the food and uniform and no one objected to it.

[...] The teacher had a legitimate excuse to steal the money – he said he hadn't been paid his salary in six months. He was going to undertake a Gandhian protest to retrieve his missing wages – he was going to do nothing in class until his pay cheque arrived in the mail. Yet he was terrified of losing his job, because though the pay of any government job in India is poor, the incidental advantages are numerous. Once, a truck came into school with uniforms that the government has sent for us; we never saw them, but a week later they turned up for sale in neighbouring village.

No one blamed the schoolteacher for doing this. You can't expect a man in a dung heap to smell sweet. Everyone in the village knew that he would have done the same in his position (Adiga, *The White Tiger* 33).

The other 'important' aspect that accounts for the subjugation of the lower-class and which plays a major part in Indian society is "religion". It is the biggest Ideological state apparatus which works in the society. Adiga is very critical of religion in India as he speaks about it from the mouthpiece of Balram. He paraphrases the religion system as

[...] It is an ancient and venerated custom of people in my country to start a story by praying to a Higher power.

I guess, Your Excellency, that I too should start off by kissing some god's arse.

Which god's arse, though? There are so many choices.

See, the Muslims have one god.

The Christians have three gods.

And we Hindus have 36,000,000 gods.

Making a grand total of 36,000,004 divine arses for me to choose from. (Adiga 8)

Adiga ironically mocks the religions and how people are still oppressed by the religions. The use of word "Higher power" indicates that the Indian people always want to be

controlled by someone. They always need a permission from the higher authority, to begin with, anything.

He describes India as two countries India of light and India of darkness. The river brings the darkness to India – the black river. The authorities or the government portrays it as the river of emancipation, and every year hundreds of tourists visit to get a holy dip and click photos of naked sadhus but Adiga defines it as the river full of faeces, straw, soggy parts of human bodies, buffalo carrion, and seven different kinds of industrial acids (Adiga 15).

As Karl Marx stated in *Critique of Hegel's philosophy of Right* that:

[...] Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people. (Marx)

Marx was of the opinion that religion had certain practical functions in society. These functions were similar to the function of opium in a sick or injured person, it reduced people's immediate suffering and provided them with pleasant illusions, but it also reduced their energy and their willingness to confront the oppressive, heartless, and soulless reality that capitalism had forced them into. So under the illusion of religion, people continue to suffer as most of the time they think that they are supposed to suffer. The example of this is Hindu God *Hanuman*, the faithful servant of *Rama*, Balram defines him as the epitome of slavery as “he is a shining example of how to serve your masters with absolute fidelity, love, and religion.” He didn't find any goodness in religion although Balram belonged to village Laxmangarh, in the district of Gaya- the town where the Lord Buddha sat under a tree and found his enlightenment and started Buddhism. Balram mocks

[...] “I wonder if the Buddha walked through Laxmangarh – some people say he did. My own feeling is that he ran through it – as fast as he could – and got to the other side – and never looked back” (Adiga, *The White Tiger* 18).

Balram contradicts the very idea of enlightenment Lord Buddha spread wherever he went as in case of Laxmangarh it was still in darkness. The working of religion can be clearly seen from the Balram's account as the religion only favours the upper class and for the lower class it teaches them as how to be loyal to their masters. Similar incident of the use of religion to oppress the working class can be seen in the other text that is *Kankan da Katlam* by Ram Saroop Ankhi. The land is acquired from the farmers and the rich businessman Lala Mulakh Raj establishes his factory on that land. In order to control and keep the workers under them and establish himself as a secular person he ordered the construction of a temple, a gurudwara and a mosque in the factory. All these buildings are constructed and the workers are ordered to visit their respective place of prayer before coming to work. He didn't order the construction of a church because none of the worker was a Christian. Lala used the religion as a shield as from his secular nature one could assume that he is the man of high morals (Ankhi 17). So religion acts as a biggest ideological state apparatus in Indian society and the upper class always used it as a tool to tame the lower class workers. Hence religion somehow contributed to the subjugation of the lower class as they easily fall trap to it. The minority communities such as Muslims face the double marginalization as they were marginalized based on belonging to lower class and based on religion too as seen in the case of first driver of the stork that is Ram Persad. Ram Persad was a Muslim but he wanted a job at house of a landlord who does not like Muslims so he changed his name to Ram Persad and claimed to be a Hindu just to feed his starving family. When Balram caught him in the mosque then he had to give up his job. Balram was thinking:

[...] What a miserable life he had, having to hide his religion, his name, just to get a job as a driver – and he is a good driver, no question of it, a far better than one I will ever be. Part of me wanted to get up and apologize to him right there and say, you go and be a driver in Delhi. You never did anything to hurt me. Forgive me, brother. (Adiga)

Balram did not intend to take away his job but as he says that in order to escape rooster coop one had to be different. There was a hierarchy in the servants also as the *Nepali* security guard and Ram Persad were senior servants so they exercised more powers

upon Balram who was a new and younger servant. It was the desire to acquire power that led Balram to investigate into the life of Ram Persad. After this incident, Balram was the number one servant in the house.

. Balram's first escape from the *Rooster Coop* or the Darkness was his running away from his house. When he goes on to meet his family during Ashok's visit to the village, where he finds that his family is arranging for his marriage. Marriage is an important part of an Indian household. It is considered mandatory whenever a person starts earning something. The place of marriage can be seen from the neighbours response when Granny told them that her grandson has a job but she still had to work. The neighbours responded that *Marry him off...That's the only way to tame the wild ones like him!* So in Rural society, the marriage is more of a responsibility to keep the person oppressed in family values. Balram and his brother Kishan can be compared here as Kishan remained in the village and adopted his father's profession so he used to go to Dhanbad to work as a labourer and he has become weak. Adiga realistically portrays the problems faced by lower class in rural society.

[...] Kishan had changed. He was thinner and darker – his neck tendons were sticking out in high relief above the deep clavicles. He had become, all of a sudden, my father (Adiga 84).

Balram has escaped the patriarchal system represented by his grandmother. In rural households or in the India of darkness the eldest women take the role of patriarch after the death of her husband. She controls everyone the same way her husband used to control them. Kusum is the perfect example of this. She always wanted that Balram should submit all his money to her. Later on, she starts arranging his marriage without even informing him. In this way, Balram escapes the oppression in the household by leaving his house. So Balram had already escaped the misery of becoming like his father and then dying in some government hospital of tuberculosis. The education he got from the society helped him as when he used to work at the tea shop, where he heard someone saying that the drivers are paid well. He learned driving and got a job at one of the landlords and he had escaped the miseries of rural life. His elder brother was still there caught in the *Rooster Coop*.

Another important thing that plays a massive role in the life of lower class is the means of income whatever it may be. There he mentions the most important creature or the dictator of the house that is the water buffalo. The water buffalo is the important part of every household in the villages as it is the means of income. The milk is collected and it generates income which contributes to the two square meal. The importance of water buffalo is evident from the fact that no matter if the people in the house were hungry or not but the buffalo is always full, feeding her is the main thing in the lives of the women. The reason being that their hope lies in the fatness as *if she gave more milk, the women could sell some of it, and there might be a little more money at the end of the day* (Adiga 20).

Adiga depicts that India is the two countries in one: an India of Light, and an India of Darkness. The subjugation of the lower class is realistically portrayed as Adiga explains as for how the landlords of the Laxmangarh rely upon the income of the lower class people. Each landlord is given the specific metaphorical name as the *buffalo* is the one who owns the roads and the rickshaws used the road so they have to pay one-third of whatever they had earned to Buffalo. Next is the stork, he owns the river and he used to take a part from every fish caught and toll from every boat that used the river. His brother is wild boar, he owned the agricultural land and if anyone wanted to work there he has to bow down under his feet. The last one was the raven he owned the dry land and the rocky hillside around the fort, he used to take a cut from the goatherds. So basically Laxmangarh was controlled by these four people who used to live in high walled mansions outside the Laxmangarh and they had all the amenities at their home they don't have to go anywhere just like other people. The villagers cannot do anything on their own as they had to pay a certain sum of their earnings to the landlords. This explains the working of the class system in the village using the ideological and the repressive state apparatus. This feudal system is prevalent in the village and landlords had the full control of everyone in the village.

Adiga explains the working of the caste system in the subjugation of the lower class as the caste in India is the destiny of the man. As the protagonist, Balram is *Halwai* so he

can easily get a job at sweetshops as they think that he is a halwai so making sweets is in their blood. This is the biggest factor in Indian society as a person from particular caste is expected to act in a certain way. Adiga further explains that in the time of greatness this country was like a zoo. Everyone was kept in his place but as the Britishers left all the animals and us on fifteen of August 1947 the cages were left open, they attacked each other and jungle law replaced zoo. The ferocious animals have eaten others up and grown big bellies. Something similar could have happened with Balram's father as earlier they were halwai but someone had taken their shop so they didn't have the belly to take back and now they are rickshaw pullers. The new caste system in modern India according to Adiga is:

[...] To sum up – in the old days there were one thousand caste 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 (Adiga 64).

This explains the feudal system as it was working in Balram's village. The treatment of lower class from the hands of rich can be seen from the hiring of Balram as a driver in the stork's house. They enquire a lot about him as to where did his family live most of the time and did they supported *Naxals* or terrorists. This is used as a repressive tool against the servant as when one of the sons of the landlord was kidnapped then they killed the whole family of the servant who was responsible for the kidnapping. So the landlords should know where did the servant's family live in case some mishap takes place then they can confront his family. The alienation from family and education etc. is used by the upper class to tame the lower class. According to *Karl Marx*, a key part of the control of the Proletariat is the use of alienation in all aspects of society, including the family, the education system, and the media. This provides the Bourgeoisie with a supple mass of workers who do not mind working for the external rewards of a constant wage. Balram was hired as a driver but he was a continuous labourer in the house of Stork as when he was not driving, he had other works to do such as bathing the dogs, mowing the lawn, and most important giving the Stork a foot massage. Engels in his

book *The Principles of Communism* states as for how labour power is used as a commodity:

[...] Labor [power] is a commodity, like any other, and its price is therefore determined by exactly the same laws that apply to other commodities. In a regime of big industry or of free competition—as we shall see, the two come to the same thing—the price of a commodity is, on the average, always equal to its cost of production. Hence, the price of labor is also equal to the cost of production of labor. But, the costs of production of labor consist of precisely the quantity of means of subsistence necessary to enable the worker to continue working and to prevent the working class from dying out. The worker will, therefore, get no more for his labor than is necessary for this purpose; the price of labor, or the wage, will, in other words, be the lowest, the minimum, required for the maintenance of life (Engels 81-97).

This explains the life of Balram as he was used as a machine and he was ordered not to sit idle. Balram's Master Mr. Ashok has recently come back from America. He is not used to the Indian system as he has been living in America. Ashok is suffering from the in-between the two systems as he is used to the American system where everything is in order but here in India everything is in chaos. In America, he used to drive himself but here he needs a driver. The reason being the traffic conditions in India. He blames the Indian traffic as no one follows the system here. He is mimicking the Americans as he repeatedly criticizes the Indian darkness. Balram learns about all the flaws in the system from his master Ashok.

The condition of the drivers in the cities depicts the subjugation they face. The masters used to live in the posh apartments but the servants and drivers quarters were in the basement infected by cockroaches and lizards. They had to stay there as anytime the master can ring the bell and servant has to report to the master. So the servants are never off duty that's why they are provided the quarters next to their masters. The servants are not allowed inside the malls. The malls that depict the development

undergone by the country are still out of reach of the poor. Balram, the mouthpiece of Adiga states:

[...] We were outside the mall. We – a dozen or so of chauffeurs – were waiting for our masters to finish shopping. We weren't allowed inside the mall, of course – no one had to tell us these things. We had made a ring by the side of the car park, and we were smoking and chatting – every now and then someone would emit a red jet of *paan* from his mouth. (Adiga 123).

The drivers are the ones, who knew and addressed to all the needs of their masters be it hashish, girls or golf balls. They always served their masters with a smile on their face. Balram says that the servants are corrupted because they were working under the corrupt masters. Balram has a huge respect for his master but when he saw him involved in prostitution and corruption he believed in what the 'vitiligo lips' had told him that all masters are the same.

It can be concluded that the class system and the major evils prevailing in the society in all levels hold a topmost place in Adiga's narrative. Balram's rising to power and shifting the power structures is an alarming call for the upper class that the one in the servitude can rise anytime. Vijay's story is also similar to Balram but he has chosen the other path and he escaped the oppressed zone. Adiga depicts that class is the new caste in the new India. So the amount of capital and power decide that who belongs to which class. As with the help of this, a person from the lowest of the low as Vijay can rule the upper class. Adiga provided the solution in the terms of the slitting of the throat by Balram.

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## Chapter: 03

### Depiction of Class Struggle as reflected in Ram Sarup Ankhi's *Kankan da Katlaam*

Ram Sarup Ankhi is the Punjabi regional novelist and poet. He wrote about the agrarian society or the farmers and the village life in Punjab. The major themes being farmer suicides due to indebtedness and drug addiction etc. He belonged to a small village called *Dhanaula* in Barnala district of Punjab. This region of Punjab comes under the Malwa region. Malwa region falls towards the left bank of Satluj River. People in this region speaks the malwai dialect of Punjabi. Malwai Dialect is very close to the written Punjabi. Ram Sarup Ankhi has written his novels in the malwai dialect of Punjabi language. The larger part of the Malwa region is the landowning farmers. Agriculture is the main occupation in this region. The land is fertile and the soil is desert soil. The main crops were Cotton and lentils. With the passage of time the fertility of soil decreased with the regular crop circle and due to the malice policies of government the agriculture became less profitable. This led to decline in the lifestyle of farmers. They started selling their land in order to cover the loss. The capitalists bought the land and they established the industries on that land. This led to the landless situation of the farmers. Hence the lifestyle declined to the worst level which led to drug addiction and suicides. Ankhi tried to address these issues in his novels.

In the selected text, Ram Sarup Ankhi realistically portrays the condition of small farmers who consists the lower class in the rural society. The word farmer is the defined as the person who owns the land and cultivates it. It refers to the small landowners and the one who himself cultivates the land. These two qualities 'small piece of land' and 'self-cultivation' differentiate the farmer from 'landlords' and 'labourers' as landlords are the one who owns a very large piece of land and gives it on lease whereas labourers are the one who are involved in cultivation but they don't own the land. The farmer's main source of income is farming and through this small piece of land contributes a lot to the economy of a country. As renowned British sociologist, Teodar Shanin said "The peasant family farm as the basic unit of multidimensional social organisation. Land

husbandry as the main means of livelihood directly providing the major part of consumption needs specific traditional culture related to the way of life of small communities” (Shanin). Landforms a major part of their dependency and the problem starts when the farmer becomes landless.

The small land-owning farmers in the Punjab mostly belong to *Jatt* community, which is considered an upper caste, but in terms of capital or economic conditions they fall in lower class strata. Their only source of income is the farming on the small portion of land owned by them. The selected text narrates the story of Harchand who is the son of Ex-serviceman Makhan Singh. Harchand’s mother After the retirement Makhan Singh decided to adopt his ancestral profession that is farming. The land owned by him was the barren land but after the hard labour he converted it in to the fertile one. One of the rich businessman Lala Mulakh Raj bought the barren land in the village to establish a factory over there. The land that was considered as barren turned the fortunes of the farmers. They received a hefty sum of money for the unproductive land. The class system here is divided in two binaries that is the one who have power that is the businessmen and landlords as they had a stronghold in politics and on the other side is the small land-owning farmers who depend upon the piece of land they own for their income. On the other hand, there is a clear-cut stratification in the rural society based on caste system as the farmers mostly belong to *Jatt* community, which is supposed to be upper caste and the main source of their income is farming. The other one is the lower caste who depend upon daily wage work for their income and they get this work in the fields owned by farmers. As Karl Marx said In the preface to *Capital*: *“Here individuals are dealt with only as fact as they are personifications of economic categories, embodiments of particular class-relations and class interests.”* Hence in rural society the class or caste you are born in determines your fate. The son of a farmer will go on to become a farmer whereas the one born in lower class will always depend upon the availability of work for daily wage labour. This factor remains one of the major reason for the subjugation of the lower classes in rural society. The capitalists control them all. As Karl Marx said:

[...] The class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production.” This is done through control over the media, educational curricula, grants and such. This is not the result of a conspiracy; rather it is the dominant viewpoint that pervades the culture. Because the dominant class owns and controls the forces of production, the social class in power uses the non-economic institutions to uphold its authority and position. (Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto)

The capitalists or the rich businessman control the means of production and they have a control upon all other factors as media, power etc. There is an ardent desire to exercise power in every level of hierarchy in the rural society as the farmers exercise the power upon the lower caste labourers working under them. They never pay them regularly but the burden of work is very high on them. The capitalists on the other hand exercise power upon all others through their control over media, government etc. Lala was one such businessman. Lala Mulakh Raj had established a paper mill in the barren lands. He bought the barren lands at low cost as the farmers didn't have enough resources to convert the barren land into fertile one. But on the other hand Lala used that barren land to establish a factory, and due to the need of the factory the village is being connected to other cities via roads. Initially the factory became a boon for the people as they got employment in the form of construction work and later on in the factory as factory workers. But the factory had its own disadvantages as the waste was thrown openly and from there it got mixed up with groundwater and caused various diseases. Initially one of the local leaders started protesting against it as all the waste was being thrown openly into ground and it caused the foul smell to the passengers passing by and later it got mixed up with groundwater and caused many fatal diseases. The local leader was silenced by Lala after the latter bribed the former and funded the construction of his house.

Now Lala wanted to expand his business and in order to do so he had to acquire the fertile land which is the only source of income for the farmers. He offered them double the price but as it was the only source of income so farmers denied it every time. Here Lala used the repressive state apparatus as mentioned by Louis Althusser. Repressive

state apparatuses are the one through which the ones in power force the other to do certain things forcefully and they are as law, police, prison etc. Lala acquired the land with the help of government and without the consent of farmers. It is by the law that Government can acquire the land anytime but they had to pay the farmers the price for that land. The land was acquired when the crops were about to be harvested. So the small land-owning farmers now became landless. They were left with no other source of income. So the biggest cause of the subjugation or oppression of lower class in rural society is capitalism. The capitalists want to expand their business for which the land is required and in urban cities there is shortage of land. So the land is available in rural areas which is owned by majority of small land-owning farmers. The farmers are dependent upon this land for their income and through them the lower caste labourers are also dependent upon the land as they work in the land on daily wages. In certain cases, the farmers refuse to give their land and they try all sort of ways such as revolutionary ways to stop the acquisition of land. Karl Marx describes revolution as:

[...] Marx believed that religion, the government, educational systems, and even sports are used by the powerful to maintain the status quo.

Although they are hampered by the ideological dominance of the elite, the oppressed classes can, under certain conditions, generate counter ideologies to combat the ruling classes. These conditions are moments when the existing mode of production is played out; Marx terms these moments “revolutionary.” (Trueman)

The revolution is depicted in the novel when the land got acquired forcefully. Farmers started protesting against it. They were joined by the Peasant’s Union, a body comprising of the peasant leaders, they tried to get their land back by forceful means. The whole village gathered for a violent protest against the factory owners. But the factory owner was aware of these things so he deployed police forces around the factory to avoid any mishaps. The factory owner was using the repressive state apparatus to control the peasants.

Capitalists control every institution such as religion, government etc. as it can be seen in the interaction between the minister and Lala in the selected novel. When farmers refused to give away their land even at higher prices than Lala contacted the minister

in charge and asked him to use the law for the benefits of Lala. The minister did the same and the land was acquired through the governmental process. The law that ensured the acquiring of the land was originally implemented to acquire the land for public purposes but here it is used for the benefit of an industrialist. In this way, the capitalists control the government and eventually control the people.

In the light of the selected text, there are three classes of farmers related to farming in the rural society. They are the large landowning farmers or 'landlords' and the second one is the small landowning farmers and the third one is the 'helpers' or the labour class, they do not own any land but they form a major contributor to the farming. Ankhi's novel deals with the suffering of the small land-owning farmers that can be considered as the exploited class. Now the question that arises is that if any change occurs at the rural level it should affect everyone equally but the only class that suffers is the small landowning farmers. The major changes that occurred were the Green revolution and the industrialization, former was a huge success but still, the small landowning farmers were the least profited class from its benefits and in case of latter the lands are being acquired for setting up industries which eventually effects the small landowning farmers.

The reasons for the failure of small landowning farmers can be traced from the selected text as Harchand, the protagonist of the novel is a small landowning farmer. Due to the modernization of the agriculture model, the need for human capital in farming is declining day by day. Machines are doing most of the work. So the labour class or the 'helpers' are losing their work and they are leaving the village and moving to cities in need of work. This class mainly comprises 'Dalit' community and they are already out of the scene when it comes to the farming sector. The 'landlords' on the other hand adopted some other sources of income. So agriculture is not their only source, rather they started their own business like trucking, money lending etc. They are getting involved in state politics. So the main reason for the stability in the conditions of 'helpers' and 'landlords' is their own efforts. They adopted other sources of income and moved away from agriculture but on the other hand, the small landowning farmers are still stuck in the agriculture as their only source of income.

The downfall of the small landowning farmers can be related to the fall of the small companies from the hands of the giants in the field. The large multinational corporations are increasing their empire day by day and in this process, they often acquire the smaller companies. Small landowning farmers are also going through the same as the 'landlords' wanted to acquire more land which is only possible through the small landowning farmers. When in need they sell their land and 'landlords' keep on expanding their empire. In this context, Ankhi writes, "Needy families often sell their land, and the wealthy families keep on purchasing it" (translated) (Ankhi 13).

The second reason that accounts for the decline of the small land-owning farmer is the 'false reputation' on being a *Jatt*. The word *Jatt* was used to describe a traditionally agricultural community living in Northern Punjab and Pakistan. Originally the *Jat* people migrated to north and settled over here. They took up agriculture as their main profession. The *Jat* community of Punjab, now known as *Jatt* became an influential group, as they were the large landowners. However, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century most of the *Jatt* migrated to cities and settled over there. The influential use of word *Jatt* created a 'false reputation' among all of farming community. The small landowning farmers are the one who are affected the most by this 'false reputation' as they do not have enough resources to maintain the lifestyle of *Jatt* as portrayed by 'landlords' and neither they want to give it up. This makes them in-between they are not able to move to other professions. This 'false reputation' has ruined many lives and Ankhi realistically portrayed this in his novel as in the foreword it is mentioned, "Land is the basic necessity of a *Jatt*. One who does not own a land is not a *Jatt*. *Jatt* can never do other any other work" (translated) (Ankhi 0). This 'false reputation' is the reason why the small landowning farmers did not want to adopt other professions. Some of these professions are related to the lower class or the 'Dalits' and the ego of being a *Jatt* did not let them be in these professions. The success of the 'helper' class or the 'Dalits' lies in the fact that when they had seen the decline of the farming they started moving towards cities in search of the labour or work. Secondly, as portrayed by Ankhi this lower class believe in earning a two square meal. The materialistic world did not have much impact on them, they didn't work to earn money and later invest in the materialistic world.

In the light of selected text, another major problem that is faced by the small landowning farmers is the various policies of the government that favours the capitalists. In the text the farmers were not willing to sell their land to Lala Mulakh Raj. The main reason behind this was the dependency on the agriculture. The farmers were fully dependent on the land and if they become landless then they were left with no other sources of income. When farmers refused to sell their land then Lala contacted the chief minister. This depicts the use of state power by the capitalists to control the lower class. When Lala meets the chief minister, he explains the situation from his own perspective. He proves that he wanted to establish a factory for the benefit of the farmers, as stated in the text, "Our company is planning to set up a sugar mill which will eventually benefit the farmers as their sugarcane crop will be utilized in their village only. Secondly, a distillery will also be set up, this is again for the benefit of the residents as they will stop the trading of illegal liquor and get used to the 'healthy' liquor produced by their distillery" (translated) (Ankhi 19). The minister was satisfied with his explanations and promised him that he will acquire the land through governmental laws and will give it to Lala. The land acquisition act gives the permission to government to acquire the land without the consent of the farmers. This act was passed to acquire the land for public use such as to build the roads or the railway lines but nowadays capitalists are using it as a tool to expand their empire. This led to decline of small landowning farmers, as they did not get enough money to settle at some other places neither they can set up a business with the money. In the selected text the land is forcefully acquired without giving prior information to the farmers. Small farmers depend upon the yield of the crops as it is the main source of their income. Lala acquired their land when the crops were about to be harvested. Farmers not only lost their land but the crops which were yet to be harvested were also acquired along with the land. In case of protagonist Harchand, His family was planning for his marriage as this time the yield will be high so they will earn more money and finally they can spend on the marriage but they lost everything. They were left with no source of income. Eventually it leads to the downfall of the family and in some cases; it lead to farmer suicides.

Ankhi gives a detailed account of the institution of marriage in the rural society through his novel. In the light of the selected text, in rural society, Marriage is directly related to

the capital owned by the person. As depicted in the text, "*Meeto* (his soon-to-be-wife) existed because of the seven acres land owned by him. If he is landless than there is no *Meeto*" (Ankhi). Harchand got the marriage proposal because he was the son of a 'pensioner' ex-serviceman and they owned seven acres of land. These things were enough to prove his ability to marry a girl. Girl's family held this view that they have seven acres of land that is enough to live a good life. After the acquisition of land, Harchand becomes landless and his father died while protesting against the factory owners. Now Harchand was all alone in his home and he needed a company of his wife. He started urging them for marriage but as Harchand was a landless now they refused to marry their daughter. They gave a reply that earlier he was a landowning farmer but now he is a landless labourer, how can their daughter live a good life with a labourer. The marriage is considered an economic affair and the materialistic wealth owned by a person determines his worth to marry. In the latter part of the novel when Harchand received the money for their acquired land and bought four acres of land, he again became an eligible bachelor. This shows how the possession of economic worth increases the influence of a person.

So, the conclusion can be drawn from the above analysis that Ankhi's depiction of the agrarian society clearly portrays the situation of the small land-owning farmers. Ankhi's novel portrays the ground realities but any solution is not offered as, in the end, the protagonist loses everything. The class struggle is between the rich businessman who controls the power structures as government and police whereas on the other hand are the small land-owning farmers who are unable to oppose the oppression.

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## Chapter: 04

### Comparative Study of the selected texts for the portrayal of social disparities in society

Literature is the mirror of society and it plays a vital role in reflecting what is happening in society at particular time. The genre *Novel* has been the foremost medium to expose the immoralities or the indifference in the society. Literature not only exposes but urges the reader to take an action. The age and time of both the selected texts make them eligible for the comparative study. One describes the condition of rural society in a remote village of Bihar and the high society in Delhi and Bangalore whereas the other one describes the rural agrarian society of Punjab at the same time. The selected texts are the most realistic depictions of the society in which they are set. The themes emerging in both the novels are the class struggle influenced by various factors. Both the novels are set in different societies. Adiga's *The White Tiger* represents the rural society in a remote village of Bihar and later on, it shifts to the metro cities that is Delhi and Bangalore. The rural society of Bihar consists mostly of the lower class people who work on a daily wage labour in the fields or in coal mines. The living conditions of these people are contrasted with the landlords of the village, they are the wealthy landowners who have all the facilities at their home. On the other hand, Ram Sarup Ankhil's *Kankanda Katlaam* is set in a small village in the 'Malwa' belt of Punjab. The novel deals with the agrarian society, which is the small land-owning farmers whose only source of income is farming. The living conditions of these farmers are contrasted with the wealthy Businessmen who owns and keeps on expanding their business on the cost of the land of the farmers. They acquire the land and making these farmers landless which results in a miserable life.

The comparison of both the novels will be through the Marxist lens as how literature depicts the harsh social realities, the various factors which are described in both the texts with Adiga's novel being the main text. Secondly the role of the social class of the author as to which extent the author is aware of what he had written.

One of the necessities of a person's life other than food and shelter is the education. Education plays an important role in shaping the life of a person. Adiga has targeted

the Indian education system as the protagonist of the novel Balram is a genius student and he was doing well in education at school but there are certain loopholes in the education system. Free education is the basic need and it should be implemented by the state as Karl Marx wrote in *Das Kapital* that:

“Education is free. Freedom of education shall be enjoyed under the condition fixed by law and under the supreme control of the state” (Marx).

This is implemented through the education policy of the government as schooling for children from 6-14 is free in government schools. The students are provided with a mid-day meal that is one-time food is given free of cost. The government also provides the uniforms to the students. However, the problem lies in the implementation of these schemes at the ground levels. Adiga has targeted these problems as how the education system fails at the grass root level in the rural society. The control of teachers was evident from the lizard incident. The students in the classroom were playing with each other and the teacher was snoring. This shows the responsibility of a teacher towards the students. The teacher never bothered himself with any of class's affairs as Balram says:

[...]When he (teacher) went to sleep, which he usually did by noon, we stole *paan* from his pockets; distributed it amongst ourselves and chewed on it; and then, imitating his spitting style – hands on hips, back arched slightly – took turns spitting at the three dirty walls (Adiga 29).

This depicts the condition of the schools in the rural society as described by Adiga in his novel. Balram describes his school as “...*school with two-foot-long lizards the colour of half-ripe guavas hiding in its cupboards...*”

The corruption prevalent in the school system is depicted through the missing free food and uniforms for the students. Balram says

[...] There was supposed to be free food at my school – a government programme gave every boy three *rotis*, yellow *daal*, and pickles at lunchtime. But we never ever saw *rotis*, or yellow *daal*, or pickles, and everyone knew why: the school teacher had stolen our lunch money (Adiga 33).

The reason given for this stealing of money and uniforms is the silent protest by the teacher, as he was not paid his salary in six months. The teacher was compromising with the education of the students. The inspector who came for inspection knew about the corruption as well as he entered the classroom he questioned the teacher as:

[...] 'There is no duster in the class; there are no chairs; there are no uniforms for the boys. How much money have you stolen from the school funds, you sister-fucker?'

The inspector considers Balram as an intelligent student and recommends his name for a scholarship. He wanted him to go to "real school" and get "real education" away from these "thugs and idiots". This shows the standard of education being provided to the lower class in rural India.

Whereas in the other text *Kankan da Katlaam* the scenario of education is entirely different. Ankhi has portrayed the major flaws in the rural society. The major occupation in the rural society is agriculture and it forms the basic source of income. Harchand, the protagonist of the novel is the son of a small landowning farmer. Harchand's father wants that Harchand should join him in farming so he let him study until tenth class. After that Harchand left the studies and started working with his father in farms. There were many reasons as to why Harchand's father didn't let him go to higher studies. First is that the higher studies are quite expensive and after spending that much on education no one was sure that they will get a permanent job. They knew that the only way to get jobs is through bribing the officials, which they cannot afford. As mentioned by Ankhi in the text he writes, "After completing their higher education, the ones who had any kind of political support gets the job while the others remained unemployed" (Ankhi). So rather than sending their children for higher education, the parents wanted them to go for some work that can earn them some money.

Another governmental facility targeted by Adiga in *The White Tiger* is the government hospitals. Balram describes the government hospital, as "There were three black goats sitting on the steps to the large, faded white building; the stench of goat faeces wafted out from the open door. The glass in most of the windows was broken; a cat was staring out at us from one cracked window.... The doors to the hospital were wide open; the

beds had metal springs sticking out of them". Goatherds were using the hospital as a rest house. There were no beds for the patients and no doctor. The patients were making their sitting arrangements themselves by spreading the newspaper on the floor. It was the only hospital on either side of the river. When asking about the doctor, Balram came to know that the doctor is working in a private hospital and he had paid a certain sum of money to supervisor as a bribe and now his attendance is complete and he had treated all the patients in the hospital. Due to the lack of doctor and medical facilities, Balram lost his father to Tuberculosis, which is a very common disease among rickshaw pullers.

On the other hand, in the second text, Harchand lost his mother to cancer. Cancer is the most widespread disease in the Malwa region of Punjab. The main reason for this is the water pollution being spread by the industries. They dump their waste matter into an open ground from there it got mixed up with the groundwater and lead to the contamination of water. The treatment for Cancer is available in select hospitals but it is too costly. So, in the end, the patient has to die as happened in case of *Surjeet Kaur*, mother of protagonist Harchand.

The main concern in the both of the selected novels is that the government medical facilities, which are affordable for the lower class, are not up to the mark as there are no doctors in the government hospitals, there are no proper beds, and there is no hygiene in the most hygienic place. All this is replaced by the private hospitals, they have top class facilities and equipment and they had well-qualified doctors but a person from lower class cannot afford the treatment of private hospitals.

According to the selected text, biggest flaw or the mother of all evil that is prevalent in Indian society is corruption. This leads to all other problems. Adiga has established how the upper class makes use of corruption to control the power structures and have a hold over the lower class. It starts from the grass root level that is from their village. Each of the landlords takes a certain sum of money from everyone's income. The voting system is the most corrupt one as in case of Balram, he wanted to cast his vote for himself but his employer sold his vote. There was no voting in their village and when one of the men tried to protest against the system, the political goons beat him

mercilessly. According to Adiga, the corruption is everywhere as in the school the teacher is corrupt and in the hospital the doctors are corrupt.

While living in Delhi with his master, Balram looks into the political system as for how his masters bribe the politicians to evade from the tax. His masters own the coal mines and during every election, they used to pay a certain amount of money to both the parties as political funds and in return they did not have to pay taxes.

Adiga had shown that the India that seems to be advancing and developing is filled with the treacherous, greedy and self-serving men who are looting public's money.

On the other hand from Ankhi's novel it is clear that the corruption is prevalent in rural society as when the farmers refused to sell their land, Lala bribed the minister and acquired the land through the governmental process. Secondly, when some people started protesting against the factory for polluting the area with their waste material, Lala bribed them and they started praising the factory. In this way, the corruption is shown as a tool in the hands of the capitalists to rule the lower classes.

Marriage is considered as a union of two souls but in the selected texts the portrayal of marriage is in terms of the economic affair or a process to control or tame an individual. Adiga has shown that in rural society, in case of Balram's family, the marriage is the opportunity for the family to engulf as much dowry as they can from girl's family. Balram had left his education because during his cousin's marriage they had taken a loan, to fulfill the demand of dowry, from one of the landlords and in order to repay that loan he had to work on a teashop. Similarly, when Balram's brother Kishan got married they took a good amount of dowry. Besides this marriage is considered to be the solution for the boys who did not followed their family's orders. As Kusum decided to marry Balram when Balram stopped sending money to his family.

The dowry system is prevalent in the upper class also. After Ashok's divorce, his brother enquires as when he will remarry. In addition, he says that last time you refused to take any dowry but this time we will find a good family and will take a hefty amount of dowry.

However, in case of the upper class, they have a very strict class code when it comes to marriage. They married their children in their own caste as Ashok could not marry

Uma because she was from another caste. He married Pinky when he was in America although Pinky was from a different caste. He got divorced later. Therefore, Adiga depicts the role of class in marriage.

In the second text, Ankhi portrays marriage as an economic affair. Harchand's marriage is fixed because he owns seven acres of land but after the acquisition of land he becomes landless which results in his broken marriage. Role of women in rural society is portrayed as the one who takes care of the household. When Harchand's mother dies of cancer, they wanted Harchand to marry soon as there was no woman in the house. This is also the main factor for marriage in rural society.

Adiga takes a dig on the flesh trade going on in the metro cities. Poverty and the expensive lifestyle forces many girls in prostitution. The scandal goes on in the high-end hotels of the city. All the rich businessmen and the politicians are involved in this flesh trade. Adiga portrays in the text as for how the minister's assistant lures Mr. Ashok into this. He arranges a 'Hollywood actress lookalike' for him, a Ukrainian student. Adiga depicts that not only the upper class is involved in it but the lower class have their own area. He talks about the 'famous red light district' of the area that is G. B. Road. This is the darkest area of India of light. Balram refused to involve in it as he said, "*They're like parrots in a cage. It'll be one animal fucking another animal*". This depicts the morality of Balram, and how he was consciously aware of the things around him.

The rural society is still safe from these malpractices as there is no depiction of this in another novel.

Adiga targets the class difference as how lower class is kept in servitude by the upper class. Slavery exists in the rural society in the form of the subjugation of the lower class people towards the upper-class landlords. The exploitation of the poor people by rich landlords is depicted from the fact that for using the basic public amenities that is road, river, grasslands they had to pay a certain amount of money to the landlord who 'rules' over that area. They used various methods to keep the poor people under their feet. As Balram's family had taken a loan from one of the landlords, in order to repay that

loan all of the family members have to work. The landlords have all the amenities at their houses but the poor people don't even have access to basic amenities.

The Electoral system in the democracy like India is ridiculed by Adiga in his novel. He explores the rise of 'The Great Socialist' as the representative of the lower class but later on, he himself became one of them. The Great Socialist was an example of how the support of the lower class in India can turn someone into a great politician. Balram describes:

[...] The Great Socialist had been the boss of the Darkness for a decade at the time of this election. His party's symbol, a pair of hands breaking through handcuffs – symbolizing poor shaking off the rich – was imprinted in black stencils on the walls of every government office in the Darkness. Some of the customers at the tea shop said the Great Socialist started off as a good man. He had come to clean things up, but the mud of Mother Ganga had sucked him in. Others said he was dirty from the start, but he had just fooled everyone and only now did we see him for what he was... You see, a total of ninety-three criminal cases – for murder, rape, grand larceny, gun-smuggling, pimping, and many other such minor offences – are pending against the Great Socialist and his ministers at the present moment... The Great Socialist himself is said to have embezzled on 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 (Adiga 98).

This clearly describes the type of politician Great Socialist is. He had a huge public support and every time he keeps on winning the elections again. He did this with the help of the money he collected from the landlords. He used to buy all the votes and won with a clean sweep. Balram's father had told him that he had seen twelve elections but he has not voted in any of them. Every time someone else voted for him. He had a huge support in Darkness because "He humiliated all our masters – that's why we kept voting him back in".

The election system in rural society as described by Ankhi in his novel is similar to the portrayal in Adiga's novel. Ankhi depicts that the agendas of both the ruling party and

the opposition party were same. They made big promises before elections but after winning the elections they forgot their promises and continued with the regime of exploiting the people. As Karl Marx said, "*The oppressed are allowed once every few years to decide which particular representatives of the oppressing class are to represent and repress them*" (marx and Engel). So after every five years, the people changed the government but the way of governance remained the same.

Vijay, the bus conductor was an example of how the power structures can be shifted. He also escaped the barbarous oppressed zone called *Rooster Coop* by Balram. His story can be contrasted with the story of Balram. Vijay was the son of a pig herd, the lowest of the low caste, but he had befriended a politician. Whatever he had to do, he had done to come out of the lower class. He progressed gradually. Firstly he was a conductor, then he joined politics full time and he was the sidekick of The Great Socialist and towards the end of the novel, he was a full-fledged politician in Great Socialist's party. His family were the lowest of the low but now he had made it to the top, so even the landlords respected him. "a landlord bowing before a pig herds son! The marvels of democracy!" On the other hand, Balram's way of escaping the *Rooster Coop* was entirely different. He had learnt all the ways in which the upper class oppressed them. So in order to shift the power structures, he had no other option but to slit the throat of his master and escape with the money.

The master Mr. Ashok was not the master in the real sense as he had spent most of his life in America so he was devoid of the 'Indian way' of doing things. He was subjugated to the decisions of his brother and his father. They didn't want him to go back to America which eventually led to his broken marriage with Pinky. Whenever he tried to give any suggestion, they silenced him by saying that you do not know how things work in India. He used to bribe the politicians every day as it was the duty assigned to him by his family.

The nature of literature rooted on the grounds of Marxist critical analysis has a characteristic influence of the social and political circumstances, as stated by Terry Eagleton:

[...] You can tell that the capitalist system is in trouble when people start talking about capitalism (Eagleton 43).

The writers depict the social economic conditions of a society in which they are writing. Some of the authors like Aravind Adiga and Arunaditi Roy self-consciously depicts the nature of the class system and the exploitation of lower class in the hand of the upper class. The second case in when writer unconsciously writes about the society. The hidden meaning can be extracted from the analysis of the text.

Aravind Adiga was born in India and raised in a well-to-do family. Later on, his family migrated to Australia. He studied at James Ruse School in New South Wales and later at Magdalen College Oxford. He returned to India after fifteen years in 2003. He was working as a financial journalist with the TIME. His debut novel *The White Tiger* talks about the protagonist from the poor society of India. The poor society or lower class to which he was never related. In an interview for *Bookreview* Adiga explains as “the inspiration form the character of Balram comes from the slums, railway stations and other public areas he visited. There was a constant growl in the lower class, a voice which was never heard” (Adiga, Interview with the Booker Prize winner "Aravind Adiga"). Therefore it was the voice of the poor which is reflected in the retaliation of Balram halwai by slitting the throat of his master. Adiga’s novel was influenced by Black American Authors James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison, and Richard Wright. The method of depiction was quite similar to Richard Wright’s *Native Son*. Both the characters Balram halwai and Bigger Thomas responded through the murder of their masters. Adiga’s way of depicting things was to give the lower class a voice and to give the upper class an alarming call that if the exploitation of the poor will continue than they will respond through violent means. The other cause for the harsh depictions of every field of the country, right from the schooling to the political system, emerges from the fact that Adiga had spent a greater part of time in developed nations as the United Kingdom and America. So his expectations from his own country grew to that levels which led to his ridiculing of the Indian system.

On the other hand, the second author Ram Sarup Ankhi belongs to the Malwa region of Punjab. He writes about the situation of the small peasants in the agrarian society of

Punjab. He belonged to a small landowning family and he himself was indulged in the farming. So the problems he was writing about comes from his own experience. He depicts the society in which he is living. This gives his depictions a firsthand experience. The language used by Ankhi in his novels is the colloquial language spoken by the people in the rustic part of Malwa region of Punjab. This makes the depictions seem more realistic.

Adiga's novel ends with a solution to the problem as Balram halwai has escaped the barbarous oppressed zone and shifted the power structures. He justifies his act of murdering his master as:

[...] Yet even if all my chandeliers come crashing down to the floor – even if they throw me into the jail and have all the prisoners dip their beaks into me – even if they make me walk the wooden stairs to the hangman's noose – I'll never say I made a mistake that night in Delhi when I slit my master's throat.

I'll say it was all worthwhile to know, just for a day, just for an hour, just for a *minute*, what it means not to be a servant (Adiga)

On the other hand, Ankhi's novel ends with the grieving note where all the land of the protagonist is acquired by the factory owner and he becomes landless again. The circumstances were never on protagonist's side. His decline continues throughout the novel.

Thus, from the comparative analysis of both the novels, it can be concluded that they represent the realistic depictions of the society in which they are set. The depiction of both the writers is similar at certain points but differs in the way they had seen the society they are talking about. The social class and the society of the author affects the literature.

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## Conclusion

Literature has always been used as a tool to represent the flaws in the society. Through the use of literature many authors have consciously tried to represent the society at a particular point of time. The regional authors are the flag bearers in this process as most of them belonged to the region about which they were writing and it gave an authentic touch to the work. Most of these regional authors have written in the regional languages which limits the circulation of the work as sometimes it remains limited to a particular region only. Ram Sarup Ankhil was one such Punjabi novelist who has written numerous short stories and novels describing the agrarian rural society and the condition of peasantry in Punjab. Despite being an English teacher by profession he chose to write in Punjabi. His novels were read and appreciated by the regional audience but because of the barrier of language they could not attract the large readership. On the other hand there were Indian English novelists who shot to fame with their first publication because they were writing in English which has comparatively large readership. Aravind Adiga received the 2008 Booker prize for his debut novel *The White Tiger*. *The White Tiger* demonstrates the India in terms of Light and Darkness that is in urban and rural society, it gives a detailed account of all the malpractices going on under the veil of developing India. Ankhil's novels were reviewed time and again for the study of description of the conditions of peasantry of Punjab. Similarly Adiga's *The White Tiger* was reviewed and studied using various perspectives. In this study the regional novel *Kankan da Katlaam* is being compared to the Booker prize winner *The White Tiger*. The objectives of the study was to analyze both the novels through the Marxist lens for the depiction of the class struggles. Chapter one is the brief introduction of the Marxist theory to be applied with the introduction of the author and the texts. Chapter two dealt with the study of Adiga's *The White Tiger* for the representation of the exploitation faced by the lower class in the rural society of Bihar and in the metro cities Delhi and Bangalore. The basic socioeconomic theory of Karl Marx was used to study the binaries created in the society between the upper class and the lower class. Chapter three deals with the study of Class struggles as depicted in Agrarian rural

society by Ankhi in *Kankan da Katlaam*. Along with the depiction of the class struggles the novel explains the hierarchy in the peasantry of Punjab. The major reasons that led to the downfall of the small landowning farmers are explored from the close reading of the text. The fourth chapter is the comparative study of both the texts for the depiction of the social disparities prevalent in the society. The Marxist idea to relate the context of the work to social class of the author is being used in the comparative study as Ankhi belonged to the Malwa region of Punjab about which he was writing but on the other hand Adiga had spent most of his time outside India, which affects the context of the work. Although Adiga claimed that he had experienced India at various levels during his journalism career.

The study of the class struggles in *The White Tiger* had come to a conclusion that the lower class in the rural and the urban society is in complete servitude to the higher class. The reasons being the lack of the basic amenities and the lack of opportunities for the lower class. They depend upon the upper class for all their needs. This gives the upper class an edge over them eventually repressing them. Secondly, the power structures that is the government and the state always favours the upper class. They interact with lower class but only during the time of elections in which they make all kinds of fake promises and once they are in power they forget them. Democracy is also used as a tool to oppress people. The last line of the Adiga's novel justifies the murder committed by Balram to end his never-ending subjugation. Balram says that he did not regret the murder committed by him as it was the time in life when he felt that what it feels to be a free man.

The study of Class struggles in the *Kankan da Katlaam* by Ram Sarup Ankhi establishes that the small landowning farmers in the rural society are declining day by day. They are neither financially capable to open some other business nor they are prepared to step down in the daily wage labour. The capitalists use the state power for their own benefit and in this way, they control the lower class or the small landowning farmers. The laws made for the benefit of the public are being used against the public such as Land Acquisition Act. The development is there in the rural society but at the cost of their land which is the only source of income they have.

The comparative study of both the novels establishes as to how both the authors addressed the social issues prevailing in the society. Ankhi approaches the problems from the regional point of view or his depiction is limited to a particular region only whereas Adiga has related the problems to the broader view and touched all the fields including the electoral process and working of the government from the small village in Bihar to Delhi. The social class of author plays an important role as Ankhi himself belonged to the rural society and they were the small landowning farmers. So his depictions come from the first class experience that's why they seem realistic and he touches every aspect of rustic life. Adiga, on the other hand, viewed the situations from a journalist point of view. He looked at the situations from the distance. He did not experience the things first handed but seen them during his career in journalism. He was writing from the perspective of a protagonist from the lower class of Indian society, on the other hand, he himself belonged to a well-to-do family. So he wrote about the depiction of flaws in the Indian society as a whole. The another reason, for ridiculing of the Indian society to such an extent, is that for the most of the time in his life, Adiga lived in the developed countries, as he studied in Australia, United Kingdom, and America, which sets a benchmark to which he is comparing India while listing all the flaws prevalent in the society. The idea of the caste system is also different for both the authors as Ankhi's novel shows strict hierarchy when it comes to the caste system in the agrarian society but Adiga claims that in the new India the class is the new caste. One who owns a worthy amount of capital is considered in upper class despite him being from a lower caste.

I would like to conclude my study by listing that both the texts were examined through the lens of Marxist theory which distinctly establishes the social disparities prevalent in the society. The class struggle delineated in the texts is apodictic as to the context in which they were written. This comparison can be further continued from the perspective of other literary theories as well.

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